

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

# MADRAS MUSINGS

Vol. XXIII No. 9

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August 16-31, 2013

## Metro Rail's impact – on churches...

(By A Special Correspondent)

Tunnelling for the Metro in the Broadway area recently resulted in two historic churches developing cracks. With these being certified as non-threatening to the structures, work has progressed. Metrorail has also promised that it will repair the buildings immediately. All this is to the good. But the week-long drama merely exposed the fact that heritage structures in the city do not have any proactive protection as the following lines will show.

The first building to develop fissures was the Wesley Church. The matter received due publicity in the press. The response was predictable. It is reliably learnt that Metrorail was of the view that such cracks were only to be expected. But with a second church, the Arcot Lutheran, too showing signs of stress, experts from the IIT had to be called in. This was after the parishioners of both shrines expressing distress at what had happened. The IIT certified the fissures were superficial and Metro promised to get them repaired. Matters have ended there now. The Heritage Conservation Committee of the CMDA, which is supposed to be responsible for the protection of such historic structures, was conspicuous by its silence. Not even a line expressing concern could be elicited. To what purpose is such a body?

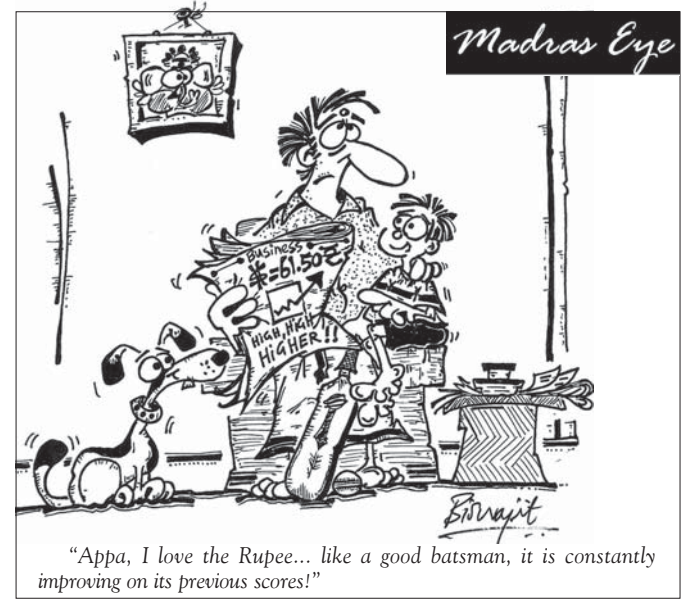
What is being forgotten is that Broadway is replete with historic structures and there are at least 16 of them down the principal thoroughfare. Among the listed ones, the Church Missionary Society's Parish Hall is in a particularly enfeebled condition. It has already required shoring up of one wall using steel supports. An edifice that is more than a century in age, it belongs to the CSI's Tucker's Church, which stands opposite. Work is yet to begin on the

stretch where this building stands and it is doubtful if it can withstand tunnel boring below its foundations, unless some special efforts are taken to support it. But that is unlikely to happen as Metrorail does not have a publicly available policy on what steps it takes to protect heritage buildings before work begins in the vicinity. Beyond asking owners and users to stay away from the premises, it does little. It merely installs some vibration monitors in the vicinity and by the time the readings are noted, the damage is done. Steps for protection, if any, are taken only after cracks develop and there is a hue and cry.

Even now it is not too late. There cannot be more than 100

identified heritage structures along the routes that Metrorail will be taking. Why cannot the HCC insist that Metrorail, together with IIT, undertake a study of each of the structures? The effort must detail what are the weak points in each and identify what steps need to be taken to prevent any structural damage. The recommended safeguards can be put in place before work begins. That way everyone would be happy.

The current episode has, however, thrown up one positive development. This is the first time that Metrorail has acknowledged that cracks are due to its activities. Earlier, when similar incidents took place on Mount Road and the Esplanade



"Appa, I love the Rupee... like a good batsman, it is constantly improving on its previous scores!"

area, stout denial was the sole reaction. And whatever little action has taken place in connection with the two churches is entirely due to the strong involvement of the parishioners who have demonstrated a strong sense of ownership and pride in their heritage. Not all heritage structures are so lucky.

It is reliably learnt, in fact, that several owners will be happy to see their buildings fall consequent to Metrorail work so that they can redevelop their properties. That too is an understandable point of view. In a city where there are no rewards for holding on to heritage, what else can be expected?

## Why can't temple tanks be put to good use?

Yet another threatened water crisis has receded a little. With copious inflows in the upper reaches of rivers that run across the State, Chennai too has cause for cheer. In the absence of an immediate crisis, why can we not turn our attention to some long-term preparation? Why can't the various temple tanks in the city be cleaned up and made ready to receive the monsoon waters, as and when the rains come to our city?

Chennai and its environs are blessed with several temple tanks. Barring very few, most are mere cesspits and a shame to a citizenry that is becoming increasingly religious. Several have been filled up in the past and converted into bus termini and shopping complexes. Though that concept has died out thanks to better awareness,

civic pride and a passion for maintaining the surviving temple tanks have not yet come. As a consequence, these water-bodies are merely gaping holes in the earth.

A temple tank is not merely something that is used for rituals. It plays an important role in maintaining the neighbourhood

ecology. In hot weather spots such as Chennai, it cools the environment and provides fresh breeze. Above all, it recharges the groundwater in the surroundings. With so many pluses going for it, why are temple tanks so neglected?

Perhaps the best instance of this is Mylapore. It has no less than five temple tanks. But the only one with water is the

Kapaliswarar tank. The rest are apologies. Those within temple precincts, such as the Madhava Perumal tank, are somewhat better off in terms of cleanliness as compared to Chitra Kulam which has remained a glorified puddle for decades. Even the Kapaliswarar tank, though it is full of water, has had to be cor-

doned off to prevent the neighbourhood and visitors from dumping their garbage into it. But that it has survived itself is a miracle. It was only in the 1990s that a temple trustee had recommended that the space, then dry, be cemented over and put to use as a venue for a laser show! A laudable attempt at tank restoration that ended in failure was the one at

Tiruvanmiyur. The locals were delighted that the tank was revived by external agencies but once this was done, they were quite happy to let it go to seed. There was no sense of involvement in what should have been a community project.

Elsewhere in the city there are chronically water-starved spots, such as George Town. It may come as a surprise to many that there are at least six major water tanks attached to temples in George Town. Not one has water and as for the biggest, the Kasi Viswanatha Swamy temple tank, also known as the Krishnappa Naicken Tank, it has been steadily destroyed over the years. What was a relatively clean water-body till the 1990s is now moss-covered and empty. In ancient Purasawalkam, the Gangadheeswarar

(Continued on page 8)

● by A Special Correspondent

• **A reader writes...**

# Medhurst, Elizabeth and Loveless

I am an Australian working on a biography of my ancestor, the English missionary, Dr. Walter Henry Medhurst, and my research required me to recently visit Chennai.

I was particularly interested in Dr. Medhurst's wife, Elizabeth, and her early years growing up in South India, because she was to become an important partner in the missionary life of the Medhursts. She was born in Thanjavur in 1794, the daughter of George and Elizabeth Martin, her father being an officer in the Madras Army.

During her early life, she and her younger sister Sophia had moved around to various regimental stations. In 1803, her father was a Captain, based at the Fort in Trinopolly.

In 1807, the newly appointed Governor,

Sir George Barlow, sparked a crisis in Madras when he decided against the previous practice of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army having a seat in the Governor's Council. The Governor also made a number of other changes to allowances for senior officers which, he believed, were being abused. In short, these activities initiated an atmosphere of revolt within the Madras Army and George Martin, a Lieutenant-Colonel now, was one of three officers who signed a covering letter to the General outlining what could be construed as seditious demands. The crisis came to a head but, before a resolution could be achieved, General Hay Macdowall, the Commander-in-Chief, resigned and returned to England, only to die when his ship was lost at sea. Meanwhile, George Martin was sent back to London to explain to the Directors of the East India Company the army's side of the dispute. The crisis ultimately died down and Martin returned to India as a full Colonel with the 13th Madras Native Infantry in 1813.

In the middle of this crisis, Elizabeth's mother fell ill with a fever and died. Distraught from

the loss and under the threat of a court martial from the potential revolt, George Martin arranged for Elizabeth, then just 14 years old, to marry a fellow army officer, Lieutenant George Braune. The couple got married at Chitradurga on October 14, 1808. George Martin entrusted Elizabeth's younger sister Sophia to their care and he returned to his army duties.

Elizabeth dutifully bore her husband two sons, the first when she was 16 and the family was living at Machilipatnam.

Tragedy struck again in 1815 when the younger son died on the day that Elizabeth was to celebrate her 21st birthday. As if that was

not bad enough, her husband was away on a campaign at

Kurnool. Whether he died of wounds sustained during action or from

some other cause is not recorded. We do

know that he died on November 26 at Gooty. Elizabeth would not learn of the death of her husband for several weeks, receiving the news as a dreadful Christmas present. By that time her father had returned to India and word came that he had also died at Bellary in June that year.

So at 21, Elizabeth became an orphan, a widow and lost one of her children. All of this in a land where she had no family other than her son and her younger sister. She moved to Madras, placed her sister in an orphanage and went to live with missionaries at what is now the William Charles Memorial Church in George Town. There she taught and looked after the children, receiving board for herself and her son for her services. Then known as the Missionary Chapel, it was founded in 1806 by William Charles Loveless of the London Missionary Society and was the first church to be built outside Fort St George. Elizabeth's young son George was able to attend the school which the missionaries operated just next door to the church.

(Continued on page 11)

## Ballot-time in clubland

By the time you read this, the greatest election that mankind has ever known will be over. *The Man from Madras Musings* alludes to the battle for the ballot at one of those gentlemen's clubs in the city. A hallowed home-away-from-home for over a century and more, it has recently seen more activity in the bar, by which MMM speaketh of the legal variety. Accusations of torts and malfeasances hold court, not to forget soggage and barratry in fief. But that is the way of all things in Madras-turned-Chennai, isn't it?

Anyway, it is not the build-up that led to the present elections, held under the watchful eye of the law that MMM wants to speak about. The behaviour of the electoral hopefuls has, on the other hand, given plenty of grist to MMM's mill. Several of these,

looks, heavy breathing and profuse sweating. After this follows a litany against the competition in the field. Then the final shot: "But with your support I definitely will make it." By then another potential vote has been espied and so off he bounds, his figure not giving the least indication of such agility. MMM is not certain about the electoral verdict but these candidates will definitely emerge fitter and more svelte.

Some have taken to canvassing in such earnestness that they smile and shake hands with just about anyone. One of these even embraced a passing waiter thinking him to be a member. The shock was too much to bear for both and they had to be revived with a few quick ones.

But, as MMM says, it is only a question of time. The results

angry women, brooding men and a resigned-to-their-fate set of the elderly. Not a chair was in sight. There was no water either. And as for ventilation – perish the thought. If this was the fate of the 'adhaarables', those who were doing the 'adhaaring' were not much better off. They had the latest cameras and laptops, it is true, but as for the rest of the amenities that go to make up an ergonomic workplace, there was none. A sole fan that swirled slowly distributed hot air. The only light was from the laptop screens and the seating was something left over from the Chinese torture chambers. Bedrolls strewn about indicated that the Adhaarers lived on the premises. A permanent odour proved that they cooked, ate and answered nature some-

### SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

who invariably looked through MMM all along, have now suddenly become friendly. What was once an eye like Mars, so to speak, has become an eye like Ma's, full of the milk of human kindness. Having descended from their lofty heights they have begun taking cognisance of lesser beings, of whom MMM is also one.

The hopefuls have been calling up over phone. They have sent letters and emails. One group of aspirants has banded together and taken to sending combined appeals. The lone operators are more colourful. Some have printed expensive brochures on themselves, replete with full family details (ideal husband, doting Dad, good to dogs, happiest among books and great guy to have around the home) and social achievements (laid roads, built bridges, planted trees, dug wells and was good to widows and orphans). But more than all this, it is the personal encounters that they specialise in.

The Cheshire Cat is what comes chiefly to mind. MMM has to merely be in the vicinity of one of these suitors to become aware of a powerful and steely grin (is it because of gritted teeth?) being directed at him. Shortly thereafter, the grinner emerges in full and having fixed MMM's eye with a steady gaze and enveloped MMM's hand in a vice-like grip, proceeds with his pitch. Pausing briefly to remind MMM as to how he has been kind to MMM in numerous ways in the past, he speaks of how he plans to make the Club another Eden, a sceptred isle and a paradise on earth. All this is accompanied by steady gyrations, beseeching

will soon be out and everyone will revert to hauteur, stiff-upper-lip and spreading embonpoints. Until the next battle for the ballot, that is.

### Being 'Adhaared'

Came a day when *The Man from Madras Musings'* good lady announced that he had to get an Adhaar card. MMM was not exactly enthusiastic but in the face of the Iron Lady's steely resolve he capitulated. All kinds of dire eventualities befell those without an Adhaar card, said the good lady. You did not get gas connections, banks froze your accounts and you became persona non grata with the powers that be, she added for good measure. The Adhaar team camped but briefly in each neighbourhood she warned, and they had a tendency like the Arabs (or was it the Assyrians) to suddenly fold their tents and leave. And once they had gone it was apparently like the moving finger in Nebuchadnezzar's feast. Not all your piety nor your wit could bring them back.

And, so, off MMM went feeling rather like Childe Roland who came unto the dark tower. Nothing could be closer to the truth. Dark was the *mot juste*. The venue was a school, which had probably been designed by an architect who specialised in prison cells. It was with great apprehension that MMM walked in. In his fevered hands he clutched a set of documents, the most important one being a small census slip that proved MMM was for real and not a mere wraith or phantasm.

Outside the chamber waited an increasingly restive populace – wailing children,

where close by.

Into this despairing darkness MMM stepped when his turn came. It was like something out of a noire Bengali film. The man doing the Adhaaring asked MMM to show his documents. He shook his head as though he was not satisfied and then left the room taking all of MMM's papers with him. After a stage wait, a more superior being arrived and having looked at MMM twice, reluctantly conceded that he, MMM, was of Adhaar standard. MMM was asked to step in front of the camera and smile. But try as he might, MMM could not. He is now, therefore, permanently enshrined in Government records as one prone to melancholia. Then came what was known as 'fingering'. MMM was asked to place his thumbs first and then all his other fingers on a gadget that recorded their patterns forever. Next time there is a smash-and-grab raid in the neighbourhood, the Government would know where to look. A cold nod indicated that MMM could leave. Outside, the women continued to be angry, the men brooded, the children wailed and the old remained passive. MMM smiled.

### Afterthought

Coming away, his documents intact, *The Man from Madras Musings* could not help wondering as to why any interaction with the Government has to necessarily be sans any physical convenience. Surely in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, those in charge can be more sensitive to basic amenities?

– MMM



# Madras Week '13

18th to 25th  
August

Updated till August 9<sup>th</sup>

## August 10-24

- **Storytelling.** *Storytelling about Beach and Ocean Eco-Systems.* 9 Storytellers (members of the Chennai Storytelling Association) at six locations around Chennai.

August 10: Glow Worm Club, Shenoy Nagar, 4217 0507. 4.30-6 p.m.

August 16: Little Millennium, Kilpauk, 98400 91290. 4.30-6 p.m.

August 17: Hippocampus, Adyar, 94440 49175. 4.30-6 p.m.

August 21: Kalaa Manjari, Alwarpet, 98404 21305. 4.30-6 p.m.

August 23: Burgundy's, MRC Nagar, 4900 1000. 4.30-6 p.m.

August 24: InKo, 98401 77215. 4.30-6 p.m.

At each location, there would be a mix of stories such as animal fables, grandmother stories, fairy tales, episodes from epics, myths, historical stories, and personal experiences – all on the theme of Beach and Ocean Eco-Systems. There will be discussions after the stories. 9 Storytellers are participating in this project. A few of them will perform at each location.

## August 12

- **Music Competition:** Papanasam Sivan songs. PSBB, KK Nagar, and Madras Heritage Lovers' Forum have organised their programmes for students of the Central Cluster and neighbourhood schools.

The neighbourhood schools include PSBB Millennium, Gerugambakkam; PSBB Siruseri; Kendriya Vidyalaya, Ashok Nagar; Springfield, KK Nagar; MAK, KK Nagar; Devi Academy, Valsaravakkam; AVM School, Vadapalani; Karthikeyan Matriculation School, Vadapalani; Government Cariappa School, Vadapalani; and Government School, MGR Nagar. These schools will participate in all the PSBB and MHLF programmes. For details: Shanthi Chandrasekhar: 23663165/ 23664251 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.).

## August 13

- **Oratorical Competition.** Topic: *How I Visualise Chennai Ten Years from Now and Impact of Metro/Monorails on Heritage.* Duration: 3 minutes each. Organised by PSBB and Madras Heritage Lovers' Forum.

At Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Sr Sec. School, K.K. Nagar. 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

## August 14-20

- **Blog Competition.** Blog on a topic each week and win a Tablet. The topics are:

**August 1-6:** *Madras to me is...*

**August 7-13:** *An iconic Symbol of Madras...*

**August 14-20:** *Greatest British contribution in Madras to Modern India...*

Send your blog entries to [madrasweek@britishcouncil.org](mailto:madrasweek@britishcouncil.org) with your name and date of birth. Blogs in Tamil are also welcome. Watch our facebook page for weekly winners.

Organised by the British Council

## August 14

- **Philately Quiz on Chennai.** Each team: 2 students. Organised by PSBB and Madras Heritage Lovers' Forum.

At Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Sr. Sec. School, KK Nagar. 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon.

## August 16

- **Nizhal Tree Walks.** Nizhal is organising tree walks. The walks will last for about an hour. Rediscover the verdant parks and magnificent trees in your neighborhood with friends and family! The Azhinji at Kotturpuram Tree Park, the Thaandri at Semmozhi Poonga, the Putranjiva at Panagal Park and many more such gems! Online through [www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade](http://www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade)  
1st walk: Kotturpuram Tree Park. 5.00 p.m. (Tamil)  
For registrations please call Usha at 97910 29568 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

## August 16-17

- **Exhibition.** Exhibition of photos, books, drawings and assorted items. Supported by Madras Heritage Lovers' Forum.  
From 10 am-4.30 pm At St. Joseph's High School, Erukkenchery (MKB Nagar)

## August 17-22

- **Walk into the British Council.** Answer our Trivia questions on Madras to win daily prizes. Organised by the British Council

## August 17-31

- **Exhibition.** A photo exhibition on Madras by photographer S. Kanakaraj. At Studio Palazzo Art Gallery, Chetpet

## August 17

- **Chennai Heritage Walk.** *Adyar and around* led by Sriram V. The tour is partly by van and partly on foot and end with breakfast. The tour is charged and prior registration is necessary. Payment details will be emailed on receipt of registration. 6.00 a.m. Registration by email at [srirambts@gmail.com](mailto:srirambts@gmail.com)

- **Nizhal Tree Walk.** Nageswara Rao Park, Luz Church Road. 4.30 p.m. (English)

For registrations please call Usha at 97910 29568 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Online registration through [www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade](http://www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade)

- **The Mint Food Trail.** A food trail organised to discover the food delicacies of Sowcarpet in and around Mint Street. Start point: Kakada Sweets, New No 348 Old No 343 (Near Jain Temple), Mint Street, Sowcarpet.

How to get there: Reach Flower Bazaar police station. Turn left to join NSC Bose Road. Turn into Mint Street on right side, walk for 5 minutes and you will see Kakada Sweets on the left side. The Walk will take you to 4/5 great North Indian snack outlets in and around Mint Street to give you a taste of the rich food offers in this part of our city. You will also get a feel of Mint neighbourhood. No registration charges. But you will need to pay for the snacks you wish to sample. Note: Since this is a very crowded area with no parking facility, we suggest you come by auto and walk to start point.

Starts at 4.30 pm. Ends at 6.00 p.m. To register, Contact Pratibha Jain: 24986651 (during office hours). Email: [support@pratibhajain.org](mailto:support@pratibhajain.org)

- **Talk.** An illustrated talk by Dr. R. Bhanumathi on *Natural Heritage of Chennai* covering diverse flora and fauna. Organised by ELAI. Gallery Sri Parvati, 28/160, Eldams Road. 6 p.m.

- **Photowalk for children.** Open to children studying in classes 5 to 12. Starts from the Luz Church and ends at the Madhava Perumal temple, Mylapore. In this walk children will get to pick up trivia about the history of the landmarks on the way and get to capture interesting scenes. Children with a camera (any type) and love for Chennai can join. Organised by [www.YOCee.in](http://www.YOCee.in), the website for children and led by N. Ramaswamy of <http://chennaidailyfoto.wordpress.com>. Parents are also welcome to join their children in the walk.

Prior registration required. Limited to first 25 registrations. Contact 98405 44629 – Revathy for registration. 4.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. (approx.)

- **Exhibition.** *Go Green* – Exhibition of products and services for sustainable living organised by Inner Wheel District 323 and *The Hindu* At Hyatt Regency. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- **Musical Presentation.** *Glory of Karṇagambal* by Kausalya Shivakumar. At Tattvaloka Auditorium, Teynampet. 6-7.30 p.m.

## August 18

- **Heritage Walk.** Fort St. George Heritage Walk. Led by Vincent D' Souza. Meeting point – Parking lot opposite the main gate of the Fort. Late comers will not be able to join the walk due to security reasons. Free. But participants should register by sending an e-mail to: themadrasday@gmail.com. Starts at 6.45 a.m. Duration 2 hours.
- **Madras Day Heritage Ride.** The bicycle ride will start from University of Madras (I.C.E Entrance) and end at St. Peter's Church, Royapuram. Helmet is mandatory. Please wear bright coloured clothing to enhance visibility. The ride is free of cost and has no registration fees. You are responsible for your own safety. Obey all the traffic rules. The road will not be closed for the event. Ensure that your bike is in a good and safe-to-ride condition. For more information, details and registrations please visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cyclingyogis/> or contact Senthil Phone No: 9884246822, Mr. Ramanujar Phone No: 9884023123 Starts at 5 a.m. and ends around 7 a.m.
- **Chennai Heritage Walk.** *The Islamic Heritage of Mount Road* led by S. Anwar. The tour is partly by van and partly on foot and end with breakfast. The tour is charged and prior registration is necessary by email at srirambs@gmail.com. Payment details will be emailed on receipt of registration. 6.00 a.m.  
**Presentation:** Y.G. Mahendran and A.R. Srinivasan will present a dialogue-presentation on *Adventures in Tamil Theatre*. At Tag Centre, 9.30 am (Open **only** to members of the South India Heritage group).
- **A Special Musical Nizhal Tree Walk.** The walk will be led by the Nizhal team (Latha Nathan and Dr. Babu) and Carnatic musician Dr. Sowmya along with her disciples. Meeting and assembly point will be the Kalakshetra Road entrance to the campus. 8 a.m. at Kalakshetra.
- **Nizhal Tree Walk.** Anna Nagar Tower Park. For registration please call Usha at 97910 29568 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Online through [www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade](http://www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade) 4.30 p.m. (English)
- **Exhibition:** Inauguration of exhibition of C.L.D. Gupta's "Line drawings of Madras, Queen of the Coromandel". Inauguration by P. Chellapan. Public lecture by S. Muthiah. Exhibition will be open on all days from the time of inauguration till 24th August. At Roja Muthiah Research Library, Tharamani. 5.00 p.m.
- **Art Competition and Handwriting Competition.** Children above 5 years can take part in an Art and Handwriting competition to be held at Kalaa Manjari between 2-6 p.m. This is open for all NON GLOBAL ART children. The topic will be given on the spot and will be related to Madras Week Celebrations. All children will get participation certificates. Kalaa Manjari, 6/12, First Street, Venus Colony, Alwarpet. Register before 16th August. Registration Fee: Rs. 100. Contact: 2431 2676/98404 21305  
**Crafting along the Marina** – Scrapbook making. Open to children of classes 6 to 9. A walk taking in the statues on the Marina beach starts from Kannagi Statue. At the end of the walk children will get to do a scrapbook on their walking tour. Children need to bring their own pens, colour pencils, sketch pens, scissors and glue. Resource person: Krishma Shankar, *Memoirs of Paper Craft*. At 4.30 p.m. Open **only** to first 25 registrations. SMS with name and age to 9840544629 for registration on or before August 15.

- **Storytelling at The Children's Space.** Asha Sampath of Tale Spin, Kavitha and Debjani of Once Upon a Time... Tells a Tale' will tell stories about Namma Chennai. Followed by a storytelling activity. Open to children and adults. At the Children's Space Mookambika Complex (basement), Alwarpet, Chennai 18. Contact: 87544 70178. From 5 to 6 p.m.
- **Chennai Heritage Talk.** *A Superstar of Tamil Cinema* by Mohan V Raman. At Grand Chola, 6.30 p.m. Entry restricted to **first 150** persons.

## August 19-23

- **Exhibition: Reflections** – an exhibition on the heritage and monuments of Chennai, by the students of The Pupil. Organised by Parampara, the Heritage Club of The Pupil has organised Madras Memoirs for the students of neighbourhood schools. Neighbourhood cluster schools include: Loyola International School, Poonamallee; Chennai Public School, Thirumazhisai; Chennai Public School, Annanagar; Sundar Matriculation, Poonamallee; Sana School, Kattupakkam; Schram Academy, Maduravoyal; Christ Matriculation School, Seneerkuppam; National IT School, Mangadu; Devi Academy, Valasaravakkam; PonVidyashram, Valasaravakkam; Mangadu Public School; PSBB Millenium, Gerugambakkam; Maharishi School, Thiruverkadu; Vellammal Vidyalaya, Maduravoyal; Pioneer Matriculation School, Nolambur; Kalakshetra Matriculation School, Kattupakkam; and RMK School, Thiruverkkadu. Prize distribution on August 23, at 1.30 pm. At The Pupil Saveetha Eco School, 4/68, Thiruverkadu Road, Seneerkuppam, Poonamallee. 10.30 am to 12 noon. Registration on or before August 12. For more details, Shameem Banu S. 044-26802013/14/15 or 9952399966.
- **Competition.** Identify this iconic place in Madras. Log into [www.facebook.com/BritishCouncilIndia](http://www.facebook.com/BritishCouncilIndia). Be the first to identify to win daily prizes. Organised by the British Council.

## August 19

- **On-the-spot Painting Competition.** Topic: *The Place I Like in Chennai*. Organised by PSBB and Madras Heritage Lovers' Forum. Materials to be brought by the participants. Chart paper will be provided by school. At Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Sr. Sec. School. K.K. Nagar. 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.
- **Katha Kalakshepam.** *Alwar or Nayanmar*. At Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Sr. Sec. School. K.K. Nagar. 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.
- **Quiz: A City, Its People & Places.** Std. 7-9. Two teams per school in cluster. Each team: 2 participants. Registration on or before August 12. At The Pupil Saveetha Eco School, Poonamallee. 10.30 am to 12 noon. Registration on or before August 12. For more details, Shameem Banu S. 044-26802013/14/15 or 9952399966.
- **Chennai Heritage Talk.** *Advertising in Pre-Independence Madras* by A.R. Venkatachalapathy. At Chamiers. 6.30 p.m.

## August 20-31

- **Exhibition.** *The Madras Region Before the British*. At the Vennirul Art Gallery, C.P. Art Centre. 10 am to 7 pm.

## August 20

- **Chennai Heritage Talk.** *FM in Chennai* by Rajeev Nambiar (CEO, Hello FM). The Park. 6.30 p.m.  
**Quiz: The Madras Dozen**, a quiz on the heritage buildings of Madras by S. Muthiah. Organised by Rotary Club of Madras South and two other clubs. Hotel Savera, 6.30 p.m. **Open only to Rotarians.**  
**Multimedia Contest on Heritage of Chennai.** Multimedia presentation contest for city schools. Subject: *Old Houses of our City*. The contest encourages city school students to explore Chennai's history and heritage and present the subject in multi-media form. *Guidelines:* Students must first locate an old house (tiled or Madras

terrace house or a bungalow) which is over 60 years old in your area. The house must be a residence. The team must record the location and ownership history of this house. They must photograph all the unique and key features of its architecture, inner spaces and vintage properties used by its residents. The team must gather details about these unique features (roof and walls, rooms and open spaces, etc) and list the purposes they serve to its residents.

**Rules:** The contest is open to school children studying in classes 8 to 12. A school can send only one team. Each team MUST have three members and all the three members must take turns to make the presentation. (No substitutes please!) Once the house is located for study, please call the organiser Ms. Revathi R at 98405 44629 and get the project approved and team members registered. This must be done before the work on the project is started. The duration of the complete presentation – PowerPoint and Oral – should not exceed 10 minutes. Participants should be prepared to answer questions of the judge/s.

On the day of Contest, the team must bring a copy of the CD to the venue of the contest and get it checked (before 9 am). We advise you to carry a backup digital copy. The organisers will provide a PC and a projector at the venue for your presentation. The best THREE presentations will be awarded TROPHIES, gifts and certificates. All participants will be given certificates. Prizes will be awarded on the same day at about 4 pm. Prizes will be awarded based on quality of research / presentation of pictures-visuals / presentation style.

At Srinivasa Sastri Hall, Luz, Mylapore 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with 30 minutes. lunch break. This contest is open to the first 20 school teams to register. Registration on first come first served basis. Organised by *Mylapore Times*. Venue Sponsor: South Indian National Association and Ranade Library, Luz.

**Quiz on Heritage buildigs of Chennai** conducted by Mr. S. Muthiah. Organised by Rotary Club of Madras South, Madras Temple City and other clubs. 6.30 p.m., Hotel Savera. **Only for Rotarians.**

**Designing a T-Shirt:** *A Chennai Flavour*. One team per school. 3 participants per team. T shirt designing on a white T-shirt. Registration on or before August 12. Prize distribution on August 23, at 1.30 pm. Required materials to be brought by participants.

At The Pupil Saveetha Eco School, Poonamallee. Std. 7-9. Registration on or before August 12. For more details, Shameem Banu S. 044-26802013/14/15 or 9952399966.

**Rangoli:** *Colours of a City*. Two teams per school. Each team to comprise 3 participants. Required materials to be brought by participants. At The Pupil Saveetha Eco School, Poonamallee. Std. 5-9. Registration on or before August 12. For more details, Shameem Banu S. 044-26802013/14/15 or 9952399966.

- **Exhibition:** Photographs, paintings and sketches of important places in North Chennai. Organised by The P.G. and Research Department of Historical Studies, Sir Theagaraya College, Old Washermenpet, Chennai 21

## August 21

**Music Performance and Lec-dem.** University of Madras's Music Department organises *Nalayira Divya Prabandham* and Multilingual Compositions on Lord Parthasarathy of Triplicane.

F50 – Thanthai Periyar Hall. 11 a.m.

- **Pulli Kolam Contest.** 30 minutes. 13 dots. Materials to be brought by the participants. No colour allowed. Organised by PSBB and Madras Heritage Lovers' Forum. At Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Sr Sec. School, KK Nagar. 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.
- **Talk.** *Musicians of Kalakshetra*. Resource/Speaker: Dr. Gowri Ramnarayan. Kalakshetra. 4:30 pm
- **Chennai Heritage Talk.** *Dialects of Madras* – Badri Seshadri Amethyst, 6.30 p.m.
- **Quiz:** *A Madras 25* – a quiz on the heritage buildings of Madras by S. Muthiah. Organised by the Indo American Association. 6.30 p.m. Presidency Club. For IAA members and guests only.

- **Talk.** Namma Arcot Road presents *The Nawabs of Arcot* by S. Anwar. At Namma Veedu Vasanta Bhavan, 100 Feet Road, Vadapalani. 7.00 p.m.
- **Poetry Recitation in Tamil.** *Heritage in Verse*. 2 participants from each school. The Pupil Saveetha Eco School, Poonamallee. Std. 5-9. For more details, contact: Shameem Banu S. at 044-26802013/14/15 or 9952399966.
- Presentation and exhibition of sketches on Madras by The Chennai Weekend Artists. At Amethyst, Whites Road. From 6.30 pm onwards.

## August 22-23

- **Project.** Prathiba 2013 – *Singaara Chennai*. Inauguration: Dr. Suresh Sethuraman. Valedictory: S. Muthiah. Organised by PSBB Millennium School, Gerugambakkam. Venue: PSBB Millennium, Gerugambakkam.

## August 22-September 1

- **Photo Exhibition:** *Through the Looking Glass: 1945* at The Gatsby Village, 359, East Coast Road, Neelankarai. 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

## August 22

**Seminar:** *Wallajah, Pigot and Tanjore: Did they transform trading to expansionism?* An all-day seminar. Speakers: Stephan Rowan of the British Council, S. Anwar and S. Muthiah. Organised by the British Council and hosted by Prince of Arcot.

At Amir Mahal. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For invitees only.

**Exhibition.** *People and Places in Chennai*. Organised by the Department of History & Tourism, Stella Maris College. At the OAT From 10 a.m to 3 p.m.

An Inter-departmental Quiz Competition in Room M.01 at 1 p.m. At Stella Maris College. **Open only to the students of Stella Maris College.**

- **Film:** Screening of documentary *Sekkizhar Adi-p-Podi* by T.N. Ramachandran and Ravi Subramaniam. At Roja Muthiah Research Library. 5.00 p.m.
- **Talk.** *Envisioning a Pedestrian-friendly and 'Walkable' Chennai*. Kadambari Badami, Transparent Chennai, talks about achieving the dream through participatory planning, public-government partnerships, citizen empowerment, and the Nanganallur project. Press Institute of India, CPT Campus, Taramani. 5.30 p.m.
- **Chennai Heritage Talk.** *Panel discussion on Changing Professional Profile of Chennai* – chaired by Chandu Nair. Park Sheraton. 6.30 p.m.
- **Illustrated Talk/Presentation:** *Girls of Ice House – 1914-1928* by Nithya Balaji and Kaveri Bharath. This presentation will be in the form of a narrative with photographs. A set of anecdotes about the girls who lived in the *Ice House*, when it was a home for child widows. Interaction and discussion will follow. At Spaces, Besant Nagar. 6.45 pm onwards. For further details Nithya Balaji 98414-96723.
- **Drawing and painting:** *City of your Dreams*. Group 1: Standard 4-6. Group II: Standard 7-9. One team per group Each group comprises 3 participants. Participants to bring white chart paper. At The Pupil Saveetha Eco School, Poonamallee.
- **A Travelling Exhibition:** *Clean Adyar, Clean Cooum, Solve Madras's Water Problem* at The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation. 10.30 a.m. The exhibition will visit schools and colleges from August 22-30.
- **Quiz Competition.** On places, personalities and events relating to Chennai. The P.G. and Research Department of Historical Studies, Sir Theagaraya College, Old Washermenpet, Chennai 21. At Sir Theagaraya College.
- **Students' Seminar.** *Evolution of North Madras*. Sir Theagaraya College.

## August 23

- **Nizhal Tree Walk.** Panagal Park, T Nagar. 5.00 p.m. (English) For registration please call Usha at 97910 29568 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Online through [www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade](http://www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade)

- **RMRL Public lecture:** *Re-inscribing religion as nation: Naveena* At Roja Muthiah Research Library. 5.00 p.m. *caiva (Modern Saivites), Tamil nationalism and the Dravidian movement* by Prof. Ravi Vaitheeswaran.
  - **Film.** *Going Away* – a film set in an Anglo-Indian milieu in St. Thomas' Mount. A trailer and a presentation by Harry MacLure, writer and director. Press Institute of India, CPT Campus, Taramani. 5.30 p.m.
  - **Chennai Heritage Talk.** *Creating a tree park in Kotturpuram* by Shobha Menon. At Saveria. 6.30 p.m.
- Book launch:** *Pure Vegetarian* by Prema Srinivasan. Published by Westland. Taj Connemara. 5.30 p.m. By invitation **only**.
- **Talk:** *Illustrated lecture on Temples In and Around Chennai* by Dr Chithra Madhavan. At Tattvaloka, 6 p.m. 76, Eldams Road, Teynampet, Chennai 600 018
- Elocution.** *Is Chennai a City of Neglect?* Two participants from each school. Prize distribution on August 23, at 1.30 pm. At The Pupil Saveetha Eco School. Std. 6 to 9

## August 24

- **Chennai Heritage Walk.** *A taste of Triplicane* led by Sriram V. The tour is partly by van and partly on foot and ends with breakfast. The tour is charged and prior registration is necessary by email at srirambts@gmail.com. Payment details will be emailed on receipt of registration. 6.00 a.m.
- **Heritage Tour.** *Tracing origin of Madras at Pulicat.*  
Trip cost: Rs.500 includes A/C-bus trip, breakfast, snacks, bottled water and guided walk. Limited seats. For details: 9940079444 email: info@aarde.in  
6.15 a.m.: Departure from Loyola College rear gate (Mahalingapuram)  
8.30 a.m.: Breakfast at Pazhaverkadu (Pulicat)  
9 a.m.: Visit to Pulicat Interpretation Centre  
9.30 a.m.: Heritage Walk  
12.15 p.m.: Departure from Pulicat for Chennai  
Organised by AARDE Foundation.
- **Walk.** *The Banyan Walk* will take you on a journey of adversity For information contact: Archana at 9840523235. 9 a.m. and recovery, starting at the Transit Care Centre in Mogappair, to the open shelter for homeless men in San Thomé and ending at the Rural Mental Health Programme in Kovalam. You will hear stories of difficult lives, of dreams lost, but also of hope and new beginnings. The Walk will also include interesting stories about the history of the areas where The Banyan is located.
- **Talk:** *Madras under the Cholas* by Dr. R. Nagaswamy. At the C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation. 10.30 a.m.
- **Quiz Competition** for school children from 6th standard to 9th standard. Theme: Heritage of Madras. Organised by Amaravathi Nagar Residents Welfare Association.  
Ambal Matr. School, Arumbakkam. 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. For details contact Dr. Kr. Thooyavan, Chennai. Cell: 9840645855
- *Children and music of Chennai* with Pradeep Chakravarthy. Organised by Association of British Scholars.  
At Lady Andal School grounds. Between 10.00 and 11.30 am  
**Tour:** A tour of Bronze Gallery at Government Museum, Egmore led by Dr. Chithra Madhavan. 2 p.m. Organised by Namma Mylapore. Rs. 250/- per person. To register, contact nammamylapore@hotmail.com. Registration on a first-come-first-served basis.
- **Puppetry Session for Children on Wildlife.** An interactive session on Wildlife of Chennai and their importance with puppets for children conducted by Dr. R. Bhanumathi of Pavai. At Nageswara Rao Park, Mylapore. 4.00-4.30 p.m.
- **Nizhal Tree Walk.** Semmozhi Poonga, Cathedral Road. 4.30 p.m. (English). For registration please call Usha at 97910 29568 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Online through [www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade](http://www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade)

- **RMRL Public lecture:** *Thiru Vi. Ka's Chennai* by Prof. A.R. Venkatachalapathy, Madras Institute of Development Studies. At Roja Muthiah Research Library. 5.00 p.m.
- **Choral Music Performance.** Indian Choral Music performance by Madras Youth Choir – Junior and Adult groups. Theme: *Heritage and Nature*. Organised by Madras Youth Choir.  
Nageswara Rao Park. 5-6 p.m.
- **Freedom Jam Chennai 2013.** Music Bands in Concert. Two rock bands and other additional acts – duos and trios of different styles. Desirock band Mother India and Jive band alias Baja. There will also be a slide projection of photographs of Madras. Phoenix Market City, Velachery 6-9 p.m. Hosted by Phoenix. Curated by Sidhartha Patnaik
- **August 24: A Piano Evening.** A Franco-German tribute to Madras Week features by Christine Chareyron and Anil Srinivasan. At the Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan Auditorium. 7 p.m.
- **Chennai Heritage Talk.** *Motorsports in Madras* by Ejji K. Umamahesh At Hyatt Regency, Anna Salai. 7 p.m.

## August 25

- **Madras Day Heritage Ride.** The bicycle ride will start from University of Madras (I.C.E Entrance) and end at Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple, Mylapore. Helmet is mandatory. Please wear bright coloured clothing to enhance visibility. The ride is free of cost and has no registration fees. You are responsible for your own safety. Obey all the traffic rules. The road will not be closed for the event. Ensure that your bike is in a good and safe-to-ride condition.  
Starts at 5 a.m. and will end at 7 a.m. For more information, details and registrations please visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cyclingyogis/> or contact Senthil Phone No: 9884246822, Ramanujar Phone No: 9884023123
- **Heritage Walk.** Fort St. George Heritage Walk. Led by Vincent D' Souza. Meeting point – Parking lot opposite the main gate of the Fort. Late comers will not be able to join the walk due to security reasons. Starts at 6.45 a.m.  
Duration 2 hours. Free. But participants should register by sending an e-mail to: [themadrasday@gmail.com](mailto:themadrasday@gmail.com).  
**Tour:** A tour of Stone Sculpture Gallery, Government Museum, Egmore led by Dr. Chithra Madhavan. 11 a.m. Rs. 250/- per person. To register, contact [nammamylapore@hotmail.com](mailto:nammamylapore@hotmail.com). Registration on a first-come-first-served basis.
- **Chennai Heritage Talk.** *Chennai Weekend Artists and their works* – exhibition and talk. GRT Convention Centre, 3-5 p.m.
- **Chennai Heritage Walk.** *Roaming around Royapuram* led by Sriram V. The tour is partly by van and partly on foot and ends with breakfast. The tour is charged and prior registration is necessary by email at srirambts@gmail.com. Payment details will be emailed on receipt of registration. 6.00 a.m.
- **August 25: Nature Walk:** The Madras Naturalists' Society (MNS) will organise a Nature Walk at Pallikaranai Marsh. Reporting place: Forest Dept. Office on Velachery-Thoraipakkam Road.  
6.15 a.m. For assistance, please call Vijay: 98400 90875  
Group size: 30.  
(When coming from Velachery, take the service road along the 2nd Flyover on the Velachery-Tambaram Road and turn left at the junction under the Flyover onto the Velachery-Thoraipakkam Road, travel around 300 metres. and take the U-turn after the Toll Plaza sign and the Office is on the left immediately after the turn. When coming from OMR, the Office is 200 metres after the Toll Plaza.)
- **Nizhal Tree Walk.** Nanmangalam Forest Park. 8.00 a.m. (English) For registration please call Usha at 97910 29568 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.  
Online through [www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade](http://www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade)
- **Nizhal Tree Walk.** Sivan Park, K.K. Nagar. 4.30 p.m. (English) For registration please call Usha at 97910 29568 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Online through [www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade](http://www.facebook.com/Nizhal.shade)

- **Talk:** *Ravi Varma and his Engagement with the Madras Presidency (1878-1906)* by Rupika Chawla. Organised by Chennai Art Club. At Hyatt Regency, Mount Road. 4:30 to 6 p.m.

*Remembering Sr Mary Theodore OAM: An Australian birth, a Madras life* – a programme to honour the late Sister Mary Theodore OAM from MITHRA. Organised by the Australian Consulate General in Chennai. At the Cosmopolitan Club Golf Annexe, Nandanam. 5.30-6.30 p.m.

- **Walk:** *Waves of conversion. Tiruwanmiyur in 7-8<sup>th</sup> Century.* Led by Pradeep Chakravarthy in the Marundeeswarar temple. The 30-minute walk will explore the modernised Marundeeswarar temple and understand how religion and politics mingled for mutual benefit in the 6-9<sup>th</sup> Centuries.

Please dress appropriately for a house of worship. No shorts please! Participants above the age of 40 cannot register unless they are accompanied by a school (class 8 and above) or college student.

No more than 30 participants, registrations on or before August 1st noon. No transport/food arrangements for the walk. 7.30-8.00 a.m. For details: Pradeepandanusha@gmail.com

- **A walking tour.** 6th Annual *Living Statues of Marina Beach. Walking Tour.* Brief Dramatic Enactments at each Statue in English and then in Tamil: 1) Kannagi, 2) NSC Bose, 3) Thiruvalluvar, 4) GU Pope, 5) Bharathidasan, 6) Avvaiyar. Facilitated by World Storytelling Institute, 98403 94282. Meet at Kannagi Statue on Marina Beach. 7.30 a.m.

**MAP UR WAY – Map making workshop.** Kalaa Manjari After School Activity Center and Bambaram Toy Library are organising a Map-Making Workshop for children. They will be explained the brief history of maps and cartography, its various uses and how to make a simple map of one's neighborhood with the help of power point presentation. After the workshop, the children will be taken for a walk in the neighborhood and based on their observations, they will, as a group, be asked to create their own maps of the area with the various landmarks.

Kalaa Manjari, 6/12, First Street, Venus Colony, Alwarpet Contact: 2431 2676/98404 21305. Reg. fee Rs. 100. Children above 10 years can participate.

- **Heritage Walk.** Tiruvottriyur. The Chennai Bloggers Club is organising a Heritage walk at Tiruvottriyur led by Gokulane Ravi. The meeting point will be the Theradi bus stop, Tiruvottriyur. The walk will cover Thiruvottriyur Thyagaraja and Vadivudai Amman Temple and the four Mada Veethi's around the temple. Walk starts at 8 a.m. for an hour. Contact Gokulane Ravi on 9884645438 on the day of the walk or a day before.
- **Quiz.** *The Madras Quiz.* Quiz is devoted 100% to all things Madras/Chennai and is open to all. Teams of two can participate. No prior registration required and no fee. Written prelim round followed by final. Quizmaster: Dr. Sumanth C Raman. Prizes for top six finalists. And to Best School / Seniors / Ladies teams too. At Hotel Ramada Chennai Egmore. Gandhi Irwin Road, Next to CMDA Building, Egmore. 2 p.m. onwards.

## August 26

- **Exhibition** conducted by Madras Heritage Lovers' Forum, and 'Reflections of Our Heritage' by PSBB students. Prizes for all the competitions organised by PSBB and MHLF will be distributed by chief guest Nanditha Krishna, Director, CP Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation. Silver Jubilee Hall, PSBB. 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon.
- **Presentation.** *Heritage Lost: Lessons from Pallikaranai.* Nityanand Jayaraman on Chennai's vanishing wetlands, natural events and national disasters, with pictures by Shaju John. Press Institute of India, CPT Campus, Taramani. 5.30 p.m.

## August 27

**Book launch:** *The Anglo Indians – A 500 Year History* by S. Muthiah and Harry MacLure. Organised by Niyogi Books and Madras Book Club. Book release by Dr. Beatrix D'Souza, former MP. Hotel President. 6.30 p.m. For members and guests only.

**Book launch:** *Master of Arts – A life in dance* by Tulsi Badrinath. Chief Guest: Gopalkrishna Gandhi. Organised by the Duchess Club. Hotel Savera. 11.30 a.m. **Only** by Invitation.

## August 28

- **Discussion.** *Madras Newspapers – the Good, the Bad and the Ugly.* A panel discussion moderated by Sashi Kumar, Chairman, Media Development Foundation. Participants: S.R. Madhu, R.V. Rajan, Shreekumar Varma and Dr. Jaya Shreedhar. Press Institute of India, CPT Campus, Taramani. 5.30 p.m.

## August 29

**Quiz:** *A Madras 25*, a quiz on the heritage buildings of Madras conducted by S. Muthiah. Organised by Association of British Scholars. British Council. 6.30 p.m.

## August 30

- **Talk:** *Cricket, Carnatic Music and Coffee* – by V. Ramnarayan. Organised by Association of British Scholars. British Council. 6.30 p.m.

## August 31

Memorial meeting for K.S. Padmanabhan. Organised by Madras Book Club. For members and guests only. Taj Connemara. 6.30 p.m.

- **August 31: Talk:** Ramakrishna Pisipaty speaks on *Human Activities in the Early Madras Region* – citing recent excavations. At the C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation. 10.30 a.m.

## September 4

**Book launch:** *Degree Coffee by the Yard* by Nirmala Lakshman. Organised by Madras Book Club. Taj Connemara. 6.30 p.m. For members and guests **only**.

## September 7

**Madras Quotient '13.** A quiz organised by the Murugappa Group for schools. Grand prizes. Quiz Master: Naveen Jayakumar. Lady Andal Auditorium, Harrington Road. 2.00 p.m. onwards.

## OTHER COMPETITIONS

**Online Writing Contest:** Create a museum on Madras – Online writing contest. Open to students of class 8 to 12.

How can we create a museum on our city? What objects can be displayed? The themes that would best classify our city, the dioramas that can be created of the city and how to use technology for such a museum and for what subjects? Put all your ideas together and mail it to: contest@yocee.in

Rules: The article should not be of more than 300 words. Ideas should be in separate paragraphs and under relevant sub-headings. Entries should be submitted only through online form provided at www.yocee.in/madrasweek/

Prizes for the best 10 entries. 25 shortlisted entries will be compiled as an e-book and will be available for download from Sep. 1, 2013. Last date to submit entries: August 24.

\* \* \*

Essay Competition: *On the role of Madras City in the Freedom Struggle.* Organised by The P.G. and Research Department of Historical Studies, Sir Theagaraya College, Old Washermenpet, Chennai 21.

# Getting Madras Week off to a start – in words.

## Taking a look at bridges

How many of us would have walked down by the side of an old bridge in our area and taken a close look at the architecture that is best seen from the other side?

My friend Hemachandra Rao, a civil engineer and heritage enthusiast, has spent the past two years taking a close look at bridges of our city built over a hundred years ago and still in service.

He has stopped at Chintadripet, Central Station and Basin Bridge among many other places, walked into slush and doubled across garbage piles to document what appears to be his current fascination.

Of late, Rao has been spending time at the Tamil Nadu State Archives in Egmore, digging into what were called PC or Public Consultation files, trying to get to the very foundation of all the old bridges that the British built for Madras.

So when we made a trip to some parts of north Madras recently, Rao asked us to slow down at a few places to show me what he had discovered on his earlier journeys, including an old quay off the Canal near Basin Bridge, and some massive, decaying godowns in the same vicinity.

With a man like Rao beside you, you begin to learn more about your city. One destination on that trip was Erukkenchery, a 15-minute drive from Basin Bridge on a day when the roads seemed to be empty.

We headed to St. Joseph's School located in a large plot of land bounded by small and tightly-knit colonies with roads that were mere lanes.

We were there to explore ways in which a few communities could get involved in the Madras Week celebrations ([www.themadrasday.in](http://www.themadrasday.in)).

Now, Rao and his friends who collect all kinds of things – postage stamps, first-day covers, city magazines in Tamil and English, maps and drawings and gas lights and army badges – are always willing to roll out an exhibition if they find a bright space and warm hosts.

The past few years, the Rao team has taken its show to a few schools in this part of the city.

That evening, we asked school principal Father Anthony how his team of senior teachers could supplement a possible exhibition.

Could we start putting together stuff that told us a bit about Erukkenchery?

Two teachers piped up. One had lived in the area for about 25 years and the other was a third generation daughter of the soil.

In minutes we were lending our ears to the snippets of local history, geography and social life.

Oh, yes, we had a project that could make a nice start. We now hope the teachers and student teams will develop some form of record of this area, once a village that had its place in old city records.

It was a trip well taken. (Courtesy: *Mylapore Times*)

– Vincent D'Souza

## Speaking of heritage at a Sunday breakfast

Sundays are usually lazy days, at least that is how you feel in the early part of the morning. So, you don't expect a packed attendance at a Rotary breakfast meeting. There were hardly 15 Rotarians when I arrived in time for breakfast – idli, vada, pongal, sambar, coffee – about 8.30 am. But in the half hour following, the number doubled and, by the time the hosts draped a ponnadai around my shoulders, it was house full.

• by  
Sashi Nair

The members were made up of a motley group comprising advocates, professors, builders, teachers, businessmen, students and others. I was introduced by an elderly member and I noticed she had taken pains to scribble two full pages, adding copiously to an email I had sent her about my background. In the event she made several errors, but on occasions such as this is best to let them pass.

A sumptuous breakfast is unlikely to keep you awake for long when you are seated comfortably and, as it turned out, there were a couple of heads suddenly dropping on shoulders and then springing back to attention. But these occurrences were momentary and by and large the audience was wide awake. That was enough motivation as I launched into the romance of old – of Andrew Cogan, Francis Day and Beri

Thimmappa, of Madraspattanam, Chennapatnam and George Town, of St Mary's Church in the Fort, the oldest British building in Madras, and of some of the early institutions established by governors like Elihu Yale.

And then, about how during the height of Queen Victoria's reign, the Indo-Saracenic style of architecture was considered the form best suited to convey imperial majesty in the Indian empire, and about the genius of Robert Chisholm, Henry Irwin, and Paul Benfield before them.

About *Senate House*, its classic restoration and its present sad state, about *Bharat Insurance Building* or *Kardyl Building* built for W.E. Smith, pharmacists, a classic example of neglect, and about the fate that awaits the Royapuram Railway Station, the oldest in India after the one at Bori Bunder was long gone. Even as Mumbai's VT and the Nilgiri Mountain Railway are preserved as heritage structures.

About the Metro Rail continuing to create a stir in the city on a regular basis – with CSI Wesley Church the latest, and earlier with a building in the Teachers' Training College campus in Saidapet, with P. Orr & Sons before that, and many other smaller instances.

About the need for a comprehensive Heritage Act without which buildings will continue to be razed. Like a 164-year-old church in Coimbatore was, and how part of the Mangammal Palace in Madurai was.

I thought I'd get into the details about *Khalas Mahal* (the one bright spark now) and the Chepauk Palace when I noticed the elderly lady who introduced me nodding her head gently. My time was up and the Rotarians wanted to say their goodbyes and leave. They had given me an hour (much more than the allotted or usual time given to speakers) and now they wanted to catch up on fellowship. For a Sunday morning it wasn't so bad after all, I thought.

## Why can't temple tanks be put to good use?

(Continued from page 1)

Temple has a tank, one side of which has been made over to shops. These have let all their drains into the tank. How can it survive? The Triplicane tank has had its bed cemented over in the mistaken notion that water would thus be saved from percolating into the subsoil. But this move has only sealed the natural spring below. The misguided attempt was in the 1970s. Why can't the bed be dredged and opened up now?

The city has taken enormous pride in the restoration of the Kapaliswarar temple tank. But it is now high time that we repeated the same success with other water-bodies. Do we have the public spirit to do this?

## Portuguese San Thomé and Madras Week

Paolo Aranha and Vera Domingues are two research scholars based in two European cities who are encouraging a small group of us interested in the Portuguese histories of Madras. Paolo, now in Munich, has done some work and published a paper or two on a subject that has links to San Thomé. Vera was here recently to walk around and talk to people in order to enrich her own research. Vera, based in Portugal, has mailed three maps of San Thomé de Meilapor which look fascinating but will send me on a crazy chase if I was to start using them.

But use I will once Vera shares a few more maps and I try to draw a trail of the dozen or more churches that existed in the Portuguese fort and outside it.

That and more will take some time in the making.

The maps and other material and Paolo's Facebook chats are also providing me the base for a small event that I wish to time with this year's Madras Week celebration.

A decade ago, some of us floated the idea of the Madras Day to celebrate the founding of the city. We chose a day – August 22.

And we decided that any event focussed on the city would be created, planned and driven by people of this city.

Ten years ago, we hosted a Walk in the Fort and ran a series of events at Rajaji Hall, once the Banqueting Hall of the British era.

When it all ended that launch year, well after 9.30 p.m. my colleague Sashi Nair and I who drove these events were exhilarated and exhausted.

Today, over 100 events are held during Madras Week, and these are hosted by many people and groups.

This year the focus is on encouraging more communities in areas which have not held such an event to ideate and drive one.

After all, a Madras Week celebration is complete only when different communities in different areas celebrate it in a way they think is best.

And it can be simple and straight.

Let me share last year's wonderful effort of a group of women of Sowcarpet.

The idea was simple – a Food Trail in their area. There are lots of snacks stalls in that region. All of them offer North

Indian specials. And the group knows most of them.

The idea was picked up and the group drew up a route. Six shops, six stops. Five guides, three volunteers.

And the Mint Food Trail attracted over 40 people.

So the call is going out to you and to your friends. Focus on an idea that makes this city. Draw out an event. Tell your friends and their friends about it. Make it happen.

Vincent D'Souza

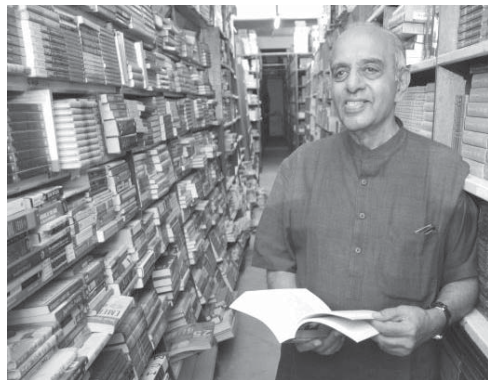
**Editor's Note:** *There is still time till the end of the month. Take a cue from the events listed.*



# The Gentle Book Man – in his simplicity sublime

Veteran journalist T.J.S. George's words best describe him: "Outside the rarefied world of books, K.S. Padmanabhan was in all likelihood an unknown quantity. He was never flamboyant, he never projected himself, he claimed nothing. He was, as the poet said, in his simplicity sublime. But his vision made him, unheralded, a part of contemporary India's cultural history. He belonged to the class of P. Lal of Writer's Workshop and Shanbaug of Strand Bookstall – men of imagination who made a difference to their generation."

Padmanabhan was mild-mannered, and his calm, smiling face reflected a serenity that cannot be put into words. Little was I aware of his inner world of books till reading what S. Muthiah, another senior journalist, recorded: "Shortly after he retired, he moved to the wilds of OMR, where he could peacefully do what he loved best, read all the time. Whether it was a pedestrian manuscript from an unknown author or the latest book he could download



K.S. Padmanabhan.

on Kindle, he read it all with equal pleasure." Bishwanath Ghosh profiled this publisher two years ago, when he bowed out at 75 from Westland, which has been acquired by Tata's. That was my first encounter with this publishing veteran, tucked away from the public eye till then. Bishwanath had called him 'The Book Man of Madras'. At 77, just two years later, he is no more with us, and I lost the opportunity to meet him for an interview he had promised me.

I don't know when I had met him first. I became a member of the Madras Book Club three

years ago. Rare were the instances when Padmanabhan was not there at meetings, usually accompanied by his wife Chandra (herself an author of a bestseller, *Dakshin*, a cook-book). When you asked for any information, he would softly say, "Ask Muthu [Muthiah]." His presence is best described by Muthiah in his tribute:

● by  
K. Venkatesh

"Though every meeting and speaker was a result of his efforts, he'd never take a front seat, standing somewhere at the back at almost every meeting with that ever present gentle

smile on his face, enjoying the interest shown by the audience." He would occasionally take charge of the proceedings, when Muthiah was absent, but of late he had asked V. Sriram to don the role of MC (whenever Muthiah wasn't available) while he took a quiet seat "somewhere". I never failed to say a 'Hello' to him at the Book Club meetings, to which a prompt smiling 'Hello' would be the response. He was reticent by nature, and I would wonder how such a successful publisher kept such a low profile.

I wanted to write about the Madras Book Club. When I asked Padmanabhan, he pointed me to Muthiah. When I met Muthiah, he told me the initial days of the Club were better known to 'Paddu' who had played a leading role in the founding of the Club. "You speak to him first," he said. I told him what Muthiah had said and asked for a date to meet him. Before the meeting could take place Padmanabhan was in hospital and then he had left the world, quietly as was his

wont. It's so difficult now to think that meeting wouldn't happen at all, that I have lost a treasure trove of information on publishing in India and his contribution to the history of the Madras Book Club.

Padmanabhan's contribution to writing will be better understood by authors who have worked with him. Vinuthaa Mallya, a friend and publishing consultant, wrote on Facebook how she was received warmly every time she went to meet him and how she still preserves copies of the *Indian Review of Books* he had gifted her. Muthiah was its first editor. "A revival of *Indian Review of Books* would be the best remembrance of Paddu," wrote Muthiah in his tribute.

George reflects the same sentiments when he writes: "Unpretentious, informal and genuine as he was, Padmanabhan would be happy to be quietly forgotten. But his associates have a duty, the kind of duty that J.R.D. Tata performed when Mulk Raj Anand returned home to Bombay after his prolonged stay in England. The novelist was fired by the ambition to start a magazine that would be a 'loose encyclopaedia of the arts of India and related civilisations'. It was an expensive concept, but it became a reality because J.R.D. gave him a start-up fund along with 'seven advertisements [per issue] and two rooms' in the historic Army & Navy Building. Thus was born the quarterly *Marg*. Tata's successors would honour the spirit of J.R.D. if they were to help revive their business partner K.S. Padmanabhan's labour of love, the *Indian Review of Books*. Seven advertisements and two rooms can work magic even today."

For a generation that has lost the pleasure of *Indian Review of Books*, its revival could bring back the vision it had, which is succinctly explained by Muthiah in his tribute: "He was very clear about what he wanted from the journal. The reviews should be in simple, lucid language that the average reader could understand and learn something about the book – making him want to read it and keep wanting to read more books."

For me, he ever remains symbolic of intellectual vigour and simplicity that personified many eminent men of his generation. Madras that is Chennai, and the Madras Book Club a bit more tellingly, will surely miss The Gentle Book Man.

## Kalakshetra's new Director

When Priyadarsini Govind was interviewed by Sukanya Sankar of *Sruti* in June in Singapore during 'Dance India Asian Pacific,' the last question posed to her was "Do you think artistes, or in your case dancers, could make good art administrators?"

And she replied: "I think we would make fantastic administrators if we did not dance. If I am performing at the pace that I am doing today, I cannot really teach. If I teach, I should not be regular professional performer. Similarly, if I want to be an administrator, then I should not do anything else. I should be true to what I am doing. You can always prove that you can do this and that, but whether you are doing justice to either of them is a moot point, and I couldn't do it."

The questions and answers proved prophetic when a month later news came of her appointment as Director, Kalakshetra. Priyadarsini is believed to have sent in her application for the position on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, the last day for the applications. She then left to participate in the Singapore festival.

V. Ramnarayan adds:

Never before had Priyadarsini really given a thought to playing a role at Kalakshetra, but she has for the last couple of years been contemplating cutting down on her performance career, and "giving something back to this art, which has given me so much." Among other things, choreography and training her students for dance productions, and the gainful use of the audiovisual media – given the film industry connections of her family – were distinct areas of interest.

Priyadarsini started learning from Kalanidhi Narayanan even as a young child, thanks to the intervention of family friend V.G. Duraiswamy, who was also a neighbour of Kalanidhi's. While she owes her strength in *abhinaya* to Kalanidhi, Priyadarsini has the fondest memories of her dance classes with guru S.K. Rajarathnam, "a dreamer," whose classes and an otherworldliness about them quite unrelated to the workaday realities of professional dance. He was a musician before a dancer, with the resultant aesthetics a special amalgam.

The 1990s saw Priyadarsini's emergence as a leading Bharata Natyam dancer perhaps wedded to her career as never before. She was already married and had two children by then. Her initial successes abroad came in Europe before she made the U.S.A. a regular destination as well.

Priyadarsini is aware of the prevalent view that suggests that her lack of administrative experience and her Bharata Natyam background – so different from the Kalakshetra *bani* – could be stumbling blocks to her effectiveness in her role as director. "To me the spirit of Kalakshetra is of paramount importance," she says, and adds "the vision of its founder and her values so assiduously nurtured by her successors. I will do my best to maintain that spirit and uphold those values." She has no intention of interfering with the work of the faculty brought up and trained in the Kalakshetra tradition. "The spirit, not the ritual, is important," she reiterates.

According to her, these are early days yet for her to spell out her plans for Kalakshetra. "My

first objective is to integrate." She will respect those "who love Kalakshetra, have given their lives to Kalakshetra." And take them with her in Kalakshetra's journey forward. While her own gurus have shaped her entire approach to dance and her understanding of it, she is keenly aware that everywhere in the world, Rukmini Devi Arundale's name is synonymous with Bharata Natyam.

Priyadarsini's quiet confidence in her ability to reach out to all constituencies integral to Kalakshetra is evident in the measured tones of her voice in articulating her views on the subject. At 48, she is, after Rukmini Devi Arundale, Kalakshetra's youngest director. She has the opportunity to play a long and constructive innings. It will indeed be a happy conclusion to the ongoing developments at Kalakshetra if Priyadarsini dispels doubts about her suitability for the position, by dint of sheer application, sincere effort and sagacious utilisation of the resources at her command. – Courtesy: *Sruti*

(Continued from  
last fortnight)

1883 – December

December 9: They sang in the Cathedral this evening No.379 of Hymns Ancient and Modern.

\* \* \*

December 15: I have a new avenue laid out, running from this house to the gate which leads to the Marmalong Bridge. It is formed chiefly of *Dillenia speciosa* and *Anogeissus acuminatus*, the latter being seedlings from the very fine tree in the compound of Mr. Price, the Collector of Chingleput, which was probably planted by my maternal grandfather.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

December 18: Sir Frederick Roberts had a parade and marchpast of about 2200 men on the Island to-day, which I attended officially.

\* \* \*

December 20: The usual ball in the Banqueting Hall – always a pretty sight.

December 20: The usual reception of natives, etc. in the Banqueting Hall, with fireworks on the Island opposite, beyond the branch of the Coum, which bounds the Government House park.

\* \* \*

December 27: In the afternoon to the Observatory with Miss Martin, Captain Agnew, and Mr. Webster, the Chief Secretary. We saw the comet of 1812, not at present a very striking object, Venus just now very distant from us, Saturn in great splendour, and Aldebaran. I asked Mr. Pogson how long light took to come to us from him. "Certainly over a hundred years," was the reply, "but how much longer, I know not." New to me, too, was the cluster in Perseus – a celestial rendering of my table the day Mr. Jacob came. Still more interesting was Alcyone which may, we understood, be the centre round which the universe revolves.

\* \* \*

December 30: On the 28<sup>th</sup>, we transferred ourselves from Guindy to Government House, Madras.

Next morning we went to the Central Station to meet my wife and Clara. Breakfast was hardly over when Dr. Mackenzie came to tell that Davis, my valet, was attacked with cholera, and we must forthwith return to Guindy. This we did. The case ended fatally at 4 a.m. to-day. He was a negro from the Gold Coast, and the best valet I ever had, though I have been fortunate in that behalf. He appeared in my room at Parell on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1881, and I have hardly ever given him an order since. Everything I wanted, while he was there, seemed to

happen as I wished it, without anything being said.

A red sunset – clouds half-veiling Venus and the crescent moon. The air was cool, in the earlier seventies, and, from time to time, we heard the gurgling cry of the great owl, the call of the spotted deer, and the dry rustle of the palmyra.

1884

January 21: We had the string-band at dinner, and afterwards sat in front verandah listening to a very pretty selection of Scotch airs which my wife has made for it. We remembered, as we breathed the soft delicious air, Keats's description of this evening in a northern climate:

"St. Agnes' eve, – Ah bitter chill it was!

*The owl for all his feathers was a-cold;*

*The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,  
And silent was the flock in woolly fold."*

I learn, by the way, that the little owl, who makes so much noise here at nights, bears one of the proudest names in the animal creation: *Athene Brama*, if you please – nothing less!

\* \* \*

January 31: The Viceroy, Lady Ripon, and a large staff, landing this afternoon with appropriate ceremonies and amidst an enormous concourse, drove with me to Guindy, where the house and gardens were lighted up, and the principal people came to meet them. We sat down to dinner, a party of forty-three.

\* \* \*

February 14: On the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup>, the Viceroy, with his suite, returned and remained with us at Guindy till the 13<sup>th</sup>.<sup>2</sup>

From Bangalore there came to meet the Viceroy, and to stay with us, Mr. and Mrs. Lyall with Major Wylie, the Assistant Resident. We had as many people at dinner as we could manage, except on Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup>, when we had a quiet little party of twenty-eight.

On the 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, respectively, we sat down fifty-one, fifty-three, and fifty-one.

A large number of persons also came to breakfast on several of these days.

The house and gardens of Guindy were illuminated every

night, while on the 11<sup>th</sup> we had a concert directed by Dr. Maclean, and on the 12<sup>th</sup> a ball. My wife also held a reception on the 11<sup>th</sup> in the grounds of Government House, Madras, after the Viceroy's levée, which took place at half-past four in the Banqueting Hall. On the 10<sup>th</sup>, I went with the Viceroy to the Convent, and thence to Vespers and Benediction.

On the 11<sup>th</sup>, he received a variety of formal visits; I, those of the Maharajah of Mysore and the Princess of Tanjore, besides which there were all the usual accompaniments of Viceregal or gubernatorial progresses – interviews, institutions, addresses, and the like.

The only *contretemps* was the illness of Lady Ripon, who was unable to appear at all either on the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>, and had to be

portent. I remembered "The Grand Old Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens."

\* \* \*

March 1: To the Observatory, soon after sunset. The newest object to me was Mars. I could not distinguish the snow which my wife saw distinctly at one of his Poles.

I looked again at Venus, but, as Mr. Proctor happily observes, "there is an annoying glare and much false colouring about the lovely lady."

\* \* \*

March 3: I spent the last hour of daylight in a remote part of the Park, where our botanical plunder was much greater than in the excursions of last week – too great, indeed, to be recorded here; but I note,

## • From the diaries of M.E. Grant-Duff, Governor of Madras

amongst characteristic sights, not elsewhere mentioned, the paddy-birds going to roost on a tree protected by water, during the largest portion of the year, from all ordinary dangers, the young green coming on the *Pongamia glabra*, the Palmyras standing up against the after-glow, and the pools in the now rapidly-shrinking tanks reflecting its golden glory.

\* \* \*

March 4: As we walked in the Park this evening, we came across the harmless green snake, *Passerita mycterizans*, in a bush of *Acacia Sundra*. He allowed both Cavendish and myself to touch him gently, without moving. One was caught the other night, and doomed to be preserved in spirits as a specimen; but we ruled that he was far too pretty, and he was allowed to escape into a tree.

...Kept one of the species without food for three months, and though thinner(!), he was quite lively when he was liberated at the end of that time.

A few mornings ago, a man brought a fine specimen of the large, but non-venomous, *Ptyas mucosus*. A Russell's viper was slain in the Park, supposed to be our friend of the 22<sup>nd</sup> February, and a huge cobra with twenty eggs was dug out from under a Banyan near the house.

\* \* \*

March 14: Someone asked at breakfast, "Which is the snake of which the natives say that when it bites you, it does not wait to ascertain the effect, but

goes straight off to the burning<sup>3</sup> ground, climbs a tree, and sees the last of you?"

The most conspicuous flower at this moment in the Park is the pretty *Carissa Carandas*. It is nearly related to the periwinkle, not at all to the jessamine, of which its little stars nevertheless always make one think.

The jackals are exhibiting a "shocking tameness." One stood in front of us, as we rode to-day, and shook himself like a dog. In the interest of our fawns, their numbers should be diminished. Have I anywhere mentioned that, when the first were shot, the French cook asked Evans-Gordon how "ce gibier la" was to be cooked!

\* \* \*

March 15: The sunset excursions noticed above, and others which have not been noticed, to the waste region near the lattice bridge, to the forsaken bungalow at Pulikani, to the country behind Saidapet, have had such scant botanical results, as to have led me to the conclusion that, at least at this season, walks in the Park, poor as is its laterite soil, are much more profitable. In it, too, one has always pleasant sights – a group of spotted deer, a herd of the black antelope, a mungoose crossing the road, a large owl startled out of its tree by our approach, and so on.

The cooing of the pretty little doves belongs rather to our morning rides than to our evening walks.

\* \* \*

March 25: As last year, the stars are a great pleasure. When we walk on the terrace after dinner, Orion is very glorious. So is the Great Bear. Jupiter and Mars are just overhead. When I look from the verandah of my rooms, now in the garden-block of the house, a little after ten, the Southern Cross is rising over the solitary Casuarina; the False Cross is straight opposite me and higher; Canopus is nearer to the garden.

Later in the night, when I return, as I often do, to the verandah, the Scorpion has become a splendid object in the south-east, and the Southern Cross is standing nearly erect, where the False Cross lay inclined.

\* \* \*

March 27: Presided in the Senate House in my capacity of Chancellor of the University of Madras, and admitted the candidates to their degrees.

It was mentioned by the Surgeon-General, in the course of the proceedings, that out of 1346 graduates, 899 are Brahmins – a significant fact. There are, I think, only 7 Mahemedan graduates, but 117 native Christians.

\* \* \*

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

(At Government House, Guindy)

March 29: With Mr. Price, the Collector of Chingleput, to Vellicherry, just outside one of the Park gates, where I saw the Monegar or headman, the Karnam or accountant, the Taliari or policeman, the Vetti or gatherer of revenue, and watched a potter, a weaver, a carpenter, and a jeweller working at their respective trades.

The first made me think of Omar Khayyam:

"For I remember a stopping by the way

To watch a potter thumping his wet clay;

And with its all-obliterated tongue,

It murmured, 'Gently, brother, gently pray.'

Listen – a moment listen! – of the same

Poor earth from which that human whisper came;

The luckless mould in which mankind was cast,

They did compose and called him by the name."

To-night we lingered on the terrace till Orion had gone down, and Canopus was almost below the horizon. Mr. Stiffe, the Port Officer at Calcutta, pointed out the Northern Crown, with *Coronae* showing very bright, just clear of the house, as we stood close to the garden gate, near the great entrance. Then came Arcturus, while beyond him high up and towards the south were the four bright stars of Corvus. The Southern Cross and both its pointers were already up before we went to our rooms. Sirius looked especially beautiful, seen through the delicate foliage of the Casuarina.

\* \* \*

(At Government House, Madras)

April 2: Before breakfast to

inspect the Napier battery. All the three batteries, which I have been pressing on, are now as good as finished. Each is armed with two twelve-ton guns.

\* \* \*

(At Government House, Guindy)

June 29: We reached Guindy this morning.

Hardly any rain has fallen, and the lawns are sandy deserts dotted with *Dipteracantha dejecta* and *Evolvulus alsinoides*.

We drove straight to the swimming bath and admired, on the way back to the house, the grand *Cassia fistula*, which is loaded with its faintly fragrant clusters of great yellow flowers. Ten days ago the spectacle would have been even more delightful, for on some trees many of the clusters are partly withered – primrose instead of labourer-coloured.

In the afternoon I opened the new drainage works for Black Town, received an address and spoke in reply.

Later I gave a small dinner at the Madras Club.

\* \* \*

August 27: Mr. Rees read to me the other day an amusing passage from a book by Mr. Monier Williams with regard to two of our Vishnuvite sects – the men of the northern and the men of the southern school – the Vada-galai and the Then-galai:

"After Ramanuja's death, his numerous followers corrupted his teaching in the usual manner, introducing doctrines and practices which the founder of the sect had not enjoined and would not have sanctioned. Then, about six hundred years ago, a learned Brahman of Kanjivaram, named Vedantacarya, put himself forward as a

reformer, giving out that he was commissioned by the god Vishnu himself to purify the faith – to sweep away corrupt incrustations, and restore the doctrines of the original founder. These doctrines, he affirmed, had been more carefully preserved by the Northern Brahmans than by those in the South. Hence rose irreconcilable differences of opinion, which resulted in two great antagonistic parties of Ramanujas – one called the northern school, Vada-galai (for Vada-kalai, Sanskrit *Kala*), the other the southern school, Ten-galai (for Ten-kalai). "They are," he observes, "far more opposed to each other than both parties are to Saivas. The northern school accept the Sanskrit Veda. The southern have compiled a Veda of their own, called "the four thousand verses" (*Nalayira*), written in Tamil, and held to be older than the Sanskrit Vedas, but really based on its Upanishad portion. In all their worship they repeat selections from these Tamil verses.

"An important difference of doctrine, caused by different views of the nature of the soul's dependence on Vishnu, separates the two parties. The view taken by the Vada-galais corresponds, in a manner, to the Armenian doctrine of 'free-will.' The soul, say they, lays hold of the Supreme Being by its own will, act, and effort, just as the young monkey clings to its mother. This is called the monkey-theory (*Markatanyaya*). The view of the Ten-galais is a counterpart of that of the Calvinists. It is technically styled, 'the cat-hold theory' (*Marjaranyaya*). The human soul, they argue, remains passive and helpless until acted on by the Supreme Spirit, just as the kitten remains passive and helpless

until seized and transported, *nolens volens*, from place to place by the mother-cat."

\* \* \*

(At Government House, Madras)

October 25: We reached Madras this morning.

The Park of Government House is as green as eye could wish, our friend the *Plumeria alba* is in full flower, and the lovely *Millingtonia hortensis* showing its white blossoms along the avenues.

There is much water about, and the charming little egrets (*Herodias egrettoides*) are very happy.

\* \* \*

October 26: I do not think I have anywhere noted the fact, which came into my head today, that, as I was travelling in Tinnevely in 1882, I observed the trunks of many of the trees whitewashed. "What is that done for," I asked. "It is done in your honour, sir," was the reply. Presently we came to a little devil-temple also whitewashed. "Is that whitewashed in my honour also?" I said. "Oh no! sir," was the answer, "that is whitewashed in honour of the cholera!"

\* \* \*

November 10: At 11 o'clock Cavendish came down from the top of the house, and told me that a large steamer, presumably the *Kaiser-i-Hind*, was visible on the southern horizon. By twenty-five minutes past twelve the two guns, which denote *Suez*, were fired, and soon afterwards we drove to the harbour. Before two my wife, with Evelyn, Lily, and Mrs. Awdry, had returned with us to Government House.

With them came to stay here Mr. Eliot, a young Oxford man

of twenty-two, who won the Balliol, the Hertford, Ireland, the Craven, and the Boden Sanskrit Scholarships, as well as a Classical First and a Trinity Fellowship.

The weather, which has been alarmingly bad – some twenty-five inches of rain falling in Madras since 3<sup>rd</sup> November – has to-day become again fine.

Since my arrival in Madras I have made twelve visits to the Museum in the early morning.

\* \* \*

November 21: Early this morning a short but violent cyclone burst over Madras, doing frightful damage. It was much more furious than that of November 1881, but in this neighbourhood blew chiefly off the land. Mr. Pogson makes the velocity of the wind, at 7 o'clock, forty-nine miles an hour. In the cyclone of May 1872 it rose to fifty-three. In the cyclone which damaged our harbour three years ago, the force of the wind in Madras has no relation, so far as could be traced, to the fury of the sea.

The *Millingtonia suberosa*, of which I am so fond, does not send its roots deep into the ground, and we have lost a great many beautiful specimens of it.

\* \* \*

November 29: St. Andrew's Eve – The Scotch dinner, for which I lent the Banqueting Hall, and at which I presided, making a long speech in proposing the toast of the evening – "St. Andrew for Bonny Scotland." The accident of the headquarters of the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment, being on its way through Madras to Burmah, gave us no less than six pipers! I will not deny that when they were all behind my chair, I thought of the answer of a musical Green merchant to my father, at Eden, when cross-questioned as to his feelings when he first heard the bagpipes, he said, "Mr. Grant Duff, I did feel myself upon the brink of rain."

(To be concluded)

<sup>1</sup> Sir Whitelaw Ainslie.

<sup>2</sup> Those who arrived and departed with Lord and Lady Ripon were – Mr. H.W. Primrose, Private Secretary, Captain Lord William Beresford, V.C., 9<sup>th</sup> Lancers, Military Secretary, Surgeon-Major J. Anderson, C.I.E. The Rev. Father Ker, Post Captain (retired) R. N. Captain the Honourable C. Harbord, Scots Guards, A.D.C. Lieutenant F. S. St. Quintin, Bengal Staff Corps, A.D.C. Lieutenant C. R. Burn, 8<sup>th</sup> Hussars, A.D.S. Lieutenant Pollen, Royal Engineers, A.D.C. Mr. Durand, C.S.I., Acting Secretary to the Government of India, in the foreign department, Captain Hext, Royal Navy, Director of Indian Marine, Lieutenant-Colonel Henderson, C.S.I., Madras Staff Corps, Special Political Officer, remained with us a little longer.

<sup>3</sup> See *infra* under date of 27<sup>th</sup> November 1886.

## Medhurst, Elizabeth and Loveless

(Continued from page 2)

In 1817 a young Walter Medhurst arrived in Madras from London, en route to Malacca where he was to set up a printing works for the Society. Due to the reluctance of the East India Company to take missionaries on their ships, Walter was delayed for three months in Madras and during this time he lodged with Mr and Mrs Loveless, the missionaries in George Town. He wrote back to London that he had procured a Chinese grammar and began to teach himself Chinese. Of greater interest to Walter, however, was his meeting Elizabeth. He fell in love with her and convinced her to marry him and join him on his journey to Malacca. They married in the Missionary Chapel on May 19, 1817 and sailed next day with

young George on the *Fair Trail* for Malacca. Walter wrote back to London to inform them of his changed circumstances:

"Yesterday I entered into the Holy State of Matrimony with Mrs Elizabeth Braune, widow of the late Captain Braune of the 15th Madras Native Infantry, who has resided in the house of our brother Loveless for these nine months. She speaks Tamil fluently and can also talk in Telugu. Born in India and having travelled over the greater parts of the peninsula living in tents under a scorching sun, she is more likely to endure the terrors of an eastern climate than one of our English ladies."

Thus commenced a partnership which embraced missionary work in Penang, Indonesia and China and involved the establishment of churches, schools, orphanages and hospitals, some of which are still op-

erating today. Medhurst published numerous reference works and he played a key role in translating The Bible into Chinese.

In visiting Chennai, I wanted to find out if the Church in which Walter and Elizabeth met and married still existed and after a few internet searches I was delighted to find that the William Charles Memorial Church was very much alive and well and I was invited to attend a service while I was in Chennai. The invitation turned out to mean a lot more than just attending a service. The welcome I received and the hospitality shown by the Presbyterian and the congregation were astonishing. They were so appreciative of having someone visit who was connected with their history and I could assure them that I shared those same

feelings. It was really gratifying to see that this Church is as vibrant today as it must have been in 1817.

During my visit I became aware that the Church did not have a picture of its founder to display among its other historical information. As a result of some previous research I was aware that the National Portrait Gallery in London had a picture of William Charles Loveless on display and I thought I might be able to source a copy from it. I am happy to report that I was able to obtain a copy of the portrait and give it to the Church as a small token of my appreciation. Hopefully this will add to the history which is portrayed so well on the walls of this wonderfully restored Church.

– John Holliday

● **The ninth in a series of profiles by V. RAMNARAYAN of cricketers who may have made an all-time Madras\* squad.**

A.G. Kripal Singh was perhaps the wittiest, most cerebral Madras cricketer in my experience, way ahead of his time in strategic thinking and articulation of ideas. In addition to his undeniable class as a batsman – not to mention his shrewd off-spin bowling – his challenging field settings, his expert handling of his bowlers, his ability to read wickets and his bold declarations not only made him a respected captain of the Madras team, but also, briefly, a candidate for the Indian captaincy. Certain unfortunate off-the-field incidents, however, denied him any real chance of that top honour.

“The eldest son of A.G. Ram Singh was an outstanding batsman, arguably the finest right-hander produced by Madras, ahead of such fine batsmen as his younger brother Satvinder Singh, Michael Dalvi, C.D. Gopinath and T.E. Srinivasan,” I wrote in 2002. There have been some top quality batsmen from the State since then, with M. Vijay, Dinesh Karthik and S. Badrinath proving themselves to be reliable as well as attractive players in multiple forms of cricket, but A.G. Kripal Singh will still find a place in a Tamil Nadu list of all-time greats.

# A most cerebral cricketer

In the Ranji Trophy tournament when it was a knock-out one, Kripal was one of the most successful batsmen of his era, scoring 2581 runs (average 49.63) and taking 115 wickets (average 20.53). He played a leading role in Tamil Nadu winning the Ranji Trophy in the 1954-55 season, scoring 636 runs and taking 13 wickets.

In the semifinal against Bengal he hit 98 in the first innings and 97 in a total of 139 all out in the second. He also took 4 for 18 in the second innings.

Kripal, who would have missed the final that year, had Madras University not acceded to his request to take his exams at a later date, played a stellar role against Holkar at Indore, making 75 and 91 and grabbing seven wickets in a narrow victory. He had started the season on a grand note, with a career best 208 against Travancore-Cochin.

Making his Test debut in



A.G. Kripal Singh.

Hyderabad against New Zealand the following season, he scored an unbeaten 100 on appearance. That was his only Test hundred, though he made 63 and 36 in subsequent Tests in the same series, and a defiant 53 at the Madras Corporation Stadium against Gerry Alexander's West Indies in 1958-59.

On the disastrous tour of England in 1959, when Dattu Gaekwad's men lost the series in a 5-0 whitewash, Kripal gave enough evidence of his class. His 178 against Lancashire was a spectacular assault on an attack led by Brian Statham. Yet he played in only one Test in which he scored 41.

Kripal played three Tests in 1961-62 and two in 1963-64, all against England. It was in the third Test of the former series that he took his first wicket in Test cricket after a long wait, having bowled 588 balls in ten Tests, a dubious world record. A Sikh by birth, he made his Test debut in a turban, but later

shaved his beard when he married outside his faith.

I had the rare experience of playing with or against Kripal, his younger brothers Milkha and Satvinder, cousins Jarnail and Harjinder, both his sons and at least one of his nephews. Though Milkha was one of the best left-hand batsmen of his era (the 1960s) and Satvinder would have surely followed in his brothers' footsteps and played for India but for an unfortunate knee injury sustained in a road accident, there was something majestic about Kripal's approach to the game that differentiated him from others.

Towards the end of his career Kripal became more of a bowler. He captained South Zone in the inaugural Duleep Trophy match. It was as South Zone captain that he started to demonstrate leadership skills of a high order, leading to speculation in some quarters that he might succeed Pataudi as captain – especially whenever India lost a Test match! Both Kripal and Pataudi gravitated towards Hyderabad, which was led by their charismatic friend M.L. Jaisimha. While Pataudi's was a long innings for Hyderabad, Kripal did not continue beyond a solitary season. Suffering a setback in his health, he not only returned to Madras, but did not play first class cricket after that.

Kripal became a member of the Tamil Nadu selection committee in 1972-73 and its Chair-

man in 1980-81. He took his job seriously, watching as many games as humanly possible, and offering sage advice to young cricketers on the verge of higher honours. He treated them as his equals, often sharing a joke or two with nervous youngsters. He became a National Selector in 1984-85, and was in office when he died of a cardiac arrest in July 1987. He was only 53.

Kripal's three children, Malvika, Swaran and Arjan, were all keen sportspersons, with both the boys playing Ranji Trophy cricket. Arjan Kripal Singh, the younger brother, was perhaps the more promising of the two, and once scored over 300 in an innings against Goa in a Ranji Trophy match. Remarkably, W.V. Raman also scored a triple hundred in the same innings.

I have a vivid personal memory of Kripal's death as his son Arjan, still a teenager then, played a fighting knock of 69 on a nasty matting wicket for my team, Alwarpet Cricket Club, a day or two later. Standing at the other end as a tailender for most of that innings, I was convinced that I was in the presence of a future star. Arjan did his late father proud that day and for some years thereafter, though he did not quite fulfil his potential.

The name of A.G. Kripal Singh will certainly go down as one of the greats of Madras cricket, second only to his illustrious father in stature amidst an extraordinary family of cricketers whose ancestors came from Amritsar to Madras in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and completely integrated into Tamil society.

\* Madras Province/State/Tamil Nadu.

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THE EDITOR

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