

## From the Editor's Desk

The idea of this Commemorative Issue was born during one of the numerous conversations I had with Gurdwara Treasurer Gurminderjit Singh Ji during the process of acquiring our new premises. There was a time when it seemed that an obstacle was thrown in our way every ten days or so. The putting together of more than one mind was often required to deal with these hurdles, yet it was difficult to summon the entire committee each time this happened, so I frequently called on him and other committee members individually to seek ideas, particularly during the renovation period.

The obstacles overwhelmed us at time. But so did the way in which the Guru intervened to sort them out. While discussing one such problem Sardar Gurminderjit Singh said there was a need to keep the sangat informed.

At a critical juncture of the occupancy process, the City engineers were pressing for the inclusion of an elevator, and that meant an additional \$100,000 in construction costs. This was an amount we had no possibility of raising. And finding an alternative to such a requirement seemed impossible.

Our collection efforts had already reached saturation point. Gurminderjit Singh Ji felt the sangat needed to know of this and other problems that kept coming up and he suggested the Gurdwara stage be regularly deployed for this purpose. We debated the pros and cons of the idea, but did not follow up on it because we were not allowed to by

circumstances. Firstly, money remained the biggest challenge at all times and it was more than enough that the Gurdwara Stage was being overly utilized for that purpose. More importantly, throughout the process of building the new Guru Ghar there lingered a campaign by a misguided group, claiming the project would certainly fail in the end. Some in the Sangat were convinced of this group's convoluted logic that the committee was collecting donations for a project we knew would ultimately fail. Speaking out publicly and regularly of the challenges and obstacles would only feed into such a campaign.

In January this year, Sardar Gurnam Singh Ji of New Hampshire, a regular member of our sangat brought up a similar idea when I was visiting his family. He had no knowledge of my earlier conversations with Gurminderjit Singh Ji. Sardar Ji had been the

representative for our Gurdwara in NH, raising funds and awareness about our existence. He inspired Sardar Manmohan Singh Ji of NH to donate an audio-video system for the Gurdwara – the solution provided for in lieu of the elevator one year ago. After Rehras and Ardas in Sardar Gurnam Singh Ji's house, the Hukamnama appeared to my humble intellect to bless the idea of a project that would allow us to do the following four things.

First it would enable us to put in written record and in the open, important milestones of a challenging and rewarding journey. The journey would thus be preserved. The process began in September 1997 and it is captured from that point instead of just the new premises, which began in 2001. Challenging as the journey of the new premises was, the bold steps taken by a tiny group of the Sangat in setting up the Gurdwara in 1997 were equally daunting and thus equally deserving of being recorded. Second, it provides an opportunity to thank all those who took part in the journey in a variety of ways. An entire list of donations towards the new building fund is included for this purpose. Third, it gives an opportunity for the local sangat, families and businesses to participate in a project of this nature. Members of the sangat and others have, in this Commemorative Issue, an opportunity to contribute their creative thoughts, feelings,

experiences and advertisements. Finally, done one year after the completion of a mammoth project, we are all sufficiently removed from the process. This allows us to honestly deal with our experiences and more importantly, to give the ultimate credit where it rightly belongs – to the Guru.

At the inaugural meeting of Sewadars gathered to chart out programs for Vesakhi under the able leadership of Gurinder Singh Ji, we decided in mid January to incorporate this Commemorative Issue into our activities. The Issue you have in your hands is the collaborative effort of dedicated sewadars working for no charge.

We have chartered out the birth, infancy and maturity of Gurdwara Guru Nanak Darbar in her essay. Baljeet Kaur wrote the *Tribute to the Ladies*. She too has been with the Sangat from the very beginning and deeply involved in the progress and development of the Sangat. Sandeep Kaur Pabla has traced the journey of the *Guru Nanak Darbar Kirteni Jatha*. She was a pioneer member of the Jatha and now leads it every Sunday. Raghbir Singh has put together the report on our inaugural *Samelan* we had in 2004 as well as our *Punjabi Class*. He was instrumental in running the Samelan and the Punjabi Class and is hence in a position to provide a first hand account. Gurbaven Singh wrote the piece on our *Kitchen*, while Ramanjit Singh penned the article on

the *Small Darbar* – the Children’s Program that runs side by side the Main Darbar from 12.00 to 12.45 pm every Sunday. Raman attends this Program and is thus able to provide a first hand account. Baljeet Kaur further compiled the article on *Vesakhi* while the two pictorial essays – *The Sangat and Pangat in Pixs* and *Pictorial History* were prepared by Gurinder Singh. A good variety of the photos in these issue are taken by Gurinder Singh who has photographed the Gurdwara’s activities for a few years. Gurinder Kaur Pabla and Gurpreet Kaur has provided a good number of photographs as well. My own *Sewadar’s Diary* attempts to provide a personal perspective of the Guru Ghar’s journey from the point where it took me on me as a fellow traveler in November of 2001. My other article *Gurdwara Crowd Types* is an attempt to use humor in highlighting negative attitudes pertaining to Gurdwara attendance. Professor Darshan Singh contributed the piece on *Science and Sikh*. Sitvinder Kaur and Brejvinder Singh got together to raise and answer some basic questions regarding Sikhism in their piece *Let’s Learn Sikhi*. Inderjot Singh, Gurpaven Singh, Gursharan Kaur Gill, Baldeep Kaur Pabla, Paramveer Singh Pabla and Ramanjit Singh jointly put together the *Sikh Stories of Sacrifice and Bravery*.

Gurinder Kaur Pabla and Mandeep Kaur bore the burden of

getting the message of this Issue to as many families and businesses as possible in the Greater Boston Area, while Sardar Gurnam Singh Ji did the same for the neighboring northern states. I understand the enormity of their task, because it was a microcosm of a similar task we had when we had to raise \$700,000 for the new premises.

The cover is designed by Gurinder Singh. It was selected from five other designs submitted by members of the Vesakhi Committee.

I thank all advertisers, contributors, individuals, families and Sewadars who have made this Issue possible. I thank Baljeet Kaur for her meticulous proof-reading. The Printers deserve commendation for their patience. I thank the Management Committee and the Board of Directors for the trust in the Editorial Board. I thank all members of the Board for all their contributions. As the Managing Editor, I am ultimately responsible for all errors and omissions, and apologize for them.

**Karminder Singh**  
Editor.