



Dear Yagya Friends,

I am delighted to report that 2013 was a wonderfully successful year ending with Divali and Subramanya yagyas in November, and Family Yagyas in December.

Our participation levels have never been higher and your continued generosity has meant so much to our community of priests and pundits.

But with all the activity the photo newsletters have been delayed. Here, at last, is the November publication.

With your help and participation, we're all looking forward to even greater success in 2014

Enjoy the photos!

Ben Collins

Upcoming Yagyas

* Navagraha and Lakshmi Yagyas

- January 18 through 27

* Shivaratri Yagya Series - (2/18 - 2/28)

Shivaratri Yagyas - 11 Day Maha Rudra Yagya ending the morning after Shivaratri (2/28), plus daily Pavamana Soma recitation and the conclusion of Ati Rudra Yagya series that began a year ago.

Diwali - November 3 - Varanasi



Diwali was celebrated in Varanasi with some very nice decorations and and an extensive Lakshmi puja.

Skanda Shasti - Subramanya Yagya Series - Kanchipuram



The puja room was nicely cleaned and fresh malas added to the kalasha pots. Then the priests begin with recitations from the Vedas.



Every day the program begins with Rudra abishekam and pujas; this month for Subramnaya, Ganesha's brother and son of Shiva.



After the pujas are completed, the priests make offerings of ghee, wood and other items into the sacred yagya fire as mantras are chanted.



The final offering at the conclusion of the fire ritual is always dramatic as the ghee makes the flames leap up high.



Each month the yagya program includes a special Shiva Temple Yagya in one of the ancient and beautiful temples in Kanchipuram.



The Rudra Abhishekam is very impressive and the ancient Shiva lingams can be quite large, many of which are over one thousand years old.



At the conclusion of the abishekam, the Shiva lingam is decorated in flower garlands and sandalwood.



The final puja is dramatic and timeless in the ancient temple. How many thousands of times has this ritual been performed over the years?



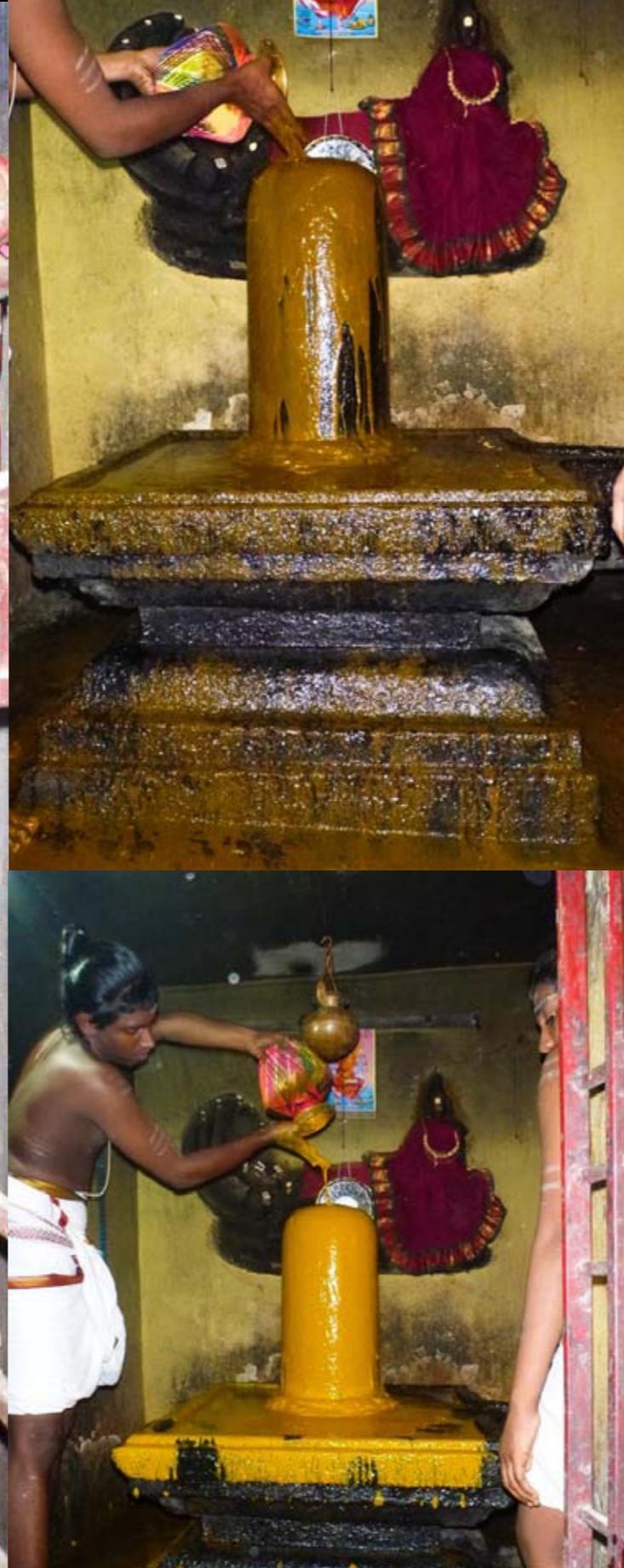
The second of our temple yagyas took place at a temple that contains both Vishnu and Shiva. This combination is very rare. We often include young Brahmins so they have experience performing the yagyas with our more experienced priests.



You can see Vishnu, reclining on the roof of the temple, with the Shiva lingam in the sanctum below. There are many stories of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma that take place in Kanchipuram.



Vishnu is shown reclining on the coils of Adi Sesha - a cosmic snake. As he reclines, Vishnu makes offerings onto the Shiva lingam.



The abishekam is beautiful with offerings of dark brown sandalwood, light yellow tumeric, and milk. On the wall behind the lingam you can see an image of Vishnu reclining on Adi Sesha and Lakshmi in her red sari.



The young priests prepare the aarti lamp and perform the final offering of light at the conclusion of the yagya.



The Shiva lingam after the abishekam looks festive and will be enjoyed by all who visit the temple.



We performed the last day of the yagya series at the Subramanya temple located at the entry to the Ekambeshwara temple in Kanchipuram. This photo of the Ekambeshwara temple was taken in 1870 and shows the famous mango tree outside the Parvati temple.



Outside the Subramanya temple, the monkeys are ready for the yagya to begin. They know they will receive prasadam bananas.



The Subramanya temple is large and impressive.







At the conclusion of the yagya Subramanya looks regal, powerful and peaceful.





*“Roaring repeatedly along
the path of truth and dharma,
may you shine as the banner
of immortality.*

*May you send forth your voice
while sages are chanting
hymns of praise.”*

-Rig Veda