

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

# MADRAS

## MUSINGS

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Strong tooth powder, if you please!  
Now they'll really chew up India!

### The medium's the message

The world is shrinking – no doubt about it, and rapidly at that. And given the rate at which this process accelerates ever'day, the third rock from the sun will soon be the size of a peanut, metaphorically speaking, at least (if that's the word I want).

This phenomenon appears to have a few fairly surreal side-effects, providing new twists to the term 'being connected'.

Like – in advertising.

Ruddy-faced, sometimes light-haired leg-spinners from far-off lands (okay, fine, off-spinners, pinch-hitters, – or whatever whirling action these heroes use to create maximum havoc) now appear on our screen, exhorting us to buy our own home-grown products – many of which have little to do with their particular areas of expertise.

Suddenly, these hands across the seas are dancing the *garba* on our TV sets, riding our bikes, wearing embroidered *sherwanis*, and looking intensely into our eyes via the screen, as they tell us how to do our shopping.

Which, apart from the element of novelty, raises one question – everyone knows it pays to advertise, but... well... exactly who's the cleverest of us all in this particular case?

What next?

The world-record-holder-for-the-most-number-of-wickets taken during Test matches sipping a spoonful of fresh-off-the-stove tomato *rasam* daintily, and going "Mmmm, just like my....er.... your grandmother used to make it. Buy 'Kanakambal Instant Rasam Powder' today!"

Now that's globalisation.

Ranjitha Ashok

# Hooray! Restoration at last

*South's first railway station gets promise of new life*

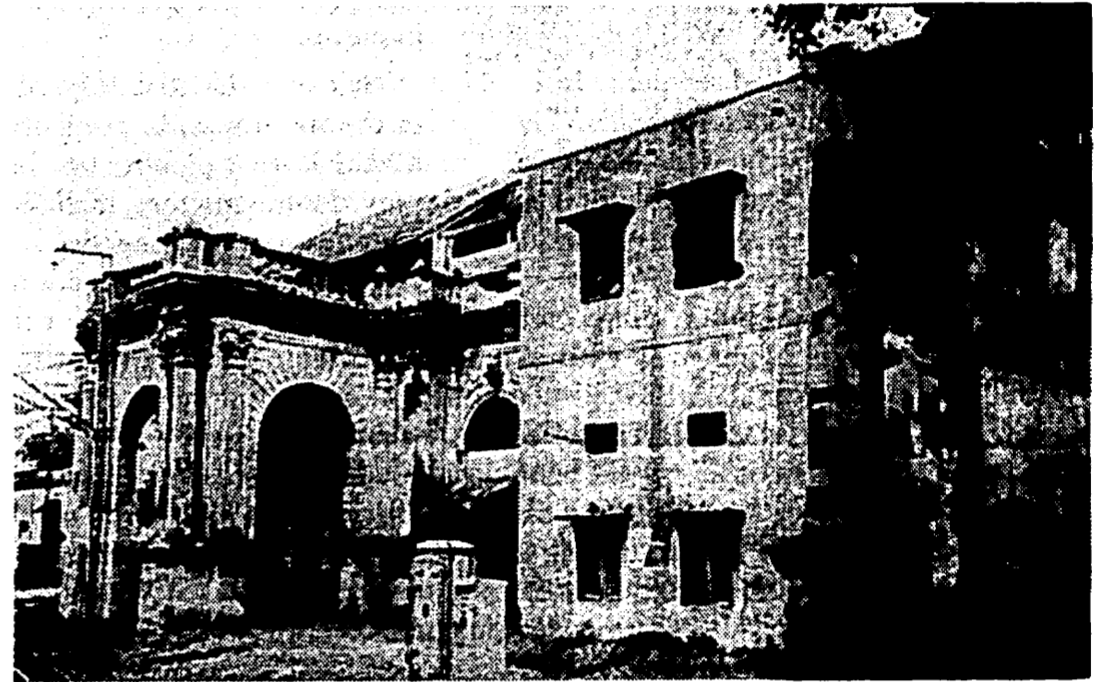
(By The Editor)

As your Editor sets out on a break, he goes with a light heart, delighted to hear that the South's first railway terminus, the Royapuram Station, is to be restored. Railways Minister of State R. Velu has promised Rs. 1 crore for the restoration and has also promised that it will be maintained as a model station after the restoration has been completed.

May we hope that the restoration work will also be a model work? For that to happen, the Railways will have to appoint, like the University has done for *Senate House* and the Governor has done for *Raj Bhavan*, a supervisory committee well-versed in heritage restoration. We trust that the General Manager, Southern Railways, will follow this healthy practice, even if there are no heritage laws to make it mandatory.

In promising funding for the restoration, the Minister has also stated that the building's foundations and walls have been found structurally sound. This has been repeatedly emphasised by conservationists over the last decade, ever since the neighbouring building built in harmonious style, the Madras & South Mahratta Railway's headquarters, was pulled down on the grounds of alleged weak structural stability and similar action was proposed for the, heritage-wise, even more significant building, the Station.

The Royapuram Station was inaugurated in 1856 by Governor Lord Nopier. It remained the South's principal railway terminus till 1907 and an important station till the first decades after Independence.



Royapuram railway station awaiting restoration. (Courtesy: RAJIND N. CHRISTY.)

# A water lifeline that horrifies

(by Shobha Menon)

THEN

The Buckingham Canal originally started out as a navigable canal of length 11 miles, cut for the use of small craft through land and shallow backwaters from Madras northwards upto Ennore. Then known as the Cochrane Canal (since it was the property of a private individual, Basil Cochrane), it was soon extended to Pulicat Lake and totalled 25 miles. Taken over by Government in 1837, the Canal was, by 1857, extended upto Dugarazapatam, 69 miles north of Madras (by means of excavation between backwaters) as the East Coast Canal.

By 1876, the Canal was extended from Dugarazapatam to Krishnapatam, 92 miles north of Madras, thus placing the city in easy communication with not less than five districts with important towns like Kakinada, Bezwada, Masuli-

patnam, Ongole and Nellore (to which there was only road access) besides numerous smaller trade centres. Commonly used by boats of 3 ft draught and 40 tonnes weight, the principal goods carried were firewood, salt, foodgrains, cotton, coal and building materials. It was only in 1878 that it was named the Buckingham Canal. Simultaneously, a new canal was excavated from north of the Adyar joining backwaters southwards to Sadras, a stretch of 35 miles, with the watershed separating the rivers Cooum and Adyar for a distance of 5 miles in Madras town.

Severe cyclones in May and November, 1879 necessitated the provision of flood gates (as against locks which were more cost-effective) across the Canal at its junction with each river or

(Continued on Page 2)



A PWD Engineer on inspection duty on the Buckingham Canal travelling aboard an 'Office Boat'. Notice the reflection in the clear waters of the Canal. (Photographs courtesy: C.S. KUPPURAJ)



# A church built by a gunner

Now celebrating its 325th Anniversary

St. Mary's Church in Fort St. George, now celebrating its 325th year, was completed in 1680, almost two hundred years before many of the monuments to the 19th Century had risen above their foundations. The church, a protected building in the care of the Archaeological Survey of India, is safe from demolition experts assessing it in terms of so many cubic yards of rubble. For, when it was new this was a regular experience, and on numerous occasions the shadow of oblivion loomed uncomfortably close. Neighbouring buildings were, in fact, reduced to heaps of bricks and shattered timber but, as we will see, there were good reasons why St. Mary's did not share the same fate. The shadow was due to sinister cannon balls loosed off from the decks of enemy warships out in the Bay of Bengal. Despite frequent attacks from this quarter, and other unwanted visitations from the landward side, there stands today the oldest Protestant church built in India, quiet and serene, looking much the same as it did on the day of its completion.

It is a simple, but far from elegant house of worship modelled in the then new and increasingly fashionable neo-classical style which was sweeping like a purifying flame throughout Europe. William Dixon, neither an architect nor an engineer in the modern sense of these terms, was a Master Gunner. He was also the designer of the church.

How does an artilleryman come to design a church? One clue is that in addition to gunnery and the manufacture of explosives, he would be trained as a surveyor and could build and repair defensive fortifications and possess also the necessary skills to enable him to calculate by geometry the distance of a target on land and sea. How he obtained the expertise to become a Master Gunner is not difficult to find out, but how he could, in addition, turn his attention to drawing and, ultimately, erecting a building as formal as a church, does raise questions which cannot be answered so easily. We know almost nothing about his own personal training, or his career up to the time he came ashore in Madras.

After the Great Fire of London in 1666, large areas of the City became one vast building site. Thanks to the imposition of new regulations, timber wall construction was forbidden. Every new building rising from the ashes had to be built of non-inflammatory materials such as stone and brick, with tile and slate on the roof in lieu of thatch. In consequence, designers sought inspiration not in mediaeval survivors of the conflagration but in Roman and Greek models. It is perfectly feasible that Dixon, stationed perhaps in Woolwich on the south bank of the Thames, would come to the City to see what was happening. Maybe he was invited to aug-

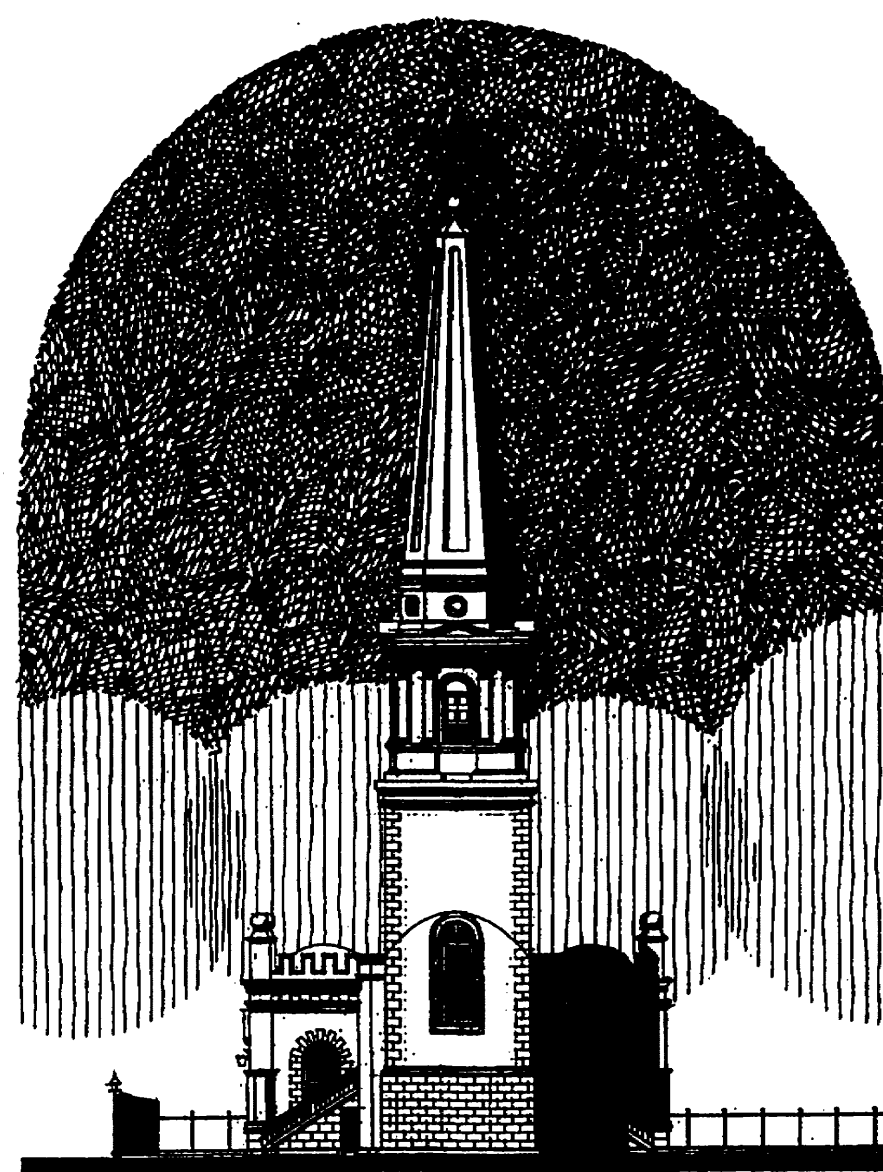
books on the practical arts were translations from Italian, French and Dutch originals. Books on the technique of surveying appeared with a wealth of plates. Perspectives showing the methodology of laying out defence works, and how towns and castles could be measured with a view to committing them to paper, explained thoroughly how each job could best be tackled. In one such treatise the Royal Palace in Paris, with all possible architectural embellishments, was selected for a worked out example of a survey of a large building. Dixon may have seen any or all of these and drawn classical inspiration and benefited from detailing tips.



THE OLD...

Our OLD is a view of St Mary's in the Fort taken 225 years ago. Our NEW (on right) is an architect's drawing by TOM INGLIS done nearer the 325th anniversary of the church. (The OLD, courtesy: VINTAGE VIGNETTES.)

...& THE NEW



The circumstances of how, why, when and for whom St. Mary's came to be the earliest Anglican Christian church built in India is well recorded, and the reader is recommended to find out more about its history in the

slightly later date. To make the building look more like what was believed to be appropriate for a place of Christian worship, a tower was added after a couple of decades (in 1701). It is presumed that the top of this detached structure would have terminated at the level of the main cornice. Above this came the very decorative belfry stage, and it has been suggested that this doubled up as a look-out during a siege by the French; logical enough as this was loftier at that time than any other building in the Fort. In 1760 the intervening space between the tower and the church was filled with a two-storey link. This involved the construction of the two flights of curving steps to provide access to the gallery from the exterior. Finally, and a crowning glory indeed, a Col. Gent designed and erected the spire in 1795. This feature, surmounting the belfry, performs as a prominent landmark and takes the form of an eight-sided obelisk with slightly recessed panels on each face.

What is remarkable is that this spire, which is among the finest to be found anywhere in India, fits so very neatly the architecture of the church, although there is a hundred years and more between the times when these parts were completed. The reason is that the obelisk does not really belong in style to its own period, in the last decade of the century, but harks back to the 1720s when, for a short period, the towers of several new churches in London were equipped with terminals of this type. So, as we see, Gent's spire could well have been designed for a church which had been completed before he was even born. The majority of classical belfries and spires of the 1790s in Britain are of the stepped type

which are to be found, a little later in India, at St. George's Cathedral in Teynampet and St. Andrew's Church in Egmore. Stylistic retrospection abounds in the architecture of any period, and anachronistic crimes are usually found to be committed for a special purpose. Here at St. Mary's, we can be pretty certain that Col. Gent believed that a spire of this configuration would be in greater harmony with Dixon's work than an up-to-date one. He was undoubtedly right!

When Dixon arrived in Fort St. George in the 1670s he could not have brought any illustrated books in English on classical architecture. They were not available at this period. Not on design and the technical aspects of construction and detailing, anyway, though there were plenty of hefty tomes on the antiquities of Ancient Greece and Rome. James Gibbs' influential work *A Book of Architecture and Ornaments* was not to be published until 1728, and it is not known when a copy of it found its way to Madras. It is quite probable that one was available to Col. Gent, for Gibbs included a profusion of obelisk spires there to inspire him. Lt. Grant certainly had it at his elbow as he sketched proposals for a circular St. Andrew's ninety years later. But Dixon could have had with him only some kind of sketchbook of ornaments and detailing that he had compiled himself. Nevertheless, it has to be handed to Dixon that he did a splendid job for Governor Streysham Master.

His special knowledge of ballistics would have stood him in good stead in St. Mary's for, as we are aware, the building had to perform also as a bombardment-proof shelter. When calculating the thickness of the walls and working out the form the roof

would have to take, he would have considered the speed and weight of a cannonball, and the angle at which it was likely to impact. However, never for a moment did he neglect the other and more important aspect of his brief, namely that this was to be the first purpose-built Anglican church east of the Mediterranean Sea, and that it had to perform as a suitable arena in which the Governor and his entourage could perform, and be seen to perform, each Sabbath Day.

No, St. Mary's is far from being a mere multi-purpose part of the fortifications, interchangeable with some other armoured emplacement. It is a fully developed and quite sophisticated example of the modern architecture of its time. Its understated classicism became the preferred model for the Company's churches for 150 years. To accommodate garrisons of differing strengths the model could be stretched or condensed as desired. What the Company had no time for were towers and spires. Where a tower was proposed, the perpetrator of the notion was roundly admonished by the Directors for having contemplated such extravagance and needless drain on Their Purse. St. Mary's, of course, does have a very fine tower and spire but, as these features were probably paid for by local fundraisers in Madras, Head Office could have had nothing of relevance to say. And quite right, too. Not that would have silenced their grumbling; very frequently they expressed the view that there was no need for a church anyway.

Tom Inglis

(To be concluded next fortnight)

# A literacy kit for every blind person

A literacy kit such as this is what every blind person in the world should have, says the inventor.

A unique teaching solution that has emerged from an NGO in Chennai. This could be a tool for universal literacy – it is capable of use to teach anyone, sighted or blind, in any language, in any country of the world.

"For the millions of blind individuals across the world, rehabilitation is the only answer. Which means providing education and skills. Why should Braille be the closed preserve of a few teachers and favoured children in certain blind schools? Our quest is to facilitate Braille teaching by anyone – by any literate person, particularly mothers, sighted siblings and family members, teachers in mainstream schools and volunteers within the community", says N. Krishnaswamy, the founder of the NGO, Vidya Vrikshah, and a retired IPS officer.

Vidya Vrikshah's 'Universal Braille Kit' has been consciously designed for those who are visually challenged but is relevant for the sighted too. It contains a combination of simple and inexpensive devices that will enable children to acquire Braille and other basic skills that constitute literacy and is a concept that reaches out to provide for the needs of the blind of all ages. "Of the estimated 6 million blind individuals – both adults and children – in India, only about 1% receive any kind of help to achieve literacy. About two years ago, a keychain sent by a friend triggered the idea for this kit, whose central feature is a cube. The 5000 cubes sent to 250 blind schools, as a trial, received an overwhelming response. 7500 cubes have been supplied till date," he says.

The Universal Braille Kit is a single, comprehensive inexpensive set of instruments, whose powerful and far reaching strategy will enable Braille teaching to be handled even in nearby mainstream schools, to bring literacy and education within meaningful reach of the vast numbers of the visually challenged. It consists of:

**The Vasantha Braille Cube** – to learn / teach how to form and read letters of the alphabet of any language, in Braille.

**The Natesan Braille Block** – to learn / teach how to form and read words in Braille.

**A Braille Slate and Stylus** – to learn / teach how to write (emboss) in Braille.

**The Alphabet Plate** – to

learn / teach how to write in the normal form in any language.

**An Abacus** – to learn / teach how to count and calculate.

**A Braille Geometry Set** with a tactile drawing tool – to learn / teach how to create shapes with embossed dots, and measure and calculate dimensions like length, area, volume, angles etc.

A sample of *Dhrushti*, a children's Braille magazine in the local language to launch and sustain the reading habit; and

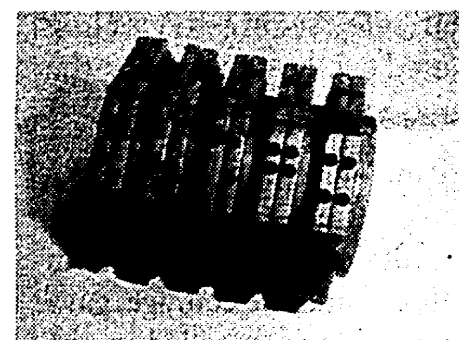
**An Instructor's Manual** (including Braille Code Charts for English and in Bharathi Braille, the national standard for Indian languages) – to enable any literate person to teach, using the devices included in the kit.

Many of these extremely simple and inexpensive devices have long been in use in schools for the visually challenged across

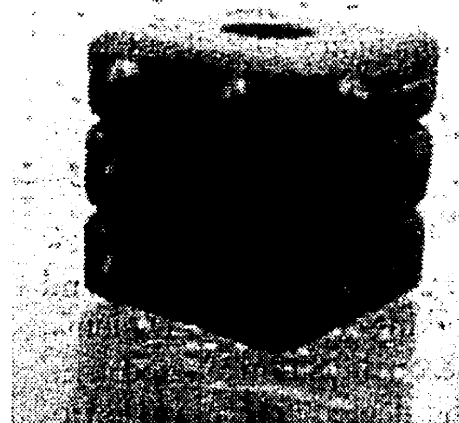
• by  
**SHOBHA MENON**

the world, and in some schools in India. But the Vasantha Cube and the Natesan Block have been designed by Vidya Vrikshah. Their use as teaching aids in India, however, has been restricted to a small number of Braille teachers in a small number of such schools, serving only about 1% of India's total population of visually challenged children.

In Tamil Nadu, there are about 25 schools – both private and government run – for the visually challenged but each of these can cater in terms of infrastructure and staff only to about a hundred children. The actual need is thought to be about 40–50 times more. Currently, there is no reading material for blind children either in English or in



Natesan Block



Vasantha Cube

their mother tongue. Not even enough textbooks; I am told an average class of 20 children in a regular blind school in the country will probably have only 1 or 2 textbooks! "Fortunately, the methodology designed through this initiative is so simple that, recently, three 4-year-olds from the P.S. Senior Secondary School brought out an entire story in Braille themselves as part of a project, even proofreading, taking printouts and posting them to 25 destinations! A tremendous opening up of the visually challenged is therefore possible," feels Krishnaswamy.

The Universal Braille Kit is a part of the National Initiative For the Blind launched by Vidya Vrikshah. The initiative aims to provide Braille study material produced with the aid of computers and provide computer skills through voice-supported computer usage in all local languages. This has been made possible by a unique software designed by Prof. Kalyanakrishnan of the IIT Madras, which will enable the integration of sighted and blind children in several ways:

- Its solutions can be used nationally and internationally, across all languages;
- It can create an integrated environment in schools and increase understanding between blind children and their sighted classmates;
- All the devices can be shared by both sighted and blind children;
- Computers could be used to build electronic, audio and Braille libraries for the use of all through a single input effort.

A positive factor in this context is that government schools in Tamil Nadu are encouraging integration by increasing the enrolment of the visually challenged in regular classes. But, again, the availability of Braille material to meet the new demands needs to be addressed.

The National Initiative for the Blind was formally launched in December 2003 by the Governor P.S. Rama Mohan Rao. The Universal Braille Kit, an initiative of Vidya Vrikshah, is priced at Rs. 300 and supported by the Worth Trust, a non-profit Trust at Katpadi formed by a group of industrialists, which manufactures products that cater to the physically challenged – wheelchairs, canes etc. – besides motor accessories for industry, employing physically challenged individuals as their major workforce.

## Quizzin' with Ram'nan

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

1. What distinction did Padmavathy Bandhopadhyay achieve recently in IAF history?
2. Who recently gave a crown worth Rs. 1.5 crore to Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala?
3. Which Indian Premier's 100th birth anniversary was celebrated on October 2nd?
4. Which world titles were won by Kenya's Paul Kirui and China's Sun Yingjie in New Delhi on October 3rd?
5. Name the two writers elected to the elite club of 21 'Fellows' of the Sahitya Akademi.
6. Name the actor, who played 'Superman' two decades ago, who passed away recently.
7. Which craft won the coveted S 10 million Ansari X Prize for the first non-government team to fly into space twice?
8. Who is the leading man in Gurinder Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice* that premiered in London on October 4th?
9. Simple ones. Who were Anil Kumble's 400th and Shane Warne's world-record breaking 533rd Test victims?
10. Why is Kenya's Wangari Maathai in the news?  
\* \* \*
11. Which is Chennai's only source for Western music on the radio?
12. Who was the first President (designation later changed to Governor) of Madras?
13. What 'distinction' does the above-mentioned person's wife have amongst Madras monuments?
14. Which art form was originally called *ezhuthu velai*?
15. Tamil cinema trivia. What is Nagesh's film production company in the hit movie *Kaadhalikka Neramillai*?
16. Whose story is told in comic-strip style, using small sequential sculptural panels, at the famous Gangaikondacholapuram Temple?
17. On the above theme, which rulers completed the 'Big Temple' in Thanjavur, centuries after its dedication, by building the main hall in front of the sanctum?
18. What public service appointment does Vatsala Raghu hold in the State?
19. Which organisation gave Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha the 'Golden Star of Honour and Dignity Award' recently?
20. What official post in Madras was Rajah Sir Ramaswamy Mudaliar the first Indian to hold?

(Answers on page 8)

# The essence within



K.C.S. Paniker

## Values in Creativity

Sculptor S. Nandagopal remembers his father:

● The one quality my father would look for diligently in an artist was moral character. It was a watchword which ranked very high in his list of qualities which personified a creative person. He detested a painter who lacked this and once related to me an incident in the life of Tolstoy. Tolstoy was fond of browsing through bookstalls with the intent, perhaps, of discovering new talent. Once, he came upon the short stories of a young writer which he found extremely profound and original. After that, he eagerly looked for the young writer's latest writings and found him to have improved his craft immensely. But something disturbed Tolstoy about the young man's moral standpoint. Whenever there was a murder, he was on the side of the murderer. Whenever there was a rape, he was on the side of the rapist. Tolstoy shook his head sadly. For him, it was a great talent gone waste. Years later, he was walking past his favourite way-side bookstall and curiously looked to see how the young writer was progressing. He was absolutely thrilled at the transformation. Whenever there was a murder, he was against the murderer and whenever there was a rape, he was against the rapist. The young man had matured and arrived. He was none other than Guy de Maupassant.

Nandagopal, K.C.S. Paniker's son, and himself an award-winning sculptor of both national and international repute, recalls images of Roy Choudhary sitting in the gardens of the School, with an air-gun in hand.

Choudhary was also an amateur wrestler, filled with great admiration for the 'Patiala School'. He created an *akkada*, a wrestling pit, on the premises. It was filled with red earth, believed to be good both for the skin as well as for a strong grip. The School at the time had only the post of the Principal. In

1941, Roy Choudhary created the post of an Instructor, and appointed Paniker.

Many prominent artists joined the School over time, especially from Bengal – Prodosh Dasgupta, who later became Director of the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi; Paritosh Sen, Founding Member of the Calcutta Progressive Group, Gopal Ghosh and Sushil Mukherjee, to name a few. Choudhary was a student of Abanindranath Tagore, whose students dispersed all over.

It was this larger-than-life personality that Paniker drew on for his initial ideas and thought processes.

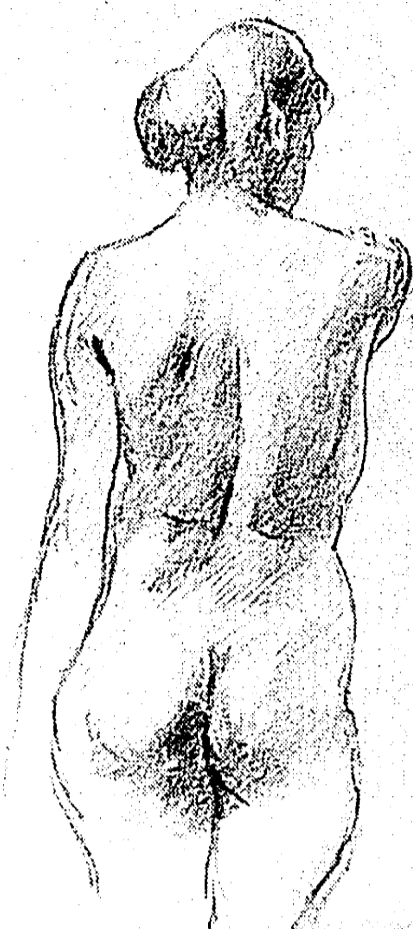
An artist who had rebelled against the Bengal School, Choudhary possessed a spirit that could not be wooed by society, an ideology that Paniker too imbibed. Choudhary was also greatly influenced by the West, and this in turn influenced Paniker, especially the works of the English artist Cottman, and those of Frank Brangwyn.

Between 1944 and 53, Paniker's prominence as an artist grew; his water colours brought him fame and regular buyers. He also won awards and held exhibitions in Madras, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and London. These years also saw the establishment of the Progressive Painters' Association in Madras.

Paniker's work took him often to Calcutta, where he met and became very close to Jamini Roy. Paniker saw Roy as a 'real modern' – his style being an amalgam of Bengal 'pat' painting and Romanesque France. For Paniker, this association provided a breakthrough, although he faced criticism for even meeting Roy. While the British bought Roy's work, his own people took a while to recognise him.

Paniker now found that, while time appeared to have frozen in Madras, the Bombay and Delhi groups of artists were more open to modern art in the West. Paniker often returned from his visits with prints of the works of Salvador Dali, Paul Klee, Joan Miro and others. While the students were impressed, D.P. Roy Choudhary wasn't too happy. Soon Paniker and Choudhary parted ways. Yet, while all avenues appeared to lead to what was happening in Europe, Paniker rebelled against Western hegemony in art.

In 1954, he was nominated as one of India's Nine Eminent Artists and appointed a Mem-



Crayon 1954



Crayon 1952

ber of the Executive Board of the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi. He travelled to Europe, holding one-man exhibitions in London, Paris and Lille.

Nandagopal recalls letters that his father wrote to his mother at the time, speaking of his disillusionment after visiting famous museums of art and seeing all those originals of work that were so familiar otherwise but which failed to impress him, based as they were on "so much optical realism". To Paniker, this made the works slightly superficial, as he felt that Art has to personify qualities.

While Paniker never claimed one school of Art was better than the other, as differences are a result of basic cultures, he came back rather

(Continued on page 7)

# The essence within

(Continued from page 6)

disappointed. This is when his search for Art that was "Indian in spirit and worldwide contemporary" began. Like all true seekers, he was now back at the beginning.

Between 1955 and 58, he was Vice-Principal of the Government School of Arts and Crafts, then its Principal. In 1962, the Government School of Arts and Crafts was upgraded as the Government College of Arts and Crafts.

Paniker's paintings with an Indian ethos of patterns and symbols were rather forced at first. Gradually, his work became linear, but retaining its Indian quality. In his *Blessed are the Peacemakers*, featuring Gandhi, Buddha and Christ, a huge panel around 12 ft. by 5 ft.

now in *Raj Bhavan* in Chennai, the entire work is linear and contains the beginning of what was to grow into his 'Words and Symbols' series. Then came his 'Garden Series', with large heads and small bodies.

The line now became important and two-dimensional, and was the forerunner of the spirit of the Madras Movement that relies so heavily on it. In the early 1960s, he worked on a series of drawings of Christ. Later came his painting of *Subramanya*. A maze of lines crisscrosses like a web through this piece of work. Then followed the series 'Words and Symbols', begun in 1963, with the first work called *The Fruit Seller*.

Paniker's eyes darted restlessly between those intriguing numbers and identification

marks that adorn the sides of carriages in a goods train and Nandagopal's Maths textbooks. He began to wonder why a page of writing could not be a work of art.

At first, he used the Roman script in his work. Then, a student of his brought him a book on Tantric art and he began what Nandagopal describes as "a brief flirtation" with Tantric art. But instead of the Nagari script, Paniker began using the Malayalam script in his work. He was, however, concerned that these symbols created over a 1000 years and which had become infused in the process with tremendous power, would, at best, be weak when used by him. So, he decided to evolve his own symbols. Paniker always maintained that his paintings were really pictures, with no heavy colour or thick brushwork. Writing, he felt, did not lie lightly on a bed of colour.

His work is, therefore characterised by flat backgrounds, where the reds and blues are toned down so that the writing comes to the fore.

He was, says Nandagopal, "way ahead of his times...even today people are uncomfortable with his work." Some critics even called it "blackboard writing." The Madras School was very popular; yet, when his work was exhibited along with those of his students, critics would sometimes wonder aloud, "Brilliant students of a brilliant teacher, but why doesn't he paint?"

In 1966, his dream, the Cholamandal Artists' Village, Madras, was established. In 1967, he retired as Principal, Government College of Arts and Crafts, Madras, and offered all his works – 78 pieces and 4 bronzes – as donation to any State that was prepared to build a museum to house them. Nandagopal states that he actually wanted his work to be housed here in Madras, having spent all his life in Tamil Nadu. However, it was Achutha Menon of Kerala who responded positively and a museum was built in Thiruvananthapuram, next to the Ravi Varma Museum, for Paniker's work. Unfortunately, this came about only in late 1977, too late for K. C. S. Paniker who, suffering from cancer, passed away in Madras earlier that year.

An exhibition of K. C. S. Paniker's work, from the early 1940s to the mid-1950s, is on view at the Art World Gallery, Chennai, from November 1st to 23rd.

Ranjitha Ashok with inputs from S. Nandagopal

## Dates for Your Diary



Till November 23rd: An exhibition of K. C. S. Paniker's work, from the early 1940s to the mid-1950s. (At the Artworld Gallery).

December 1-7: The Park's THE OTHER FESTIVAL 2004. (At the Chinmaya Heritage Centre.) Programme:

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Dec 1 - 7 pm: | Eero Hameenniemi (Finland) + Indian Collaboration – <i>Mylapore Variations</i> , Music – Premiere show (30 mins)<br>Parijat Desai & Dancers (USA), <i>Quiet/Fire</i> , contemporary dance (30 mins) |
| Dec 2 - 7 pm: | Jean-Luc Penso & Theatre du Petit Miroir: <i>A Fox Story</i> , Theatre of Shadow puppets.<br>An Alliance Francaise collaboration (60 mins)  |
| Dec 3 - 7 pm: | Gil Alon (Israel), Mr C, solo theatre (60 mins)<br>Chitrakleha Bolar & Group (UK)<br><i>The Story of C</i> , contemporary dance-theatre (60 mins)   |
| Dec 4 - 7 pm: | Denise Fujiwara (Canada): <i>Sumida River</i> , contemporary dance (solo) (70 mins)   |
| Dec 5 - 6 pm: | Constanza Macras & Group (Germany)<br><i>Back to the Present</i> , contemporary dance.<br>A Max Mueller Bhavan collaboration (135 mins)   |
| Dec 6 - 7 pm: | D'LO (USA/Sri Lanka), Solo Performance art (10 mins)<br>Arjun Raina (New Delhi): <i>A terrible beauty is born</i> , solo theatre (60 mins)  |
| Dec 7 - 7 pm: | Ramu Ramanathan (Mumbai) & 'Out of Context': <i>The Sanjivani Super Show!</i> , English theatre (60 mins)   |

## Senate House Conservation Fund

● The Senate House Restoration and Management Trust appeals to all alumni of the University of Madras and heritage lovers everywhere to contribute to the Senate House Conservation Fund which the Trust is managing for the purpose of restoring Senate House to its old glory by December 2005 and maintaining it thereafter in the same condition.

Cheques should be made out to the Senate House Conservation Account and sent to the Registrar, University of Madras, Chennai 600 005. Contributions are eligible for benefits under Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act.

Dear Registrar,

I am pleased, to enclose a cheque for Rs. .... as my contribution to the restoration and maintenance of Senate House. Kindly acknowledge receipt.

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

.....

I am an alumnus/alumna/heritage lover and wish the project all success. My college was .....

Date: ..... Signature: .....

# A record fifth success

When the last SICAL batsman was dismissed, with his team trailing by 47 runs at the Vivekananda College ground a couple of weeks ago, Jolly Rovers were assured of a special place in the history of Chennai cricket. The rest of the match was a formality, and by virtue of its first innings lead, Jolly Rovers had reached the top of the TNCA First Division league table for a record fifth consecutive season, missing out in the 2000-2001 season only because the league was not completed that year. Skipper Hemang Badani and his men had pulled a rabbit out of the hat, when they came back spiritedly in the last four matches to surmount the seemingly unassailable lead Globe Trotters had gained at the end of the seventh match.

No team can pull off a coup of this magnitude unless it really is a team. Even their strongest rivals will concede that Jolly Rovers have indeed functioned as a team to achieve a feat that has perhaps surpassed the best efforts of Jolly Rovers teams of the 1960s and other stalwart teams like Alwarpet CC, Vijay

CC, Globe Trotters, SPIC, State Bank and IOB over the decades. Singling out individuals for praise would therefore be out of place in such a concerted assault on the Palayampatti Shield, yet the sterling performances of the likes of Sujith Somasundar, Vikram Kumar, Ajay Kudua, Dinesh Mougia, R. Ramkumar, Kulamani Parida, Lakshmiathi Balaji and Hemang Badani, which made this extraordinary sequence of titles possible, cannot be ignored. What is even more creditable is the fact that Jolly Rovers, like some other major outfits in Chennai, was handicapped by the absence of key

players away representing India and India 'A' in international fixtures.

Jolly Rovers, which was once supported by members of *The Hindu* family was adopted by



India Cements in the mid-1960s, when it fielded a star-studded combination that included P. K. Belliappa, K. R. Rajagopal, Najam Hussain, B. Kalyanasundaram, K. V. R. Murthy, Balaji Rao, K. S. Vaidyanathan, George Thomas and other effective cricketers. It was a glamorous outfit that won literally everything before it. Then came a lull in the 1970s. The team was rebuilt when Chemplast – the flagship of the Sanmar Group – took over the running of the club in 1979.

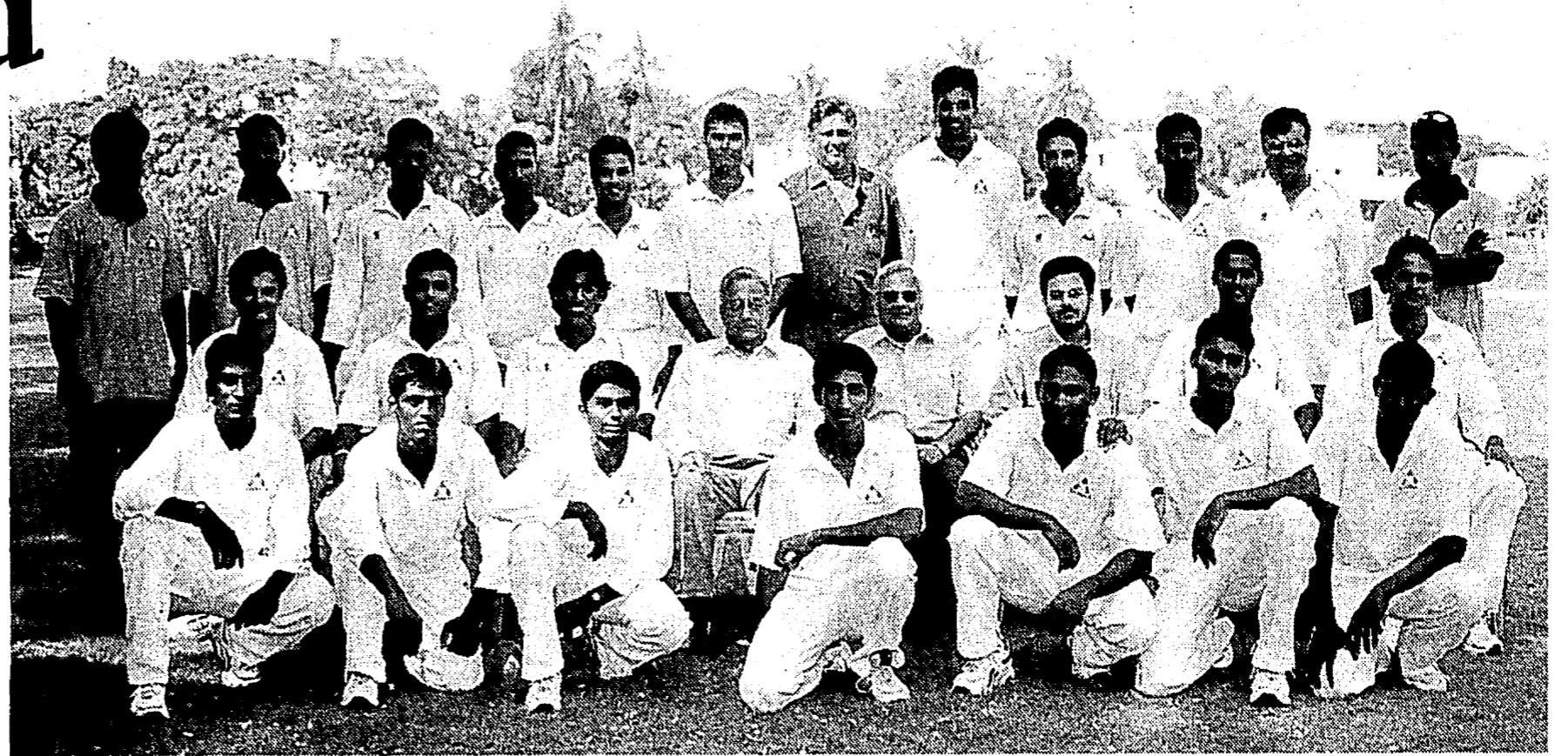
Since then, the team has won the Palayampatti Shield 14 times in 25 years.

Like his father and chairman-emeritus K. S. Narayanan, the Sanmar Group's Chairman, N. Sankar, is passionately fond of cricket and has been an active amateur sportsman for decades. Besides playing cricket competently, he was proficient enough in tennis to combine with TNCA president N. Srinivasan and dominate college tennis back in the 1960s. His brother and vice-chairman N. Kumar has also been a keen amateur cricketer and tennis player of considerable merit. Son Vijay Sankar, a Sanmar director, is equally passionate about cricket.

Now nearly four decades old, Sanmar's love affair with cricket has extended to the excellent maintenance of the IIT Sanmar cricket ground, which it developed a few years ago. The facilities there, including the Sanmar pavilion inaugurated by Australian great Neil Harvey, are so comprehensive and state-of-the-art that the Indian team has trained there a

few teams and many world-class cricketers have praised its ambience.

Bharat Reddy, the administrative manager of the Jolly Rovers team, coach Abdul Jabbar and assistant manager Ram Mohan Rao have all been with the Group for over two decades, first as players and later as administrators. Quite a few of the players too have been with the team for a long time. Special mention must be made of D. Vasu, who has in the past done yeoman service for Jolly Rovers, but now captains the Group's other team, Alwarpet CC, and his teammate J. Ramdas, another notable former 'Jolly Rover'. B. Kalyanasundaram, star medium pacer of the 1960s and now a senior company official, played a quiet role when the IIT ground came up for adoption. Of all these individuals, it is Bharat Reddy who has really masterminded the strategies of Jolly Rovers not only on the field of play, but also in team selection and personnel management over the years.



The record-setting Jolly Rovers team.

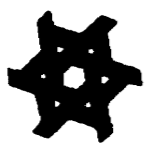
## Answers to Quiz

1. She is the first woman to achieve the second highest rank, i.e Air Marshal; 2. Devotees of Kanchi Kamakoti Math; 3. Lal Bahadur Shastri; 4. Half-marathons for men and women; 5. Amrita Pritam and U.R. Anantamurthy; 6. Christopher Reeve; 7. SpaceShipOne; 8. Michael Henderson; 9. Simon Katich and Irfan Pathan; 10. She is the 2004 Nobel Peace Laureate.

\* \* \*

11. FM Rainbow; 12. Aaron Baker; 13. Elizabeth Baker's tombstone has the oldest British inscription found in India; 14. Kalamkari; 15. Oh Oh Productions; 16. *Bhagiratha*; 17. The Nayaks; 18. Chief Postmaster General, Tamil Nadu Circle; 19. The Ukraine-based International Human Rights Defence Committee; 20. Sheriff of Madras.

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