

October 2009
Newsletter



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2009- 2010
MANAGING COMMITTEE

PRESIDENTS

Shobha Hebbar	26411248	9840338258
Elizabeth Aston	24328590	9094558566

VICE PRESIDENTS

Mridula Srinivasan	24321028	9840931812
Sejal Wasani	24355290	9864052575

SECRETARIES

Ramani Reddy	28353608	9840086858
Manisha Singhee	24991482	9841035003

TREASURERS

Archana Meiyappan	28473932	9840998800
Jansi Kishore	28226395	9841569896

ACTIVITY CHAIRPERSONS

ARTS & HANDICRAFTS

Deepali Goyal	24357752	9840442260
Suzanne De Haes	24352346	98409 33138

BOOK DISCUSSION

Geeta Rajagopal	24453239	9840052899
Janet Haughton Quarshie	24512401	9884187719

COOKING SWAPSHOP

Asha Rammohan	28332006	9840039958
Jennifer Arun	28275032	9880399490

CURRENT EVENTS

Zainab Kachwalla	28292274	9840853652
Jennifer Moore	9940065292	9840892782

HEALTH & ECOLOGY

Nabila Avas	28264325	9840026665
Bess Simkin	24333565	9791172021

HISTORY, CULTURE & TOURS

Maya Mathew	28281228	9841010080
Nalini Panday	24610944	9841048629

MUSIC & PERFORMING ARTS

Nita Reddy	42030717	9962530717
Sue Cook		9677020407

PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION

Anuradha Uberoi	24329728	9841042520
Tineke Sysmans	45066148	9940135888

IWA NEWSLETTER

Volume XXIV No.5

Chennai

OCTOBER 2009

MONTH AT A GLANCE

Thu. 1st Oct. International Music Day 10.15 a.m.

Sat. 3rd Oct. Deep Mala 10.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m

Mon. 5th Oct. Managing Committee Meeting 09.30 a.m.
Executive Committee Meeting 10.30 a.m.

Tue. 6th Oct. Book Discussion 04.30 p.m.
Health & Ecology
Size Zero

Tues. 13th Oct. Health & Ecology 10.15 a.m.
Onco Quiz

Tues. 20th Oct. Cooking Swapshop 10.30 a.m.
Instant Entertaining from
Around the World

Thu. 22nd Oct. Current Events 10.15 a.m.
Gay Rights in India

Tue. 27th Oct. Philosophy & Religion 11.00 a.m.
"Eid Mubarak"

27th to 31st Oct. History, Culture & Tours
Trip to Hampi

IWA Blog Site : www.iwachennai.blogspot.com

FROM THE PRESIDENTS

We begin the month with International Music Day on Thursday, 1st October, 10.15 a.m at the Sheraton Park Hotel. Details are available in the September newsletter and further information is enclosed in this issue.



As we are nearing the end of 2009 we celebrate festival time in India. There are many people who would say it is always festival time in India as celebrations are held throughout the year. It is also what helps to make India such a vibrant and unique country.

Deep Mala, this year's IWA Diwali celebrations will be held on Saturday 3rd October, 10.30 a.m - 3.00 p.m. at the Mayor Ramanathan Chettiar Hall. Do join in the celebrations which provide us with a day of fun and friendship. Please make every effort to attend.

Final preparations are being made for the Hampi - Aihole - Pattadakal - Badami trip and the first meeting of those going was held on 31st August. The details of the trip to Assam and West Bengal in February are also in this issue of the newsletter.

Your feedback from the September meetings has again been an inspiration to us and we hope you enjoy the October meetings. So much thought and planning by the Activity Chairpersons together with your suggestions enables such a variety of meetings. Thank you.

SHOBHA HEBBAR

ELIZABETH ASTON

MANAGING COMMITTEE
Mon. 5th Oct. at 9.30 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Mon. 5th Oct. at 10.30 a.m.

Meetings hosted by
Ramani Reddy
Presidency Club,
Ethiraj Salai, Egmore,
Chennai - 600 008.

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC DAY

Thursday, October 1st at 10.15 a.m.

At: **Sheraton Park Hotel**
132, T.T.K. Road
Chennai - 600 018



International Music Day is, as usual, being celebrated on October 1st when we honour an outstanding young musician. It is also, by a happy coincidence, our **Founder President Nirmal Seshadri's** birthday and her family has instituted an award in her memory to be given to a child prodigy in the field of music.

This year our Music Committee comprising of **Jyothi Ganesh (Chairperson)**, **Nalini Acharya**, **Shantha Narayan** and **Padmini Subramaniam** received many applications. They have chosen **Sriram Sridhar**, a violinist who has trained in both Carnatic and Western classical music as this year's recipient for the award. The young artiste will give a brief recital on the day.

We thank **Vijay Goyal**, **Shashi Malhotra**, **Deepali Goyal** and **Chandra Goyal Seoni** for sponsoring this meeting.

SHOBHA HEBBAR

ELIZABETH ASTON

THE BOARD

We apologise for inadvertently omitting the name of **Sapna Sood** in the list of dancers for Founder's Day. We thank her for her participation.

We thank our gracious hostesses **Rekha Rangaraj**, **Anita Reddi** and **Vidya Singh** for the September 11th meeting with **Thota Tharrani**.

DEEP MALA

Saturday, October 3rd from 10.30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

At: Ramaswamy Hall

Mayor Ramanathan Chettiar (MRC) Centre
Santhome High Road, Chennai 600 004



The significance of Deepavali is the removal of darkness and ignorance from the mind and filling it with goodness. - Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi

Diwali is a joyous celebration of the victory of good over evil, of the triumph of light over darkness. IWA celebrates this annual event with Deep Mala (garland of lights). Do join us and enjoy a morning of fun and laughter, of shopping and dancing and great food!

Join the dancers as they perform the *Ghoomer* and the *Bhangra* to the rhythmic beat of the *Dhol*. Have a makeover or nail art done by experts. Have your fortune told by a palmist or a Tarot Card reader or the ever popular *Kili Joshyam*. Participate and win prizes at the many games stalls.

There are stalls galore to shop to your heart's content. We also have the ever-popular Khazana stall which our members Eira Doshi, Radha Gopalakrishnan and Aruna Vijaykumar have kindly agreed to run. Be there to sample some fabulous food, from the tasty *chaats* of Mumbai to the sumptuous dishes from the colourful states of Rajasthan and Gujarat.

ENTRANCE - MEMBERS NOT CHARGED.

So do come and join in the fun. Please check in by the 25th of September with Mridula Srinivasan, Ramani Reddy or Manisha Singhee.

Tickets for family and friends will be sold at Rs. 250/-. They are available with all Management Committee Members and Activity Chairpersons. There will be no charge for children below 10 years of age.

Our thanks to Visalakshi Ramaswamy for sponsoring the hall.

SHOBHA HEBBAR

ELIZABETH ASTON

THE BOARD

BOOK DISCUSSION HEALTH & ECOLOGY



Tuesday, 6th October, 4.30 p.m.

At: Nina Kothari's

"Kothari Bagh"

18, M.G. Road, Nungambakkam,
Chennai - 600 034

The Size Zero Way - Don't Lose your Mind, Lose your Weight

The eminent fitness professional, **Rujuta Diwekar**, from Mumbai is amongst the few trained sports, science and nutrition experts in India. Rujuta has always had a holistic approach towards fitness and emphasised a healthy lifestyle rather than any drastic changes that are not long term. Having worked with people from all walks of life, all age groups and varying fitness levels, she has fine-tuned her methods to fit the lifestyle of the Urban Indian.

She is the best selling author of "Don't Loose Your Mind, Loose Your Weight" which has sold with over 80,000 copies and today, Rujuta Diwekar is a household name. Some of her famous clients are Anil Ambani, Kareena Kapoor, Saif Ali Khan, Preity Zinta, Karisma Kapoor, Konkona Sen Sharma, Amrita Arora and Sameer Bhatia. She will talk about finding yourself within, about celebrity fitness, her new book and much more.

A big thank you to Nina Kothari for hosting this meeting at her residence. We are also thankful to Beena Mathew, Somna Sachdev and Shanthi Verghese for hosting Rujuta.

Members only. Warn-in with Archana Meiyappan (98409-98800) or Jansi Kishore (98415-89896) by 4th October.

NABILA AVAIS

GEETA RAJAGOPAL

BESS SIMKIN

JANET HAUGHTON QUARSHIE

HEALTH & ECOLOGY

Tuesday, 13th October, 10.15 a.m.

At: Sundaram Medical Foundation Auditorium
4th Avenue, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar,
Chennai-600 040



Onco Quiz – Think Pink

Breast cancer is the most common cancer of women in India. Recent statistics show that it has exceeded cervical cancer. Research in breast cancer has led to the emergence of a range of options in diagnosis and treatment that have enhanced our ability to fight this disease and give women long and meaningful lives. Mutilating operations are no longer necessary if the problem is detected in its early stages.

It is vital that all women be aware of the facts and choices in the management of breast cancer, and to this end, the programme will provide information in the form of an interactive, easily understood Onco Quiz. No preparation or background information is needed to participate.

Dr. Arjun Rajagopalan, Trustee & Medical Director, Sundaram Medical Foundation & Dr. Rangarajan Memorial Hospital, will be addressing us on the awareness of breast cancer with the help of a Power Point Presentation and will also be conducting a quiz for the members. On the spot prizes will be given for correct answers.

Dress Code: Shades of Pink

We are thankful to Dr. Vijayabharthi Rangarajan, for her help in organising and hosting this meeting for us.

NABILA AVAIS

BESS SIMKIN

We will be holding an ECO-Mela on the 17th of November, displaying and covering a wide range of eco-friendly products like organically grown produce, energy saving inventions, dynamised water, fabrics (organic cotton & vegetable dyed), accessories, foot wear, daily dump composting and much more.

Members interested in having a stall, call Nabila Avais (98400-26665) before the 31st of October. Venue will be finalised shortly.

COOKING SWAP SHOP

Tuesday, 20th October at 10:30 a.m.

At: Asiana Hotel
1/238 Old Mahabalipuram Road (OMR)
Semmencherry
Chennai 600 119



Instant Entertaining from Around the World

Have you ever had to whip up snacks or appetisers in a flash when guests unexpectedly stop by? Have you ever racked your brain for something simple, yet delicious to make in a hurry?

Join us at the Asiana Hotel as their chefs demonstrate different hors d'oeuvres from around the world that you can make in a jiffy at home. These tasty treats will satisfy any guest and make your job as hostess stress-free.

Heading the demonstrations are Chef Umashankar, the Asiana's Wild Fire Grill speciality restaurant chef; and Chef Orasa, head of the hotel's speciality Thai restaurant. Chef Umashankar's experience includes working in France with Chef George Blanc at his gastronomic restaurant and kitchen; while Chef Orasa has over 30 years experience in Thailand, Japan and India, and has even prepared meals for Her Royal Highness The Princess of Thailand during her visit to the Asiana Hotel

A tasting of the recipes will follow the demonstration.

Transportation will be provided for all interested attendees, so please warn in with Jennifer Arun (098803-99490 B'lore mobile), Shobha Hebbar (98403 38258) or Liz Aston (24328590) by 14th October.

The pick-up point is Sunita Shahaney's home: 'Oakland House', 7 Adyar Club Gate Road, Chennai 600 028. Please be at the pick-up point by 9.00 a.m., as the buses will depart at 9.15 a.m. The buses will return to Sunita Shahaney's house by 2 p.m.

MEMBERS ONLY, WARN IN MEETING, LIMIT 80

ASHA RAMMOHAN

JENNIFER ARUN

CURRENT EVENTS

Thursday 22nd October at 10.15 a.m.

At: Pearl Room, Presidency Club
Ethiraj Salai,
Egmore, Chennai – 600 008



Gay Rights in India

Homosexuality is generally considered a taboo subject by both Indian society and the Government. In recent years, attitudes are changing and there is far more discussion of homosexuality in the Indian news media and by Bollywood.

On 2 July 2009, a landmark Delhi High Court court ruling decriminalised homosexual intercourse between consenting adults. It judged Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (a piece of legislation introduced 150 years ago during British Rule) to be conflicting with the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India. What does the judgement mean for gay rights in India?

Bryan Dalton is the Consul and Officer for Consular Services at the U.S. Consulate. Dr. Ramakrishnan heads a non-profit organisation SAATHII that strengthens and expands HIV/AIDS services in India. A public health Professional and human rights activist, he has been involved in movements promoting rights and services for LGBT (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender) people. Together they will discuss current issues about LGBT equality in the U.S. and India.

ZAINAB KACHWALA

JENNIFER MOORE

We thank Urmilla Agarwal for sponsoring the speaker gift for the History, Culture and Tours meeting on the 14th of September.

PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION

Tuesday, October 27th at 11 a.m.

At: YWCA
1086, Poonamallee High Road,
EVR Periar Salai
Chennai – 600 084



“Eid Mubarak”

‘Eid Mubarak’ is the customary greeting on the occasion of Eid – ul – Fitr.

Ramzan is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar year, a month when the holy “Quran” was revealed to the Prophet by Allah in 615 AD, as a guidance and declaration.

At the end of the customary fasting during Ramzan “Eid- ul- Fitr” is celebrated. Eid ul Fitr often abbreviated to “Eid” is an Arabic word meaning “Festivity”, while “Fitr” means, “to break the fast” and so symbolises the breaking of the fasting period.

On this occasion we have specially arranged for you to witness an auspicious ceremony called **Bismillah Khani**.

This ceremony is the initiation to education when the Muslim child reaches the age of 4 years 4 months and 4 days.

As a child’s first education is an important event, it is believed that the child must start his/ her education, by pronouncing Allah’s name in an assembly with the good wishes and blessings of elders.

Join us in celebrating and devoting this day to the spirit of love, peace and sisterhood.

ANURADHA M. UBEROI

TINEKE SYSMANS

We thank Gayatri Krishnaswamy for sponsoring the audio equipment for the August 20th meeting on Dance.

HISTORY, CULTURE AND TOURS

From October 27th to October 31st



IWA TRIP TO HAMPI

This trip will visit Hampi-Aihole-Badami and Pattadakal.

During their visit the group will be transported to another era where the Vijayanagara Kings ruled in pomp and glory over vast empires. In the open museums, every monument tells a silent story, of grandeur, splendour and fabulous wealth; of men whose talent and power demonstrate their capacity for senseless destruction. The entire city including palaces, temples, market places and streets is going to come alive with the mesmerising sound of horses galloping, music, chanting, bells ringing, elephants trumpeting – all for the IWA ladies.

We feel sure the visit will satisfy their sense of adventure and provide a lifetime of happy memories. Bon Voyage.

MAYA MATHEW

NALINI PANDAY

Committee to Review IWA Byelaws

The second meeting took place on 31st August.

The initial focus of the meetings is to work through the ByeLaws Booklet, to identify areas to be reviewed and make recommendations to the membership.

HISTORY, CULTURE & TOURS

Trip to West Bengal & Assam
February 7th to February 14th



In February, IWA will visit West Bengal and Assam.

The State of Assam, which is our first destination, is one of the most beautiful regions of India. There is hardly any other state, which has greater variety and colour in its natural scenery and in the cultural treasures of the people that inhabit it. Some call it a magic land while others call it a green paradise.

We fly via Kolkatta to Jorhat and then proceed to the Kaziranga National Park, a World Heritage Site famous for the Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros. Kaziranga, which was declared a National Park in 1974, is inhabited by the world's largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses, as well as many mammals, including tigers, elephants, panthers and bears, and thousands of birds. We take morning and evening safaris into the jungle to catch glimpses of the rhino.

From Kaziranga we proceed to Majuli, the largest fresh water mid-river deltaic island of South Asia and located at the upper reaches of the River Brahmaputra. Majuli Island is famous as a bio-diversity hot spot and enriched with rare species of flora and fauna, with fresh water dolphins. For the past 500 years, Majuli has been recognised as the cultural capital of Assam and as the cradle of Assamese civilisation. It is the centre of Assamese Vaishnavite culture and is a repository of rich heritage. It is the nerve centre of neo-Vaishnavite religion, art and culture, having 22 Vaishnava monasteries or *satras*, which resemble Buddhist monasteries where a number of inmates, called *bhaktas*, dedicate themselves to religious activities

Guwahati is our next stop where we will visit the famous Khamakya temple, the Srimantha Shankardev Kalakshetra, a multi-arts complex, the State Museum, and Hajo (Hayagreva temple). Saulkuchi (weaver's village) is near Hajo, and literally every home in this village weaves one of three varieties of silk. This would also be a good place for shopping as the customers can buy directly from the artisans. We visit Ashvagandha, where Lord Krishna rested

along with his horses before crossing over the Brahmaputra to vanquish Narakasura.

After half a day's shopping in Kolkata, we proceed to **Sunderbans National Park** in West Bengal, the largest and probably the most mysterious National Park in India. It was declared a World Heritage Site in 1997. Situated on the largest delta in the world, the Sunderbans (beautiful forest) has the biggest mangrove forest in the world and is home to the largest concentration of Royal Bengal Tigers. Explore the rich wildlife of Sunderbans by taking a boat safari into the wildest depths of nature, inside creeks and dense forests. Visit the **Sudhanyakhali Watch Tower** and cruise through rivers and the narrow creeks of **Pitchkhali - Sarakhkhali - Sudhanokhali- Bomobibi Dharani** (narrow creek). Visit the neighbouring villages to interact with the local community at a typical Sunderban settlement to understand their local art, culture and how man and tiger coexist in such a difficult terrain. The trip will include a visit to a tea estate and evenings of folk dances and entertainment in both Assam and in the Sunderbans.

The cost of the trip is Rs. 39,500/- for Indians and Rs. 44,500/- for Non-Indians.

The above rate is inclusive of

- Accommodation on Twin sharing basis with all meals and one bottle of water per person per day
- Transport by A/C coach in West Bengal, Cars in Assam
- All sightseeing with guides.
- River Cruise in Sunderbans
- Kaziranga Jeep & Elephant Safari
- Entrance fees.
- Air ticket from Chennai/Kolkotta, Kolkotta/Guwahati, Guwahati/Chennai.

Does not include

Personal – Laundry, telephone calls, camera fees, beverages & tips. Please check in with **Maya Mathew** at 9841010080 or **Nalini Panday** at 9841048629 before the 30th of October.

MAYA MATHEW

NALINI PANDAY

A JOURNEY TO THE LAND OF THE TSARS - RUSSIA

Chennai airport was awash with travellers at one a.m. on 5th September; but our large group got through ticketing, screening, immigration, customs etc. in record time, and THEN.....waited HOURS to take off. Delays occur in the best of circles, so we arrived in Moscow at 1 a.m. on the 6th! Barring that glitch however, nothing marred a delightful trip.

A morning visit to an ancient monastery – now restored— revealed the richness and beauty of walls and ceilings. The Belfry Tower was in three levels, with size of bells to match. The gardens were a riot of colours, filled with flowers and sunshine - but I shuddered to think of them in winter!

An entertaining evening at the Russian Circus followed, with excellent jugglery, acrobatics, clowning and balance feats. The equestrian act was superb. We went on to catch an overnight train to St. Petersburg with tiny coupes with draped and fringed curtains, fairly comfortable, and hot pancakes and caviar for breakfast, served by red-cheeked, but unsmiling girls.

The grandeur of St. Petersburg was breath taking - the river flows through the town under ornamental bridges, with boats large and small, dotted around; imposing houses, palaces, churches and museums on every side and even a glimpse of a mosque, but no hustle and bustle anywhere. (How unlike home!) We lined up at the Hermitage to see a mind-boggling number of artefacts, paintings, chandeliers, furniture, jewellery, armour, curios, and what not. One room housed a large glass cage, with a metal peacock, at least three times larger than life, which is said to spread its tail and whirr at noon. Such art is meant to be taken in small doses over weeks, but we had to rush through at breakneck speed.

It was a rewarding visit to the Winter Palace and gardens; the rooms choc-a-block with crockery, silver and memorabilia from various countries and ages. A glance into one of the highly decorated bedrooms did raise a niggling doubt as to how Peter the Great fitted into the puffy bedstead, or enjoyed a romp in it.

We saw so many churches, each more beautiful than the last. The frescoes, mosaics, etc in each were unbelievably rich and fresh. We were privileged to hear sacred music in 2 or 3 of them, soft and sublime.

The visit to the Red Square and the Kremlin was unforgettable. The grandeur of the latter and the size of the former, with onion domes springing up in the most unlikely places were stunning. No torture chambers or underground dungeons were shown, so our spy and crime story fears retreated. We watched the changing of the Guard in the huge courtyard. The goose-stepping and the formality were fine, but I must say our change of Guard at the Wagah Border is far ahead in style and grandeur!

Packed into all this, was a night of Folk Dance, an evening at the Russian Circus and an unforgettable ballet –Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake A real wonderful ending to it all...

Premila, Maya and, of course, our Presidents deserve a ringing "THREE CHEERS".

"THREE CHEERS".

RITA SALDANHA



Breathtaking view from the summer palace in St.Petersburg



IWA members at Kremlin



One of the beautiful underground metro stations in Moscow

We thank Noelene Goonan for her involvement as Activity Chairperson for Book Discussion and wish her well in her new job. We look forward to seeing her at our meetings when time permits.

Welcome to Janet Haughton Quarshie who is the new Non-Indian Activity Chairperson for Book Discussion.



New Non-Indian Members

Marie-Ange Neyrinck (Maya)
Tivoli Apartment, Flat A1
New No. 11, Kasturi Estate,
1st Street, Alwarpet,
Chennai
Mob: 96000 48359

BELGIUM

Isabel Mattheeuws
Grayshott D 102
Bishop Garden Extn 4
RA Puram, Chennai 600 028
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Mob: 99406 76631

BELGIUM

Juliet Meikle
No.11, 3rd Drive,
Sea Cliff Conclave
Akkarai
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Mob: 95662 60268

UK

Meena M. Rao
2-A, Willow Crest
29, 6th Main Road
R.A. Puram
Chennai 600 028
Tel: 2435 1836
Mob: 98405 43957

USA

KEEP TABS ON YOUR ATTENDANCE

Every month jot down the meetings you have attended in the column below. This will help you keep track of whether you have completed your ten meetings.

MEETING	DATE
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	