

Australian Residents Anglo-Indian Association Inc.



News Letter January 2024

ARAIA

ABN 39 071 862 336

PATRONS: *Hector Soans OAM*
Noel French

Honorary Life Member:
Marina Soans

Dear Members,

As we usher in 2024, we eagerly anticipate the arrival of autumn and the exciting months that follow. The upcoming four months promise a host of events as part of our annual programme, details of which have already been shared with you. We invite you to participate, enjoy, and mark those dates on your calendar.

While we have more activities planned, we want to emphasize a significant historical point. Many historians attribute the establishment of the British Empire to Robert Clive, but it's crucial to remember that his achievements were largely due to the support of the Anglo-Indians. They were the roots of the Empire, the origin of the most extensive empire the world has ever known. Without the Anglo-Indians, Clive's success would not have been possible. We encourage you to help in the development of ARAIA resources.

Despite our appeal for contributions for the NYE Dance, only three members have responded. It's disheartening that our communications appear to be ignored. Nonetheless, we will persist in reminding you and urging you to maintain your cultural identity. We request you to distribute this newsletter among all the Anglo-Indians in your circle.

Talent Contest: Reminder that the last date for submissions is this month's end, Refer Flyer attached. Check the performance of this 5-year-old Sienna Jacobs at ARAIA's New Year's Eve function.

<https://www.facebook.com/100004693620325/videos/1510490959801539/>

The 12th World Reunion special rates end this month refer updated flyer attached. ARAIA is eager to include young members who are either in their final years of school or attending university and have an interest in "The Symposium" focusing on the global future of the community. If you're interested in being part of this group, please get in touch with the membership secretary.

The "GRAND BALL" is an event where our community will be highlighted in the presence of political figures, and even the Prime Minister.

Every Anlo-Indian who values their community should be there, regardless of the expense. We also urge you to bring your friends along.

The newsletter includes information about the boarding schools we own and operate in India. We encourage you to reflect on the quote from the records of HMSI and MHS school during the EDWARD BOWER ERA.

We look forward to seeing many ARAIA members and friends at the World Reunion in Canberra in March 2024.

Max French
Chairman ARAIA

Newsletter - January 2024 Volume 54

SCHOOL BOARDING HOMES
CONTROLLED and owned by the
COMMUNITY—YEAR 2024, South India.

Laidlaw
Memorial School
of St. Georges
Home. Ketti.
Nilgiris.

There are only three schools controlled by the community in South India. Leading among them is "St. Georges Homes" nestled in Ketti Valley on the Nilgiris mountains, with its boundaries of over 250 acres marked by a stream, established in 1914, initially served as a sanctuary for orphans, particularly those affected by the First World War. It later expanded its services to cater to children from Railway colonies who needed boarding schools to pursue their education. The institution continued its noble work by assisting families impacted by the Second World War. In the latter half of the 20th century, **the Old St. Georgians Association (OGA) significantly contributed to the school's development.** Under the leadership of its present Chairman, Norman Woods, the school has achieved remarkable recognition. Below Painting from Valley View of School —Courtesy Bill Fowler – Class of 1956



The Principal Edward Hammick's tenure is fondly remembered by students as the Schools golden years. Edward, one of the first students of the institution, served as a major in the Indian army, active during the Burmese campaign in the Second World War.

In a bid to enhance its reputation, the institution was rechristened as the "Laidlaw Memorial School and Junior College", paying tribute to "Sir Robert Laidlaw" the initial significant benefactor. Presently, it stands as **one of India's premier boarding schools**, having made remarkable progress over the years.

Quote from Principal Gary Everett.

"Congratulations! to the LMS Family. I am thrilled to announce that the School has received not one, but two prestigious Education Awards for the year 2023.

1. In the 'Vintage Legacy Co-ed Boarding School' category, we have achieved **7th** place in India and **3rd** place in Tamil Nadu.



2. Our school has excelled in the 'Career Counseling Leaders' category, securing the **4th** position in India and **1st** in the state.

International School competition, conducted by the British Council



ISA AWARD – 2022

We owe this success to the entire school community for making this journey of excellence possible. Together we can take our school to greater heights. unquote. In the photo above, Chairman of the Board, Mr. Norman Wood, Principal, Mr. Gary Dominic Everett receiving the Prestigious Award from Janaka Pushpanathan, Director of British Council, South India.

OGA's Australia convene annually. and Genevieve Hughes, a leader in these assemblies, has advanced the yearly Palm Sunday gathering to the Global Reunion.

This gathering maybe the last of any large numbers.

Do not Miss this opportunity.



Reunion of Old Georgians
at the World Anglo-Indian Reunion

This is a great opportunity for a large gathering of Old Georgians. The World Anglo-Indian Reunion Organisers are holding a School Reunion/Jam Session on Thursday, 14th March 2024 between 6.30 pm and 11.30 pm, with a band and 3-course dinner at the Hellenic Club, Canberra. Cost: \$77 per person.

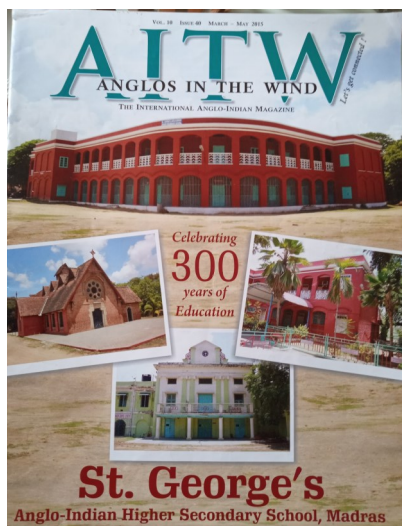
14 March 2024

**St. George's
MADRAS
Over 300 years
old.**

The Tercentenary Celebrations were held in APRIL 2015. The Event was covered by ANGLOS IN THE WIND (AITW) May 2015 magazine and have covered the history of the first school in our care.

We comprehend that the Bishop of the Church of South India presides over the Board, with the remaining 12 members being Anglo-Indians.

Dr. Geoffrey Francis, the Board and School's Secretary and Correspondent, regularly seeks out deserving Anglo-Indians, aiding them in their settlement by providing free education and accommodation.



**Mountain Home School,
Coonor**

Mountain Home School, nestled in the Nilgiris mountains at Coonor, is an institution dedicated to the education of Anglo-Indian girls.

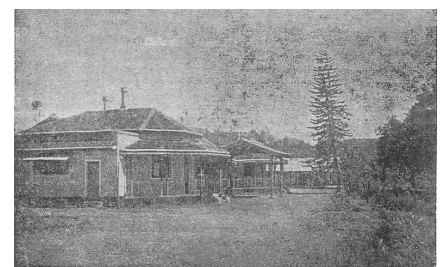
Until 1953, it was acknowledged as a sibling institution to St. Georges Homes, Ketti, as students would typically spend their last two years of study at Ketti.

The school was established by the "Women's Home Missionary Society of India" (WHMSI), which had 35 branches spread across India, Burma, & Ceylon.



Photo; 2012 Conference Delegates

Eventually, the admission of male members into the society it was renamed the "Home Missionary of India" (HMSI). They acquired the Maharaja of Travancore's Holiday Palace, about seven acres, thanks to a generous donation from Calcutta. In recognition of his contribution, the main assembly hall was named after the donor Allan Houghton.



Mountain Home Purchased—Jan. 1920



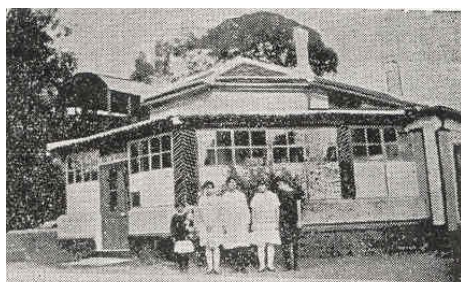
Lady Goschen in the Opening of the Houghton Memorial Hall.

Every structure within the school premises carries a name that Honors either a benefactor or an active member of HMSI. This includes the Allan Jones playing field (Below) and the Kathleen MacDermott block, among others.



When a landslide caused significant damage to many buildings, the trust funds from a number of legacies were utilized to reconstruct, modernize, classrooms and dormitories.

The school takes immense pride in its students, the first five girls admitted to MHS, (Photo below) their accomplishments serve as a testament to the institution's success.



Forest View
(Purchased — 1912)

Two Austin sisters, one became the wife of a ship captain, while Alda tied the knot with Reverend Fowler of Stanes School, Coimbatore. Alda Fowler, nee Austin, a prominent industrial figure in the Coimbatore region and eventually ascended to the position of a Member of the Legislative Assembly. She also served as the Principal of MHS, where she dedicated a year of unpaid service to revive the school following attempts to sell it in 1953.

The Stocking Sisters made significant strides in their respective careers. One sister took on the role of matron at the General Hospital in Madras. Maud Stocking, on the other hand, married the station master of Coonoor. During that time, the town didn't have a police station, making the station master the town's authority. Sadly, Maud's husband passed away, leading her to

seek employment at St. Georges Homes in Ketti. She served as a matron in the junior dormitory of Oldham House for many, many years, shaping the boys with the high standards she was accustomed to.

The youngest of the five students, Grace Marsh's accomplishments were noteworthy, culminating in her appointment as the Inspector of Anglo-Indian Schools in the Madras state.

HMSI Sydney Auxiliary maintained 20 children and understands that they are the only Anglo-Indians in the boarding home. Contact the Secretary Rebecca Wright email:beckywoo7@hotmail.com for further information to donate to the fund so that the numbers of Anglo-Indian girls could be increased.

**Quote: from records of HMSI and school
EDWARD BOWER ERA**

He was awarded the Order of the British Empire. He judged the temper of the times. Without the schools pull on sympathies of the community, HMSI would soon cease to exist as a living association. He rejected any form of amalgamation and repeatedly preached self-sufficiency. When the Society was moving on the crest of a financial wave in the early forties, he issued a note of warning on the "Seven lean years" to follow.

He sensed the downward trend, and quietly began providing for the difficult years. His first task was to raise the amount into a "Trust Fund" so that future generations will be blessed with a permanent Endowment Fund that could not be touched.

"We can succeed only if we learn the values of Unity, and of confidence in ourselves as a community. We may not have the money, but we have the drive and talent to organise concerts, sales and such likes. To the government officials who ask us to amalgamate our children's home with other kindred institutions, I can only reply that we seek our own salvation in our own way. It is something deeper, far deeper than a school, it is to the Anglo-Indian community part of the burden it ought to bear. This is our little "ewe

lamb" and it is up to every respecting Anglo-Indian to do what he can. Practically all the money subscribed is from Anglo-Indians, the children are Anglo-Indians, and the staff are Anglo-Indians. It is more than a school – it is an object lesson."

His unworthy detractors insisted on selling the school and suggested various easily managed uses for the funds from the sale. Mr. Bower's last act was tact and patience when speakers openly announced the destruction of the institution. He knew it would have been fatal and held on to see it flourish.

A dejected committee, unable to evoke public response nor attract workers from an emigrating community, shed their responsibilities by placing the problem before the 43rd Annual General Meeting of 1953 for a firm decision to close the school and sell the property. Unquote.

The Savior'

Quote from HMSI records

Kathleen MacDermott - Her genius manifested itself in a gesture which convinced a community "what is important in life is what remains." Her plans were conceived on studiously familiarizing herself with the records of HMSI to prepare her for the task which was considered "Herculean".

Maybe someone who wishes to memorialise a loved one who has died. Here is a fitting opportunity and object. Build a Memorial cottage or you might pay for the support of workers or children. Try to be the privileged one to work or share in this scheme." Unquote.



Mr. E. M. Bower, G.B.E., I.S.O.
Chairman, 1941-1948.
President and Patron.

She offered a permanent memory to workers and philanthropists. This was the original fund raising ideas of the founders. The beauty of the plan was that it was totally practical but never seriously perused. Every large donor or dedicated worker was diligently honored. Affluent members of the community were convinced. Bequests and large donations began flowing in to swell the funds. Legacies flowed and MHS was secured and has had astonishing results under the present Principle George John.

More in the next chapter on Day Schools that are owned by A.I's.
