



Setting down for
a better tomorrow!



Welcome to
Anjali!



नमस्कार!

मी एक चिंचेचं झाड बोलतोय. 'अंजली'च्या बागेतील सर्वात जुनं झाड. माझा आणि 'अंजली'चा जन्म साधारण एकाच वेळेस झाला १९२६ मध्ये. आम्ही एकत्र वाढलो, एकत्र जगलो आणि एकत्र सुख-दुःखाला सामोरे गेलो. जिवलग मित्रच आम्ही! तसं बघायला गेलं तर अंजली एक नुस्ती दगड आणि लाकडाची इमारत आणि मी एक साधं झाड, पण तरी आमच्यात एक वेगळं नातं होतं. 'अंजली'च्या पायाभरणीपासून ते 'अंजली' पूर्ण उभे राहीपर्यंत आणि त्यानंतर तिच्या आयुष्यात घडणाऱ्या प्रत्येक क्षणाचा मी साक्षीदार आहे.

एक दिवस मला अचानक समजलं की 'अंजली' मला सोडून जाणार आहे, आणि एक नवीन 'अंजली' तिची जागा घेणार आहे. 'अंजली'चा संपूर्ण प्रवास मी पाहिला आहे आणि तो कुठेतरी जतन करून ठेवावा म्हणून हे खास पुस्तक लिहिण्याचा प्रयत्न. माझ्या 'अंजली'बद्दल यामध्ये नक्की वाचा.



"There's joy in the house, it's full of activity,
One can reside here and enjoy its sanctity."

- Dr Anjali Joshi




Technically, a home is merely a residence built using bricks and cement, but it is much more than that. It's a feeling, an emotion, a connection and strong support.

It's a place where you spend time with your family,
It's a place that watches you learn and grow,
It's a place where you relax after a long day,
It's a place that witnesses all your ups and downs,
It's a place that is with you when you need it the most!



अंजलि



Right from buying a piece of land and developing an architectural plan to witnessing the birth of a home, every member of the family, across generations, unknowingly develops a deep connection with the place.

Birthday celebrations, Anniversaries, Baby Showers, Festivities and be it any other small occasion, this one member of the family is a witness for all.

Anjali, on Bhandarkar Road, was no exception to this.


Anjali was a simple yet architecturally elegant bungalow that used to catch the attention of many passers-by. It stood with pride for 96 years with the same aura. But, just like everything that comes to life has to come to an end someday, so did the existence of Anjali in 2020.



Anjali was situated off Bhandarkar road and was built in 1926 by Dr Anjali Joshi's grandfather, Prof. Shripad Laxman Ajrekar. He was a renowned botanist and his contribution to the field is noteworthy.

This was a prime location plot considering the proximity of many educational institutions, hospitals and the Deccan area. An engineer-contractor named Purushottam Laxman Modak designed and executed the construction of this house. This 96-year-old structure was constructed with stone and brick walls and had wide verandas on 3 sides. It boasted 39 large windows, 40 doors, and 9 entrances and it used to be a challenge for the owner when the house was to be locked. Anjali had 3 sets of staircases - one wooden, one stone, and one with a circular iron structure. Carved teak wood was used in many areas of the house giving it a very majestic look. The sloping roof of the house was covered by red tiles which stood out prominently amongst the dark green mango leaves.

When asked about the features of the bungalow that you are proud of as an owner, Dr Anjali replied within a moment about the elegantly crafted woodwork and beautifully designed staircases. The woodwork was especially a fine example of excellent workmanship.





Dr. Anjali Joshi, owner of Anjali bungalow, has penned down a beautiful poem that aptly describes her bungalow.

Have you ever lived in a huge 96-year-old house?
Inhabited by bats, snakes, snails, and Mr Mouse?
The challenges faced therein you can never imagine,
How daily chores cannot be achieved without fortified vitamins.

Its wooden doors which do not allow people to enter,
Being stuck, due to rain, posing a danger.
But the cold wind into the house has free access,
Through chinks in the walls and holes in excess.

How leaves shower the sprawling verandahs newly swept,
And birds on the rooftop drop half-eaten fruits they have kept.
The visiting cats prefer to sleep on the neatly made bed,
But the stray dog lies in the garden all day, as if dead.

Have you ever heard the 'drip-drip' of leaking taps?
Or heard the creaking of the gate after the midnight lap?
The stone floor is as cold as an iceberg,
And the darkness inside makes the shadows into each other merge.

Yet the house is not sinister or full of mystery,
The radiant face of its owner tells a different story.
There is joy in the house, it is full of activity,
One can reside here and enjoy its sanctity.

Do you know how visitors stare at the house in awe?
They will never truly understand its unique law.
Its three staircases, one of stone, one wooden, and one iron
make it stand out amongst its neighbours like a lion.





She recalls her early days at Anjali saying that she always felt connected to nature. Back then, there were many trees surrounding Anjali and even on Bhandarkar road. The density of the population was quite less. The streets were not crowded and there were just 4 bungalows near Anjali. But today, with time, things have changed a lot. Nature has diminished, traffic has increased, and the city has become noisy.

Her deep connection with the house can be felt in this poem. And how can one not develop a connection of this level when you have spent almost your entire life at one particular location?





Each room in the bungalow has a long history and was full of beautiful memories for the owner. Each room had a peculiar name which may have looked strange to others but for the owner, it aptly described the things associated with that room.

Ukhalichi Kholi

a special room for grinding chillies.

Balantinichi Kholi

a special resting room for newborn babies and their mothers.

Lakadachi Kholi

used for storing firewood

Galnari Kholi

a room in which heavy rains posed a problem of leakage



Gujar chi Kholi

named after a student who occupied that room in 1960 while he was studying in Pune

Kakanchi Kholi

which belonged to grandfather and had a king-sized wooden bedstead in it with teak planks

Istrichi Kholi

a dedicated room for ironing clothes

Varcha Hall, Khalcha Hall

denoting the sitting rooms according to their positions on each floor

Madhli Kholi

a room situated at the centre of the house where the family used to dine in. It was like a cave, very cool in summer, and had lots of privacy.







In 96 years, Anjali had served five generations and every member of the family had developed a strong connection with the home. After all, this home stayed with them through all their ups and downs.





Anjali was surrounded by 36 large trees - some of which were planted when the house was built and some dating back to 1950. These trees create the effect of a forest and one can enjoy their coolness in summer. The variety of trees in my garden is amazing, as proved by the following list- Coconut, Tamarind, Ramphal, Chikku, Mango, Fishtail palm, Bakul, Chapha, Jackfruit, Umbrella tree, Sandalwood trees, etc.

Dr Anjali describes her love for her garden in the following words.

My garden is a green paradise, a pleasure to my eyes,
Full of butterflies, moths, and fluorescent flies.
A place of refuge where I can get rest,
A stage where nature is displayed at its best.

The theme of my garden is 'Unity in Diversity',
Each plant grows close to its neighbour, having no enmity,
Each bright flower can bloom and show its identity,
Each green blade is allowed to grow with full liberty.

My garden is like a painter's palette,
Splashed with bright colours, within a silhouette
It is also like an emerald, displaying a green hue,
Brightly lit by the sunlight and washed by the morning dew.

I share my garden with the birds and the bees and the breeze,
They can come and go and do whatever they please.
Beetles, worms, and bumblebees - they have a lease,
They can live here happily and in number increase.

My garden has its enemies in the form of many pests,
Rats dig tunnels in it in their never-ending food quest.
Fat caterpillars gobble up fresh leaves, always choosing the best,
And clever crows steal brown twigs for their nests.

My heart is in my garden. It will remain there forever
I cannot live without it, now or never.
I want others to enjoy it - let me do them this favour
So come into my garden to remember our saviour.







AJREKAR FAMILY

From L to R - Manohar Shripad Ajrekar, Anant Bhalchandra Sapre, Nilkanth Bhalchandra Sapre, Tarabai Bhalchandra Sapre, Aasha Mukund Ajrekar, Dr. Mukund Shripad Ajrekar, Shripad Laxman Ajrekar, Madhukar Halbe, Tara Madhukar Halbe, Venutai Shripad Ajrekar, Dileep Madhukar Halbe, Anjali Prakash Joshi, and Shrikant Madhukar Halbe.

When we say home, memories have to follow! Every member of the family has some bittersweet memories attached to it. Dr Anjali remembered her mother, Mrs. Aasha Mukund Ajrekar who came to Anjali bungalow in 1947 and lived there for nearly 65 years. She worked as a Reader in Biochemistry at B.J. Medical College. She took the entire responsibility of the house on her shoulders after the early demise of her husband, who worked as a surgeon in England.




FLYING OFFICER
LAXMAN SHRIPAD AJREKAR

She also shared that the best memory of her with the house is that of nature. Being so closely associated with nature is one of her fondest memories. During severe floods in Pune, Anjali opened its doors to the needful and provided them with food and shelter.

Talking about the flip side, she shared a memory that left everyone dumbfounded. Dr Anjali Joshi's Uncle, Flying Officer Laxman Shripad Ajrekar who worked at the Royal Air Force during World War II, was reported to be missing. 22nd August 1944 was when the Ajrekar family received a telegram regarding this from England's Air Ministry. The entire family was shattered by this incident.

Anjali had witnessed it all! Anjali stayed with the family through all thicks and thins!

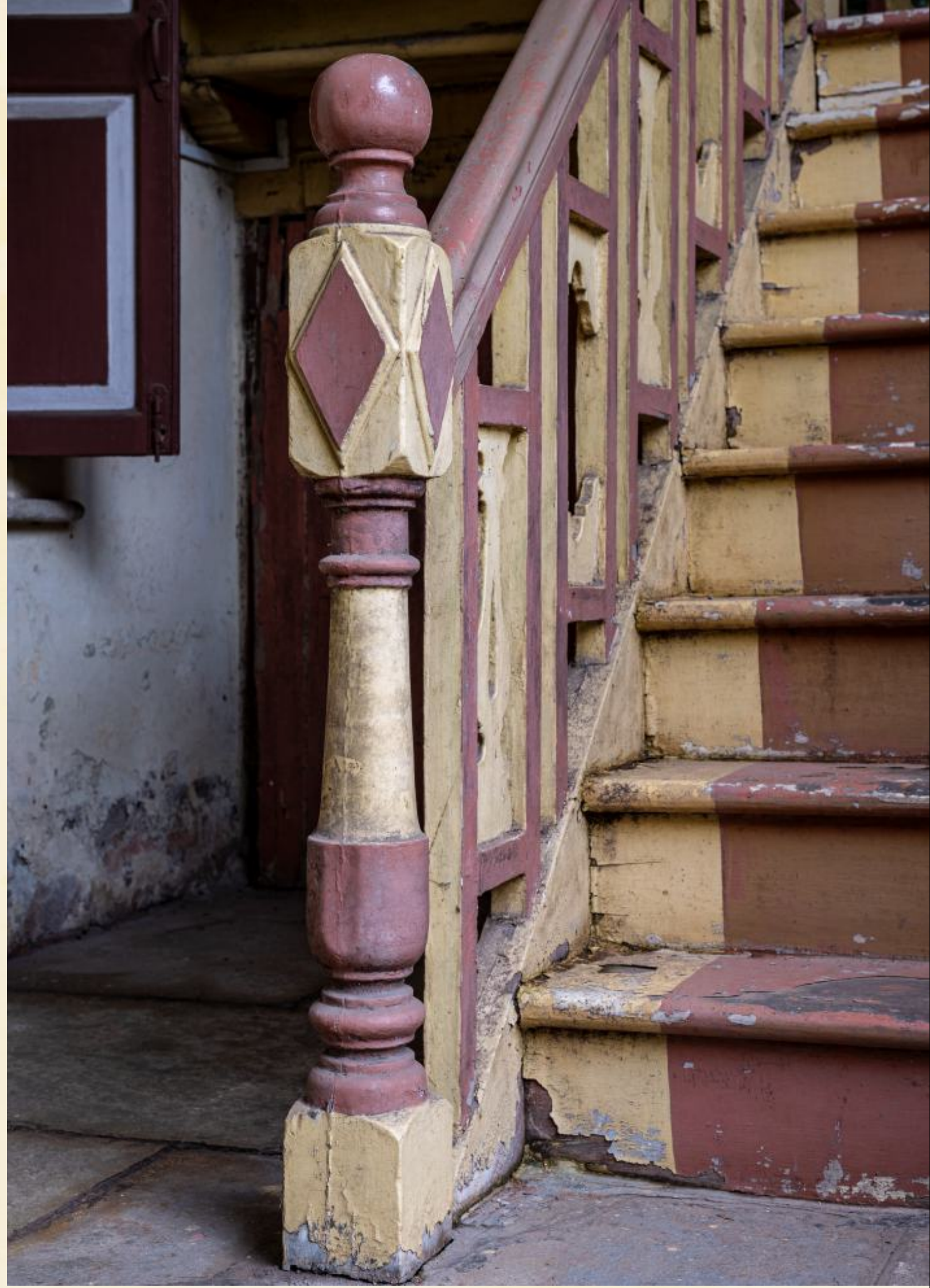


**Anjali had seen a lot in her life.
And it was probably time for her to retire.**

Being a doctor, Dr Anjali described the state of her house in the following words.

“Time has taken its toll as seen by the house's present condition. As a doctor, I can describe it as being pigmented (rain marks on the wall), having osteoporosis (weakened walls), having blocked water pipes that need angioplasty, fractured tiles, and missing windowpanes like lost teeth.”

Further, she adds, “We should not forget that the house will donate many of its 'organs' for future use in other buildings just as human beings donate their organs. Its doors will be used by future generations to enter new vistas of life. Its iron staircase will aid people to 'climb' higher planes both physically and spiritually, and through its windows, young people will 'see' wider horizons ”.





अंजलि

Even though the old structure of Anjali doesn't exist now, its spirit is going to stay alive forever.

A new 'Anjali' will remain the pride of Bhandarkar road.



तर असा होता 'अंजली'चा प्रवास. मला 'अंजली' पुन्हा कधीच भेटणार नाही ह्याचं वाईट वाटत आहे पण मी नवीन 'अंजली'ची तितक्याच आतुरतेने वाट बघत आहे आणि मला खात्री आहे की नवीन 'अंजली'देखील भांडारकर रोडची शान असेल.

चला, येतो आता! नवीन 'अंजली'च्या स्वागताची तयारी करायची आहे.



अंजलि





अंजलि