

ADYAR DAY

On 17 February every year we celebrate Adyar Day. As in the earlier years, students from the Olcott Memorial Higher Secondary School (OMHSS) came in a procession, carrying a portrait of Col. H. S. Olcott, stopped at the portico of the Headquarters building to sing a song, and together with the children from the Social Welfare Centre (SWC), paid their respects to the founding President who passed from this world on this day in 1907. For this special occasion, the SWC children were thrilled to be wearing new dresses, gifted to them by the TOS, Adyar, on 14 February 2020.



Ms Marja Artamaa hands over a gift to a child at the SWC

The meeting commenced with opening remarks by the international Secretary, Ms Marja Artamaa, who then invited Ms Jaishree Kannan to sing the song of Adyar. An English translation of the same was handed over to the audience before the commencement of the programme. Four speakers who had been invited for the function, were warmly welcomed by Ms Artamaa. The first speaker was Mrs Clemice Petter, who spoke on the vital importance of Adyar — as a place for those who are thirsty for the truth — to understand and discover what lies beyond the veil of ignorance in which most

of us live. The next speaker was Mrs Catalina Isaza, a new resident of the campus, who gave her impressions on Adyar. Mr Shikhar Agnihotri was the third speaker, and spoke about Col. Henry Steel Olcott's will of steel, and illustrated his talks with very interesting anecdotes from Col. Olcott's life before he joined Madame H. P. Blavatsky in founding the Theosophical Society. The last speaker was Mr Sankara Saktananda, a scholar in the Adyar Library, who spoke on the teachings of J. Krishnamurti in the light of the *Bhagavad-gita*.



Speakers at the function



Singing songs in front of Col. Olcott's statue

The function ended with the offering of flowers to the Founders by the participants. The main hall was kept open till noon for those who felt the need to meditate in silence and reverence. Books by Col. Olcott, J. Krishnamurti and C. W. Leadbeater, were made available for reading in the Headquarters Hall.

SHIFTING OF THE ARCHIVES

The Adyar Archives was set up on 17 February 1922, and has a long and hoary history. The preserved material in the Archives is extremely precious and historically very important. Besides diaries and scrapbooks, the collection includes original letters, manuscripts, personal belongings, travel mementos, photographs, gifts, and audio and video cassettes, of various theosophical leaders.



The new Name Board

Despite the beauty of the location of the Archives in the Headquarters Hall, on the banks of the Adyar River, the ever present moisture in the air, and the resultant fungus, proved to be a great danger to the precious documents stored there. Also, there was the risk of flood water entering the building during the monsoon. Keeping all this in mind, the Archives was moved to the building housing our sister institution, the

HEADQUARTERS HALL GARDEN RENOVATION PROJECT

Since the Headquarters Hall is an iconic and revered building for theosophists all over the world, it is important that it should have an equally appealing garden in front of it! For many years now, the grassy patch in front of the Hall has been in urgent need of care, development and beautification.

So when Dr Gautam Narasimhan, who

Adyar Library. This move would make many researchers happy because one need not run from one place to another for sourcing a reference. It saves time and energy and facilitates greater ease of functioning.



Mr Tim Boyd lights the lamp at the inauguration

On 25 January, there was a formal inauguration function by the President, Mr Tim Boyd, and the Archives was named 'Surendra Narayan Archives' after the former Vice President of the Theosophical Society, Mr Surendra Narayan, who passed on recently. His family had donated generously to the Archives and it is a fitting tribute to this very fine theosophist whose life was an inspiration and example for others, to have the Archives named after him.

had spent his childhood in the TS, and is now based in the US, came forward with a novel project proposal — that is, not only would he donate / fund the entire cost of creating a beautiful green space, but he would also fund the annual recurring cost of maintaining the same — TS Adyar, wholeheartedly accepted this proposal. Gautam wanted to

create a living memorial for his late wife, Smt. Medha Gautam, by setting up and nurturing this beautiful garden.

This project — named HQ Hall Garden project — envisaged the removal of the top soil surface layer, refilling it with red earth and then planting pre-grown lawn grass over the entire garden area. A number of flowering plants are to be planted along the border and in clusters within the lawn area. Pathways are to be paved with granite slabs and the pond in the middle of the garden is to be renovated. Two sculptures — one bronze lamp and another granite sculpture depicting 'turiya' or 'pure consciousness', in abstract form — are planned to be installed in the northern and south-eastern end of the garden.

Work on this garden has already begun.

The new lawn has been laid. The planting of flowering plants is in progress. Granite pathways are in place. Work on the sculptures have commenced and it is expected that the garden will be completed by August/September 2020.



Laying of the granite pathway



Removal of the existing top soil on the lawn



The planting of pre-grown lawn grass

NEW APPOINTMENT

Dr Radha Raghunathan has been appointed as the Director and General Editor of the Adyar Library and Research Centre (ALRC) in November 2019. A post-graduate in Philosophy and Sanskrit, she earned her PhD in Advaita Vedanta of Indian Philosophy. A researcher and author of Vedanta works, she had volunteered her time and services to the ALRC over the past few years. Her contributions to ALRC include her books *Jnanankusham*, *Ashtashloki* with the *Sarartha Dipikai* commentary, and *Paramata-bhanga*. Notable is her contribution as Editor of *Brahma-Vidya*, the Adyar Library Bulletin, Vols. 81 and 82 in 2017 and 2018, and Vol. 83 in 2019.



REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS

The seventy-first Republic Day was celebrated at several places on 26 January 2020 in the TS campus.

At the Social Welfare Centre (SWC), Mr Tim Boyd, President of the Theosophical Society, hoisted the flag and delivered the Republic Day message. He gave certificates to the Vocational Training Centre (VTC) students who had completed the course. The children and VTC students also put up a cultural programme.

At the OMHSS, Mr Baskara, President of the Rotary Club of Chennai Mithra, was the chief guest and hoisted the national flag. The OMHSS students participated in the march past and sang patriotic songs. They spoke

about our great leaders and the importance of Republic Day through English and Tamil speeches. There was flag-hoisting at the Adyar Theosophical Academy too.



Mr Tim Boyd delivers the Republic Day address

SPORTS DAY CELEBRATION AT THE TS SCHOOLS

At the Olcott Memorial Higher Secondary School (OMHSS), Junior Sports Day was celebrated for classes 1 to 5 on 8 February 2020. The Director, Academics, of OMHSS, Mrs Sashikala Sriram was the chief guest for the function. The organisation and conduct of the entire programme (compering, welcome speech, vote of thanks) was done by the Fifth Grade students. First and Second Grade students participated in the march past and honoured the chief guest. There was a drill demonstration as well and prizes for various events and group games were presented at the event.



Students performing the drill

The Adyar Theosophical Academy (ATA) held its very first Sports Day on 25 January in the grounds of the OMHSS. In his speech, the international President, Mr Tim Boyd, who was the chief guest for the function, emphasised the importance of sports and the integral role that it plays in holistic learning.

The ATA Sports Day featured a number of events including the march past and parachute drill which the children executed with élan. There were a number of games and races like the hurdles, shuttle-ball race, the caterpillar race, potato-picking race and sack race.



Ms Sonal Murali presents a bouquet to Mr Tim Boyd

PONGAL CELEBRATION

Pongal is the harvest festival in Tamil Nadu, dedicated to the Sun God and denotes the start of the sun's 6-month-long northerly movement at the end of the winter solstice.

On this day, the sweet *pongal* dish is prepared in an open courtyard under the rays of the sun. Milk, freshly harvested rice and sugarcane jaggery, are boiled in a pot and when it boils over, the conch is blown and everyone present shouts *pongalo pongal*. The dish is then offered to the Gods, and then shared by family and friends.

In the TS campus too, Pongal was celebrated with great gusto and enthusiasm by the ATA, OMHSS and by the Housekeeping Department on 15 January 2020.



Checking . . . Is the pongal ready?



The pot boils over — the pongal dish is ready!



Offering sweet pongal to the Sun God

After the puja, the prepared pongal dish was distributed to one and all present and was greatly relished.

THE ADYAR NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT CENTRE (ANEC)



ANEC organized two interesting programmes, one in December and the other in January. On 7 December 2019, ANEC, along with the Madras Naturalist Society, organised a talk and slide show by Mr Jayanand Govindaraj, on the fauna of Falklands, South Georgia and Antarctica. The presentation was a fascinating one, covering the wildlife found in the

ice-covered, inhospitable terrain of the region, with some truly breathtaking photographs of the penguins, seals and other creatures which have made the ice-covered areas their home.

The second programme was the screening of a documentary, *The Life of Butterflies* filmed by Sammilan Shetty, in his sprawling Butterfly Park in Belvai village in the Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka, at the foothills of the Western Ghats.

CHRISTMAS TEA PARTY

The third annual Christmas tea party took place this year at the Bhojanasala as the Leadbeater Chambers (LBC) dining room is closed while the renovation of the building is underway. The Christmas tea has been held each year on 25 December, and has been hosted by Marja Artamaa, international Secretary, and Nancy Secrest, international Treasurer. All Adyar staff/workers, residents and guests are invited to attend. That numbers about 170 people! This year, the Madras Theosophical Federation (MTF) of the TS joined as additional hosts, thus doubling the amount of savories and sweets enjoyed by all! The MTF wanted to thank the Adyar employees and residents for the help and support it received throughout the year.



Ms Marja Artamaa & Ms Nancy Secrest are ready to welcome the guests



A beautiful floral decoration

The dining area was beautifully decorated by the kitchen staff, and with Christmas music playing in the background, everyone enjoyed the refreshments and camaraderie. Marja and Nancy really enjoy working together in making the arrangements for the tea party each year and plan to continue this new Adyar tradition in the years to come.



Guests enjoying the tea and company

RARE MANUSCRIPTS DISCOVERED AT THE ADYAR LIBRARY RESEARCH CENTRE (ALRC)

Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra was an eighteenth century saint, mystic, music composer and Advaita philosopher, who had produced great works of philosophy and Carnatic music compositions. His *Atmavidya-vilasa* (Living in the Knowledge of the Self) is considered to be a masterpiece on *Advaita*.

Two of his unpublished works were accidentally discovered by Sankara Saktananda, a research scholar working at the ALRC. As the palmleaf manuscripts had been written in the ancient Telugu language in the *Grantha* script, a lot of time had to be spent in deciphering the manuscripts and translating them.

DONATIONS TO THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY (TS)

1 October to 31 December 2019

	<u>Rs.</u>		<u>Rs.</u>
GENERAL DONATIONS		Mardia Charitable Trust, India	5000
Ms Subelo Wiyono, Indonesia	3640	Ms Nagarani Sanjeev, India	15000
Leap Foundation, India	41400	Mr V. Vinay Kumaraswamy, India	50000
Ms S. Mariya, India	5000	Ms Anasuya Elisha, India	10000
Ms Maria Widjaja, Indonesia	13793	Ms A. Sushma Harini, India	5000
ADYAR DAY CONTRIBUTIONS		HEADQUARTERS HALL GARDEN PROJECT	
Logia Espana, USA	11442	Dr N. Gautam, India	1000000
ADYAR NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT CENTRE		LBC RENOVATION	
Madras Naturalists Society, India	750	Dr Ajay Ramesh Hora, India	350000
ARCHIVES		Portland Lodge, USA	343929
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Ms Carmen Diaz Blanque, Spain	7657	Mr Venky N. Nair, India	2000
Ms Christina Frevert, Germany	3829	Mr N. Asokan, India	1001
BESANT MEMORIAL ANIMAL DISPENSARY		Mr Ashok Kumar Thakur, India	1100
Mr Sarath Prasanna, India	1000	THE ADYAR THEOSOPHICAL ACADEMY	
Mr P. S. Jagdish, India	100000	Roop Technology Pvt. Ltd., India	25000
		Mr Maurice & Mrs Jenny Bisheff, USA	21170

DONATIONS TO THE OLCOTT EDUCATION SOCIETY

1 October to 31 December 2019

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Mrs Mira	5000	M / s. Alert	15000
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The **Coppersmith Barbet** or **Crimson-breasted Barbet** (*Megalaima haemacephala*) is a bird with a crimson forehead and throat which is best known for its metronomic call that has been likened to a coppersmith striking metal with a hammer. They chisel out a hole inside a tree to build their nest and are mainly frugivorous.

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