

*In June Nancy Secrest, International Secretary of the Theosophical Order of service, moved to Adyar to take up an additional role as International Treasurer of the Theosophical Society. (Nancy's professional background as a Certified Public Accountant in the United States qualifies her for that position). During this time she also travelled to various countries within the theosophical world spreading the news of TOS activities, and connecting with TOS workers and friends. Nancy shares her report of that period:*



*Nancy after her bon voyage party in Portland, Oregon, USA*

This spring and summer have probably been the busiest of my life. You may know that in June I moved to the International HQ of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, Chennai, India. The months before were full of activity. I had to pack up and move all of my belongings out of my home in Vancouver, Washington, USA, deal with innumerable tasks and much paperwork relating to an international move and, of course, take time to say goodbye to friends and family. At the same time I was fulfilling lecture and workshop commitments to TS and TOS groups in California, Washington State and New York.

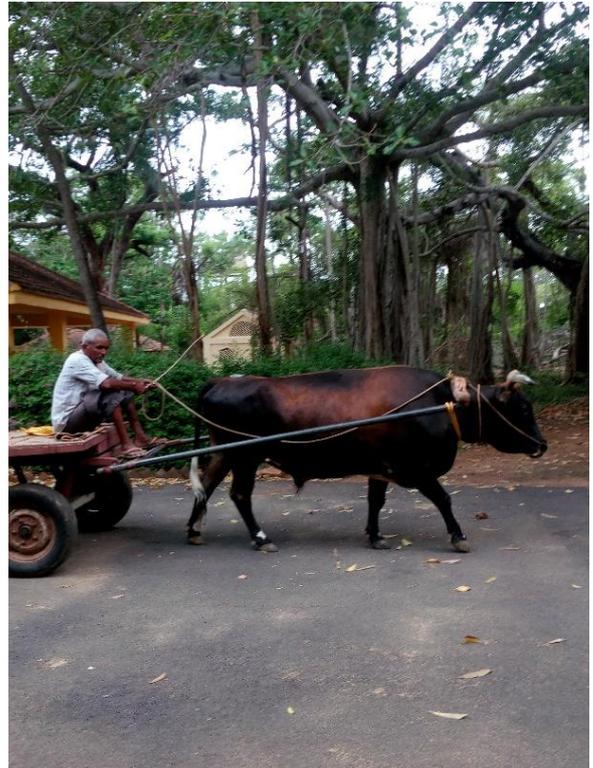


*In New York City I saw the Lamasery where HPB and Olcott lived.*

As heart-warming as it always is to meet fellow workers and friends, by the time I sat down on my seat on the plane to Chennai, I was tired and relieved to be finally on my way. At the same time, I felt anticipation, curiosity and exhilaration about what lay ahead. What an adventure! I found myself reflecting on how I could best serve the Masters and our beloved Society at this turning point in my life. It really does feel like a major step when one moves to our international HQ which is such a source of inspiration and theosophical history. I was going to Adyar to work in the Treasury Department, in addition to continuing my TOS work. Because of my professional background in accounting, President Tim Boyd had asked me to volunteer in Treasury.



*Mangala Vilas - Nancy's new home, and our new TOS office, at Adyar*



*A bit of old world flavour, bullock carts are a common sight at Adyar.*

I spent my first month acclimatizing to life at Adyar - a new role, new friends, new customs, new language, new flora and fauna – and the h-e-a-t! And, oh yes, one can forget wearing makeup in India. It slides off your face in two seconds.

By the second month, I was on the road again with a trip to a regional conference of the Indian TOS held in the city of Kakinada, an overnight train trip to the north of Chennai. I was accompanied by Dr Revathy, who also spoke at the conference. Dr Revathy is a paediatrician who works with the poor children of Chennai and is the leader of the TOS there. It was a joy to meet so many of our Indian members and to hear about the service projects in which their groups are engaged. A wheelchair was presented to a local hospital to mark the occasion of our conference. I was honoured to launch the website of the TOS India. The conference ended with an enlivening concert of Indian classical music. This was my first Indian experience outside of Chennai and it was wonderful, but oh the traffic and...the h-e-a-t!



*TOS India South Zonal Conference, July 2017*

At the end of July, I gave a presentation at the Adyar Lodge on the work of the TOS around the world. As usual, participants said they had no idea that we were doing so much!



Early August brought a flight to Europe for the Summer School of the TS in England and for the European Congress held in Barcelona, Spain. Here are some photos of the splendid Summer School held in the city of Birmingham, England and of their TOS AGM that I was honoured to attend. The TOS presentation made at the Summer School was well received and generated requests for articles on the TOS, its history and ongoing work.



*The English Summer School was held at Hillscourt, Rose Hill, Rednail, Birmingham, England.*



*Nancy and Pam Evans at the English Summer School holding some of the many teddies knitted by TOS England members for distribution to children in hospitals and distressing situations.*



*Workers from the TOS England with the International Secretary: Greta Walker, Maureen Atkinson, Nancy Secrest, Cynthia Trasi, Tehmi Pomeroy, Atma Trasi and Susan Bayliss.*



*Nancy Secrest giving a PowerPoint presentation, TOS: The Face of Service 2017 in August at the Summer School of the TS in England.*



*Michael Gomes delivered the 100th (and his third) Blavatsky Lecture at the 2017 TS in England's Summer School held in Birmingham, England.*

The European Congress saw many fine talks on the topic of Universal Consciousness. My invitation included the opportunity to speak about the TOS as well and our work around the world. It even generated some donations.



*At the European Congress in Barcelona, Spain Nancy spoke on Universal Consciousness in her talk entitled, "Grow As The Flower Grows" referencing study, meditation and service as points of growth. She also shared TOS activities around the world with "The Face of Service"*



*Excursions took European Congress participants to the Gaudi House in Barcelona,*



*and to Montserrat, a monastery.*

Between the two events I managed to fit in an enjoyable visit with former TOS International Secretary Diana Dunningham Chapotin and Michel Chapotin, President of the TOS in France. Anyone who knows Diana also knows that no visit with her is complete without plenty of thought and action given to TOS topics and work. We had much discussion about the upcoming TOS International Conference to be held in Singapore in August 2018.



*It was interesting being able to learn about the work of the TOS in France in some depth during my stay with Michel and Diana.*

**Communicating with TOS workers around the world via email is useful, but nothing is more satisfying than meeting them in the flesh, either at TS gatherings or on their home terrain. Solid links are forged. I return from each of my trips to theosophical events enriched and full of respect and enthusiasm for all the service action I see.**