

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Namita Asthana**

Ms. Asthana was born and raised in India with a very large extended and close knit family. After marriage, she and her husband resided in several countries traveling extensively through Europe. A job opportunity moved them to Fort Bend County in 1996 where Namita found her true home.

She and her husband raised their son and daughter in Fort Bend and became very involved in many organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, YMCA, Meals on Wheels and the Exchange Club.

In 2015, she and her family opened a restaurant in Missouri City called "Off the Vine Bistro," a farm-to-table gastropub serving fresh, natural foods.

Namita shares the rich history of India, under British rule and as an independent country; as well, as the history of her family including involvement in the quest for independence.

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Interview Summary

People (in order mentioned in interview)

Manish Asthana – spouse

Saakshi Asthana – daughter

Samarth Asthana – son

Rameshwar Dayal – maternal grandfather

Bob Hargarther – mentor & friend

Susan Hargarther – mentor & friend

Shyam Kumari – maternal grandmother

Krishna Mohan – paternal grandfather

Geetika Dayal – sister

Prateek Mohan – brother

Vijay Narain – father

Kamla Rani – paternal grandmother

Neerja Srivastava – mother

Places / Businesses

Brussels, Belgium

Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce

Fort Bend Seniors

Fort Bend Family YMCA

Berlin, Germany

India

India House Society

Events

Namita was born in 1965 in Lucknow, India in a large, close-knit family with lots of grandparents, aunts, uncles & cousins.

To keep her grandmother warm, the cousins would wrap themselves around her like “warm water bottles.” They ate Indian and Western foods.

Namita attended a Catholic all-girls school for much of her formal education until she switched to a co-ed French Protestant school.

She and her husband married in 1989 and immediately moved to Brussels, Belgium where both of her children were born. They did extensive traveling around Europe and were in Berlin when the wall came down.

They relocated to Fort Bend County in 1996. However, while her husband continued to travel internationally, Namita decided to stay in the county so her children would have a stable life.

She became involved in many organizations, often serving as an officer in the YMCA, Fort Bend Seniors, Chamber of Commerce and the Exchange Club. She and her husband, Manish, started several successful companies including their most recent adventure, “Off the Vine Bistro” serving farm-to-table natural foods in Missouri City. Their son and daughter are both involved with the restaurant.