

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

# MADRAS

## MUSINGS

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### INSIDE

- Short 'N' Snappy
- Father of primary healthcare
- Madanapalle centenaries
- Madras Week Programme
- An American & Tranvancore trio

# Build as you please

The recent collapse of a multi-storeyed building under construction made headline news. While most of the media focussed on the terrible tragedy that took several lives, very few bothered to comment on the reasons for such a disaster having taken place. It has everything to do with an administration that has stopped being proactive. The construction industry, and much else in our city, is in a self-governance mode: Those who wish to abide by rules can choose to do so, the rest need not, until they commit an error of judgement and are exposed.

The building in question was

not an illegal one. The promoters had sanction for building two blocks of eleven floors each. Such structures need to have soil certification to be done for

### • by The Editor

ensuring load bearing capacity before work begins. This is usually obtained from a certified soil mechanics engineer and the document is one of the prerequisites for obtaining approval from the CMDA for going ahead with the construction. Since the developers under question had obtained CMDA

sanction, it goes without saying that they had soil mechanics certification as well. Yet, the building collapsed. It is now rumoured that the structure fell because it was built on the bed of a lake without proper reinforcements. How could that be if the soil had been found suitable?

A high profile enquiry has been launched and heads in official circles might well roll. But it is unlikely that anyone will bring up the root cause for all this trouble – neither the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA),

(Continued on page 2)

# Watching heritage go up in flames

There was a time when Shimla held the record for the maximum number of heritage buildings burnt down. The excuse given there was that the structures were largely of timber and so this was bound to happen. Now it would appear that Chennai is giving the erstwhile summer capital some tough competition. The fire in the State Bank of India (SBI) building on Rajaji Salai (First Line Beach) is the latest in a series that stretches back to the 1980s. Most of them have had only one reason – poor maintenance, something that could have easily been avoided.

The fire at the State Bank building was quickly put out – but not before a part of a floor caved in. It is understood that experts from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) have been called in to assess the damage. What is heartening is

that the Bank has not announced any decision to demolish, and is most likely to restore, the structure. The SBI has had a fairly good track record of conserving its built heritage and it is expected that

### • by A Special Correspondent

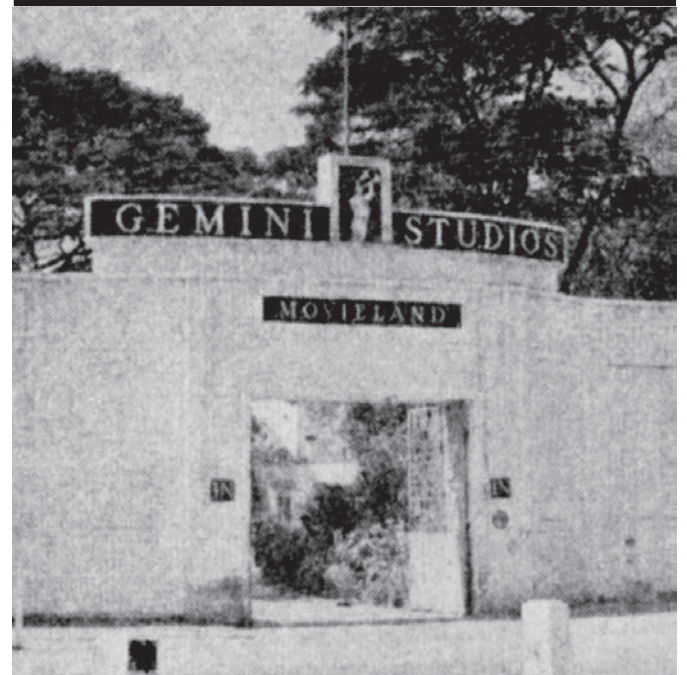
it will take up work on the Rajaji Salai property in the same spirit. That said, we must caution that the restoration will not be an easy task given the building's location and its undoubtedly intricate architectural elements and interiors. It is to be hoped that the SBI will NOT follow the example of the Department of Posts, Government of India, when the latter restored the neighbouring General Post Office. That was

largely a wasted effort the way it has panned out. The building is back to a bad state and the only satisfaction that can be got out of it is that the structure is still standing.

The fire at the SBI building was waiting to happen given the way the structure was maintained – unwanted furniture dumped at all corners, water seeping through at most places, an enormous number of files stored disorderly and above all, arbitrary electric wiring and use of false ceilings and partitions. The last named had been put up as and when the necessity arose, without any proper planning. Thus, what was essentially a single storied banking hall became a two-storied structure with the intervening floor being put up for accommodating more office space. This is the floor

(Continued on page 2)

## Madras Landmarks – 50 years ago



• Now it is nothing but a cluster of multi-storeyed buildings and a five-star hotel, but till the late 1960s this was the place that embodied cinema. Gemini Studios or, to give the place its proper name, Movieland-Gemini Studios, was the best known among the several film studios of Madras.

The story of the property, at the intersection of Mount Road and Nungambakkam High Road, goes back many years. A heavily wooded piece of land, it had in its centre a classical mansion which, according to legend, was once the house of Edward, the second Lord Clive, c.1800. It was in the possession of a J. Sherman in the 1820s. In the 1830s it became the residence of the Rev. F. Spring, Chaplain of St George's Cathedral, Madras, a man who, it would appear, spent more time at the Agri Horticultural Society close by than in the church. In his time, the property came to be known as Spring's Garden and the name continued to be used for a century and more, even as the property changed hands – the Rajah of Pithapuram and Sir C Sankaran Nair owning it at various times. In 1903, the property hosted a session of the Congress party, a pandal to house 6000 people being put up in the gardens.

In 1937, the property was purchased by film director K. Subrahmanyam who established a studio there for his Motion Picture Producers Combine (MPPC). It was here that some of his famous films, Thyaga Bhoomi (1938) included, were shot. On December 21, 1940, the studio was burned to the ground necessitating a distress sale of the land. It was bid for and bought by S.S. Vasana of Ananda Vikatan.

Renamed Gemini Studios in 1941, the property embarked on the most exciting phase of its existence. Several hits, including Chandralekha (1948), were made here, making Vasana a movie mogul. The studio was a cosmopolitan place with people from all over the country and even some foreigners working for The Boss as Vasana was always referred to. It was also a 'must visit' spot in the city for any VIP who happened to be passing.

The golden era of Gemini was undoubtedly the 1940s and the early 1950s. Thereafter, it did produce some hits but the purple patch of the earlier decade was never matched. Decline set in in the 1960s. The unionised staff, a new political regime and the star as opposed to the studio system meant the good times were coming to an end though Vasana's grit and determination ensured success to a large degree. When the bugles blow, there will be a show was the motto embossed under the logo of the famed Gemini twins at the entrance and so the show had to be kept going. The Boss died in 1969 after a painful bout with cancer and with him much of the Gemini magic too went. His family decided to focus on his publishing activities and preferred to sell Gemini to developers. The bugles had blown, and the show was over. But old memories die hard – the flyover nearby is still Gemini to most people.

## Watching heritage go up in flames

(Continued from page 1)

that has now collapsed. Those in charge of the restoration will need to debate on whether the floor has to necessarily be put back or whether the old hall can be splendidly restored with the space in it being put to better use.

The SBI fire is symbolic of a larger malaise – the shocking lack of upkeep of public buildings and spaces in our city. That cleanliness and safety standards have never been Chennai's virtues is only very well known, but it is of late that these have reached epidemic proportions. It is the heritage buildings that have suffered the most. Consider this – Spencer's, Moore Market, the GPO, Gandhi Illam, the Mint, Khalsa Mahal and now the SBI have ALL had fires attributed to short circuits. That must certainly have made someone somewhere sit up and take notice by now. But we are to be sadly disappointed in such expectations – there are plenty more heritage buildings crammed with paper, old furniture and bad wiring that are awaiting a fate similar to that of the worthies listed above\*. It is a sad blot on a city that is aim-

ing to be international in its standards.

For a matter of record, the SBI building in question was built in 1895 by T. Namberumal Chetty, the master contractor of that period, to the design of Henry Irwin. It was the head office of the Bank of Madras which, through its amalgamation with the other Presidency banks in 1921, formed the Imperial Bank of India, which in 1955 became the State Bank of India. The Bank of Madras incidentally, can trace its origins to the first bank of the country – the Government Bank, Madras, set up in the 17th Century in Fort St George. Apart from being a splendid piece of architecture, it is all this history that the bank building represents. Hopefully, the SBI will be conscious of this in its restoration exercise.

**\*Editor's Note:** Even before this story could go to press, another heritage building has been made a shell – a salvageable one, though – by a fire in it. *Humayun Mahal* joins *Khalsa Mahal*, its core having burnt down for all the same reasons listed above.

(Also see page 5)

## BUILD AS YOU PLEASE

(Continued from page 1)

which gives approval, nor the Corporation, which monitors construction, can enforce any discipline. Both have long given up on this task. Thus we have a situation where every plan looks perfect on paper, but when executed the construction deviates considerably from what was approved. There is nobody to check these variances while the construction is in progress. True, builders are supposed to obtain a completion certificate once the structure is ready for occupation. That appears to be the easiest document to get. This is proved by the number of illegal constructions and extra unapproved floors in the city – all with electricity and water connections, which cannot be obtained without completion certificates.

Fire safety is yet another issue. Most public buildings and several private residential apartments appear to have no preventive mechanisms of any kind. Multiple exits, assembly

points, basic fire-fighting equipment, and ease of access for firemen and hydrants are all absent. Yet, such buildings are allowed to be constructed. The lack of fire safety is highlighted only when a major disaster strikes. Here again, the approving authorities are to blame. Apart from the Fire Department, the Corporation, which monitors buildings under construction, rarely notices if set offs are provided for as mandated by the rules. These are not just for making a building look pretty – they are needed for easy accessibility of all parts of a structure in the event of a conflagration. Unfortunately, these are overlooked completely, which is why we have so many buildings constructed in close proximity to each other and often usurping public land as well.

All this does not show the administration in good light. That apart, if this apathy is allowed to continue we are going to see several more such incidents in the near future. More evidence of an international city in the making?

## A Madras Week moment

**"A**h! MMM, such a pleasure talking to you," said the voice over the phone and *The Man from Madras Musings* froze in his tracks. A sixth sense warned him that an impossible idea for Madras Week was in the offing. Sure enough, MMM was correct. The person at the other end of the wire, it seemed, found the poster culture of our city most annoying. Each day of this individual's life, it seems, was blighted by the posters. Coming out of home and office, the first thing that greeted the person's eyes was a variety of posters. Those that were pasted on the pillars of the Metro rail's work-in-progress, in particular, offended the most. MMM heard the whole complaint out in silence, wondering from the accusatory tone if the person on the other side thought MMM was responsible for the pasting of these offending pieces of paper.

And then came the punch line. "As part of Madras Week celebrations," said the voice, with the air of one bestowing a royal favour or issuing a command, "Why don't you, MMM, do something about it?" Having counted till ten, MMM then asked if the party on the other side had anything specific to suggest. "Why, it's quite easy. You know so many people in Chennai. Why don't you first fix a meeting with the Managing Director of Metro rail and explain the matter to him? He should also be convinced to take action. As a follow-up, you could meet the Mayor and the Commissioner of the Corporation. Then, if nothing happens, there is always the ..."

At this moment, the voice paused to take a breath and MMM got a word or two in. He explained that Madras Week operates on a simple principle. Put in elementary Chennai-speak, it amounts to "That that person, that that idea, that that execution." He then went on to make it simpler by saying that, contrary to general opinion, Madras Week is not run by a vast industrial conglomerate that has thousands of minions at its beck and call. Secondly, the organisers have no clout with the Government and, in MMM's private view, not mentioning their names is the best way to curry any favour with the powers-that-be. Lastly, Madras Week is all about voluntary effort. And so if the voice did not like the posters, the voice needed to do something about it. The caller did not sound very convinced, but rang off.

A couple of days later, MMM was pleasantly surprised to see that the Corporation has resolved that it would remove posters from public places and fine those pasting them. Of course, this is not saying much, given that our city's civic body has in the past

resolved to have clean public toilets, ensure pavement space, maintain smooth roads, tackle the hawker menace, repair street lights, and clear garbage. Anyway, it is the thought that counts and MMM is glad to note that the heart of the civic body is in the right place. But leaving all that aside, MMM wonders if the resolution to remove posters has anything to do with the voice that called MMM. If so, this must be a powerful voice, a voice that, like Mars, can threaten and command. MMM wishes he had made a note of the number.

We've got mail!

**T**he Chief has this thing about the postman's knock. He writes about it frequently. *The Man from Madras Musings* is not so enamoured of the game and less so ever since the Chief, in a moment of weakness, installed email and got MMM to administer the daily quota of fan communication that comes to our beloved publication – Chennai Chirpings, oops sorry Chief – *Madras Musings*.

Each morning, MMM's hand shakes visibly as he logs on to mail account to see what has come in. Now you may wonder why, and in order to elucidate, MMM gives you a

### SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

sample. Last week there came in an email that had 'accusatory' written all over it. The correspondent began by saying that she was most unhappy with *Madras Musings*' delivery. She had, she said, paid for an annual subscription and was not receiving the publication. Of course, this is a common enough complaint upon which MMM has ceased to dwell, chiefly because the postal department (not of *Madras Musings* which, many people assume, separately exists, but that of the Government of India) is very sensitive to criticism.

But to get back to the email. Upon giving it a cursory

Tailpiece

**T**he *Man from Madras Musings* was at a temple. He was stuck for the tailpiece and was worried. He opened his eyes after a brief prayer to find that God Almighty had delivered. The picture below explains all.



– MMM

**OUR  
READERS  
WRITE**



**Looking back**

The recent letters about Hotel Oceanic brought back fond memories of Madras and San Thomé.

I always say that our generation was the one that went through the most revolutionary change in our lives. Nagesh's song *Madras nalla Madras* brings back nostalgic memories of our homely city, and of what it could have been, but for the mindless "development" brought about by decades of senseless "town planning!"

My parents lived in Raja Annamalaipuram, which was a quiet, peaceful area. All the houses were built on four-ground plots by order of the Corporation, and they had large gardens. We had a few mango and gooseberry trees, whose fruits I would take to school and share with my friends.

Since we had a large backyard, my father, a lover of nature, had built a shed and kept two jersey cows in it.

My father J. Thangavel rose to become the Chief News Editor of All India Radio. But he was more happy to write for Tamil magazines and movies. He penned several lyrics under his pen name 'Surabhi'. The

most popular lyric of his was "Konjum Purave" sung by the legendary MLV for film *Thayul-lam*, among others were 'Mapil-lai Doi' by AM Raja, and 'Roja Malar Venuma' sung by Bala-saraswathy. I was fortunate enough to be present at the recording of a couple of songs by PB Srinivas and P Susheela for the devotional film *Bhakta Sabari*. Sometimes music directors sat in our shed at the backyard and composed music, while our cows listened. Father also started a small poultry unit at the far end, when the poultry industry was just beginning. Our neighbours bought milk and sometimes eggs for their children. But they complained about the crowing of the roosters, cackling of the hens and the smell from the very cows that gave them pure milk!

By the mid-1970s things began to change, and we had sold off our livestock and prepared ourselves for a more "modern" lifestyle! So, here we are, cribbing about the peaceful past even while enjoying the myriad electrical and electronic appliances which have made our homes more comfortable.

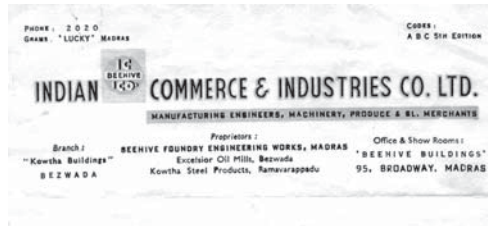
**Usha Sundar**  
sundarusha@rocketmail.com

**A verse response**

Simply couldn't resist the temptation to wake up the poet in me after reading Ranjitha's verse (MM, April 16th).

I couldn't help grinning,  
At parts that were winning;  
A review so very rare,  
The writing an MM dare,  
But never taking a dig  
At the A.I. identity jig  
That most good writers like Kevin  
Are unwittingly caught in  
Dancing to our Community's blues  
With special wooden-flooring shoes,  
One leg going East  
And the other West;  
Mulligatwany soup is our stew,  
And a fondness for pork vindaloo,  
Has prompted many a writer to ask  
When A.Is their identity they mask:  
"Hey, Missy, are you Double Cream  
Or Madras fish curry made with bream?"

**Harry MacLure**  
Editor-Publisher, *Anglos In The Wind*



# A telephone line in its 100th year

• **RAMESH KUMAR of the Indian Commerce & Industries Co. P. Ltd., 57, Prakasam Salai, writes:**

Our oldest telephone line completed 99 years on July 11th and has entered its 100th year.

The BSNL invoice featured above says that our telephone line was installed on July 11, 1915. This telephone line was subscribed under **Beehive Foundry Engineering Works** (when it was still with **Oakes & Co.**). It was only in the early 1990s that we got the billing addressed to the present parent company, the Indian Commerce & Industries Co P Ltd.

I attended the school opposite *Beehive Buildings* in Broadway from Class 1 to SSLC, and most of my after-school hours and holidays were spent in our office premises where I frequently roamed around the entire office and workshop. One day, I chanced upon an unused letterhead lying in the stationery cupboard. Since I was interested in dated material, I saved the letterhead, which I still have. It is also featured above.

I think this letterhead was printed no earlier than 1952 (since it bears the name Kowtha Steel Products which was started in Ramavarappadu near Vijayawada – then known as Bezwada – in January 1952) but no later than 1953 (since in September 1953 the Excelsior Oil Mills was razed in a fire accident).

Our telephone number as seen on the letterhead was 2020, presumably the original number allotted to *Beehive Foundry* at the time of installation in 1915. It could also have been a three digit number which was later changed to four digits. I wouldn't know.

The telephone connection was originally with the Oriental Telephone & Electric Co. till Madras Telephones took over in 1923.

The number changed to 21071 (I don't know precisely when, but that's the number I have known from childhood).

With the introduction of the Kalmandapam Telephone Exchange (in the early 1980s, I think) our line got shifted to the new exchange and we were allotted 555021.

When the Harbour Exchange was opened, the line again got shifted to this exchange and we were allotted 512221.

With the introduction of 7-digit numbering, the number changed to 523-1477 and with introduction of 8-digit numbering, it changed to 2523-1477 and continues to remain so.

A phone line in the same location since its installation in 1915 has gone from 2020 to 21071 to 555021 to 512221 to 5231477 to 25231477 and all this while the Telephone Exchange

kept moving, while we remained rooted to the same premises!

The same is the case with our door number, which went from 95 to 27 to the current number 57, while the street name changed from Popham's Broadway to Prakasam Salai.

At the bottom of the letterhead I have, is the logo of the Engineering Association of India (reproduced below) of which we were member and have remained so in its various *avatars*.

This association evolved as the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) of which we continue to be a member.

I am not sure if Beehive Foundry under the ownership of Oakes & Co. was a member of the Indian Engineering Association (IEA) or whether we carried forward that legacy, but here again is a situation of a company's membership remaining for a long period, unbroken even while the association in which it is a member changed its name, form and structure.

**Footnote**

The history of the CII began in 1895 when five engineering firms, all members of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, joined hands to form the Engineering and Iron Trades Association (EITA). The name changed to the Engineering Association of India (EAI) in 1912, reflecting the Association's decision to exclude traders from the membership and concentrate fully on promoting the cause of manufacturers. Till 1942, IEA was the only all-India association of the engineering industry and represented, mainly, the big engineering companies, particularly the British firms. This led to a situation where the interests of the Indian firms (mainly medium and small scale) were not sufficiently represented. Thus, the Engineering Association of India (EAI) was established in 1942.

After Independence, the public sector assumed the lead role in industrial development. Keeping in view the greater interests of the engineering industry in the country, in April 1974, the two associations – IEA and EAI – merged to form the Association of Indian Engineering Industry (AIEI).

In 1986, there was a change in name from AIEI to the Confederation of Engineering Industry (CEI), reflecting the growth and expansion of the organisation since 1974. CEI then became an apex body for manufacturing industries at the national level.

With effect from January 1, 1992, in keeping with Government's decision to opt for the liberalisation of the Indian economy, the name of CEI was changed to Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).



**CHENNAI HERITAGE**

No. 5, Bhattad Tower, 30, Westcott Road, Royapettah, Chennai 600 014

I am already on your mailing list (Mailing List No.....) / I have just seen *Madras Musings* and would like to receive it hereafter.

● I/We enclose cheque/demand draft/money order for Rs. 100 (Rupees One hundred) payable to **CHENNAI HERITAGE, MADRAS**, as **subscription to *Madras Musings*** for the year 2014-15.

● As token of my support for the causes of heritage, environment and a better city that *Madras Musings* espouses, I send Chennai Heritage an additional Rs.....(Rupees .....). Please keep/put me on your mailing list.

Name : .....

Address: .....

All cheques to 'Chennai Heritage'. DD/Cheque should be sent by Speed Post only.

# The father of primary healthcare in India

(Continued from last fortnight)

M. C. Subrahmanyam, Editor, *The Indian Review*, and Hony Secretary, Public Health Centre (PHC), West Mambalam, wrote in the 1970s, "VHS today is an example and an inspiration in the field of voluntary medical service, silently beckoning medical men of quality to spare a portion of their time for service to the community... There may not be a record to show all the sources Dr. Sanjivi tapped to build and maintain this new experiment in community medical service: the sources that yielded readily, those that yielded but with a lot of pontifical advice, those that remained ice cold, those that gave out insult and nothing more, and those who were more vain than compassionate. It may not also be known how Dr. Sanjivi bent over backward to provide all facilities to medical men of high academic distinction in some of the rare specialities. VHS is a monument to the services of a fragile man with a flaming will!"



Dr. K.S. Sanjivi.

Dr. C. Raghavachari noted, "The establishment and smooth running of the Voluntary Health Services called for organising capacity, administrative skill, diplomacy, delegation and capacity to develop good public relations with staff, co-workers, agencies and the public at various levels. The magnitude of the task and the pace of the execution called for a great sacrifice of comfort and leisure."

Dr. J. Balasubramaniam recalls that on ward rounds Dr. Sanjivi was always kind to patients and soft-spoken and encouraged keen discussions among students. Even in the most difficult cases, he never antagonised anyone, whether colleague or patient. A smiling utterance of *Saappaatturama* or *Pythiakkaran* was a rare admonition!

The man they were referring to was Dr. K.S. Sanjivi whom many consider "the father of the

primary health care movement in India".

Sanjivi passed out of Madras Medical College in 1927, and went on to complete his MD in General Medicine (one of the first four to do so!).

From his first posting at the Kilpauk Mental Hospital, he

Dr. B. Ramamurthi, the acclaimed neurosurgeon, once wrote, "In 1957, when Dr. Sanjivi was to become the Chief Executive of the Madras Medical College, that was denied him on irrelevant grounds, he resigned and the episode was a blessing for the people of Madras and for the people of India. The idea of VHS was born and so was the message of 'people helping themselves towards better health'. His idea of small voluntary contributions from the poor and his concept of preventive and promotive health have influenced the delivery of health care in our country."

Well-known physician Dr. K. V. Thiruvengadam recalls, "The privilege (he had) of being his student in the clinical years, a postgraduate trainee with him, and his Assistant Physician – all over a period spanning nearly ten years. Very few clinicians



The then Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran being shown around the VHS hospital by Dr. K.S. Sanjivi.

service and, post-retirement, at VHS, speaks of "two entirely different phases of his life – "one before preponed retirement, a quiet and placid life as a physician and teacher of medicine with academic achievements, and the other after retirement, a life of restless, dynamic activity in the fulfilment of a stupendous, self-imposed mission in life., a brilliant innings!"

Polite and gentle in speech and manners, he emphasised the moral responsibility of well-to-do citizens to help poorer sections. Dr. Sanjivi was greatly influenced by Gandhian thought and, therefore, the underlying ethos of VHS has been prevention and cure of serious illness, fostering of the family as a unit for medical care, and facilitating active com-

of the best public relations men in the city! From well-known consultants to ward boys, he motivated them all to have a sense of ownership for VHS.

For a man of his achievements, the greatest quality and strength he possessed was to retain his humility and give others the credit. Dr. C. Raghavachari once said of him, "Short in stature, frail in constitution and with low voice, but with the best inner strength and will power to succeed in areas where most people would be unsuccessful. An inspirational force, initially it was his gentle but determined and persuasive manner that spurred people on. His larger than life persona continues to envelop the campus, willing professionals to continually develop services for the less privileged sections of society."

Thilakam, at present a Blood Bank Assistant, VHS, grew up "like a daughter" in the doctor's household from the age of 12. She recalls that Dr. Sanjivi was disciplined in his eating habits and daily routines. His weight was always a standard 50 kg and, till the time he stopped driving, he always drove at a sedate 40 km/hour. Even in his seventies, he would take the stairs in the VHS and never use the lift! His respect for everyone he met was well-known, cutting across religions and among of cross-sections of society.

Following his wife's death in 1980, Dr. Sanjivi threw himself even more into building up VHS. By mid-1989, he suffered a series of strokes that left him bedridden and blind. Yet he continued to be active, discussing cases with doctors and taking classes in hospital administration. On October 1, 1994, he breathed his last. As his daughter Gita wrote, "A calm and peaceful ending to a life of cheerful and unselfish service." He was the recipient of many honours and awards: the Padma Shri in 1971, the Padma Bhushan in 1976, Dr B C Roy National Award for Socio Medical Relief in 1976 and many others. But to him the implementation of his messages meant more than any award.

(To be Concluded)

• by Shobha Menon

would be so sedate, yet so sharp and quick of reflexes, reticent, yet so effective in clinical discussions, soft spoken and yet so reassuring to their patients!"

Dr. Sanjivi's advice to students was to be simple and frugal in all their actions, never to over-prescribe, never to over-investigate and to always be kind to patients! Dr. Saroja Srinivasan, who joined VHS in 1966 as the RMO, remembers accompanying him on his medical rounds, visiting about 25 patients over two hours, "His clinical acumen was so exceptional that he rarely relied on lab tests or X-rays, and always prescribed simple drugs. His recall memory was brilliant and he'd often quiz us about instructions given on patient follow-ups weeks earlier! Particular about not wasting any resource – power, water or paper – tests that had to be done were indicated on a small slip of paper with the VHS stamp. Meticulously he'd note down points for the day in between meetings with colleagues/patients, on a small piece of recycled paper with a neatly sharpened pencil that would be used to the last remnant!" And Dr. S. Raghavachari, who had a long association with Dr. Sanjivi from P S High School to medical

munity participation in the provision of a continuum of health-care, with special reference to disadvantaged groups such as women, children and elderly.

To ensure this was his "genius for mobilising support for his cause, and the way he got initial help from the Race Club by individually contacting and canvassing support from the hundred-odd members with different interests and moods."

Dr. Krishnamoorthy Srinivas often speaks of how he once took Dr. Sanjivi to meet a rich industrialist who kept his legs stretched out on a table throughout the conversation! When Dr. Srinivas apologised later for his friend's bad manners, Dr. Sanjivi replied, "Oh that's nothing...I would not have minded even if he put his legs on my head as long as he gave a sizeable donation." Dr. J. Balasubramaniam recalls an instance when Dr. Sanjivi learnt that a donor had given a cheque for Rs 40,000. "It was found out that the donor lived on C V Raman Road, and he went to visit him to thank him. He came back smiling with another Rupees 2 lakh donation for the VHS!" Dr. Sanjivi's unassuming and easily approachable personality made him one

## Will this magnificent interior be restored...



... like this one was?

The magnificent Banking Hall (above), of what was then the Bank of Madras, was Henry Irwin's contribution to a building that was opened c.1900. This splendour is unrecognisable today in the building which in recent years has become the State Bank of India's Main Branch office and which was recently damaged by fire. Can we hope for its restoration to a glorious bit of construction in the manner the Connemara Library's 1896 Reading Hall (below) (another Irwin masterpiece) was done a few years ago?



### MADRAS MUSINGS ON THE WEB

To reach out to as many readers as possible who share our keen interest in Madras that is Chennai, and in response to requests from many well-wishers – especially from outside Chennai and abroad who receive their postal copies very late – for an online edition. *Madras Musings* is now on the web at [www.madrasmusings.com](http://www.madrasmusings.com)

THE EDITOR

## Quizzin' with Ram'nan

(Current Affairs questions are from the period July 1st to 15th. Questions 11 to 20 pertain to Chennai and Tamil Nadu.)

- Who won the Golden Ball and Golden Boot at the recently-concluded FIFA World Cup?
- What is the name given to the latest offensive launched by Israel on Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip?
- Which country recently benefited from a UN Tribunal awarding it four-fifths of an area sprawling over 25,000 sq km (9,700 sq miles) in the Bay of Bengal, which ended a dispute over a sea border with India?
- Name India's first indigenous anti-submarine warship (ASW) that was handed over to the Indian Navy recently.
- Name the much feted and loved veteran actress and grand old lady of Bollywood who passed away recently at the age of 102.
- According to the C. Rangarajan report on poverty, what is the daily per capita expenditure for the rural poor and the urban poor?
- The President of India joined Twitter on July 1st. What is his handle?
- India has become the first country to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty. What does it deal with?
- What is Google's new initiative, 'Project Zero', all about?
- On July 15th, who was awarded the International Gandhi Peace Prize by the President of India?

\* \* \*

- What was the previous name of the Muslim Higher Secondary School in Triplicane?
- The foundation stone to which once iconic symbol of Madras was laid on April 20, 1898 and inaugurated on November 30, 1900?
- What was the name of the Madras residence of Naganatha Setupathi, the Rajah of Ramnad? It was in Royapettah.
- How has the wedding of one Rukmini and Rajagoplan on April 29, 1963 been made famous in literature?
- What is said to have come up on a property of Simpson's (earlier, Thomas Waller's stables) on Mount Road?
- Which Chennai-based racer founded 'Wallace Sports & Research Foundation' to train drivers interested in participating in races and rallies?
- Which famous Madras statue was sculpted by Sir Francis Chantrey using a portrait by Sir Martin Archer Shee?
- Which bustling area in Chennai gets its name from the Flame of the Forest tree?
- Which Rajini-starrer holds the distinction of being the first 70mm Tamil film?
- What is the name of Shiva at the Thirukazhukundram temple?

(Answers on page 10)

# Two enter their 100th year

Two well-known institutions in the South, both in Madanapalle, Chittoor District, once part of Madras Presidency, Province and State, have entered their hundredth year from July 19th.

**Besant Theosophical College**, founded by Annie Besant, was inaugurated on July 19, 1915 by Governor Lord Pentland. The College drew students from as far away as Burma and England. Its first Principal was M.U. Moore and on its staff were James H. Cousins, English Lecturer, and his wife Margaret Cousins (English Composition). Both were well-known Madras Theosophists.



The Besant College buildings coming up.



Rev. Dr. L.R. Scudder (left) and Rev. B. Rottschaefler of the Arcot Mission.

Construction of the College buildings began in January 1916. When Rabindranath Tagore visited the College in 1919, he translated *Jana Gana Mana* into English, and it was set to music by Margaret Cousins and sung at the College.

\* \* \*

Later that same July 1915 day, Lord Pentland opened the **Union Missionary Tuberculosis Sanatorium** now called the Arogyavaram Medical Centre.

Originally located in Madanapalle from 1912, the hospital was shifted to Arogyavaram, about 4 miles from Madanapalle.

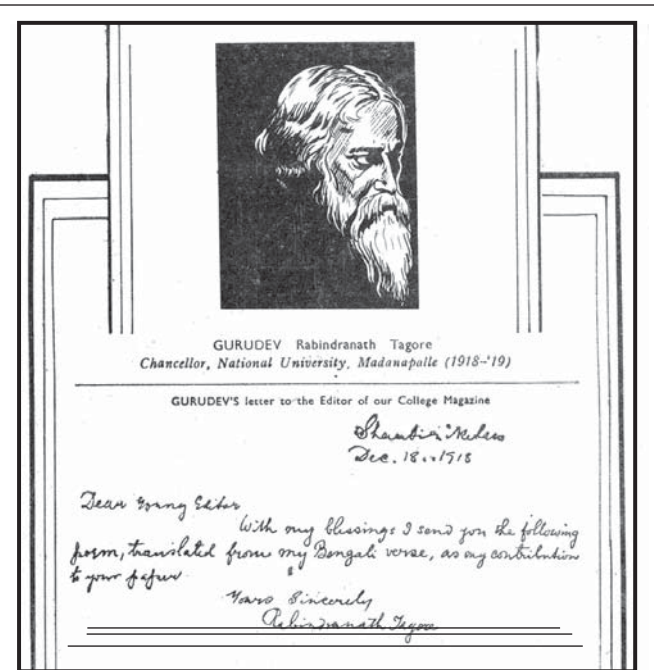
The hospital was started with 109 beds which later increased to 397 beds in the 1950s and to about 450 beds in 1965. The largest hospital in India, it occupies an area of about 300 acres.

Eight inter-denominational missions, led by the American Arcot Mission, cooperated in setting up the sanatorium. The Executive Committee instrumental in establishing the institution was convened by the Rev. L.R. Scudder, and the Building Committee, convened in October 1912, was led by the Rev. B. Rottschaefler, both of the Arcot Mission.

Published with this reminder sent by **Ramineni Bhaskarendra Rao** are pictures of those early days of both institutions.



The Administration Block with the two general wards for women on left side.



## The moving song of India

Thou art the ruler of the minds of all people, dispenser of India's destiny. Thy name rouses the hearts of the Panjab, Sind, Gujrat and Maratha, of the Dravid and Orissa and Bengal; it echoes in the hills of the Vindhya and Himalayas, mingles in the music of the Ganges and Jamuna and is chanted by the surging waves of the Indian Sea. They pray for thy blessings and sing thy praise. The saving of all people waits in thy hand, thou dispenser of India's destiny.

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

Day and night thy voice goes out from land to land calling the Hindus, Buddhists, Shikhs and Jains round thy throne and the Parsees, Musalmans and Christians. The East and the West join hands in their prayer to thee, and the garland of love is woven. Thou bringest the hearts of all people into the harmony of one life, thou dispenser of India's destiny.

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

The procession of pilgrims passes over the endless road rugged with the rise and fall of nations; and it resounds with the thunder of thy wheels, Eternal Charioteer! Through the dire days of doom thy trumpet sounds and men are led by thee across death. Thy finger points the path to all people, Oh dispenser of India's destiny!

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

The darkness was dense and deep was the night. My country lay in a deathlike silence of swoon. But thy mother arms were round her and thine eyes gazed upon her troubled face in sleepless love through her hours of ghastly dreams.

Thou art the companion and the saviour of the people in their sorrows, thou dispenser of India's destiny.

The night fades; the light breaks over the peaks of the Eastern hills; the birds begin to sing and the morning breeze carries the breath of new life. The rays of thy mercy have touched the waking land with their blessings. Victory to thee King of Kings; Victory to thee, dispenser of India's destiny.

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

Rabindranath Tagore

February 28, 1919



# Madras Week '14

August 17 to  
August 25

Updated till July 31st

## During August

- Trips in sail boats (with fishing included) off the coast of Adyar are been arranged by **Adventure 'n' Nature** to celebrate 'Madras 375'.
- Exhibition:** A rare collection of old Madras photographs will be on display throughout the month. There will also be special Madras tiffin combos at **Blu Hickey Bistro Restaurant** at Rs. 500 nett per person.

Dipankar Ghosh  
99403 55521.

Radisson BLU Hotel  
GRT  
11 am.-7 p.m.

## August 8

- Quiz: Heritage Quiz for children.** Organised by **DakshinaChitra**. Quiz is open to students of 6th, 7th and 8th Standards only. No participation fee

At DakshinaChitra.  
For more information  
and to register,  
contact 98417 77779.

## August 9

- Quiz: How well do you know your Madras** – a quiz by **S. Muthiah**. Organised by the **Indian Institute of Materials Management**, Chennai Chapter.

Express Avenue,  
2nd Floor. 6.30 p.m.  
For members and their  
guests only.

## August 9 and 10

- Films:** Documentaries on Madras-based artists organised by **DakshinaChitra**. *Water and Man* – Contemporary artists. 25 mins; *Fluid signs* – Contemporary artists. 35 mins; *Devarattam* – Kanna Kumar, Folk - 60 mins. Films by **Anand**.

DakshinaChitra.  
11 am-1 pm

**NOTE:** ● Open to all, but terms apply. Limited seating at all venues on first-come, first-served basis. All Chennai Heritage tours require booking and payment in advance. Please make your bookings through email (editor@madrasmusings.com) and you will be informed on where to make the payment and get further details. ★ Details awaited.

**Programme sheet from Madras Musings, Graeme's Road, Chennai 600 006.**  
Also check [www.themadrasday.in](http://www.themadrasday.in) for up-to-date programmes.  
Promotion & Publicity : PRISM

## August 10

- Heritage Tour:** Led by Chithra Madhavan and organised by **Namma Mylapore**. The tour by van will start at Luz Church and will end at Kapaliswara temple. The places covered will be Kapaliswara temple, Luz Church, San Thomé Basilica and two Vishnu temples near Chittrakulam. The monuments will be explained from the outside only. The fee for the tour will be Rs.350/- per person.

Luz Church  
7 a.m.-9 a.m.  
To register  
nammamyapora@  
hotmail.com

**Heritage Walk: Walk inside Govt. Museum, Egmore** conducted by **Pradeep Chakravarthy**. The 45 minute walk will focus on select stone sculptures from Tamil Nadu in the ground floor of the main gallery. You will learn the context of the sculptures and how to tell which period they belong to (a practice test at the end where you score your own test!) and what you can learn from the sculptures for your own lives today. Meeting place – The seated Buddha just outside the entrance to the stone sculptures gallery. Be sure to buy your ticket as you enter the gates of the Museum.

10 a.m. to 10.45 a.m.  
Registrations to  
pradeepandanus@  
gmail.com  
clearly mentioning  
how many of you will  
be coming. Open to  
30 people only.

## August 13, 2014

- Heritage Walk: A Walk Down Memory Lane** – *Tracing the 100-year History of Queen Mary's College* A power point presentation followed by a quick walk round the heritage buildings, presented by alumnae **Nithya Balaji** and **Vasanth Madhu**.

Register through e-mail only – nithinal.balaji677@gmail.com.  
First come first served basis, up to max. 30 people only for the walk, and up to 40 for PP alone

8.00 to 9.30 a.m.  
Assembly Hall,  
QMC

## August 14

- Nature Walk: Flora of Queen Mary's College** – an illustrative walk by the author of book by the same name, alumna **A. Thilagavathy**.

QMC has many fascinating plants, herbs and tree species on its campus. A. Thilagavathy of the Botany Dept. will conduct the group and take you close to the ancient trees and seasonal flora on campus. This will be followed by a power point presentation of the same as well as more species.

Maximum number 35 only. By registration through e-mail on first come first served basis: thilagavathy25@gmail.com

7.00 a.m. to 8.00 a.m.  
QMC

## August 15, 2014

- CD Release:** CD-release function of the **Madras Youth Choir**. Welcome by P.C. Ramakrishna. Songs by children, and release of the children's CD by Leela Samson.

At 9.30 a.m. at TAG  
Center. Open only to  
members of the  
South India Heritage  
Programme and their  
guests.

**Talk: Madras and Music.** **Dr Ghatam Karthik**, well-known musician and *ghatam* exponent, will speak on the history of Carnatic music, its luminaries, the various sabhas of our city, the happenings of the December music season etc.

10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.  
at Tag Center. Open  
only to members of  
the South India  
Heritage Programme  
and their guests

## August 16 and 17

- Films:** Documentaries on Madras-based artists organised by **DakshinaChitra**. *Echoes of freedom* – R.B. Bhaskaran. 30 mins; *Red Symphony* – Achuthan Kudallur. 40 mins; *Deskilling of Art* – Banner artists. 40 mins; Films by **Gita**.
- Exposition: Eco Spots of Chennai: Know Them, Sustain Them.** Interactive sessions with public on various Eco Spots. Organised by the **Madras Naturalists' Society (MNS)**.

DakshinaChitra.  
11 am-1 pm

SPACES  
11 a.m.-7.00 p.m. and  
5.15 p.m. on both days.

## August 16, 2014

- Heritage Walk: Looking back at Lloyd's Road** – walk led by **Mohan V Raman** and **Sriram V**. Walks requires registration (at editor@madrasmusings.com) and payment in advance. Ends with breakfast. Organised by **Chennai Heritage**.

6.00 to 8.30 am

**Talk: Madras to Chennai: A Strategic Hub** by **Dr. Uttam Kumar Jamdhagni**, Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Madras University, followed by an open discussion. Organised by **Observer Research Foundation**. Intending participants should confirm their interest by email: orfchennai@orfonline.org and also warn-in for lunch.

11 am-1 pm.  
A1 Towers

- Talk: Biodiversity of Chennai** by **Dr. R. Bhanumathi**. Organised by **MNS**

11.45 a.m.  
SPACES

- Talk: Bird Sanctuaries: Pulicat and Vedanthangal** by **Dr. T. Murugavel**. Organised by **MNS**

4 p.m.  
SPACES

- Talk: Institutional Habitats: Theosophical Society, IIT-M and MCC, Tambaram** by **Preston Ahimaz**. Organised by **MNS**

05.15 p.m.  
SPACES

- Madras meets Korea at the **Korean Bazaar**. Organised by the Korean Community in and around the city.

St. Thomas' High  
School, San Thomé.  
3-7 p.m.

## August 17

- Heritage Ride: The Ride** will start from Madras Veterinary College, Vepery, and finish at Sir Baden Powell Scout Training Centre, Perambur. 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 bicycle is in a good and safe-to-ride condition.

Ride route is subject to last minute changes.

For registration and other information log onto Cycling Yogis fb page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cyclingyogis/> or call Senthil Tel: 9884246822 or Ramanujar Tel: 9884023123

- Heritage Walk: Coursing down College Road** – walk led by **Sriram V**. Walk requires Registration (at editor@madrasmusings.com) and payment in advance. Ends with breakfast. Organised by **Chennai Heritage**.

6.00 to 8.30 am

- Heritage Walk: Perambur Walk** conducted by **Girish, K**. 100 year old institutions are in the list of 10 places of interest. Two-hour walk. No fee. Report at Perambur Railway Station near Advance Reservation Counter. Open to 30 participants only.

6.30 a.m.  
Contact 9884132136.  
To register email  
girishkgb@yahoo.com  
with your name and  
phone no.

- Heritage Tour: Bronze Gallery tour at Madras Museum** led by **Chithra Madhavan**. Organised by **Namma Mylapore**. The fee for the tour will be Rs.250/- (entrance ticket included).

From 11 am to 1 pm.  
To register  
nammamyapora@  
hotmail.com

**Talk: Coast of Chennai** by **Dr. T.D. Babu**. Organised by **MNS**  
**Talk: Forests of Chennai: Guindy NP and Nanmangalam Reserve Forest** by **Vikas Madhav**. Organised by **MNS**

11.45 a.m., SPACES  
04.00 p.m  
SPACES

**Talk: Wetlands of Chennai: Pallikaranai, Siruthavur, etc.** by **Gnanaskandan K**. Organised by **MNS**

05.15 p.m.  
SPACES

- Meeting:** Release of Special Postage Cover. Theme: *Transport in Madras*. Hosted by **Chennai Heritage Lovers' Group** and the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**

At Clive Hall, ASI,  
Fort St George

- Talk:** Chennai Heritage Lecture: *From Madras to Mandalay*. **Geeta Doctor** looks at the Madras-Myanmar connect through conversations with **S Muthiah** and **Visalakshi Ramaswami**. Readings from the book *A King in Exile*, a short film by Shylaja Chettur and a special menu presented by Chef Rajesh of The Park

The Park  
6.30 p.m.

## August 18-23

- Exhibition: Print culture in Cennai** organised by the Roja Muthiah Research Library (RMRL)

Roja Muthiah Library  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## August 18

**Multi-events:** An all-day programme by students of the **Department of Indian Music, University of Madras**.

Clock Tower Buildings,  
University of Madras

Group Rendition of *Vintage Tamil Film Devotional Classics* by the students of the Department

10.15-10.30 a.m.

Workshop on *Harikatha Compositions* learnt from Smt. C. Bannibai by **Dr. Premeela Gurumurthy**.

10.30-11.15 a.m.

*Tiruvallikkeni Vina Ramanuja* and his Sangita Sarvartha Sara Sangrahamu by **Dr. Rajshri Sripathy**.

11.15-12.00 noon

*Veena Dhanammal, Madras Lalithangi and Kanchipuram Dhanakoti Ammal* and their musical excellence by **M.Subhasree**.

12.00 noon-  
12.45p.m

*Malaiakkottai Govindasamy Pillai* and his grandson T.K.Ramamurthy of Viswanathan Ramamurthy fame by **Dr. R. Hemalatha**.

12.45-1.30 p.m.

- Vintage Film: Kalki's *Parthiban Kanavu*. Jubilee Films.  
Star Cast: Vijayantimala, Gemini Ganesan, S.V. Ranga Rao.
- 02.30 p.m
- **Talk:** *Story of the English Press in Madras* by **S. Muthiah**. Organised by the Press Institute of India.
- Press Institute of India (PII), 5 pm
- **Talk:** Chennai Heritage Lecture: *A Piece of the Past – Mementoes from 18<sup>th</sup> Century Madras* – A talk by **Dr. Swapna Sathish** of Department of Fine Arts, Stella Maris College. She received a Charles Wallace India Trust research grant to undertake post-doctoral research in the United Kingdom studying art and artifacts in the homes of British 'nabobs' with a Madras connection, and her talk derives from the visit.
- GRT, T'Nagar.  
6.30 pm
- August 19-September 20**
- **Exhibition:** *MADras!* An exhibition of 375 cartoons on the city and its people by **Biswajit Balasubramanian**.
- Forum Art Gallery,  
10.30 am to 6.30 pm
- August 19-25**
- **Exhibition:** *Shoot Chennai* – An exhibition of selected entries to photo contests conducted by the **Photographic Society of Madras**.
- Hotel Ambassador  
Pallava
- **Heritage Ride:** East Coast Road. The Ride will start from Madhya Kailash (opp: Kasturba Nagar MRTS Station) and finish at the Madras Square (Cafe-Art Gallery, Neelankarai). Heritage places to be covered during the ride are Tiruvanmiyur, Covelong (Kovalam) and Tiruvudhanthai. 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 bicycle is in a good and safe-to-ride condition. Ride route is subject to last minute changes. For registration and other information log onto Cycling Yogis fb page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cyclingyogis/> or call Senthil Tel: 98842 46822 or Ramanujar Tel: 98840 23123
- 5 a.m. to 9 a.m.
- August 19**
- **Talk:** *Temples in and around Chennai: A presentation by Chithra Madhavan*. Organised by the Press Institute of India.
- PII, 5 pm
- **Talk:** Chennai Heritage Lecture: *The Indo-Saracenic Man* – A tribute to Robert Fellowes Chisholm on his death centenary. A talk by **Sriram V**, entrepreneur, writer and Associate Editor, *Madras Musings*
- Hyatt Regency.  
6.30 pm
- **Workshop:** A unique opportunity for children to learn the art of making miniature models from old Madras photographs. Organised by **DakshinaChitra**
- DakshinaChitra  
For more Information and to register, contact 98417 77779
- August 20**
- **Talk:** *Madras and the American Connection* by **S. Muthiah**. Organised by **RMRL**.
- RMRL, 5 p.m.
- **Talk:** *Revisiting colonial history: What if Lally had defeated the English in 1761?* by **Sumitra Muthukumar**. Organised by the PII.
- PII, 5 pm
- **Talk:** Chennai Heritage Lecture: *From LA to Madras in search of music*. Well-known film critic and writer **Baradwaj Rangan** in conversation with young and fast rising Carnatic musician **Sandeep Narayan**
- Chamiers Anokhee.  
6.30 pm
- August 21**
- **Talk:** *The hidden gems of Madras* by **S. Venkataram** aka Poochi Venkat. Organised by the PII.
- PII, 5 pm
- **Talk:** *Madras – First City of Modern India* by **S. Muthiah**. Organised by TIE.
- 6.30 p.m.  
For members and guests only.
- **Talk:** Chennai Heritage Lecture: *Foodpreneurship* in Chennai – Panel discussion anchored by entrepreneur **Chandu Nair**. Panelists – **Kiran Rao** of Amethyst, **Vinit Chordia** of Dinein.in and **Bhuvanesh** of Donut House.
- Amethyst  
6.30 p.m.
- August 22-24**
- **Exhibition:** *Buckingham Canal – Maps, pictures, notes*. Hosted by **Chennai Heritage Lovers' Group** and the **ASI**
- Clive Hall, Fort St George. 10 am-5 pm
- August 22**
- **Talk:** *The Origin of Chennai/Madras* by **Prof. J.B.P. More**. Organised by **RMRL**.
- RMRL, 5 p.m.
- **Talk:** *Chennai that was Madras*, in song by **Uma Vangal**. Organised by the PII.
- PII, 5 pm
- **Book Release:** *Tales of Old and New Madras* and 7th Edition of *Madras Rediscovered* (revised and expanded) by **S. Muthiah**. Also sale of books on Madras. Organised by **Westland**.
- Taj Connemara  
7 p.m.  
Invitees only.
- **Competition:** A folk dance competition for college students organised by **DakshinaChitra**. Colleges can send in groups of six to ten students. The theme would be on traditional folk performances. The best three folk performing teams will be given prizes and certificates. There is no participation fee for the competition.
- At DakshinaChitra  
For information and registration call 98417 77779
- August 23 and 24**
- **Films:** Documentaries on Madras-based artists organised by **DakshinaChitra**. *Shilpi speaks* – Ganapathy Sthapathy. 60 mins; Film by **Bala Kailasam**
- DakshinaChitra.  
11 am-1 pm
- August 23**
- **The Gujaratis of Sowcarpet** – walk led by **Karthik Bhatt**. Walk requires registration (at editor@madrasmusings.com) and payment in advance. Ends with breakfast. Organised by **Chennai Heritage**.
- 6.00 to 8.30 am
- **Heritage Tour:** *Trace Origin of Madras: Tour of Pulicat*. **AARDE Foundation** conducts a heritage tour of Pulicat (Pazhaverkadu). 8.30 a.m. – Breakfast at Pulicat Interpretation Centre 9.00 a.m. – Heritage Walk 12.30 p.m. – Lunch 1.00 p.m. – Departure from Pulicat Fee: Rs. 845, incl of A/c bus trip, breakfast, lunch, water & snacks
- 6.30 a.m. from Loyola College rear. Contact: 044- 42139961. Email: info@aarde.in www.aarde.in
- **Tree Walk:** *Trees and melody in Carnatic music*. Musical tree walk with **Vidwan R.K. Shriramkumar** and **Latha Nathan**. Organised by **Nizhal**. For registration: nizhal.shade@gmail.com or message www.facebook.com/nizhal.shade or call 90030 98613, 97910 29568, or 9940061810
- Kotturpuram Tree Park  
7.30 a.m. to 8.30 a.m.
- **Quiz:** Quiz for college students organised by **INTACH-Chennai**
- IIT, 10 am
- **Talk:** *The Anglo-Indians- A 500-year history* by **S. Muthiah**, followed by an open discussion. Organised by **Observer Research Foundation**. Intending participants should confirm their interest by email: orfchennai@orfonline.org and also warn-in for lunch.
- 11 am – 1 pm.  
A1 Towers
- **Heritage Tour:** *Stone Gallery* tour at the Madras Museum led by **Chithra Madhavan**. Organised by **Namma Mylapore**. The fee for the tour will be Rs.250/- (entrance ticket included).
- From 11 am to 1 pm. To register nammamylapore@hotmail.com
- **Quiz:** *Madras Quiz in Tamil*. Open to school registered teams from Tamil medium schools ONLY. Team of two can participate. Each school can send 3 teams. Registration of teams must be made by the schools, not individuals at 98405 44629. Organised by **Mylapore Times**.
- P.S.Hr.Sec.School campus, Mylapore 1.30 p.m. onwards
- **Talk:** *Mariamman at the interface of Science and Religion* by **Prof. Perundevi Srinivasan**. Organised by **RMRL**.
- RMRL, 5 p.m.
- **Tree Walk:** *Siddha medicine tree walk* with **Dr. K.V. Abirami** and **Chithra Viswanathan**. How have the Naaval, Nuna, Putranjiva and many other such trees been a part of Siddha medicine down the ages. Organised by **Nizhal**. For registration: nizhal.shade@gmail.com or message www.facebook.com/nizhal.shade or call 90030 98613, 97910 29568, or 9940061810
- At Panagal Park, T Nagar.  
5 p.m. to 6 p.m..
- **Talk:** Chennai Heritage Lecture: *A birth centenary tribute to T.S. Baliah*, veteran comedian and character actor. Talk by **Mohan V Raman**, actor and entertainer.
- Sheraton Park  
5.30 pm
- **Book Release:** *A Guide to some Urban Fauna of India*. Published by **Madras Naturalists' Society**. Chief Guest: **Mr. Venu Srinivasan**, Guest of Honour: **Mr. M.V. Murugappan**, Special address on *Living with Urban Birds*: **Dr. V. Santharam**, Rishi Valley Institute of Bird Studies and Natural History
- 5.00 p.m.  
Asian College of Journalism
- **Walk and Make Madras Scrapbook** – organised by **YOCEE**. Children will be taken for a walk on a short stretch and at the end of the walk they will have to get down to make a scrapbook. Open to children from classes 5 to 9 and restricted to 25 participants. Prior registration required. To register, SMS name and age to 98405 44629 on or before August 20.
- ★
- **Quiz:** Quiz for general public organised by **INTACH-Chennai**
- IIT, evening
- August 24**
- **Heritage Walk:** *Touring around Triplicane* – walk led by **Sriram V**. Walk requires registration (at editor@madrasmusings.com) and payment in advance. Ends with breakfast. Organised by **Chennai Heritage**.
- 6.00 to 8.30 am
- **Nature Walk:** *Pallikaranai Marsh*. Organised by the **Madras Naturalists' Society**. Group size: 30; Reporting Place: Forest Dept. Office on Velachery-Thoraipakkam Road How to reach: 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 m. 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 m. after the Toll Plaza.
- 6.15 a.m.  
Reporting Place: Forest Dept. Office on Velachery-Thoraipakkam Road For details: Vijay 98400 90875
- **Heritage Walk:** *St. Thomas' Mount*. Duration: 2 hours. Rs.500 (inclusive of breakfast) For registration: Richard O'Connor: 98402 07283.
- From St. Patrick's Church Time: 6.30 a.m.
- **Photowalk:** For children organised by **YOCEE**. Led by **N. Ramaswamy** of Chennai Daily Photo. Open to children studying in classes 5 to 12. Starts from the AMM School gate on the Gandhi Mandapam Road, Kotturpuram, and ends at Kotturpuram MRTS Station. Walk through a part of Kottur, a village in a city, and capture interesting scenes. Children with a camera (any type) and love Chennai can join. Prior registration required. Contact Revathi: 98405 44629. Limited to first 25 registrations. Parents are also welcome to join the walk
- AMM School Gate Gandhi Mandapam Rd 6.45 a.m.
- **Tree Walk:** *Putranjiva tree walk* with **Dr. T.D. Babu**. From Banyans to the Pala Indigo Tree, explore the magnificent trees in their sylvan setting. Organised by **Nizhal**. For registration: nizhal.shade@gmail.com or message www.facebook.com/nizhal.shade or call 90030 98613, 97910 29568, or 9940061810
- At Rostrevor Gardens Railway Colony, Teynampet, Anna Salai 7.30 a.m. to 8.30 a.m.
- **Tree Walk:** *An Insect tree walk* with 'Poochi' **Venkat** and **Rajani Shankar**. Visit the magical world of insects and the trees that they inhabit. Organised by **Nizhal**.
- 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.  
At Nageswara Park

For registration: nizhal.shade@gmail.com or message  
www.facebook.com/nizhal.shade or call 90030 98613,  
97910 29568, or 9940061810

- **Talk:** Chennai Heritage Lecture: Screening of **Karan Bali's** feature length documentary film *An American in Madras* which is on the life of Ellis R Dungan. Programme co-hosted by Cinema Rendezvous. The director will be present and there will be a discussion after the screening

Savera  
6.30 p.m.

#### From August 25

**Exhibition:** *Emden-Sydney* commemoration exhibition by the Australian Consulate-General for South India.

\*

#### August 25

- **Talk:** Chennai Heritage Lecture: *My memories of Madras* – Veteran artist, art director and designer **Thotta Tharani** speaks

ITC Grand Chola  
6.30 pm

**Quiz:** *How well do you know your Madras* – a quiz by **S. Muthiah** for Rotary Central and four other clubs.

Savera Hotel, 6 p.m.  
For members and guests only

#### August 27

**Talk:** **Capt. D.P. Ramachandran** speaks on *The Madras Regiment at the Madras Book Club*.

Taj Connemara,  
7.00 p.m. Members  
and guests only

#### August 30

- **Talk:** *Madras: Trade, Business and Industry – Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* by **Sushila Ravindranath**, Consulting Editor, *Financial Express*, followed by an open discussion. Organised by **Observer Research Foundation**. Intending participants should confirm their interest by email: orfchennai@orfonline.org and also warm-in for lunch.

11 am – 1 pm.  
A1 Towers

**Talk:** **Fr. Anand Amaladoss** speaks on *The Jesuit Presence in Madras at the Madras Book Club*.

Taj Connemara,  
7.00 p.m. For members  
and guest only

#### August 30 and 31

- **Films:** Documentaries on Madras-based artists organised by **DakshinaChitra**. *Golden Flute* – Alphonso Arul Doss. 30 mins; *Perumal's People* – P. Perumal. 30 mins. **Films by Gita**

DakshinaChitra.  
11 am-1 pm

#### August 31

**Heritage Walk: Perambur**

Meeting Point: Lourdes Church, Paper Mills Road, Perambur.  
Rs.500 (inclusive of breakfast). For registration:  
Harry MacLure 98413 97502

From Lourdes Church  
Time: 6.30 a.m.  
Duration: 2 hours

## Other Events

**Discussions:** Goethe-Institut Chennai, Alliance Francaise of Madras and British Council team together to talk about The Great War that began 100 years ago and the effect it had on artistic movements' in Madras of the era. Events planned include:

The British Council holds a daily online blogging competition (August 18-22) on the subject of Madras and World War I Panel Discussion in which A. Srivatsan, V. Sriram and Prof. A.R. Venkatachalapathy will participate. Organised by **Goethe-Institut, Chennai/Max Mueller Bhavan**  
Literature session: Prose, poetry and essay reading (English and Tamil), organised by **Alliance Francaise of Madras**.

**Film:** Release of the film: *The Story of Madras: The First City of Modern India*. Narrated by **S. Muthiah**. To be distributed to schools. Organised by **INTACH-Chennai**.

**Talk:** *Art Deco* by **Sujatha Shankar**, Convenor, INTACH-Chennai.

Several events are being organised by 'Hot Breads' Mahadevan in his restaurants between August 17 and 24th.

- The duration of the complete presentation – PowerPoint and Oral – should not exceed 10 minutes. Participants should be prepared to answer on-the-spot questions from the judges.
- The Power Point presentation should be submitted to the organisers **on or before August 11, 5 pm**, in a Compact Disc (CD).

Address for submission  
**MYLAPORE TIMES**

**77, C. P. Ramaswamy Road, Alwarpet, Chennai - 18**  
(Please courier the pack. We do not entertain hand delivered entries!)

- The team should retain a copy of the CD and bring it to the venue of the contest. The organisers will provide a PC and a projector at the venue to help you make your presentation.
- Contest is open to first 20 teams to register on first come, first served basis.
- The best THREE presentations will be awarded trophies, gifts and certificates. All participants will be given certificates. The prize giving function will be held on the same day at about 4 pm.

This event is supported by **Mylapore Times** and the **South India National Association (SINA)**, Luz.

#### ● Shoot Chennai – Photo contest

The **Photographic Society of Madras (PSM)** is organising the contest for two groups: 1. Students only; 2. Open. The themes are as follows: 1) **My Madras:** The photographer's personal tribute to Chennai, depicting what it means personally to him or her. Including typical Chennai views like beaches, eat-outs, city life, cityscapes, scenes against which day to day life in Chennai plays out. 2) **Monuments of Madras:** From the architect's scrap book, capturing the magnificence of the city's architecture, from the oldest to Art Deco and the modern architecture of the city. 3) **Unusual Madras:** Strange and unusual happenings in the city. Also the unexpected that breaks tradition and contradicts stereotypes. 15th August is the deadline for entries.

15th August is the deadline for entries. Entries to photomadrasweek14@gmail.com before 12.00 noon, Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2014. For details, visit www.photomadras.org

#### ● Navin's Photo Contest

Navin's, a leading real estate developer is hosting a photo contest *Inspirational Madras*, for all the camera lovers. Participants can send their entries to Navin's official id – info@navins.in

Participants are expected to focus on capturing utility and functionality aspects of landmark buildings across Chennai. Each photograph should be supported with a brief write-up which defines why the building is inspirational to the photographer. The entries will be shortlisted and exhibited at a common venue. The winners will be announced on the Madras Day (August 22, 2014) at the exhibition by an eminent jury. The winners will grab exciting prizes worth over Rs. 15,000 and an attractive opportunity to work on a portfolio project for Navin's.

For more details about the photo contest kindly visit, Navin's official Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Navins/36618144672437>.

#### Anna Nagar Social History Group contests

- Teams of 2 to 5 persons above 16 years of age to make presentations on how your family moved to Anna Nagar, when, why? How your family history is related to Anna Nagar.
- For children of 8 to 12 years of age. Start with a four generation (minimum) family tree, add pictures, plan of your house (before and now), write stories, add function invitations, postcards, sketches. Add information on how your family moved to Anna Nagar, when and why and how your family history is related to Anna Nagar. Selected works will be displayed and felicitated at an exhibition in August.

Doubts, queries and registration at annanagarshg@gmail.com

Registration at annanagarshg@gmail.com

## Possible speakers on Madras

If you are looking for a speaker, try these Madras enthusiasts:

**Anuradha Uberoi** on Punjabis of Chennai: 98410 42520; **S. Anwar** on Tamil Muslims, on mosques of Chennai: 94440 77171; **Chandu Nair** on Chennai's changing professional profile: 98840 51682; **Dr. Chithra Madhavan** on Temples of Madras: 98408 77671; **Deepak Suresh**, an ice-cream entrepreneur (Amadora) on his experiences: 99400 95746; **P.K. Doraiswamy** on Chennai and humours: 2491 4555, 91768 53188; **Jagannath Ramaswamy** on Advertising in Chennai: 98840 99294; **Karthik Bhatt** on Gujaratis of Chennai: 99622 28077; **Kiruba Shankar** on blogging and bloggers in Chennai: 98415 97744 / 4273 3619; **Krithika Balasubramanian** on Chennai's musical scene: 98400 36903; **G.E. Lakshmi Krupa** on social revolutions in Chennai: 97907 34172; **Mohan Raman** on Tamil Cinema: 99401 49934; **K.R. Natarajan** on Chennai and humour (in Tamil): 98400 68768; **Nina John** on Women of Chennai: 98441 16530; **Dr. V. Padma** ("Mangai") on Tamil drama and folklore / on women's empowerment: 94451 60611; **Peter van Geit** on trekking in Chennai: 96000 04509; **Pradeep Chakravarthy** on history, heritage, temples: 98412 99017; **Dr. Pradeep Philip** on the police and law and order in Chennai: 98407 39100; **R.V. Rajan** on Advertising in Chennai: 98403 92082; **Rakesh Raghunathan**, restaurant entrepreneur and singer of Tamil film songs: 98840 82008; **Ram Ramakrishnan** on Rajni Kanth: 99629 02902; **V. Ramnarayan** on cricket and Chennai: 98400 20602; **Randor Guy** on Barristers of Chennai, on crime, on Tamil cinema: 2674 6381; 94441 08182.

## Addresses for the venues

**A1 Towers:** Fifth Floor, Conference Hall, 89, Dr Radhakrishnan Salai; **Amethyst:** Next to Corporation Bank, Whites Road, Royapettah; **Chamiers Anokhe:** 106 Chamiers Road, R.A. Puram, (diagonally opposite Park Sheraton); **DakshinaChitra:** East Coast Road, Muttukadu. **Forum Art Gallery:** 57, 5th Street Padmanabha Nagar, Adyar. **Lourdes Shrine:** Paper Mills Road, Perambur; **Press Institute of India:** Second Main Road, Taramani, CPT Campus, (behind M.S. Swaminathan Foundation); **Raja Muthiah Research Library:** 3rd Cross Road, Rajiv Gandhi IT Expressway, CPT Campus, Taramani, (Opposite Indira Nagar MRTS Station); **SPACE,** across from Besant Nagar beach.

## Contests

### Heritage of Chennai – Multimedia Presentation Contest

The contest encourages city school students to explore Chennai's history and heritage and present the topic given to each team in multi-media form.

**Theme:** *A city temple with great heritage and architecture.* Please avoid the Sri Kapali Temple, Sri Parthasarathy Temple, Sri Marundeeswarar Temple – because we want presentations on less known temples.

Contest is open to schoolchildren studying in classes 8 to 12.

A school can send only one team. Each team MUST have 3 members and all 3 members must take turns to make one presentation.

#### Guidelines:

- Identify a temple, ask your school teacher to call the organiser, Revathi at 98405 44629 and get the project approved and registered before you work on it.
- Take pictures and videos on the spot, make notes and interview people for your presentation.
- Prepare a Power Point presentation.
- At the presentation, each team of 3 students will take turns at the mike to present the project using the PP. You can use your notes for reference and speak in English or Tamil.

The contest is on  
August 19 from  
9 am to 3 pm

Venue: Srinivasa Sastru  
Hall, Luz, Mylapore





Ruth Woodman on the dance stage

● **New Hampshire (USA)** based Betsy Woodman, an alumna of Woodstock School, Mussoorie, is the author of three children's books set in North India. But she lived in Madras as a child of 6-8, when their next-door neighbours during that time were the Travancore Sisters! Betsy's mother Ruth was a trained ballet dancer. So, she learned Bharata Natyam from them and even performed with the sisters. In recent times, Betsy has been remembering those years in several blogs.

V. Vijaysree

My mother, Ruth Woodman, had studied ballet in New York City before marrying my dad, Everett Woodman. By the time they reached Madras, she had two little girls and was about to give birth to a third. The dance career had been put aside.

But as luck would have it,

## An American who danced with the Travancore trio

our family happened to move in next door to a family of dancers. The three daughters – Padmini, Lalitha, and Ragini – were known as the Travancore Sisters and were also wildly popular as film actresses.

The sisters took Mom under their wing and allowed her to study the classical Indian style of Bharata Natyam with their guru. She even performed once

twenty-three, Padmini twenty, and Ragini about fifteen. They were already well established in their film and dance careers.

They quickly added suffixes, meaning "older sister" and "older brother", to my parents' nicknames. Mom became "Poochie-akka" and dad "Evie-anna".

\* \* \*

We were the new kids on



Left to right: Lalitha, Ragini, Padmini.

with them, the local newspapers expressing some astonishment that an American – and a mother of three – could do so well on the dance stage.

Later, in New Delhi, she founded a ballet school, and gave performances to support various charitable causes.

When we moved in next door to them, Lalitha was

the block in 1953, the block being on Edward Elliot Road. It could have been a difficult adjustment but, instead, it was like falling into a warm bath. This was largely because of the kindness of our hospitable next-door neighbours – the Mom, Saraswati Amma, her three daughters, their brother, Chandran, and their cousins, Ambika and

Sukumari. We were still learning the ropes and no doubt made gaffes right and left, but not to worry, they made allowances!

In their publicity photos the Travancore Sisters looked breathtakingly glamorous, but in real life they were the girl-next-door wholesome and unaffected, and nice as could be.

Lalitha (1930-1982) was the oldest. She got her start in films when she was eight. My parents remembered her as quieter than the other two, with her own gentle mystique. Dad liked to recall the time she sat up all night with a sick kitten in her lap, willing it to live after everyone else had written it off for lost; the kitten recovered.

Padmini (1932-2006) appeared in over 250 Indian movies in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Hindi. She often portrayed a sassy, independent-minded young woman. In *Mera Naam Joker*, she even played a woman masquerading as a male street entertainer with a performing dog. (She was fierce in that role.) As a dancer, she was nothing less than divine.

Later, Padmini married and moved with her physician hus-



Here she is, on the left, with Padmini, centre, and Lalitha, right.

band, Dr. Ramachandran, to New Jersey, where she founded her own dance school.

Like the older two, Ragini was a stunning dancer with a sparkling screen presence. The tallest of the three, she would often play a male role in dance dramas. She could also wield a cricket bat!

Perhaps the sight of these three beautiful ladies has been a remedy for homesickness for people spread over the globe by the Indian diaspora. But you don't have to be Indian to love them.

The sisters are no longer with us, but decades after they made their movies, they still have devoted fans. – (Courtesy: Betsy Woodman's blog. Pictures from the Woodman Collection)

(To be concluded)

### Answers to Quiz

1. Lionel Messi and James Rodriguez respectively; 2. 'Operation Protective Edge'; 3. Bangladesh; 4. INS *Kamorta*; 5. Zohra Sehgal; 6. Rs. 32 and Rs. 47 respectively; 7. @RashtrapatiBhvn; 8. Facilitating access to published works for persons who are blind and visually impaired; 9. It is team of elite hackers designated to check internet security holes and secure users from cyber-attacks; 10. Social activist and pioneer of the Chipko movement Chandni Prasad Bhatt.

\* \* \*

11. Harris High School for Muslims; 12. Moore Market; 13. Woodlands; 14. In Saavi's *Washingtonil Tirumanam*; 15. Cosmopolitan Club; 16. Vicky Chandhok; 17. Sir Thomas Munro; 18. Pursawakam; 19. *Maveeran*; 20. Vedagiriswarar.

### Dates for Your Diary

**August 15-17:** Three-day residential workshop 'Vernacular & Sustainable Architecture' to create understanding of such architecture. Course Director, Conservation architect Benny Kuriakose. Participants limited to 30. For details, [mcfindia@gmail.com](mailto:mcfindia@gmail.com) or call

044-4551 1508/ 044-4249 8943 (at DakshinaChitra).

**August 23-31:** Onam Festival includes Singari Melam, a group percussion performance by Swarnaloham, a women's troupe from Kozhikode (at DakshinaChitra).

**Till August 31:** *Traditions*, an exhibition of drawings and sketchings by G. Rajan. His interest in temple architecture and Shilpa Shastra has led him

to do many works based on them (at DakshinaChitra).

**Till August 31:** *Sangamam*, an exhibition of photographs by Susil Pani. To coincide with the Adiperukku water festival, the exhibition focusses on different water bodies of India. (at DakshinaChitra).

**Till August 31:** *Middle Path 2*, a group exhibition by seven senior artists at DakshinaChitra.

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