



**International
Women's
Association**

JULY 1993



*Let Victoriana
go to your head*



IWA NEWS LETTER

Vol. VIII No. : 2

Madras

JULY 1993

MONTH AT A GLANCE

Monday, 5th July	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING	10-30 a.m.
Friday, 2nd July	PRELUDE TO FOUNDERS' DAY	10-15 a.m.
Tuesday, 6th July	HISTORY, CULTURE & TOURS Vasanthi Sankaranarayanan talks on 'The Matrilineal Property Rights of Women in Kerala'	10-15 a.m.
Wednesday, 7th July	ARTS AND HANDICRAFTS 'A Jeweller's look at Traditional Indian Jewellery' by Tushar Mehta	10-15 a.m.
Tuesday, 13th July	HEALTH AND ECOLOGY Prof. K. Bhasker Rao enlightens us on 'Women & Harmones'	10-15 a.m.
Thursday, 15th July	COOKING SWAPSHOP A morning of 'Pickling & Preservation' with Vijaya Balu	10-15 a.m.
Friday, 23rd July	FOUNDERS' DAY A Victorian Afternoon	3-30 p.m.
Tuesday, 27th July	BOOK DISCUSSION Movie 'Of Mice and Men'	10-15 a.m.
Thursday, 29th July	CURRENT EVENTS A presentation by Sabita Radhakrishna on 'Current Trends in Fashion and Designs'	10-15 a.m.

FROM THE PRESIDENTS

Dear Members,

Thank you for the very enthusiastic response to this year's Newsletter. Our Vice Presidents have taken a lot of trouble to give you good reading.

Our Chairpersons have planned a variety of programmes this month. Please do come and support their efforts.

There will be no reminder of attendance shortcomings. Surely 10 mornings out of 365 are not too hard to reserve!

In preparation for Founders' Day, Issy Sanderson is organising a morning of Victorian Fashions, when you can pour through old design books and get tips on Victorian Styles. Bring along your materials and any accessories, if you wish to have them checked out.

And please come to the Founders' Day function at the Madras Club, in large numbers. It's a very special day for IWA.

**ARUNA VIJAYKUMAR
NANDITHA KRISHNA**

JULY

July, the seventh month in our Calendar, was originally the fifth month of the year, and as such was called by the Romans Quinctilis. The later name of Julius was given in honour of Julius Caesar, who was born in this month. The Anglo-Saxons called July, 'Maed-monad' or 'Mead-month', from the meadows being in bloom, and 'Aftera Lida', "the latter mild month", in contradistinction to June, which they named 'the former mild month'.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 5th July, 1993 — 10-30 a.m.

At: Aruna Vijaykumar
24, Sivaganga Road
Madras-600 031
Tel. : 8272732/8271284



DOWN THE GARDEN PATH

We wrote to you last month that we intended to take you "down the Garden Path", but the Gremlins or 'Printer's Devils took us 'up the Garden Path' instead. We therefore apologize for those whom we led 'up the Garden Path' and hope we can keep the 'fairy folk' under the Gooseberry bushes in future.

July brings us to the commencement of Dakshinayan, when the power of the sun is on the decline in the Northern Hemisphere. This period is called "the Long Night of the Devas, when the Devas, or minor Gods are asleep, and while the Asuras, or the forces of evil are awake and at work."

We shall be out in a Victorian Garden during July. What was it like? Mr. Hickey said after going over what I conceived to be a wild and uncultivated piece of ground... he suddenly stopped and asked me what I thought of a Madras garden, to which in perfect simplicity I answered "I would tell him my opinion when I have seen one".

Mr. O. T. Ravindran assures us that 'Madras is a place for palms. Old buildings in Madras once sported avenues of Royal Palms *Oreodoxa regia*. Palms other than coconut that thrive in Madras are *Areca lutescens*, *Kentia sap.*, *Livistona chinensis*, *Licuala grandis*, *Prichardia pacifica* and *Corypha Umbraculifera*. Old photographs and etchings show the native wild date palms *Phoenix Sylvestria* keeping their graceful heads above the spreading scrub jungle. We have lost them to house building and road making'.

Madras has always suffered from a continuous supply of water so we hope that as we move into July or Adi, according to the Tamil calendar, we shall see with the rain.

THE DRAGONFLY

Then the green rushes-O so glossy green,
The rushes they would whisper, rustle, shake,
And forth on floating gauze, no jewelled queen,
So rich, the green-eyed dragon-flies would break
And hover on the flowers-aerial things :
With little rainbows flickering on their wings.

— JEAN INGELOW

MARGARET SEKHRAN
LILY MADHOK

PRELUDE TO FOUNDERS' DAY

Friday, 2nd July, 1993 — 10-15 a.m.

At : Issy Sanderson
9, Archbishop Mathias Avenue
Madras-600 028

DESIGNING WITH ISSY

Issy is keeping herself free to help members design their Costumes for the Founders' Day 'Victoriana' Extravaganza. Issy will give you Victorian patterns and advice on how to design your crinoline, bustle or your costume for Friday 23rd July, to make you not 'the Belle of the Ball' but the "GONG OF THE TEA".

MARGARET SEKHRAN
LILY MADHOK

From : The Temple Bells

She is young and very sweet,
From the silver on her feet
To the silver and the flowers in her hair ;
And her beauty makes me swoon,
As the Moghra* trees at noon
Intoxicate the hot and quivering air.

LAWRENCE HOPE
(Died in Madras - 1904)

* A strong-scented flowering tree

HISTORY, CULTURE AND TOURS

Tuesday, 6th July, 1993 — 10-15 a.m.

At : Gayatri Bewoor
20, Gilchrist Avenue
Chetpet
Madras-600 031



THE MATRILINEAL PROPERTY RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN KERALA

At first sight the matrilineal right to property appears to confer on the women of Kerala a unique status and a powerful means to economic independence and liberation. Is this really true or a mere mirage?

IWA member, VASANTHI SANKARANARAYANAN, who is a journalist, translator and writer, with her intimate knowledge of Kerala, is a natural choice for discussing the debatable subject.

PADMINI NATARAJAN

CONGRATULATIONS :

Leila Ratnam who becomes the All India President & the Indian Representative to the Inner Wheel International from July 1, 1993.

To Devaki Muthiah, whose daughter Abirami gave birth to a baby girl.

GET-WELL WISHES :

We all wish Nirmal Seshadri a speedy recovery from her eye operation.

CONDOLENCES :

Our sincere condolences to Shamim Padamsee on the passing away of her husband Mumtaz.

ARTS AND HANDICRAFTS

Wednesday, 7th July, 1993 — 10-15 a.m.

At : The C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation
1, Eldams Road, Alwarpet
Madras-600 018



A JEWELLER'S LOOK AT TRADITIONAL INDIAN JEWELLERY

Renowned jeweller, Tushar Mehta, will give us an audio-visual presentation on distinctive Indian Jewellery from various parts of the country, with special emphasis on South India. He will give us invaluable tips on what to look for when buying jewellery, and how to take care of your precious pieces.

All are welcome !

**MAUREEN THADANI
BELA MISTRY KHALEELI**

HEALTH & ECOLOGY

Tuesday, 13th July, 1993 — 10-15 a.m.

At : Willingdon Conference Hall
Willingdon Hospital
21, Pycrofts Gardens
Madras-600 006



HORMONES HORMONES HORMONES

We all have them ; but, what are they ?

Are they our friends or our foes ? Are they good or bad for us ? Why is everyone talking about them ?

Come and hear Prof. K. Bhasker Rao, M.D., F.A.M.S., a renowned Obstetrician and Gynaecologist who has been in this field for more than 40 years, and has 'authored' more than 200 scientific papers and several books on this subject, for Undergraduates and Post Graduate Medical students.

Limit — 50 Members

**MARGARET PACE
SHYLA K. RAU**

R.S.V.P. : SHYLA K. RAU — 8276893, 8278676

COOKING SWAPSHOP

Thursday, 15th July, 1993 — 10-15 a.m.

At: Vijaya Balu
12, Sullivan Street
Santhome (near Santhome Church)
Mylapore, Madras-600 004



PICKLING AND PRESERVATION

As this is the season of Mangoes, Lime and other pickling vegetables & fruits and the sun is bright and hot, the month of July is pickling season. Our Member Vijaya Balu will give us a 'mouth tingling' demonstration on 'Pickling & Preservation' at her residence.

Ladies, please confirm your wish to attend before the 10th of July.

Limit — 40 Members

**RATI NEELAKANTAN
AMRITA BHALLA**

R.S.V.P. : RATI NEELAKANTAN — 8265250

"FRUIT FOR THOUGHT"

AMLA (Indian Gooseberry — *Emblica Officinalis* or Tamil Nellikai)

Amla is probably the richest known natural source of Vitamin 'C'. 100 gms. of Amla contain 600 mg. of Vitamin 'C' compared to 30 mg. in 100 gms. of Citrus Fruit. The high Vitamin 'C' content makes it beneficial for the prevention and cure of Scurvy (swollen and bleeding gums) and an effective remedy for the common cold.

Nellikai, to give it its Tamil name, is light, laxative and diuretic. It helps in the absorption of Iron in the body.

The best way to eat Amla, with the least loss of Vitamin 'C' is to eat it raw with a little salt. The berry can be used as a vegetable, but is often used in the form of pickle and marmalade.

The gooseberry can be preserved for long periods when it is dried and powdered. This powder can be mixed with honey and eaten.

Emblica Officinalis is an accepted hair tonic in traditional Indian recipes for enriching hair growth and preventing greying. The fruit cut into pieces is dried outside in the shade. The pieces are then boiled in Coconut Oil until the solid matter becomes like charred dust. This is added to water and soaked overnight, and this water is used to nourish the hair. It should be used in the last rinse while washing the hair.

This lesser known bush is worth growing in your garden, and produces very pretty pinkish-white flowers. The taste of the fruit is extremely sour.

LILY MADHOK

FOUNDERS' DAY

(This meeting is for Members only)

Friday, 23rd July, 1993 — 3-30 p.m.

At : Madras Club
Chamiers Road
Madras-600 028

VICTORIANA

We shall be spending Founders' Day in the delightful Victorian garden setting of the Madras Club, weather permitting, with tea on the lawn. This will be followed by Dramatic Readings and a Musical Entertainment organized by Issy Sanderson.

We shall not be spending the tea and I quote "in the shade of mango trees with carpets spread and cushions and mattresses, and mosquito nets hung from branch to branch enclosing the party in an airy tent."

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The International Women's Association was founded in 1985 by Nirmal Seshadri, Nancy, Lakshmi, Anneliese, Sunita, Rewa and Saroj, and to begin with we bring you an insight into our two Founder Presidents Nirmal & Nancy.

"NEVER TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER"

Nirmal was born into an educated, musical, fore-sighted, un-orthodox, and long-established family in North Mada Street, Mylapore, Madras.

Music has always been Nirmal's passion. It seeped into her bones through her association with her mother and grandmother, who were both well-versed in music and were composers in their own right.

Dramatic Arts were part of Nirmal's childhood heritage, as her mother and grandmother wrote plays and short stories, though as a child Nirmal was too shy and introverted to actively participate in such activities.

Her days at Queen Mary's College in Madras helped her to come out of her shell, and to blossom into the self-confident and self-reliant person she is today. Here she developed her innate talent for music and drama, and made her first public performance as a vocalist.

After obtaining a Degree in Music Nirmal moved to Presidency College, met her future husband, and during the period of their engagement completed her masters in Politics, her BL and was called to the Bar. (She never practised.)

After thirty years of marriage and living in Bombay and continuing her musical activities within and without India Nirmal returned to Madras, but not to retire or rest. Nirmal felt that Madras needed an International Cultural Organization, so Nirmal stirred and pushed the ladies of Madras to contribute their talents to this new organization, now called the 'International Women's Association'.

Nirmal has offered IWA a great deal through her own talents, yet she has offered more through her warm and encouraging personality, her ready smile and her memorable laugh. If ladies have any doubts about their husbands allowing them to become actively involved in an International Cultural Friendship Organization ask Nirmal to approach your husband he will always say 'yes' on your behalf.

MARGARET & LILY

NANCY ON HERSELF

I think the fact that I was born, raised, and educated from kindergarten through university in the state of Indiana was important to my development - because it's the heart of the U.S. midwest. There the values are solid and basic, so no matter where I lived after, or what I did, that Hoosier upbringing is the bedrock upon which everything else was laid.

My love of reading I have had for as long as I can remember. When I started, there was no television, and even today. I'd much rather read a book than sit in front of a T.V. screen. Except that I do watch television every evening for half-an-hour I never miss the news if I can help it. Friends know not to call then, because I won't answer the phone. . .

I suppose my insatiable quest to be up-to-date on what's happening nationally and internationally became especially important to me during the diplomatic years, and the habit has stayed with me.

As for the adult who influenced me the most, that would have to be my former father-in-law. At Indiana University he was both my professor and faculty advisor. My ability to write, I've always had. My editing skill was honed by him a severe task master. Infact in school, most of the time he terrified me. Like many of his students, I came to appreciate him only years later. Only then did I realize that I had learned more from him than how to do a good job editing other people's writing. He also instilled within me the need do what I think is right. The older I get, the more I've come to appreciate that.

The most satisfying aspect of all this has been the fact that I see so much of her grandfather in the daughter I visited just a few months ago that is now teaching in Kodaikanal. It's very satisfying for a mother to see the best of the genes - as both a teacher and a person-being passed on from generation to generation. . .

BOOK DISCUSSION

Tuesday, 27th July, 1993 — 10-15 a.m.

At: The American Centre
210, Mount Road
Madras-600 006



MOVIE 'OF MICE AND MEN'

'Of Mice and Men' was the first of John Steinbeck's experiments in constructing a novel as close to dramatic form as possible. We are showing this film as a sequel to our June Book Discussion of the now classic novel.

We are grateful to the American Centre for agreeing to bring the movie 'Of Mice and Men' from Delhi, especially for us, and to screen it at their Centre. We hope to see all our regular book discussion members as well as many more cinema buffs.

**ANGELICA MANDAIKAR
KAMALA MUTHIAH**

First come first served. Five Cars can be parked in the American Centre's Car Park. Please inform Nanditha's office before the meeting of your wish to attend, with the number of the car, so that we may inform the American Centre. Anyone having difficulties please speak to Angelica.

CURRENT EVENTS

Thursday, 29th July, 1993 — 10-15 a.m.

At : The YWCA International Guest House
1086, Poonamallee High Road
Madras-600 084



CURRENT TRENDS IN FASHIONS AND DESIGNS

Well known Fashion Designer Sabita Radhakrishna will discuss the changing fashion scenario and the 'Passion for Fashion' that has affected everyone.

Sabita was one of the earliest Designers to set up her own boutique 'Amarapalli' in Madras. Her designs have always combined tradition and elegance. She has conducted numerous Fashion Shows at home and abroad and is also familiar to us as an interviewer of personalities on television.

Sabita's presentation will include live models to demonstrate the use of different kinds of fabrics, accessories and designs.

All are welcome !

**PADMA ASHOK
JAVANTHI PRABHAKARAN**

From : **'The Lays of Ind'** a Victorian book of Comic Verse

I do believe in dress and ease,
And fashionable dash.

I do believe in bright rupees,
And truly worship cash.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

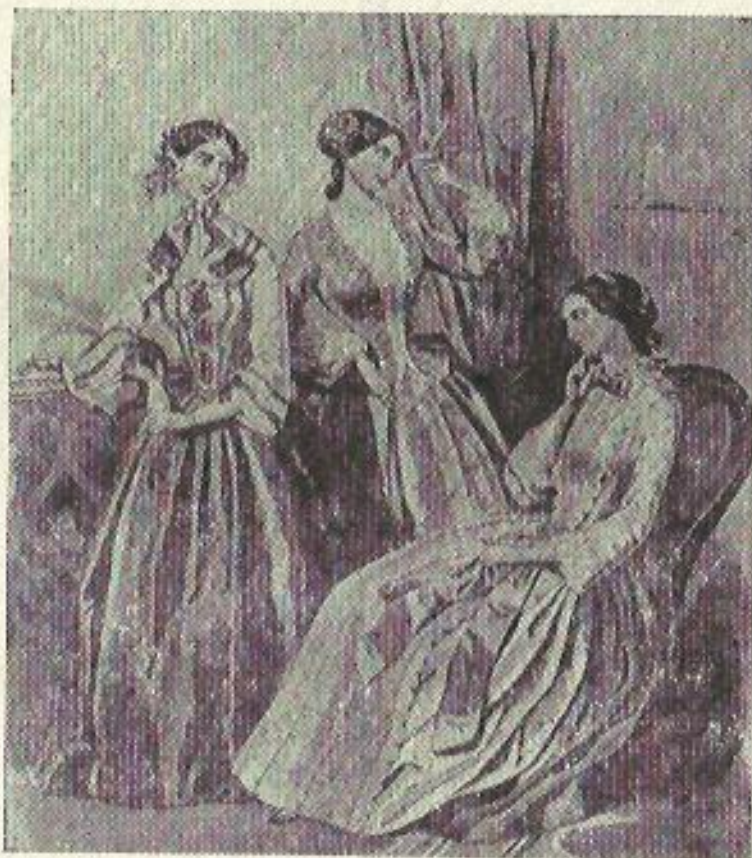
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VICTORIANA



On Friday, July 23, IWA celebrates Founders' Day with a theme - VICTORIANA

This year's News Letter is printed on tree-free paper. The cover is made of rag and the printed matter is on paper made of bagasse, an agro waste.