

AIS Views

A monthly newsletter of Australia India Society of Victoria Inc

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Vol 25/04 April, 2002

Australia India Society of Victoria is an integrated non-sectarian, Indian Association in Victoria. It represents Indians and Australians from many parts of the world.

AISV membership is open for anyone who is interested in India, her culture and her people.

The aims of AISV are to promote cultural and social events in context of India, to safeguard interests of its members and to act as a representative for the Indian community in Victoria at various Federal, State and Local governmental levels.

“Kearala- a tropical paradise on earth”

by: Dr. G. Aurora

“Uncle, if I invite you to my wedding, will you come?”

I looked straight into her eyes and replied, “I will most definitely attend your wedding, Tina. I will be there if you invite me”. Tina was silent. She gave me a hug and said nothing. “Tell me one good reason why I will not attend your wedding? I said with a big smile on my face. “I am getting married on the 29th of December, please keep this date free”, she replied. “And by the way the wedding is in a church where Anish’s (Tina’s fiancée) parents and grandparents got married, in Kerala.

I considered Tina no different to any of my own children and did not for one instance, regret what I had gotten myself into. I told Arvinder about Tina’s wedding invitation and she was delighted at the fact that we would be going to a part of India we had never visited before. And so we started to plan our trip to Kerala. A quick phone call to my brother in India to finalise our itinerary and our trip came to fruition.

We left Melbourne on 25th December. From Singapore we took the Silk Air flight straight to Thiruvananthapuram, the city of the holy serpent which formerly known as Trivandrum. This city is the gateway to one of the most beautiful states in India, Kerala. It was a hot and sultry half hour drive by taxi before we reached our hotel, the Muthoot Park Plaza.

Thiruvananthapuram is one of the most striking cities in India. The city is perched on undulating terrain consisting of low coastal hills near the southern edge of the Indian mainland. The city is very clean and a lush green colour, with its spacious layout and regulated life, a welcome departure from other large cities of India.

The following afternoon we took a taxi to see the Sri Ananthapadmanabhaswamy Temple. Here in India, my very own country, I had my first brush with religious discrimination against my own self. Being a Sikh with a turban, I was not allowed to enter the temple. The temple is open only to Hindus and dress regulations are strictly enforced. I was not in the least offended, as being an atheist, I was only going to see the exquisite stone carvings, mural paintings and pavilions in the temple. The action of the “priests” to turn away an individual wishing to enter reinforced a belief already existing in my own mind, that religion is the greatest fraud of all times.

The temple has a one hundred feet high ‘gopuram’ built in Dravidian style. This ancient temple is the most dominating feature of Thiruvananthapuram. I was informed that the temple is devoted to Lord Vishnu in which he is depicted reclining on

Sri Anantha, the hooded snake from which the city derives its name. Outside the temple courtyard we spent some time looking at the medley of shops selling souvenirs, handicrafts and woodcarvings made out of sandalwood. As we saved a great deal of time by not being allowed inside the temple, we went to the Sankhumugham Beach and spent an hour on the long stretch of clean sand.

The same evening we booked ourselves in for a day trip to Kanniyakumari, situated at the southernmost tip of India. We learnt at the bookings office that Kerala Tourist Board has no air-conditioned coaches and, further that there were are no private tourist operators with air-conditioned coaches. The cost of the full day trip including lunch and tea was Rs.190. Surprisingly the coach was not bad. The bus was new and the seats were reclining and in good condition.

We left the bus depot at 7.30 AM. Our first stop of twenty minutes was at Kovalam beach, sixteen kilometres away from the city. It is a unique and uncluttered beach of silvery sands fringed with rows of tall palms and has become one of the most popular beach hangouts in India. There are several shops of handicrafts, jewellery and clothes spread along the waterfront. Our next stop was the Padmanabhapuram Palace, the ancient seat of the Travancore rulers. The palace contains relics of historical and ancient value and boasts some of the most exquisite and elaborate woodwork ever to be seen in India.

We reached Kanniyakumari at lunchtime. A very delicious and sumptuous lunch was served for the tourists. Kanniyakumari is situated at the southernmost tip of India. From the strategically built lighthouse one can see the panoramic view of the landscape of Kanniyakumari. On the left one can see the green water of the Bay of Bengal, on the right, the light blue water of the Arabian Sea, and looking south, the dark blue waters of the Indian Ocean. Nowhere in the world is there a confluence of three oceans and thus this has become an important pilgrimage site along with one of the most popular tourist spots in the country.

Kanniyakumari was once referred to as the “Alexandria of the East”. It has been a great centre for pilgrimage, commerce and trade. St.Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles of Christ, arrived in this area in 52 AD. Kanniyakumari was under the control of the Chola, Chera, Pandya and Nayak dynasties that built several temples. Islam, Christianity and Jainism have also enriched the architectural wealth and heritage of the city.

From President's Desk

I wish to express my gratitude to those life and ordinary members who gave their valuable time to attend the informal meeting before the Society's Annual General Meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the future direction of the society. The discussions were frank and forthright. I felt that the meeting was very fruitful and the people gave a good feed back on the expectations of the membership of the society as well that of the Indian community. The meeting was recorded on tape and I hope we will be able to inform you of the discussions that took place during the meeting in the near future.

The executive members from last year were re-elected unopposed along with Priya Saratchandran. The secretary's position was not contested and remained vacant. However, Dr. Kamla Chandu has kindly agreed to offer herself for the position and we are indebted to her for her generous offer. There are still two positions for committee members vacant and if you are reading this message and are interested in filling this seat, I would urge you to nominate yourself. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the following outgoing committee members Heather Mathew, Usha Sharma, Tom Thomas and Ahmad Keshtiar for their valuable support and contribution in the running of the affairs of the society.

I would also like to take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to Mr. Vasam Srinivasan, who has been selected by the Liberal party to contest the safe seat of Forest Hill held by the liberals for the past twenty-six years. The Indian community should rally behind Mr. Vasam to support him in the forth-coming state elections.

I also wish to inform you that Australia India society of Victoria is negotiating a partnership arrangement with a local newspaper to promote the activities of the society as well as that of the Victorian Indian Community Charitable trust.

Gurdip Aurora

AISV Newsletter Deadline

The material to be published in the newsletter is required to be in hand by the **first of each month**. The newsletter committee seeks your cooperation in an effort to produce a publication of an acceptable quality and standard. The material for publication may be mailed to AISV address or fax to 9366 7660

AISV

Management Committee

President

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9873 4365 (Tel)
9764 2060 (Fax)

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9214 7839 (fax)

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9366 5444 (Tel)
9366 7660 (Fax)

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9318 4318 (Fax)

Committee

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9331 2069

Priya Saratchandran
9366 5444

S. Subramaniyam
9388 0915

The publication

AISV newsletter is a monthly publication. The sole purpose of this newsletter is to maintain communication link with the members and to provide up-to-date information of the forthcoming cultural and social events in Victoria.

It may cover topics such as history, travel, biographies as well as various social, cultural, psychological or family issues. It can also become a forum to discuss issues concerning Indians in multicultural Australia. It is in no way an appropriate forum to express personal discontents or counterproductive gestures towards our own countrypeople. Any suggestions are welcome from readers as long as they are in good faith.

AISV sub-committees

Cultural:

K P Saratchandran(chair), Aroti Ghosh

Immigration:

Gurdip Aurora(chair), Priya Saratchandran

Newsletter:

K P Saratchandran(chair), Suniti Betigeri, Remesh Remesan, Umesh Pawar, Kalpana Pawar

PR & Promotional:

Gurdip Arora(chair)

Youth Affairs:

To be announced

Women's Affairs:

Kamala Chandu(chair), Pratima Francis, Priya Saratchandran

Major Events:

to be announced

Koorie Fund:

Pratima Francis

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Coburg, Vic 3058
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FOR EMERGENCY RING (03) 9330-3193

Disclaimer

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Advertisement Rates: Full Page \$150, Half Page \$ 80, Quarter Page \$ 50, B & W photo add \$ 20, Leaflet Insert \$50,

Repeat Ad 20% disc, AISV members 25% dis

AISV Membership Fees: Life Member \$300, Single & Pensioner \$ 20, Family Member \$ 30, Student & unwaged \$ 5

“Mehfil Night” - 2002!

The Australia India Society of Victoria organised monthly ‘Mehfil’ night will present a well-known singer for the night.

Mrs Barbara Nagiah, her able co-singers and a talented orchestra will present famous Hindi Film songs of the past and contemporary time. A high quality enjoyable program for all those ‘filmy’ songs lovers!

Invite all your friends come and enjoy this fabulous program!!
**‘Mehfil’ night- a Friday musical night presented by
A.I.S.V
in service of the community!**



Entry is free for all!!



Date 19-04-2002 - Time. 8-10pm

Venue – Coburg Library Hall

Cnr. Victoria St & Louisa St, Coburg. (Melway 29 G1)

Parking is plentiful !!!

For enquiries- Phone Dr. Saratchandran 9366 5444.



AISV
March
Mehfil
Night -
Open
night
for all !!



AISV Annual General Meeting

After Dinner - A Pictorial Essay!



NOTICE

AUSTRALIA INDIA SOCIETY OF VICTORIA (AISV) INC. / VICTORIAN INDIAN COMMUNITY CHARITABLE TRUST (VICCT)

INVITES MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN AND AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY AND LIKE MINDED INTERESTED INDIAN REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BUILDING OF THE INDIAN RETIREMENT VILLAGE COMPRISING OF

1. 20 SINGLE BED ROOM AND 20 DOUBLE BED ROOM FULLY FURNISHED INDEPENDENT UNITS
2. HOSTEL ACCOMODATION FOR TWENTY FIVE AGED RESIDENTS
3. NURSING HOME ACCOMMODATION FOR TEN RESIDENTS
4. RECEPTION CENTRE
5. COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE/LIBRARY/SCHOOL

Hostel accommodation for the Aged and Nursing home accommodation will be partially funded by the State and Federal governments.

Estimated total cost of project is six million dollars excluding land.

Land area required for above project – over five acres.

The Indian community in Australia is the most respected and one of the largest amongst the ethnic communities in Australia. The Indians are the highest per capita earners in Australia and still do not have a facility like the one AISV and VICCT proposes to build with your support.

This project will only succeed with your active participation and involvement.

How can you help as a member of the Indian Community?

- * Join the Australia India Society of Victoria Inc (Established in 1963)
- * Interested Regional Associations can affiliate with AISV
- * Become a trustee of the Victorian Indian Community Charitable Trust (Subject to approval by the commissioner of taxation)
- * Become actively involved in community affairs and help raise funds for the above project by holding suitable fund raising activities.
- * Attend meetings to discuss progress in the development of the above project.
- * Receive monthly newsletter to keep you informed on the progress of the retirement village.
- * Work as a team to help build the Retirement village.

What if you do not wish to join AISV?

You may not join the AISV but still can assist in the formation of the retirement Village. By joining the AISV it will become easy for the trustees to keep you informed of the progress of the development of the retirement village through AISV's monthly newsletter. The strength of AISV depends on its increased membership and its ability to lobby strongly on behalf of the Indian community.

VICCT is an income tax exempt charitable entity under Subdivision 50-5 and deductible gift recipient under Subdivision 30-BA of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

If you have friends who would be keen to participate in the project please ask them to fill in the membership application form and post it to AISV at their earliest convenience.

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Dishes of the Month



Chicken Tikka

Ingredients

- 750 gms boneless chicken,
- 1 med.onion,
- 2 cloves garlic,
- 1 tbsp ginger,
- 2 tbsp lemon juice,
- 3 tsp dhania powder,
- 3 tsp jeera powder,
- 3 tsp garam masala,
- 1/3 cup plain yoghurt.

Method:

1. Soak 12 skewers in water.
2. Grind onion, garlic, ginger, lemon juice & spices in mixer grinder.
3. Coat chicken in ground mixture & marinate preferably overnight.
4. Thread chicken on skewers & grill under a hot grill or fry in a large well greased pan till chicken is well cooked.

Serve hot with lemon slices.

Source Unknown

AISV Annual General Meeting

was held on Sunday March 24, 2002



Friday, April 19, 2002

'Mehfil Night' - A third Friday Musical programme. For details refer page-3.

Saturday, August 17, 2002

AISV celebrates 'Indian Independence Day - details later

Directory

Australia India Society of Victoria

Business Centre P O Box 1000, Brunswick, 3056
Tel: 9310 7722 Fax: 9366 7660

Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs

P O Box 241E, Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: 9235 3999 Fax: 9235 3300

Ethnic Youth Issues Network

1/250 Gore Street, Fitzroy, VIC 3065
Tel: 9419 9122 Fax: 9416 0450
Contact: Ms Carmel Guerra

Federation of Indian Associations of Victoria

P O Box 2554W Melbourne VIC 3001
Tel/Fax: 9521 2300

High Commission of India

3-5 Moonah Place, Yarralumla ACT 2600
Tel: 06-273 3999, 273 3774 Fax: 06-273 3328

Honorary Consul for India

15 Munro Street, Coburg, VIC 3058
Tel: 9384 0141 Fax: 9384 1609

Indian Resource Centre

47 Grantham Street, Brunswick, 3055

Multicultural Arts Victoria

156 George Street, Fitzroy VIC 3065
Tel: 9417 6777 Fax: 9416 3342

Overseas Qualifications Unit

Level 25, 55 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: 9655 6164 Fax: 9655 6151

SBS Radio

PO Box 294, South Melbourne VIC 3205
Tel: 9685 2525 Fax: 9645 7482 Contact: Mr Peter Horton

Victorian Co-operative on Children's Services for Ethnic Groups

569 Nicholson Street North Carlton VIC 3054
Tel: 9387 0177 Contact: Mr John Zika

□

Chuckle Corner



Did you know that ...

It is impossible to lick your elbow.

A crocodile can't stick its tongue out.

A shrimp's heart is in their head.

When you sneeze, your heart stops for a millisecond.

In a study of 200,000 ostriches over a period of 80 years, no one reported a single case where an ostrich buried its head in the sand or attempted to do so.

In the United States alone, there is a lawsuit every 30 seconds.

It is physically impossible for pigs to look up into the sky.

More than 50% of the people in the world have never made or received a telephone call.

Rats and horses can't vomit.

The "sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep's sick" is said to be the toughest tongue twister in the English language.

If you sneeze too hard, you can fracture a rib. If you try to suppress a sneeze, you can rupture a blood vessel in your head or neck and die. If you keep your eyes open by force, they can pop out.

Rats multiply so quickly that in 18 months, two rats could have over a million descendants.

Wearing headphones for just an hour will increase the bacteria in your ear by 700 times.

If the U.S. government has no knowledge of aliens, then why does Title 14, Section 1211 of the Code of Federal Regulations, implemented on July 16, 1969, make it illegal for US citizens to have any contact with extraterrestrials or their vehicles?

Forty percent of all people who come to a party in your home snoop in your medicine cabinet.

The electric chair was invented by a dentist.

The cigarette lighter was invented before the match.

100% of all lottery winners gain weight.

Thirty-five percent of the people who use personal ads for dating are already married.

A duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why.

23% of all photocopier faults worldwide are caused by people sitting on them and photocopying their buttocks.

In the course of an average lifetime you will, while sleeping, eat 70 assorted insects and 10 spiders.

160 cars can drive side by side on the Monumental Axis in Brazil, the world's widest road.

Most lipstick contains fish scales.

Cat's urine glows under a black-light.

A hummingbird weighs less than a penny.

Like fingerprints, everyone's tongue print is different.

and last but not least...

Over 75% of people who read this will try to lick their elbows!

Source: Unknown

We visited the Kumari Amman temple that is dedicated to Parvati as Devi - Kanya, the virgin goddess who eternally protects the country at its southern tip. The temple is built at the spot where the goddess is believed to have waited for her consort Lord Shiva to come and claim her hand in marriage. When she was unsuccessful, she vowed to remain a virgin (Kanya).

A grand memorial to philosopher Swami Vivekananda is on one of the twin rocks jutting out from the sea about 200 m offshore. There is a Dhyana Mandapam where Swami Vivekananda's meditation transformed him into one of the most charismatic spiritual leaders of this century. Built in 1970, the unique structure is a blend of various architectural styles of India. Close to the Vivekananda Rock is another rock called Sripada Parai, meaning the 'rock that has been blessed by the touch of the feet of the goddess'. There is a regular ferry service from the shore to the rock memorial. We watched the sunset from the roof of the government guesthouse, and in my opinion, it was one of the best vantage points for viewing a grand sunset in the world.

Arvinder and I booked us to go to Kottayam (Tina's wedding town) from Thiruvananthapuram by train. We were fortunate to obtain two seats in the second-class AC coach by Chennai Express. We reached Kottayam three hours later after a very pleasant train journey through the countryside. From the station we took a taxi to the Illikkalam lake resort, on the bank of Venbanad Lake. We were aware that the resort had five cottages, which Tom Thomas had booked for visitors from Australia. It was an hour and a half trip to the resort and it was pitch dark when we reached there. However, we were greeted by the caretaker of the resort and taken to our room. The accommodation was very basic, but the location was just unbelievable. The cottages were facing the lake and except for a few coconut trees in the resort there was no other interruption to the views, which was magnificent.

A few hours later the other guests arrived and all the cottages were full. After an excellent simple home cooked meal we sat outside the cottages and introduced ourselves to the various guests. Soon there was fun and frolic, an environment typically seen in an Indian wedding.

Tina's wedding was the following day, 29th December at the Church of India Holy Trinity Cathedral in Kottayam. A fifteen-seater bus had been arranged to ferry the guests to the cathedral. It was a beautiful church by any standard and by the time we arrived for the wedding ceremony, the church was almost full. However, a row of seats had been reserved in the front of the hall for the 'bride's friends from Melbourne'. The wedding ceremony was simple and very nicely performed in the traditional Kerala style. There were in excess of one thousand people for the wedding ceremony and the lunch that followed. A formal reception was held the same evening in a five star hotel in the city for over four hundred people. It was an awesome experience for the Aussies who had never in their life witnessed an Indian wedding and with so many invited guests.

New years eve was also celebrated at the resort. There were over sixty people present. There was lovely music, fireworks and a sumptuous meal that saw us herald the New Year

The stay in the resort was an experience of total relaxation and pleasure. The caretakers of the resort would climb the tall coconut trees and bring us fresh coconut water to drink as well as catch fish in the lake and cooking it for us at dinnertime. We would sit for hours and watch the gorgeous green of the fringed palms ripple in the blue waters of the Vembanad Lake.

(will continue in next issue.....) **Gurdip Aurora**

Dr. Gurdip Aurora is the current president of the AISV who took a recent fascinating trip to India. He has visited both north and south of India. His south Indian experience will be the coming article.



**Australia India Society of Victoria Inc
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL**

(Please PRINT)

Title/s:

Surname:

First Name:

Spouse's Name:

Children:

Address:

.....Postcode:

Tel (BH):

Tel (AH):

Fax:

Mobile:

Other Details:(Hobbies, Interests)

Languages

spoken:

Membership Category:

Life: \$300 Conc.: \$ 20
Family: \$ 30 Single: \$ 20

Do you require a receipt? yes no

I hereby apply/renew membership of Australia India Society of Victoria in the above category. I am aware of the rules and regulation of the society.

Signature: Date:.....

Please note:

- Application for the membership must be accompanied by the appropriate fee
- Annual membership is for one calendar year
- Please make a cheque payable to Australia India Society of Victoria and forward it to -

**The Secretary
Australia India Society of Victoria Inc.
Business Centre, P O Box 1000,
Brunswick 3056**

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please complete the form & return it to the AISV Secretary:

Name

Address

Tel no



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