

## **HAPPY MEMORIES**

By

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Of all the treasures stored up in the Treasure Chest of our memories the most cherished are those of our childhood, those happy, carefree days when adulthood has not closed in on us. If we could dip into the box of memories, we could have some enchanted moments.

Simple are the pleasures of childhood and little things gave us joy. I have happy memories of my school days, of my teachers and principals, of friendships formed, of knowledge acquired, of fun and frolic, and of the Christian ideals set before us.

My association with StJohn's was only as a student attending classes ( next door as it were),in Chemistry and Latin. At that time in the 1930's Chundikuli Girls College was in the same compound as StJohn's, with only a cadjan fence separating the two schools. A gate gave access to St John's when boarders went for joint services at St John's Church or when girls had to go to the boys classrooms to attend classes in chemistry, Latin or physics. Chundikuli Girls' College had no facilities at that time for teaching these subjects, and St John's, as always, helpful to Chundikuli as to a younger sister, allowed girls who were keen on these subjects to attend classes with the boys at the Senior Cambridge Level. So about six or seven of us made use of this help to study chemistry. Mr T.M Mathai was our teacher for the two years of study required. He was a good teacher and most of us did well in the subject.

As for Latin, I was the only girl who was interested in that subject and had to go across ,to St John's. When the bell sounded for the Latin class, I would march from the gate to the class-room close by, looking neither to the right nor to the left and take the special seat that was reserved for me at the top of the class. At the end of the session, I would march back in the same manner. My generation of girls was never allowed to mix freely with the boys or even talk to them. I don't think the presence of boys distracted us as we were all keen on our studies. The Rev H Peto was my teacher in Latin and I felt his benign presence even in the class-room. He was a wonderful teacher and made the subject interesting. He combined his missionary dedication with his scholastic achievements and gave of his best in both fields, and took StJohn's to great heights of scholarship, good behaviour and fine Christian ideals.

I have indeed been privileged to be associated even in this very small way with such an illustrious school like St John's -- a school that has produced sons who shine like stars in every sphere of life.