

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

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Window opened on heritage

– For Corporation engineers

At long last, the city's civic body appears to have woken up to the fact that none of its engineers is trained in heritage conservation. This wisdom, though belated, is to be commended. And it is to be hoped that will lead to correction and, consequently, the presence of a trained corps that will in future be able to take on tasks of enumeration, evaluation and conservation of heritage buildings within the city.

This thinking was followed up with quick action when the Corporation recently had over 80 of its engineers attend a three-day workshop on built-heritage conservation specially organised by INTACH-Chennai with experts from the city, Delhi and Bangalore offering the participants a wealth of insights into both the theoretical and practical aspects of conservation, supported by site visits. These engineers, thus, had an exposure to the technical knowledge necessary to save old buildings as well as sensitisation on the unique architecture of the city, whatever that is left of it that is. The Mayor attended the valedictory session, which is a good indicator of the importance that was attached to the

(By The Editor)

programme, and promised support to more such training programmes.

While this step of the Corporation is indeed a most welcome initiative, it is to be hoped that the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) and the Public Works Department (PWD) will follow this lead and work together with INTACH-Chennai on similar programmes, as much of the heritage of this city is also under the control of these two departments. The CMDA holds the key to decisions on demolition of public heritage buildings, especially those that stand in the way of development projects, through the role that could be played by its Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC). This largely dormant body has, thankfully, controlled the Metro Rail's tendency to largely steamroll its way over heritage. For instance, some positive action has been taken by the HCC when it came to the eventual decision to protect the RSRM Choultry from demolition. Similarly, the HCC has also ensured that proposed stations near heritage buildings

are not designed to dwarf their surroundings.

Nevertheless, one of the greatest failures of the HCC, and therefore of the CMDA, has been the inability to come out with a comprehensive list of heritage buildings in the city which can then be notified. Though a fresh listing is most unnecessary, given that the High Court of Madras has furnished the CMDA with what was put together by the Justice E Padmanabhan Committee on hoardings, the CMDA has been insisting on preparing a list of its own. That it has failed despite seven years having passed is chiefly because it has no trained personnel to take on this activity. It may be best that the task is entrusted to the Corporation's Junior Engineers (JEs), now that they have been through the recent heritage awareness programme. These JEs, given that they are attached to wards, will be able to list what is in their localities and then a comprehensive list can be made with the inputs received from them.

As for the PWD, it still controls all restoration activities in

(Continued on page 5)

Madras Landmarks – 50 years ago



• The Madras Legislative Council set up in the 1860s continuously expanded thereafter till the 1920s. It had its meetings in the Council Chamber in Fort St. George. When the Legislative Assembly came into existence following the institution of dyarchy, it met first in 1937 at Senate House and between 1938 and 1939 at Banqueting (Rajaji) Hall. By the 1940s, a full-fledged Assembly Hall had been built inside Fort St George and so the Assembly moved into the Fort.

Independence posed a new problem – the composite Madras State, which comprised what later became Andhra, had 375 Assembly constituencies and, so, that many legislators as well. The Assembly Hall in the Fort could not accommodate so many. A new Legislature building was, therefore, constructed in Government Estate, just behind Rajaji Hall and Government House. Completed at a cost of Rs. 10 lakh, it was inaugurated on May 2, 1952 by Governor Sri Prakasa.

The division of States on the basis of linguistic regions saw the creation of Andhra Pradesh in 1953 and the number of legislators in Madras State fell to 205. This could be safely accommodated in the Assembly Hall inside the Fort and so the legislature shifted back. The newly built Legislature building was redeveloped as The Children's Theatre where children's films and documentaries were shown at subsidised rates. It was, however, never popular. The auditorium received a fresh lease of life when it was refurbished as a 1000-seat theatre and relaunched as Kalaivanar Arangam, named after N.S. Krishnan.

The theatre survived till 2008 when, as part of the magnificent obsession to build a new Assembly-cum-Secretariat in Government Estate, the heritage buildings in the premises were all brought down one by one. Rajaji Hall was the sole survivor. Kalaivanar Arangam too became a casualty. That it was all to no use is now clear, what with the Assembly having shifted once again into the Fort and the new building becoming a multi-speciality referral hospital.

Meanwhile, work has begun on building a new theatre on the spot where Kalaivanar Arangam once stood.

City pedestrian plaza being planned

If everything works well, T' Nagar may soon have a pedestrian plaza, a walkers' paradise that will stretch from Panagal Park to Anna Salai/ Mount Road. In terms of distance it is not much, being just about 1.4 km, long, but it is significant as it is probably the first instance when the authorities have recognised the rights of pedestrians. However, from concept to implementation is a long road to be travelled and much depends on

how the project shapes up in reality.

The idea was first mooted in 2012 when experts from New York were called in to study the problems of public transport in Chennai. The team comprising the Big Apple's Transport and Planning Commissioners was brutally frank in its findings – the city's waterways were polluted beyond words and needed to be resurrected, the concept of designing flyovers and roads to facilitate car movement at

By A Special Correspondent

high speeds was outdated, and the need of the hour was for increased use of public transport, encourage cycling and promote pedestrian facilities. The report singled out T'Nagar and, while recognising its high energy, said that it needed to be cleared of all traffic, making it a pedestrian area. It drew parallels between Panagal Park and Times Square of New York, which faced simi-

lar problems before becoming a walking/cycling only area. This appears to have been the inspiration for our Corporation.

The design, which was finalised in May this year, envisages the division of the area into three zones. The first, between Panagal Park and Dr Nair Road, and the second between Dr Nair Road and Residency Towers, will have pedestrian walkways and a dedicated bus lane. The last section, between Residency Towers and Anna

Salai will have the standard four-lane carriageway and wide sidewalks. The cost is estimated at Rs 83 crore and part of it is expected to be funded from the Rs 50 crore loan that the Corporation hopes will be sanctioned by the World Bank for a larger revamp scheme of T'Nagar that includes aerial walkways and parking lots.

There are, however, dissensions within the Corporation's

(Continued on page 3)

Of culture & commerce

Art and commerce are strange bedfellows. And in India during the nineties of the last century, there was a sudden awakening. To put India on the world map of wealth and prosperity, we thought that we had to opt for gigantic consumerism, as in the rich Western nations, especially the US, and try aping their corporate cultural values and norms.

P.V. Narasimha Rao, India's Prime Minister then, conceived the idea of a free market-oriented economy and Manmohan Singh, his Finance Minister, delivered it, paving the way for corporate moghuls. And there was this technological boom when every young person became a whiz kid, whose short and long range vision was money and making more money. Love of art and aesthetics for their own sake became the casualty. Every aspect of our living became related to the value of money. In a free-for-all kind of economy, with buyers and sellers, conditioned by bulls and bears, with very little breathing space for art and culture, corporate czars took over the business of art. Literature, theatre, cinema and fine arts acquired values determined by their market value in terms of money. No other critical yardstick as handed down to us by our traditional concepts of culture were necessary. In such an unhealthy environment of cultural confusion and decay, how can you expect the young of the country to be aware of their past heritage and withstand the onslaught of contemporary trends?

• by Indira Parthasarathy

Look at our cultural institutions. Though they were established to integrate the various cultural aspects of this great country, they rarely collaborate with one another in organising integrated cultural festivals or seminars.

India is a synthetic fabric of many coloured threads with different regional cultural forms for which there is one well-defined fabric of what we have known from time immemorial as 'Indian culture', as the bottomline of this great concept. Have these cultural institutions, which have been in existence for several decades, succeeded in carrying this message to the youth of this country? Instead, the country is getting divided further and further into various claustrophobic cultural pockets distanced from one another. The National School of Drama every year stages hundreds of plays in different Indian languages in Delhi during its national festival. The Malayalam play is seen by the Keralites in Delhi, the Tamil play is seen by the Tamils in Delhi, and so on. Were all these cultural institutions created to perpetuate this division?

How did the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, though written in a language which is not the mother tongue of any single community in India, become an intrinsic part of the national and cultural psyche of all the regions of Bharat, where every region has adopted the stories befitting its own cultural genius but retained the spirit and soul of the epics as a whole? Was there a Sahitya Akademi or National Book Trust at the time to organise translations of these works?

The reason is not far to seek. There was free interaction between the people of various regions in this country in the form of pilgrimages, temple festivals, cultural and philosophical debates, music and dance melas, without the interference of a political government. This continued to happen till the 1930s and 1940s. There were individual patrons of art and culture, who promoted a national art consciousness among the various sections of the people, transcending the caste and linguistic barriers.

Secondly, the concept of classical and popular art never existed in those days. This division is an idea imported from the West which, during the period of industrialisation, the rich – having lost the feudatory privileges – created. The famous literary critic Leslie Fiedler asks, "Between elitism and populism, how would you rate Shakespeare? A classical poet or popular poet? The illiterate Elizabethan masses loved him as their darling. In the same way, we can also ask "Was Valmiki or Vyasa or Tulsidas or Kamban an elitist or popular poet?" The young people of today, having surrendered their taste to the worship of Mammon, do not ask themselves these questions and have become the children of a bastardised culture. It is the responsibility of the artistes and cultural activists to start a movement, as Vivekananda did for spiritualism, to reclaim our national culture, which is our due. – (Courtesy: *Sruti*).

Blue boxes of many uses

The Queen (of England, that is), we are told, operates out of red boxes. *The Man from Madras Musings* wonders as to what Indian leaders use for their confidential documents. The Chief, MMM knows, works out of a small grey diary into which he periodically enters profound thoughts in a handwriting that only he can decipher, and that too only on a sunny day. Our beloved city, of course, works out of blue boxes, the gifts that our governing fathers have bestowed on us.

These boxes have been placed in all strategic street corners. In shape and size they resemble the large containers that carry industrial output from one country to another, on ships. The idea was that these commodious containers would be used as receptacles of the rubbish that would be col-

sued for pasting posters. What is worse is that, as MMM notices, these blue bins have occupied what little there is left of pedestrian space on many thoroughfares. In short, they are among the most useless creations of our civic body. It is high time these are dismantled and the sheets put to good use, such as backdrops for hoardings, supports for cut-outs, and stands for posters. But then MMM forgets that that is exactly what they are used for even now.

Candles in the wind

Among the few wise things that *The Man from Madras Musings* has done, is the saving up of petromax and hurricane lanterns that were once used by his ancestors. For some reason, MMM was always of the view that they would come in useful

power surplus in the next two months or words to that effect. For the sake of record, such predictions were made and received with wide acclaim in 2012, 2013 and 2014, the last one being made in May of this year when it was asserted that there would be no power cuts effective June 1st. There were none to give credit where it is due, but nobody said that this was only a temporary reprieve, and had been entirely dependent on wind power. In effect, like the Rock-a-Bye-Baby rhyme, when the wind blows, our State rocks. But what happens when the wind stops? Down comes the power generation and everything goes with it.

MMM is, of course, not entirely fazed by the power cuts. Unlike the High Tension users, he is a Low Tension customer and so suffers in

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

lected from all the houses in the neighbourhood. Handcarts, it was rather grandiosely declared, would do that task of collecting the rubbish and transporting it to the blue box. The garbage collection vehicle (the big green one that is motorised and stops all traffic and which is not to be confused with the battered grey handcart) would then stop at each of the big blues and collect what is in them and carry them away to God Knows Where – namely the landfills about which nobody is as yet bothered except for those who have the misfortune to live in their vicinity.

That at least is the plan on paper and like all good things of Chennai, it looks good on paper only. In reality, the handcarts do not collect the rubbish. It is brought by householders to various bins provided by our Corporation. But, and here is where the householders differ from those in other countries – nobody puts the garbage into the bins. They strew their rubbish all around it. The motorised vehicle comes once or twice a day and collects whatever it can from the bins and from around it and departs. The task of emptying the bins is made easier by foraging cows that tilt them over in the process of reaching for some juicy plastic bags.

What of the big, blue and roomy boxes? They remain empty. Several have begun to collapse and present a sand-bagged appearance. Some have been converted into cow pens and makeshift residences for rag pickers. One or two are convenient spots for a tippie or two after sunset, especially if a TASMAL outlet is nearby. The corrugated sheets are, of course, most

and, sure enough, their hour has now come.

MMM alludes to the recent announcement by the TNEB (Totally No Electricity Board) aka TANGEDCO (Total Absence or No Generation of Electricity, Deploy Candles Only) that it will be resorting to power cuts once again. Not that anyone is surprised, but MMM understands that the High Tension users are having hypertension and several are swearing under their breath to take their custom elsewhere. Not that it has really made the powers that be concerned. The powers could not care less, or so it would appear. All that matters is that they need to be in power.

And, so, MMM has pulled out his collection of lanterns, candle stands and even a railway signal lamp which appears to have somehow attached itself to MMM's grandfather's retinue. (Like everyone else, MMM had two grandfathers and both were in the railways, so MMM is unable to guess as to which one of the two walked off with the signal lamp). These MMM plans to clean and press into service. He will be known as 'The Lad with the Lamp'.

Leaving aside the levity, it is time that this power crisis is taken in hand. It is not enough to make empty announcements that the State would become

silence. It is also with a sense of déjà vu that he does that, for it all reminds him of the time when he was the Cherubic Child of Calcutta where 22 hour power cuts were the norm, rather ironically when the State of West Bengal was ruled by a Chief Minister who rejoiced in the name of 'Jyoti', or 'light'.

But those were days when ours was a country of shortages and we were taught to accept it as our fate. These days that is not the way. With everyone being exposed to international standards, claiming that our city or State is at that level sounds rather hollow when we do not appear to have any strategy to combat this problem. MMM wonders if any developed State/City/country can claim to depend on the wind as a permanent solution and then wring its hands when that fails. Sounds rather ancient, does it not?

Tailpiece

Once again, our airports of *The Man from Madras Musings*, when it comes to the tailpiece. No comments on the English, but those in the know assure MMM that the Tamil is horribly wrong as well, as you can see from the picture featured below.

– MMM

மாற்றுத்திறனாளிகள் கழிப்பறை
विशिष्ट रूप से सक्षम व्यक्तियों के लिए शौचालय
TOILET FOR
DIFFERENTLY ABLED

**OUR
READERS
WRITE**



Turning around PSUs

The article (MM, September 16th) on V. Krishnamurthy's tenure at the helm of SAIL made me nostalgic about our association with him at middle management level: executing his out-of-box ideas on shop floors to improve productivity; his efforts to bring back steel experts who left SAIL for one reason or other to lead the units; his concern to train and develop executive managerial skills by conducting workshops with management consultant; improving HRD and introduc-

ing labour participation in decision-making; motivating R&D efforts; taking bold decisions to acquire Maharashtra Electromelts and Badravati Steel Works for integrated raw materials flow – all these bold measures, made SAIL, a run-of-the-mill organisation in the 1970s, to transform into a successful commercial enterprise in the 1980s.

VK established the Indian Model of Management.

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Jerdon's volumes

The T.C. Jerdon article (MM, September 1st) was an impressively written piece. The story of a pioneer ornithologist was told with great warmth. I hope the author is writing his biography.

In the 1990s, while serving in Ahmadabad, I was invited for lunch by a former rajah to his palace in a small town nearby. Near the dining table stood an almirah and there, among other books, the three volumes of Jerdon's *The Birds of India* caught my eyes. It was the first edition, in mint condition, complete with golden letters embossed on the calico-bound hard cover. My friend, himself a keen birder, was working in the estate of the rajah and I told him about seeing the book.

Ten years later, I visited my friend in another town. He brought out a bundle wrapped in cloth, gingerly kept it on a table and opened it. In it lay Jerdon's books, sparkling. My friend told me that when he left the estate job, the king gave the books as a parting gift. No...I will not reveal the identity of my friend. I do not want his house to be burgled.

S. Theodore Baskaran
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Dodda Gubbi Post
Bangalore 560 077

Recalling Triveni

K. Ramakoteswara Rao of *Triveni*, which was brought out beautifully, was a good friend of my father.

K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, father of Prema Nandakumar, used to contribute to *Triveni* under the pen name 'Crystal'. I think his *magnum opus*. *Sitayana*, appeared in *Triveni*. This is the *Ramayana* retold with focus on Sita.

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When London was worse

Reader T. Santhanam's letter in MM, August 16th, exhibits a contempt for Indian toilet habits and admiration for European culture ignoring the very recent history of flush toilets inside houses. Far too often, our media, government and social activists exhibit such an attitude. I hope the following changes a mind or two.

The Thames & the Cooum

In the 19th Century, the river Thames that flows through London was a far worse river than the Cooum that flows through Madras. Not only the river, but the stinking city of London was the world's largest dumpyard.

When the scientist Chadwick proposed that Thames be cleaned, *The Times*, London, opposed it vehemently: "England wants to be clean, but not be cleaned by Chadwick" ran its editorial, according to Peter Medawar in his book *The Limits of Science*.

Poor Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, died surrounded by 42 cesspools, and the inconsolable queen then ordered the cleaning up of London – thus was born the modern sewerage system. This was the most useful royal death in history, first for England, then the world: the largest metropolis of the post-Industrial Revolution era systematically got its first effective sewerage system.

Another fact might be mentioned here – one about horses. More specifically, horse dung. As Stephen Leavitt explains brilliantly in his book *Super Freakonomics*, the modern curse of Carbon dioxide pollution is insignificant compared to the pre-automobile horse-dung pollution that every European and American city suffered. The tall basements of stone houses in the US cities of that era – New York, Boston, Philadelphia – and similar cities in Europe owe their design to the moneyed classes, who built such residences to prevent rain-mixed sludge, enriched with horse and human refuse, from entering their homes. In a remarkable coincidence, the houses of Bohra Muslims in Siddhpur in Gujarat were built on the designs of the European houses of the time – and have

the high basements similar to such houses. Environmentalists mindlessly curse the internal combustion engine and the modern mechanical world as the root of all pollution, and as evil incarnate. But it was diesel and Benz's automobile that improved farming.

Thomas Hager, in his book on the synthesis of nitrogen, *The Alchemy of Air*, vividly describes cargo ships carrying mountains of guano bat and bird dung from the Pacific islands off the Peruvian coast, arriving at the ports in England. This worsened the smell. London was steadily getting dirtier and smellier well before the Industrial Revolution, dumping its untreated sewage and trash into the Thames only worsened things – in fact, the Great Stink of 1858 caused Parliament to shift from London to Oxford!

Most readers of English literature will be familiar with Charles Dickens's satires on the soot and terrible pollution of London. What we generally don't think about or realise is that such a London no longer exists. It has become far cleaner, far less polluted metropolis. It is a lesson for the dirty cities of the world.

I cannot resist pointing out at this point that the single most repeated thing about the Indus Valley Civilisation is that the people had the most advanced sewerage systems of the world until the 19th Century. The system they developed appears to be better than what we have in most cities and villages in India. During January 2014 site visit of the Tamil Heritage Trust to Lothal, we were given a tour of the drainage systems of that Harappan city. Sewage is disgusting as current affairs, but is apparently fascinating as heritage!

As Sriram V. elucidated to some of us on a Chintadripet Heritage Walk, it was during Lord Hobart's Governorship of Madras Presidency, that the plan for a sewerage system for Madras germinated. In fact, Lord Hobart's death was as useful to Madras, as Prince Albert's was to England.

R. Gopu
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The old order changeth

• A comment in lighter vein on the changes in the work ethic in the first 100 days after Modi. This little ode is dedicated to all Government offices everywhere.

*The Boss all fired with
Vision
Made it his one and only
mission
To see that things were
moving
In the corridors of power.*

*Now the files are getting
lighter,
The halls a whole lot
brighter.
In at nine and out betimes
at nine,
The canteen is no place to
spend the time.
And when you go to pay
your taxes
At the corner where the fax
is,
That lazy blighter is not
sleeping at his desk.*

*The motto being
"fitter not fatter,"
There is no Moghul biriyani
At one for Indirani.
The lady is in a fix,
A meal or aerobics?*

*There is no fiddle and no
faddle,
No huddle and no muddle,
And the Boss can't stop
grinning
For the money that is
jiggling
In the coffers where it
rightly ought to be.*

– Beatrix D'Souza

Pedestrian plaza being planned

(Continued from page 1)

executive on how the project is to be proceeded with. The engineers are of the view that it is best that the multi-level parking lot, which was to be constructed on one side of Panagal Park be completed before the pedestrian project takes off. They are concerned about the traffic chaos that will ensue if work on the latter begins without any proper arrangements for vehicles. It is, however, reliably learnt that the elected representatives are all for the pedestrian project to start at once, presumably because of its high profile nature and the urgency to see it completed before the term of the present Council ends in three years. The multi-level parking lot, incidentally, has had a history of its own. It remained on paper for years, with no bidder being interested in the tender. Estimated at Rs 25 crores, it has undergone fur-

ther changes in the light of the pedestrian plaza – what was originally planned as a multi-storey parking facility, it has now been redesigned as an underground lot capable of holding 500 cars.

While all this is welcome and hopes run high for the revamp of T'Nagar, our fundamental fears, highlighted when this idea was first mooted in 2012, still hold good. What happens

after the plaza is ready? Will it be free of encroachments? Will hawkers not take over the whole place? Will commercial interests not want all pedestrian areas to be made over as parking lots? Much depends on how the Corporation handles all that. Experience has shown us that construction of such facilities is relatively easy. It is in the maintenance that we invariably fail.

CHENNAI HERITAGE

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• 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.

Sole author

The article on *Triveni* in MM, September 16th, was by Ganga Powell alone and not as stated. The error is regretted.

– The Editor

Bridge-building tales of yore

(Continued from last fortnight)

Government insisted that an estimate be given for approval for construction work whatever the cost. Unless approval was obtained, no work could be started.

If the estimate was exceeded in the final account, Government needed to know the reasons for the excess amount spent.

Lieutenant Thomas Fraser, who built St. George's Bridge, was censured for exceeding the estimate. His commission and benefits were all withheld.

In his defence, he brought to the notice of the Governor that when the work on the foundation was completed, he was instructed to realign the whole bridge! Once again he had to sink wells for the foundation, and the piers and abutments were raised. Still, changes continued to be made, and he complied with them all. These changes added to the final cost for which he was not responsible. The Governor accepted his plea and restored all his benefits.

In another instance, the great 18-arch Elphinstone Bridge was completed successfully and the Military Board was all praise for the Superintendent Engineer who gave the people of Madras a grand structure. But not so the Governor. He demanded an explanation from the Military Board for the excess over estimate, mainly because the Court of Directors had put a cap on ex-

penditure before giving their approval.

The Superintendent Engineer gave a statement of costs involved in two other bridges to prove his work was carried out most economically, but the bailing of water for foundation building was most unexpected. He stated that the river was always full of water. While keeping the cofferdams dry, he had to use extra persons for bailing water. After protracted arguments, the issue finally came to a happy end.

The Government decided in 1840s that all 'works' should be given 'on contract'. When the time came to build a new bridge across the Cooum in Chintadripet at the same location where,

once, the suspension bridge was, the Military Board invited tenders and gave the contract to two local maistries, whose quotation was much lower than the estimated cost.

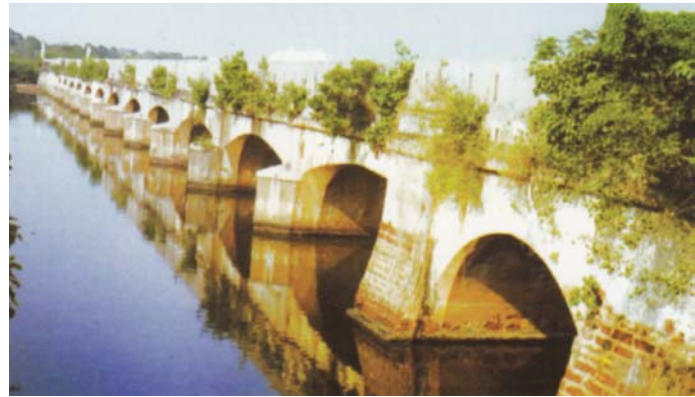
Neither Military Board nor the Government paused for a minute to ascertain whether the maistries were capable of building a large bridge. They gave them the work, but not without a security.

Having faced all kinds of difficulties, the local builders gave up the project half way. The work was taken over by the Superintendent Engineer, Presidency Division, and completed in 1848.

In the meantime, the lead mastery died and the creditors be-



St. George Bridge, Mount Road, River Cooum.



Elphinstone Bridge, River Adyar.

Through the painters' eyes

Famous painters have left us beautiful paintings of the city's graceful arch bridges:

Armenian Bridge: William Hodges
Painted in 1780, gives the earliest view of the bridge with pointed arches, and with some structures above the roadway.

Armenian Bridge: Thomas Daniel
Painted in 1792-1793 when he, along with his nephew, William Daniel, visited Madras. The arches are more semicircular.

Armenian Bridge: Justinan Gantz
Painted in 1840-45. His painting is a distant view, with the river in the foreground. Another painting shows the huge pillars at the approaches.

Wallajah Bridge: Thomas Daniel
This bridge, one situated by the southwest en-

trance of the Fort, had seven arches. Painted in 1820, just after renovation, by Major De Havilland.

St George's Bridge: Lieutenant Thomas Fraser
"A view of the Bridge over Chintadripettah River, near Government Garden Madras."

The Superintendent Engineer who built the bridge in 1804 painted it himself in 1805. He presented it to Sir John Sinclair of Ulster, with the above title.

St. Andrew's Bridge: John Gantz
Painted in 1821 by the Austrian father of Justinan. He worked with the East India Company as a draughtsman and architect. Later, father and son opened a publishing house.

Suspension Bridge Chintadripettah: An artist's sketch showing the imported suspension bridge that crossed the Cooum at Chintadripet in 1831.

A bridge near Ashton's shop was designed with a width of 22 feet between parapet walls. In 1846, when construction was about to start, the Military Board realised that the bridge would be too narrow and suggested that a minimum width of 30 feet with 5 feet raised causeways on either side for 'foot passengers' safety, thus in total 40 feet width was a must. They felt that in the distant future, with the city expanding, and comparing with the width of the bridges elsewhere, Government needed to act on this suggestion and increase the outlay sanctioned in 1846. The Government accepted the suggestion.

Even today we see just two-lane new bridges. What will happen after 50 years?

Many of the city's bridges were built with chunam and bricks and are 150-plus years old. They were designed for the transport system of those days, namely bullock carts, horse-drawn carriages and, of course, gun carriages. They served well not only in those days but still do so. When Government wanted to broaden or widen the roads, the immediate thinking was to demolish the old bridges and build new, broad ones. Nobody thought of building a bridge on either side of the old bridge, so we lost beautiful General Hospital Bridge, Elephant Gate Bridge, Hamilton Bridge (all, across the Buckingham Canal) and, lastly, Munro Bridge in Chetpet and the one in Aminjikarai over the Cooum.

(Concluded)

Text and pictures by D.H. Rao



Law's Bridge, Iyah Mudali Street, River Cooum.



M.K. Amman Koil Bridge, M.K. Road, Buckingham Canal.

gan putting pressure on the Military Board to return the promissory notes given by the builder. The Military Board sought the Advocate General's opinion and he was forthright in stating that "no notice should be taken of the application in question," as it was "a fraud of frauds." This was in 1854.

In 1840, the Military Board wanted to erect a bridge near Ashton's shop (present-day Harris Bridge). But some "influential natives" did not want to give land for the purpose of a new road.

Another road was proposed along the river from the western end of the bridge towards Marshall's Road and one northwards to St. Andrew's bridge. When the Government tried to acquire land under Section I of Act XX of 1852, it was not clear whether it would apply to the Presidency. So the Government brought another Act of 1854, under which it could take over

private lands compulsorily and pay due compensation. Thereafter the roads were completed and the bridge built.

Today, many of our road and bridge projects are stalled by vested interests because of lax legislation.

A bridge on South Beach Road needed urgent repairs. Also its wooden handrail needed replacement and its arches needed plastering. On further inspection, it was found one arch had sunk.

A couple of years later, the Military Board wanted further funds and provided an estimate. The Governor was very curious to know why the bridge was not inspected initially. He also wanted to know who was responsible for the regular maintenance of Presidency Bridges. If there was someone, why had he not carried out his work sincerely?

Catching a wave to the future

Little would have Murthy Megavan – a fisherman and a school drop-out from Kovalam, 40 kilometres from Chennai – realised that he was creating a future for himself and other youths from his village when he borrowed a surfing board from a reluctant 'Surfing Swami' in 2001. Jack Hebner, popularly called the Surfing Swami, who is credited with creating the surfing movement in India, was in Kovalam in 2001 to explore opportunities for surf sports near Chennai. He reluctantly lent his surfing board to Murthy who showed an infectious enthusiasm

to Yotam Agam, co-founder of EarthSync, a record label and audio-visual production company. Murthy caught five waves with a surfing board Yotam lent him. An elated Yotam gifted him the surfing board.

Murthy was unstoppable thereafter. He quit fishing and turned coach to train young Vicky, Venkat and Appu from his village. Gifts of surf boards from other surfers visiting Kovalam followed. A couple of years later, a stunned Yotam saw the way Murthy and his trainees were surfing and was so impressed that he made a docu-

coach and owner, the Covelong Point Social Surf School was inaugurated in Kovalam on November 16, 2012, by the then British Deputy High Commissioner, Mike Nithavrianakis.

Murthy, Vicky, Venkat and Appu now conduct training sessions for people wanting to learn surfing. And to keep them going, TTK Logistics has extended its support till the school can sustain itself. Meanwhile, an Australian NGO, 'Boards for Billions', is sending about 100 surf boards over a year and half to the school.



A picture of Murthy while surfing.

mentary on Murthy and the others in 2009. Yotam also began exploring ways to help Murthy start a surfing school. The lucky break came when Arun Vasu of TTK Logistics, a passionate water sport enthusiast for over three decades, entered Murthy's life, courtesy Yotam, in 2012.

The recently concluded Covelong Point Classic Surf and Music Festival at the Kovalam Beach, hosted by the Covelong Point Social Surfing School along with the EarthSync, and support of the Surfing Federation of India, based in Mangalore, is a consequence of the journey Murthy and his friends began in Kovalam.

Murthy's love for surfing made him buy a surfing board in 2003 for Rs. 1500 from a visiting Australian. The next ship was when Tobias, a German architect, frequented Kovalam to surf along with his children. Seeing Murthy's interest in surfing, Tobias introduced him in 2007

for riding the waves. In the next 20 minutes Murthy spent with the surfing board, an astonished Hebner saw him catching a 20-metre wave and a few smaller ones.

The recently concluded Covelong Point Classic Surf and Music Festival at the Kovalam Beach, hosted by the Covelong Point Social Surfing School along with the EarthSync, and support of the Surfing Federation of India, based in Mangalore, is a consequence of the journey Murthy and his friends began in Kovalam. Murthy's love for surfing made him buy a surfing board in 2003 for Rs. 1500 from a visiting Australian. The next ship was when Tobias, a German architect, frequented Kovalam to surf along with his children. Seeing Murthy's interest in surfing, Tobias introduced him in 2007

Vicky, a school dropout, was a shy, uncommunicative youth whose life was fishing and playing on the wooden plank in water. But his life changed when he took to surfing. He now beams with confidence on the back of his wins in several surfing competitions starting from 2011 and is aiming to become an international surfer. Appu finished his hotel management course and went up to the national level in volleyball but, then, surfing grabbed him. He now wants to compete internationally. Venkat too finished a hotel management course but found that working in restaurants wasn't what he wanted to do with life. Venkat's ambitions now don't end with becoming a surfer at the international level; he wants to turn a restaurateur catering to surfers on the beach.

Murthy, Appu and Venkat



Arun Vasu, Murthy Megavan, Jonty Rhodes and Yotam Agam.

went to their first-ever surfing competition in Pondicherry in 2011. Murthy finished second in the advanced surfers' category, which boosted the confidence of these fledgling surfers.

Among the late entrants, Dharani is showing good promise and is a consistent winner in surfing competitions held in Pondicherry, Kerala and Orissa. He is keen on becoming an international surfer. He is also interested in training young boys, even as young as six, so that they reach international levels quicker.

To popularise the surf school, the first Covelong Point Classic Surf and Music Festival was organised by the School in November 2013. Jonty Rhodes, South African cricketer and a keen water sport enthusiast, promoted the event as its ambassador and also conducted a training session. The second edition of the festival too blended surfing with music, yoga and fun. There was an all-women's category in the surfing competition. Raghu Dixit of Raghu Dixit Project sang in pouring rain. T.M. Krishna gave a classical music concert and stalls were put up by the local villagers as part of the organisers' effort to encourage the local economy.

Murthy's tryst with surfing hasn't stopped with the surfing school. In 2013 he donated a substantial sum from the surfing school's revenues to the village panchayat to finance the education of schoolchildren in the local school. The school has also organised many free health camps. In deserving cases, it has paid for surgeries. Murthy has also been channelising surfing to transform the village youth and

● by K. Venkatesh

make them responsible citizens of the future. He strictly prohibits his wards from drinking, smoking and gambling. He helps them focus on aiming for international surfing participation and to take an interest in entrepreneurial activities.

The Kovalam boys are now regularly winning prizes in competitions across the country. To take the surfing school to the next level, a beachside location has been identified for the school and a mini-restaurant. Murthy is confident that the future he has found for the youth of his village will be more exciting than fishing.

Corporation wakes up to conservation training

(Continued from page 1)

Government buildings. Given that it has no trained personnel for such special tasks, it continues to put out specifications for heritage restoration on the same lines as modern buildings. The consequence is that budgets are completely out of touch with reality – you cannot restore a wooden doorway that is 100 years old at the same cost as a modern glass one with aluminium beading. Yet that is exactly what is expected of contractors, resulting in most of them shying away from such tasks leading to buildings languishing without restoration.

Things have changed somewhat recently, with the long postponed Chepauk Palace renovation expected to be on different lines — but that has not yet moved beyond the planning stage.

It is therefore to be hoped that such heritage awareness programmes are taken up soon by the CMDA and the PWD, teaming with experts in the field. Training Corporation engineers and officials alone will have limited impact. It is nevertheless a step in the right direction and will hopefully have a beneficial effect on heritage conservation in the city.



• Media & Advertising

Growth of advertising in Madras

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

1. In the context of linguistics, September 14th was observed in the country as...?

2. The State Bank of India on September 13, 2014 celebrated 150 years of its operations in which SAARC country?

3. The Supreme Court recently ruled what per cent quota for disabled persons in all Government jobs, including the IAS?

4. The ICC recently suspended which prominent Asian from bowling in international cricket with immediate effect for an illegal bowling action?

5. What were Op. Megh Rahat and Op. Sahayata which were launched by the Indian Army recently?

6. ISRO scientist T.N. Suresh Kumar became the first Indian to achieve what endurance feat by flying in a MIG-29 in Russia?

7. Which Indian film won the Lion of the Future-Luigi De Laurentiis award for a Debut Feature at the prestigious 71st Venice Film Festival?

8. The Brazilian who partnered Sania Mirza in the mixed doubles crown at the US Open was...

9. Name the residence of the founder of the Tata business empire that was one of the two Indian properties to win the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Award for 2014.

10. The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister has announced that the State's new capital would be located around which bustling city?

11. In this non-exhaustive list, what masonry structures that criss-cross Madras has/had names like Benfield, Calinaroy, Munro, Wallajah etc?

12. Which Sangita Kalanidhi was referred to as 'Pitamaha'?

13. Which literary journal was started by K. Ramakotishwara Rao in 1928 and had a run for 80 years?

14. Which leading major in its field had its genesis in 1946 as a small toy balloon manufacturing unit in a shed in Tiruvottriyur?

15. After which two emperors are the Presidential and Grand Presidential Suites at ITC Grand Chola named?

16. Which respected college's emblem has an anchor and the motto *In Hoc Signo*?

17. What did Dr. Annie Besant call the 'Flaming Centre' from which the "Powers of Wisdom and Compassion radiate their benevolent influences to the world"?

18. Name the former director of the King Institute who is regarded as the 'Cholera Conqueror' for pioneering work in the 1920s in understanding that disease?

19. Which famous twin was the first Indian Principal of the Madras Medical College?

20. Which institution synonymous with books in Madras was started in 1840s by the librarian of the Wesleyan Book Depository?

(Answers on page 8)

Mass media as we understand it today took root with the establishment of the print media in the West in the 17th Century. The medium offered opportunities to reach a large and widespread audience simultaneously. It was the East India Company that brought the medium to India and to Madras that is Chennai.

Newspaper publishing started in Madras with the launch of a weekly, *The Madras Courier*, in 1785. *The Spectator*, founded in 1836, became the city's first daily newspaper in 1853.

Tamil publishing made a significant beginning in 1881 with the weekly *Swadesamitran*, which later became the first Tamil daily.

From the very first newspaper, advertising was very much part of the contents of newspapers and magazines. But the pioneering personalities to make significant contributions to the advertising business were the legendary S.S. Vasam (of Gemini Film fame) and T. Sadasivam. Their impact began in the 1930s. Vasam started Vasam Advertising Centre, canvassing advertisements for various newspapers and getting commissions from them. Moving on from there, he bought out *Ananda Vikatan* and also started *Merry Magazine* in English and brought in T. Sadasivam to get advertisements for that publication. Sadasivam had a flair for writing very persuasive direct mailers appealing for advertisements. It is said that thanks to Sadasivam's efforts the advertising income of *Ananda Vikatan* went up from Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 72,000 in six months. Sadasivam later left *Ananda Vikatan* to start *Kalki* magazine with 'Kalki' Krishnamurthy who had been the Editor of *Ananda Vikatan*.

Newspaper advertisements in those days were mostly for products like Keshavardhini hair oil, Asoka Betelnut Powder, Amrutanjana, Narasu's Coffee, Binny's, Westend Watch Co., Himalaya Snow and announcements of new film releases. Sadasivam was responsible for many Britain-based firms advertising the products they marketed in India.

It was in the early 1930s that advertisements which were essentially classified ads started getting a new look with the introduction of visuals to

support catchy text ('copy'). Line drawings and half tone prints of human figures were used to make the advertisements more attractive.

One of the earliest full-fledged advertising agencies was started by P.S. Mani Aiyar in 1939. Aiyar began his advertising career by canvassing advertisements for *Swadesamitran* and *The Hindu*. It is said that he got 25% commission from these newspapers for the ads he got for them. Simpson's and Spencer's were two of his best known clients. He had innovative ideas and he hired artists to create advertisements with interesting

Swamy. He not only used research for the first time to develop effective advertising strategies but also came out with some very creative ads for his clients like TVS and T.I. Cycles. 'Set your watch on the arrival of a TVS bus'; 'You can trust TVS'; and 'Hercules Cycle - your lifetime companion' were the headlines of some of the famous ads he and his team created.

He quit JWT and started R.K. Swamy Associates in 1972. In addition to walking away with some prestigious clients of JWT Madras, he persuaded several large public sector under-

chain field. New textile and jewellery showrooms like Chennai Silks, Pothys, RMKV's, Saravana's, Prince's and Joy Alukka's appeared on the scene dominated earlier by Nalli's, Kumaran's, Vummidi's and Nathella's. These new retailers splurged big on media advertising, even putting many of the leading FMCG brands to shame in terms of advertising spend.

The 1980s to 90s saw almost all leading multinational agencies opening their branches in Madras. Thanks to the efforts of some of the best creative minds of these agencies, the standard of advertising, especially print and TV advertising, went soaring. This was the period when advertising business in Chennai was at its peak..

Many local agencies started by executives and creative heads who left multinational ad agencies organisations to start on their own also contributed significantly to improve the standards and quality of advertising. One of the earliest was Gopulu, the well-known cartoonist with *Ananda Vikatan*, who teamed with Vimala to start an agency called 'Adwave' which created some interesting campaigns for the Madras-based Shriram group. Fountainhead, Insight, Rubicon and others not only created good advertisements which won awards but also helped to build brands.

Insight's efforts for Solidaire TV and Rubicon building a national brand, 'Color Plus', a readymade garment unit operating from Ambattur, are well known case studies.

Thanks to the growth of television viewership in the 1990s, the importance of print media in the promotion of FMCG, Consumer Durables and other services started going down from early 2000. Today, the print media is dominated by advertisements from retailers (jewellery/textiles), real estate promoters, automobile companies and a whole lot of educational institutions. Consumer durable companies use the medium only for promoting their discount sales during festive season or for announcing new launches. The trend has definitely affected the volume of business from Madras for the print media.

(To be concluded)

• by
R.V. Rajan

visuals. He is supposed to have persuaded Simpson & Co, dealers of cars, to offer cars on hire purchase. A car costing Rs. 3,500 was available on a monthly instalment of Rs. 100!

Later, V.G. Panneerdas & Co, popularly known as VGP's, made the hire purchase system popular for all types of consumer durables among middle class households, making extensive use of print and outdoor media.

The 1940s saw a number of local agencies being started. They included United India Publicity Company (UIPC) (1939), Eastern Advertising (1944), Elegant Publicities (1945), Federal Advertising and Criterion Publicities (1946). UIPC was perhaps the first among the Madras-based agencies to get accreditation from the Indian Newspaper Society (INS). D. J. Keymer & Co. was the only multinational agency (headquartered in Calcutta) to have a branch in Madras at the time. It was soon to be followed by F.D. Stewart's, Grant Advertising (1954) with Lance Dane as Manager, and J. Walter Thompson (1955) with R.K. Swamy as Manager. Umesh Rao, who was working as art director with JWT Madras around this time, is credited with creating the famous drawing for the 'Maharaja' mascot of Air India, conceived by Bobby Kooka of Air India.

Credit for introducing professionalism into the advertising scene in Madras must go to R.K.

takings to advertise, for the first time, so as to build better corporate images for themselves. Some of the ads that his agency created for BHEL, ONGC and SAIL were trailblazing efforts at the time.

Another legend, Mani (SR) Aiyar based in the Madras office of Bomas in the 1960s, was a hard core professional who made a significant contribution to the Madras advertising scene when he was in Madras.

Though the 1970s and 80s saw a steady growth of advertising business in Madras, it was during the late 1990s that Madras gained greater importance in the Indian world of advertising thanks to the influx of a number of new MNCs like Hyundai, Ford, Renault, BMW, Nokia, Citi Bank, Standard Chartered Bank and others. Even software giants like TCS and Infosys established large bases in Madras - all leading to increased advertising spend originating from Madras. It was also the time when a few local brands like Cavinkare, the well-known FMCG (fast moving consumer goods) group, were putting down roots in the marketing world and were getting ready to give a tough fight to the multinationals in the years to come.

Meanwhile, Madras had become the retail capital of India. Departmental stores like Spencer's and retail chains like Vivek's, which had their origins in Madras, inspired a whole lot of new groups to enter the retail

• Nostalgia

First days at Madras Medical

Soon after receiving a letter informing me of my admission to Stanley Medical College, my brother, who had been admitted to Government Veterinary College, Madras, and I prepared to leave Salem for Madras. But on the day of departure Madras was rocked by a bombshell. A telegram informed me that my admission to Stanley had been cancelled. Shocked and upset, we nevertheless decided to go to Madras, my elder brother to join Veterinary College while I, though the last date for admission to the B.Sc. Chemistry course in Loyola College was just past, would try to get into the College.

On arriving in Madras, I met a friend who told me that a reconsideration of the case of those whose seats had been cancelled had taken place and that I should go to Stanley

Medical College to check the information. To my surprise I found my name on the restored list, which also informed me that my admission had been transferred to Madras Medical

question, "What is full Indian dress", and wondered if "Pajama and Jibba was permitted," he had a hearty laugh and asked, "Young man, don't you know pajama means nightwear?"

● Madras Medical College, 73 years ago – as recalled by Dr. S. Ramaswamy, Professor of Anatomy (Retd). He was a 1941 batch student of MMC.

College. There, I had to go through the formality of a short interview with the Principal, Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, by way of introduction. The dress regulation was very strict (coat/jacket, trousers and tie) or "Full Indian Dress, closed coat". When I asked the Stanley Principal an audacious

The course began with six months of Physics, Chemistry and Biology (Zoology and Botany). For a maths student like me, the biology part (of B.Sc. level) was tough going.

Dr. John Sunder Rao was the Professor of Biology. He was very lenient as an internal examiner. A friend of mine,



Dr. S. Ramaswamy.

who had the mounting of an earthworm ovary under the microscope as his practical examination question, struggled to do it. John Sunder Rao came to him and repeatedly asked him "Have you mounted the ovary", once, twice and thrice, each time raising the volume of his voice. My friend could not get the hint that all that the Professor expected of him was to just place some part of the earthworm under the microscope and show it to him. Each time my friend only blurted out 'no'. Thoroughly disgusted, the Professor left the place. My own practical exercise was the demonstration of the trigeminal nerve and its branches in the frog. What marks we got was not known, but with no individual minima for the theory and the practical, I got through Biology.

Our Physics professor was C. Viraraghava Iyer, a tall, pleasant person with a red *namam* on his forehead. He was known for his punctuality. You could set your watch following his punctuality. Both for organic and inorganic chemistry we had a venerable-looking, elderly professor who used to dictate notes, almost a repetition of the same notes – year after year – so that even the jokes could be anticipated and the laughter used to precede the joke! After the 'snakes' practical class, some of my male classmates used to smuggle out one or two of the snakes from the lab and frighten the women students seated in the front rows by throwing them at the girls, who would jump up and shout "Sir, snakes!". The women students never felt hurt by this innocuous fun at their expense. In fact, among them were graduates, one of them being T.C. Vimala, an M.Sc. in Botany.

As for ragging, I was late in joining by a few days due to influenza fever and so I escaped, but I saw a few Anglo-Indian students dressed in khaki, belonging to the Indian Medical Department (IMD) group, with half-shaven heads or with hair cut here and there on their heads. Ragging practice at the time did not include day scholars, unlike what started a few years later. But the 'victims' were never subjected to violence or humiliation.

I used to be nicknamed 'vakil'. I had only two coats, one of which was black and which I used alternately with the other of a different colour. Of my two trousers (pants, as they were wrongly called), one was white and the other greyish.

Even while in the six-month pre-registration course (where Physics, Chemistry, Maths and Biology were taken), I was invited by the college cricket captain to join the team, even in while I was attending a lecture! I also had a short stint with the Minerva Cricket Club, captained by A.F.W. Dixon. But my cricket experience then stopped with my being a perpetual twelfth man.

(To be continued)

Lady with a diamond nose stud

● The Dutch master Vermeer was famous for his *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. In South India I am convinced he would have been pressed upon to depict "Lady With a Diamond Nose-stud."

The middle-aged couple arrived at the famous doctor's clinic in their Rolls Royce. With her check-patterned silk saree, ruby earrings, and chunky gold bangles, the woman seemed dressed for a wedding reception, but she was really there for a consultation. Her medical complaint: Every afternoon, she took her tea outdoors in the garden of her large home but, lately, she had been coming down with severe headaches soon after. "I can cure you," said the doctor, "but it'll cost you your new nose stud." That was a peculiar fee he was asking for.

Much like the physician Sherlock Holmes was modelled after, the doctor, owner of a Silver Ghost himself, paid attention to the tiniest of details about patients who walked in through his door – their gait, their clothes, even the colour of the mud under their shoes – all in the cause of good diagnosis. So, he'd noticed the woman's nose-stud, which consisted of a

single stone, with five diminutive diamonds around its base. When sunlight fell on the central diamond, it became suffused with a bluish glow. The intensity of that glow, he suspected, caused her noontime agony. Diagnosis done, he proceeded with the 'cure'. For the record, he took cash for the treatment; the couple's gratitude was a bonus.

● by
V. Vijaysree

This apocryphal story is the stuff of Madras medical school legend, but there is nothing mythical about these exquisite diamonds. Blue jagers, prized in South India, originated in South Africa, where diamonds were discovered for the first time in 1867. The bluish-white diamonds were unearthed at the Jagersfontein mine. Jewellers prefer colourless diamonds, but they made an exception for blue jagers, which are essentially white but can emit a distinctly bluish glow.

Photochemistry has a simple explanation for that blue glow: fluorescence. A fluorescent substance can absorb at a cer-

tain wavelength and emit at another. Some diamonds, because of the impurities in their crystal lattice, absorb invisible ultraviolet rays from intense sunlight or a special lamp, and emit blue light, which the human eye can see. Such rare bluish-white diamonds fetched a premium. The jager rating once went to the very best diamonds, but it soon became an obsolete term.

In the second half of the 20th Century, the international community of jewellers drew up a list of criteria to evaluate the quality of a diamond. Thereafter, the gem's colour, cut, clarity and carat weight would determine its price. Diamond fluorescence tends to be less regarded, but these things can be a matter of individual taste. The Jagersfontein diamond mine closed operations in 1971. Nostalgia, however, is a powerful thing and old connoisseurs continue to speak of blue jagers. And you'll, of course, find the occasional references to them in old books and magazines.

In the delightful biography,

R. K. Narayan, *The Early Years*, you read about the novelist's mother Gnana. "She would look resplendent in her nine-yard sari, her earrings, seven Blue Jager diamonds set in each, and her single-diamond nose-stud," says her granddaughter Hema. In this attire, Gnana played tennis or sat down for a game of chess and bridge at the Ladies' Club. Her partner was the Maharani of Mysore, to whom she diplomatically lost on many an occasion. This won her invitations to play at the palace and, as the evening drew on, Gnana would return to her anxious family in the royal Rolls Royce. Palace servants followed, bearing gifts of sweets and nuts. With these treats, and by her lively narration of the events of the day, she would dispel the tension at home. Along with her sparkling diamonds, luckily she also had a sparkling wit.

Another woman who was very much in the public eye owned a pair of these blue jager earrings. Carnatic singer M.S. Subbulakshmi used to lay out these special studs carefully along with her saree, blouse, and other accessories by 2.30 p.m. on concert days, according

(Continued on page 8)

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.

Musings is now on the web at www.madrasmusings.com

– THE EDITOR

Pioneering mobike production

K.R. Sundaram Iyer (KRS) and his nephew K Eswaran from Kallidaikurichi started with trading in bicycles and built an industrial empire.

The Royal Cycles and the English Cycles and Motorcycles Importing Co. were set up in Broadway by KRS and his nephew Eswaran to sell bicycles and motorcycles. They dealt with the branded bicycles of Raleigh, Rudge, Humber, BSA, Hercules, Phillips and Royal Enfield motorcycles. The 3.5 hp Enfield Bullet, with its rhythmic engine sound, was highly popular for its power and reliability. In line with such flourishing dealerships leading to progressive manufacture in the aftermath of independence, the two business leaders set up Enfield India Ltd at Tiruvottiyur in North Madras.

The uncle-nephew duo also set up the Easun Engineering Co that focussed on electrical transmission equipment. Later, KRS and his sons took total charge of Enfield India and Eswaran and his family focussed on electrical transmission.

Enfield India flourished with the reliable workhorse, the Royal Enfield motorcycles. KRS also set up the K R Sundaram Industrial Estate in Tiruvottiyur, the first private industrial estate in the State, to produce components for Enfield India. But tagged to a single mother unit with limited production, the estate did not flourish.

KRS's eldest son, S. Sankaran, and, later, his younger son S Viswanathan took charge of managing the company. KRS's second son S. R. Subramanian headed Madras Motors that distributed the company's products at the national level. In the protected market conditions with limited competition, Enfield India flourished. Two other companies – Ideal Jawa Ltd and Escorts Ltd – focussed on motorcycles in the 2.5 hp and 1.75 hp range and built up good custom.

● by
S. Viswanathan

The attempts of Enfield India to produce motorcycles in the lower capacity did not succeed. The brand Prince did not take off nor did the Fantabulous scooter designed in-house.

Diversification into agricultural engines proved to be a success. The company set up a plant at Thoraipakkam to produce Villiers engines and it met with good demand. Viswanathan, who took control in the 1970s, embarked on expansion, investing in a large facility in southern Tamil Nadu, created production facilities at Ranipet and also spent on a corporate headquarters at Saidapet. Post-1973, with the petrol

prices shooting up and with the low fuel efficiency of the Bullet, the going became tough. With a low capital base, with heavy dependence for orders from the government (Defence and Police), and with stiff competition from Jawa and Escorts, the company accumulated losses and struggled for survival. Thereafter it was a series of ups and downs for Enfield India till Eicher Group took control in 1990. After three years, Eicher group bought out the shares of Viswanathan. And revival began with the group focussing on the huge potential offered by the two-wheeler industry where volumes have grown, from a few thousands to over 13 million in less than two decades.

Enfield India that pioneered motor cycle production in India almost six decades ago is now gearing up to evolve as a significant supplier of mobikes in the higher power ranges.

The plans of Siddharth Lal to focus on export markets in developed and emerging markets and in rural-urban and traditional youth segments hold promise ending years of low growth.

Enfield India has also opened a new factory at Oragadam spread over 50 acres.

Production capacity is expected to be to 250,000 by 2014. (Courtesy: *Industrial Economist*)



Royal Enfield Thunderbird 350.

The diamond nose stud

(Continued from page 7)

to an article in *Sruti* magazine. M.S., as she was popularly known, favoured a certain deep shade of blue for her silk sarees, which a silk merchant and music aficionado created specially for her. Her female fans began clamouring for "M.S. Blue" sarees. Some bought blue jager earrings as well. The singer might've never thought of herself a style icon but, to this day, many older South Indian women aspire for her aesthetics in appearance.

Truth is that women in our part of the world have long relied on sparkling stones to lend them radiance after the glow of

youth is gone. Blue jagers and white diamonds are meant to dazzle the beholder. A pair of earrings, set in the classical seven-stone design, often does just that, as do diamond-encrusted nose studs. Sometimes, of course, the plan backfires, as it did for the poor woman who suffered from the stone's radiance. But it must have been a simple matter for her to direct the Rolls Royce to a jeweller's shop, ask him to find the diamond's twin, and have them set in a flattering new design – a pair of earrings, maybe. Then, she would've proceeded to enjoy the gleeful brilliance of the stones in accordance with tradition.

Answers to Quiz

1. National Hindi Divas or Hindi Day; 2. Sri Lanka; 3. 3 per cent; 4. Pakistani off-spinner Saeed Ajmal; 5. The operations launched to deal with floods in J&K; 6. The first Indian to visit the stratosphere, the second layer of the Earth's atmosphere; 7. *Court*, written and directed by Chaitanya Tamhane; 8. Bruno Soares; 9. *Esplanade House* in Mumbai; 10. Vijayawada.

* * *

11. Bridges; 12. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer; 13. *Triveni*; 14. MRF Ltd; 15. Karikalan and Raja Raja Chola; 16. Madras Christian College; 17. The Theosophical Society HQ in Adyar; 18. Dr. K.V. Venkataraman; 19. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar; 20. Higginbotham's.

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UCAL AUTO
PRIVATE LIMITED



MUSIC SQUARE

Since 1856,
patently leaders
— A WELLWISHER

Pioneering mobike production

K.R. Sundaram Iyer (KRS) and his nephew K Eswaran from Kallidaikurichi started with trading in bicycles and built an industrial empire.

The Royal Cycles and the English Cycles and Motorcycles Importing Co. were set up in Broadway by KRS and his nephew Eswaran to sell bicycles and motorcycles. They dealt with the branded bicycles of Raleigh, Rudge, Humber, BSA, Hercules, Phillips and Royal Enfield motorcycles. The 3.5 hp Enfield Bullet, with its rhythmic engine sound, was highly popular for its power and reliability. In line with such flourishing dealerships leading to progressive manufacture in the aftermath of independence, the two business leaders set up Enfield India Ltd at Tiruvottiyur in North Madras.

The uncle-nephew duo also set up the Easun Engineering Co that focussed on electrical transmission equipment. Later, KRS and his sons took total charge of Enfield India and Eswaran and his family focussed on electrical transmission.

Enfield India flourished with the reliable workhorse, the Royal Enfield motorcycles. KRS also set up the K R Sundaram Industrial Estate in Tiruvottiyur, the first private industrial estate in the State, to produce components for Enfield India. But tagged to a single mother unit with limited production, the estate did not flourish.

KRS's eldest son, S. Sankaran, and, later, his younger son S Viswanathan took charge of managing the company. KRS's second son S. R. Subramanian headed Madras Motors that distributed the company's products at the national level. In the protected market conditions with limited competition, Enfield India flourished. Two other companies – Ideal Jawa Ltd and Escorts Ltd – focussed on motorcycles in the 2.5 hp and 1.75 hp range and built up good custom.

● by
S. Viswanathan

The attempts of Enfield India to produce motorcycles in the lower capacity did not succeed. The brand Prince did not take off nor did the Fantabulous scooter designed in-house.

Diversification into agricultural engines proved to be a success. The company set up a plant at Thoraipakkam to produce Villiers engines and it met with good demand. Viswanathan, who took control in the 1970s, embarked on expansion, investing in a large facility in southern Tamil Nadu, created production facilities at Ranipet and also spent on a corporate headquarters at Saidapet. Post-1973, with the petrol

prices shooting up and with the low fuel efficiency of the Bullet, the going became tough. With a low capital base, with heavy dependence for orders from the government (Defence and Police), and with stiff competition from Jawa and Escorts, the company accumulated losses and struggled for survival. Thereafter it was a series of ups and downs for Enfield India till Eicher Group took control in 1990. After three years, Eicher group bought out the shares of Viswanathan. And revival began with the group focussing on the huge potential offered by the two-wheeler industry where volumes have grown, from a few thousands to over 13 million in less than two decades.

Enfield India that pioneered motor cycle production in India almost six decades ago is now gearing up to evolve as a significant supplier of mobikes in the higher power ranges.

The plans of Siddharth Lal to focus on export markets in developed and emerging markets and in rural-urban and traditional youth segments hold promise ending years of low growth.

Enfield India has also opened a new factory at Oragadam spread over 50 acres.

Production capacity is expected to be to 250,000 by 2014. (Courtesy: *Industrial Economist*)



Royal Enfield Thunderbird 350.

The diamond nose stud

(Continued from page 7)

to an article in *Sruti* magazine. M.S., as she was popularly known, favoured a certain deep shade of blue for her silk sarees, which a silk merchant and music aficionado created specially for her. Her female fans began clamouring for "M.S. Blue" sarees. Some bought blue jager earrings as well. The singer might've never thought of herself a style icon but, to this day, many older South Indian women aspire for her aesthetics in appearance.

Truth is that women in our part of the world have long relied on sparkling stones to lend them radiance after the glow of

youth is gone. Blue jagers and white diamonds are meant to dazzle the beholder. A pair of earrings, set in the classical seven-stone design, often does just that, as do diamond-encrusted nose studs. Sometimes, of course, the plan backfires, as it did for the poor woman who suffered from the stone's radiance. But it must have been a simple matter for her to direct the Rolls Royce to a jeweller's shop, ask him to find the diamond's twin, and have them set in a flattering new design – a pair of earrings, maybe. Then, she would've proceeded to enjoy the gleeful brilliance of the stones in accordance with tradition.

Answers to Quiz

1. National Hindi Divas or Hindi Day; 2. Sri Lanka; 3. 3 per cent; 4. Pakistani off-spinner Saeed Ajmal; 5. The operations launched to deal with floods in J&K; 6. The first Indian to visit the stratosphere, the second layer of the Earth's atmosphere; 7. *Court*, written and directed by Chaitanya Tamhane; 8. Bruno Soares; 9. *Esplanade House* in Mumbai; 10. Vijayawada.

* * *

11. Bridges; 12. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer; 13. *Triveni*; 14. MRF Ltd; 15. Karikalan and Raja Raja Chola; 16. Madras Christian College; 17. The Theosophical Society HQ in Adyar; 18. Dr. K.V. Venkataraman; 19. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar; 20. Higginbotham's.

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