Kodaikanal – The Book Launch

(INTACH Madurai Chapter visits Kodaikanal)

The INTACH Chapter of Kodaikanal launched the book titled KODAIKANAL-The Vanishing Heritage of an Island in the Sky on 14th of May 2015 at KMU Hall, (Kodaikanal International School). The book was released by the chief guest Maj.Gen.(Retd) L.K.Gupta, Chairman INTACH in the presence of the guest of honour Mr.Corey Stixrud, Principal, Kodaikanal International School. The book has been compiled by Pradeep Chakravarthy, Anil Choudhry, Jayashree Kumar and Girija Veeraraghavan. Kodaikanal Chapter’s attempt to record not only the cultural heritage like buildings but also the natural heritage like birds, fish, trees, plants, waterfalls and streams etc and that too by people who love ‘KODAI’ reflects in the book well. Ms. Sunayana Choudhry, Convenor, INTACH Kodaikanal Chapter spoke about how the passion to save and document the unique sky island in Palani Hills brought so many Kodai lovers into the foray . The session also included two presentations done by Tanya Balcar and Bob Stewart of the vattacanal Conservation Trust about the natural heritage of the area specifically about shola forests and their experiences on reclaiming the plantation lands and the second one by V.V.Robin an ecologist working on the conservation of Shola birds about the unique ecosystem of Palani Hills especially Kodaikanal and how it influences the evolution of the birds. Both were informative and enjoyable. This was followed up by a Book Critique session which also saw editors of the book interacting with the audience and sharing their experiences and how much they learned about their beloved town during that period.

INTACH Chapter of Madurai members were taken on a tour by Ms. Sunayana Choudhry, who was gracious enough to take time off her busy schedule to take us, not only to old cottages, Jesuit college, church, bakery, clinic and old cemetery but also gave information about who built them and when and how they were built. Even though many in the group have visited Kodai many times before, this trip proved to be an entirely different and informative one.