

MATRIX

October 2012

A PUBLICATION OF THE SANMAR GROUP



Madras Week 2012

MAJOR GENERAL
SIR THOMAS MUNRO
BART & C.B.
GOVERNOR OF MADRAS
1836-1837
BORN 27 MAY 1761
DIED 6 JULY 1827



The Sanmar Group

9, Cathedral Road, Chennai 600 086.

Tel.: + 91 44 2812 8500

Fax: + 91 44 2811 1902

Sanmar Holdings Ltd

Chemplast Sanmar Ltd

Trubore Piping Systems

TCI Sanmar Chemicals S.A.E.

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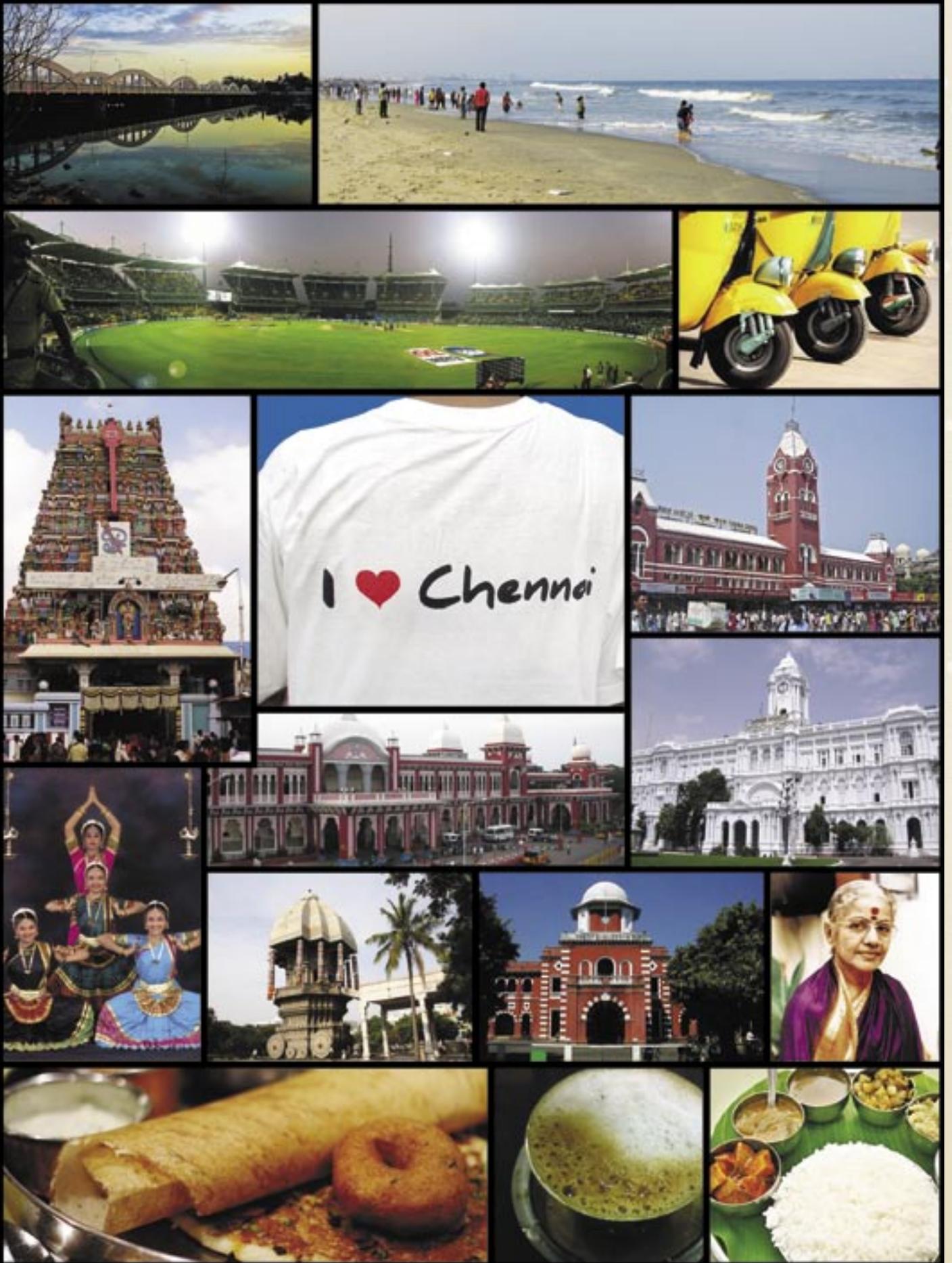
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Cover: Statue of Sir Thomas Munro, sculpted by Francis Chantrey - an important landmark of Chennai since 1839.

Matrix can be viewed at www.sanmargroup.com

Designed and edited by Kalamkriya Limited, 9, Cathedral Road, Chennai 600 086. Ph: + 91 44 2812 8051/ 52

For Private Circulation Only.



Madras Week

When the present meets the past



The author, Sriram V, is one of Chennai's leading public speakers – especially on the city's heritage – and eminent author on music and musicians. Sriram's heritage walks in the city of Madras are well-known events.

It all started in 2004, when three wise men of Madras decided to get together and celebrate the city. These were S Muthiah – the well-known chronicler of Madras and editor of *Madras Musings*, Vincent D'Souza of *Mylapore Times* and veteran journalist Sashi Nair. They hit upon 22 August as the day, for though the grant for Madras was dated 22 July 1639, historians are almost certain that the month was August and that the recorder of the grant made a mistake. And so 22 August became Madras Day. On that day in 2004, a day-long celebration was held at Rajaji Hall, Government Estate. The response was so good that it was decided that in 2005 this would become a three-day event. The response for that was encouraging that in



2006, the celebrations spanned Sunday to Sunday centering on 22nd August. Madras Week it became and has so remained, though now, Madras Fortnight would perhaps be more appropriate, given

Picture and prints of Old Madras at Vennirul Art Gallery, CP Art Centre.



Dr Sumanth Raman conducting the 'Madras Quiz'.



Cooking demo by Vipin Sachdev at Burgundy, MRC Nagar.

the way the number of events has been increasing. And from there, who knows, maybe a Madras month? And making this possible are several volunteers, hotels, restaurants, shops, colleges, schools and Government institutions.

Was Madras Day/ Week that lasted from 18 to 26 August a success? With about 150 events, a few thousand participating, and plenty of Press coverage getting many more to talk about the occasion, it certainly could be considered a success. Particularly noteworthy, and reflecting wider recognition, was that some of the

Heritage walk.



city's newspapers and magazines had special features or supplements and most devoted columns to the coverage of the events.

As was another welcome feature. The Coordinators of Madras Week had for some time been wondering whether there was enough spontaneity of what was essentially meant to be a volunteer celebration, or whether many of the events took place only in response to requests from the Coordinators. This year the happy feature was several events being organised without the Coordinators even being aware of them. If this spontaneous participation is a sign of things to come, we should think that Madras Week is a period that is getting embedded in the minds of people and will in future generate its own steam.

Walks too were many more in number this year and were, after quizzes, the most popular programmes. If only more volunteers from different parts of the city came forward to be trained on leading walking groups and keeping them interested in history, Madras Week can develop into a month of walks; there is so much of Madras that's unexplored by all those interested in history. We are sure that those already leading walks will be only too glad to train newcomers. There has been some comment that charging a fee was "restricting" participation in some walks. Participation is in no way restricted, but longer walks need vans and with these walks throwing in breakfast the fee charged just about covers these expenses. That the charge has not proved restrictive could be seen by the fact that more took part in a couple of these long 'walks' than



Heritage Tour by Dr Chithra Madhavan.



Chennai Heritage Lecture by Mohan V Raman. "The Tamil Forms of Sivaji Ganesan", at Park Sheraton on 25 August 2012.

in any 'free' walk. The venue needs to be interesting and the storyteller needs to be able to build on that interest for walks to be successful, whether there is a fee or not. The police officers and men who accompanied some of these walks were among the most interested participants and couldn't believe how much this city had to offer; they'd gladly, we're sure, support the case for such walks and encourage instant permissions.

There has also been some concern expressed by a few that there are too many programmes and that clashes of times have depleted audiences. We would think more the merrier, particularly if they were distributed all over town instead of in a central locality. Programmes in different parts of a large city would enable people in each of these parts to participate in locally-arranged events instead of having to travel long distances to a core area. The secret of success for programmes outside the centre of the city is for local organisers to encourage local audience participation, like Namma Arcot Road and Mylapore Times do. In fact, more local programmes

locally supported is what Madras Day/Week should be generating in the years to come.

This is true in the case of exhibitions too. We've heard it said that after the crowd present at the inauguration there are hardly any visitors during the rest of the duration. This is true of almost any of the usual exhibitions, even those in art galleries. Perhaps it is time that some energy is spent not only on organising events but also on

Tennis legend of Madras, Ramanathan Krishnan and Lalitha Krishnan talking to The Hindu's sports editor Nirmal Shekar.



drumming up audiences; once you get a reputation for putting on interesting events, a crowd will respond to that reputation.

We have also heard it said by some that their efforts did not receive any publicity in the Press. With so many events, the media undoubtedly has to pick and choose what it thinks is most newsworthy, given that it can feature only two or three events a day. Constrained by space they are likely to give many an event a miss. But event organisers should ask themselves whether they are organising events for the publicity or because they want to create an awareness about the rich heritage of Madras amongst the participants in their events. On the other hand, with Madras Week becoming virtually a Madras Month, the Press could



Tree Walk by 'Nizhal' at Queen Marys College, Marina Main Gate.

do a bit more for events organised outside the core Week, even while being selective.

A continuing disappointment has been the lack of response from North Chennai. This is a cause for concern and has also resulted in a comment that Madras Week is elitist and restricted to South Chennai. It must be remembered that this is a voluntary celebration and unless organisers from the various areas come forward to celebrate, it



English and Tamil Quiz Winners.



is not possible for this concept to take root all over the city.

But at the end of it all, what remain with the organisers are the expressions of thanks and enjoyment that unknown people shower them with. It is unknowns like these who keep our faith alive, that Madras Week will generate its own crowds in the years to come, that it will grow year by year and create a greater heritage awareness in the city.

TCI Sanmar 'breaks ground' for Alcoethylene Project at Port Said

An Alcoethylene plant (AEP) is being set up as a part of the TCI Sanmar Project Phase-2 in a new 100,000 sqm site which is on the south side of the 340,000 sqm site where the TCI Sanmar Project Phase-1 Plants are set up and most of them are in operation already. A 60m El-Raswa Industrial area E-W Road separates the two sites.

AEP will provide 60,000tpa of High Purity Ethylene for captive use in the VCM and EDC plants of TCI Sanmar.

AEP is scheduled to be completed in October 2013 and go into operation from January 2014.

Foundation work has started for the Ethanol Storage Tank the largest of a series of tanks, to be put up for the AEP.

R Kalidas during the 'Bhoomi Puja' of the AEP at Port Said, Egypt.



PVC plant, TCI Sanmar Chemicals, Port Said, Egypt.



Vijay Sankar receiving a memento from Khaled El Bakly, Ambassador of Egypt in India. E Ahamed, Minister of State, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt of India is in the middle.

Friends of Egypt from India

Sanmar's work at Port Said applauded by Egyptian Embassy

The Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt, New Delhi, on the National Day of Egypt on 19 July this year, recognised and applauded The Sanmar Group as one of the "Friends of Egypt from India".

Vijay Sankar received a memento on behalf of The Sanmar Group which has established a fully integrated world class vinyl chain production facility at Port Said, Egypt. TCI Sanmar Chemicals SAE has implemented a chemical project to manufacture 275,000 TPA of Caustic Soda and 200,000 TPA of Poly Vinyl Chloride (PVC) at Port Said. The Sanmar Group has so far invested USD 1.0 billion in

the projects already completed and has started work on Phase-2 of the project with an investment on USD 300 million. TCI Sanmar provides direct employment to about 800 Egyptians and indirect employment to about 3000 Egyptians. The total investment of USD 1.3 billion by The Sanmar Group in Egypt is the largest investment in chemical sector from India into Egypt.

The event was attended by Indian diplomatic officials and parliamentarians, as well as ambassadors and other diplomats. There was a varied business and media presence at the function.

Platinum Award for Chemplast Sanmar, Mettur

FICCI Safety Excellence System Awards 2012

Chemplast Sanmar Limited, Mettur Plant II (PVC Plant), received the Platinum Award for its safety systems under the medium size category of the FICCI Safety Excellence System Awards 2012. The gold award was won by Schneider Electric India, Hyderabad and the silver was won by ITC Ltd (PSPD Unit, Bollaram) AP. The award was received by Ramkumar Shankar from

Union Minister for Labour & Employment Mallikarjun Kharge.

The focus in the awards is on the presence of robust safety systems in the organisation rather than performance. The jury for the awards consisted of Dr R Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, Former Cabinet Secretary Surendra Singh, Former Minister of Agriculture and Member of Parliament Sompal, Rohit Relan, Managing Director, Bharat Seats Limited, and Shyam Bang, Executive Director, Jubilant Life Sciences Limited.





FICCI Water Award for Chemplast Sanmar, Mettur

The FICCI Water Awards 2012 instituted by FICCI supported by HSBC under its water mission policy is an initiative with the objectives of recognising the efficient

utilisation of water by industries. 138 participants from all over India competed for the award. A panel of 12 jurors shortlisted 32 companies for a presentation at New Delhi to select the top three companies for the award. Chemplast Sanmar, Mettur was awarded the third prize.

Saurabh Tripathy of the New Delhi office received the award from Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit and MS Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, on behalf of Chemplast Sanmar, on 7 August 2012 at FICCI, New Delhi.



Sanmar Speciality Chemicals

Syngenta lauds SSCL's customer focus



Krishna Kumar Rangachari received the award on behalf of SSCL from Tom Gray, Head of Global Sourcing.

Chem Spec Europe is a trade show/exhibition that brings together a broad range of professionals from the custom, fine and speciality chemicals markets. SSCL's major customers and some of our leading suppliers participated in this show. This year the show was held in Barcelona, Spain on 13-14, June 2012.

Syngenta an important customer of SSCL, hosted its annual supplier conference during the show (evening of June 13). Syngenta also held an awards ceremony recognising those suppliers who have shown commitment and partnership to work with Syngenta.

This year SSCL was nominated in the category of Responsiveness in recognition of its achievements in the area of continuous improvements to reduce costs and working with Syngenta in handling demand volatility.

Out of over 80 suppliers, 12 were recognised for their accomplishments under the following categories - Health Safety Environmental Quality, Innovation, Responsiveness, New Partnership, and Partnership.



“Stick to your company in good times and bad”:

Vijay Sankar to students at COMFEST 2012



Vijay Sankar addressing the gathering.

Vijay Sankar addressed the students of Guru Shree Shantivijai Jain College for Women during the inauguration of COMFEST 2012, an intercollegiate commerce festival held at the college campus on 10 September 2012.

“Never quit the first job easily”, was the advice given by him. “Employees have to stick to their companies in good times and bad phases. They also have to make use of training programmes conducted by companies aimed at improving efficiencies”, said Vijay Sankar.

Talking on India, he spoke positively about India’s future. Development prospects here are bright, and chances of young talent coming out of colleges and landing jobs are higher here, than in the West, he said.

Stressing the importance of education, Vijay Sankar said, “it is teachers who give us

education and they have to be provided with all facilities. They are prized in western nations like the USA”, he said.

P Gautam Vaid, honorary secretary of the college and MK Malathi, principal of the college presenting a memento.



Danish Ambassador visits Sanmar facilities at Karapakkam

His Excellency Freddy Svane, Danish Ambassador in India and Lars Christiansen, Commercial Counsellor, Danish Embassy in India, visited Flowserve Sanmar and BS&B (India) facilities at Karapakkam on Friday, 14 September 2012. They were impressed with the niche products manufactured at these plants. KR Varma and RB Sathish Kumar showed them around.



(L to r): SB Prabhakar Rao, Vice Consul, Danish Consulate for South India, HE Freddy Svane, Danish Ambassador in India, Lars Christiansen, Commercial Counsellor, Danish Embassy, visiting Sanmar Engineering facilities at Karapakkam.



Peacocks at home at Sanmar Foundries, Viralimalai

The peacock, declared a national bird in 1963, is a part of Indian folklore and a symbol associated with many Hindu deities, Lord Krishna and Lord Muruga, prominent among them.

Though their numbers are dwindling rapidly, Viralimalai is one of the few places in India where peacocks abound. They roam around the periphery of Xomox Sanmar, Viralimalai, which forms a sanctuary for these beautiful birds with amazing plumes.



Sanmar's foundry in Mexico a shining example of 5S housekeeping initiative

In April 2012, Sanmar's foundry in Mexico, Acerlan, reviewed the necessity to improve housekeeping in the plant. Although a 5S programme was already in place, there were only occasional meetings and no significant improvement was seen in several departments.

Hence, a plant-wide management meeting was held to brainstorm the root cause of lack of improvement and subsequently to develop a new plan of action. The resultant plan was agreed to by the entire team, which included housekeeping and safety staff.

The plant was divided into 30 areas and leaders were assigned to each of those areas. The group reviewed each area for suggested

improvements and also developed a scoring system for each area. The team developed an audit group to walk through weekly to score the different areas and post the results. Those areas that met the minimum requirement were rewarded with free lunch for the whole of the next week.

Acerlan has achieved significant improvement in the area of housekeeping and it has created a much safer and more pleasant work environment.

Significant housekeeping activities included in the plan:

- A major kick-off campaign to clean the facility to standard
- Dividing the plant into smaller more manageable areas
- Instituting a measurement system
- Offering an incentive to meet and maintain standard
- Auditing results to standard every week
- Posting the results for all to see including our customers

Production Control

After



Before



After

Before



Human Resources



Pattern Shop

After

Before



Melting

After

Before



Maintenance

After

Before



Sankara Schools pay homage to their

The Sankara Schools, and indeed the world of school education, suffered a grievous loss on 7 July 2012 when its Managing Trustee VS Dhandapani, a lawyer by qualification, a businessman by profession, and an educationist with compassion and commitment, passed away.

Born on 27 June 1932 at Coimbatore, Dhandapani was a successful entrepreneur known for his integrity and ethical practices.

One of the founder directors of Durametallic India Ltd, the first joint venture of Sanmar Engineering, he played a key role in The Sanmar Group, especially during its early years.

Dhandapani took over as Managing Trustee of the Sri Sankara Schools in 1978 and provided them with exemplary leadership, devoting himself to the development of both the schools. While he was a true mentor to the principals and staff of the schools, students and parents loved and respected him too, for his compassionate ways, ready wit, and his ability to resolve complex issues with a pragmatic approach.

As an ardent educationist, he cherished the dream that the Sankara Schools should be model institutions with outstanding infrastructure and educational facilities.

The tributes the Principals of the Sankara Schools have paid their mentor follow.

mentor VS Dhandapani (1932 - 2012)

I was most privileged to have interacted with Mr VS Dhandapani ever since my promotion as Principal of Sri Sankara Vidyashramam in the year 2000. A constant source of inspiration and motivation, he always encouraged me to take up new initiatives which would enhance the image of Sri Sankara Vidyashramam and improve the overall efficiency of the staff. I found him to be an intensely passionate, intellectually curious person. For him no detail was small in its significance and he would delve into the most intricate aspects of any knotty issue with the aim to offer befitting solutions.

He was a picture of confidence and composure and ever ready to extend a helping hand with a genial smile. His sincerity of purpose and tenacity of commitment will always remain unparalleled. I saw his focus and determination firsthand; his passionate commitment was matched by practical understanding of what needed to be done to achieve set objectives.

Mr Dhandapani was an icon and visionary with exemplary farsightedness. Under his guidance, Sri Sankara Vidyashramam has made rapid progress and emerged as one of the most preferred schools in Chennai.

We owe it to him in full measure for what we are today. His cherished dream was that Sri Sankara Vidyashramam should always be the "The School" for best in class infrastructure and education.

Though he is not in our midst today, his dream will never die.

His legacy will live on.....

We will leave no stone unturned in our effort to make his dream come true!

Kalpalatha Mohan,

Principal, Sri Sankara Vidyashramam Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Tiruwanmiyur.

Sri VS Dhandapani had been my mentor since I assumed office as Principal of Sri Sankara in 2004, a rare privilege I enjoyed.

He had an aura about him at once overwhelming and benevolent. He had encyclopaedic knowledge and we greatly benefitted by it.

He had a vision for the school. He wanted every child walking into the school to be happy and stress-free. He believed in an egalitarian academic atmosphere and strongly felt that the school had to be a realistic part of society.

The safety and security of children in the campus were his utmost concern, and he appreciated teachers for their sincerity of purpose in nurturing a child. No issue in the school was insignificant to him.

He set exacting standards of work and was constantly raising the bar which is evident from the fact the Sri Sankara is reckoned as one of the best schools in the city. He encouraged extracurricular activities along with sound academics, which he felt were essential for the overall development of the student.

Sri Dhandapani firmly believed that 'brevity is the soul of wit' and lived by what he felt. Behind his reserved and serious appearance was a very compassionate human being. He was and will continue to be the guiding spirit of the institution.

Subala Ananthanarayanan,

Principal, Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School, Adyar.



VS Dhandapani with R Seshasayee, Vice Chairman & Managing Director, Ashok Leyland Limited.

An album of memories

VS Dhandapani is seen here with some of the visiting dignitaries at Annual Day celebrations of the Sri Sankara Schools during the last couple of decades.



Seated (l to r): VS Dhandapani, Janaki Venkataraman, Tamil Nadu Governor PC Alexander and President of India R Venkataraman, while KS Narayanan, Chairman Emeritus, Chemplast Sanmar, addresses the gathering, during the inauguration of Sri Sankara School's new block (1988).



VS Dhandapani greeting Tamil Nadu Governor Bhisma Narain Singh and R Venkataraman.



VS Dhandapani with R Venkataraman and KS Narayanan.



(l to r): Sri Sankara School student presenting VS Dhandapani with a bouquet, while KS Narayanan, R Venkataraman and N Sankar look on.



(Seated l to r): VS Dhandapani, KS Narayanan, Additional Director General of Police K Vijayakumar, N Sankar and N Kumar during the Annual Day of Sri Sankara Schools (2006).

Apropos...

(Or the art of writing letters to the editor)

“The report of my death was highly exaggerated,” said a probably apocryphal letter to the editor by Mark Twain. Unfortunately, access to such correspondence from such eminent sources is not easy even in today’s world of Google. Among the great men of the 20th Century, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was one political leader who did not hesitate to write to newspapers when he was not writing for them or publishing them himself.

A telling example of his audacious prose based on the high moral ground was his letter dated October 25, 1894 to the Times of Natal, which had carried a contemptuously worded editorial titled, ‘Rammysammy’.

Gandhi wrote: “You would not allow the Indian or the native the precious privilege (of voting) under any circumstances, because they have a dark skin. You would look the exterior only. So long as the skin is white it would not matter to you whether it conceals beneath it poison or nectar. To you the lip-prayer of the Pharisee, because he is one, is more acceptable than the sincere repentance of the publican, and this, I presume, you would call Christianity.”

‘Hardy perennials’ would be a perfect description of those sterling men - and occasional women - who have made it their life’s mission to write letters beginning, “Dear Sir, Apropos the article on the Anna Hazare movement in your Op-Ed page by XYZ”.

The magazines are the place to go if you want interesting, even

controversial fare. Outlook and Tehelka are Indian magazines that seem to attract the most entertaining debates in the Letters column, and that may be because their editors do not mind publishing letters critical of them and their magazine.

Madras Musings, the heritage fortnightly, seems to fare rather better than its national counterparts in that it has a loyal base of correspondents with strong, often sound views on everything from the hygiene hazards of the city to the heritage value of all manner of relics of a bygone era.

Here are some examples:

“Fidelity to Madras”

I refer to the reminder to Union Finance Minister about his promise to save the Bharat Insurance Building (MM, August 16th). It should be child’s play for the FM to get the LIC Chairman to preserve the building because he is the LIC Chairman’s boss. There are, however, other priorities.

The FM has to first tackle the economy which has become as moribund as the building. Besides, he has other promises to keep and files to go (shall we say scams to investigate?) before he sleeps. Plus, he has to step gingerly because Subramanian Swamy is snapping at his heels. He certainly has a lot on his plate.

A lurking danger is LIC quietly borrowing a couple of bulldozers from Metrorail and reducing the building to rubble overnight.

CG Prasad

(A Madras Musings veteran of well over a decade)

An old issue of the same magazine reveals a rather sentimental streak in its readers: their concern for the vanishing sparrow. Here are some edited samples from the correspondence the subject evoked.

“The vanishing sparrows”

When I was young there were innumerable instances of sparrows building nests in the beams and in the fan covers of our house. I remember rehabilitating some young ones whenever they fell and making nests in shoeboxes for them.

Nowadays, I must admit, they are not to be seen. But when I went to Kothavalchavadi recently, I was surprised to see many of them competing with humans and bovines alike.

Padmini Badri

Anna Institute of Management, a State Government sponsored management training institute, functions in Kanchi, a heritage building in Greenways Road. In this building we have lots of sparrows and the chirping of the sparrows eases the stresses of a working day and creates a wonderful environment for effective human interaction so necessary in a training programme.

Dr TA Sivasubramaniam

Does the younger generation know what a sparrow is? Does the older generation remember? Driven by

urban blight, this diminutive creature has made its exit—well, almost. But I disagree with the claim by Madras Naturalists' Society that these birds can be seen in Mylapore.

However, I saw sparrows in two other areas. At Beach Station, opposite TIAM House about four or five years ago and at Ellis Road/ Mount Road near Anna Statue about two years ago.

B Gautham

Birds have always been a formidable attraction to letters-to-the-editor writers. The Times of London even came up with a book of letters to the editor collected over a hundred years. The sighting of the first cuckoo and the first nightingale of spring was a joy that English men and women loved to share with their fellow readers of the Times or the Telegraph, though a competitive streak in them, the urge to get there first could not be ruled out.

Septuagenarian Duncan Rayner, is one fierce competitor. He told a newspaper reporter that he was at his computer by 8.30 am most mornings, scanning the paper for topics to write about. "You have to be quick to get your oar in," he says. "You know that there are other people making very similar points."

One famous letters-to-the-editor writer Keith Flett belongs to the Beard Liberation Front, "a campaigning organisation, a vehicle for exposing the smooth-faced absurdities of the New Labour world". Flett reckons on an average success rate of just five per cent; and he has had some 1,000 of them published.

Roland Tyrrell, deputy letters editor at The Independent, who rations Keith to just four outings a year, said,

"The really annoying thing about Keith Flett is that he writes such a good letter."

Robert Warner, a semi-retired management consultant has been a constant pain in the neck with his obsessive ways of letter writing, but his wife, Anne, took her revenge, when she wrote to the Telegraph: "Please stop publishing letters from my husband: after three in less than a fortnight he is insufferable and has taken to reading the letters page online at 2 am. Enough is enough - there are lawns to mow, leaves to sweep and logs to split."

The Telegraph of England recently brought out the third edition of a book of unpublished letters to the editor. This is what the editor of the newspaper, Iain Hollingshead, said at the time the first edition was published:

Am I Alone in Thinking...? proved to be a surprise Christmas hit, selling over 70,000 copies and topping the Independent Bookshops' chart.

The third and latest version was brought out very recently. Here are some gems from the three versions so far:

"In praise of progress"

SIR – My first thought on seeing your headline, "Pupils to be taught about sex at seven" was, "What, in the morning?"

When I was a child, the school day began with prayer. But you can't stop progress.

Peter Homer

"Waking up terror experts"

SIR – "It's a wake-up call". That's what politicians say after every terrorist outrage. So who are these security experts who need to be woken up on

a regular basis? Are they all teenagers who can't bear to get out of bed before three in the afternoon?

Jim Dawes

"Tanned Tony"

SIR – I don't believe you should judge a man by the colour of his skin, but in the case of Tony Blair I'll make an exception.

Ralph Berry

"Sporting figures"

SIR – Whose idea was it to stage the World Cup during the cricket season?

Mary E Rudd

According to the editor of the Telegraph, the only certainty in this business is that the correspondence will keep pouring in. "Letters to the Editor" offer a coherent, carefully edited space - a kind of daily competition, if you will - that exhibits the best of what our readers are thinking. They are seldom shy of sharing these thoughts, writing from their offices, from holiday - even, in one instance, from the bath. One correspondent suggested that "we run a separate letters page for emails sent after pub closing time."

Great magazines like The New Yorker and The Economist invariably publish letters to the editor of high quality, but they are often on very serious issues and rightly so. It is the newspapers that can provide space for the whimsical, the angry, the downright playful varieties of letters on subjects as varied as international politics and rainwater harvesting. Will our dailies consider giving the reader a chance to flex his creative muscles, to coin an oxymoron?

V Ramnarayan

Sanmar's Capt. Krishnamurthi does Indian maritime fraternity proud

First Indian and youngest ever to be elected President of The Nautical Institute



Capt. S Krishnamurthi being anointed as President of The Nautical Institute on 24 May 2012 for a two-year term, up to 2014 by immediate Past President Capt. James Robinson, during the AGM of the Institute, at York, UK.

The election of Sanmar Shipping's Captain S Krishnamurthi as the new President of The Nautical Institute, London has made the whole Indian maritime fraternity proud. The Nautical Institute has over 7,000 members and over 40 branches worldwide.

Before taking up this prestigious post, held mostly by Europeans since its inception, Capt. Krishnamurthi was Senior Vice President at the Institute.

Krishnamurthi becomes the youngest person ever to hold the office and takes over from Captain James Robinson DSMFNI Irish Navy (Retired).

Describing himself as 'passionate' about improving safety at sea, Krish said: "One important aspect of my role will be to promote mentoring as a means of raising competence and driving up professional standards, both at sea and ashore."

Technology will be another key area of focus for Krish during his two-year presidency. "I'm particularly interested in how emerging technology and in particular IT can be harnessed to provide maritime businesses with a competitive advantage and sensible management control", he said.



Sri Sankara Schools

A proud moment for Sri Sankara Vidyashramam, Tiruvanmiyur

Sri Sankara Vidyashramam, Tiruvanmiyur, has been awarded the “Dr Rajah Sir MA Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad Rolling Shield” by the Madras Voluntary Blood Bureau and the Association of Voluntary Blood Donors (TN) for finishing second among schools for mobilising the greatest number of donors for the year 2011. President of the Interact Club, Vishal Srinivas, along with two office bearers and faculty counsellors received the shield from Corporation of Chennai Mayor Saidai Duraisamy.



Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School, Adyar, receives Outstanding Delegate Award at Model UN conference

Ten students of Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School participated in a Model United Nations Conference organised by Harvard University in collaboration with MUN Café during 16-19 August, 2012 at HICC, Hyderabad. 193 delegates from over 12 countries of the world (India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Singapore, Bangladesh, Australia, USA, Kuwait, Oman, Sri Lanka and Korea) participated. Three students—S Brahadeesh, PV Pranav and Akshat Jain—won the “Outstanding Delegate” Award and Sneha Sreeram and BM Vishal won “Honourable Mention”. The students were accompanied by the school’s MUN coordinator Sushila Ravindran.



Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children

Jaya Krishnaswamy receives Best Social Worker Award

It was a proud moment for MNC when its Director Jaya Krishnaswamy, received the 'Best Social Worker Award 2012' in the field of Differently Abled Persons. The Award was presented by

the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Selvi J Jayalalithaa on 15 August 2012 during the Independence Day celebrations at the Fort St George, Chennai.



Sanmar cricketer Piyush Chawla in T20 World Cup

Leg spinner Piyush Chawla of Jolly Rovers has made it to the Indian team now in Sri Lanka for the T20 World Cup.

First hitting the headlines when he clean bowled Sachin Tendulkar with a googly in a Challenger Cup final, he soon played for India in international cricket. Later, Chawla spent a long time in the wilderness, but Piyush Chawla has been a dependable and consistent performer with bat and ball for the Sanmar cricket teams over the last five seasons.





Capt. Lakshmi Sahgal (1914 - 2012)

Lakshmi Sahgal was an extraordinary woman, who after playing a spectacular role as Captain Lakshmi in Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army during India's freedom struggle, served humanity as a physician catering to the poor and deprived.

An officer of the INA and Minister of Women's Affairs in the Azad Hind government, Sahgal was taken prisoner in Burma.

Captain Lakshmi Sahgal was not only a firebrand revolutionary, but also a dedicated physician, freedom fighter, and commander of the world's first women's

military regiment, the Rani of Jhansi regiment in Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army. On top of all that she was also artistically talented.

She was born Lakshmi Swaminadhan in Madras on 24 October 1914 to S Swaminadhan, a lawyer who practised criminal law at the Madras High Court and AV Ammukutty or Ammu Swaminadhan, a social worker and freedom fighter from a prominent family in Palghat, Kerala. Swaminadhan was a Tamil brahmin and Ammu was a Nair lady of matrilineal stock, a teenage daughter of Swaminadhan's mentor when the young man decided he must marry her.

Lakshmi's brother Govind Swaminadhan was an eminent lawyer and one of the leading members of the Chennai Bar, and her sister Mrinalini Sarabhai, wife of nuclear scientist Vikram Sarabhai, is a famous Bharatanatyam exponent. Their daughter Mallika Sarabhai is a classical dancer, too, and social activist. Lakshmi's daughter Subhashini Ali is a politician and labour activist, while her son-in-law Muzaffar Ali and grandson Shaad Ali are filmmakers.

According to Subhashini writing in Frontline magazine, "Lakshmi was a true child of the era that her life spanned. Born in 1914, the year that saw the start of the First World War, her infancy witnessed that most tumultuous of the last century's upheavals, the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. The 97 years that she lived were years of incredible transformations. Movements for democracy, for national liberation, for social justice, for women's emancipation and for revolutionary change dominated the years of her childhood and adulthood and the idealism and commitment that fired them entered her spirit and became part of her being."

Even as a child, Lakshmi showed signs of the social rebel and fiery freedom fighter she was to become in adulthood when set fire to her English frocks and the clothes of her English dolls. She and her younger sister, Mrinalini, abandoned their Western clothes for Indian ones and Lakshmi converted many of her classmates and friends to her cause, organising bonfires of their clothes and toys. "Anyone who ever met Lakshmi, fell in love with her and, no matter what she did or did not, could never fall out of love with her."

Though Lakshmi admired Mahatma Gandhi, she refused to give up medical studies to join the freedom movement, because she felt strongly that independent India would need doctors to minister the poor and that by studying in India she would learn first hand the problems of the sick in India. She, therefore, joined the Madras Medical College, one of a small group of women pioneers in the field, declining an opportunity to study in England.

Lakshmi completed her MBBS in 1938. A year later, she earned a diploma in gynaecology and obstetrics, and worked in the Government Kasturba Gandhi Hospital, also known as the Gosha Hospital at Triplicane, Chennai.

In 1940, she left for Singapore after the failure of her marriage with pilot PKN Rao. During her stay at Singapore, she met the members of Netaji's Indian National Army, established a clinic for the poor, mostly migrant labourers from India. She soon began to play an active role in the India Independence League.

In 1942, during the surrender of Singapore by the British to the Japanese, Lakshmi aided wounded prisoners of war, many of whom were interested in forming an Indian Liberation Army. Subhas Chandra Bose

arrived in Singapore on 2 July 1943. Netaji's call for volunteers to a women's regiment which would "fight for Indian Independence and make it complete" met with enthusiastic response. Soon Dr Lakshmi Swaminadhan became Captain Lakshmi.

The INA marched to Burma with the Japanese army in December 1944, but by March 1945 the INA leadership decided to beat a retreat. Lakshmi was arrested by the British army in May 1945, remaining in Burma until March 1946, when she was sent to India. There she received a true hero's welcome everywhere.

In 1971, Lakshmi joined the Communist Party of India (Marxist) of which Subhashini was already a member. She represented the party in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of India's Parliament. She organised relief camps and medical aid in Calcutta for refugees who streamed into India from Bangladesh. She led a medical team to Bhopal after the gas tragedy in December 1984, worked towards restoring peace in Kanpur following the anti-Sikh riots of 1984 and was arrested for her participation in a campaign against the Miss World competition in Bangalore in 1996. She was also a founder member of the All India Democratic Women's Association, of which she was the Vice-President.

In 2002, the Left parties nominated Sahgal as a candidate in the presidential elections opposite APJ Abdul Kalam, who emerged victorious.

Lakshmi received the Padma Vibhushan, one of India's highest civilian awards, from the President of India.

Lakshmi Sahgal breathed her last on 23 July 2012. She was seeing patients regularly at her clinic in Kanpur almost till the very end.

