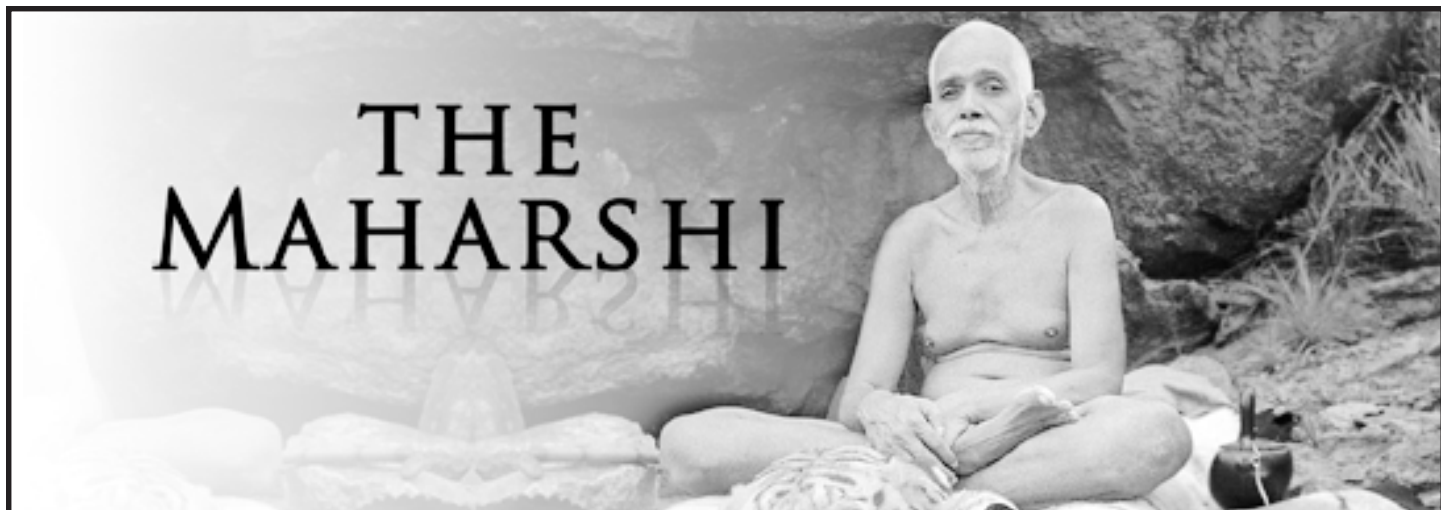


THE MAHARSHI



JAN/FEB 2012

VOL. 22, NO. 1

If Only It Were Chadwick *By Louis Buss*

The scrutiny of the hand-written inscriptions found in a 1935 edition of the book Self-Realisation bought on Ebay takes the author on a journey of inspiration and expectation.

Part IV One of Us

FOR who could fail to love old Chadwick? It's the sheer size of the man, the mixture of gentleness, strength and that certain endearing shyness. It's his luminous kindness, and that boyish enthusiasm which so often seems to have led him into a sort of clumsiness. But above all, we love him because of his own absolute and unswerving love for Bhagavan. He may not have been a great scholar or poet, and he may have put his size thirteen foot in it from time to time, but he had that unthinking adoration and trust which are all a devotee really needs. The moment he first arrived in the Ashram, all his best and worst qualities were on display, as he hastened to prostrate before Annamalai Swami, apparently on the assumption that the first Indian he set eyes on would have to be Bhagavan. When he was taken to the Hall and introduced to the real Bhagavan, that same boyish eagerness asserted itself again, as he launched in with his first question about why Christ had cried out on the cross, then kept Bhagavan talking for hours – blissfully unaware that he was offending all the other devotees by remaining seated on a chair. Bhagavan Himself, of course, was not offended, any more than He had been on the occasions when He visited Chadwick's room and, far from getting up to welcome Him,

Chadwick remained seated and carried on with what he was doing.

In some superficial ways, Chadwick seems to have been ill-suited to ashram life, and perhaps it is this that most endears him to me. He couldn't sit cross-legged, but was so determined to meditate in Bhagavan's presence that he was prepared to strap himself up in that ridiculous cotton belt. From what one can gather, he didn't sink then into deep *samadhi* for hours on end. Despite the fact that he had devoted his life so wholeheartedly to Bhagavan, he found it very awkward to prostrate before Him in public, and resisted doing so for as long as he could. It must be difficult for any Indian to understand just how reassuring a rather conventional Englishman like me finds it to know that such a figure was there, so close to Bhagavan and at the centre of the Ashram in so many ways. Not only had Chadwick trodden this foreign road before me, but he had remained perfectly sane, eminently practical and, in a strange way, reassuringly English.



If I find it hard to express my gratitude to Chadwick, I find it even more difficult to express my gratitude to Bhagavan for loving him as He did, for accepting him just as he was, and for doing so in such a very public way. For in accepting Chadwick, Bhagavan was somehow accepting and welcoming all we clumsy great Westerners. His open declaration that Chadwick had been an Indian who had had some desire to be reborn in the West, but that they had been together before, was really quite remarkable – especially as Bhagavan almost never revealed anything about people's previous incarnations. I do not for a moment flatter myself that He might have said anything similar about me. All the same, whenever I think of Him declaring that Chadwick was 'one of us,' I can't help feeling that, in some way, He meant the reassurance to apply to other Westerners as well.

The fact is – and I know I am about to reveal my own abysmal lack of spiritual development – that I am just ever so slightly *proud* of Chadwick. When I read about him defending Bhagavan against that visiting missionary, intervening in 'his stentorian voice' to correct his reading of the Bible, I can't help feeling he was somehow thundering on my behalf, as well. I take a particular boyish delight in that silly game he played of using the fan then pretending he hadn't been doing so the moment Bhagavan turned round – and, because Chadwick is part of me, I am somehow personally flattered that Bhagavan took it all in such good part. Similarly, I take ridiculous pride in the fact that 'my' Chadwick was one of the few people I can think of whom Bhagavan specifically named as having appeared in one of His dreams. Whenever I read of some little triumph like that, an unenlightened part of me wants to punch the air, as if my team had just scored a goal, and cry: 'Good old Chadwick!'

None of this, I hope, gives the impression that I think Chadwick was at my own humble level of development. This was a man, let us remember, who had worked out for himself the basic principles of *advaita* and the technique of self-enquiry before he'd ever heard of Bhagavan – an extraordinary achievement by anyone's standards. He was the first devotee of any nationality who was allowed to build

himself a home inside the Ashram and settle there permanently. This clumsy great Englishman who couldn't even cross his legs was also the one who eventually assumed responsibility for reinstating the Sri Chakra Puja at the Mother's Shrine and reviving the Veda Patasala



after Bhagavan's death. These are sacred trusts, and if Chadwick was the one who ended up bearing them, it can only be because Bhagavan knew he was the best person for the job. The fact that I can so easily imagine myself pumping Chadwick's hand and slapping him on the back is perhaps less an indication that he was down on my level than a testimony to the simplicity and humility of a man in a high spiritual state.

Perhaps that was why he recognised Bhagavan so quickly, went to Him without the least hesitation, and never seems to have felt the slightest desire to see anybody else. It's hard to imagine good old Chadwick indulging in a dalliance with Aurobindo, Papa Ramdas or Krishnamurti, or even feeling a compelling need to set eyes on Gandhi. In this, he almost bears comparison with the adoring Muruganar himself, although I do seem to remember that Chadwick once left Bhagavan's presence to go on a trip somewhere, and Muruganar always refused to do even that. Chadwick also shares with Muruganar, and indeed with all Bhagavan's foremost devotees, the distinction of never having been tricked into believing he might be some sort of guru himself, for those who have recognised Ramana Maharshi understand that there is only one Guru they or anyone else will ever need.

Yes, I wanted it to be Chadwick. A book that had been sent from the Ashram to England in 1936 was clearly a treasure, but knowing it had been sent by Chadwick would make it priceless in my eyes. At first glance, it seemed the odds were in my favour. *A Search in Secret India*, the Paul Brunton book which first spread Bhagavan's fame in the West, had only come

out in 1934. Before that, as far as I knew, there had been no English visitors since Humphreys, in the early part of the century. Our Mystery Devotee must have been one of the very first to pack his bags and set off in search of this intriguing ‘Maharishree’. The fact that he could describe Tiruvannamalai as ‘the place in which I am living’ must have made him one of a very small group indeed.

The dates fitted well. Chadwick arrived at the Ashram in November, 1935. By the time the book was sent, in August of the following year, he would have been living there for nine or ten months – long enough to get into that pleasant routine of visiting the temple for meditation at the shrine of Krishna, then walking back through the forest archway for an evening in the Old Hall. Perhaps it had also been long enough for him to start looking on the place as home and to realise that he might never return to England. Could it have been this great realisation that prompted him to send the book back to his parents? If it now seemed that he might never see them again, he would have wanted to do everything in his power to make them understand the reason for his decision, which might have seemed to them at best foolish, and at worse traitorous. There might already have been an exchange of letters between India and England, in which he had explained his decision and they remonstrated with him, and that would certainly fit with the tone of the dedication on the opening page. Sending the book might have been his last-ditch attempt to make them understand. Surely once they had actually seen Bhagavan’s picture and read some of His teachings, Chadwick’s parents would appreciate why their son could never now leave His side

But if the dates fitted perfectly, and though Chadwick had been one of a very few Westerners in the Ashram at the time, there were other incongruities that made me uneasy. The first and most obvious was the idea of Chadwick having parents alive at all. There is no mention of them in *A Sadhu’s Reminiscences*. As far as I could remember, Chadwick there describes having a farewell stay with his sisters before he set off for India, not his parents. A quick look back at the opening of the book confirmed that this was right. Then, thanks to the wonders of modern technology, I was able to search the entire text at the press of a button

and discover that there was not one mention of anybody called Russell.

The Mystery Devotee had a mother, a father and what looked very much like a brother. These people were still alive, and still loomed so large in his life that he had taken the trouble to send them a book from India in an attempt to make them understand why he had moved there. But the Chadwick of *A Sadhu’s Reminiscences*, if his parents are still alive, doesn’t even deem them worth a mention. He doesn’t tell us how they reacted to his decision to leave, or describe any scene of farewell. The fact that he does specifically mention saying goodbye to his sisters had naturally led me to assume, on previous readings of the book, that his parents were dead and that those sisters were the only family he had left to see him off.

Sadly, there was nothing now to make me change my mind about this. Much as I wanted it to be Chadwick, there was no denying that one of the few bits of hard evidence we had about the Mystery Devotee – ‘Mother, Dada and Russell’ – stood in flat contradiction to the Chadwick of *A Sadhu’s Reminiscences*. All the same, I was still unwilling to give up all hope. Perhaps Chadwick had had reasons of his own for keeping his parents and brother out of his published reminiscences. Perhaps the rift caused by his move to India had been more traumatic than I realised, with his sisters taking his side against the rest of the family. Perhaps he had felt that by dredging all this up years later he would only upset himself and the others involved, or show them in a bad light. If his parents had had a violently negative reaction to India and Bhagavan, he might have thought it best passed over in silence. *(To be continued)*

Will You Not Let Me Go?

Will you not let me go?

Like some insidious druggist you would make
 Me come with craven pleading to your door,
 And beg you of your mercy let me take
 From out your potent wares a little more.
 And so,
 You will not let me go.

Will you not let me go?

Here, in an alien land I pass my hours,
Far from my country and all former ties.
A restless longing slowly me devours
That me all wordly happiness denies.
And so,
Will you not let me go?

Will you not let me go?

You tell me, "Yes, I do not keep you here."
That's but your fun. Why else should I stay?
While months pass by and mount up year by year
So that it seems I'll never go away.
And so,
You do not let me go.

Will you not let me go?

Nay, I'm a fool, I cannot if I would.
I am your slave, do with me what you will.
That you should all deny, well, that is good.
If it so pleases you. I'll speak no ill.
And so,
Refuse to let me go!

Will you not let me go?

I'm only sorry wax beneath your hands.
You've striven long to mould me into shape.
Your endless patience no one understands;
Your boundless love there's no escape.
And so,
You'll never let me go.

Will you not let me go?

I'm a fool that I should try to flee,
For here, there is a peace I'll never find
When I the least am separate from Thee;
Then I'll be but a slave to caitiff mind.
And so,
I do not wish to go.

—By Sadhu Arunachala (Major A.W. Chadwick,
O.B.E.) from *The Golden Jubilee Souvenir*, 1946

On the Glory of the Sidhhas

Chapter 18 of Sri Ramana Gita

(Continued from our last issues)

The verses composed for the 18th Chapter of Sri Ramana Gita are infused with inspiration and insight. A sample of this chapter chanted can be heard on Arunachala Ashrama's web site at: "<http://www.arunachala.org/bookstall/audio>". In this issue we have provided verses twelve to nineteen.

धीरत्व सम्पदि सुवर्ण-गिरेरनूनं
वारां-निधेर्-अधिकमेव गभीर-तायाम् ।
क्षान्तौ जयन्तम्-अचलाम्-अखिलस्य धात्रीं
दान्तौ निदर्शनम्-अशान्ति-कथा-दविष्ठम् ।१२ ।

dhīratva sampadi suvarṇa-gireranūnaṁ
vārām-nidher-adhikameva gabhīra-tāyām |
kṣāntau jayantam-acalām-akhilasya dhātrīm
dāntau nidarśanam-aśānti-kathā-daviṣṭham | 12 |

12. More imperturbable than the Hill of Gold (Meru); more unfathomable than the ocean; more patient than the immovable Earth, the Mother of all, he is a paragon of self-control, far removed from even the whisper of excitement.

नीलारविन्द सुहृदा सदृशं प्रसादे
तुल्यं तथा महसि तोयज-बान्धवेन ।
ब्राह्म्यां स्थितौ तु पितरं वट-मूल-वासं
संस्मारयन्तम्-अचलम् तम्-अनूदितं मे ।१३ ।

nīlāravinda suhrdā sadṛśaṁ prasāde
tulyaṁ tathā mahasi toyaja-bāndhavena |
brāhmyām sthitau tu pitaraṁ vaṭa-mūla-vāsaṁ
saṁsmārayantam-acalam tam-anūditaṁ me | 13 |

13. Spreading grace like the friend of the blue lily the moon; bright like the lord of the lotus, the sun; by his abidance in Brahman (the state of pure Being) he reminds one of his Father¹ under the banyan tree; firm like a rock is this my younger brother².

1. Siva as Dakshinamurty who through silence dispelled all the doubts of his four venerable older seekers.

2. Ganapati: the poet thinks of himself as the elder son and of Sri Ramana the younger son of Siva.

यस्या-धुनाऽपि रमणी रमणीय-भावा
गिर्वाण-लोक-पृतना शुभ-वृत्ति-रूपा ।
संशोभते शिरसि नापि मनोजगन्ध
स्तत्ता-दृशं गृहणम्-अप्य-धिपं यतीनाम् ।१४ ।

yasyā-dhunā'pi ramaṇī ramaṇīya-bhāvā
girvāṇa-loka-pṛtanā śubha-vṛtti-rūpā
saṁśobhate śirasi nāpi manojagandha
stattā-dṛśaṁ grhaṇam-apyā-dhipaṁ yatīnām ।14।

14. Even now in the thousand-petalled lotus of the head there shines Devasena (the senior consort of Kumara), lovely in looks and in mind, in the form of auspicious thoughts; yet he is free from the faintest scent of desire. Though thus he is a householder, he is the King of ascetics.

वन्दारु-लोक-वरदं नर-दन्तिनोऽपि
मन्त्रेश्वरस्य महतो गुरुतां वहन्तम् ।
मन्दार-वृक्षम्-इव सर्व-जनस्य पाद
च्छायां श्रितस्य परितापम्-अपाहरन्तम् ।१५ ।

vandāru-loka-varadaṁ nara-dantīno'pi
mantreśvarasya mahato gurutāṁ vahantam ।
mandāra-vṛkṣam-iva sarva-janasya pāda
cchāyāṁ śritasya paritāpam-apāharantam ।15।

15. A giver of boons to the devotees; the guru even of the great Ganapati, the master of mantras; like the celestial tree, he assuages the anguish of those who seek the shadow of his feet.

यस्-तन्त्र-वार्तिकम् अनेक-विचित्र युक्ति
संशोभितं निगम-जीवन-माततान ।
भट्टस्य तस्य बुध-संहति-संस्तुतस्य
वेषान्तरं तु निगमान्त-वचो विचारि ।१६ ।

yas-tantra-vārtikam aneka-vicitra yukti
saṁśobhitaṁ nigama-jīvana-mātātāna
bhaṭṭasya tasya budha-saṁhati-saṁstutasya
veṣāntaraṁ tu nigamānta-vaco vicāri ।16।

16. He is a re-incarnation of (Kumarila) Bhatta, praised by assemblies of scholars, the author of "Tantra Vartika", elixer of the Vedas, brilliant with various ingenious ideas; in this birth, however, he elucidates the teachings of the Vedas alone.

वेद शीर्ष-चय-सार-सङ्ग्रहं
पञ्च-रत्नम्-अरुणाचलस्य यः ।
गुप्तम्-अल्पम्-अपि सर्वतो-मुखं
सूत्र-भूतम्-अतनोदिमं गुरुम् ।१७ ।

veda śīrṣa-caya-sāra-saṅgrahaṁ
pañca-ratnam-arunācalasya yaḥ
guptam-alpam-api sarvato-mukhaṁ
sūtra-bhūtam-atanodimaṁ gurum ।17।

17. He is the Master who composed "Arunachala Pancha Ratna" (Five Gems on Arunachala), the quintessence of Vedantic utterances, brief like the sutras, but all-comprehensive and filled with hidden meaning.

देव-वाचि सुतराम-शिक्षितं
काव्य-गन्ध-रहितं च यद्यपि ।
ग्रन्थ-कर्मणि तथाऽपि संस्फुरद्
भाषिता-नुचर-भाव-सञ्चयम् ।१८ ।

deva-vāci sutarāma-śikṣitaṁ
kāvyā-gandha-rahitaṁ ca yadyapi
grantha-karmaṇi tathā'pi saṁsphurad
bhāṣitā-nucara-bhāva-sañcayam ।18।

18. Though not at all trained in the language of the gods (Sanskrit), and unaquainted with poetry, he is yet the author of works wherein crowds of brilliant ideas trail behind the inspired expression.

लोक-मातृ-कुच दुग्धपायिनश्
शङ्कर-स्तव-कृतो महाकवेः ।
द्राविड द्विज-शिशोर्नटद्विरो
भूमि-कान्तरम्-अपार-मेधसम् ।१९ ।

loka-mātr-kuca dugdhapāyinaś
śaṅkara-stava-kṛto mahākaveḥ
drāviḍa dvija-śiśornaṭadgiro
bhūmi-kāntaram-apāra-medhasam ।19।

19. Again, this boundless genius is another advent of the Master-poet (Jnana Sambandha), the twice-born Tamil child who, drinking the breast-milk of the Mother of the Universe, sang in dancing tunes the praises of Siva.

132nd Jayanti of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

You, your family and friends are invited to join us in celebrating the 132nd anniversary of the birth of Sri Ramana Maharshi.

11 A. M. Saturday 14 January 2012

Arunachala Ashrama

8606 Edgerton Blvd., Jamaica Estates, NY 11432

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V. Ganapati Sthapati (1927–2011)

Part II

Born in 1927, V. Ganapati was the son of Sri Vaidyanatha Sthapati and Smt. Velammal. His father was the builder of the Mathrubhuteswar Temple at Sri Ramanasramam. In this concluding article, the late, internationally renowned V. Ganapati Sthapati tells of his father's intimate association with Chandrashekarendra Saraswati Swamigal, the Paramacharyal of Kanchi, and the blessings he bestowed on both of them.

THE interaction [with the Paramacharyal of Kanchi] was so intense and frequent that my father was able to present an effective and comprehensive picture of the divine tradition of Vastu and Shilpa and he requested the Paramacharyal to move the society to realize the values of the tradition and also for its revival and development. The Government of Tamil Nadu had already started a school for the revival and promotion of art and architecture. My father was appointed its first Principal. This was enough for the revival of skill and expertise. But what my father wanted Paramacharyal to do was to create the social awareness of the spirituality of the tradition and to take this up as a mission. Every Friday he used to visit Kanchipuram on work inspection and had a series of serious discussions with Paramacharyal on Vastu and Agama traditions. My father was not merely a Sthapati, knowledgeable in Vastu and the Agamas. He was an expert in Tamil and Sanskrit languages, sculpture, architecture, astronomy, astrology, Vedas, Upanishads, mantra Sastras, tantra sastras, and a musicologist proficient upon Gotuvadyam (chitra veena). So he found it easy to impress upon His Holiness how the various Indian traditional disciplines of art were all meant to serve the spiritual welfare of the human race.

Paramacharyal was very much impressed and touched by my father's sincerity and knowledge. He was sad to find that these divine traditions of such potential remained unrealized in the Indian social hierarchy. This was the seed that my father sowed in the fertile heart of Paramacharyal which later sprouted into a movement at Ilayattankudi where he ushered in Sadas called "VEDA AGAMA SHILPA VIDVAT SADAS". This movement later worked wonders. It helped to restore the spiritual message of the Vastu Vedic Culture in the soil of its birth.

Let me now turn to my father and his illness. Having lost all hopes of reviving my father from a

dreadful disease, I ran to Ilayattankudi and told the Paramacharyal of my father's plight. The Paramacharyal was then in the midst of a large gathering of devotees and philanthropists in Chettinadu. On hearing that the Sthapati was dangerously ill, he emerged out of the gathering and took me away from the place and asked me to walk with him. The crowd followed at a distance. The Acharyal did not inquire about my father and talked only about my education, employment, my ambition in life. I did not like this as I was worried and wanted him to offer remedial advice for my father's health. Furthermore, I had not come to him for anything personal. I was in Government service at the time, with a well-defined future.

Finally, far from the crowd, we reached a lonely temple built over a samadhi into which he entered, leaving me behind at the threshold. He did not ask me to come inside, nor did he ask me to stay outside. It was 10 o'clock in the night. The crowd waited with me till midnight and then quietly melted away. I stood there all alone in the precincts of the samadhi.

I thought I should wait patiently for his return and receive his blessings and advice before taking leave of him. I felt as if this waiting were a test. I was feeling very uneasy there alone at 12.30, the dead of night. This was a samadhi temple, an adhithana of another Acharyal. A kind of fear gripped me as the clock struck 1:00 A.M. I was hungry too. At that moment the Paramacharyal emerged from inside the temple and called: "Where is that boy?"

"Here I am," I said. He beckoned me to His side and took me to the corner of the temple prakara and then started his enquiry about my father. After listening to me for fifteen minutes, he put into my hands a couple of broken coconuts. He walked with me empty-handed into the temple, and it still remains a mystery to me where he got the broken coconuts. Then he blessed me saying, "You will prosper and be happy." But not

a word about my father. He repeatedly said that I would be happy. I interpreted these words of Paramacharyal as bad for my father and something good for my future. My father passed away after a few months.

It was only after this, in 1965, that the Paramacharyal conducted the Veda Agama Shilpa Vidvat Sadas (gathering of Sthapatis, pandits and scholars). I was asked to take a leading role in the Shilpa Sadas, though there were a number of senior and experienced Sthapatis assembled for the Sadas. I was asked to speak on “Sthapati and his Contribution to Indian Culture and Civilization” by Paramacharyal. His idea in asking a youngster to speak about the tradition while more experienced Sthapatis were then available, was not only to encourage the younger

generation, but he believed that the younger generation of shilpis was the future hope for the spiritual culture of the Vastu tradition to flower again. I took inspiration from this and endeavored to live up to his expectations. Whenever there was a difficult problem, he advised the clients only to approach me, thereby influencing me to keep myself knowledgeable about all the details of Shilpa Shastras. This encouragement qualified me to become a more useful member of society. And if at all I have some insights into the hoary tradition of Vastu Veda, it is only because of this indirect direction he gave me during the formative period of my Sthapati profession. I owe much to Paramacharyal and I bow to Him, with folded hands.

(Conclusion)

Ramana Satsangs

Regular satsangs with recitations, songs, readings and meditation are conducted in or near large cities. Some of them are weekly. If you would like to attend any of these, please contact the individuals below for more information.

Atlanta Area — Mangalam Kalyanam (678-546-0378 / smoothcutter@hotmail.com)

Ann Arbor, MI — Nirupama & Ramesh (574-514-4766 / <neeru_2@hotmail.com)

Boston, MA — David & Anna (617-928-1487 / dklegon@comcast.net)

Connecticut Area — Prashanth & Shobana (860-691-1862 / vprashanth@msn.com)

Dublin, Ohio — Abilash & Madhavi (614-789-9058 / mungamuru@hotmail.com)

Ft. Lauderdale Area — David & Janet Robinson (954-755-4758 / arunahill@gmail.com)

Houston, TX — Kumar Saran (832-435-3761 / saran01@earthlink.net)

Los Angeles, CA — Natarajan and Indira Venkatesan (310-473-9441 / nvenky30@yahoo.com)

Miami, Florida — Marcelo (786-277-2982 / Marcelo_Addario@hotmail.com)

New Jersey, Pennington — Nandini (609-730-8447 / nandinikapadia@yahoo.com)

Ottawa, Canada — Anantha Padmanabhan (613-733-8250 / padmanabhan_ananth@hotmail.com)

San Francisco Area — Karthik & Sunita (510-656-2752 / sunita_parasuraman@yahoo.com)

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