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A New Flame Burns Bright: Atash Kadeh, Houston, Texas





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"ZARATHUSHTI YOUTH:

GAME CHANGERS"

GUEST EDITORS

ANNE KHADEMIAN

NAWAZ MERCHANT

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SEASON OF HISTORIC FIRSTS

The summer issue is a very special issue celebrating many firsts. The historic opening of the 24 hour wood burning Atash Kadeh, fully funded by Feroze and Shernaz Bhandara , on March 21. The presence of Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor of Udvada added to the religiosity of the occasion. It was a very uplifting experience to see the presence of so many mobeds from all over North America and England giving so freely of their time and devotion, the six mobeds reciting the Vendidad prayers non-stop for four and a half hours, speaks volumes for their tenacity, not to mention the laity who attended all four and a half hours!! The hospitality and warmth of the Houston Zarthushti community was amazing, attention was paid to the minutest details. May the holy fire bring greater prosperity to the Zarthushti community (pages 19).

Then in May we had another historic event. Two major Zarthushti organizations got together – WZCC and FEZANA and had their AGMs back to back, during the same week, in the same place, May 1 – 5 2019, Orlando, Fl. The small Central Florida Orlando WZCC Chapter did an outstanding job of conducting this weeklong event with great efficiency, serving home cooked 5 lunches, 4 dinners 10 tea and coffee breaks for all the days. The lunch and dinner menus were not repeated even once. The food was transported over considerable distances and served with a smile and great hospitality. Special mention must be made of the young twins Armaan and Zaman Sheikh who were omnipresent, doing all tasks from working the IT to serving food, cleaning after the meals and any other job in between, all with a smile. Dinyar Mehta’s *Wingate by Wyndham* hotel was our second

home for 5 days. Thank you Dinyar Mehta and Afsaan Kermani, and your 25 + amazing volunteers for hosting this week with efficiency, unbelievable hospitality, good food and humility. Thank you all for giving us a week to remember.. Special credit goes to the WZCC Global president Edul Daver for his leadership and choice of enlightening speakers.(page 36).

Another first, all four WZCC Award winners were women,!! (page 42).

Combining the two AGMs was an excellent idea as it allowed business people from around the world to mingle with FEZANA associations and committee chairs and see first hand how they function.

The FEZANA AGM also had a first. For the benediction at the start of the first day Ervad Soli Dastur sang *Aa Airyemaa Ishyo (Yasna 54.1)*, also known as Brotherhood of Mankind to the tune of Ode to Joy, by Beethoven played by Dr Daryush Mehta on the Clarinet. It was a “goose bump” experience. Reports were presented (page 47)

And then there was the meeting of the Global Working Group, (GWG) attended by representatives from FPZAI (India), Pakistan, Hong Kong, FEZANA , Australia, ZTFE. Representatives addressed global issues, specially the condition of the mobeds and some agiaries in India .

This issue of the FEZANA journal is a collaborative issue with FIRES, the FEZANA Information Research Education Service. Many of the articles on the Atash Kadeh are provided by the ZAH community members. All these events were meticulously executed with great proficiency which speaks volumes for the community. We have arrived and are here to stay in our new North American home.

With vision, strong foundations and spirit of co-operation , may the North American Zarthushti community continue to prosper and grow in strength .

Atha jamyat yatha aafrinaamee



REFLECTIONS ON THE BHANDARA ATASH KADEH

The bell pealed. The first boi marked the start of a new day, in a new country that we call our home. While we will continue to return to our ancestral places in Iran and India, on March 23, 2019, we witnessed the start of a new era. That morning, we assembled for the grand jashan and witnessed one of the most solemn, interesting, joyful and glorious occasions that was led by the Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor, Head Priest of Pak Iranshah Atashbehram, Udvada, joined by 25 priests from Houston, California, Dallas, Washington DC, New York and UK. Thanks to a gift of Shernaz and Feroza Bhandra, there is an Atash Kadeh in Houston. The architect who designed it, Cyrus Rivetna, reminded us that this is the first free-standing, wood burning, Atash Kadeh built outside of the continent of Asia in history. It is an Atash Kadeh that welcomes everyone and excludes no one. And that means that we Zarthushtis in North America have our own sugar in the milk story to tell. The Zoroastrians of Houston have thrived in the vibrant diverse city, and they have institutions to show for it. From the Zoroastrian Heritage and Cultural Center to the Atash Kadeh, the Zoroastrians have made a mark in their city, and in doing so they have showed the positive impact of Zoroastrians in North America. This impact was made evident by the illustrious dignitaries including Congressman Al Green, Council member Martha Castex-

Tatum, Council members David Robinson, Mike Laster and the Honorable Anupam Ray, Consul General of India. Accompanying the opening was the FIRES exhibit "Down Memory Lane," which presented vignettes of past Parsi



domestic spaces in India and Pakistan. While the celebration of the Atash Kadeh was also the celebration of the right to worship and express oneself in the new world, it was also the celebration that was shaped by the sweet imprint of the past. After all, the afarganiyu in the now smaller prayer room is from Sukkur, Pakistan, the Zoroastrian Heritage Cultural Center has small glimpses of the architecture of the Quetta agyari, and of course the Atash Kadeh is a nod to the Bhandara's beloved Lahore agyari. Renowned

author Bapsi Sidhwa reminded us that it was her mother Tehmina Bhandara who moved the Lahore agyari from one location to a more desirable area Gulberg. It is a fitting tribute to her that her son Feroze be the next generation to move us to a new state of openness and a new state of possibility. The story of the Bhandara Atash Kadeh is about a couple who recognized the spiritual needs and the potential of a community who long to have a religious home in the new world. As the first boi ceremony was conducted and the bells sounded across the Houston soundscape, I thought of Nargesh Sethna and the few community members who are homebound ---but was happy to see Katy Patel who was lovingly wheeled to the ceremony by her grand-daughter Zannah. It was their dream to see an Atash Kadeh in Houston. Boston's Katy Eduljee, who will be 90 in November and who lives in Boston by herself, requested her daughter Nazneen to accompany her to witness the inauguration. And what would our friend John Hinnells say about the first wood burning free-standing religious space outside of Asia and Iran? It was a joyous day to celebrate not only the standing monument and the generous benefactors, but also the community members who yearned for the Atash Kadeh and will make it their spiritual home.

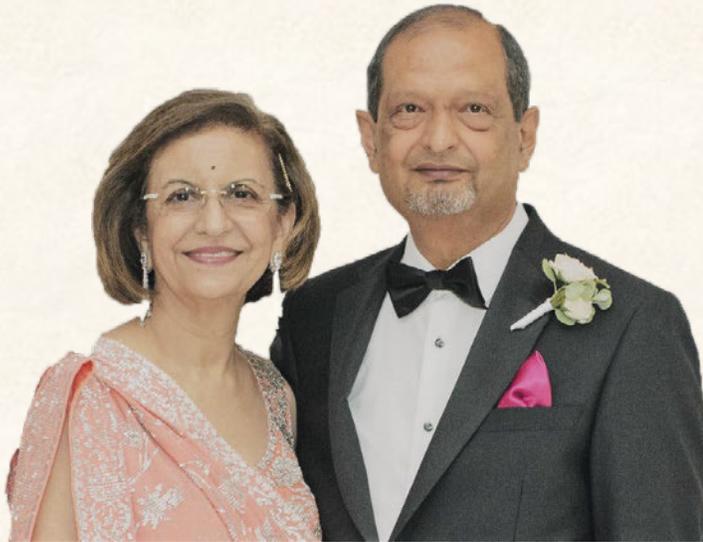
ABAN RUSTOMJI

Aban Rustomji treasures her early years in Quetta, Pakistan, as well as her Zoroastrian Association of Houston membership and her connection with FEZANA Information and Educational Research System (FIRES) as founder-chair.

Atash Kadeh

FEROZE AND SHERNAZ BHANDARA

INTERVIEW WITH NAZNEEN KHUMBATTA SUGAR LAND, TEXAS

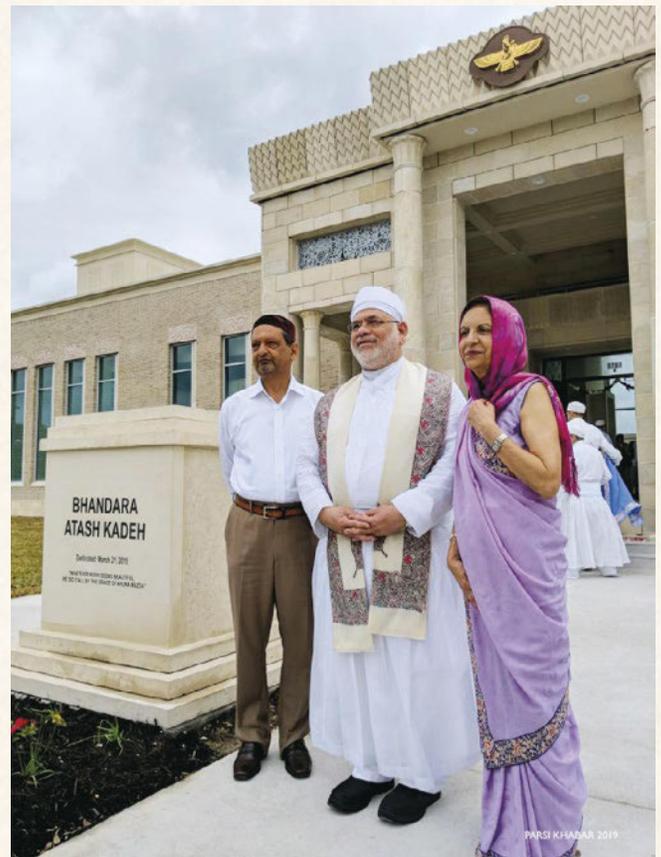


funds for the first phase of the ZHCC Houston, money for the New York Dar-e-Meher to go past the finish line, operating funds for Arman House in Karachi where the elderly can live in comfort. The latest and perhaps most dear to him, is the completion of the Atash Kadeh for the Zarathushti community in Houston.

NK (Nazneen Khumbatta): *When and at what stage in your life did you start thinking about personal philanthropy? Additionally what were Shernaz's feelings about the philanthropic zeal then and now?*

FB (Feroze Bhandara): My personal passion for philanthropy developed gradually after a personal issue in my life; I suffered a first heart attack at the young age of 37 due to overwork and business stress. Our good friends Daraius Captain and Jimmy Makujina, encouraged me to start developing other passions besides work. I started focusing on service to our Zarathushti community and in 1991, I was elected President of Zarathushti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC). At ZANC, I was involved

A self-made man who amassed his fortune by positioning himself to be in the right place at the right time, Feroze Bhandara was born into an illustrious Parsi family in Pakistan. After finishing schooling in Pakistan, he went to the US where he graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a BS in Industrial Engineering and a Master's in Business Administration. Later, while working at Ford Motor Company, he participated in the Stanford University Honors program. When Feroze returned to Pakistan in 1978, the family business was in decline and he decided to move to America. Before leaving Pakistan, he married Shernaz Cowasji and they both travelled to America. Feroze started working at the Ford Motor Company in San Jose and with his foresight; he bought houses as potential rental properties. The price of real estate in the Bay area skyrocketed and Feroze became a millionaire. When the Bay area real estate market plateaued, he pulled out his profits and reinvested in the Houston real estate market which had reached historic lows due to the oil bust. Financially, it was a difficult time at first, but Feroze was a quick learner and his hard work achieved success undreamed of as the depressed Houston market rapidly improved. At present, Feroze is chairman and CEO of The Ardenwood Group comprising of several real-estate developments and leasing projects with future projects in the pipeline. However Feroze believes very strongly in, and is committed to giving back. Hence, through The Bhandara Foundation in the USA and The Feroze and Shernaz Bhandara Charitable Trust in Pakistan, Feroze and Shernaz have contributed to and supported various Zarathushti projects. These include majority of



Atash Kadeh

in the development of our San Jose Dar-e-Meher and Prayer Hall. It was a learning experience working with the powerful sister Persian Zoroastrian Organization (PZO) and acting on behalf of ZANC. As ZANC President, I had enjoyed complete trust within the Board but had to prove myself to my Irani-Zarathusti brethren. However the experience taught me a lot about my personal strengths and weaknesses and this has helped me in my professional life. After moving to Houston, I was blessed with financial success beyond my wildest expectations. Our next major donation was money and construction services for the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) Center. The motivation for this gesture was truly mixed and Sarosh Collector was the catalyst for this donation. He saw my success in the homebuilding industry and asked me to consider sharing my good fortune with the community. Perhaps I was also seeking acceptance from our Houston community members and a leadership role as I had previously enjoyed at ZANC. I learned quickly enough that ZAH members were much more involved, very passionate, & identified strongly with ZAH and their roles in creating it. The ZAH project was started in 1993 and completed in 1997. I am glad that the Center is being used and enjoyed by the community to this day.

SB (Shernaz Bhandara): I have always been supportive of Feroze's endeavors. In California, I was initially involved in Sunday School since our children were young at that time. However when the Atash Kadeh in San Jose, CA was coming to fruition, I got very excited and helped in any way I could. Within two months after completion, Feroze announced that we would be relocating to Houston because of his business interests. You can imagine my disappointment on finding no Atash Kadeh or community hall in Houston and it was then that I started to nudge Feroze into building something for the Houston community.

NK: *What was your first major philanthropic project? What did you learn from it and how have you pursued later projects differently?*

FB: My first major philanthropic project would be the first phase of construction of the ZAH center. The takeaway from that experience is that there is no way to accurately estimate the costs for a community project. Once you commit to such a project, expect the costs to increase as the multiple needs of the community are recognized with the progression of the design. When giving, give with an open heart! Plan to finish the project and see it through. We started out with a commitment to

donate \$100,000 but eventually our direct donation to the ZAH Center ended up being \$275,000 to \$300,000 in 1990 dollars plus construction services. I also learned that I did not know how to handle multiple professionals and personal crises simultaneously. Since then, I have learned to manage & discipline my life and count Ahura Mazda's blessings being showered on me. Now, I try to work in a more collaborative manner. However to complete a project expeditiously, it is best to take it on individually and complete it within its scope. One really can't be "strictly business" in a donation setting.

NK: *Please give a brief timeline of the Houston Atash Kadeh project starting from when it initiated in your thoughts and what observations drove you to fulfill this need of our Zarathushti community? Who were your mentors in this project, if any? What help and guidance did you take from others, if any? What are some areas you would do differently in hindsight?*

FB: The idea of an "Agiary" first came up during a lunch with Kobad Zarolia and Sarosh Collector in 2013. They pushed me to consider the idea of a *first of its kind "Agiary" in America*, that would serve as a model of being an open and inclusive spiritual place. An "Agiary" for our new homeland in America! It was Sarosh's idea to keep my identity anonymous until the ZAH voted on the project. Some may have felt deceived by this ruse and in hind sight that could have been done differently. We considered different architects initially but eventually decided to go with a North American architect, Cyrus Rivetna who has created an outstanding design blending the more traditional Atash Kadeh/Agiary exterior with a more modern and open interior layout yet keeping all the key elements of our place of worship intact in the design. The 2014 starting budget of \$500,000 has greatly exceeded; the final project direct cost has increased many fold. However I have no regrets about this extra cost as we wanted to give the Houston community a true Atash Kadeh to match the zeal and beauty of our community. Learning from past experience, for the Atash Kadeh project I decided it would be best to pay for the complete project; including the soft costs, architect, survey, engineering etc. This approach avoids controversy and rancor in the community. We have a very good construction and management team with Aderbad Tamboli, Rohintan Deputy, Jatin Desai - Engineer, Cyrus Rivetna - Architect and AG project manager Rustum Challa. The resulting design and construction progressed very smoothly and we have a beautiful building reflecting the core values of our Zarathushti spirit.

Atash Kadeh



NK: *What made you decide to open one of the few Atash Kadehs /Agiaris in North America, with emphasis on being all-inclusive?*

FB: The North American culture is quite intolerant of any kind of discrimination and is a very open society. Our children are educated in this society and absorb these values. They are unable to reconcile our Zarathushti values of Love (Ushta) and Truth (Asha) with some of our more traditional practices. Most North American Zarathushti families today have some non-Zarathushti family members and in-laws. Cohesive families need to share faith-based activities. Are we going to exclude the spiritual needs of these kin? In North America, we have our unique set of challenges and to succeed and thrive as Zarathushti communities on this continent, we will need to adapt to our new home in America. We respect the different sets of practices of the Zarathushti faith in other parts of the world but have to establish our guidelines that blend the essence of our faith with our societal norms. Unless we flex and adapt while maintaining the true essence of our Zarathushti faith, we will lead to our own demise in a generation or two.

NK: *Where do you see our Zarathushti community in N. America in the next 25 years to 50 years? What are your personal hopes for our community? What else appears to be necessary to be further done for our community to not just survive but thrive in the western Diaspora?*

FB: To thrive in North America, it is imperative that we accomplish the dual tasks of keeping our Zarathushti identity and make our mark in the mainstream American community. We have to excel on an individual basis and be torch bearers of our Zarathushti faith and earn the recognition and respect in mainstream American society. We will have to be the proverbial “sugar in the

milk” or “brilliant light” that we have been in the greater Indian society. People should be able to easily identify the Zarathushti tenets and spiritual meaning. We have to continue our emphasis on education, making a conscious effort to show our younger generations how to achieve a balance of faith, family and work. Additionally we have to instill the pride of being a Zarathushti in our younger members and inspire and aid them to reach their full potential. We have to promote and align ourselves with Zarathushti high achievers and claim them as our own eg: Ratan Tata, of Tata companies being owners of Jaguar and Range Rover automobiles, Tetley Tea; Freddie Mercury, Adi Godrej of Godrej Industries; Zubin Mehta, Cyrus Poonawalla of Serum Institute being world’s largest vaccine providers. We have to identify the Zarathushti faith with mainstream charity projects. In North America, we do not have established community funds and should develop a tradition for tithing, similar to other faiths. Lastly, strong and equable Zarathushti leadership institutions should be developed within North America as community members get disheartened on witnessing fractious and quarrelsome behavior among the leaders and that leads to religions decline.

NK: *I know the past generations of your family members have been extremely generous to the community. Do you have a particular family member from whom you draw inspiration? and for what reason?*

FB: Our family has a long legacy of donating to our Zarathushti community. Grandfather and grandmother Ardeshir and Soonamai Mama established the Mama Parsi Girls High School in Karachi. When Khan Bhadur Ardeshir Mama had some financial mishaps and did not have the funds to fulfill his pledge, Lady Soonamai sold her jewelry including a beautiful diamond necklace to enable her husband to keep his pledge for the Mama

Atash Kadeh

school. Father and mother, Peshotan & Tehmina Bhandara saved many women in Lahore during the 1947 Indo-Pak Partition by providing safe haven and driving them across the border to join with their other family members at great risk to their own lives. They quietly gave to many causes and helped many Parsis and non-Parsis alike. My mother carried on the tradition after my father died in 1961, by helping to build the new Lahore Agiary, community flats and other projects.

NK: *In self-analysis, what do you think impelled you personally to donate for the Houston Atash Kadeh? Not meaning any disrespect to you personally, but there are many Zarathushtis who have been extremely successful in Europe and N. America in business but their donation to the Zarathushti community is in no way proportionate to their wealth. What personally motivated you to such a large endeavor?*

FB: Shernaz and I have absorbed the family tradition of giving back to our community from an early age. Personally I have realized that material wealth is temporal. We have many instances in our family where members have seen their fortunes oscillate with the times. My

grandfather, Ardeshir Mama was the richest Parsi in Karachi and was the Mayor of Karachi living in The Mama Palace at one time. He lost all his wealth due to some poor investments in Bombay. Our very successful family liquor business called Murree Brewery was cut short by prohibition in Pakistan in the late 1970 thru early 2000s. When I went back to Pakistan in 1978 after completing my studies in US, there was no future for me in Pakistan. Hence I came back to the US and had to start over, first in California & later Texas. I have also observed that inherited wealth can be a curse and leads to disharmony and discord among the family members. In our case, there is enough set aside in Trust for our kids and future generations so why not give to the causes you believe in? Each individual can do as they please with their acquired material wealth. As they become more successful financially, they can live in their larger mansions and drive their fancier cars, enjoying all the luxuries their hard work and acumen has afforded them. However, it is equally important to share the financial success as well.

Photo credits Yezdi Engineer, Houston

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Atash Kadeh

The Bhandara *Atash-Kadeh*

Grand Opening March 20-24, 2019

Meheryar Rivetna



“O Fire! May thy radiance increase in this abode and may thy brilliance light up this house until the end of time.” Atash-Niyayesh

Since the first Zarathushti stepped on North American soil, he was imbued with the yearning to keep the flame of this ancient religion alive. This fervor continued with subsequent generations, and as the number of Zarathushti immigrants grew across North America the desire to connect with fellow Zarathushtis became critical. Initially, the Zarathushtis congregated in private homes to reminisce about their culture and discuss religious issues to ensure the religion thrived in their adopted home. The growth of the Zarathushti diaspora led to the creation of Zarathushti Associations and Centers, many with prayer rooms, where the followers of Zarathushtra gathered for religious, cultural and social events.

That this dedication continues unabated among contemporary Zarathushtis is evident with the construction of the *Atash-Kadeh* in Houston, the first of its kind, thanks to the generosity of Shernaz and Feroze Bhandara of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston. The *Atash-Kadeh* is a testament to the commitment of modern day Zarathushtis to sustain, secure and strengthen their culture, values and religious principles. The *Atash-Kadeh* is the epitome of Zarathushti pledge and the passion to maintain the faith for all generations of Zarathushtis, present and future - an everlasting tribute to a great religion.

Let the Zarathushti immigrants, their North American-born children as well as the Zarathushti brethren in their country of origin, rejoice in the fact that the flame sparked by that first Zarathushti immigrant is brightly burning in North America. May it be eternal.

Atash Kadeh

A Brief History of the *Atash-Kadeh*

Genesis

In 2014, the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) received a proposal from the President of the North American Mobed Council (NAMC) that the construction of an *Atash-Kadeh* was very much needed if the North American Zarathushtis were to ensure that generations to come could maintain religious ties with their fellow Zarathushtis in India, Pakistan and Iran. The proposal for a stand alone, *all-inclusive* facility was the requirement of the donor, who would bear all costs. Once the ZAH General Body approved the Motion for an *Atash-Kadeh*, the Executive Committee proceeded with the plans to build it. The *Atash-Kadeh* was to function not just as a prayer house, but also as a facility where those of priestly lineage could be ordained, and higher liturgical ceremonies could be preformed. What was a dream in 2014 was realized on August 18, 2017 when the groundbreaking ceremony took place. In true Zarathushti principle, it is a place where all who revere Zarathustra's teachings are welcome.

O Divine Ahura Mazda grant us the bliss which is your reward to the adherents of the religion. Enlighten us with thy tongue, O Ahura Mazda, so that I may convince all human beings to put their faith in the religion. (Gatha Ha 31.3)

Architecture

The *Atash-Kadeh*, designed by the architectural firm Rivetna Architects Inc., Chicago is based on the company's founder and principal Cyrus Rivetna's extensive travels and study of *Agiaries* and *Atash-Behrams* in India and Iran. Cyrus and his team designed this place of worship adhering to the needs of contemporary Zarathushtis as well as to the religious and liturgical heritage of the faith. The columns at the entrance to the *Atash-Kadeh* simulate Zarathushti temple structures in India, Pakistan and Iran. In accord with Zarathushti tradition, the *Entrance Hall* has a *kusti* room adjacent to it. The *Atash-Kadeh* has a *Jashan Hall* designed for navjotes, jashans, and group prayers. Inner liturgical ceremonies and rituals can be performed in the *Urvishgah* which is unique to North America. Once in the *Prayer Hall*, the devotee focuses on the resplendent *Atash* (fire) lit up in the *Afargan* (urn), fed with sandalwood, which is placed on a raised platform in the *Kebla* (inner sanctum) marked with *pavis* (furrows) designed, according to convention, to preserve the sanctity of ceremonial and consecrated things. Kudos to Cyrus Rivetna and his team for a well-conceived place for Zarathushtis to worship in North America.

Meheryar N. Rivetna is an active member of the library committee of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston as well as on the FIRES committee. Meheryar retired from Merck & Co., Inc. and now devotes his time to research and the study of the Zoroastrian religion. Meheryar resides with his wife Zubeen Mehta in Houston, TX.

Program Highlights for The Bhandara *Atash-Kadeh* Grand Opening March 20-24, 2019

Wed-Mar 20 th	Thur- Mar 21 st	Fri-Mar 22 nd	Sat-Mar 23 rd	Sun-Mar 24 th
Collection of sandalwood and ash from Humdins	Atash Niyayesh and Baj Ceremonies	Vendidad Ceremony in the <i>Atash-Kadeh</i>	Grand Jashan	
Humdins preparation of the site	Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor's Blessings	An Exhibit: "Down Memory Lane"	First "Boye" in <i>Atash-Kadeh Kebla</i> .	Avan Parabh Jashan at <i>Atash-Kadeh</i> led by Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor
Haftseen Table set up	ZAH Scholarship Awards	Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor's Talk: "Zarathushti Way of Life in Today's World."	Grand Gala begins Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor's Keynote Address	Farewell
	Noruz Dinner	Persian Dinner	Gala Dinner	

This was a handout given to each person who attended the Inauguration event.

Atash Kadeh

BUILDING A SPIRITUAL HOME FOR THE COMMUNITY: THE BHANDARA ATASH KADEH AN INTERVIEW WITH ARCHITECT CYRUS RIVETNA

NAWAZ MERCHANT

When Cyrus Rivetna was approached, about four years ago by the ZAH team to design an *Atash Kadeh* in Houston, he saw an opportunity to realign the community to one that balances the cultural and spiritual. The first wave of Zarathushti immigrants had built community centers as a foundation, a place to gather and conduct social activities, but many communities had outgrown their centers. In addition to social spaces, we now need separate spaces focused on the religious and spiritual needs of the community. Addressing the Houston group, he emphasized the need for an “*Atash Kadeh*” with a 24 hour, continuously burning fire, an “*urvish-gah*” to facilitate the full range of traditional religious practice, and provisions to perform the Navar ceremony to ordain mobeds. His proposal caught the attention of donor Feroze Bhandara, when he said, “Let’s do it now!” This year, in March 2019 this dream came to fruition.

Having a continuously burning fire required that a structure be focused around the practice of our religion. Many Zarathushtis are secular, in a way, their cultural identity centered on food, language and personal connection. Our Dar e

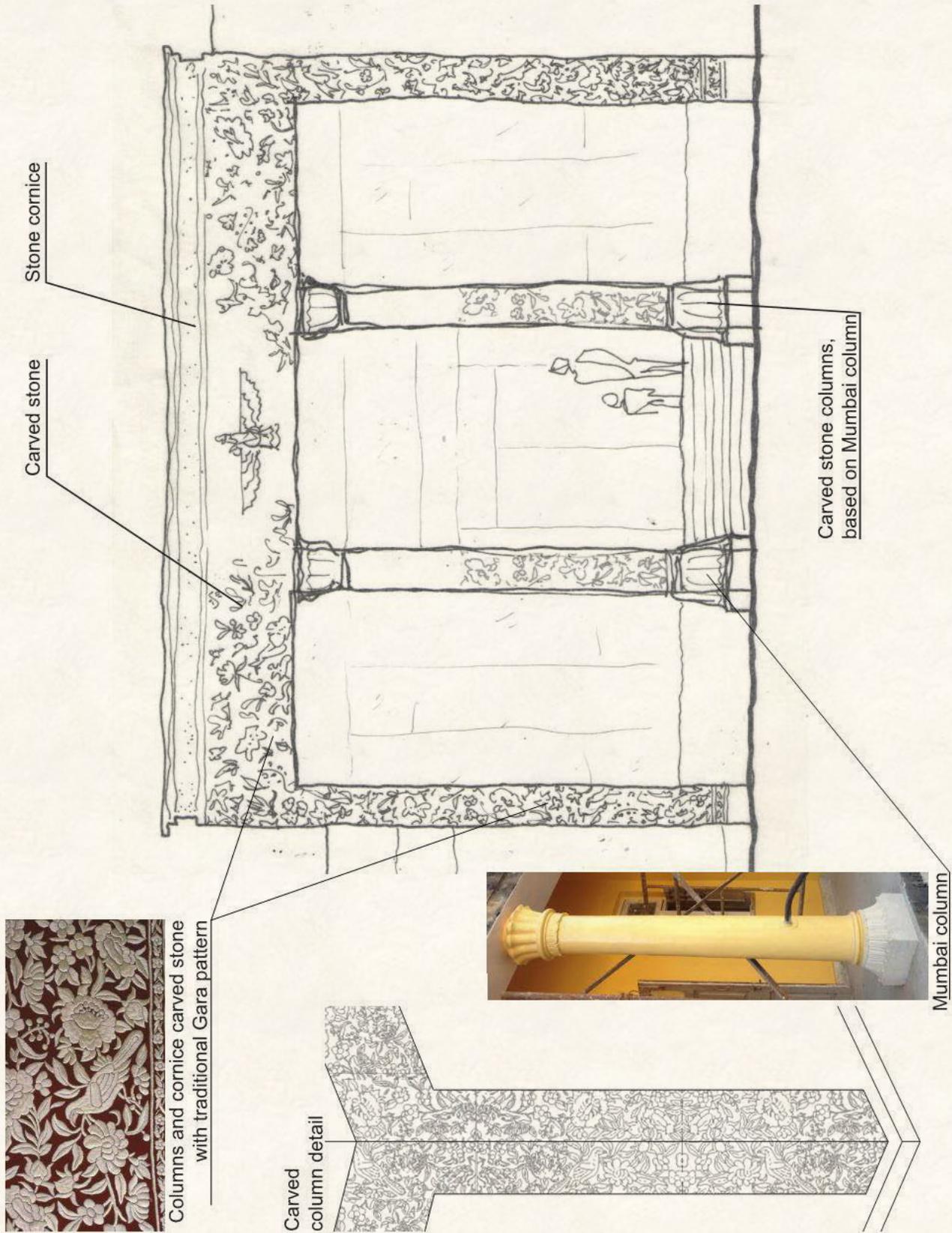
Mehrs also reflect this, with the community hall as the central focus. “*Designing a building around a sacred space was exciting*” Cyrus said, “*because it can promote and deepen our religious focus. I wanted to build something that caters to the devout who want to come and pray, as well as those who use it as a place for contemplation.*”

Photo left Cyrus Rivetna with Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastur, in front of the Atash Kadeh. During the planning phases, Cyrus consulted with Dasturji during his visits to Chicago; the plan and concepts were refined based on Dasturji’s comments.

To create the design, Cyrus researched Dar e Mehrs in North America with their brighter, lighter colors, Agiyaris in India whose soothing darkness give a mysterious feel, and those in Iran where the pillared, symmetry speaks of endurance prevailing through centuries. Combining these, his design creates a truly Zoroastrian environment appropriate for worshipping, the scent of *sukhad* (sandalwood), the quiet, symmetrical columns, light filtering in, spacious ceilings, all giving the feel of a spiritual space.



Atash Kadeh



An early sketch of the façade, which incorporated the gara motif carved into stone. The idea was eventually abandoned for the present design; however, the gara motif resurfaced in the laser cut aluminum screens that top the smaller columns on the verandah.

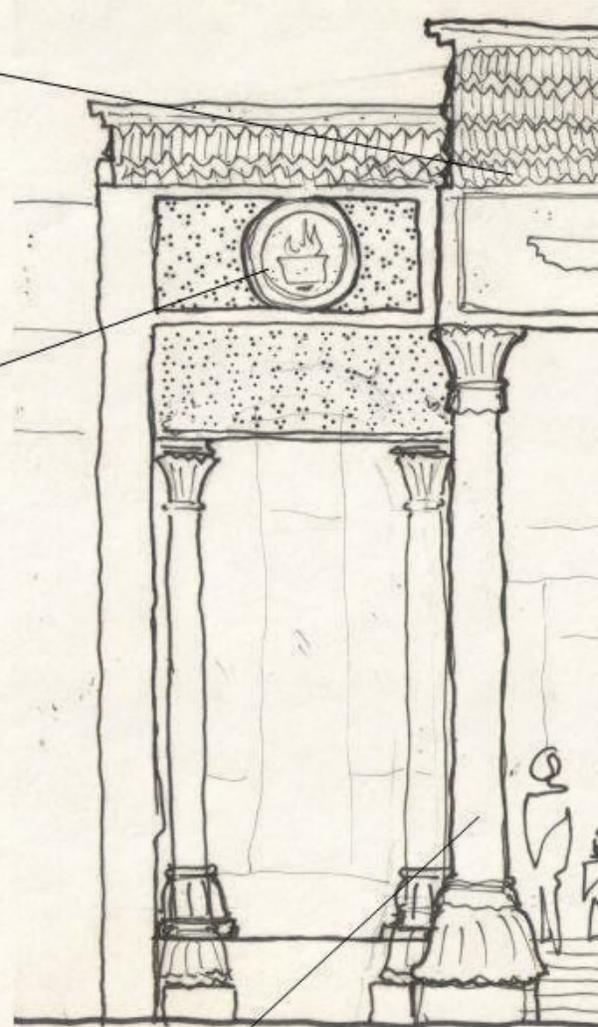
Atash Kadeh



Cornice from Yazd



Screen from Surat



Column alternatives:

3. Persepolis



2. Dadi Seth

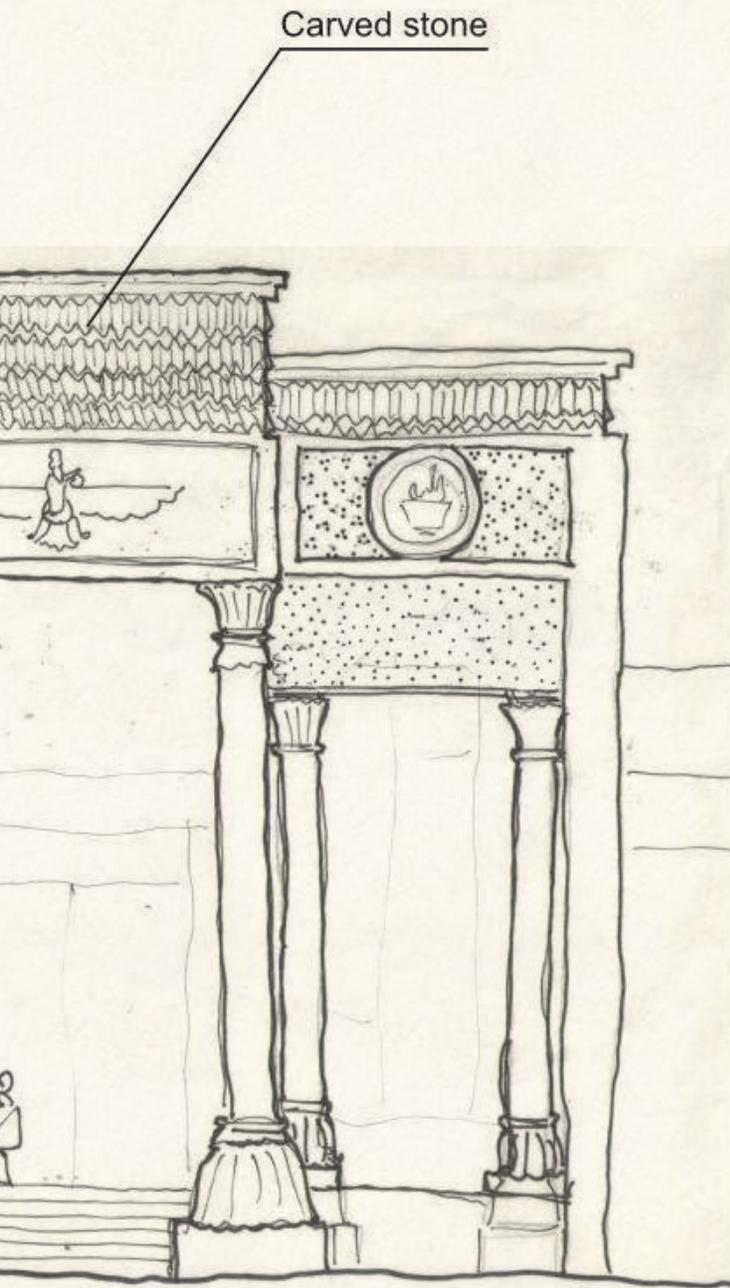


1. Mumbai



Columns from Mumbai

Atash Kadeh



A sketch of the façade which eventually developed into the present building. Inspiration came from the Shehenshahi Atash Behram in Surat. The column design is from a Zoroastrian building in Mumbai. The floral motif columns have 12 petals at the capital and base. Other column options were presented, but the floral motif was selected for its simplicity and elegance, creating a Zoroastrian building, which fits well with the North American environment.

Atash Kadeh



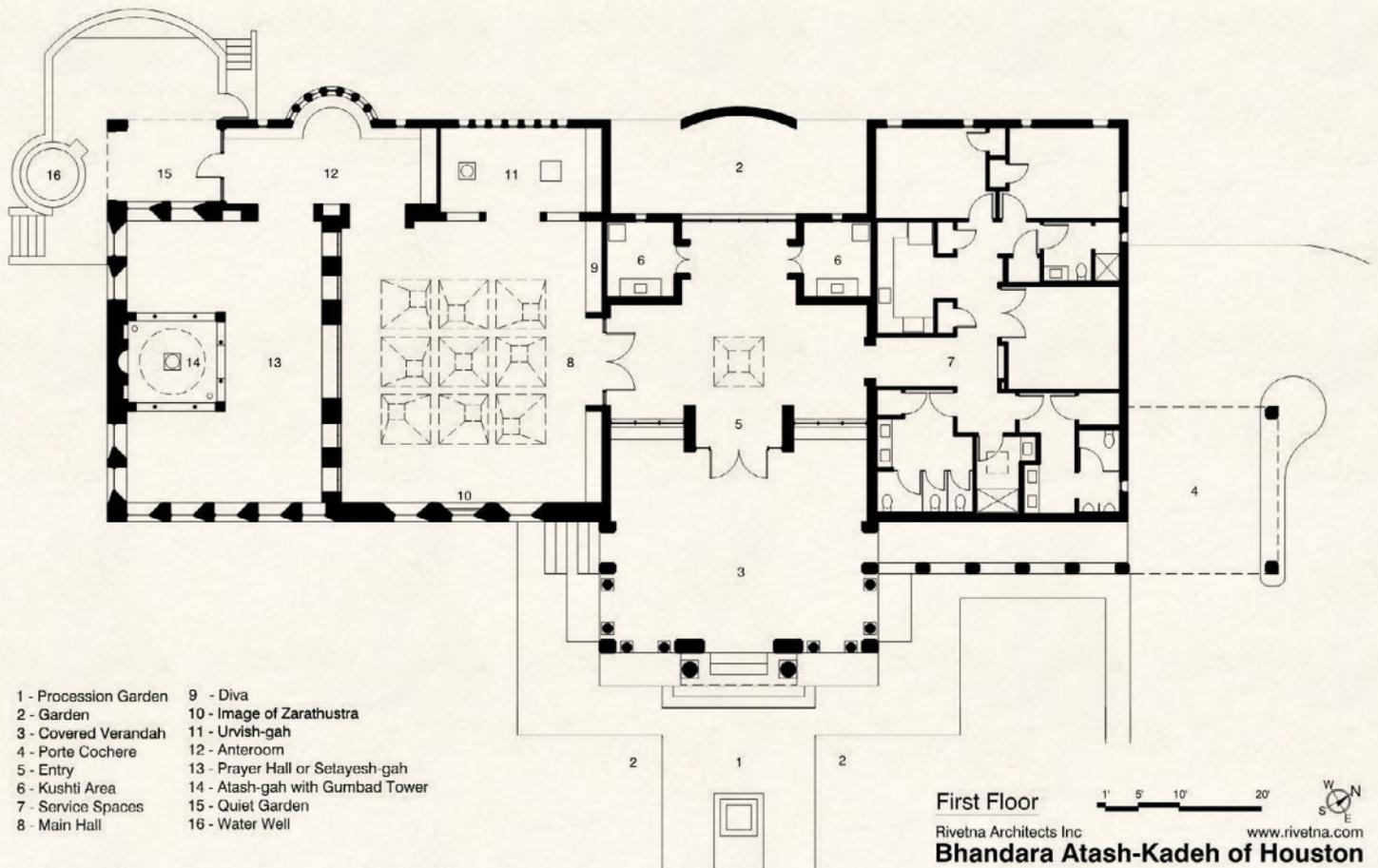
A Clay model of the column base and capital alongside a detailed specification drawing. The columns were designed by Rivetna Architects, the stone craftsman then carved full-size clay models, which were modified and refined. Cyrus visited the workshop in Houston to review and comment. Molds were made, from which the columns were cast. Each piece was hand formed and unique.

A detail of the cornice, screens and capital. The cast-stone cornice, fabricated at the workshop in Houston, is a modern interpretation of the cornice of from the fire temple in Yazd, designed to change as shadows throughout the day transform the geometric cornice. The laser-cut aluminum screens depicting a gara design, were a collaboration between Cyrus and fashion designer Ashdeen Lilaowala of New Delhi, and were fabricated in a workshop in Houston.

The building is built on a seven acre plot, across from the existing Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center, accommodating a garden, parking, with space for a future senior retirement home behind it. The approach faces a tall edifice, flanked by columns. One enters through a grand verandah reminiscent of that on the Anjuman Atash Behram in Mumbai, and into the entry hall, with rooms to wash hands and face and tie the *kushti*. The glass doors to the outside are flanked by wall reliefs depicting motifs from the staircase at Persepolis – ordered from Toronto. Services (kitchen, bathrooms, storage) are separated on the right from the spiritual spaces on the left. Large windows invite nature into the building, where symmetry and brightness bring comfort and uplift the spirit.



Atash Kadeh



The floor plan, derived after careful study of Zoroastrian architecture in India and Iran, creates spaces to facilitate the full range of traditional ritual practices and allow for a continuously burning Fire. The service spaces and spiritual spaces are kept separate by the entry hall. The plan is symmetrical, with the main axis running North – South, and the Fire positioned to the furthest point South to allow worshippers to face the sun while praying.

A multipurpose hall for muktads, jashans and small navjotes and weddings, seats 140, with plenty of light from large windows, one of which sports a full-size colored glass etching of Zarathushtra, made in Dallas, and skylights modeled after the ancient temples in Iran.

The “Urvish-gah” has been designed to facilitate the performance of Inner ceremonies. Provisions have also been made for performance of the Navar ceremony to ordain mobeds, in the future.

The Urvish-gah is designed to facilitate performance of inner liturgical ceremonies like the Yasna, Vendidad and Baj. The Urvish-gah has three Idhoras (stone pedestals) for the afarghan, the alat, and the third for the mobed to sit on. After taking off one’s shoes in the ante-room, one enters the Prayer Hall or Setayesh-gah (“place for prayer and worship”). Tall engraved windows admit light and are designed for privacy. Window seating eliminates the need for furniture. It is here that one prays, at the inner sanctum, the main Atash-gah which houses the Fire in a large shining afarghan. The space is ventilated through the Gumbad Tower in the Atash-gah – based on a centuries-old technique, that provides natural draft ventilation. The Prayer Hall leads onto an outdoor quiet garden, a peaceful space with a fountain that resembles the well found at all fire temples.

Fire, tended with prayers and sandalwood and myrrh, burns continuously in the sparkling afarghan in the inner sanctum or the main Atash-gah. This afarghan as well as the afarghan in the Urvish-gah were custom made and shipped from India.

What do our youth need? Cyrus fears that the next generation is growing up believing that our religion is about food and

Atash Kadeh



social activity. However, those born in North America can enjoy good conversation with their peers, and can buy great cuisine in every city. The next step, a human need that we seek to meet, is building a spiritual connection, a feeling that allows one to clear one's mind and feel a sense of connection with the Divine.

"I wanted to build a great piece of architecture, a beautiful building to do just that--a place which marries art, light, sequence and function into a structure that is itself a destination people want to visit," he said, speculating, in our discussion, that this may be the greatest contribution he could make to our community. It draws upon his professional experience with sacred spaces which includes building other houses of worship. Among these, he is currently rebuilding a large Catholic church from the 1920s which was devastated by fire, leaving only four exterior walls.

In building the magnificent Bhandara Atash Kadeh, the team faced numerous hurdles. The design needed to be traditional and contemporary, modern yet uplifting, grand yet accessible. Cyrus tried dozens of designs, evolving the floor plan with each round of community input. Then close to the finish line, there was a scramble to get all the items – the decorator stone, the columns, the handmade cornice, the wall reliefs, the etching of Zarathushtra, the laser-cut screens -- in place before the ceremonial inauguration. In the end, it all worked out, and seeing the final structure made it very worthwhile. Cyrus would like to thank Shernaz and Feroze Bhandara for their vision and dedication, Adarbad Tamboli for his guidance at every step, his parents Roshan and Rohinton Rivetna for their advice and suggestions, and most importantly the Houston community for entrusting him with this monumental project. He hopes that this structure will become a model for other Zarathushti associations as our community evolves, meeting both our social and spiritual needs.

We salute his vision and thank him for his efforts.

Cyrus Rivetna, AIA, is founder and principal of Rivetna Architects, Inc. (www.Rivetna.com) a Chicago-based architecture firm that has grown, since its inception in 2005, to a 10-person firm, with a studio in the trendy Bridgeport Art Center, and an impressive portfolio of residential, institutional, religious and commercial projects, across the USA. Cyrus has been recognized by the City of Chicago for Rivetna Architects' commitment to bringing distressed and abandoned properties back to life, and helping businesses expand and grow through pleasing architecture. Cyrus has a deep interest in the design of Fire Temples that fill the needs of contemporary Zoroastrians, and also facilitate and perpetuate the rich liturgical heritage and time-honored traditions and rituals of the faith.

Navaz Merchant is a long standing member of ZAGNY, and the marketing manager of the FEZANA Journal

Photo credits Cyrus Rivetna.

Atash Kadeh

GENESIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BHANDARA ATASH KADEH

SAROSH COLLECTOR

BANAM-E-KHODA



SPEECH AT THE GALA DINNER

Honorable Guest – Vada Dastur ji Saheb Khurshed Dastur, FEZANA officers (past and present), President of NAMC, officers from other North American Zoroastrian Organizations, ZAH Executive Committee, my favorites, The Youth Group of Houston and fellow Zarthushtis:

Good Evening The Executive Committee of ZAH gave me a microphone, which if you ask any of the youth will say it is a mistake- he talks too much! So folks, settle in and take a nap. Feroze in many past meetings has credited me for providing the inspiration for building the Atash Kadeh.

This evening I would like to set the record straight. The vision of an Atash Kadeh came from a white paper written by Roshan and Rohinton Rivetna and presented at one of the AGMs. It talked about anchors to make the community a cogent one, and to provide for a permanency to the new emigres' on a new soil. One of these anchors was an Atash Kadeh. Many FEZANA presidents advanced this thought. NAMC (North American Mobeds' Council) and CIMNA (Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America) published a white paper on the minimum requirements for Atash Kadeh. Here I must thank the NAMC and their many members for all their work to maintain our religious traditions, often at no payment.

So how is my name attached to this project? One day Feroze and I were just sitting around and I made a dumb ass statement saying it would be nice to have an Atash Kadeh in Houston. This evidently intrigued him and he asked for more information. At which time I introduced him to the then President of NAMC, Kobad Zarolia, of

Toronto, who came and talked about the NAMC white paper. Feroze politely listened and thought it over.

Soon after, Mrs Cooper, the Doyenne of Lahore, came to Houston for a visit. Feroze and Shernaz brought her over to show her the Center we have here. Luckily we had an Executive Committee meeting going on. She visited and spoke to us with many words of wisdom. Then she stated "you should have an Agiary here". She made that statement to the EC. but looking at Feroze. I believe between Mrs. Cooper and the quiet and strong persuasive powers of Shernaz, Feroze made the commitment to the Atash Kadeh. This was of discussed with the Executive Committee and then a presentation made to the General Membership to get their approval of the project.

Next was the formation of a management committee and the hiring of Cyrus Rivetna, the only architect who knows and understand the architecture of our traditional Atash Behrams and Adrans and has the ability to retain all those old qualities and requirements and merge them with a more modern design. Yesterday evening you met may individuals who have been involved with the project. However I would be remiss if I did not mention Rohinton Deputy, Khusrav Nariman and Adarbad Tamboli. Shernaz and Feroze you have provided a very important anchor to the North American Continent, and more especially to the Houston Zarathushti community, to establish our presence in North America

So Ladies and Gentlemen, even though Feroze and Shernaz have given me much credit and I gladly smile and accept it, since I am somewhat of an egotistical hog, it is the strong shoulders of many visionaries, that I stood on and made that remark to a good friend. Shernaz and Feroze did you ever deliver a gem of an Atash Kadeh.

May this anchoring event provide for the World Zarathushti Community to live in Happiness, Prosperity and Solidarity. May the North American Zarathushti community live in Happiness, Prosperity and Solidarity. May the Houston Zarathushti community flourish with Happiness, Prosperity and Solidarity, May the Bhandara Family be happy, prosperous and have long lasting good health to lead the community in many more anchors to establish permanent roots in the USA. Atha Jamyaat Yatha Aafrinaamee

Sarosh Collector is a Chartered accountant and long standing member of the Houston Community.

Atash Kadeh

BAAJ CEREMONY – March 21, 2019

Inaugurating an Atash Kadeh requires us to follow certain protocol. With the guidance of the Vada Dasturji Saheb Khurshed Dastoor, the first ceremony that needed to be performed was that of BAAJ which was performed at the Atash Kadeh at 4:00 p.m. on March 21, 2019.

BAAJ means prayers recited to honor yazatas or angels and the Fravashis or the guarding spirits of the living or the departed souls and is performed before undertaking an important task. It can be performed at the beginning of a joyous occasion, or in memory of the departed soul on the occasion of a death anniversary.

In the *baaj* ceremony certain items which serve as representations or symbols of the different elements of creation, such as animal creation and vegetable creation are submitted as offerings. These offerings are a tribute to the glory of the particular yazata or heavenly being of a departed soul. The most essential requisites of the *baaj* are (a) Darun (sacred bread), (b) some kind of fruit, (c) some kind of animal product.

Making Daruns was a challenge. Manek Nariman and Mahrukh Deputy had several practice runs before they perfected the art of making marked and unmarked daruns. Marked ones are considered to be in the name of the persons requesting this ceremony.

On the day of the *baaj*, preparation started early and under the guidance of the Vada Dasturji, two trays of offerings were prepared – Daruns, dates and a few seeds of pomegranate representing fruits, and ghee (rarified butter) representing animal product. The two mobeds who prayed the *baaj* were Ervad Maneck Sidhwa and Ervad Pervez Gonda. On the dot of 4:00 p.m. the Vada Dasturji Saheb started the fire in the Urvishgah and Ervad Maneck

Sidhwa started the first *baaj* dedicated to Dadar Ahura Mazda. Once finished, Ervad Pervez took over and he prayed the second *baaj* dedicated to Sarosh Yazad.

This completed the first part of the inauguration ceremony in the Atash Kadeh.



ARNAVAZ SETHNA



Arnavaz Sethna is a valued member of ZAH for over 40 years from the start of Sunday School to editing Manashani, the monthly newsletter.



Photo Credit Jimmy Kumana

Atash Kadeh

VENDIDAD CEREMONY

Vendidad is one of the most important and valuable Avesta prayers that has survived for thousands of years in its entirety. The approximately four and a half hours long Avesta prayer is recited after midnight in the last watch of the day (Ushahin gah) when the forces of evil are believed to be at their zenith. It is generally done to remove evil entities, bad vibes or negative energy from a place.

On the evening of March 21, 2019, a fire lit in the Prayer Room of the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center was carried in a procession to the new Atash Kadeh located across the parking lot. (page 34) At 2.00 a.m. 22 paragarad (chapters) of Vendidad prayers were recited by two mobeds from Houston, Ervads Maneck Sidhwa as Jyoti and Pervez Gonda as Rathvi, accompanied by four other Ervads: Poras Balsara and Yazdi Dastur (Dallas), Kurush Dastur, (Washington DC) Jimmy Madon (London). The ceremony was performed in the Urvisgah, a specially designed space for higher liturgical ceremonies, equipped with

traditionally required features like Pavi (a small channel in the floor around a designated space), Idhoras (four-legged platforms made of stone used as a base for Afarganyu (fire urn) or as a seat for the officiating mobed or as a table) etc. This was Vendidad Sadeh, as the Atash Kadeh did not have all the necessary *aalats* to enable a full Vendidad. The ceremony ended at 6.30 am.



RUSTOM ENGINEER

There were few die hards who came at 1.45 am and sat through the four and a half hour ceremony but by 6.00,am the room was full. For most of us who attended the Vendidad ceremony for the first time, it certainly was a truly memorable and spiritually uplifting four and a half hours of our lives.



It also gave us time to reflect on the role this Atash Kadeh will play in keeping the flame of Zarathustra's teachings burning in the hearts of Zarathushtis in North America for many generations to come.

The Vendidad ceremony was followed by a traditional Parsi Nasto (breakfast) of malido, ravo, pora pav, (parisi omlette) with makhan (butter) and jam. A fitting ending to a wonderful experience.

Photo credit Yezdi Engineer

Rustom Engineer served on the executive committee of ZAH or 8 years and is currently on the ZAH library committee. He was past global vice-president of WZCC and currently is the global director and regional director of USA. Rustom is an active Houston resident who works for the survival of Zoroastrianism in the modern world.

Atash Kadeh

“DOWN MEMORY LANE”

LIBRARY EVENT DURING THE ATASH KADEH INAUGURATION

JANGOO MISTRY

Four days of prayers and celebrations (March 21 - 24) provided a most memorable experience for several hundred well-wishers gathered in Houston for the opening of the Bhandara Atash Kadeh. The evening of Friday, March 22, organized by the ZAH Library, provided a uniquely different type of event for the attendees.

Before the start of the organized presentations in the Main Hall, attendees were given the opportunity to view the exhibit: “*A Walk Down Memory Lane*”.

Set up in the library was an impressive collection of all kinds of items that were used in Indian and Pakistani Zarathushti households. From kitchen utensils and dining sets to easy chairs and home-style snack items, from rare manuscripts to a

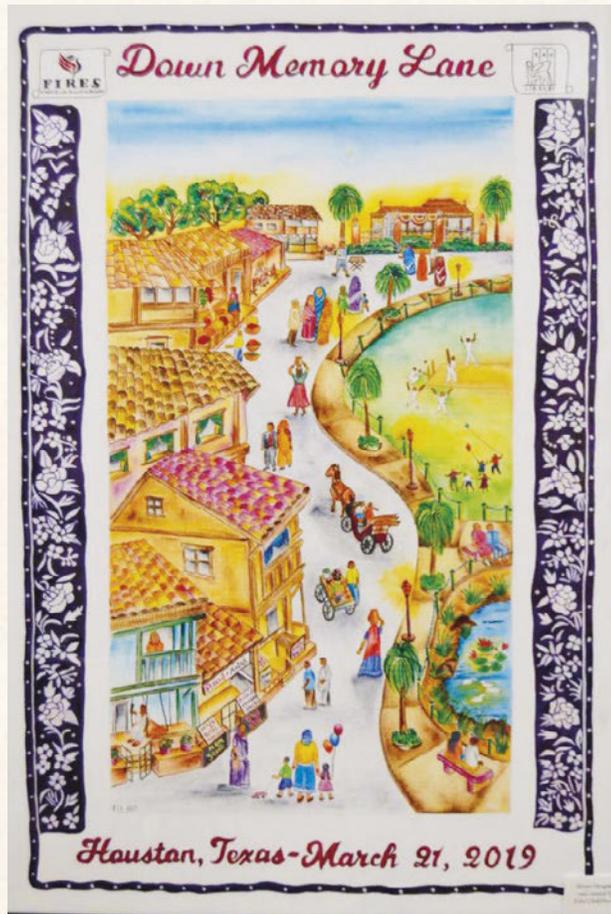
kusti-weaving loom were attractively displayed all around the room. Among other notable items, there was a rare hand-written copy of the Vendidad, two different easy chairs that one could picture a grandparent sitting and reading the newspaper, an actual kusti-weaving loom with live demonstration, a solar hat, pagdhis, fetas and topis of all kinds, several mouth-watering snack items found in a typical Parsi household at tea-time, an antique Victorian sofa set, a tavolo for cooking, a samovar for heating water, a velan, (rolling pin), a patlo, a manual meat grinder that spewed forth ground meat, a kerosene stove, a tamri and karasio, a bhona no dabbo (tiffin carrier) and a ghee ni banni (jar to store rarified butter) -- things that were a part of life growing up, but had not been seen for decades by us.

As the visitors strolled around the room examining the items, one could hear squeals of surprise and delight that brought back fond memories of the lifestyle and living paraphernalia of life back home. Kudos to the team that worked so hard, under the direction of Aban Rustomji: Persis Behramsha, Nauzer Billimoria, Zarine Boyce, Edul Chikhliwala (for the hand-drawn poster at the entrance), Lyla Daroga, Yezdi Engineer, Arzin Italia, Vehishta Kaikobad, and Yasmin Medhora. Aban’s tour of the exhibit is on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mtjfhVtpEY>

Following the wine-and-cheese reception, the evening program commenced. After the benediction by our young priests, Aban Rustomji, the main organizer of the evening program and

Chairperson of the Library Committee, welcomed dignitaries, out-of-town guests, and others. She touched upon the mission and work of the ZAH Library and FIRES, the North American research and education effort housed in Houston. Next, Bapsi Sidhwa, the internationally recognized author, shared her memories of growing up in Lahore with her much younger brother Feroze Bhandara, the sole benefactor of the Atash Kadeh. (pg 23).

Homi Gandhi, President of FEZANA, the umbrella body of all Zoroastrian Associations of North America, recognized the role of ZAH as an original member, and pioneer of many religious initiatives through the decades.



Atash Kadeh



A delightful musical presentation by children was followed by a talk by the Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor of Udvada, India. (The following summary of Dastoorji's speech is from the detailed writeup by Meheryar Rivetna, see page 24). Speaking about the **"Zarathushti Way of Life in Today's World"**, the Dastoorji touched on the survival of the

Zarathushti faith amidst the tribulations and controversies of modern times. Dasturji Sahib complimented the Houston Zarathushti community for its dedication and efforts to build the *Atash-Kadeh* on its association's grounds. It is actions like these, the Vada Dasturji said, that will sustain the community and this commitment exemplifies the *will* to keep the faith alive.



The Vada Dasturji summed up the Zarathushti faith in its basic principles: Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds. We must ask ourselves, the High Priest advised, at the end of every day, whether we indulged in good thoughts, did good to others, and spoke good words. Charity is an important part of the Zarathushti fabric. Parsis are known for their charity, Dasturji declared. The Bhandara family validates the Vada Dastur's sentiments in the timeless adage:

Atash Kadeh



"Parsi, thy name is charity." In the same spirit of charity, organ donation is a duty for Parsis. He pointed out that we would readily accept blood, a kidney, or eyes, if we needed these organs for our own survival. Why would it be difficult, particularly in death, to help another human being add years to his/her life?

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor, in conclusion, struck a chord when he told the gathering it was time for the community to rise, to unite, to think and be visionary like our Zarathushti forebears and leave a legacy for future generations.

On a personal note:

Seeing the main fire lit in the kebla of the Atash Kadeh gave me a revelation that took me by surprise. For the last 50 years, visiting the Agiaries and Atash Behrams of Mumbai for me was a necessary and important part of the whole trip. Back in America, there was always a "spiritual hole" that could not be filled properly, and one whose existence I had not even recognized. The Atash Kadeh fire suddenly made that hole visible and filled it for me. Now, my life in America is complete.

Photo Credit Yezdi Engineer

Jungoo Mistry worked at Ford Motor Company for 32 years. Now retired and living in Houston, he is active in community affairs, and serves on the ZAH Library Committee.

Our Established Spiritual Presence in North America

- 1977 - ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DARBE MEHR, NEW YORK
- 1978- THE MEHRABAN GUIV DARBE MEHR, TORONTO
- 1983 - ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DARBE MEHR, CHICAGO
- 1985 - ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DAR-E-MEHR, VANCOUVER
- 1986 - RUSTAM AND MORVARID GUIV DAR-E-MEHR, SAN JOSE
- 1987 - RUSTAM GUIV DAR-E- MEHR, LOS ANGELES
- 1993/2007 -ARBAB RUSTOM GUIV DAR-E-MEHR, VIENNA, VIRGINIA
- 1998 - ZOROASTRIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURAL CENTER, HOUSTON
- 2005 - ONTARIO ZOROASTRAIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, (OZCF) OAKVILLE
- 2011 - ZOROASTRIAN CENTER OF NORTH TEXAS, DALLAS/FORT WORTH
- 2014 – KAMRAN DAR- E- MEHR OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON
- 2015 - ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
- 2016 - ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DARBE MEHR, NEW YORK
- 2017 - ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION DAR-E-MEHR, SACRAMENTO
- 2019 - BHANDARA ATASH KADEH, HOUSTON

Atash Kadeh

BAPSI'S WORDS OF WISDOM

TRIBUTE TO HER BROTHER FEROZE

First of all, I join you all in congratulating my kid brother Feroze (he's a lot younger than me) on the completion of the first freestanding Atash Kadeh in the Americas.

Our maternal grandfather, Ardeshir Mama, was the main instigator and donor of the Mama Parsi School for Girls in Karachi. Our mother Tehmina moved the Bai Ava Bai Cooper Agyari from a very congested part of Lahore to Gulberg, a much better area. Thus it is fitting that her son should build the first freestanding Atash Kadeh not only in Houston but in all the Americas.

Our mother came from a wealthy family in Karachi, whereas our father studied under street lamps in Lahore - while his two stern faced sisters, Sillamai and Banoofui, with mathabanas covering their heads, served as barmaids in their small dry-goods and wine store in Lahore.

After their marriage, our mother had a difficult time adapting to the family who were as confused by this light-hearted, attractively dressed woman, suddenly in their midst.

Our father, Peshotan Bhandara, used to cycle to and fro 4 miles from Warris Road to D.P. Edulji on the Mall.

I was in Kinnaird College one day when our driver came to inform me that our mother had delivered a baby boy. In those days, the sex of a child remained mysterious until birth. I jumped joyfully into our tiny Morris and went to Mayo Hospital to see my perfectly formed beautiful infant brother. His face was smooth and his tiny features were defined.

Our mother conceived Feroze accidentally. We were in Bombay at my Gustad uncle's house in Colaba Causeway, when she complained that the smell from the sea was giving her nausea. Their daughter Jiloo, who was visiting from Africa, was a doctor. After hearing our mother's endless complaints, she decided to examine our mother thoroughly and surprised, announced, "You are not going through menopause Tim - you are four months pregnant." I think we are all thankful now, for that unexpected conception.

Our father carried Feroze proudly and I often heard him talk to him in Gujarati, "Baba tu Moto Thai ne sun thasay. "What will you be when you grow up? A lawyer? A doctor? Or a dukandar (shopkeeper) like me?" Some years later, he carried my daughter Mohur with the same affection.

When the partition riots started, our father - ever the astute businessman-- as is his son Feroze - acquired shares of the Murree Brewery Company from fleeing Hindus. The British management departed after hastily handing over the business to our father, and he became owner of the Murree

Brewery in Rawalpindi.

Our father died in 1961. I came to Lahore from Bombay with my four year old daughter (I was not permitted to take my son). I stayed on in Lahore.

My brother Minoo was called back from Oxford where he was studying English literature - he was a poet at heart - and was put in charge of the Brewery.

Feroze had a difficult boyhood. Our widowed mother, stressed out by her sudden responsibilities - I feel took out all her frustrations on Feroze. He was a mischievous boy and I remember cowering in my room as my mother thrashed him with whatever came to hand. She was at a breaking point when she was advised by a friend to send him to boarding school at the military academy in Abbottabad. I think by now he has forgiven his mother, but he must have had a very rough time there.

After finishing school in Lahore, Feroze went to a college in Idaho in America. He had scant money and sold bibles door to door during the vacations and survived somehow until he received his inheritance. After getting his bachelor's degree in business, he returned to Lahore.

Almost the first thing he told me in Gujarathi was, "Angregi ma waat karta karta mahara jabra dukhi gayach" which translates, "Talking in English all the time has made my jaws ache. I want to marry a Parsi girl. Can you think of anybody?"

I at once suggested Shernaz. She was my husband Noshir's niece and a constant visitor of our house. Her father was extremely conservative, as was her brother - and Feroze had to navigate the courtship with great tact (I doubt they even managed to kiss).

Shernaz and Feroze got married in Lahore at our home on Warris Road.

How Feroze became wealthy "beyond his wildest dreams" is the story to be narrated by Nazneen.

Thank you all .. May Ahura Mazda bless my kind and gentle brother - who is in every way a self-made man - and visits me often with flowers. May Ahura Mazda's blessings be with you always Feroze, and may he grant you a long life.

And may the Atash Kadeh's blessings be with us all. I am saying this because I sat at the Atash Kadeh a few days ago when it was absolutely empty and not yet finished, and I felt a sense of sublimity and absolute peace descend on me.

Photo Credit Yezdi Engineer



Atash Kadeh

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor's Talk "Zarathushti Way of Life in Today's World" in Houston, Texas

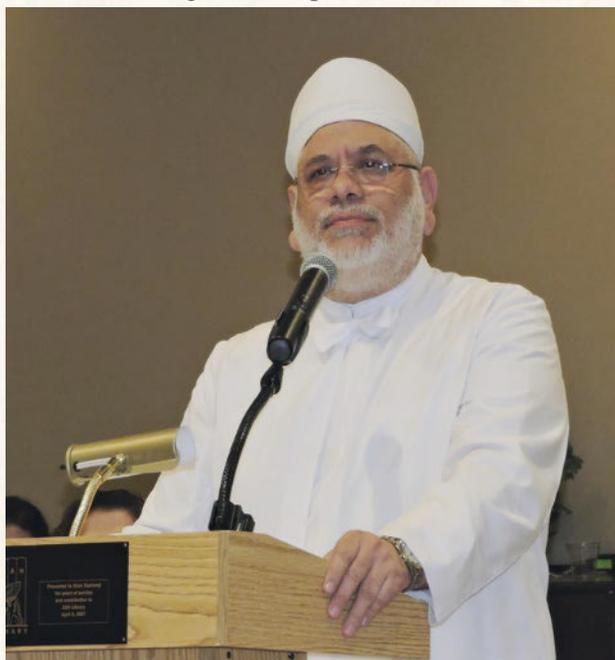
Meheryar N. Rivetna

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor, High Priest of Udvada, graced the inauguration festivities of the Atash-Kadeh in Houston, Texas from March 20-24, 2019. It was a distinct honor to have the High Priest in the presence of the Houston Zarathushti community as well as Zarathushtis from across North America and beyond.

On March 22, 2019, the keynote speaker Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor spoke to a large audience on "Zarathushti Way of Life in Today's World" at the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) center. It was a fascinating talk making the audience think of the survival of the Zarathushti faith amidst the tribulations and controversies of modern times.



The High Priest opened with a fundamental yet a very thought provoking and essential



question: "What is religion?" He asked the audience to "think as a community." He asked whether "we [Zarathushtis] want to survive and have the will to survive." It is a question that plagues the Zarathushti community at large as factions within this glorious faith deviate from the basic tenets of Zarathustra in asserting their distorted views, fracturing the community, thereby leaving the adherents of the faith to contemplate on the future of the religion.

Dasturji Sahib complimented the Houston Zarathushti community for its dedication and efforts to build the Atash-Kadeh on the grounds of the cultural centre. It is the first of its kind in North America and, in true Zarathushti principle, all respecting Zarathustra and his teachings are welcome. The Vada Dasturji also offered well deserved accolades to Shernaz and Feroze Bhandara of Houston, Texas who funded the costs of the Atash-Kadeh as well as drawing on the expertise, dedication and diligence of Zarathushtis and non-Zarathushtis to bring this house of worship to fruition. It is actions like these, the Vada Dasturji said, that will sustain the community and this commitment exemplifies the will to keep the faith alive that will go down in history.

The Vada Dasturji asked the faithful "What is the way of life for a Zarathushti?" He summed up the Zarathushti faith in its basic principles: Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds. However, the High Priest queried, where are these ideals when we trample on others in this highly competitive dog-eat-dog world? Zarathushti tenets are not words that are to be nonchalantly muttered, but actually put into practice. Evil is a choice, Dasturji said, adding, Angre Mainyu, the personification of iniquity (the counterforce of the good spirit Spenta Mainyu), resides in the mind from where it must be dispelled. We must ask ourselves, the High Priest advised, at the end of every day whether we indulged in good thoughts, did good to others and spoke good words. A true Zarathushti commits to righteousness, Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor asserted, not to look good or please somebody, but does it from the heart because it is the right thing to do.

Dasturji Sahib reminded his fellow Zarathushtis that encountering misfortune and suffering in life is not to be viewed as punishment, but as an opportunity for self-realization of ill deeds. Ahura Mazda has given everyone a Good Mind—Vohu Manah—which must be utilized to avoid adversities.

Atash Kadeh

Practically every Zarathushti Agiary and Atash-Behram has a lamassu—winged bull with a human head—on either side of the entrance. The Vada Dasturji brought to light the significance of the lamassu in Zarathushti lore. A Zarathushti must be courageous and strong as a bull in all his/her actions; the human head signifies that humankind must use the intelligence nature has bestowed upon it; the wings signifying one must elevate one's soul and soar to great heights striving for harmony, peace, love and all aspects of virtue which is the essence of the Zarathushti faith. *[This writer's note: The lamassu is not of Zarathushti origin. It is a protective deity of Assyrian origin; the icon being borrowed by rulers of the Achaemenid Dynasty making it a Zarathushti symbol of courage, intelligence and virtue.]*



While the construction of the Atash-Kadeh demonstrates the will of the community to ensure the survival of the Zarathushti religion for millennia to come, Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor stressed that the community and the religion would endure all the vicissitudes if the devotees would just follow the very simple, insightful elements of its central prayers. He reminded the audience of the quintessence of the Yatha-Ahu-Vairyō prayer in which the supplicant expresses a heartfelt yearning to serve and help those in need. Dasturji went on to explain the core of Ashem Vohu, another basic prayer in the faith: Happiness to him who makes others happy. Succinct and profound are the teachings of these short prayers. One can overcome all adversities and controversies by observing the essentials of these principles. Thus, the will for the religion to survive is sustained.

Charity is an important part of the Zarathushti fabric. Parsis are known for their charity, Dasturji declared. The Bhandara family validates the Vada Dastur's sentiments in the timeless adage: "Parsi, thy name is charity."

Dasturji Sahib touched on the controversy around organ donation that engulfs the community. It is not a matter of individual choice, he contended, but as Parsis it is our duty. He asked a very important question: "If we can receive, why can't we donate?" He pointed out that we would readily accept blood, a kidney, eyes if we needed these organs for our own survival. Why would it be difficult, particularly in death, to help another human being add years to his/her life? Why deny the happiness such a charitable action would bring to another individual? Can we live in the service of others as the Yatha-Ahu-Vairyō and the Ashem Vohu prayers entreat us? The Vada Dasturji's point is that charity, service, and benevolent acts take many forms. The underlying message, very appropriately, is: God is served when humankind is served.

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor, in conclusion, struck a chord when he told the gathering it was time for the community to rise, to unite, to think and be visionary like our Zarathushti forebears and leave a legacy for future generations.



Atash Kadeh

Dasturji ended with a reminder of the supplications of the Hosh-Bām, a prayer recited at dawn. The prayer implores the reciter to fight all aspects of evil; to bear allegiance to the attributes of Ahura Mazda—the Amesha Spentas, integrating the characteristics of these manifestations into our persona; to praise and emulate all good men and women; to be charitable with righteous deeds; have the wisdom to be virtuous at all times. Herein lies the answer to Dasturji Sahib's opening query, "what is religion?" It was refreshing to hear an answer that is intelligent and not antithetical to Zarathustra's teachings.

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor left an indelible mark on all those who heard his words of wisdom; giving the audience ample food for thought on our individual responsibilities in today's world to ensure the survival of the Zarathushti religion until Fresho-kereti.

Meheryar N. Rivetna is an active member of the library committee of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston as well as on the FIRES committee. Meheryar retired from Merck & Co., Inc. and now devotes his time to research and the study of the Zoroastrian religion. Meheryar resides with his wife Zubeen Mehta in Houston, TX.

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Atash Kadeh

INAUGURATION

JASMINE Y. MISTRY

The Bhandara Atash Kadeh Inauguration and Navroze Gala celebrations on Saturday, March 23, 2019, started with our National Anthem followed by *Doa Tandorasti* (Blessings) recited by Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor, Zoroastrian representative on the National Minorities Commission of India, and other mobeds. Our young and hilarious MCs, Mitra Khumbatta and Darius Tamboli welcomed everyone and invited Mr. Feroze Bhandara to take the podium. Mr. Bhandara wished everyone a Happy Navroze and introduced several key guests and dignitaries who attended the event. He thanked Vada Dasturji Saheb, our mobeds, ZAH Committees, and ZAH Members for their support and participation in the Atash Kadeh Inauguration events.

In his keynote speech, Mr. Bhandara provided some valuable information on the history of ZAH and his inspiration to build an Atash Kadeh that would meet the spiritual needs of our second and third generations. Mr. Bhandara stated that he and his wife Shernaz felt privileged to have built this fire temple, and it is their hope that Houston Zarathushtis from India, Pakistan, and Iran will come together as one to carry the Zoroastrian religion forward in their new homeland. He wants this Atash Kadeh to be a safe, inclusive and welcoming spiritual place of worship for all in our community. He hopes our Non-Zoroastrian family members can share our faith and spiritual beliefs at this one common place of worship and that this Atash Kadeh will carry our faith forward and provide a spiritual foundation for our children and grandchildren. On behalf of ZAH, past President Sheroy Haveliwala and Mr. Sarosh Collector felicitated Mr. Bhandara with an award.

Mr. Collector, in his talk clarified that the thought of an Atash Kadeh first came to his mind after he read a white paper written by Roshan and Rohinton Rivetna. He discussed this white paper with Mr. Bhandara, but the push to move forward with this idea truly



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came from Mrs. Cooper (Lahore) and Mrs. Shernaz Bhandara. The rest is history. Sarosh Collector commended the work done by Architect Cyrus Rivetna, and thanked Aderbad Tamboli, Rohinton Deputy, Khushrav Nariman, and others for their support and contribution. He concluded his speech with good wishes for the Bhandara family and Zoroastrian Community Members - *Atha Jamyat, Yatha Aafrinaamee* (as it is, so shall it be). A series of speakers – Fezana President, Mr. Homi Gandhi, NAMC President, Dr Ervad Arda-i-Viraf Minocherhomjee, and Consul General of India, Dr. Anupam Ray addressed the audience. Council Member Mike Laster (District J), Council Member Martha Castex-Tatum (District K), and Council Member at Large David Robinson, jointly on behalf of Houston’s Mayor Sylvester Turner, proclaimed Saturday, March 23, 2019 as the Bhandara Atash Kadeh Day.

The final two speakers who fondly shared their special bond and memories of *growing up* in Houston were Parnis Khaitibi (photo right pg 28) who despite her busy schedule flew down for the evening event and Bahrom Ferozgary (photo left pg 28) who read out a message of felicitation from his venerable grandfather Mobed Mehraban Ferozgary who was unable to personally attend the inauguration. Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor Saheb addressed the audience next. He

Atash Kadeh

explained the history and the meaning of the Holy Fire. He conveyed how touched he was during the first boi ceremony, and that it is now up to us as a community to take care of this fire and to see that it burns in perpetuity. He also added that our determination to do so would encourage other Zoroastrian Associations in North America to do the same.

Our final speaker of the evening, Congressman Al Green, on behalf of the 9th Congressional District of Texas, presented a Certificate of Special Progression Recognition to ZAH.

In addition to some very interesting speakers and an attentive audience, several



talented young Zoroastrians did an exceptional rendition of two songs that were written to the tune of “O Sol e Mio” by our very own Sunday school teacher Vehishta Kaikobad. (photo left below). These performances, and solos by Chloe and Tayte Choudhury awed the audience. If you know of a Parsi or a Zarathushti, you also know of their love for food, drinks, dance and music. Navroze celebrations continued with one of the best tasting Indo-Pakistani cuisine from Aga’s. Restaurant. Our ZAH Youth Group members, under the guidance of their mentor Jasmine Mistry, displayed Zoroastrian learnings of “**Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds**” by volunteering to serve dinner to seniors at their respective tables, and they received some very positive feedback for this good deed.



Zarathushtis are also known for their philanthropy and magnanimity. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, youth and adult volunteers with the help of Sweta Sethna collectively raised \$90,000 that night. Soon after dinner, DJ Gary (Farrokh Firozgary) and his outstanding band members took stage, and in no time, attendees rocked the dance floor singing and dancing to their favorite tunes.

The four-day long Atash Kadeh Inauguration and Navroze Event was

one of the smoothest in the history of ZAH thanks to all the hard work and effort of numerous volunteers and the strong leadership of ZAH’s Entertainment Committee Members Arzin Italia and Lyla Daroga. Now, as Vada Dasturji said, it is up to Houston Zarathushtis to keep this holy fire burning perpetually.



Photo Credit Yezdi Engineer

Jasmine Yazdi Mistry is an active and involved ZAH Contributing Member since 1995, and a dynamic, hands-on Middle and Youth Group Mentor since 2009.

Atash Kadeh



Kebla



Ground breaking for the Atash Kadeh, by Feroze and Shernaz Bhandara, Shehenshahi Navroz August 17, 2017



Assembling the Afarganyu



GROUP PHOTO AT THE INAUGURATION

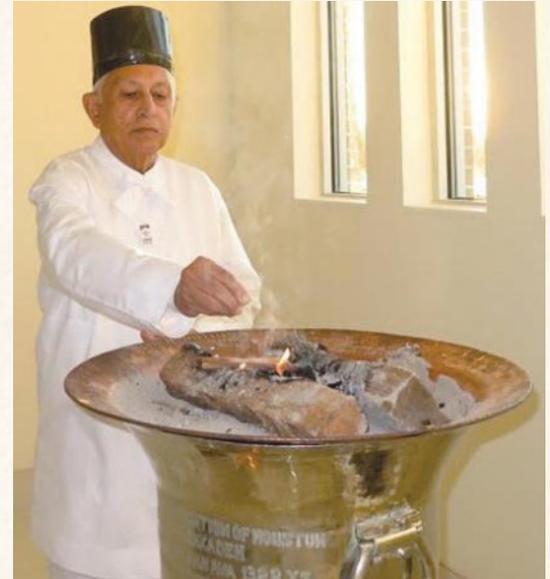
Atash Kadeh

YATHA AHU VAIRYO

Speech at the Inauguration by President of FEZANA, Homi D Gandhi.

Vada Dasturji, Dignitaries, Ladies and Gentlemen!
Millenniums ago, a man named Spitama was born. For several years, He was an itinerant teacher. He sang the Gathas. He never owned a house. He didn't go to college. He never visited a big city like, New York, London, or Houston. He never travelled beyond 500 miles from the place where He was born. He did none of the things which we are accustomed to associate with greatness. He had no credentials for Himself. When He returned after 30 years of seclusion, the tide of Court opinion had turned against Him. His friends were few, but amongst them was the King Gustasp. When He left the world, the property He left behind was the poetry of GATHAS and His teaching in only 3 words—Humata, Hukhata, Hvarshata, which no prophet who followed Him was ever able to improve on.

Millennia have come & gone and today He is in the hearts of a handful of human race. He is the guide of our progress and character. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the jets that ever flew, all the Sputniks around the earth, all the Parliaments that ever sat, all the dictators and all the kings that ever ruled, put together, have not affected our life on earth as much as THAT ONE ENLIGHTENED ZARATHUSHTRA to whose Glory we have dedicated this HOLY FIRE on the soil of this new world today.



In those GATHAS, some of the Cardinal prayers of our Zoroastrian faith are recited. One of those Cardinal prayers, in my humble opinion, is Ahunavar. We heard yesterday extensively from our Vada Dasturji of Iranshah what Ahunavar prayer means in living the actual life.

FEZANA decided to give a plaque to honor the historical inauguration of this Atash Kadeh at this historic momentous moment, to be displayed at the very entrance of this sacred place, reminding us every time we enter the Atash Kadeh premises. The plaque arrived only a few days ago and requires certain process to be installed because of its heaviness. So Today, on behalf of our grateful community and FEZANA, I am honoring Shernaz & Feroze Bhandara by handing over a photo of it. It reads:

*Yathaa Ahu Vairyo Athaa ratush ashaat chit hacchaa
Vangheush dazdaa manangho, Shyaathananaam, Angheush
Mazdaai Khshathremchaa Ahuraai aa, Yim dregubyo dadat
vaastaarem*

Just as an Elected Leader acts according to his will, So also the Religious Leader due to his righteousness and other virtues associated with it. The gift of Vohu-Manah is for those working for Ahura Mazda in this world; He who acts as the protector and nourisher of the Poor, accepts the Sovereign rule of Ahura Mazda for the entire world.

(Translation: Prof. Ervad Maneck Furdoonji Kanga-M.A.)



Atash Kadeh

PRESENTATION BY ERVAD DR ARDA-I-VIRAF MINOCHERHOMJEE,
PRESIDENT NORTH AMERICAN MOBED COUNCIL

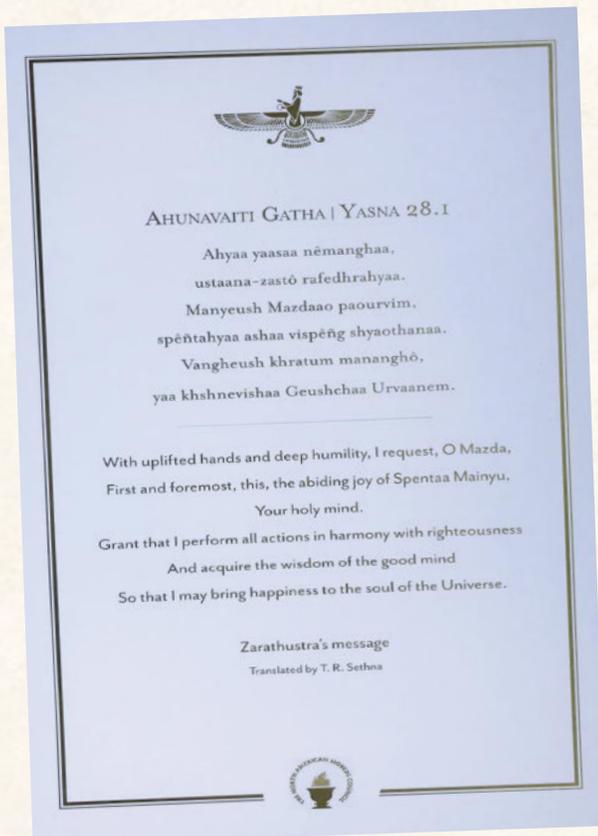
TO FEROZE AND SHERNAZ BHANDARA



NAMC president Dr Ervad Arda-i-Viraf Minocherhomji congratulated Feroze and Shernaz Bhandara and presented them with a plaque with a quote for Yasna 28.1 to display in the Atash Kadeh together with the plaque from FEZANA on Yatha Ahu Variyo (Photo left)

He thanked Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor and the young Mobeds for their participation in the ceremonies. He also talked about the fact that our religious literature provides answers to many issues faced in our daily lives, and that NAMC could teach our young Mobeds the meaning of our ceremonies during the educational seminars .

*Ahyaa yaasaa nêmanghaa ustaanazastô rafedhrahayaa.
Manyeush Mazdaao paourvim spêntahyaa ashaa vispêng shyaothnaa.
Vangheush khratum mananghō yaa khshnevishaa geushchaa urvaanem
YASNA 28.1*



**With uplifted hands and deep humility, I request, O Mazda,
First and foremost this, the abiding joy of Spenta Mainyu,
your holy mind.
Grant that I perform all actions in harmony with
righteousness
And acquire the wisdom of the good mind
So that I may bring happiness to the soul of the universe**

(The Teachings of Zarathustra by T.R. Sethna, Second Edition, Published by TR Sethna, Karachi, 1978.)

Atash Kadeh

MOBEDS PARTICIPATING IN THE RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES DURING THE INAUGURATION

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor (middle) with some of the mobeds who participated in the inauguration ceremony



Mobeds participating in the religious ceremonies during the inauguration

Houston Mobeds: Ervads Maneck Sidhwa, Shapur Pavri, Bomanshah Sanjana, Pervez Gonda, Khushrav Nariman, Kayomarz Sidhwa, Khushroo Vimadalal, Zubin Kotwal, Noozar Boomla, Bahrom Firozgary, Viraf Nariman, Noshir Khumbatta, Rayomand Katrak, Vispi Katrak, Yazad Sidhwa, Freyaan Vimadalal

Out of Town Mobeds : Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor Ervads Arda-e-viraf Minocherhomjee,(California) Pervez Patel,(New York); Fabian katrak (New York) Poras T. Balsara, (Dallas) Yazdi Dastur, (Dallas) Kurush Dastur, (Washington DC) Jimmy Madan,(London), Zerkxis Bhandara (California)

THREE FATHER AND SON PAIRS



Khushroo & Freyaan Vimadalal



Kayomarz & Yazd Sidhwa



Khushrav and Viraf Nariman with mother Manek

Mobeds participating in the Vendidad

Lead Mobed Ervad Maneck Sidhwa

Participating Ervads Pervez Gonda, Poras T Balsara, Yazdi Dastur, Kurush Dastur and Jimmy Madan.

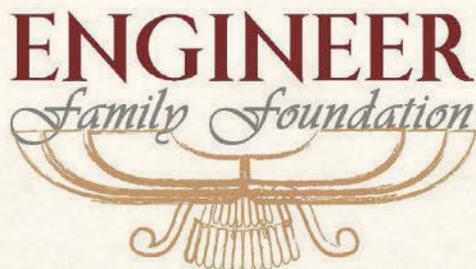
Boi at the prayer Room Ervad Maneck Sidhwa ; **First Boi at Atash Kadeh** Ervad Bomanshah Sanjana.

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GOOD THOUGHTS | GOOD WORDS | GOOD DEEDS

Atash Kadeh

CONTINUITY OF THE FLAME

The five-day events inaugurating the Bhandara Atash Kadeh in Houston started with carrying the fire from the existing prayer room to the Atash Kadeh. In the spirit of continuity, the fire from the prayer room, built in 1998 with a donation from Drs. Katy and Dinshaw Irani, was symbolically carried to the new Atash Kadeh.

It was also the passing of the torch from one generation to the next --- a gift from the generation of our homelands, India, Iran and Pakistan, to Zarathushtis born in North America.

On March 21st, Ervad Maneck Sidhwa performed a Boi ceremony in the prayer room with several mobeds attending. The fire from the prayer room was carried to the Atash Kadeh by pairs of mobeds spanning three generations, from the senior-most mobeds to the youngest. The youngest mobeds carried the fire into the Atash Kadeh where the fire from the prayer room was transferred to the afarganyu in the urvishgah (room used for higher liturgical ceremonies).

On March 23rd after a grand Jashan led by Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor and 19 other mobeds, Ervad Khushrav Nariman carried the fire from the Jashan into the Kebla. The first Boi in the kebla was performed by Ervad Bomanshah Sanjana.

The fire is now tended around the clock by Ervads Pervez Gonda, Bomanshah Sanjana and Maneck Sidhwa

Below we give you a pictorial journey of the fire.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Atash Kadeh



10



11



12



13



14



15



The grand jashan with Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor presiding

LEGEND:

1. Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Centre; 2. Boi in the prayer room; 3. Afarganyu with fire leaving the prayer room; 4 to 11. The Afarganyu being carried by a relay of three generation of mobeds; 12. Vada Dasturji receiving Afarganyu being carried by the three youngest mobeds; 13. Dasturji lighting the fire in the urvishgah before the baaj; 14. Feroze and Shernaz Bhandara paying homage; 15. Drs. Katie and Adel Irani paying homage.



WZCC

World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce

Building the Spirit of Entrepreneurship

The 2018 Annual General Meeting of WZCC, held May 1-5, 2019, was a great success at all levels. It was historic in being the first joining activities with FEZANA AGM. It meticulously summarized the events of the last year.

The meetings engaged the present new, youth-inspired leadership. WZCC gave awards to phenomenal business leaders and provided a venue for world leaders to speak about success. Lastly, the meetings turned to WZCC's future. WZCC is designing a program to offer funding for business of its North American members, taking after an ongoing program already assisting the funding of small Indian businesses.

Meetings were held in Orlando, Florida from May first through fifth at Dinyar Mehta's Wingate Hotel complex. Social events for the first morning included a Dance/Movement interactive session led by Dilshad Patel and a discussion of the Kinder Trust's role in social entrepreneurship by Diana Bharucha. A Pre-AGM meeting was held with current Board of Directors and outgoing Directors. Several items were approved by the Board at the Pre-AGM; minutes of the international BoD March 2, 2019 meeting, minutes of the WZCC Global AGM of December 15, 2017, the 2019 Treasurer's Report, the 2019 Annual Report, the schedule for the AGM, notification of Director changes, and appointment of Neville Shroff as a Special Advisor due to Far East regional expertise.



Global President WZCC, Edul Daver

The Pre-AGM also covered updates on WZCCI-WZOTF alliance, ZFN's, Zoroastrian Faculty Network's status, a socio-economic clean water project in Gujarat, announcement of awards and honorary member, the Mumbai office as self-sustaining, and the 2020 AGM to be held in Lonavla, India.

Emulating the recent funding initiative for Indian WZCC members with a similar program for American WZCC members was favored.

Events started for all attendees after lunch. Prior to his inspired benediction, Ervad Soli P. Dastur engaged five-year old Asha R. Gandhi from Montville, New Jersey representing the Greater New York community in reciting "Ashem Vohu" to the audience. He delivered fine blessings and alerted the group to special calendar days of the proceedings.

Central Florida Zoroastrian Community's President, Afsaan Kermani, gracefully welcomed WZCC.

The AGM was led by WZCC President Edul Daver. Minutes of the last AGM in Bangalore on December 15, 2017 were approved. Zarine Commissariat summarized Secretary Adi



WZCC Central Florida Chapter Chair, Afsaan Kermani



WZCC Director for Hong Kong, Neville Shroff



Dr. Rashna Writer

Siganporia's report, Edul highlighted Meher Bhesania's report on SynergyZ. Attendees were updated on the WZCCI-WZOTF initiatives. Yazdi Tantra spoke on ZFN. Xerxes Dastur reported on the Youth Wing. Formation of a FEZANA-WZCC Entrepreneurship Foundation was discussed. We heard the Vice-President and Treasurer reports, summary of reports from each Chapter, mention of Awardees and Honorary Members, elected new Board members, and recognized outgoing Board members.

A major Panel, "Zoroastrianism and Entrepreneurship" proceeded. The moderator was Ervad Xerxes Dastur and panelists included Anne Khademian, President of ZAMWI, Dr. Daryush Mehta, Ervad Arda-E-Viraf Minocherhomjee, and Dr. Zubin Sethna of Regent University, London. (see pg 39) The outstanding tradition of entrepreneurship and its deep spiritual base was highlighted during the discussion. Dr. Rashna Writer delivered the evening talk, "*Predicting the Zarathushti Entrepreneurship Future by Creating it*" (photo left)

The second day began with a presentation from the dynamic figure, Danny Khursigara of Hong Kong, who spoke on the "Road to Success" and his phenomenal consulting record with major global corporations and distinctive figures. Dr. Zubin Sethna from London spoke on "The Psychology Behind Entrepreneurial Marketing - Company and Consumer Perspectives" based on his decades of academic research. The CEO of Spark Academy, Chuchi Arevalo, spoke on "E is for Entrepreneurship - Capitalism for age 5 and Up". WZCC New York enjoyed a successful program for child entrepreneurs from Spark Academy last year and the initiative can continue in more Chapters.

After lunch, a Youth Panel moderated by Dr Pastakia proceeded.(pg 40) Panelists included Khush Italia, Dr. Jeannie Kenkare, Dustyn Shroff, and



Dr. Jennifer Silva. Each gave deep insights into their brave and diverse entrepreneurial initiatives. Dr. Mahzarin Rustum Banaji of Harvard University (photo above) delivered an animated passionate talk on "*An Emerging Science of Good and Bad - a participatory session to reveal mental blind spots that impact our decision making*". Audience members were surprised as she showed subtle biases in our judgments. The evening talk was offered by Afreed Mistry of Toronto from Bank of Montreal, "How Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain Technology, and Smart Contracts Are Changing The World". These new technologies will soon impact society with great force.





WZCC

May third events turned to the FEZANA AGM, led by President Homi Gandhi.

Entertainment for the evenings included Bollywood dance performances by members of CFZC, a ballroom dance performance, a clarinet performance by Daryosh Mehta and singing by Mani Rao.

May fourth included additional WZCC events. The new Board of Directors met in a Post-AGM meeting. In the afternoon WZCC's funding initiative was explained with the input of Rohinton Rivetna and favorably received. In the evening, a joint WZCC & FEZANA Gala Dinner and WZCC Annual Awards Ceremony was held. The Central Florida Chapter also welcomed attendees. An outstanding Keynote Fireside Chat led by New York's Dinyar Devitre was held with Ajay Banga. He is the accomplished CEO of Mastercard, the world's seventeenth largest company with a current market capitalisation of 230 Billion dollars. (Photo pg 37 bottom, from left Ajay Banga, Nilufer Daver, and Dinyar Devitre).

Ritu Banga, the impressive wife of Ajay Banga and Edul Daver felicitated WZCC's 2018 awardees; Outstanding Zarathushti Young Entrepreneur, Perzen Darukhanawalla Patel, Founder of Bawi Brides; Outstanding Zarathushti Entrepreneur, Dr. Jennifer Silva, CEO, SentiAR, Inc.; Outstanding Zarathushti Professional, Spenta Kandawalla, Director & Co-Owner of Captain-PQ Chemical Industries, Pakistan; and also from Quetta, Pakistan, Outstanding Zarathushti Social Entrepreneur, Roshan Khursheed Bharucha, Founder & Managing Director of SOS Children's Village & HUNAR Foundation. Entertainment for the evening included a Polynesian dance group followed with a Polynesian dinner and music with dancing.

The Central Florida Zoroastrian Community, CFZC, and WZCC'S Central Florida Chapter served as welcoming and excellent hosts for the meetings. Their work was tireless. Their guests and members were treated throughout the occasion to fabulous Parsi cuisine that was personally prepared by local members. The beautiful floral decoration on the stage for the Saturday evening was done by Benafsha Bamasi and Dinaz Irani.

Sponsors for the WZCC 2019 AGM included; Platinum Sponsor, The Incorporated Trustees of The Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao (including Homiar Poonawala, Neville Shroff, Dilnavaz Daver, Yazdi Parekh and Rustom Jokhi), Silver Sponsors, WZCC Global Headquarters, WZCC New York Chapter, Jo Ann and Soli P. Dastur, Niloufer and Edul Daver, Hootoxi and Arda-E-Viraf Minocherhomjee. Well wishers included; WZCC Chicago Chapter, WZCC Houston Chapter, Shernaz and Feroze Bhandara, Gulshan and Mina Dubash, Shernaz Engineer, Koomi and Homi Italia, Percy Master, Ratan Mistry, Roshan and Rohinton Rivetna, Sanobar and Aderbad Tamboli, Bachi and Dinshaw Tamboli, and Cyrus Patel.

WZCC acknowledges the efforts of Nina Mistry in compiling the Program Brochure and Kaika Clubwala in facilitating printing. Not least to be thanked is WZCC's President, Edul Daver, who worked for months on every detail of the historic event. And Afsaan Kermani and his team for the great hospitality and the gift of the beautiful souvenir mug .

Entrepreneurship, the spirit of pursuing opportunity beyond resources currently controlled, is at the heart of WZCC noble and growing activities.

"As summarized by Natalie R. Gandhi, PhD, Director Emeritus, WZCC."





WZCC

ZOROASTRIANISM & ENTREPRENEURSHIP PANEL



(L-R) Dr Anne Khademian; Dr Daryush Mehta; Ervad Dr Arda -i-Viraf Minocherhomjee; Dr Zubin Sethna; and, moderator, Ervad Xerxes Dastur

Ervad Xerxes Dastur was the moderator for the “Zoroastrianism & Entrepreneurship” panel with speakers: Dr Anne Khademian, Dr. Daryush Mehta, Ervad Dr Arda-e-Viraf Minocherhomjee and Dr. Zubin Sethna. The panel talked about how Zoroastrianism and its teachings play a major role in their daily professional life. How you can accumulate wealth with honesty. Think about charitable causes and how you can help people you are working with. Happiness comes to those who make others happy. People should leave the earth better than how they found it. Have businesses see the value in tackling hunger and climate change issues. Create a shared value for the businesses.

Dr Anne Khademian holds a doctorate in political science and a master’s degree in public administration from Washington University in St Louis . She is a fellow and former chair of the Board of Directors of the National Academy of Public Administration, an independent ,non-profit and non-partisan organization established by Congress to assist government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable and transparent organizations. She is a Presidential Fellow and Professor with Virginia Tech. Author of numerous journal articles and three books “Working with Culture”; “Checking on Banks “. "The SEC and Capital Market Regulation". She is the President to Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan

Washington, Inc, co-ordinator of Avesta classes and the community’s interfaith concert performances for several years.

Dr Daryush Mehta, Director of the Voice Science and Technology Laboratory at the Centre for Laryngeal Surgery and Voice Rehabilitation at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH).He is also the Assistant Professor in Surgery at Harvard Medical School. He holds a Ph.D in SHBT from Harvard and a masters in Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences from MIT. His expertise is in signal processing and acoustic voice analysis bringing engineering tools to clinical voice research. He is an accomplished Clarinet player.

Ervad Dr Arda-i-Viraf Minocherhomjee is a founding and managing partner of Chicago Growth Partners (CGP), a private equity firm that managed over \$1.2 billion in assets. He received a MSc in Pharmacology from University of Toronto and a Ph.D and MBA from University of British Columbia, a post doctoral fellow in pharmacology at University of Washington Medical School. He is an ordained Navar and Martab and is currently serving as the President of the North American Mobeds Council (NAMC) and provides volunteer priestly services to Zoroastrians in the US and Western Canada .

Dr Zubin Sethna is a Professor of Entrepreneurial Marketing and Consumer Behavior at Regent’s University, London and Head of

the Programs. He holds a Ph.D from University of Stirling, He has successfully launched five businesses (one of which won a UK National Award). His passion for entrepreneurship and marketing is very evident in his best selling book “Entrepreneurial Marketing: Global Perspectives (Emerald publishing 2013) in collaboration with Roz Jones and Paul Harrigan .The book is now in its 4th edition. He has conducted research in UK, Europe, India and China, is the Board Member of the Global Research Symposium for Marketing and Entrepreneurship. Dr Sethna is the Editor-in-chief of the Journal of Research in Marketing and Entrepreneurship .

Moderator Ervad Xerxes Dastur is an ordained priest and a Chartered Accountant from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India and became the partner of V.S. Dastur and Co , a member firm of the Plante Moran Alliance and D. J. Jasavala and Co. CA. He handles several challenging assignments like compiling family settlements, arbitration assignments, tax matters, advising and setting up foreign enterprises, mergers, valuations risk assessments , due diligence, portfolio management, etc. Xerxes is active in the community in India, is currently the trustee of the Bombay Parsee Panchayat, He has been on the managing committee of the WZCC, Mumbai.



WZCC

YOUNG ADULT ENTREPRENEURSHIP PANEL



From left Dr Jennifer Silva; Dustyn Shroff; Dr Jeanie Kenkare, Khush Italia and moderator Dr Behram Pastakia

Dr Behram Pastakia was the moderator for the “Young Adult Entrepreneurship” panel with speakers: Khush Italia, Dr. Jeanie Kenkare, Dustyn Shroff and Dr. Jennifer Silva.

PANELISTS

Dr Jeannie Kenkare a physician who started her first urgent care center in Connecticut in 2008. Since then, she has 18 centers in Connecticut, New York and in the Boston area. She grew up in New Jersey and has been a member of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) since she was 6 years old. Married and her husband Jay also a physician – practices Sleep Medicine. They have 3 children – the oldest Zubin is graduating high school this year, middle son Cyrus is a freshman in high school and daughter Layla is finishing 6th grade.

Dr Jennifer Avari Silva is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Biomedical Engineering at Washington University in St Louis, and the Faculty Fellow for Entrepreneurship for the School of Medicine. She is a practicing Pediatric Electrophysiologist at St Louis Children’s Hospital. In 2017, she co-founded SentiAR, Inc with husband Jonathan Silva, an Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering at Washington University in St Louis after filing the initial patent on March 21, 2016. SentiAR is developing the first mixed reality platform to display intraprocedural 3-dimensional holographic visualization of a patient’s cardiac anatomy with real time catheter locations with anticipated submission to the Food and Drug Administration in 2019. Their company has grown since then to having 8 full time employees, and has raised >\$4M in funding both through venture capital and nondilutive grant funding from the National Institute for Health. They have 2 children—Asha Maria (age 8) and Marcus Jal (age 5). Asha is an aspiring inventor, engineer and veterinarian and Marcus wants to be a paleontologist or doctor when he grows up. Parents, Dinci and Nausheer Avari live in NJ and raised Jennifer and brother, Jimmy Avari, in a very close-knit Parsi community in NY/NJ/CT where ZAGNY played a significant role in their childhoods.



Dustyn Shroff. With experience in organizations ranging from start-ups to Fortune 500s, Dustyn is currently the Owner and Agent in Charge of 2 Independent Insurance Agencies in South Florida. Dustyn's 1st Agency was recognized as the fastest growing franchise by Great Florida Insurance in the Summer of 2017.

Khush Italia born in India, lived in Abu Dhabi moved to Los Angeles, excelled in Tennis and reached the Top 600 on the WTA Tour until she was forced to retire due to career ending injury. She has a degree in Finance and International Business. After working for 12 years in Finance and Operations Management field from small businesses to large corporation, set the foundation for the entrepreneurial journey. At the end of 2016, Kush and her brother Kurush founded LCI partners LLC dba Lighting Capital House Buyers in Tampa, Florida. Initially they worked remotely from Los Angeles but moved to Tampa in 2018 since then their business has grown three fold

Moderator Dr Behram Pastakia is a Radiologist in the Washington DC area. He is chair of the Zarathushti Youth without Borders Program, is involved with RAD-AID International (www.rad-aid.org) promoting outreach for humanitarian activities worldwide, past president of Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc and currently serves as chair of the FEZANA Information Receiving and Dissemination committee and Co-chair of the FEZANA-NGO committee.

Each panelist was asked to respond to

- 1 What motivated you to become an entrepreneur?
- 2 What hurdles/ challenges did you face on this journey and how did you overcome them?
- 3 How do you see yourself giving back to the Zarathushti community in the years ahead with your experience and talents?
- 4 What are your thoughts on the following: "Entrepreneurship is the pursuit of opportunity beyond the resources currently controlled"

The panel talked about their lives and what made them become entrepreneurs. All stories had the common theme of not being able to expand their wings and do things their way while working for someone else. They all branched out and created their own businesses to be able to have the freedom to do the things they wanted to do. They wanted to create their own trajectory of their future. They all identified a need in their respective professions and followed through with a solution to resolve that need. Starting a business is a marathon not a sprint. Being an entrepreneur means you take control of your life. It requires creativity, drive, and fearlessness to create the ideal notion of what you want to create for yourself. This is what has made all 4 young entrepreneurs very successful.

They emphasized the need to have passion, relationship and value in their projects. The female minority founders faced more challenges for which there were no mitigating strategies. Juggling time trying to balance the different roles they play in life is another challenge

They were all very willing to give back to the community by way of offering mentorships and their time. What was impressive was that they had made a commitment to religious education for their children driving 2 hours each way to ZAGNY religious classes. They wanted their children to have the same experience as they had when they were growing up.



WZCC



From left Edul Daver, Global President of WZCC, Jennifer Avari Silva, Ritu Banga, Guest of Honor, Spenta Kandawalla, Perzen Patel Zarine Commissariat, MC for the awards ceremony (photo Jasmine Driver, courtesy Parsiana)

The WZCC Annual Awards have been an ongoing feature since the start of WZCC in year 2000. It is given to Outstanding Zarathushti Individuals in the category of Outstanding Young Zarathushti Entrepreneur/Professional (< 35 yrs); Outstanding Zarathushti Entrepreneur; Outstanding Zarathushti Professional; and starting from 2018 Outstanding Zarathushti Social Entrepreneur. Nominations are requested from individuals from around the World and once received considered for two years. A panel of three confidential judges from three different continents score the candidates for various characteristics and achievements. The scores are tallied by the WZCC Secretary and winners notified. The Winners are expected to come to the AGM to receive the awards in person. The announcement is made to the AGM delegates at the AGM at which the Awards are being made.

The quality of nominees are nothing short of spectacular and this year was noteworthy because winners in all four categories were women. We can be proud of the outstanding achievements of our relatively miniscule community.

Edul Daver, Global President, WZCC



OUTSTANDING YOUNG ZARATHUSHTI ENTREPRENEUR/ PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – 2018

PERZEN PATEL

Perzen Patel epitomizes the true Zarathushti qualities of following her passion and making it an entrepreneurial venture creating a unique niche for herself of culinary delights.

Born in Mumbai, and at age 15 migrated to New Zealand with her mother. After graduating from AUT University in Auckland with a Bachelors in International Hospitality Management and Business Marketing, she joined the Hospitality Services Department at the University and soon became the “Events & Marketing Coordinator”.

The cooking skills she learnt from her mother combined with the experience of running a catering business sowed the seeds of entrepreneurship and a love for Parsi food, it’s history & culture and it’s place in today’s multi-cuisine modern life.

After her marriage she moved back to Mumbai and as a young bride started working for **Ennovent** as “media and events management coordinator”. In 2013 she started to document her journey on a blog called **Bawibride.com**. which focused on sharing Parsi family stories and lost recipes. Writing these stories fueled Perzen’s passion to travel and discover other culinary secrets and expand her blog and writings. In 2014 Perzen won the IFBA Best Reginal Food Blogger Award.

She then started Bawi Bride Kitchen as a home delivery food service and in 2014 started catering parties for up to 20 people. By 2015 with her entrepreneurial juices flowing she quit her full time job to focus of Bawi Bride Kitchen., which was in demand and she hired two full time chefs. Perzen has now introduced Parsi Food Pop-Ups, Parsi Food Walks and the first ever Parsi Food Festival. Bawi Bride Kitchen continues to innovate by introducing “On-Demand lunch service” where clients order Parsi food delivered to their home or office via popular food delivery apps. More recently, Bawi Bride Kitchen collaborated with Mumbai’s top restaurant, The Bombay Canteen, to feature two of her signature dishes at the restaurant as part of a 15 day Parsi food festival. She writes a regular column on India Food Network as well as contributes culinary articles to the Mumbai readers.

Perzen’s business model uses social media as a key tool in spreading the word, getting feedback, listening and interacting with them in real time. With a proven growth model, Bawi Bride Kitchen is looking to partner with key players while keeping the core of their business sacrosanct. ***Their motto remains “Taste the Love, Love the Taste”. And all this by the young age of 29.*** She is passionate about entrepreneurship and startups, regularly contributing her expertise with would-be entrepreneurs and promoting them on her blog.

Perzen is intimately involved with her community. As a child she helped her mother make 200 cutlets for the local Zarathushti Anjuman. She was an integral part of the New Zealand youth group, served on the organizing committee for the 6th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, participated in the first “Return to Roots Program” and shared her knowledge about Parsi foods with the other participants.

We congratulate Perzen for following her passion and creating a profitable niche in the world of Parsi culinary delights.



OUTSTANDING ZARATHUSTI ENTREPRENEUR OF 2018

JENNIFER AVARI SILVA



Jennifer is a visionary founder of the startup company SentiAR whose mission is to transform the experience for both patient and clinician in interventional procedures with a 3D augmented reality platform featuring real-time holographic visualization of the patient's actual anatomy, "floating" over the patient. Jennifer is responsible for the clinical application of the SentiAR technology for patient use. She is an Asst. Professor of Pediatrics at Washington University in St. Louis and Director of Pediatric Cardiac Electrophysiology at St. Louis Children's Hospital, where she leads the largest pediatric electrophysiology program in the Midwest.

Dr. Avari Silva grew up as an active participant in the ZAGNY community where she excelled in ZAGNY's religious class program under the tutelage of the late Villy H. Gandhi. She spoke as a young adult at a North American Zoroastrian Congress. She has made inroads with the St. Louis Zarathushti community.

Her academic credentials include an MD from St. George's University School of Medicine, residencies in Pediatrics at Miami Children's Hospital, Pediatric Cardiology at Washington University School of Medicine, and in Pediatric Electrophysiology at Children's Hospital Boston, Harvard University.

Jennifer says, "I am currently a Pediatric Cardiac Electrophysiologist, following inspiration from my great uncle and from working to take care of children with heart rhythm abnormalities by performing minimally invasive, catheter-based procedures called electrophysiology studies, where the patient's normal and abnormal electrical systems are identified and targeted for ablation. This therapy is applied by introducing catheters through blood vessels in the legs and carefully directing them into the heart. Electrical maps are then created to carefully identify and target the abnormal tissue with hot or cold energy. This approach is rather young with a heavy component of technology and engineering. Her career path united her with her husband and venture partner, Jon Silva. In 2015 as a Professor, Jon was invited to participate in the Microsoft Faculty Summit in Seattle, WA where new and emerging technologies were presented to a national gathering of academic leaders.

This exposed them to "mixed reality," a true technology leap where 3D digital images are placed within a user's room. Jon and Jennifer hypothesized that MxR technology could empower electrophysiologists to not only better understand the anatomic and electrical relationships by providing true 3 dimensional visualization, but also to allow the electrophysiologist, the ability to control the data they were viewing. As they started to crystallize the idea, they received significant support from Washington University in Saint Louis—which helped with the patent process, provided guidance on forming a company, seed funding and made critical introductions to local investors and entrepreneurs. In 2017 SentiAR, Inc was founded with the goal of commercializing the technology which was diligently nurtured. SentiAR was recently awarded a \$2.2M Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Grant through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for further engineering and clinical work on advancing this technology in the market. The company currently has 8 employees and will grow to 10 by the end of the summer. SentiAR's mission is to improve the way we take care of patients. At the core, the guiding vision is not all that different from basic Zoroastrian teachings Jennifer grew up with from childhood."



OUTSTANDING ZARATHUSTI SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR 2018

ROSHAN BHARUCHA



Roshan grew up in Quetta which she still calls home. After obtaining her Masters Degree in English from Baluchistan University at age 21, she got married to her 22 year old next-door neighbor Khursheed Bharucha, a Captain in the Pakistani Army. She started working as a Montessori school teacher, then as a Librarian, and a senior school teacher. Roshan always dreamed of sending her children abroad for their education and for financial reasons was simultaneously working multiple jobs.

Her public service exposure started in 1987 when she became an administrative secretary at the International Labor Organization (ILO)-a United Nations agency and later the Administrative officer of the Technical Training Center with responsibility to teach English to Afghan Refugees, provide vocational training for women and protect human rights. She then joined GTZ, a German non-profit, and over the next 12 years she established 12 training centers and a micro-lending program.

Her work came to the attention of the Pakistan Government and in 2000, General Pervez Musharaf appointed Roshan to be Provincial Minister of Baluchistan Province – making her the first female minority to hold such a post in Pakistan’s history. She was assigned nine portfolios and also became Member of Human Development Commission, Ambassador to UNICEF Polio Fund and first Women Director of the HR Committee for Pakistan Petroleum Ltd. From 2003-2006 Roshan was elected to represent Baluchistan in Pakistan’s Senate- once more making her the first female minority Senator where she became the Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Health.

In 2007 Roshan was made Federal Minister as part of a “caretaker” Federal Government with responsibility for Social Welfare, Civil Rights, Population and Youth where she worked on laws against “honor killings”, shelters for abandoned and abused women, legal aid for minorities, family planning etc. In 2018, she was appointed to serve as a Federal Minister in Pakistan’s six member Federal Caretaker Cabinet becoming the first Parsi woman to hold a Federal Cabinet post.

In 2008 Roshan Founded and became Managing Director of SOS Children’s Village of Baluchistan. It is a private social welfare organization providing orphans and abandoned children a permanent home, love and nurturing and a quality education-so they have a fair chance in life in Pakistan’s poorest province, home to millions of Afghan refugees and where child trafficking is rampant. Currently the Village houses 250 children and 16 women and it has facilities such as playground, gym, barber shop, clinic, computer room, library and convenience store.

In 2010 Roshan founded and became Managing Director of **HUNAR FOUNDATION** a social welfare organization for vocational training to the poorest and most neglected women of Quetta. The women receive six months of skills training to make them employable or to set up their own small business. HUNAR has trained over 4000 disadvantaged women with 100 students enrolled at any given time.

Today, consistent, long-term funding for both organizations is provided by a mix of local, national, and international donors –individuals, institutions and NGOs. There is significant danger inherent to her work- as educating women to be independent is resisted by many local tribes and Pakistani Taliban.

Over the years she has been recognized for her work with numerous awards including Human Rights Award by Pakistan’s Human Rights Foundation, and even a commendation from the Mayor of Dallas, TX.

Until the 1990s, the Quetta Parsi Anjuman included upward of 15 families. As the political and economic climate worsened nearly all the families moved to Karachi or abroad – leaving a small group of elderly Parsis in a nearly empty Parsi Colony. Since 2010 Roshan is the General Secretary of the Quetta Parsi Ahjuman and Parsi Colony including the Agiary. Even though her husband Khursheed passed away in 2016, Roshan has decided to remain in Quetta – a dangerous part of the world- committed to caring for her elderly neighbors, even housing, feeding and caring for several elderly Parsis in her home and pursuing her life-long mission to help the neglected women and children of Baluchistan.

We congratulate Roshan for her remarkable achievement in providing for orphans and abandoned children and also for measuring social impact and pitching it further to solve social problems.



WZCC

OUTSTANDING ZARATHUSHTI PROFESSIONAL OF 2018

SPENTA KANDAWALLA



SPENTA CAPTAIN KANDAWALLA is Director and co-owner of Captain-PQ Chemical Industries, the leading manufacturer of silicates in Pakistan and also served as Managing Director of Kandex Sales Pvt. Ltd, which successfully introduced Honda automobiles into Pakistan. Since 2000, she has served as an Independent Director on several corporate boards (both public and publicly listed) of the food, insurance and banking industries in Pakistan. She is currently on the Board of Standard Chartered Bank Pakistan, where she serves as an Independent Non Executive Director and Chair of the Human Resource and Remuneration Committee. In each, she has been the first and only woman on these Boards.

Spenta is a Certified Board Director and a member of Women Corporate Directors, USA. She is a Founding Member of Business Leadership Council of Wellesley College, USA. Chair, Alumnae Admissions Representatives for Pakistan, Wellesley College, and Member of the Presidents' Advisory Board on Global Education, Wellesley College. She further serves on the Advisory Council, Pakistan Scholars Program, Woodrow Wilson

International Center, USA.

Ms. Kandawalla is an active member of civil society being the Founding Trustee of the I-Care Foundation, Pakistan's first Donor Advised Fund, and Managing Trustee of her family foundation, the Captain Foundation, on the Board of Layton Rehmatulla Benevolent Trust, a nationwide network of free eye hospitals which have treated over 25 million patients free of charge. She is Vice President of the Patients Aid Foundation, a public-private partnership with the Jinnah Hospital, the only medical center in the world providing robotic radiation Cyber Knife treatments free of charge. Spenta is also on the Board of the BMH Parsi General Hospital Trust Fund and the Liaquat National Medical Center.

Spenta has two daughters, Shaan and Tushna and four grandchildren, Nadir and Nael in Karachi and Riah and Zane in New York.

2019 WZCC OUTSTANDING ZARATHUSHTI AWARDS

WE ARE A SMALL COMMUNITY OF VERY TALENTED AND SUCCESSFUL INDIVIDUALS AND EACH YEAR WE RECOGNIZE BEST OF THE BEST. PLEASE HELP US TO IDENTIFY AND RECOGNIZE THESE OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS BY NOMINATING THEM IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

***YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR/PROFESSIONAL; ENTREPRENEUR ;
PROFESSIONAL;
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR***

NOMINATION PACKAGE WITH INSTRUCTIONS AVAILABLE ON
WWW.WZCC.ORG

COMPLETED NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY JULY 26, 2019.

YAZDI TANTRA, yazdi@on-lyne.com
WZCC AWARDS COMMITTEE



FEZANA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN Orlando

By Afreed Mistry

The 32nd FEZANA AGM took place in Orlando, Florida from May 3rd to 5th, 2019. For the first time, the AGM was set to coincide with the Global WZCC AGM and the Global Working Group Meetings. The meeting started with a benediction from Ervad Soli Dastur and accompanied by Professor Daryush Mehta on the clarinet playing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Ode to Joy, while Ervad Soli Dastur prayed the Aa Airyemaa Ishyo (Yasna 54.1). *(photo pg 48)* Aa Airyemaa Ishyo is at the end of all Gathas in Yasna and according to Dr Taraporewalla is written by Zarathushtra as his ending of the Gathas with the same meter as Yasna 53- Gatha Vahishtoisht also known as the Brotherhood of Mankind. It is recited in the Zoroastrian Wedding Pazand Aashirwaad for the joy of the wedding couple.



Eighteen out of 26 Associations were present. Afsaan Kermani, President of the WZCC Central Florida Zoroastrian Community, welcomed all the FEZANA delegates and guests to the "Entertainment Capital of the World", Orlando.

Homi Gandhi and all of the FEZANA Executive read out their reports for the past year. Arzan Sam Wadia, FEZANA VP, urged all Association Presidents to have 35% of the Association board members to be under the age of 35 by the 35th FEZANA AGM in 2022. All Associations have promised to work on this 35-35-35 goal.

Adil Masani, has been managing the FEZANA funds since 2009 and according to him the FEZANA investments are diversified, 50% stocks, 40% bonds, 10% cash and are doing quite well. In a vote of confidence in FEZANA, it has received several significant donations. FEZANA is the beneficiary of funds from Prof. K.D. Irani's Trust, and from another estate fund that will provide \$500,000 to be split between Scholarship and Welfare.



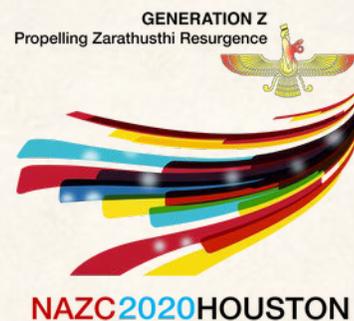
FEZANA Executive: Secretary Percy Master, Office Administrator Zenobia Damania; President Homi Gandhi; Treasurer Rooky Fitter; Asst Secretary Xerxes Commissariat; Vice-president Arzan Wadia.

Cyrus Irani and his sisters Roxanne and Kerbanoo have committed to provide \$1,200 for three years for the Bapsi Irani Culinary and Arts Scholarship.



Some highlights from the FEZANA meeting were presentations on the upcoming congresses. The 7th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress will take place in Los Angeles, CA from July 1-6, 2019. Details can be

found online as registration is still open: <https://wzycongress.org/>. The speakers are confirmed and there will be academic, social and professional tracks including a Zoroastrian Shark Tank Competition. FEZANA is encouraging more youth to participate by providing subsidies.





The 18th North American Zoroastrian Congress will take place in Houston, Texas, at Royal Sonesta Hotel in the Galleria area from Dec. 29 to 31, 2020. Sign up online for updates: <https://nazc2020houston.com/>. The torch was passed from Katayun Kapadia, past FEZANA President, to Aderbad Tamboli, the Co-Chair of the 18th North American Zoroastrian Congress and Homi Gandhi, current President of FEZANA. (photo left)

The 12th World Zoroastrian Congress will take place in New York in 2022.

Some noteworthy items from various Committees:

There were 76 applications for 18 academic scholarships. The goal is to award scholarships to one of every two applicants. Some new endowed scholarships and new legacies may help move FEZANA towards this goal. A question was raised about awarding scholarships for trade schools. A proposal to change the Terms of Reference to include this was approved. One Sports scholarship and three Arts scholarships were awarded.

The FEZANA Journal currently has 597 subscribers, but a falling subscriber base makes it difficult to be self funding .

FIRES had mounted two well received exhibits: One at the Parliament of World Religions and the other at the ZAHAtash Kadeh opening. There have been several donors this past year that have sent in books, rare manuscripts and financial donations. Kersi Shroff and Dinyar Patel, Co-chairs of the FEZANA Preservation Committee, provide excellent counsel to FIRES.

The North American Mobed Council (NAMC) president Ervad



Soli Dastur sings Aa Airyemaa Ishyo—The Brotherhood of Mankind Prayer—to the tune of Beethoven’s Ode to Joy played by Daryush Mehta on the clarinet.

Arda-i-Viraf Minocherhomjee talked about separating the operations of the Atash Kadeh and State by empowering mobeds to do their religious duties without interference from association executive committees.

Operation Eyesight and World Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra will be re-started for the Houston and New York congresses.

The Z Shop on the FEZANA website is fully operational and has been mailing out many items that were purchased online from all over the World.

The UN-NGO Committee has been very busy attending UN conferences and organizing events. New call for participants for the next UN conference is out and the deadline is May 24th, 2019.

The Return to Roots program continues to connect young Zarathushtis to their Indian roots. Associations were urged to support the program by sponsoring their youth to attend

The main topic of discussion was the formation of a new organization, where WZCC and FEZANA would be Board members. This organization would be setup to give interest free loans to entrepreneurs in North America.

The local host, Central Florida Small Group, under the leadership of Dinyar Mehta and Afsaan Kermani were very hospitable and greeted all very warmly. We were constantly fed with good Parsi and fusion food all week along with lots of tea breaks with bhakras, batasas, dhokla, chukli, cookies, etc. The chefs were Dilnavaz Irani, Delphina Bharucha and Sarosh Mistry with help from Kim Mistry and Kaizer Bharucha. There were trips organized as well to Disney World, Universal Studios, Kennedy Space Centre and a bus tour of Orlando. A small group of people also went to see the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launch at 2:48 AM from Port Canaveral. A very big thank you to all the volunteers.

The next 2020 FEZANA AGM will be held in Sacramento, CA.

Afired Mistry is the FEZANA representative to the United Nations.

Photo credits Astad Clubwala



Central Florida Volunteer group with WZCC Global President Edul Daver on left bottom and FEZANA President Homi Gandhi on right bottom. Afsaan Kermani, the Chair of the WZCC Central Florida Chapter second row left, Dinyar Mehta sitting first left.

GLOBAL WORKING GROUP (GWG)



Coming Together to Work Together



The Global Working Group met in Orlando, FL on May 5 after the marathon AGMs of World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) and FEZANA .

The 11th meeting was hosted by FEZANA with the FEZANA president Homi Gandhi in the chair, and Neville Shroff, of Hong Kong as the Non-Executive chair of GWG. (photo above second and third from left)

The regional representatives present were Neville Shroff, (Hong Kong), Homi Gandhi (FEZANA) Arzan Sam Wadia (FEZANA) Spenta Kadawalla (Pakistan) Ervad Xerxes Dastur (FPZAI), Firoz Pestonji (Australia) Shernaz Engineer (ZTFE); Alayar Dabestani (Iran) and Dinshaw Tamboly, (WZOT). Ervad Adra-i-Viraf Minocherhomjee; (NAMC), Edul Daver (WZCC), Katayun Kapadia, Bomi Patel, Behram Pastakia, Rustom Engineer (FEZANA in their capacity of chairs of GWG committees (photo right below shows representatives from regions)

The Code of Conduct and a brief history of the GWG was presented by Rohinton Rivetna. He mentioned that GWG is a product of 25 years of work starting in 1993 with the World Council of Zoroastrian Federations which morphed into Coming Together Round Table in 2005 and then in 2010 into Global Working Group. The goal of this group is “to strengthen our bonds of friendship and togetherness and to assist each other to grow and prosper, while yet respecting each region’s autonomy. We are neither orthodox nor liberal, we are one community with differing view points”

FEZANA was thanked for hosting the meeting and all the regional representatives elaborated on the progress and concerns since the last AGM in 2017.



GLOBAL WORKING GROUP (GWG)



The formalization (institutionalization) of GWG through the formation of Global Council of Zoroastrian Trusts was discussed. It will be made of Settlers, Trustees and Advisors who will provide the funding and administration. According to the Indian Trust law, all the Settlers and Trustees are to be Indian Citizens or OCI (Overseas Citizens of India) that provide start up funding. The functioning of the current GWG will not be changed. After some discussion the proposal for adoption was forward by FPZAI and seconded by Australia.

The report of the Zoroastrian Faculty Network(ZFN) was presented stating that a website had been established, an e.mail ID, and 2 webinars in May and June 2018 were conducted, contacts have been established with the US Consulate and the French Consulate in Mumbai to facilitate the process of applying for US colleges and study opportunities in France. A partnership between WZCC and ZFN has been established to empower Zarthushti students to learn how to create economic, cultural, intellectual values and to reinvest in the Zarathushti community. An internship program in reputed universities globally for Zarthushti students is under development.

Behram Pastakia invited the regions to encourage their youth over 18 years to participate in the UN -NGO program of FEZANA . Till date 75 youth have been sent to various UN events with the youth paying their own way. We would like to make our youth World Citizens.

Dinshaw Tamboly updated the GWG members of the work done by Empowering Mobeds group which was formed in 2017.

He mentioned that the number of mobeds to serve the 156 Atashbehrams, Agiaries and Ddadgah's in India is dwindling at an alarming rate. There are at present 24 young boys undergoing mobedi training at the Dadar Athornan Madressa and according to the principal Ervad Ramiyar Karanjia, he would be surprised if even one goes into the profession. He encouraged GWG to support the mobeds with financial support for housing, medical insurance, retirement, education for their children, etc to make the profession more attractive. Mobeds also need skills training in leadership and counselling families.

The services rendered by the pall bearers at Doongervadi also needs to be supported .

Arzan Wadia spoke of the success of the Return to Roots Program but said it lacked international support which at present is only given by FEZANA, The Zoroastrian Charity Trust Funds Hong Kong, Canton and Macao and Dinshaw Tamboly. The program instills pride in the Zarathushti identity, and associations world wide should encourage their young adults to enroll in the program.

An update on the upcoming World Zoroastrian Youth Congress was given by FEZANA. They expressed disappointment at the lack of any participants from the Middle East. They also expressed the non-issue of any visas to Iranian youth who had registered to come for the Congress.

Homi Gandhi who chairs the GWG Congress committee announced that one bid was received for the 8th WZYC 2023, and since it met all the requirements it was accepted. Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe will host the Congress in 2023.

A proposal to conduct a global survey of Zoroastrians to establish the status of the community as it stands today was tabled for discussion. Spearheaded by Dinyar Devitre, Toos Daruwala and Edul Daver the proposal would be worked on by Rashna Writer (France) who was present to explain the concept. This would be a collaboration with an institution like SOAS. Talks are in their preliminary stage and further updates are awaited.

A sustainable solution for all the programs requesting funding is to inculcate in every Zarthushti family the habit of collective giving e.g \$1000 per year per family. This habit of giving needs to be developed from a very young age.

Edul Daver informed the meeting that the next WZCC AGM shall be held in Lonavala, India from Jan 3-5, 2020.

The 3rd Iranshah Udvada Utsav is scheduled to be held from December 27-29, 2019.

A proposal to hold the next GWG meeting around the above two events was discussed. A final date would be announced once its discussed and finalized with the local host organization FPZAI.

With a vote of thanks to the hosts and the chair, the meeting concluded.

Report by Dolly Dastoor and ArZan Sam Wadia .

Photo credit Jasmine Driver, courtesy Parsiana

BIRTHS



Vishtasp Neville Akolawala, a boy, to Perzen and Neville Akolawala (Spring, TX), grandson to Nadirshaw and Gilda Akolawala (Colombo, Sri Lanka) and late Percy and Kashmira Polishwala (Pune, India), great grandson to late Bomanshaw and Roshan Akolawala (Victoria, BC) on February 13, 2019. (Manashni)

Samara Vania Harris, girl to Narissa and David Vania Harris, granddaughter to Darab and late Nilufer Vania (San Ramon, CA) in Berkely, CA on February 22, 2019. (ZANC)

Liam Cyrus Press, a boy, to Anna and Cyrus Press, brother to Raina, grandson to Zarin and Minoo Press and Mary and Cal Davis, nephew to Carl and Erin, Rachel and Ryan, cousin to Elias, Maryn, Clayton on February 24, 2019. (ZA-Chi)



Shahan Zane Byramji, a boy, to Tashan and Zane Byramji, brother to Daena on May 10, 2019. (ZAPANJ)

Parker, a boy, to Emma and Carl James Dubash (Oakland, CA), grandson to Jimmy and Mari Jo Dubash (Palm Beach, FL), Clark and Ann Griffith (Lexington, MA) in Oakland, CA on March 26, 2019.

NAVJOTES

Azad and Tahmir Antia children of Nerina Rustomji and Shehriyar Antia, grandchildren to Hilla Antia and Aban Rustomji in Houston, on April 20, 2019. Priests presiding included Ervad Bomanshaw Sanjana, Ervad Pervez Gonda, and Ervad Shapur Pavri.

Zahara, daughter of Mahnaz Marolia and Zal Damkevala, granddaughter of Soonnoo and Rohinton Marolia (Montreal) and Hilloo and Rohinton Damkevala (Mumbai) in Washington, DC, on May 26, 2019.

WEDDINGS

Gohar Babakan, daughter of Bahram and Mahin Babakan to **Kaykchosro Afghani**, son of late Esfandiar and Rita Afghani in Burnaby, BC on February 24, 2019.

Kayras Irani, son of Nilufer and Daryush Irani (Vancouver, BC) to **Sanaya Master**, daughter of Farida and Khushru Master (Auckland, New Zealand,) in Auckland on April 6, 2019.

Zaran Engineer, son of Kersi & Thrity Engineer to **Grecia Yanez**, daughter of Miguel & America Yanez in Houston on April 20, 2019. (Manashni)

DEATHS

Farhad Navroze Ginwalla, brother of Vera Hoshang Shroff, father of Cherie (Eric) Ginwalla, Rustam (Naheed) Ginwalla, Rashna Ginwalla in Mumbai, India on February 1, 2019.

Hormoz Ourmazdi, 82 years, father of Azita, Ardeshir, and Kambiz; husband of Parvin Hormozyari; father-in-law of Tooraj Khodabakhshi, Armita Akhtarkhavari; grandfather of Kiarash, Prasa, Andia, in Tehran, Iran, on February 2, 2019. (ZSBC)

Avi (Mehta) Mobed, wife of (late) Homee Faramroze Mobed, mother of Azdiar (Natasha) and

Zanara (Umer), grandmother of Nikita, sister of Shahrokh (Gool) Mehta, in Karachi, Pakistan on February 3, 2019. (ZAGBA)

Sam Toddywalla, husband of Villi Toddywalla, father of Phiroze (Shehnaz), grandfather of Vispi in Mumbai, India on February 13, 2019. (ZAGNY)

Gity Marzbani, 83 years, wife of Khodabakhsh, mother of Babak and Siamak, mother-in-law of Farah, Mandana, grandmother of Natasha, Ryon, Vida, sister of Parviz, late Khodarahm & Iradj Pourkarimi, in North Vancouver, BC on February 18, 2019.

Roshan Sorabji Batliboi, mother of Rashna, Hormuz (Madhavi) Batliboi, grandmother of Zahaan and Cyrus in Mumbai, India on February 25, 2019. (ZAGNY)

Keykhosrow Kabolyzadeh, 81 years, father of Keyvan Kabolyzadeh; brother of Iraj, Parviz Kabolyzadeh, Mehri Parsi, in North Vancouver, on March 1, 2019.

Pari Shahrokh, 79 years, daughter of the late Aflatoon and Manijeh (Kermani) Shahrokh, sister of the late Shahrokh, Pوران (Jamshid) Farin and Katayoun (Dinyar) Farin in Toronto, ONT on March 10, 2019.

Vera Naoroze Dastur, wife of late Naoroze (Naval) Dastur, mother of Natasha (Jean Claude, Phillip, Sonia), Nereus (Nadia, Leo, Maia), sister of Goshi, Arnaz, Mithoo Birdie (NY), Happy in Karachi, Pakistan on March 15, 2019. (ZAGNY)

Sam Nargolwalla, husband of late Chrystobell, father of Ciaran, Darius, Killian, Farhad, Liam, Mariam, brother of late Feroze (Kay) Nargolwalla, Mani (Pacy) Divecha, Nari (Aban) Nargolwalla, Dinaz (Shahrokh) Rustomji in Toronto, ONT on March 15, 2019.

Aban Meherji Daruwalla, mother of Kashmira (Minu) Dutia and Zersis Daruwalla, mother-in-law of Noshir Dutia, grandmother of Roxanne, Rushad, great grandmother of Avery

MILESTONES

Alan in Mumbai, India on March 19, 2019. (ZAGNY)

Aimee Karanjia, wife of late Jehangir Karanjia, mother of Darius, Jamshid, mother-in-law of Coombi and Anita, grandmother of Kevan, Jaime, Jay, Alex in Toronto, ONT on March 20, 2019.

Aban Jamshed Karanjia, wife of late Jamshed Karanjia, mother of Pervaiz and Dilshad Karanjia (Houston, TX). Meher and Cyrus Karanjia, Dinavaz and Homiyar Patel, grandmother of Zaine, Zanarah, Zaina Karanjia, Zubin, Zanaida Patel on March 24, 2019.

Pratap Kanji Parmar, husband of Dhun Parmar, father of Neena, Tanaz on March 30, 2019. (ZAGNY)

Shirin Felfeli, wife of Pariborz Izadi Biuki, daughter of late Rustom and Homayun Felfeli, mother of Anahita, Abtin, sister of Sorab, Banoo, Sohila in London, ONT on April 12, 2019.

Jehanbux (Jalu) Virjee Divecha, husband of Mani Divecha, father of Zareer (Tanaz) Divecha, brother-in-law of Jehanbux and Sillie Mehta in Toronto, ONT on April 12, 2019.

Shernaz Colabewala (nee Vajifdar), mother of Shara Colabewala, Dinaz Colabewala, mother-in-law of Derek Saint Clair, sister of Khushroo Vajifdar, sister-in-law of Ety Vajifdar, aunt to Arash Vajifdar, sister-in-law of Jehangir Chenoy, in Toronto, ONT on April 14, 2019.

Perviz (Pearl) Ghadially, 96, mother of Kati Tamboli (Houston, TX), late Farokh Ghadially, Hoshang Ghadially (UK) and Sohrab Ghadially, sister of Dinshaw Pestonji, Jimmy Pestonji (UK), late Jal Pestonji, mother-in-law of Amy, Naomi, Behroze Ghadially, late Dadi Tamboli, grandmother of Saira, Farah Ghadially, Zain, Zavera, Shaan Ghadially, Khursheed Challa, Aderbad Tamboli (Houston, TX), Diana Billimoria (Michigan) Firoze Tamboli (Houston, TX), Zerksis, Zareer Ghadially (London, UK) in Toronto, ONT on Saturday April 20, 2019.

Tenaz Bardoliwalla, 66, wife of Hoshang Bardoliwalla, mother of Farish Bardoliwalla, Penaz Virji, mother-in-law of Havovi Bardoliwalla, Cyrus Virji, grandmother of Farzan, Rayaan Bardoliwalla, Delreen Virji in Mumbai, India on April 21, 2019. (OZCF)

Nowsherwan Gustad Irani, husband of late Homai Irani, father of Zaina, Adil, Ruzbeh, father-in-law of Kaezad Mehta, Linda Nowsherwan, grandfather of Zain, Gulnar, Nadia, Isabella, brother of Banugoshasp, Varjavand, late Freeboze Irani in Virginia on April 25, 2019.

Ervad Dara Sorabji Madan, husband of Amy Madan, father of Ervad Homyar (Pearl), Ervad Xerxes (Jeroo), grandfather of Zeenia, Jehan, Anaisha, Ervad Kevan on April 29, 2019. (ZSO)

Zarine Fali Balsara, wife of Fali Balsara, mother of Adil Fali Balsara, Diana Balsara, Anita Balsara Thakore, Suhrid Thakore, grandmother of Nicholas, Sierra, Joshua, Joel, Michelle, Lauren and Alex Wolfe, great grandmother of Delilah, Lincoln Balsara, sister of late Minoo Minwalla, Feramerz Minwalla, Farhad Minwalla, late Jimmy Minwalla on Thursday, May 9, 2019. (Karachi Obituary)

Simin Eftekhari (ZSO)

Dariush Ejbari (ZSO)

Arastoo Kasravi, husband of Giti Kasravi, father of Barsam, Sanaz. (CZC)

Keikhosrow Baghkhani, father of Ardeshir, Ardavan, Arzhang. (CZC)

Sheshagiri Rao, 94, father of Murali Rao, father-in-law of Mani Rao. (ZA-Chi)

Matrimonial

Female, 35, 5' 5", graduate, IATA/UFTA (Montreal), 12+ years in travel industry-International and Domestic. Presently General Manager in reputed travel organization. Good personality, smart, loyal, cheerful, understanding, caring, tolerant, dedicated, good family values. Career oriented but also loves family. Interested in educated, well-settled, loyal, family oriented boy in USA, Canada, UK, Australia. Sister settled in Florida. Contact suitablematch83@yahoo.com. [F19-10]

Male, 27, 5' 9", Masters in Computer Science, Working with major Telecom Co. in Philadelphia. Enjoys nature, music, movies and reading. Contact kmm2563@gmail.com. [M19-14]

Female, 45, 5' 8", B.Sc., B. Ed., working as head-mistress in school in Baroda, India. Contact monadalal74@gmail.com. [F19-15].

Male, 28, 5' 10", successful Mechanical Engineer based in Georgia. Grown up in USA, financially independent, interested in cars, racing, sports and music. Interested in meeting educated girl with similar background. Contact farshidaa@gmail.com. [M19-18].

FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties. We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna at roshanrivetna@gmail.com.

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VADA DASTUR DR KAIKHUSROO MINOCHER JAMASPASA MARCH 11, 1932- MAY 19, 2019 AT AGE 87

Renowned scholar and religious leader Vada Dasturji Dr. Kaikhusroo Minocher JamaspAsa, High Priest of Zarthoshti Anjumana Atash Behram, Mumbai passed away in England after a heart attack, leaving a vacuum in the Zarthoshti community worldwide. Dasturji comes from a lineage of illustrious scholar priests, with his great grandfather, Dasturji Dr. Jamaspji M. JamaspAsa, who consecrated and installed the Anjumana Atash Behram,

He was installed as the High Priest of the same Zarthoshti Anjumana Atash Behram on 3rd October 1956 and continued to hold this position till his death

Born in Mumbai, he received his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Avesta and Pahlavi from St. Xavier's College in Mumbai and in 1966, obtained his Doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Bombay. Dasturji was fluent in German and French given his orientation in European scholarship of Iranian studies. His academic achievements were many. He was visiting Professor at the Asia Institute of Pahlavi University in Shiraz. He held the position of Honorary Professor of Iranian Studies at St. Xavier's College for over 3 decades, was Principal of Sir J. J. Zarthoshti Madressa for 10 years and Senior Lecturer of the Mulla Firoz Madressa, in Mumbai.



Dasturji JamaspAsa was the author of many scholarly books and learned articles in renowned international academic journals and his most important publications are on 'The Pahlavi - Pazend Text of the Aogemadaeca: The Vaetha Nask; and the Pursishniha'.

Many young boys have been trained by him as navars and martabs, and under his religious authority, over 200 Nirangdins and other higher liturgical ceremonies have been performed.

In his role as the Vada Dastur of the Anjuman Atash Behram, he steered the community onto the path of tradition and has upheld the beliefs and practices of the Zarathushti faith. He has constantly advocated the need for the community to adhere to the time tested belief and practices of our religion. Dasturji firmly believed that the only way to ensure the survival of the faith was to maintain the socio-religious laws of the community fused to the religion, and to safeguard the religious institutions such as the Fire Temples, Dakhmas and other religious bodies.

Dasturji is survived by his wife Dr. Bakhtavar, son Dr Jamasp and daughter Dr Shirin.

May his noble soul achieve Garoth Man Behest.

FEZANA JOURNAL extends our deepest condolences to his family.

(Obituary adapted from The Parsee Voice)

Dr Jamasp Dastur Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa has been installed as the new Dastur of Anjuman Atash Behram to succeed his late illustrious father to the Dasturi Gadi.



A legacy of love – A tribute to my grandmother Perin Sheriar Talavia (March 1934 - January 2019)



*In loving memory of my dearest
grandmother Perin Sheriar
Talavia*

A wonderful lady with a noble soul
Who captured the heart of
everyone wherever she would go!
Gratitude and graciousness were
the ornaments she wore
Even though her health issues were
almost always out of control!
One of her many qualities I truly
admire,
She never complained and always
had a smiling face, in spite of the
turbulent phase!
A month has passed so quickly,
though you are missed every day
dearly!
Reminiscing your glorious feats
everyday makes me feel closer to
you each day!

You gave us strength, you gave us
might, a stronger person would be
hard to find,
We are fortunate to be in your
shelter always, without your
blessings, we wouldn't have made
it so far in any case!
We love you dearly oh grandma,
our hearts aching by your
separation forever!
Brave lady, we have faith in He
who will protect you always
wherever you may be!
With lots of love and fond
remembrance,
Your granddaughter Sharmin

APARTMENT FOR RENT IN MUMBAI

Why stay in expensive hotels in Mumbai – when you can stay in this recently renovated, 1 Bedroom, living/dining room, kitchen & bathroom apartment in a PARSİ COLONY in PAREL, MUMBAI!

*This apartment is for SHORT TERM RENTALS only (minimum 1 week), is for PARSİS ONLY & is offered at \$ 50 per night!
It will sleep 3 adults comfortably (1 on Lv Rm sofa)*

It is located in a very well maintained Parsi Colony- A. H. Wadia Baug – in the Parel / Lalbaug area, equidistant between South Mumbai & Bandra & northern suburbs. It is also close to the expanding Lower Parel area with its boutique shops restaurants!

The apartment has AC in the living & bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen and bathroom with shower & washing machine.

Strictly – No pets and No smoking!!

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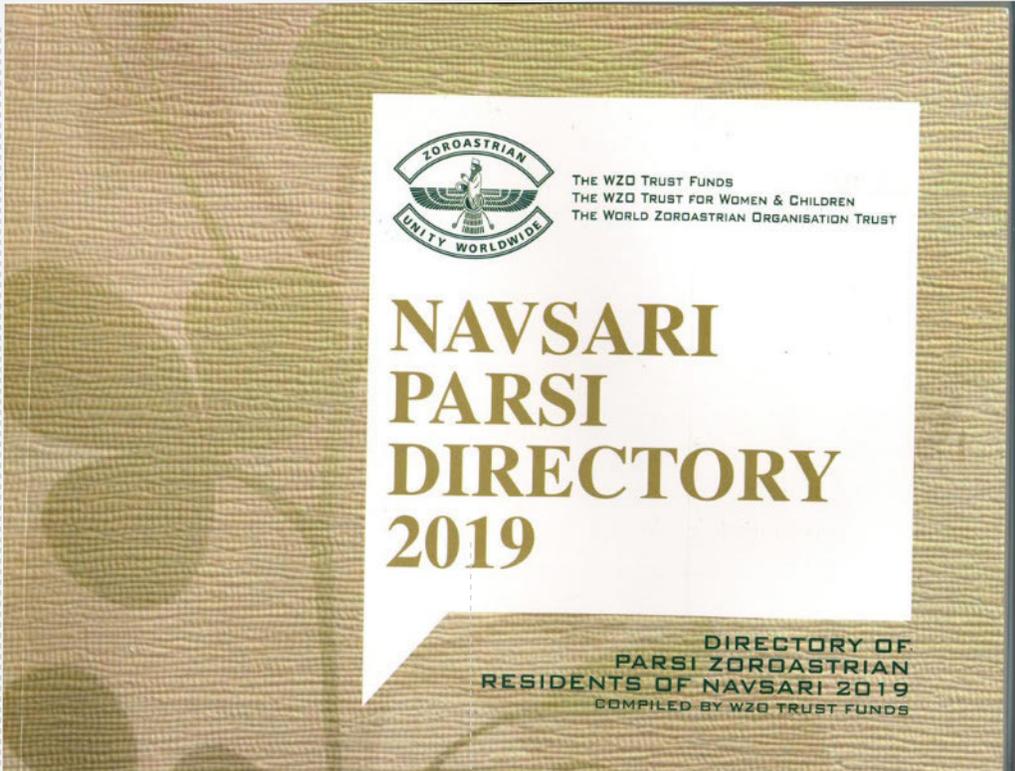
Navsari Parsi Directory 2019

Compiled by the WZO Trust Funds and Published by the World Zoroastrian Organization Trust (WZOT), Mumbai, India and available free from the WZOT, subject to payment of mailing charges which may be reimbursed at a later date. 204 pp, soft cover and landscape page format.

Review by Dr. Ardeshir B. Damania, University of California, Davis. Email: abdamania@yahoo.com

Although the refugees from Iran landed on the west coast of Hindustan (India) around 1,300 years ago and settled in villages around Sanjan, it was always Navsari where they had their headquarters and also where the Iranshah fire resided for many years before finally shifting it to Udvada. Although the Sanjan group are believed to have been the first permanent settlers, the precise date of their arrival is a matter of conjecture. All estimates are based on the *Qissa -e-Sanjan*. Consequently, three possible dates – 716, 765, and 936 – have been proposed as the year of landing.

Following the commercial treaty in the early 17th century between Mughal emperor Jahangir and King James I of England, the East India Company obtained the exclusive rights to reside and build factories in Surat and other areas, incl. Navsari. Many Parsis, who had been living in farming communities throughout Gujarat, moved to the British-run settlements to take up the new jobs offered. In 1668 the English East India Company (EEIC) leased the Seven Islands of Bombay from Charles II of England. The company found the deep harbor on the east coast of the islands to be ideal for setting up their first port in the sub-continent, and in 1687 they transferred their headquarters from Surat to the fledgling settlement. The Parsis followed and soon began



to occupy posts of trust in connection with government and public works. Many Parsis, who were more enterprising, moved also to the Port of Aden and locks began to appear on many a Parsi dwelling in Navsari. Although Surat had become the commercial headquarters (HQ) of the EEIC, it was Navsari that had become the spiritual HQ of the Parsis. On 2nd December 1765 the Navsari Anjuman Atash Behram was established. The present building was newly constructed in 1925.

The Directory of the present Parsi Zoroastrians of Navsari in the year

2019 was compiled and published with devotion and effort of Dinshah Tamboly, Chairman and the main driving force of the World Zoroastrian Organization (WZO) Trusts. Members of the Local Committee at Navsari, numerous volunteers, and well-wishers assisted the WZO in this noble task. The Directory has 20 chapters, and a total of 204 pages, including a map of the town at the end.

Of course the Parsi sethias, among them Jamshedji Tata, Jamshedji Jeejeebhoy, Cawasji Jehangir, and stalwarts like Dadabhai Naorowji

and Mehli Mehta (Father of Zubin Mehta) were all strongly connected by birth or otherwise to Navsari at one time or another before moving to the ultimate stronghold of the Parsis, Bombay (now Mumbai). Although the Parsis rose to wealth and fame and commercial successes in Bombay, their hearts were always in Navsari. Even Zubin Mehta in the film “On Wings of Fire” says that his father always had Navsari on his lips and dreamt of it often. When the film was being produced, Zubin went to Navsari and visited his father’s home which has since been sold. The present Gujarati owner showed Zubin his family’s genealogy book which he had found lying in the house! Even my late father, Behramji Mancherji Damania, rebuilt his ancestral home in Kangavad, Navsari in the 1950s, spending a very large amount of money on the renovation. The Gujarati contractor at the completion of the project told my father “*Seth,*

tamay atla baddha paisa karechwa taiyar hatta, toh hun tamunay aakhu navoo gher bandhi aaptay!” (or Boss, if I knew you were ready to spend so much money (on the renovation) I would have built you a whole new house). What the contractor did not understand was that my father did not want a new house. He wanted to renovate his father’s house which was originally built in the 1800s. Such was the hypnotic hold Navsari exerted on its sons and daughters.

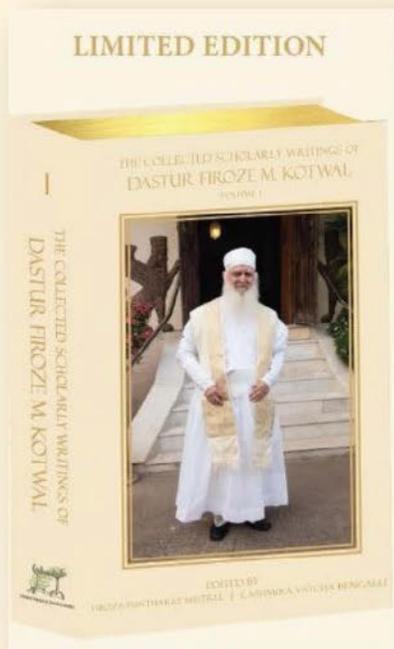
The Directory has color photographs of all the Parsi places of worship as well as all the Institutions that were built from donations of the Parsis. The list is astounding! Important contact phone numbers in Navsari, and of course the names, family members, dates of birth, sex, marital status, occupation, address, phone no. and email addresses of all the present Parsi Zoroastrian residents of Navsari are given. In addition, the

relevant statistics of the population, list of Navars-Martabs, the blood groups, and the Yellow Pages of Parsi-owned commercial enterprises. Marzban J. Giara, Parsi Historian, provides a comprehensive list of Parsi Dharamshalas and Sanatoriums with their addresses and phone numbers, which would be very useful to visitors who would like to avail of the facilities that our ancestors had provided for the Community. And, finally the Directory has a fold-out map of Navsari highlighting all Parsi Institutions by number and a key. However, this reviewer feels that the key should have been printed in a larger font. The map was conceived by Marzban J. Giara, who has taken up Navsari as his permanent residence. I recommend the Directory as a “must have” for the bookshelf of every Parsi home, for it is Navsari where the saga of the rise of Parsis to wealth and fame had its roots.

A Must for Everyone Interested in Zoroastrianism and its People

Book published by PARZOR and

Sponsored by Sir Ness Wadia trust and FE Dinshaw Trust.



Edited by Firoza Punthakey Mistree and Cashmira Vatcha Bengali, the volume combines 19 selected articles on the Zoroastrian religion and its ritual practices and includes a 340 page Biography covering Dastur Kotwal’s early childhood and his rise as a learned High Priest in the world of academia

It gives an insider’s view on the disputes and controversies that have mired the community for over forty years.

Dastur Kotwal’s opinions on matters of religion have shaped decision making in the community and have illumined the core of what is considered sacred and inviolable by the Parsis and Iranis of India

It is a great resource for the future study of the faith.

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A CLAWED AND FEATHERED SPELL

Format: softcover 205 pages; **Publication Date:** 2018

List Price \$9.99

Publisher: Catherine Linka; **ISBN:** 978-0-692-17110-3

Unsigned copies available: On amazon.com

Signed copies available: www.shoponceuponatime.com/Linka

Book Reviewer: Neeku Capak

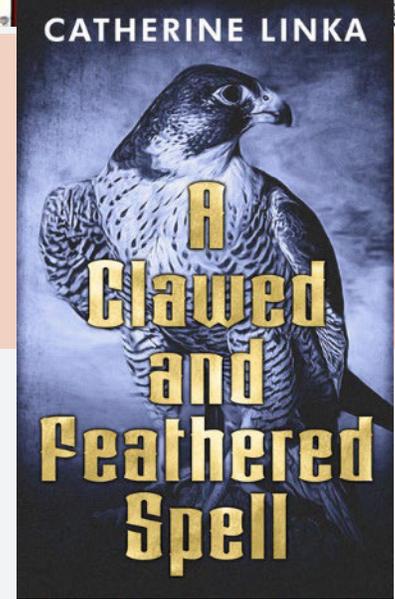
How a young Zoroastrian, Paridun, deals with making a major mistake and comes of age is the central theme of the latest novel by award-winning young adult fiction author, Catherine Linka. A Clawed and Feathered Spell begins with the village animals being eaten by wolves after the central character abandons his position guarding the livestock to join in the Mehregan (thanksgiving and friendship festival) in the center of his village. After this devastating tragedy, Paridun must prove himself and save the reputation of his family. “[He] will show them [he is] pure of heart, [he] will make things right.” To make amends, he goes to the Mobed or priest, and asks to drink a bitter juice that judges the person who drinks it and gives them strength if they are of good mind. The Mobed gives him the drink, which turns Paridun into a falcon. Now he must learn to control his passions so that they don’t rule him. The Mobed tells Paridun that, “a scorpion or lamb cannot choose what they become, but a man must choose his way.”

As a young Zoroastrian reader who loves fantasy novels, I really enjoyed reading A Clawed and Feathered Spell. There was an abundance of subtle references to the Zoroastrian culture and virtues in this book. For example, the author emphasizes good thoughts, good words, and good deeds as well as the importance of honesty when Paridun is considering coming clean to the village elders. I also liked the

connections to the old kings of Persia in the Shahnameh and the cryptic prophecy that ties the poison snakes of the evil king Zahhak to the evil General Zahhak. Having just had my initiation ceremony, Sedreh-pooshi, I also appreciated reading about how Paridun’s sedreh, the white symbolic undershirt worn by Zoroastrians, helped save his life and his community.

I strongly believe that my non-Zoroastrian peers would also understand and enjoy this novel in part because of the creative and rich use of details and imagery by the author. Catherine Linka has taken the time to research many different aspects of the Zoroastrian culture and beautifully uses them to bring the story to life. The rich and delicious details pull you into Paridun’s journey such as the taste of the dried fruits (lorak) or the smell of the lamb and lentil stew or the sound of the traditional Persian drums (tombak).

Paridun’s story and journey is all about making choices and taking responsibility for your choices. “Each day offers us choices between Asha, truth and order, and druj, lies and chaos.” This is a very important Zoroastrian teaching. As a young North American Zoroastrian, I also liked how the author has, mixed aspects from both the Indian and Persian Zoroastrian cultures. Two examples are the incorporation of Behra, or the silver bowls used to honor the dead; and the practice of, “we honor the souls of the animals that nourish us.” After reading this book and discussing it with my



mom I was surprised to find out that my family still has the silver bowls made after my great great grandparents passed.

A Clawed and Feathered Spell not only captivates the reader, it unlocks a whole new world of fantasy. I would specifically recommend this book to kids ages 9-14 who enjoy fantasy, but I also think readers of all ages would enjoy Paridun’s journey and will find it relatable. Like Paridun we are all thirsty to prove ourselves and the underlying themes of friendship, trust, honesty, and courage are central to all of us in our lives. Catherine Linka has done an amazing job with this book and I am honored that she chose to write her newest book about Zoroastrianism. She has my utmost respect and deserves lots of praise for A Clawed and Feathered Spell.

Neeku Capak is a Zoroastrian youth who enjoys reading fantasy novels. She is in seventh grade and lives in Southern California. In addition to reading, she loves to bake and her favorite middle school classes are math and science. Her mother, Trity Pourbahrami, who is a communications professional supported her in writing this review of Catherine Linka’s latest novel.

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