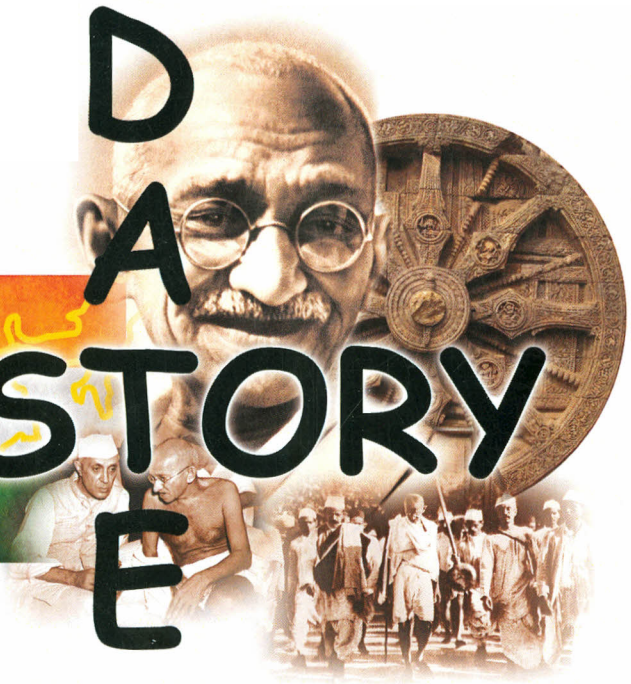




U
P
D
A
H
I
S
T
O
R
Y
E



Vol. X March 2012
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
STELLA MARIS COLLEGE

FOREWORD

As part of globalization, the entire world is witnessing a 'Tourism revolution'. Chennai is one of the most sophisticated and exciting tourist destinations of India. Chennai offers an astoundingly rich cultural heritage to the visitors. It is a curious blend of tradition and modernity. There is something for all tastes and interests from the soft adventures to the fast-paced thrills.

Chennai – the Southern capital – the fourth largest city, is noted for its graceful and dignified beauty. A series of historic relics dot the city. It also includes a gamut of multi-storeyed shopping plazas. This book purports to give glimpse of the various places in Chennai and there is certainly something for every level of experience.

Prof. Vimala Stephen
Head of the Department of History
Stella Maris College

CONTENTS

Foreword

1. Chennai – A Beautiful Picture
2. Etymology of names in Madras

Heritage

3. Fort St. George
4. Besant Nagar Beach
5. Madras that is Chennai – The Coromandal Queen
6. St. Thomas Mount Church
7. St Thomas Basilica
8. Parthasarthy Temple
9. Chennai – A Commercial Capital
10. Chennai – Semmozhi Poonga

Institutions

11. Higginbothams
12. The Theosophical Society
13. The Anna Centenary Library
14. Spencer Plaza
15. Express Avenue
16. Chennai Cuisines
17. Culinary Tourism in Chennai
18. Early Protestant Schools for Girls in Chennai
19. University of Madras
20. A Peep into the World of Dhobikhanas
21. History of Railway Stations of Chennai

CHENNAI-A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE !

Have you ever travelled around the city at night? If you haven't then you should and if you have! Then I'm sure you would have noticed our beautiful city lights, everything lit up and colourful. Be it a street light, huge buildings showing off their lights or even the pavement shops with their little lamps-each adds to the uniqueness of our city. Doesn't all this make you feel like you are in New York? Chennai is known to be a safe place for women to live in unlike other metro cities. Take a journey through Chennai at night and I'm sure it will be a life changing experience. The night life and the lights of Chennai will make you feel brand new. It is the best time as the lights paint such a beautiful picture. A walk by the beach at night makes you feel like you are in a dreamland. Every time you pass by the beach, you tend to drift away into a sense of relaxation. The lights on the shore, the lights from the little lamps of the vendors, the lights from the ships at sea and above all the light that guides the sailors at sea- the light from the light house, each makes the place so much more beautiful in its own way! The lights are not everything, Chennai has a perfect geographical location, some huge skyscrapers, busy malls, great infrastructure, together with the warm smiles on the faces of the people and their unbeatable hospitality definitely are the major factors that attract tourists. Who can forget Chennai's talent? Chennaites are a set of talented people and no one can deny that! Chennai has produced some of the greatest people in India like our former president Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, music maestro A.R Rahman etc. take a look at the developments of our city and you will know what I mean. Be it engineers, actors, musicians, political leaders, you name it and Chennai has it all. Indeed this city has inspired many. There is nothing else that can beat any of these things. We may not be New York, we may not be India's capital city or India's fashion capital but we are Chennai- one in a million and that's what makes our city a unique one. *Namma Chennai* never gets old!!

Shantelle Rozario
11/USHA/006
I BA History

ETYMOLOGY OF NAMES IN MADRAS

- **ALWARPET** : is named after Thirumangai Alwar.
- **CHROMEPET** : was either named after the chromium that was discharged from the leather tanneries in the area, or the Chrome leather factory, established here in 1912. The pollution destroyed the Nagalkeni lake.
- **EGMORE** : was originally *Elumboor*, which means the seventh village in Tamil. It was the seventh village bought by the British.
- **KODAMBAKKAM** : is the mispronunciation of *Ghoda Bagh*, where the stables of the Nawabs of Arcot were once located.
- **MAMBALAM** : means ripe mango fruit (*maam palam*)
- **MANGADU** : is named after the mango (*maangai*) tree
- **MOUNT ROAD** : was named after St. Thomas Mount, which was originally connected to Fort St. George by a dirt track called Mount Road.
- **MYLAPORE** : was named after the peacocks and peahens (*mayil* in Tamil) that once roamed here.
- **PALLAVARAM** : was originally Pallavapuram and is the oldest known settlement in Chennai, going back to the Paleolithic period.
- **PARRY'S CORNER** : was named after Thomas Parry, a trader who landed in 1788.
- **PERAMBUR** : means the place with a lot of affection. (*Per+Anbu* = lot of affection)
- **PONDY BAZZAR** : is named after W.P.A. Soundara Pandiyan of the Self Respect Movement
- **PULICAT** : comes from the *Palaverkaadu*, which means the forest of mangroves.
- **PURASAWALKAM** : was originally *Purasaipaakkam*, after the Purasu or Flame of the Forest tree.

- SAIDAPET : is named after one Syed Khan, to whom the Nawab of Arcot gifted the land in 1730.
- TEYNAMPET : is named after the coconut groves (*thennam pettai*) that once flourished here.
- THIRUSULAM : is derived from *suram* (jungle path) and was the headquarters of *Surathur naadu* in the past.
- THIRUVERKAADU : is named after the *vela* or acacia tree.
- THOUSAND LIGHTS mosque commemorates the Assembly Hall that once stood there and was lit by a thousand lamps during the Muslim observance of Muhurram.
- TRIPLICANE : is a shortened version of the ancient *Vandai Nagaram*.
- OTTERI : is the tank near Vepery, or *otha yeri* (single reservoir).
- VEPERY : is named after the neem (*vembu* in Tamil) trees on the banks of the *yeri* (water reservoir) (*vembu yeri*)
- WASHHERMANPET : was the place where unprocessed cloth from the looms was washed and bleached.

Kiran I Dadlani 08/HS/25
 Naveena Ganesh 08/HS/01
 Antonette Sandhya 08/HS/50
 III BA History

FORT ST. GEORGE

Built in 1640, Style-neo classical, Chennai, formerly Madras, owes its genesis to two determined East India Company merchants, Francis Day and Andrew Gogan, who acquired a sandy tract of land, said to belong to a farmer called 'Madrasan'. The Company negotiated the deal in 1639 with the local Nayaks at Poonamalee. On this strip of land they established a 'factory' that grew into the seat of British power in the East. Completed on St George's Day, 23rd April 1640, this fortified settlement came to be known as Fort St George.

The area's history goes back a long way, as is evident, from the 19th century Parthasarathi temple at Triplicane, one of the first villages to be acquired by the East India Company and now a bustling suburb of Chennai

The old, solid and staid enclosure of Fort St George was built with the simple aim of protecting the trading outpost and merchandise of the English. The first building or 'factory' was also called the fort-house. It took 13 years to build and was enclosed with a brick and mud wall faced with laterite. In due course, the settlement grew, spilling outside these walls and this necessitated an outer wall. The outer fort then, surrounded the new 'White Town', with its English, Portuguese and Armenian inhabitants. The northern gate of this new enclosure led to the market place, beyond which lay the old 'Black Town'-the Indian settlement of weavers, dyers and merchants.

The inner fort was square in plan, while the outer fort was oblong-walled in only on three sides and defended by the river Elambore on the fourth. By 1710 the fort was full of houses, neatly lined along the streets the original fort-house was rebuilt further to the east as a neo-classical building, part of which still exists as the core of the Secretariat building.

The French occupied Fort St George in 1746 and had possession of it for 3 years. The English recovered and immediately began strengthening it. The sloping ramparts and battlements for gun emplacements were designed and constructed in 1750. These ramparts form an irregular pentagon and are further reinforced by a ring of earthen walls that slope down into a moat. The original drawbridges that led to 5 gates of the fort have been converted to roads.

Within the fort is the neo-classical Secretariat building, the seat of the Tamil Nadu state government, and behind it, the Legislative Council Chambers. These elegant buildings built between 1694 and 1732, with their classical lines and facades of gleaming black pillars are said to be among the oldest surviving British constructions in India. The 148-foot-tall flagstaff was erected by Governor Elihu Yale in 1687. Yale, who had begun his career as a clerk in East India Company, went on to found the Yale University in U.S.

Near the large parade ground to the north is the Fort Museum, which was built in the 1780's as the Public Exchange. It is a treasure house of war memorabilia, old lithographs of Madras and paintings.

Sushmitha
10/UHSA/014
I BA History

BESANT NAGAR BEACH

It's been about 8 months since I joined college and moved into my hostel here in Chennai. This is my first time ever here (except for the Central and Egmore Railway Stations) and I am completely smitten by the city. Of course I hate the pollution and the meter-less autos but otherwise I love the place. There are so many places to go to and so much to see here. Like a friend of mine, when asked about Chennai, said there is something for everyone here. My favourite thing about Chennai is the beaches here. They are so awesome and there are so many!

Out of the beaches here, though Marina Beach is the most well-known, it is Elliot's Beach in Besant Nagar that is most liked by college students. Besant Nagar, named after Annie Besant, is one of the well-known and posh residential areas in Chennai. The main attraction here is of course the Elliot's Beach, named after Edward Elliot, Governor of Madras. The first beach I had been to here was the Thiruvanmiyur Beach, which was small, clean and not very crowded. The second was Marina Beach, which was huge, dirty and unkempt and extremely crowded. I must admit that I was disappointed with the lack of maintenance of the beach and was shocked on learning that there are no lifeguards posted here. Besant Nagar beach, fondly called 'Bessie' was the 3rd beach I visited here. This was mainly due to its far off location from my hostel. I fell in love with it instantly. It was big but not too big, crowded but clean. One of the prominent landmarks here is the Karl Schmidt Memorial, which was named after a Dutch sailor who died in the process of saving a drowning swimmer.

One more very important feature that makes 'Bessie' more preferred is the presence of many restaurants and cafes around the beach. They include Barista, French Loaf, Calk Walk, Eden, Galloping Gooseberries, Murugan Idli Kadai, Tasty Jones, Fruit Shop on Greams Road and many others. You can find food of all cuisines here. The Velankanni Church and the Ashtalakshmi temple situated near the beach are also very famous. There are many shops around the beach selling everything from groceries to clothes to shoes. The accessories made from stone-like beads sold here are very popular among the tourists. This is my account on one of my favourite places in Chennai, the Besant Nagar Beach.

Smita Vanniyar
10/UHSA/035
II BA History

MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI – THE COROMANDEL QUEEN

The Queen of the Coromandel has been roughly known for less than 400 years .During the first 150 years, it was the 'Gateway to India'. Today, Chennai is India's fourth largest city and is the Gateway to the South. The modern Madras was the part of Thondaimandalam, Kingdom of the Pallavas. Mylapore was known as the famous port from the 2nd century A.D

It is in Madras that the first rules of governance and justice were introduced by the British. The old civic corporation outside Europe was established. Chennai houses the oldest Engineering college and the first western style medical facility in the country.

Over the next 150 years, the Fort grew to take the form. It is the forerunner of the Imperial and state banks, the Fort exchange and the city's first light house. There were developed in it the buildings that includes The Secretariat and The Legislative Assembly of the Government of Tamilnadu. Among the protected monuments in this historic campus of today are Admiralty House, better known as Clive House. It also houses the first church built by the British, St.Mary's church which is the oldest Protestant Church in Asia.

The road to south leads out from the fort is called the Island grounds. It is a man-made island in the curves of the Cooum, the river which protected the southern flank of the fort.

The University of Madras is one of the three oldest Universities in India. The University was organized on the model of the University of London and is situated in the southern part of Madras. It has the second longest beach in the world and is one of the broadest is the Marina Beach.

The Santhome Basilica in the town of St. Thomas was built on this site in 1896. It was a Nestorian church raised over the crypt of St. Thomas. This was later rebuilt as the Cathedral. Beyond Santhome was the southern boundary of Madras, the Adyar river. Its estuary, once Island-filled, was in those days much wider than what it is today and is believed to have been great port of the Pallavas in 7th and 8th centuries.

On the north bank of the estuary is the Headquarters of the Theosophical society, which maintains vast gardens, orchards and stretches of forest - apart from an ancient banyan tree that is said to be the second largest in India. It houses the shrines of all faiths a Hindu Temple, Buddhist Vihara, a Church, a Mosque, a Zoroastrian temple and Gurudwara. The society also has a very well equipped library which has one of the world's finest collection of Eastern civilization.

The Madras Harbour is a man-made harbour as Madras did not have a natural harbour. The Royapuram railway station, was Madras first and the main railway station. It was built in a palatial classical style with fluted ionic pillars, arches and stucco floral decorations. Madras also houses the old industrial houses among which some of them exist even today. Some of the old industrial houses are Parry & Co., Binny and Co., P. Orr & sons., etc.,

While its monuments and memorials of heritage stand under threat, still Chennai remains a city of Faith, Culture and Gracious Charm.

J.Anton Lourds Liji Cangan

09/HS/02

III BA History

ST. THOMAS MOUNT CHURCH

Located near the neighbourhood of Guindy and very close to Chennai International Airport, St. Thomas Mount is associated with St. Thomas, the apostle of Christ, who is believed to have been martyred here nearly 2000 years ago.

Tradition

The ancient tradition that Thomas the Apostle was one of the first Christians to reach India and to preach Christianity is well ascertained. He is believed to have reached Kerala in 52 AD and spent the last years of his life in a cave on this hill spreading Christianity and baptizing the native people. Local belief adds that St. Thomas was killed with a spear in 72 AD by persons hostile to him. Thus, the hillock acquired the name St. Thomas Mount.

Hill Shrine

A shrine dedicated to "Our Lady of Expectation" (Mother Mary) was built in 1523 on top of the mount. It is believed that the altar of this shrine was built on the spot where St. Thomas had died in 72 AD. At the northern foot of the mount, is a gateway of four impressive arches surmounted by a cross bearing the inscribed date 1547. A flight of 160 steps leads up to the summit of the mount. There are fourteen stations of the cross erected on the way to the summit.

In 1547, an excavation unearthed a stone cross, believed by Christians to have been chiselled by Thomas himself. This became known as the 'Bleeding Cross' as it purportedly has stains resembling blood stains which reappear even after being scrubbed off. It is also believed to 'bleed' afresh periodically. It first 'bled' publicly during Mass in 1558 and the last recorded occasion when it 'bled' was in 1704. Thomas is supposed to have clutched this cross as he lay dying.

When it was discovered, the cross was built into the wall of the altar of the church, which it adorns even today. On either side of the Chancel there are framed oil paintings depicting the twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ. Above the altar is an oil painting of The Madonna, which is believed to be one of the seven painted by Luke the Evangelist and brought to India by Thomas.

Saint Thomas Day is celebrated on the 3rd of July, in memory of his death. During the Easter season, faithful climb the steps to the church, singing hymns and saying the “Way of the Cross” prayers. Petrus Woskan, an Armenian merchant paved the way with granite steps in order to make the climbing easy. It is also said that the oil paintings and beautifully carved Pulpit are also from the same Armenian benefactor.

The Baptismal Font which existed at the Church on the St. Thomas Mount in 1680 has a rich history. This Font was shifted to the St. Mary’s Church at Fort St. George in 1685. A plaque behind the Font explains history of the Font and the famous people who were Baptised here. Adjoining the church, is the convent of the “Holy Apostles Convent”, managed by the priests of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM) order. Attached to this there is a home for the physically and mentally challenged children run by the nuns of the convent.

Sr. Soumya 10/UHSA/029

Sr. Sindhu 10/UHSA/034

II BA History

ST. THOMAS BASILICA

St. Thomas one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ came to India in A.D.52, martyred in A.D.72 and was buried here in Mylapore. This is one of the only three basilicas built over the tombs of apostles – the others being St. Peter’s at Rome and St. James at Spain (Compestella, Santiago). There is an underground tomb chapel below the Basilica.

St. Thomas who brought Christianity to India is considered to be the Father of Indian Christianity. Pilgrims and visitors from all over the world visit this shrine throughout the year. The shrine is in the heart of the City of Chennai (old Madras) at a place called Mylapore.

This lovely Gothic Church is an architectural treasure, rising 155 feet from the ground, with a nave of 112 feet by 33 feet, and an imposing sanctuary 62 feet long and 33 feet wide, it is adorned with stained glass windows depicting St. Thomas and the other Apostles. Inside the sanctuary is a statue of St. Thomas seated. A valuable work of art kept in the Basilica is an ancient painting of Our Blessed Mother, in front of which the other great apostle of India, St. Francis Xavier, used to pray.

Legendary Log and First Church of Mylapore

A huge log washed ashore was blocking the narrow mouth of the river that caused floods on the banks. The Kings army could not pull it inspite of their best efforts. St. Thomas came and spent a few minutes in silent prayer couched on the log with the girdle of the Virgin Mary and asked the men to pull it. They pulled it without any difficulty. Pleased by this the King offered the land, where the log was first sighted for the construction of a church.

The Stained glass window

The stained glass window was installed during the construction of the present gothic cathedral in 1896. Pope Pius II raised the cathedral to the dignity of a minor Basilica on 16 March 1956.

Relic of St. Thomas

The sand from the tomb is believed to have miraculous healing powers. The tomb was opened to take some earth to cure the son of ruling king Mahadevan. Between A.D. 220 and 232, a merchant called

Khabin removed greater portion of the relics to Edessa in Asia Minor. Later this was moved to Chios island and finally to Ortona on the east coast of Italy. A piece of bone and the lancehead that used to kill the saint, excavated from the tomb, is kept in a monstrance in the museum. Pilgrims used to take sand from the tomb back to their homes and keep it with devotion. For the benefit of pilgrims Shrine is providing 'Relic Card' embedded with sand taken from the tomb.

There are two new structures today: The Tomb Chapel below the Basilica and Museum cum Theatre. The new underground chapel with a separate access outside the church structure, allows pilgrims to pray at the tomb and tourists to visit it, without disturbing the sacred functions in the church. Most Indian Catholics, why, even most Catholics in South India, or even in Chennai, seem to be unaware of the importance of this extraordinary shrine.

Sr. Liji Thomas, Merin, Monica, Amale Lily

I BA History

PARTHASARTHY TEMPLE

The Parthasarathy Temple is an 8th century Hindu Vaishnavite temple dedicated to Lord Krishna, located at Triplicane, Chennai. It is one among the 108 'Divyadesams' or holy abodes of Lord Vishnu. Lord Krishna is worshipped in the name 'Parthasarathy' in this temple, which in Sanskrit, means 'charioteer of Arjuna'.

History of the Temple

It was originally built by the Pallavas in the 8th century by king Narasimhavarman I. One of the distinguishing features of it is that it has four of the incarnations or avatars of Vishnu: Narasimha, Rama, Varaha and Krishna.

According to Hindu Puranas, Lord Krishna was the charioteer for Arjuna during the Mahabharata war when he gave the Hindu holy book of Bhagavad Gita. Hence, the God, Sri Parthasarathy's face is full of scars created by the arrows of the Great Bhishma in the Kurukshetra war. Other interesting thing is that, God Krishna is seen with a moustache and without his weapon Chakra. The reason attributed is that he promised not to take weapons in the Mahabharatha war and hence he has only his conch. As He was the charioteer he sported the moustache keeping with the tradition. The 'Utsavar' also has only a stick and not his mace as found with others. This is because the Lord was born in a cowherd clan.

The temple and the area Tiruallikkeni derives the name from the Holy tank. It is said Goddess Mahalakshmi herself was born here as Vedavalli to Sage Bhrigu. This tank consists of five sacred wells, and so it is said that its waters are holier than the Ganges. Except Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Shrine, other shrines have been renovated in the beginning of the century and the shrine of Sri Vedavalli Thayar and the 36 pillared mandapam in front of the temple were build in the later part of the last Century.

Shrines at the Temple

There are shrines for Sri Vedhavalli Thayaar, Sri Ranganatha, Sri Rama, Sri Gajendra Varadharaja Swamy, Narasimha, Sri Andal, Sri Anjaneya, Alwars, Ramanuja, Swami Manavala Mamunigal and

Vedanthachariar. There are separate entrances for Lord Parthasarathy and Lord Narasimha.

Main Festivals

The temple has grand brahmotsavams for Sri Parthasarathy Swami during the Tamil month of *Chittirai* (April-May), in the same month Udayavar Uthsavam is also celebrated in special manner. In the month of *Vaigasi*, *Sri Varadarajar uthsavam*, *Sri Nammalwar uthsavam* (*vaigasi-visagam*) and *Vasanthothesavam* are celebrated. Sri Azhagiyasingar during the Tamil month of *Aani* (June-July). There are also grand *utsavams* for Sri Ramanuja (April-May) and Sri Manavalamamunigal (Oct-Nov) besides *utsavams* for Alwar and Acharyas. *Vaikunta Ekadesi* and during the Tamil month of Margazhi draws lot of pilgrims.

The temple has attracted many people not only the local residents, but also people from abroad. The infrastructure of the temple is well maintained. Thus, the Parthasarathy temple is one of the best temples in Chennai.

R.Divya,
10/UHSA/008
II BA History

CHENNAI – A COMMERCIAL CAPITAL

Chennai is capital of Tamil Nadu State, India on the Coramandel coast of the Bay of Bengal. Madrasapatnam where the British East India Company built a Fort and trading post in 1639- 1640. At that time the weaving of Cotton fabrics was a local industry and the English invited the weavers and native merchants to settle near the Fort. By 1652 the factory of Fort St.George was recognized as a Presidency. By 1801, the company expanded its control and had become masters of Southern India. Madras had become their administrative and commercial capital.

Madras developed without a plan from its 17th century formed by the fort & the Indian quarters to the north and north-west are industrial areas the main residential areas are to the west & south and the old village are in the centre. The most distinctive building in the city are the seven large temples in the Dravidian style, situated in the sections of George town, Mylapore and Triplicane. Of the buildings of the British period, the University Senate house in the (Indo-Muslim style) and the Victoria Technical institute & the High court building (both in the Indo-Sarcenic style) are generally considered to be the most attractive.

There are number of educational institutions in Madras. Music Academy devoted to the encouragement of Carnatic music [the music of the historic region between the southern Coramandel coast of the Bay of Bengal & the Deccan Plateau], the Kalashetra is a centre of the dance and music and the Rasika Rajini sabha in Mylapore, encourages the Theatrical arts. The Suburban town of Kodambakkam, with its numerous film studios, is described as the Hollywood of South India. The Madras Government Museum has exhibitions on the history and physical aspects of TamilNadu. There is a small collection of East India Company's antiquities in the Fort Museum and a collection of Paintings in the National Art gallery. .

Sr. Jothi
09/HS/10
III BA History

SEMMOZHI POONGA

Semmozhi Poonga literally translated to “Classical Language Park”, is a botanical garden in Chennai set up by the horticulture department of the Government of Tamil Nadu. The garden was opened on 24 November 2010 by then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Kalaigñar M. Karunanidhi. It is the first botanical garden of the city. The garden is located in the Cathedral Road–Anna Salai junction, opposite to the American Consulate. More than 500 species of plants are being grown in the area, in addition to the 80 trees that was already in existence during the development of the park, some of them being more than 100 years old. Many of the exotic plants are imported from countries like China and Thailand

The area in which the botanical garden stands today was formerly the location of the Woodlands Drive-In restaurant and the Agri-Horticultural Society. The land was sub-leased to the Woodlands Hotel by the Agri-Horticultural Society in August 1989. In 2008, after a prolonged legal battle, the land was handed over to the government, where it planned to set up the botanical garden, a research centre and a green house for developing rare species of medicinal and non-medicinal plants and flowers.

The garden features eight sub-gardens displaying flora of different varieties, such as a tree court, mural walk and bonsai; herbal and exotic gardens, in addition to an artificial duck pond. Incorporating elements of an Indian-Buddhist garden, the garden has a wide variety of indigenous species across 22 exclusive areas including Palm court, Tree court, Golden garden (featuring plants that flower in different shades of gold), water and Rock garden, Butterfly garden, Fern garden, Sunken garden and Theme garden.

The arch-near the entrance plaza is a vertical garden which is a unique feature of the botanical garden. The vertical garden, with an inbuilt irrigation and drain system for easy maintenance, is 22 feet long and 14 feet high intended to improve the scenic beauty of the park at the entrance. The arch is covered by 7,000 plants from 35 different species including Dracena, Lilies, Phyllocladon and flowering plants like Krishnagantha.

Other features of the garden include disabled-friendly ramps, a mural walkthrough, and areas dotted with fountains, vertical gardens, ponds and cascades.

In the course of the construction, the garden has received nearly 800,000 worth plants from China. These include flowering cacti that have a velvety, light pink at the top, non-flowering cacti with diameters up to about 45 cm, 'lucky' bamboo, *figus* and Bonsai varieties. The cacti were planted in the cacti garden decorated with white marble chips, pebbles and rocks from Porbandar. The garden also received water lilies from Thailand and 12 varieties of orchids.

There is an open auditoriwn in the garden, which is available on hire, to organise functions. Semmozhi Poonga, one of the best park in Chennai, is a huge green patch in the heart of the city which gives us a visual enchantment. It is a sanctuary for citydwellers who live in high-rise buildings surrounded by towering structures.

THE PREMIER BOOKSHOP - HIGGINBOTHAMS

"Among the many elusive and indescribable charms of life in madras city is the existence of my favorite book store - THE HIGGINBOTHAMS at Mount Road"

-Lord Trevelyan, Governor of the Madras Presidency

Standing tall with stained glass windows, high ceilings, white arched entrance, wooden railings and stacks, this 167 year old bookstore is a classic example of the Anglo- Indian architectural style in the country. Started as a religious bookstore it was later taken over by Abel Higginbotham, an English librarian. In the later part of the 19th century it was shifted to its abode at Mount Road. It had all genres of books under one roof and it was one place which was equally liked by both the British and the Indians. The booklovers thronged its aisles and soon it was named as the "Premier bookshop in India". Some of the most important customers on its list include the British Prime Minister Clement Atlee, the last Mysore Maharaja Jayachamaraja Wodeyar amongst many others. This bookshop expanded into a publishing house with '*Sweet Dishes: A Little Treatise on Confectionary*' by Wyvern in 1884. This bookstore had a major impact on the Indian Revolution but silently watched as India was granted her much awaited Independence. Today looking back nothing much has changed for the shop from its modest beginning in 1844. But with the outside competition for the book store on the rise and the diminishing number of book lovers whether this heritage site stands the test of time or not is in the hands of the people.

Thaatcher Missier
10/UHSA/001
II BA History

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Society based on the philosophy of Theosophy, was founded in New York on 17 November 1875 and was incorporated at Chennai (Madras) on 3 April 1905. It is a worldwide body whose primary object is Universal Brotherhood. The Theosophical Society campus in Chennai contains several buildings:

Bharata Samaja Temple:

This architecturally beautiful non-sectarian Hindu shrine called the 'Temple of Light' contains no idol, only a flame.

Church of St Michael and All Angels:

This is an attractive, well-appointed church where services are according to the rites of the Liberal Catholic Church and are held on Sundays and other important days.

The Buddhist Shrine:

It enshrines a gray sandstone image of the Lord Buddha from eastern India which shows the Buddha as the Teacher of Dharma, turning the Wheel of the Law. Directly facing the temple is a lily tank and beyond it a magnificent Bodhi tree (*ficus religiosa*), grown from a sapling descended from the original tree under which the Lord Gautama attained Enlightenment.

Zoroastrian Temple:

Not far from the Hindu temple is the Zoroastrian shrine. The figures are Assyrian in origin: the animal-men indicate the Self; the kneeling horses at the capitals of the columns signify the mind obedient to the Self; and the winged figure over the entrance is symbolic of the Highest Self

Adyar Library and Research Centre:

The Adyar Library and Research Centre was founded in 1886 by Colonel Olcott. It contains over 250,000 printed volumes and around 20,000 palm-leaf manuscripts from India, Sri Lanka, China, and other places, a few of which are kept on display for visitors. Among its riches are a 600-year-old Koranic text, a 500-year-old text of rare Sanskrit

stotras, a 300-year-old German Biblia and an 800-year-old scroll of pictures of Buddha.

The Giant Banyan Tree:

The giant banyan tree inside the campus of the Theosophical Society, believed to be around 450 years old, came with property acquired in 1908. Its sprawling branches covered 40,000 square feet of space and were once held up by a 40-foot tall, 30-tonne trunk and thousands of pillar-like roots dropped from the canopy. A gale storm in the year 1989 uprooted the giant trunk of the tree, but since then it has miraculously survived on a weakened trunk and its drop roots, still attracting thousands of sightseers every month.

Gowri T. Raghavendran

10/UHSA/016

II B.A. History

ANNA CENTENARY LIBRARY

The Anna Centenary Library (ACL) is a newly established state library of Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It is located at Kotturpuram in Chennai. Built at a cost of Rs. 1,720 million, it is the largest library in South Asia. It is named after the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, C N Annadurai. It is built by the then Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, M Karunanidhi.

Built on 8 acres of land, the 9-floor library building houses a total area of 333,140 sq. ft and has a capacity to accommodate 1.2 million books. The Anna Centenary Library has planned to adopt an integrated Library Management system that includes automated issue and return of books, user smartcards, access controls, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology and self-check counters. The library is designed to accommodate a total of 1,250 persons and has an auditorium of 50,000 sq. ft. with a seating capacity of 1,280 people. It has an amphitheatre on the terrace that can accommodate more than 800 persons; two conference halls with capacities of 151 and 30 persons are some of the facilities available.

A dedicated Children's section, spread over 15,000 sq. ft. has a fun-filled theme-based reading area with multimedia kits and storybooks. The library also boasts a high-tech section for the visually-impaired, with talking books and Braille displays. There are parking space exists for about 420 cars and 1,030 two-wheelers. CCTV cameras have also been installed in 493 locations in the building.

A food court in the building is capable of serving 180 persons at any given point in time. The library was designed by Mr. C.N. Raghavendran. The entrance to the building showcases a 5 ft bronze statue of C.N. Annadurai. The library has a collection of 550,000 books. It is visited by about 2700 persons every day. The building is designed in such a way that the reading area receives good daylight. However it is a pity that the government is deciding upon using the building for other purposes. Joint efforts must be taken to stop Chennai from losing its one of this kind, which stands as its pride.

Jessica Mary Francis
09/HS/019
II BA History





SPENCER PLAZA

Spencer Plaza is one of the Oldest and most popular shopping mall in Chennai located on Anna Salai (formerly known as Mount Road). People from olden days prefer to go to the Spencer plaza and do their shopping. There are also internal shops and restaurants present inside the Spencer plaza making it more convenient for the business people to conduct meeting.

The historical roots of Spencer Plaza goes back to the British Raj, when in the year 1863-1864, the first Departmental store in the Indian subcontinent (comprising India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka), was established by Charles Durant and J.W.Spencer. After a few years, Eugene Oakshott shifted the department store to a new building, which was an example of Indian Indo-Saracenic style of architecture. The building was designed by W. N. Pogson. In the year 1985, the original building was destroyed in a fire. The present Spencer Plaza was constructed on the same site. This shopping mall is the major hangout for people of Chennai (Madras). The mall has been developed by Mangal Tirth Estate Limited.

It now comprises 3 phases, Phase I, Phase II and In this complex, leading names like Food World, Music World, Health & Glow, Vummidiars, Van Heusen, Proline, Arrow, American Express, Allen Solly besides a lot of retailers dealing with jewellery, domestic appliances, leather goods and handicrafts are housed. Other comforts like central air-conditioning, smooth-moving escalators to the first and second floors, glass capsule lifts to all the seven floors, well-lit atriums, info-desks are available. The shopping area spreads across ground, first and second floors. Office units are spread between fourth and seventh floors. An exclusive car park is located partially in the second floor, and fully in the third floor Phase III. Phase III is the most recently opened.

There are more than 400 shops inside the shopping mall. It is fully air-conditioned and has all the major international brands. Spencer Plaza is a favored destination for the children and young adults. People have a great time shopping in this mall.

Manju Baghel
10/UHSA/002
II BA History

EXPRESS AVENUE

There are a number of shopping malls that have emerged in Chennai in recent years. These malls have been a great source for entertainment, income and employment and also promotion of tourism.

Express Avenue in Chennai is the largest and South India's second largest shopping mall. It is located at Whites Road, Royapettah and is strategically situated in the hot business spot of the city Chennai. Chennai's shopping experience has gone to a new level with the opening of Express Avenue. The mall was named so since it is situated in the location where Indian Express newspaper once had its office. Express Avenue is the first mall in Chennai to be a combined shopping centre, hotel and multiplex giving the consumers what they want under roof.

Tourists Attractions

The first tourist attraction is its location. It is located in the heart of the city where business and shopping go hand in hand. It is constructed in such away that the people are able to move from floor to floor in an extremely free manner without any confusion. Its parking facility is definitely another attraction. It has an electronic parking system. There is a 24 hours security system which covers every nook and corner of the mall with video surveillance. The Mall houses about 210 national and international brands in about 9,00,000 sq. ft. of space. It comprises of shops with fashion accessories, footwear, furniture, home, lifestyle, hypermarket jewellery, kids and infant care, sports, fitness equipment, watches etc. One of the notable and popular shops of the mall is Big Bazaar. Other shops of the mall which attract the maximum number of tourists include Espirit, Westside, Lifestyle, Max, Fab India, Woodlands, Nike, Addidas, Wrangler etc.

The Food court at the mall also attracts large numbers of tourists especially domestic tourists. The food court has 25 counters offering large varieties of international and Indian food. The cinema hall of the mall also has many facilities for attracting tourists and they are quite popular among them. The notable feature of the theaters is that screens are floating type. The Escape Theater has the real digital effect.

Another prominent tourist attraction of Express Avenue is the fun city which is a play area for children and adults like with arcade games shooting games, coin operated games and many more. This place is also very popular among tourists. One of the zones of the mall has been named Chennai Bazaar, giving tourists, especially outbound tourists the shopping experience of a traditional bazaar. Some unique facilities include facilities like wheel chair assistance for senior citizen, first aid kit in every corner, ATM facility, taking care of children while parents do their shopping, currency exchange centers and well trained customer friendly staff. Inbound tourists usually come from the states of Mumbai, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh whereas outbound mostly come from the European states. Mall culture is rapidly growing in the country and people seem fully satisfied.

Ashika Mariam George, Dziesenuo, Kate,
Bharathi S, Amala Priya, and Vimala Devi

I BA History

CHENNAI CUISINES

Chennai provides a wide variety for the foodies. Tamil Nadu is known for its hospitality and traditional food. People in the state are of the belief that serving food to others is a service to mankind. This fortifies the fact your eating experience in the city will definitely be an unforgettable one. Specially talking about the cuisine of Chennai, the city offers a wide variety in terms of different types of dishes. The delectable south Indian savories are truly a treat for the foodies. There is a plethora of items for both vegetarians as well as non-vegetarians. This can be made out from the number of restaurants and eating places in Chennai. The staple diet of the people of Chennai is rice, which is served with other supplementary food items. The regular south Indian meal which comprises of steamed rice along with a variety of vegetable dishes like *sambhar*, dry curry, *rasam* and *kootu*, is served on a banana leaf. At times it is also accompanied by crisp *appalams*. This is followed by a round of rice and curd or buttermilk or both. Finally, the meal concludes with a small banana and a few betel leaves and nuts. For non-vegetarians, the platter consists of rice along with curries or dishes cooked with mutton, chicken or fish. The breakfast and evening snacks mainly includes *idli*, *dosa*, *vada*, *pongal* and *upma*.

All the above dishes are served with coconut *chutney*, *sambar* and *mulaga podi*. Apart from this, coffee is a must for all south Indians. Nothing can match the rich taste and aroma of a tamilian filter coffee. The coffee beans are arabic in origin which are roasted and then powdered to achieve the right taste. A bit of chicory is also added to enhance the aroma. It is then put in a filter set, along with hot water to prepare a dark liquid called decoction. A portion of this is mixed with milk and sugar to get the perfect coffee. Besides these popular dishes, there are the restaurants in chennai there are known to serve several cuisines including continental, north indian, chinese, italian and more. Some of the restaurants are: Chinese-canton (nungambakkam), Carnival heights (Kilpauk), Chin Chin (Thyagaraya Nagar) etc. Thus Chennai is one place where people can taste a lot of yummy and healthy food! Therein it also provides restaurants with several other cuisines too. Hence this is the perfect place for food.

Shannette Davies
I BA History

CULINARY TOURSIM IN CHENNAI

Culinary tourism or food tourism is experiencing the food of the country, region or area, and is now considered a vital component of the tourism experience. Dining out is common among tourists and “food is believed to rank alongside climate, accommodation, and scenery” in importance to tourists.

Chennai can be rightly called as the Foodies Hub. With a wide variety food that the city serves, it makes Chennai even more special. 57% of the population believes that Chennai, being a city in southern India, serves only a wide variety of South Indian food. But Chennai, over the years has proved them wrong. Chennai serves it all. Here’s the food guide that can help you locate the best of cuisines from all over the world.

INDIAN FOOD

Chennai serves a wide variety of Indian food. From Kashmiri food to South Indian food, from Gujarati food to Bengali food. Chennai is indeed a foodies paradise.

PUNJABI FOOD: Punjabi food is the most mouth-watering cuisine one can find in India. Be it the *Lassi* or *Makke ki roti aur Sarso ka saag*, *Chole bhature* or *Tikka kebabs*, Punjabi food makes one crave for it more and more.

THE FOOD HUB: The best place to enjoy Punjabi food in Chennai is “THE DHABA”. Established in 1983, The Dhaba stands as Chennai’s no.1 Punjabi food hub. Accredited by Times Food Guides and Burrp, THE DHABA sets a trademark in its class.

THEY SERVE : Punjabi food and Mughlai food

AMBIENCE: The Dhaba truly defines the Dhaba culture. Portrays a typical roadside dhaba of Punjab, with a gramophone, posters of old Bollywood stars of the black and white era and the lights placed amazingly in lanterns.

RAJASTHANI FOOD: The spiciest of flavours, the most tongue tickling delicacies. Rajasthan is known for tough people and tough food. From *Daal-baati to Bail-Gatte, from Boondi to Lapsi, From Ghewar to Churma.* Rajasthani food is mouth-watering.

THE FOOD HUB: If you want to tickle up taste buds with some spicy Rajasthani food, then BAMBOO is your ultimate destination. Established in 2007 in a small area, Bamboo comes out to be people's favourite.

THEY SERVE: Rajasthani food

AMBIENCE: Bamboo has created its ambience as per its name. Right from the furniture to walls to the floor everything is made of bamboo.

BENGALI FOOD: With wide variety of food and sweet dishes, Bengali food stands out from all. From *Sorshe ilish to Baati chachhari, from Daab chingri to Dhokar dalna, from Rosogolla to Mishti doi,* Bengali food comprises of all the flavours that tickle up your taste bud.

THE FOOD HUB: The best Bengali food in town is available at "BAYLEAF". Started in 2001 as a home food delivery chain, Bayleaf came up as a restaurant in 2003. Listed in the Times Food Guide, as the city's no.1 Bengali food hub, Bayleaf sets a standard for itself.

THEY SERVE: Bengali food and Kolkata's roadside food.

AMBIENCE: The ambience is very much like a old house of Kolkata, of the Victorian era, with light Bengali music being played and a homely atmosphere.

WORLD CUISINE

Chennai doesn't restricts itself to Indian cuisine alone. Chennai has wide variety of food to serve to its food lovers.

NORTH WEST FRONTIER FOOD:

Comes from the north western part of undivided India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

THE FOOD HUB: "KABUL" and "ZAICA". Famous for its Afghani food, Kabul was listed in the Times Food Guide in 2011. Zaica serves Peshawari food.

THEY SERVE: Afghani food and Peshawari food.

AMBIENCE: Kabul gives you a royal feeling with all the Hukkas and other Nawabi articles placed very interestingly. Zaica, however, has a normal ambience - like any other city restaurant. The only plus point is its buffet hall.

SPANISH FOOD: Spanish cuisine consists of a variety of dishes, which stem from differences in geography, culture and climate. It is heavily influenced by seafood available from the waters that surround the country, and reflects the country's deep maritime roots.

THE FOOD HUB: Zara Tapas Bar.

THEY SERVE; Spanish Cuisine

AMBIENCE: A perfect party place with good food and an option of bar for wine and alcohol lovers.

CHINESE FOOD: Chinese food is loved all over the globe. From noodles to Manchurian, from fried steaks to roasts. Chinese food is the most sorted food all over the world.

THE FOOD HUB: SHOGUN, established in 2006, Shogun is the city's most loved Chinese food joint. Listed in the Times Food Guide and the Burrp list, Shogun stands as a mark of quality and service.

THEY SERVE: Chinese

AMBIENCE: Made in the typical Chinese house way with the interiors too well decorated with Chinese porcelains, dragon figurines and all other Chinese stuffs.

COASTAL FOOD: Coastal food has no specific region of origination. Coastal food varies from country to country and region to region, but still loves by all.

THE FOOD HUB: Coastline, established in 2005, Coastline is the city's no.1 coastal food joint. Managed by the Savera group, Coastline has made its way to the Times Food Guide and Burrp review in 2009, 2010.

THEY SERVE: Coastal food

AMBIENCE: The ambience undoubtedly deserves a full 10 on 10. For it's absolutely a sea world. With wonderful shell works and sea images, it gives you a feel as if you're enjoying your food in a underwater restaurant.

Ipshita Sengupta

11/UHSA/012

I BA History

EARLY PROTESTANT SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN CHENNAI

The education of boys was important in the new ideas it introduced, but it grew naturally because of the obvious material benefits education brought. But Indian parents, particularly wealthier, upper caste parents, could see no benefit in the education of a daughter. The education of girls and women was, for the teachers, an 'exercise of faith and patience'.

Actually, the concept of women who could read and write and knew basic arithmetic was not a new one for India. Regular schooling was, however, a novel concept, especially for girls above ten years of age. When the missionaries started to offer formal education to girls and women, and especially to upper caste girls and women, they faced indifference and hostility. In their writings they often quoted common social sayings to show the extent of such sentiments: 'educating a woman is like putting a knife into the hands of a monkey'; 'a cow has more rights and higher rank than a woman'; '[education is] unbecoming the modesty of sex, and fit only for public dancers.' There were also powerful superstitions - one being that if a girl learnt to read and write her husband would die young.

Women's education eventually became the primary concern of the wives of missionaries or single lady missionaries. From about the second decade of the nineteenth century, many missionaries were accompanied by their wives, who took the lead in 'female education'. These ladies often founded little schools for girls, and many of their students were orphans under their own care, because there was no demand for education for girls. Accounts of early schools for girls mention names like Mrs. Drew, Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Braidwood, who were all wives of pastors or missionaries, leading the schools. Most of these schools did not survive, being closed after their founders moved away, or fell sick, or died. The greatest effect of these schools was the way they slowly changed public opinion on this subject, and opened the way for the greater education of the following generations.

By 1841, Bentinck School, with middle- and lower-class students, was turning away people, both Christian and non-Christian, who came asking for admissions for their daughters, for lack of space. But in the General Assembly's School (of Scottish missionaries, which later developed into the Madras Christian College School), where they were trying to develop a section for upper-caste girls adjacent to the boys, finding students remained a problem. Some of the older students here tried to teach their sisters or wives 'but the scowl, the opposition, the torrent of abuse and threats from the seniors of both sexes, were too strong for the moral courage of the domestic reformers, who covered their faces and shrunk back with dismay.'

In 1841, one of the wives of the Scottish missionaries managed to make a small start by finding a Tamil teacher who was willing to teach her Tamil as well as instruct his own sister and a few other girls he brought along with him. To encourage girls to come no fees were charged and the girls given some money or presents each day they attended – such was the resistance. The girls, mostly very young, stayed at school from before ten in the morning to two in the afternoon.

There were occasional alarms when all the students stopped coming, for example when a student of the mission's school chose to be baptized. But with much persistent effort, attendance became more steady and the girl students moved out of the houses of their teachers to rooms adjacent to the boys' school, where they could finally receive instruction and supervision similar to the boys.

When the first examination for girls in this school was held in December 1844, 253 girls from both schools, up to ten years of age, appeared. Unlike the boys' examination, which was open to many spectators and guests, the girls were tested 'privately'. As usual in those days, the examination was oral, and the girls had to read in their own language, show that they understood simple English, and translate between the two languages.

By 1844 Indians themselves also set up schools for girls at Madras which did not offer Christian instruction. While there was still opposition from people who considered the education of girls only a means to their conversion and had contempt for those who educated their daughters, the progress was unmistakable. By 1850, people noted with amazement that girls performed better than boys academically. One Indian wag remarked, 'They'll teach the cows next!' But the change of mind was irreversible.

One English teacher at the Bentinck School in Vepery, Mrs. Porter, reported that her students in Madras were just as intelligent as English girls she had known, and that many 'interesting and important positions' were held by former students of her school, though there is unfortunately little information on what kind of positions these were. At least some of them were teachers, who did much good work.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, an influx of educated women from Europe, who came to India either as missionaries or to work as teachers in government schools, helped stimulate women's education. Many of these women were unmarried, and there was a belief that such single women could do more for the mission than married women who had families to take care of. This was a contrast to the earlier period, when a married woman would work as her husband's partner in taking care of the school while he looked after the church. In this later period, a woman would typically resign from her responsibilities in the mission once she got married. This is clearly seen in the list of headmistresses and female missionaries in some institutions. For example, till 1865, the Bentinck School had many married women as headmistresses: Mrs. Turnbull (1838-40), Mrs. Porter (1841-57), Mrs. Koebler (1857-59), Mrs. Sargeant (1859-61) and Mrs. Corbold (1861-75). After this point, the post is mostly held by unmarried women: Miss Geller (1876-78), Miss Bounsell (1879-87), Mrs. Joss (1887-89), Miss Barclay (1889-97) and Miss Williams (1897-1915). This was true of other missions and schools for girls as well.

The last three decades of the century saw great progress in this area, as efforts became more intense and the people became more receptive. For the first time, at the end of the nineteenth century, there were many enlightened families of all communities who were willing to pay to educate their daughters well. The report for 1888 of what became the Bains School mentions a fee of Re. 1 for secular instruction.

The future Bentinck School succeeded in spite of opposition in upgrading from middle school to high school status in 1895. Permanent recognition came in 1898. It is significant that there were enough students to keep the school going and also that a tiny portion of them went on for higher education.

By the end of the nineteenth century, women's education had become mainstreamed and respectable and options for higher and professional education were also becoming available for women.

Faculty

Dr. Susan Paul

UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

The sprawling campus of University of Madras located opposite the Marina Beach had its beginning as early as 1839 when the first ever demand was put forth for an Institute of Higher Education to The Right Honourable Lord John Elphinstone G.C.H., Governor of Madras signed by 70,000 native inhabitants. This was followed by the Governor evolving a plan to establish a Central Collegiate Institution or a 'University'.

At the time of its inception it had two departments (i) High School for the Cultivation of English Literature, Regional Language, Philosophy and Science and (ii) A College providing instruction in the higher branches of Literature, Philosophy and Science. The University Board was constituted in January 1840 and it was a precursor to the Presidency College, Chennai.

Following various recommendations and Educational Policies of the English, the University of Madras, based on the model of the London University was incorporated on 5th September, 1857 by an Act of the Legislative Council. Since then it has developed rapidly and grown to be one of the pioneering institution in spreading Higher Education in India. It is one of the three oldest Universities in India the other two being University of Calcutta and University of Mumbai.

Today the University of Madras has given birth to roughly around 17 Universities. To name a few Annamalai University, Bharathidasan University, Osmania University, Mysore University, Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University and so on.

The Organizational Structure of the University of Madras comprises of the Senate, the Syndicate, the Academic Council, the Faculties, the Finance Committee and the Board of Studies. The Chancellor of the University is His Excellency The Governor of Tamilnadu and The Vice-Chancellor who is appointed for a term period is the Principal executive officer. The Registrar of the University, who is also the Secretary of the Syndicate, is the custodian of all the records and Chief Administrator of the university.

The University has around 72 departments in various disciplines offering Under Graduate, Post Graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D courses. A

number of institutions affiliated to Madras University Concentrate in research activities where Ph.D., Programme is available in their respective field of specialization.

The University is also offering teaching and Research programmes in 4 Campuses of Madras University. The 68 University Departments of study and research are spread over in 4 Campuses organized into 18 Schools each of which offer Post Graduate Courses in respective specialization, part time and full time Ph.D. Programmes, Diploma and Certificate Programmes.

The Institute of Distance Education popularly known as IDE caters to a large number of people in providing distance education in a number of courses. Some of the courses offered by the IDE is unparalleled. Apart from this a number of Arts and Science Colleges across the State are affiliated to the University.

The University of Madras continues to uphold the task of furthering knowledge by providing Qualitative Education in Higher Studies and equitable access to everyone irrespective of their social stature and to prove this right, The National Assessment and Accreditation Council has conferred the “Five star Status” to the University of Madras. The University of Madras has been given the status of “University with Potential for Excellence” by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Faculty

Dr. S Gayathri

PEEP INTO THE WORLD OF DHOBIKHANAS

The recent Tamil flick *Madrasapattanam* highlighted their lives. Unknowingly they touch the lives of many among us. There are 14 such facilities in Chennai and some of which have a history dating back to the British Raj.

Chetpet

Established in 1902, the dhobikhana on school Road in chetpet is the oldest in the city and is said to be the second largest in Asia. Standing on a 20-ground area, the facility beams a vast washing, ironing and drying area equipped with machines to squeeze and dry clothes. The dhobikhana has been a part of a few Tamil movies and TV serials. But terror struck at the facility in 2010 when a woman was brutally murdered inside.

Saidapet

What began as a small group of people washing clothes on the banks of the Adyar river in Saidapet in the pre-independence era has taken shape into a dhobi colony with 150 families. The second oldest dhobikhana in the city and the largest in terms of area (4 acres), the Saidapet dhobikhana on Abdul Razzak street in Thideer Nagar is bustling from 6a.m. onwards. The Adyar river turning a sewage dump-decades age, has forced the Saidapet dhobis to switch to Metro water which is delivered to them free of cost by the Corporation of Chennai. But the business has become dull over the years.

Old Washermanpet

Today one of the oldest dhobi communities stay at the Kothandaraman street at Old Washermanpet and houses 70 families. The community came together for work in the mid-1920s and remained here for decades. Washermen families have been living here for three generations and work bustles right from 6 a.m. onwards

Mylapore

Functioning from 1952 under the Chennai Corporation, the Mylapore dhobikhana is a three ground conical-shaped facility near Vivekananda college with more than 80 people working for three generations. The 22 washing stones thrive only from two water sumps inside.

Adyar

The well known Vannanthurai (washermen's zone) in Adyar is also the workplace and home for over 100 dhobis for more than a century. But an organized washing facility under the Chennai Corporation was constructed two decades on three grounds in Ellai Amman Koil street here. The dhobis reside around a facility in a colony and have a 36-strong member union.

These were some of the oldest and flourishing dhobikhanas in the city and the lives of these denizens.

Dr. Shan Eugene
Faculty

HISTORY OF THE STATIONS OF CHENNAI

The Royapuram Railway Station

The Royapuram Railway Station is at the extreme north end of the North Beach Road. This road is now known as the Rajaji Salai. It was the first terminus of the Madras Railway Company in South India.

The first sod of the Madras Railway Company was turned on the 9th June 1853 at Royapuram for an experimental line from Madras to Meril, a distance of 150 miles towards the west. The commencement of work was a fitting occasion for public display and rejoicing on the part of all high officials and all other employees of the railway. The ceremony of cutting of the first sod was celebrated with the distinguished personage of Madras Presidency, Mr. Edward Smalley, Agent, Madras Railway Company. The Royapuram Station with iron pillars looked like a Regency Mansion. It was declared open by the then Governor Lord Harris on June 28th 1856. The 78 kms long track connected Madras city to the station named Wallajah Road, then in Arcot and it served as the capital of the domain of the Nawab of Carnatic. The Madras Railway Company inaugurated the rail service by introducing two trains, and coaches made by Simpson & Company, the leading coach builders of the day. The Royapuram Station is rectangular in plan. Originally set in a park-like environment, the stately pillared, quasi – classical building was once the pride of the Railways. It resembled like the large villa of the Renaissance period.

A fairly small structure that consist of a ticketing hall and a lobby along with an administrative block is accessed, through a porch supported on delicately fluted Corinthian Column on the south. Semicircular arches with elaborate keystones and mouldings, and Corinthian pilasters adorn the exterior. The parapet wall is composed of delightful fat bellied balusters interrupted by taller turrets. Flowering motifs on some of the pillars of the porch are in good shape and depict the art of that era. The main hall of the station is about 30 ft. x 40 ft. A Burma Teak wooden beam supports the roof structure. The wooden beam is 30ft long, 18 inches wide and 24 inches high. This is in good condition. This wooden beam supports the 11 cross beams on each side by holding the roof intact.

Pictured in many railway publications this tiny white building of fine Madras Chunam is now in shambles but has stood the test of time. No longer does it serve as an important junction still the building survives precariously so it was renovated and declared open on 2nd October 2005.

Egmore Railway Station

The Egmore Station is located on the Gandhi-Irwin Road, earlier known as the Redoubt Road. The change in the name of the road was due to Mr. Glyn Barlow's radical political influence. The designation of the well known hamlet of Egmore is said to have derived from the seven hamlets namely – Elumbur, Chindadripet, Komalesvaranpet Narayangaud Paracheri, Sami Reddi Paracheri, Sitapet and Surammalpet. In 1693 the British Company acquired it and made it a farm house. From then onwards it became the seat of military work and garden residence of opulent Anglo-Indians. The local military work known as Egmore Redoubt or Fort was constructed to protect the British settlements and act as a check against the advancing enemy like the French or Tripu Sultan of Mysore. In 1752 the Company established a Gun Powder Mill at the Redoubt at a cost of 7,500 pagodas. In 1793 the Redoubt was repaired.

The need for Redoubt vanished with the death of Tipu Sultan. In 1800 the Redoubt was handed over to the Madras Male Asylum Authorities. The authorities who were running a press expanded it and it is from here that the famous Asylum Press Almanac was printed. Many people felt that a place associated with military and Manufacture of Gun Powder should not be utilized for purposes like Orphanage and Press so in 1900 the Asylum Directors sold their property in Egmore to the South Indian Railway authorities and they moved to a new premise in the Poonamalle Road. This gave birth to the Egmore Railway Station in 1900.

The Egmore Railway Station was designed by Henry Irwin and built by Samynada Pillai in 1908. It was designed chiefly in Indo-Saracenic style with many Dravidian elements infused in it. It has intricate stone carving, fantastic-shaped brackets, drip stones, and rich friezes that at once attracted the attention of any observer to the excellence of the structure from an architectural point of view. As the number of passengers increased a new building of the same style was added extensively in 1930 and later in 1980. The portion that was built earlier had lobby at the

east, and one has to enter through a porch. Two floors in height, the roof of this area was supported on hollow cast-iron rectangular columns with arched brackets, fashioned intricately with Dravidian motifs. Flanked by rooms on either side the two domes crown the corners along the eastern edge. Two other domes appear along the corner in the west. In 1930 another lobby with four curved truncated pyramidal domes appeared at the corners of the building giving it a Saracenic touch. Two storeys high with a lengthy verandah over - looking the road and separated from the concourses immediately behind a set of rooms, this bulbous squatly proportioned structure is far from an architectural masterpiece.

A highly decorated exterior with intricately carved stone columns, brackets, cornices, parapets and trimmings help to heighten the entire composition. A purely masonry structure, the station reveals an early use of concrete roofs in places, reinforced with expanded metal lath, cast-iron and relief plaster work can be seen in abundance. Since the building is constantly in use day and night and also due to the proper maintenance of the railway authorities the building is in good condition.

Southern Railway Headquarters Office

The Headquarters Office of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway was originally situated at Royapuram, the old terminus of the Madras Railway. This building proved to be inadequate to accommodate the staff of all the departments and as a result separate accommodation had to be found for the Traffic, Electrical and Medical departments not very far away from the head office. In 1911 a plan was prepared for the construction of a new headquarters office close to the Central Station. A place located at the junction of the Waltax Road and Poonamallee High Road or E.V.R. Salai was selected for the construction of the Southern Railway Headquarters and it has become a landmark.

The work of construction began in 1913. The building was designed by a well known architect named N. Grayson and the building construction work was undertaken by Samynada Pillai at a cost of Rs. 20 lakhs. The building construction work was completed in December 1922 and it was officially opened by Her Excellency Lady Willington. It was one of the first modern office building which was similar to that of

the magnificent Mysore Palace both in style and material. Its unique feature is that it is the first in India to be laid in reinforced concrete.

The Railway Gazette of 1923, described the Office Thus..

“The building consistS of three floors and covers an area of 82,000 sq. ft. It is faced with Porebunder stone, and the floors and roofs are of reinforced concrete supported on steel columns and beams. The total quantity of steel work used in the construction of the building amounted to 1,300 tons. The entire office is fitted throughout with electric lights and fans and the current for which is obtained from the Company’s Power house at Perambur. The Company is also provided with an electric lift”.

One of the only buildings of its kind, its architecture is an elegant fusion of Classical and Dravidian style. A long rectangle divided into two parts and symmetrically arranged above the central porch, the substructure is of local Pallavaram Granite while the super-structure is of fine exposed brick work with plaster on the interior and stone cladding on the exterior. The central bay contains a magnificent bifurcated staircase capped by a dome with stained glass the two long rectangular wings are arranged around a beautiful courtyard on either side to let in fresh air and sunlight. Intricate stone clad columns similar to those of the Dravidian Temples, trim the tall verandahs in the front. Uniquely chamfered domes with Hindu finials and tall cupolas sporting bell-shaped domical roofs lend to an interesting skyline. The building is also unique for its use of reinforced cement concrete as foundation pads, on which rest the inverted masonry arches that in turn carry the loads of the brick pillars above.

A new temporary floor with an asbestos roof was erected on the Western wing terrace in the late 1970s to house the Office of the Central Bureau of Investigation. Another addition on the Eastern side is the new auditorium block. Mindless additions in the name of expansion is ruining the beauty and character of the building which is already a victim to the constant onslaught of the salty sea breeze that flows from the beach in the vicinity and the atmospheric pollution caused by the heavy traffic throughout the day.

Similar Railway Offices in other Presidency Towns

F.W. Steven’s Railway Office at Bombay and Baroda was built

wholly in Gothic style and decorated with Indic carvings and details.

James Ransome built the Railway Office in Lahore in 1905 in Indo-Saracenic style. Thus the railway buildings constructed by the British stand as an elegant fusion of Classical, Hindu and Mughal style executed on hard local granite. Victorian railway stations were elaborately orientalized.

Faculty

(Late) Ms. Anne Shanthi