

Research studentships set up at Oxford University in honour of Goan scientist

Joseph Rufino Cordeiro invented a digital meteorological measurement system which was granted 2 patents in UK in 1983. His expertise in radio navigational aids and communication became recognised worldwide and his design skills were utilised in 27 international airports around the world

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THE GOAN NETWORK | LONDON

In a unique initiative, the Joseph Rufino Cordeiro Foundation has announced a collaboration with the University of Oxford on May 12, to sponsor inaugural summer research studentships in Sustainable Chemistry and accommodation at Worcester College to encourage and nurture Goan or Indian students.

The Joseph Rufino Cordeiro Foundation has been founded by Mary Anne Cordeiro to honour the memory and legacy of her late father, Joseph Rufino Cordeiro, a brilliant Goan scientist and inventor, whose expertise in radio navigational aids and communication became recognised worldwide.

EARLY LIFE

Rufino was born in Mombasa, Kenya, on April 23, 1924, but went to school in Goa, Belgaum and Pune, while his mother completed the construction of their family home in Saligao.

“He was a polymath and although his passion was always science and medicine, Rufino eventually graduated with a BSc from Ferguson College in Physics and an MSc in Electronics awarded by St Xavier’s College, University of Bombay,” informed his daughter Mary Anne.

Rufino’s first professional role was in Gwalior where he was hired by the Holkar to run his private airport, but his father was keen that Rufino relocate to Kenya where he believed his son would be able to find better prospects.

ACHIEVEMENTS

As his father predicted, Rufino transitioned quickly into a prestigious job with International Aeradio (IAL) in Nairobi in 1952, and later was head consultant of the Directorate of Civil Aviation in Kenya. There, he met his future wife soon after he arrived in Nairobi, and they married after his 7-year single-minded courtship of Lira in 1959.

In 1969, the young family moved to the UK for the sake of their three daughters’ education. Rufino continued to work for IAL in London for another 10 years, during which his expertise in radio navigational aids and communication became recognised worldwide.

He continued to work in similar roles for other international aeronautic companies until he retired in 1989. His design skills were utilised around the world in 27 international airports, including Abu Dhabi, Brunei, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria and Singapore.

One of Rufino’s proudest achievements was the invention of a digital Meteorological Measurement System for the quantification of wind speed and direction, which was granted two patents in the UK in April 1983 and sold to three different end-users.

Rufino was thrilled that his three daughters, Lucinda, Mary Anne and Francesca, all chose to follow in his scientific footsteps. Lucinda and Mary Anne are Chemistry alumni of the University of Oxford. Mary Anne is a member of the Development Board of the Chemistry Department and matriculated in 1979, the first year that women were accepted into



Rufino Cordeiro carrying out an airport survey with colleagues in Malawi in the 1970s.



Rufino Cordeiro on his 90th birthday.

Worcester College.

LOVE FOR GOA

Mary Anne said her father was a stalwart supporter of Saligao and dutifully visited his family home there annually.

“He supported many local and international causes to promote fellow Goans. He was delighted to become president of the Saligao Association UK in 1977 and sponsor the Mae De Deus Feast in Saligao in May 1984. Everyone who knew him considered him to be a gentleman of great integrity, strong faith and deep convictions,” added Mary Anne.

Rufino passed away at the age of 96 at his family home in Bray, Berkshire on January 5, 2021.

RESEARCH STUDENTSHIPS

Mary Anne founded the Joseph Rufino Cordeiro Foundation to honour the memory and legacy of her late father, a brilliant scientist/inventor who was proud of his Goan heritage manifested through his



Rufino Cordeiro and a colleague on location with East African Civil Aviation in the 1950s.

philanthropic acts.

“We intend to offer up to three Joseph Rufino Cordeiro Foundation Studentships in 2023. The studentships will provide successful candidates with up to £4,200 for a defined period of up to 8 weeks in July and August. Up to 3 successful candidates will also be offered paid-for accommodation in Worcester College, Oxford, for up to 8 weeks,” explained Mary Anne.

“The Foundation sponsors projects that nurture young talent in innovative scientific research and also encourages Goan/Indian students in those fields.”

“The grants will offer the successful applicants an opportunity to experience postgraduate research at the University of Oxford, enable them to advance excit-

ing research and inspire them to pursue postgraduate study and a career in Sustainable Chemistry.”

“The grants will also improve their research and transferable skills, and give them access to advice on further study and research careers,” Mary Anne added.

The eligible applicants must be enrolled in an undergraduate degree in chemistry, demonstrate academic excellence and potential, be able to provide proof of right to work in the UK and must submit their application with an academic reference by email to jane.rice@chem.ox.ac.uk latest by 12 noon (GMT) on May 26, 2023. The website <https://tinyurl.com/y4wz96fn> provides further information on how to apply for research studentships.