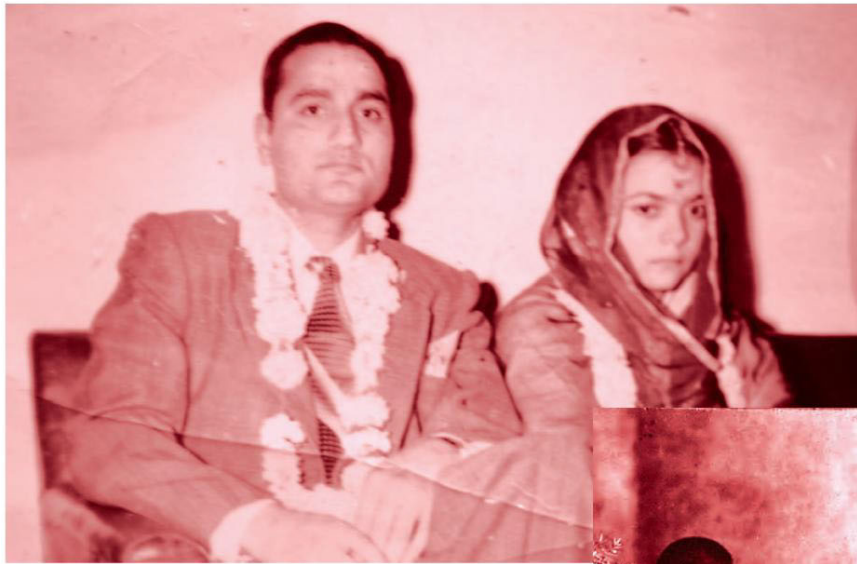


# Remembrance of Things Past

The Indian Memory project is a unique online visual and narrative archive that breathes life into frames captured years ago. **DIANA FERNANDES** connects with photographer Anusha Yadav, the brain behind the initiative.



A picture of Usha Sharma and Jagdishwar Nath Sharma's marriage ceremony, December 12, 1954. Their daughter, Renu Shukla, sent in the story of how their love for cinema brought them together.

Tales from your grandparents' past always tend to transport you to a happier place. Now imagine a whole new nostalgia trip, only this one is online and the stories are of people you may not know. The Indian Memory Project (IMP), an online visual and narrative-based archive transports you into the personal history of the Indian subcontinent, its people, cultures, professions, cities, development, traditions, circumstances and their consequences through images sourced from family archives.

Its founder, Anusha Yadav, based in Bangalore, began the adventure of collecting these 'memories' from contributors in India in 2010. She has since put in a huge effort into each of these personal stories from the past. Yadav born and raised in Jaipur was surrounded with photographs since childhood. "I've always been fascinated with old pictures. My school museum had albums of old pictures and leafing through them was like getting lost in a fantasy world," she told HeraldReview.

What began as a Facebook experiment, grew into a blog and finally a full-fledged website owing to its popularity and public response. Her efforts have not only been commended but also duplicated in countries

What began as a Facebook experiment, grew into a blog and finally a full-fledged website owing to its popularity and public response. Following on Yadav's initiative countries like Nepal have started their own memory project.

like Nepal where a similar memory project has also sprung up.

The website [www.indianmemory-project.com](http://www.indianmemory-project.com) has got responses from Karachi to the rajahs and maharajas of India. Stories from as far as the United Kingdom have made the cut. "No matter what he or she does, or how long they live for, everyone on this planet plays a central role in the history of the world," Yadav says.

A one-of-a-kind project, the IMP is open for photo contributions from anyone in India with a photo taken before 1991 and a story behind it. The process that goes into it is in-



The Cordeiro siblings. Alec (Bunnu), May and Beatrice, Karachi 1910. This story sent in by Naresh Fernandes, is based on the touching life and times of his uncle Bunnu, a Goan who lived in Karachi in the early 1900's.

tense. Yadav curates every single entry and has to match it with the relevant photograph to give it that authentic feeling. "I've received over

150 stories and have been able to curate about 90 so far," she said.

Photographer, photo archivist and book designer, Yadav gradu-

ated from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad with a degree in Communication Design. After 16 years in graphic design, Yadav branched out as an independent photographer and later embarked on her current historical photographic journey.

More recently she has been scouring around for personal handwritten or typewritten letters including postcards. "Family archives of photographs and letters hold astonish-

ing secrets and when they reveal themselves via narratives, they become the missing link to a country's emotional history," explains Yadav. She also has plans to bring out a book based on the 'memories'.

Yadav's IMP initiative is a unique blend of the use of modern technology and connectivity with the stories of the past and offers us as a globalised community a platform to retain and interweave human history and heritage.

■ Review Bureau



Anusha Yadav