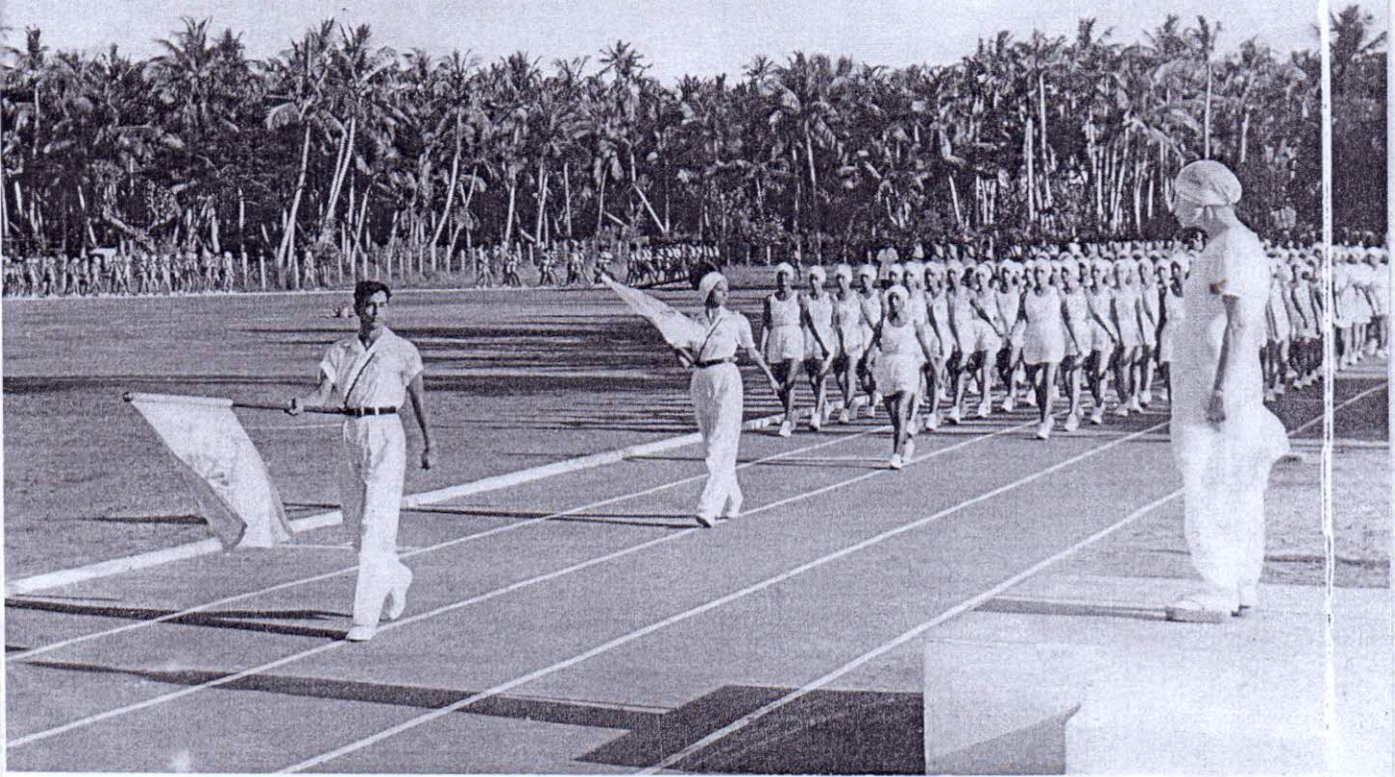


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# The Golden Chain

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE ASHRAM



# MY DAYS AT THE CORNER HOUSE

## A COMMUNITY KITCHEN CAN TRANSFORM YOU FOREVER

By Sachidananda Mohanty '75

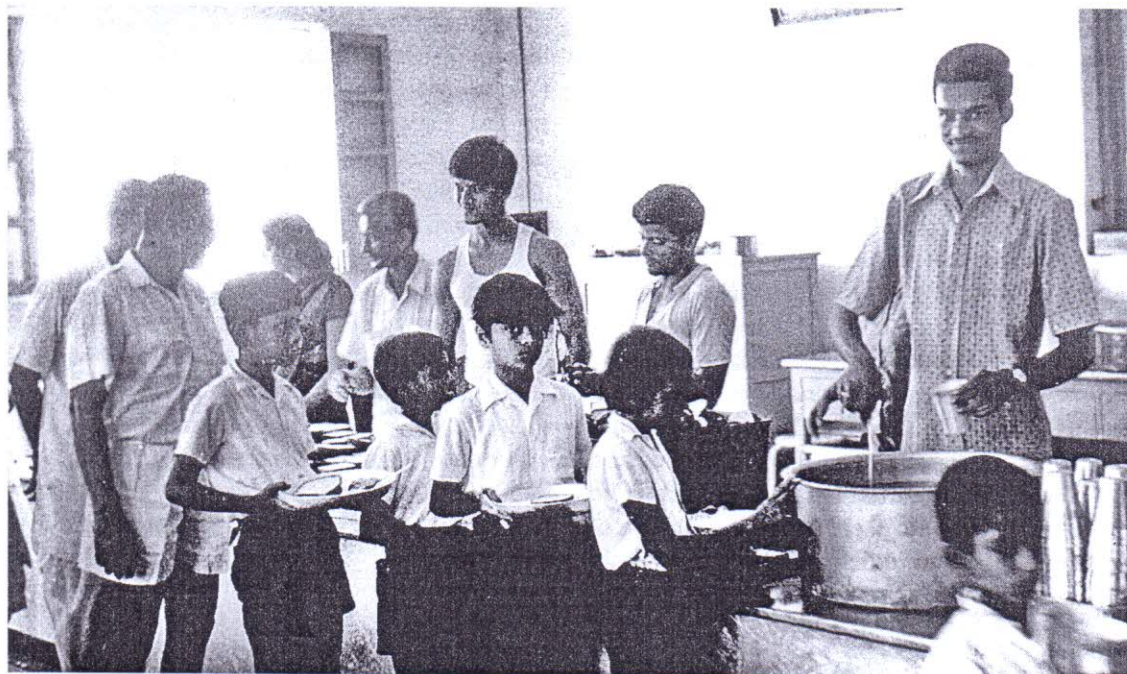
**B**y October end 1975, I had passed out of the Higher Course of the SAICE and had the invitation from the Ashram Trust to join the community as a probationer-in-mate. I was asked to meet Ravindra-ji in his upstairs office in the Ashram Main Building. Given my academic bent of mind and performance in studies, I was hoping to join the Ashram School.

Ravindra-ji seemed to have other ideas for our batch of probationers. "The Mother had said that one should not have any preference for work," he said. "Whatever work is assigned ought to be carried out willingly. I have decided that you will work in the 'Accounts Department.'" When he heard me murmur that I had no calling for

finance or accounts, he said, "Well then, you will work at the Corner House", with his characteristic laughter, with a sense of finality.

I came out of his room somewhat dazed and crestfallen. I had no experience of cooking or working in a community kitchen. Like all boarding students, food came to me automatically and easily four times a day at the Home of Progress, Dining Room, or the Corner House. One of course knew that there was an army of men and women who toiled hard every day to keep us well fed and healthy, but clearly, this was an unseen labour, invisible and unrecognized.

I knew that 'Swabhava' and 'Swadharmā' were important considerations in the teaching of the



Corner House anniversary: Pranab-da in the queue (extreme left). Mahendra-bhai, Gautam, Sachidananda at the serving counter.

