



SRÍ CHAKRA

Blossom 7, Petal 2

THE SOURCE OF THE COSMOSE
Makha-Phalguna, Bhava March 1995

At The Peetam

17th Dec '94 the Pratishta ceremonies took place for the almost 33" high Panchaloka Vishnudurga at the Sri Vishnudurga Peetham in the presence of over a hundred devotees. Chaithanyananda along with the devotees from Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse, Hamilton, Toronto, St.Catherines and Mississauga consecrated the kalasa with Dik Stapana. Uppachara pujahs were performed and an elaborate Rudrabhishekam was performed. During the abhishekam Srisuktam, Kumbalinga Stotram, Purushasuktham, Narayanasuktham, Panchamruta Abhishekams were chanted while all the devotees participated in the Abhishekam. Sri & Srimathi Sagar had elaborate arrangements in place for the comfort of the devotees and the pujah itself. The Kalavahanam was performed along with the eye opening ceremonies to the exquisite murthy, which is housed in a six foot high mandapam. Pujahs have commenced and the compassionate open eyes of the Devi are so apparent in this Peetham.

On 18th Dec SriSukta Vidhana pujah was performed by Sri Paramananda at the Raja Matangi Peetham in Rochester. This Peetham has now relocated to California with the Peethadhipathis Sri. Ramakrishnan & Srimathi Chitra moving to the west coast. Over the Christmas weekend pujahs were performed at the Sri Swaprakasha Peetham and the Sri Matangi Peetham in Syracuse. Havans were also performed.

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Story Section:

Kathirgamam

(continued from last issue..)

The lady Valliammah was also called saddaiammah. She was quiet and very peaceful to be with. At the time I had no idea that she was in the very advanced stages of her Sadhana and would innocently ask many questions whenever I had the opportunity of seeing her in Kathirgamam. My boyhood friend one Balasingham (who now lives in Surrey, England) and I would make it a point to visit Kathirgamam on Tamil new years day which falls on the day the Sun enters the sign of the Ram in April. We would both go and find any place, sometimes even the riverbank, to stay in Kathirgamam. Many times he and I have slept under the tropical sky ablaze with a million points of light from the stars, sleeping on just a piece of cloth rolled out. In the morning we would both wake up and bathe in the river, and attend pujah. After pujah in the main temple we'd sit in a corner and sing bhajans or Tirupugal, Alankarani, Anubhuthi, Thevaram etc. The only accompaniments we had at that time were a sruti box and two pairs of cymbals (Thala). In fact whenever we were awake while in Kathirgamam we never stopped singing. The highlight of our trips invariably was the climb to the Katiramalai, the hill on which the 'Vel' was embedded. (See Sri Chakra Dec 94').



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During this period six devotees received the Mahavakyas and Poorna Dhiksha, Sriganesh was named Ganananda natha, Srirangaraj as Paraprakashananda natha, Ramakrishnan as Chinmudrananda natha, Chitra as Poornambikamba, Shanker as Vagbhavananda natha and Malathi as Mangalambika.

Over the New Year's weekend Sri Chaithyananda's & Smt. Gnanamba's only daughter Charu's marriage was announced to Jana Balasingham of Sommerville Mass, eldest son of Mrs. Kanthimathi & the late Mr. Balasingham. Jana (Parananda) as readers recall is the Peethadhipathi of the Sri Saraswathi Peetham in Boston. The wedding will take place in Rochester.

Jan 15th Chaithanya performed a puja in the Nayar residence in Buffalo and on the 28th Jan a Havan was performed in the Rastogi Residence in Buffalo. 29th Jan a SriChakra Navavarana puja was performed at the Sri Prahlada Peetham in Syracuse. 4th Feb 95 an elaborate Sathyanarayana Puja was performed with all the devotees chanting the mantras. For the first time an extensive Navagraha puja, Dikpalaka Sthapana were done. The planetary forces established in 9 Kalasa Sthapanas were linked by a Yagnopavitha to form an eight pointed star. It provided a visual as well as Soul satisfying pleasure & happiness to those present at the Ramdass & Lakshmi residence in Rochester. This was to celebrate the 16th birthday of Kartik, their son.

The 5th Feb 95 saw the Seemantham of Smt. Latha, wife of Sri Sivakumar Peethadhipathi of the Kamalambal Peethani, performed by Chaithyananda in Rochester. In the evening a Siva puja and a Bhajan was performed in Buffalo at the home of Smt. Mamtha and Sri. Bharagava. On the 11th puja was performed in Syracuse at the Sri Kamadhenu Peetham and on Sunday 12th at the residence of Sri Mathur in Buffalo. On Monday the 13th Sri Sathyanarayana puja at the Chandar and Shoba's residence and a puja was performed on Wednesday the 15th at the Rakesh residence.

One time we went up the hill and we found that there was a shortage of water in the temple, we both climbed down and carried four gallons of water each, up the hill. Whenever we went up we would carry some rice & condiments and staples to the top where we quickly became known to the Swami at the top of the hill and he dubbed us Hari-Haran brothers. We were also noticed by the sannyasins at the Sri Ramakrishna Mutt where we would sing in the evening after puja. Slowly we came to be recognized and we would sing bhajans behind the festival elephant during the procession.

The procession was something to see. The first time I saw it, it took my breath away. The time was around 8.30 or 9.00 pm and the deafening roar of the drums and the shouts of Hara-Hara mixing with the fragrance of all kinds of flowers and perfume from the incense, hit us as we walked out into the ceremonial path, from the Ramakrishna Matam. The blaze of the hand held coconut shell fired torches was competing with a sea of orange. The ochre robes of sannyasis, hundreds of them, hair matted, foreheads smeared with the holy ash, were everywhere. I stood transfixed, caught up in the immense spectacle in front of me fighting to hold back tears of joy, devotion exhilaration and love. Someone was singing bhajans to the rear of the richly caparisoned elephant. Bala and I gravitated towards the sound, still mesmerized by the great scenes around us. The singing of the bhajan came to an end and someone nudged us and said in Tamil "sing". So we started singing. Behind us in the crowd there were devotees dancing to the beat of the bhajan, clapping their hands or keeping time with wooden clappers. The very name of Shanmuga sent them into a trance like state. We used to be there at the rear of that elephant several years. Once we arrived the day before new year. We found that there was to be an 'akhanda nama sankirtanam' (24 hrs of singing the lord's name) at the Deivanai temple. Both of us, after our ablutions went there to participate. It was our first such experience.

We were both involved in the singing. There were a handful of people there from various places. There were also a couple of ladies, who we were acquainted with from the Sri Ramakrishna mission in Colombo. These ladies kept up a continuous supply of hot coffee and tea throughout the night. It was an eerie feeling as the night flew by in the mystical glow of the oil lamps and "cling, cling" of the two pairs of cymbals and the two young voices blending in song framed by the monotonous yet soothing "sruthi". It was easy to lose one self in the powerfully charged atmosphere. After midnight the crickets were the only ones adding to the singing. It was around 2.00 am I saw from the corner of my eye someone almost imperceptibly entering the temple's circle of dim light from the inky blackness just outside the door. It was a sanyasi with an orange cloth around his waist. Unclothed from waist up, two bright eyes peeked out from matted hair and a surprisingly well groomed bearded face. He was carrying of all things, an old aluminum kettle, which had definitely seen far better days.

Upcoming Events from Sri rajarajeswari pettam
N/A

Regular services:

☞ **Mondayto Friay**

Morning 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM

Evenings 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

☞ **Weekends and Holidays**

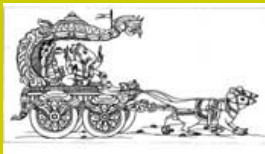
All day [9:30 Am to 9:00 PM]

☞ **Pujas on Weekdays are at 9:30am,
12:30pm & 7:00p**

☞ **Pujas on Weekends are at 10am, 12:00pm
& 6:00pm**

☞ **Abhishekam for the Devi is at 10:00am on
Saturdays**

☞ **Navavarana Pujas are performed every
Poornima**



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Before he sat down he silently walked up to the five foot lamps and poured oil in them from the kettle then sat down with his eyes closed. As our song ended he started singing "Muruga, Muruga, Muruga in a silken velvety voice. One could feel the immense effect of his singing was exerting on those around him. I sat there mesmerized by the Kanada raga which was floating around the temple, tugging at my heart. All my hangups, concerns, worries, my very existence seemed to just evaporate in the sound of his deep soft voice. I had never experienced the power of the name up to that time with that intensity. It was an hour or two later the voice trailed away. Soon, as silently as he had entered the temple, the sanyasi rose, picked up his kettle and melted back into the silence of the night. This sanyasi I later found out was from the neighboring village and had belonged to a family that was related to my brother in-law Mr.Paramsothy. I never encountered him again in my many visits to Katirgamam although I looked for him many times.

-Aiya

Eighty five year old Mrs. Sellammah Ambalavanar, Peethadhipathi of the Sri Sundari Peetham of Rochester, NY entered the state of Mahasamadhi on the 9th of February 1995. The Peetham passes to her two Grand daughters Bhamini & Dharmini Pathmanathan. She was cremated in Rochester. She died in the residence of her Son Dr. Somaskanda . Her cremation & 14th Day ceremonies were performed by Chaithanyananda. The Peetham was in her residence from 1987. She was a disciple of Sri Amritananda.

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