

SECOND NATIONAL MINIATURE ART EXHIBITION

Bringing Together the Young Talents

If you ask the local artists the reasons for going into miniature form, which is fairly new for Dhaka, they would explain that the limitation of buyer's budgets and the fact that modern houses tend to have smaller wall space lead the artists to try their hand at this form, which was once patronised by the Roman Catholic Church in Europe and the Moghul nobility in India. Painters like Mohammed Eusuf, Jamal Ahmed, Kanak Champa, K M Mithu and Ranjit Das have already won local and overseas fame in this particular small-scale presentation of art form.

Gallery Tone's second national miniature art exhibition may not have been as well organised as its other normal programmes, as its director, Kanak Champa was indisposed but this contest brought out the best in many young contemporary local artists.

Zamirul Islam, who won the 'All Media Best' award for his 'Gloomy Zorina' has portrayed a street girl seen at a Dhaka park, wearing only a second-hand east-of skirt. This work is so realistic that it could easily be taken for a photograph; the bare-footed, bare-topped girl with her surrounding grey-green tree trunks and fallen leaves took the artist a week to complete. Poster prints, left over from Zamir's stock as a commercial artist, have been utilised for this piece. There are many street-



Mejanur Rehman, Mask-1 mixed-media

girls that I come across so often and for whom I can do nothing in any practical or tangible sense. When I idealise them in my work, I hope the well-to-do in the city will notice them and perhaps be moved to take some action for sheltering and educating these girls so that they have some worth while future," the artist comments about his work.

Rafi Haque, who got the prize for the graphics work, is a relatively young artist, but is incredibly hard-working, imaginative and outgoing. He explains that his work 'Struggling-1' is replete with symbols. The burnt paper used in the collage form in his monograph stands for the inner pain of mankind, as he goes about his every day work. The clay pots and the crude mud over symbolize the necessity of human struggle. The semi-circle at the back also denote strife. Melancholia is brought in by the tiny triangular blue and the larger strip of the same hue in the right hand backdrop. The black outlines of arrow heads scattered all over the work also usher in the elements of disaster and disappointments. The coffin-like box images, placed in the foreground, bring in the prospect of impending doom, as well as the confining aspects that hinder mankind's achievements. In contrast, there is the vermilion rectangle, which brings in prospects of happiness and hope. The newspaper print type work and the backward slant handwriting in imitation of Da Vinci are there to hold the composition together. The piece speaks of maturity and professionalism. Rafi is a final-



Roc...-elt Rozario, Still Life, litho print

by Fayza Haq

year student at the Institute of Fine Arts, DU.

Alaptagin Tushar was overflowing with a sense of achievement when he spoke to me; it was no wonder. 'Room No II', his first attempt at miniature, while he is still a student of MFA has got him the 'Best Realistic' award. This academic work, is a departure from his normal experimental work, he explains. Details of chiaroscuro and tonal gradation has been worked into the delineation of a student studying by lamplight at a hostel. Alaptagin has won Fine Arts Institute award every year from '87 to '91.

The exquisite effect of layers of transparent watercolour washes are seen in Syed Hasan Mahmud's 'Personal Feeling', which won an honourable mention. Hasan Mahmud has been experimenting with this medium from '92 to '95. The scope of watercolour is limited as the transparency and softness must be maintained. Also, it must be finished quickly. As an artist's emotions change every day, it is difficult to register them in watercolour. The abstraction is to represent inner most thoughts. At times the technique gives the illusion of a careful collage. I, furthermore, find it difficult to work on large pieces of paper as the Dhaka heat destroys both paper and paints very easily," the artist says. The painter runs the Jhapi School of Art.



Rafi Haque, Struggling-1, monograph

Mejanur Rehman, whose 'Mask-1' was acclaimed the best in mixed media, says about his painting, 'We tend to hide our feelings of envy, greed, pride, anger etc. under masks, and pretend to be amicable with those around us. Thus, in every day society, we tend to wear masks to camouflage our real feelings. I have attempted to draw attention to the ugliness of the falsehood around us.' The pristine pink child's hand in the painting holds a trishul and contrasts with the hideous multi-coloured mask, done in grey-blue and orange. The garland, hanging to the left, stands for hypocrisy. 'We drape our guests with them in the hope of impressing them with our goodwill - whether we actually feel it or not,' the artist adds. The work is done with poster colour on photograph. The MFA student has exhibited his works at India, Nepal and Bhutan, and does commercial works along with his studies.

Shaker Shaswath's abstract female form, done in metal and called 'Kea Athithi' has been executed in the Jagannath Hall, and this got the 'Best Sculpture' award. Mokul Kumar Baral's 'Universal' in copper won an honourable mention, and depicts the struggle between good and evil forces. The evil figure is shown as lying prone, with toes twisted in the wrong direction. The clay base has been taken from Bangla folk form. Mokul



Mahbubur Rahman, Natural Period -1, cement and metal

complains of the lack of facilities for adequate metal casting in Bangladesh.

Among the other prize-winning pieces were Najib Tareque's 'Bird in the Jungle' which depicts an exotic bird, done with geometrical simplicity, with an abstract background of lines and dots, and Mahbubur Rahman's 'Natural Period', which is a combination of figures seen at a balcony, done in cement and metal. Also remarkable were Roosevelt Rozario's still-life litho-print which depicts a printer-maker's implements, and Sayeed Khondokar's acrylic 'Ever cool', which idealizes the Bangladeshi farmers. Kanak Champa and K M Mithu's works were there to delight viewers with their technique and moving messages underlying their paintings, but these two artists did not participate in the competition. Last, but most certainly not the least, was Qayyum Chowdhury's acrylic work 'My Village', which combines nature with human beings along their rustic paraphernalia. In a beautiful harmony of contrasting colours and simplified forms.

The exhibit brought together numerous young artists with their varied techniques and visions that covered different unique aspects of the visual world. It proved that our contemporary artists could present an array of something fresh and delightful yet again. Gallery Tone is doing a commendable job of encouraging promising artists to think and work with new zeal and fervour.



Mokul Kumar Baral, Universal, copper



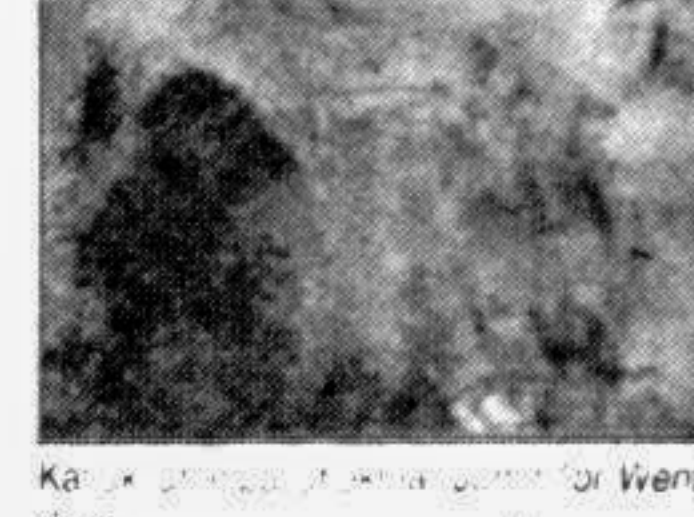
Syed Hasan Mahmud, Personal Feeling, acrylic



Mahbubur Rahman, Natural Period -1, cement and metal



Shaker Shaswath, Kea Athithi, metal



Mokul Kumar Baral, Universal, copper



Qayyum Chowdhury, My Village -2, acrylic

Birth of a Movement

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circle (which has, happily, gone far wider than we had anticipated), and for things of quality, rather than of cheap popularity, where special thanks are due to Nagorik. From the very outset, it went for the sophisticated and the difficult, rather than the easy and the popular. This made its task so much more difficult and its success so commendable. There is an intangible aspect of its contribution which can neither be measured nor written about. It can, perhaps, only be felt. And those of us, who have been privileged to literally grow up with Nagorik, can understand what I am talking about.

What made Nagorik the extraordinary success that it is? In my view, it is the commitment of the whole group, and the leadership of the few at the top. As for commitment, Nagorik was able to create an environment which made all its members feel as if they were a part of a family.

Outside their regular work, all free time the members gave to Nagorik. As professional stage-acting is yet far from a paying occupation, every participant had to do something else to earn one's livelihood. And yet, each Nagorik-member gave one's best, and was always willing to give that 25th hour of a 24 hour day. The commitment worked like magic. Credit must also be given to those in the leadership like Aly

Zaker, Ataur Rahman, Asaduzzaman Nur, Abul Hayat, Dr. Enamul Huq and Sara (apology to those whom I may leave out, given my limited knowledge of the original founders), who actually built the environment that brought out the creative best among all who came in contact with them.

Connected with Nagorik, the writer I admire most, is of course, Syed Shamsul Haq. His 'Payer Awaz Pawa Jai', written in verse with our liberation war as the backdrop, was a superb piece of play-writing. His use of village-level similes to make supremely profound philosophic statements, was stunning both in creativity and refinement of literary expression. His 'Dewan Gazir Kissa' was, in my view, an inspired writing, its political message of freedom from and struggle against oppression, and the patriotic fervor of the play's principal character, made for a play that touched the heart of everybody who saw it. In Aly Zaker's and Nur's superb and passionate rendition, Huq's dialogue achieved a quality of excellence seldom acquired in plays here.

Thus, as Nagorik grew, it gave us glimpses of excellence from the world of literature and art, and we grew with it. It elevated us to a higher world of mind and soul, and made a better human being of us all. We wish Nagorik the very best, and hope it will take us to its greater heights of experience, vision and intellect.

To You-My First Love

Continued from page 9  
relationship goes. Your charisma and incredible inner strength has always left me overwhelmed.

I met you when I was just a child and so the first 'play' I did with you was as a child artist in your production of Molner's 'Bhenpote Behag'. But after eight shows I had to be replaced because I'd grown too tall to act in the role. After this there was a brief relapse in my acting in your plays mainly because I'd reached adolescence and so didn't fit in any of the roles. Then in 1977 you called me back to act in your forthcoming production of Brecht's 'Dewan Gazir Kissa'.

Today I remember that evening (again in an April evening) when my mother gave me permission to attend rehearsals with you. But after the play came on stage I was re-trained from acting in it because my family thought that I was too young to act in the role I'd been assigned. This is when the second break-up in our relationship took place. But this time I didn't let our relations lose contact because, while working with you I'd realized the intensity and vulnerability of my attraction for you. It was intense because I could learn so much from you and I could open myself up to you and it was vulnerable because if I let the relationship go awry I would be replaced in your mind and thus it would come to an end. I didn't want that to happen. So I kept myself in constant touch with you and kept meeting you on and off. Although my family always objected to my contacts with you I always came to you whenever you called. And thanks to my wonderful mother for giving her consent and to allow me to perform whenever you needed me.

Nobody and nothing could break my relationship with you. Not even the guy I married. I even met him through you while performing the production of 'Macbeth'. At a point before my marriage, I'd thought of leaving you for the sake of my other love and to do theatre with him as he's also an actor and an ardent lover of theatre. But after my marriage I couldn't adjust myself to the idea of not being able to work with you. And so here I am still one with you after ten years of my marriage. And that is the reason why my husband and I both perform on stage and love theatre, but belong to different groups.

Remember the first theatre workshop ever to take place in Bangladesh. It was in July 1974, you organized one with the USIS to be conducted by the four actors coming from America. I was the youngest member attending the workshop. At the end of the session the attendants were given certificates. I remember the USIS wouldn't give me a certificate because I was only child artist but you made them give me one because you didn't want to break my heart and because you thought I might lose enthusiasm for acting. I also remember the classes you used to arrange for at the beginning

TELEVISION

Crystal Maze  
Episode 13 on BTV today (Friday) at 9:05 am

Arabian Nights  
Episode 13 on BTV today (Friday) at 8:30 PM.

to educate us about theatre. Classes that taught us the basic and essential traits of being an actor and of producing a play. You taught us about an actor's carriage and about voice and speech - projection, intonation, modulation, emphasis, epithet, clarity, scanning are some of the terms that were explained to us during these classes. I remember reading about Stanislavsky, Brecht, Peter Brook and their ways of acting - about alienation and naturalistic acting, the pros and cons about them; and about the social, political and economic enlightenment that an actor should have. You also recommended books and plays that an actor should read. Oh! how I loved those classes and how I miss them today!

You've taught me to get attached to things that are meaningful in life. You've taught me to read good books, to listen to music that takes one to the heights of exhilaration, to be able to appreciate beautiful pictures. You've also taught that no human being or performer is beyond politics. Nobody could remain neutral and so everyone may or should have his/her own political beliefs. And that is the reason why we can see that almost all your plays have a strong line-up. You've made almost all your plays very relevant for the society, but not too contemporary, because contemporary plays eventually seem to lose their aesthetic value and universality. You have made us realize that to put up a play should not be the goal but to come up with a qualitative production should be the ultimate intention. And that is the reason why you never compromised with the standard of your plays. And, I guess, that is the reason why I've never learned to compromise with anything otherwise.

Some people say that you're inclined towards foreign plays. But I think that you've given the theatre scenario of Bangladesh good plays, both classical and modern, from abroad as well as our own country. The foreign plays that you've produced have been done keeping in mind the contemporary relevance of the country and the people. And so we can see you producing plays like 'Captain of Kopenic', 'Galileo', 'Achalayatan' or 'Mukhosh' (Death and the maiden).

Today I remember the trips I've made out of the city with you. You've introduced me to the beauty of my countryside and the treasures of my country. Each trip I've made with you is etched in my memory because of their individual uniqueness. Remember the trip to Sylhet and of the songs that were written and sung about everyone? Or the trip when some of our friends had frightened others by haunting them with a 'ghost'? Such wonderful memories are there in the cupboard. How can one forget signing songs in the bus or giggling away at nonsense jokes or the heated discussions about books, movies, plays, political issues or the simple gossiping about the people around? Wherever will I get a friend like you in the world!

Now all that I can say about you, is that I love you not only for what you are but for what you've made of me, not only for what you are making of yourself but for what I am when I'm with you.

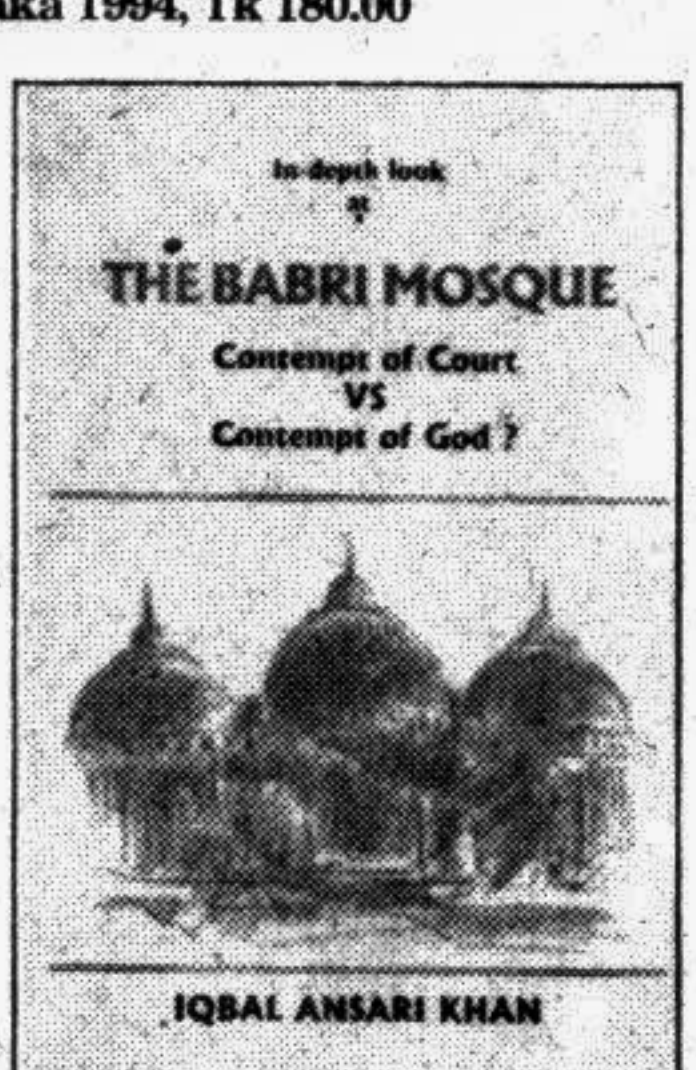
I never want to lose you. You're the one that means the world to me. You're - NAGORIK.

Burning Issues of Conflict

BOOK REVIEW

In-depth Look at The Babri Mosque Contempt of Court vs Contempt of God? by Iqbal Ansari Khan, 23 Green Road Dhaka 1994, Tk 180.00

THE dispute over Babri Mosque is getting more complicated day by day, belting an undesirable alarm to the Indian secularism. With the advent of the British in the sub-continent the Muslims had all along been suppressed in all respects, whereas the Hindu revivalism flourished inevitably giving rise to Hindu fundamentalism. Iqbal Ansari Khan draws attention to the risk and dangers inherent in fanaticism. He has examined the historical, political, ethical and anthropological aspects of the issues involved. He not only tries to focus on the hatred concept but also gives a deeper look into its origin based on caste system and supremacy of Brahmins and tries to awake all Indian citizens to the fact that without communal harmony and friendship among all classes of the people, India cannot survive.



But in fact the reference should be to Hazrat Ibrahim and Hazrat Ismail (Peace be upon them).

In chapters four and five, the author provides historical analysis and archaeological support to defend Emperor Babur and Aurangzeb who have been alleged to have destroyed temples and disturbed communal harmony. The writer has cogently presented the arguments in this regard to counter such accusations.

The remaining chapters tend to describe the British conspiracy about Hindu-Muslim harmony, the burning issues of conflicts, the savage activities of Hindu fanatics and the reaction of both Indian central and state administrations over the demolition of the mosque. The writer also talks about the conspiracy of the Congress and BJP to gain political leverage over the conflict. Ansari Khan advances further and tries to establish the fact that the Babri Mosque complex can never be the Ram Jambhumi.

However, with all its evidences this book seems to be of benefit to the people of this sub-continent and also to world conscience. It may help in disproving the fictions that have been put forward by the fanatics and may thus direct towards a peaceful solution of the problem. It is indeed a task to all intent and purpose. This book will be useful to historians, sociologists, researchers and teachers. The publication has been very timely.

Reviewed by Dr M Shamsher Ali, Vice-Chancellor, Bangladesh Open University.

Viewing Video

by Lenin Gani

OUTBREAK deals with the threat caused by a deadly virus that contaminates a small California town.

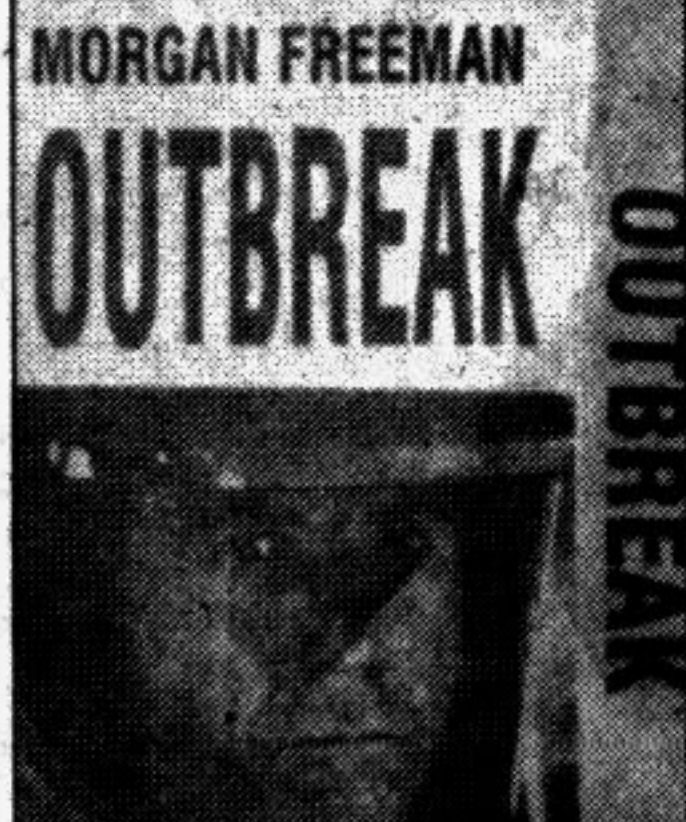
The virus, which originated in Zaire, has transformed into an airborne type more like 'flu' after being smuggled into the States by a monkey.

Army medics Col Sam Daniels (Dustin Hoffman) and wife (Rene Russo) who work at the infectious diseases centre are despatched by General Ford (Morgan Freeman) to tackle the situation. However their task is hindered by a stubborn Gen McClintock (Donald Sutherland) who first tries to conceal the fact that the army, which was manufacturing the stuff for years, were testing it out on the inhabitants. And then orders the town to be blown away after their creation gets out of hand and threatens to envelop the entire country.

Hoffman realises the horrible truth and hops on a chopper to search for the host monkey so that the antibodies for a serum can be developed.

Each time Ted tells the mayor about the series of bird attacks he simply advises Ted to go home.

However the winged menace does attack the inhabitants of the town with awesome effect.



- | NAME                                       | ENGLISH           | CAST   |
|--|-------------------|--|
| 1. Forrest Gump                            | (Drama)           | Tom Hanks  |
| 2. Outbreak                                | (Thriller)        | Dustin Hoffman/Rene Russo/Morgan Freeman/Donald Sutherland/William Shatner/Patrick Stewart |
| 3. Star Trek-VI (The Undiscovered Country) | (Sci-fi)          | Brad Johnson/Chelsea Field/James Naughton/Jan Rubes/Brooke Shields/Jack Nicholson          |
| 4. The Birds II (Land's End)               | (Thriller)        |  |
| 5. Diamond Trap                            | (Action)          |  |
| 6. Ride In The Whirlwind                   | (Action)          |  |
| 7. The Voyager Odyssey                     | (Docu)            |  |
| 8. Dreams Of Flight                        | (Nat'l Geography) |  |
| 9. Atlantis                                | (Nat'l Geography) |  |
| 10. Big Bill (The Story Of A Heron)        | (Nat'l Geography) |  |
| 11. Godzilla                               | (Sci-fi)          |  |
| 12. Space 1999 (Vol II)                    | (Sci-fi)          |  |
| 13. Sinbad Of The Seven Seas               | (Adv)             |  |
| 14. The Ewok Adventure (Dir: George Lucas) | (Adv)             |  |



- | NAME         | HINDI     | CAST   |
|--------------|-----------|--|
| 1. Haathkadi | (Rom/Act) | Govinda/Shilpa Shetty/Madhoo/Shakti Kapoor/Kiran Kumar |

Source: Film Fair Video and other clubs.

Memories of Another Day

Continued from page 11

Ganu Miah's house, people started arriving from the surroundings, and soon a little crowd had gathered. Barun Kumar Tripura says, 'I vividly remember that day. General Manzur patted my head and gave me a biscuit to eat.'

The biscuit supply had not been enough for these mysterious visitors and so General Manzur called Zahur and asked whether any food could be bought from near about. Moofi was about the only food available in the area and Manzur sent him off with some money to buy this.

It was Zahur who first informed Mritunjai Chakraborty, the accountant of Aasiya Tea Estate, about the visitors. At the time he had no idea what significance this held, that history was in the making under their very noses.

Major Reza went further back into a concealed ditch, his sten-gun ready. Meanwhile, headed by a havildar, a police force arrived at Ganu Miah's house. Siddique Ahmed remembers how they began to search all around, just as they were proceeding towards the undergrowth at the back, a commanding voice rang out loud. 'Proceed no further, men, you will be in danger. I will come out myself.' Thus speaking, General Manzur emerged from the undergrowth and surrendered to the havildar.

General Manur and the rest had sat down to eat in Ganu Miah's house when suddenly the barking of dogs startled them. The General looked at Major Reza and asked what could have made the dogs bark all on a sudden. 'I don't know,' replied Major Reza helplessly. But he realised that all was not well. 'Sir, we should hide,' he urged.

Major Reza had heard the General's voice from his ditch. Realising that it was no use to hide any more, he threw the gun to one side and emerged too. Siddique Ahmed says that the havildar first saluted General Manzur and then Major Reza.

Upon General Manzur's command, Major Gias had got up and left. He managed to run away then, but eventually surrendered. His wrist-watch still remains at Aasiya Tea Estate. He had sold it to someone there for travel expenses. Everyone in the area knows about the watch.

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Along with Major Reza, General Manzur hid in the thick undergrowth upon the hillock at the back. Then

Ganu Miah's house is no longer there, just a broken-down shed in its place. But the remembrances of that eventful day still thrive among the people of the estate. Like a fairy-tale, the events of the day 14 years ago have been passed from the older generation to the next. The aura of history is still alive.

Roosevelt

Continued from page 11

with determination and purpose. On D-Day, the sixth of June 1944 as American and Allied forces were invading occupied Europe, Roosevelt took to the airwaves and offered not a speech, but a prayer. 'Almighty God,' he said, 'Our sons, pride of our nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity. Lead them straight and true; give strength to their arms, stoutness to their hearts, steadfastness in their faith.'

who lived through those years remember most and his infectious optimism in the face of personal and national difficulty. Politically, he was an unabashed liberal - 'a little to the left of center,' as he once said. 'The faith of a liberal is a profound belief not only in the capacities of individual men and women, but also in the effectiveness of people helping one another,' he said.

He believed government must be the employer of last resort. 'Government has a final responsibility for the well-being of its citizens,' he said.

Above all, Roosevelt was a pragmatist, who believed in 'bold, persistent experimentation' to meet the challenges of his time. In meeting those challenges, he earned an honored place in the history books.

Roosevelt's leadership during the war and the difficult years that preceded it is given high marks by historians of all political stipes. But it is Roosevelt the man that people