



## Press Release

Event: "Meet the Minds"

An interactive meeting for authors and readers,

Hosted by: The Sikh Foundation International

On 13<sup>th</sup> Dec .2008 at 11am-2pm

The Sikh Foundation hosted 4 local Bay Area authors who have written books on Sikhs & Sikhism: Ms. Pushpinder Singh, Dr. R.K Janmeja, Dr. Gurnam SS Brard & Ms. Jessi Kaur.

The books covered subjects from children's literature, religion and culture.

The event was attended to full capacity & much appreciated by the diverse group of interested people, from University officials, professors, editors, lawyers, engineers, academicians and other individuals who care about books and their role in our communities.

The meeting was opened by Dr. Narinder Singh Kapany who wanted to stimulate a conversation and introspection among the audience as to the reasons which stand in the way of books by our authors reaching a much wider audience than they are now.

Ms. Pushpinder Singh, author of many publications for children, most popular been "The Boy with Long Hair", this book is based on her personal experience and has been accepted by the California Department of Education. She also talked about 2 of her upcoming books –"Games of Punjabi Children" and "The American Myth". The underlying theme that her writings wish to communicate is the commonalities between all people and the urgency to foster understandings so that no child is ever hurt, no matter what the ethnic background or denomination.

Dr. RK Janmeja, fondly known as Meji Singh, author of "A Sikhs Paradigm for Universal Peace", talked about his experiences teaching young children about Sikhism. Which eventually lead him onto his quest for the true meaning of Gurbani and being a Sikh. He also gave us the exciting

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news about one of his plays been adapted for a feature film and also his upcoming book “Sikhi Revisited”.

Dr Gurnam SS Brard, throughout his professional life was a physicist and it was only in his retirement years that he decided to ink his amazing journey which started from the feudal Punjab of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. His book, “East of Indus: My memories of Old Punjab” is a treasury of a way of life long gone which is written as an ethnographic autobiography.

Ms. Jessi Kaur, author of the recently released book” Dear Takuya: Letters of a Sikh Boy” was inspired by the need for a book which Sikh’s could present to their non-Sikh friends to convey the essence of Sikhism and the meaning of being a Sikh.

For most authors, writing is a labor of love. It is only their passion and not material gain which sustains them on this path.

Ms Sonia Dhami and Mr. Gopal Singh made the audience aware of all the changes that were been done to improve the Sikh Foundation website ([www.sikhfoundation.org](http://www.sikhfoundation.org)) and to create resources for parents and children to expose them to the richness and beauty of Sikh Art, heritage, religion & culture.

Many of the audience had some interesting questions to ask of the authors and also provided important suggestions. Dr. Gurinder Mann, was intrigued by the “fossilization” of thoughts and value systems and compared them to those in the Punjab of today. Mr. DS Sra, very warmly expressed his pleasure at been a part of this important event and hoped more such meetings would be organized, which will encourage the community members to bring in more books into their homes. Dr Avtar Singh stresses upon the need for educating the community as a whole.

The general consensus amongst the attendees was that such gatherings should be organized regularly. The Sikh Foundation will be totally supportive to help improve the level, quality and reach of books, both with Sikhs as well as Non-Sikhs.

All the books by the above authors are available at [www.sikhfoundation.org](http://www.sikhfoundation.org).