

Updates from Archives...

“Stellarchives,” was instituted in the year 2010 with the goal of ensuring easy access to essential and evidentiary material of the Institution’s past and present. To popularise and publicise its activities and work, the Archivist, Sr. Jabamalai Eruthayaraj fmm, in collaboration with the students of the Department of History arranged a two day exhibition, “Touchstones of Stellarchives,” on 18 and 19 September 2019. It was for the first time that Stellarchives had organised such a mega poly-thematic exhibition.

The exhibition had its origins when the semester began with a request from Dr. Susan Paul from the Department of History to train ten final year students in archive keeping. The Archivist engaged the students in research and taught them the methods of writing History and rechecking the facts from several perspectives and using digital tools to present the facts creatively and systematically. It was decided to take this treasure of knowledge to the faculty and student community, and the idea of an exhibition where historical documents, pictures and artefacts could be represented through photographic evidence and narrative descriptions emerged.

Circular panels were designed exclusively for the exhibition and the OAT was chosen to reach out to the College community. Extraordinary care was taken to arrange the material systematically and creatively. The exhibition featured the photographs of Principals, former and current, with descriptions of their contribution to the development of the College, milestones of the College, gold medalists, significant visitors, notable alumnae, the history of the buildings, and origin and development of the Department of History since 1947. The exhibition also included the awards received by the faculty, and the books written by our own faculty and the students.

Sr. Susan Matheikal fmm, Secretary and Correspondent of the College inaugurated the exhibition at 10:00 a.m. on 18th September and shared valuable information about the initial stage of the archives. She highly commended the first effort taken by the archivist and spent quality time to view the exhibits. Dr. Bernadine Mary Joseph, Dean of Planning and Communication, Dr. Dolly Thomas, the Head of the Department of History, Dr. Mahalakshmi the Chief Librarian of the College, and the faculty and students of the Department graced the opening ceremony the exhibition was visited by interested faculty and students throughout the day.



Some feedback from faculty and students would better capture the huge success of the event.

“I sincerely appreciate the tireless effort of this organising team, who brought alive once again the rich heritage of Stella Maris College and its history in birds eye view. I enjoyed the cherished memories of 26 years in this college. Thank you for your kindness in sharing.” Dr. Grace Paul (Department of Commerce).

“The exhibition is very well explained and presented. It took me down memory-lane. It was very exciting to see the pictures of SMC in her infancy....” Ms. Ajie George (Department of English).

A very beautiful journey from the past captured and displayed with detail....” Dr. Vijayalakshmi (Department of BSW)

“I actually never knew about this rich history our college has achieved through the ages. This exhibition is an eye opener for me. It was inspiring to look at the achievements and dedicated service of all the past teachers, Principals, and students.” Ann Mariya Philip
17/UFAA/006

Stellarchives has planned to train the students in document maintenance skills and has taken it as a priority in its utility programmes. Thirty students from the Department of History learned the skill during this semester.

Conservation and updating were also given equal priority; hence the archives page in DSpace was updated with the following nine newspaper articles about the College

- “Classical Night : Stella Maris kick starts its platinum Jubilee with a fund raiser” (August 12, 2019-Chennaionline, Chennai Vision, ABC news)
 - “Green Transport-Talia Rose and Claire Jenkins met Stella Marians” The Hindu, August 22, 2019
 - “UNICEF Celebrity Advocate and actress Trisha Krishnan calls for ending violence against children” Chennai Chronicle, Daily Thanthi-August 29, 2019
 - “Stella Maris Alumnae Celebrate Alma Mater” Indian Express; Chennai Express-Sep 30, 2019
 - International Conference “Fourth International Conference was jointly organised by Stella Maris College, Chennai and Trinity Western University, Canada” Chennai Vision-Sep 21, 2019
 - “International Conference – of the Indian Society of Victimization” Department of Psychology 2nd March 2020
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- Information and photos about the awards received by the College are posted under the newly created subtitle “Awards”
 - An archived Union Report for the year 1990-91 was digitised and uploaded.
 - Students’ Union Annual Report for the year 2018-2019 was bookmarked and uploaded.



The archive treasures 371 rare and ancient books that are more than 100 years old and some even 200 years old. The year of publication of the issues are not printed, therefore the archivist has been engaged in discovering, through extensive research, the

year of the particular editions in the archives as well as the context and other important details about the books. This endeavour, it is hoped, will serve to encourage the reading habit among students. Conservation of these ancient books is a real challenge and if permission is granted Archives will plunge into chignon mending.

Stellarchives had brought its entire vintage book collection under two broad sections, namely Fiction and Non Fiction. All the books were labeled and arranged. The extensive task of categorizing the books' genre and digitally classifying them has been done. Physical arrangement and tagging the racks with sub-themes are yet to be done. The archivist also started to catalogue every piece of paper stacked in the Archives. The completion of these works may take another solid year to perfect.

Wooden CD Racks were prepared for stacking. The Stock was checked and the missing CDs have been restored with copies. A number of alumnae have visited archives and their class photographs were collected. Social networks have been utilised to connect Stella Marians around the world.



Stellarchives focusses on professionalism therefore it stays connected to current happenings in the Campus and collects proof and evidence. The archive boasts of a collection of 101 invitations and programme schedules of various events that took place in the College during the semester.

A short film on the faculty visit to Amir Mahal to celebrate teacher's day on 5 September 2019 has also found a place in the facility.



Sisters and Faculty in Amir Mahal with the Prince of Arcot and his family

Archives' interaction for service

- Dr. Madhavi from the Department of Social Work approached the archives to gather information and photos to prepare official papers to be sent to Madras University in view of 50 years of NSS in Stella Maris College.
- Perna Bhandari, 17/UFAA/049, a third year student of the Fine Arts Department approached the Archives to have copies of old photos for her photography project.
- A few Students from the English Department visited the archives to gather information for an essay writing project.
- Students of the History Department requested photographs of their participation in the archive exhibition held on 18th and 19th September 2019.
- 10 M.Phil Students from English Department requested to refer to Doctoral Theses.
- Stellarchives extends its support to Presentation Sisters in establishing their archive unit.

Visitors to Stellarchives

Alumnae of the 1982-84 batch visited the archives; Anu Ganesan (1982-84 Batch) from the USA, Revathy Vasudevan (USA), Lucy (Pune) and Mala Ramanujam (Chennai)



presented their class photographs, tagging and their nationalities. The tagging was incomplete; therefore the archivist completed the tagging with the help of the archive advisor Sr.Helen Vincent, the former Principal.

Ms. Rajashree from Cognizant Foundation, Mrs. Mano Rasalingam from Sri Lanka, who was the Vice President of the Students' Union in 1962, and Shanthi (USA) also visited the archives at different times.



- Netta D'Souza, the General Secretary, All India Mahila Congress appreciated the environment and the systematic arrangement of the archives on her visit.
- Team from Patrician College visited to learn about archive maintenance.
- Mr. Prabhu and his team from the Literary Society visited to learn the best practices of Stellarchives.
- The FMM sisters from Hong Kong and Sri Lanka who the Archives were highly appreciative of the professional care taken in preserving the history of the institution right from its roots.

- Professor and Students from Taiwan and from mentee colleges, namely Sindhi College, National College, visited the archives

The Archives continue to add the third year class photographs to the collection. Tagging of each class photograph, achievers of the year is given priority amidst hectic work. Collection of invites, and special reports are given due importance since archives is the place where an overall glance of an academic achievement is documented.

Sr. Jabamalai fmm

Archivist
Stella Maris College