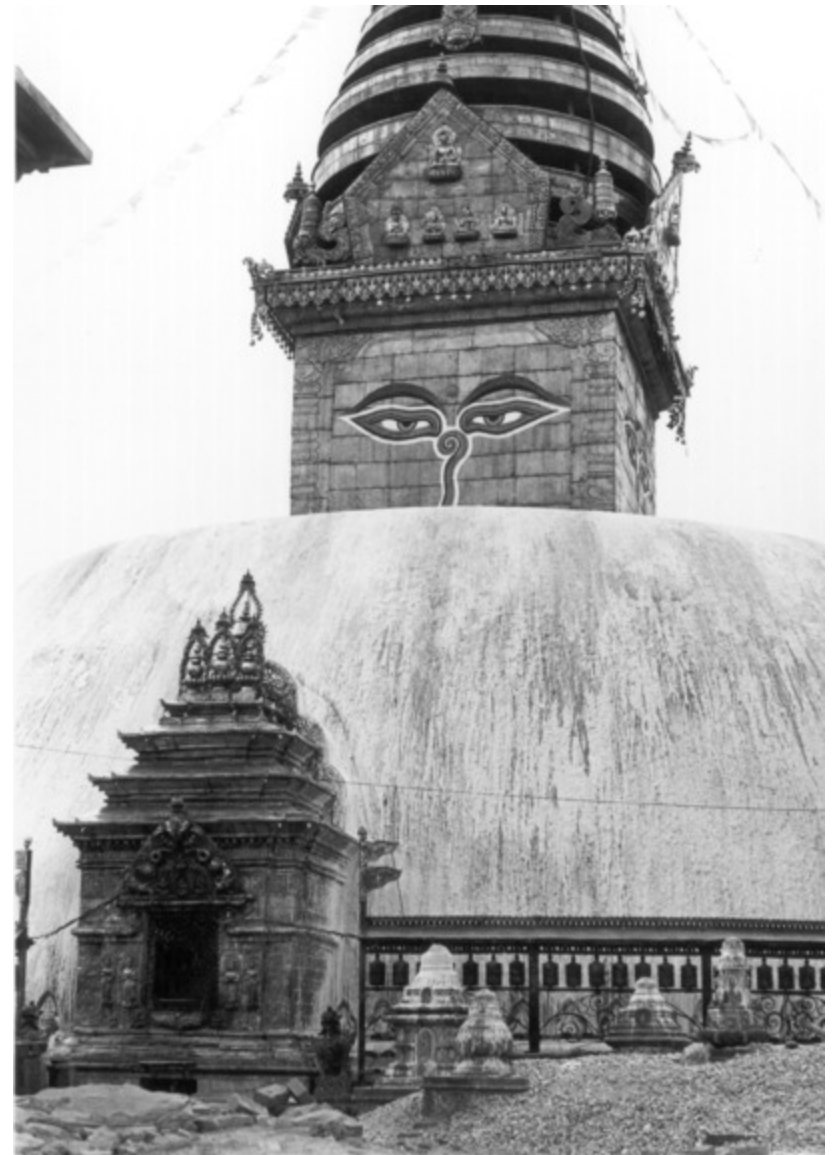


The Buddhist stupa of Swayambhunath, located on a hillock on the western end of the Kathmandu Valley, must be approached by a long stairway. As one climbs the stairway, one passes various statues of the Buddha, such as the one shown here. These statues I would guess are from recent centuries; the stupa itself is thought to be a couple of thousand years old. In this statue, Buddha is “touching the Earth.” The story is that, as Buddha was on his last meditation to Enlightenment, the demon of impermanence, Mara, attempted to distract him, and challenged him regarding his authority. In response, Buddha touched the Earth. The Earth responded to Mara, saying, “I am his witness.”



This is the stupa of Swayambhunath. In addition to representing essential teachings of Buddhism in its symbolic structure, this famous temple also celebrates the origin of the Kathmandu Valley. Thus, it is a national symbol, and not merely a religious one. The story is that, ages ago, the Valley was a lake. The sage Manjusri, meditating in the Himalaya, realized that a form of the Buddha nature, known as *Swayambhu* (“the self-born”), resided in the lake as a kind of fire, a sublacustrine flame. Manjusri is usually represented with a sword, representing his powers of discrimination. He took his sword, and cleaved a gorge in the Valley, draining the lake and revealing *Swayambhu* on the hillock where the stupa now stands. Somewhat interestingly, modern geologists have confirmed that, in recent geologic history, the Valley was indeed a lake.





Although the resolution is poor, Swayambhunath is discernible on the hillock in the distance. I believe this photo is taken looking north. You can see the other hills at the western edge of the Kathmandu Valley in this photo. The building in the foreground is probably a hotel.



The other major stupa in Kathmandu is Bodhanath, which is on the plains in the center of the Valley. This is a view of Bodhanath from a small hill within the Kathmandu Valley.



Bodhanath again. Unfortunately, the resolution did not come out well.

This is the entrance of what is probably the most famous Hindu temple in Nepal, Pashupatinath. The temple is dedicated to Shiva, the Lord of Animals (*Pashupati*). The doorway shown here is actually an entrance from the temple to the Bagmati River, a main waterway in Kathmandu. Hindus cremate rather than bury their dead, and they prefer to do so by sacred waterways (the Bagmati being one). The stairway shown here leads to the cremation grounds, or *ghats*, adjacent to the temple. Pashupatinath is one of the principal pilgrimage sites for Hindus all over the world. The interior of the temple is off-limits to non-Hindus.





Harkajit Lama on the left and Purna Chandra Subedi on the right. I believe that this shot was taken in Basantapur, within Kathmandu.

This lady, Dorothy Miller by name (no relation of mine), was, at the time (1982), the oldest Peace Corps Volunteer in Nepal, and I believe the oldest in the world. I can't remember her exact age, but I believe she was in her 70s at this time. She taught English in Kathmandu.





Purna was with me in Kathmandu during the summer of 1982, which is why you see so many photos of him here. We shared what was, in retrospect, a very small room with two other Peace Corps Volunteers (or PCVs), David Newman and Jerry Blakley. These were typical living arrangements for PCVs in Kathmandu, actually. A former PCV, Linda Clum of New York, lived in the same building in an adjacent room. The building was located in a relatively clean part of Kathmandu known as Ghairidhara. The place actually had a yard with grass, and a charming puppy, shown here, which David waggishly named Lawrence, after T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia fame).





Mr. Jerry Blakley with Lawrence and me in Ghairidhara.



Another photo of myself with Purna and Lawrence in Ghairidhara.



PCV Jerry Blakley with Lawrence on his lap, and Purna, in Ghairidhara.



Here they are again!



The most experienced official in the Peace Corps Office in Kathmandu was Mr. Tika Karki, shown here. If I recall correctly, Mr. Karki was trained academically in linguistics. He designed the training programs for teaching PCVs Nepali and other languages of the Himalayan environment, and he oversaw the field program in which PCVs instructed Nepali students in English. He had a keen and active mind, and enormous professional dignity, which was very credible in the field.

Most of the administrators and officials in the Peace Corps Office were Nepali citizens. Mr. Ambika Joshee, shown here in his office, headed the math/science education program, which I was in. So, although my supervisor was the Headmaster of Janata Sudarshan Secondary School in Thuli Pokhari, Mr. Joshee was my program coordinator, which in many ways functioned like a supervisor. (He's the one I actually list as supervisor on my resumes.) Mr. Joshee worked tirelessly to see that we had what we needed, and carefully reviewed our performance and the performance of the whole program. He was outstanding both as a supervisor and as a program coordinator.





The Peace Corps Medical Director was Dr. Theresa van der Vlugt, shown here. She probably saved my life more than once. All of the PCVs owe her an enormous debt of gratitude. She studied at the School of Tropical Medicine in Tulane, New Orleans.





An equestrian statue of Jang Bahadur Rana, the Saddam Hussein of Nepal. Circa 1840, during a meeting of high administrators and legislators in a palace near Kathmandu, he had the building surrounded and everyone killed. He seized power, and reduced the royal family to puppet status. He became very friendly with the British, who desired stability in the border between India and Nepal, and thus cemented his hold on power. Prior to the massacre, he was a high-ranking military official. His family ruled Nepal as a personal fiefdom until Indian independence after World War II. This statue is in Kathmandu. Yes, those are electrical power lines in the background!

Dharma Raj Subedi in Ratna Park, Kathmandu. Dharma Raj graduated from Janata Sudarshan Secondary School in 1980, the year I arrived in the village. He was studying for an intermediate degree in Pokhara at this time, but was visiting family members in Kathmandu. Ratna Park is the main municipal park in Kathmandu, similar to Central Park in New York or Griffith Park in Los Angeles.



Purna with Dharma Raj.



Myself with Dharma Raj.





In the center of Ratna Park is a beautiful pond, Rani Pokhari (“the Queen’s Pond”), with a beautiful pavilion in the center. Note the Moghul design, with the central turret. The Moghuls understandably had great influence on Nepal up until the 19th century (when their influence was eclipsed by that of the British). I’m not sure what the origin of the pond and pavilion is; perhaps it was created to please one of the early queens. In the background is Tri-Chandra College, the oldest center of higher education in Nepal. It was founded early in the 20th century.

This is the largest *thangka* I ever saw in Nepal. It was in the Hotel Annapurna in Kathmandu. *Thangka* is a Tibetan rather than a Nepali word. It designates a miniature painting on cloth, invariably depicting Buddhist themes. The image depicted here appears to be of Mahakala, whom I described in a previous set of slides.

