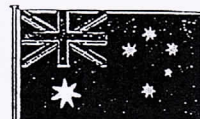


Ceylon Research Society Of Australia

(Name under review)



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Foundation

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Dr Christopher
Puttock

Mr Hugh
Karunanayake

Mr V.
Vamadevan

Mr David
Goodrich

Mr Mike
Udabage

Mr Michael
Sourjah

Dr M.B.
Kappagoda

How We Started

This society has been organised over the past few months because of interest in matters relating to Sri Lanka. Dr Chris Puttock, a Canberra scientist, has been one of the prime movers, organising the initial meeting. The society envisages discussion and dissemination of information on any aspect of Sri Lanka: history, antiquaria, (books, memorabilia, ephemera), art, coins, architecture, costumes, genealogy, cartophily, etc..)

Our small, but growing group is getting its act together. The four meetings we have had so far, in four different homes, have proved that there is a genuine desire to have such a society develop, and a most pleasant camaraderie is apparent (not to mention the absolutely wonderful food we have indulged in thanks to the ladies!!). The object of the organisation is to improve knowledge of Sri Lanka in as many areas as possible, and with members having expertise and interest in so many different fields, we have the potential to learn about "Lanka" in a most affable way.

At present we are organising the mechanics of the society. In some ways it is a shame that things have to be almost "set in stone" as far as having the society "official", but that is the order of things today, and once we have these mechanics functioning properly we can get on with the more interesting aspects of learning and enjoying more about "Lanka-Sri Lanka-Taprobana-Serendip-Ceylon-Ceilan".

What's Inside ?



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Presentation

Presented by Hugh Karunanayake

Julia Margaret Cameron

JULIA MARGARET CAMERON-VICTORIAN PHOTOGRAPHER -HER SRI LANKA CONNECTION

(Summary of a talk by Hugh Karunanayake at a meeting of the Ceylon Research Society of Australia in November 1997)

In the waiting rooms of the Brockenhurst Railway Station in New Forest in England is a unique gallery of eleven portraits of famous persons of the Victorian era, with the following inscription:

"This gallery of the great men of our age is presented for this room by Mrs. Cameron in memory of this being the spot where she first met one of her sons after a long absence of four years in Ceylon"

Julia Margaret Cameron who made this gift, is considered the world's foremost portrait photographer of the nineteenth century. Self trained, she dominated the world scene in portrait photography when the art was yet at its nascent stage, the technology at its infancy. Most of her portraits were of people known to her personally, and these included the most famous names of the world in the 19th century. They included poets Alfred Lord Tennyson, Robert Browning, H. W. Longfellow, Sir Henry Taylor, scientists Charles Darwin, Sir Joseph Hooker and Sir John Herschel, artists G.F. Watts, Thomas Woolner, George du Maurier, Anthony Trollope the novelist, historians Thomas Carlyle and W.E.H. Lecky.

Julia was the wife of Charles Hay Cameron whose connections with Ceylon dates back to 1830 when he and Sir William Colebrooke were appointed by the British government to report on the administrative and judicial systems for Ceylon. Their report known as the Colebrooke-Cameron Report laid the foundation for the British system of administration and justice that followed thereafter in Ceylon.

On arrival in Ceylon, Cameron purchased land in Dimbula and Hewaheta and planted coffee on estates later known as Cameron's Land and Rahatungoda. The Camerons had five sons all of whom worked in Ceylon. Ewen, the eldest managed Rahatungoda Estate where he worked all his life and eventually died. Another son Hardinge was in the Ceylon Civil Service retiring as the Treasurer of the colony.

Most of Julia's photographic work was done in England where she lived with her husband away from her sons who were working in Ceylon. In their old age they wanted to migrate to Ceylon where their sons were and formed such an attachment to the country that they decided to end their days there. Their home in Freshwater in the Isle of Wight was named Dimboola and they were longing to return to their beloved estates in Ceylon and the company of their sons who they greatly missed. Julia's bio-

grapher states "Great was the happiness of the Camerons to be at last in the blessed island and to be united with their children. All their yearning was satisfied. They lived in a bungalow on Gelcaru Estate, a little hut with only mud walls 4400 ft above the sea."

The Camerons visited their friends in England on a brief holiday and returned to Ceylon where Julia died on 26th January 1879 after an illness of only ten days. Her body was taken in a low open cart drawn by two great white bullocks, and all covered with white cloth, over two ridges of mountains and buried in the little churchyard at Bogawantalawa.

Julia Margaret Cameron..cont'd

Her husband who was twenty years older, died two years later in Nuwara Eliya and his remains were taken to Bogawantalawa and buried beside those of his wife. Their son Hardinge has given a graphic description of his father's funeral which is said to have been like that of an old Highland Chieftain. He said " the march from Nuwara Eliya was a very striking one, starting as we did in a wild storm of thunder and lightning and drenching rain, Walter Campbell French March-Phillips, my brothers and I riding at a foot's pace after the coffin, which was carried by Ranatungoda coolies, who had been born on the estate and who looked upon my father as a kind of demi-god. There must have been about forty of them in the gang and they relieved each other from time to time without a word or fuss or chatter such as usually marks any attempt to divide the labour of carrying any ordinary burden. The first night we spent at St Regulus, and then went on the next morning via Annfield Group through Dickoya and up the other valley to Bogowantalawa where we buried him in the afternoon. It has always been his desire, long before he decided to return to Ceylon in 1875, aged 79, to lay his bones in the hills of Ceylon and they could not rest in a more lovely spot than that which they have found."

Two tombstones in the churchyard of St Mary's Bogawantalawa mark the final resting place of the Camerons.

Acknowledgements

Helmut Gernsheim - JULIA MARGARET CAMERON - PIONEER OF PHOTOGRAPHY London 1948

J.P. Lewis - TOMBSTONES AND MONUMENTS OF CEYLON 1913

J.R. Toussaint - ANNALS OF THE CEYLON CIVIL SERVICE 1935



Presentation

Did you know ?

⇒ Sri Lankas population is 18 million (more 2 1/2 times that 50 years ago)

⇒ SL is 260 people per sq km

⇒ Adult literacy is in the high 80%

⇒ Colombo population in 1921 = 244K and in 1998 = 1 million

Collectors Postcards From Ceylon

By Dr Chris Puttock

Chris Puttock, our current chairman, who very unfortunately will be moving to Hawaii in the next few months, delivered an interesting talk on postcards in Ceylon. This proved to be an unusual topic which was well presented with a large collection of postcards of mainly around the 1900 period. His collection is well "housed" in album, making it easy to enjoy.

Many of the images depicted on the cards can be seen in the "100 Best Views Of Ceylon" by Plate, but were printed in colour, giving very real images of a bygone period. There appear to be hundreds of different cards, and different editions of each, making a complete collection series an extremely difficult exercise.

Chris has been collecting them for only 3-4 years and it is amazing how many he has accumulated in that period.

The Prins Diaries


By David Goodrich


David Goodrich spoke on Burgher genealogy and his involvement in following his Prins family tree from around 1700 (his grandmother was Prins). A transcribed diary of his uncle, George William Prins (Bobbie), written 1896 to 1901, containing almost 600 names of acquaintances of his time was found interesting by the members, particularly when they could identify with some one or other.


The diary covered everyday events of a 16 to 22 year old, giving a picture of Colombo life 100 years ago. The Dutch and the British families have little difficulty in tracing their history from as far back as the 1600s. The diary is one of a very few which have survived from that period. A copy of the diary is being donated to Royal College (which Bobbie was student of at the time he compiled this diary) and perhaps to the National Archives in Colombo. Reading classic post modern literature such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *People In between*, identifies many names which were contemporaries of Bobbie. Hopefully a Prins family history book will be forthcoming and if anyone has any knowledge it will be appreciated.

How you can participate

Postcards, Books & Prints Sale

 There will be antiquarian books on Ceylon as well as postcards and other items of interest.

 Those who are interested in selling any items could do so at a Trading table to be set up at the meeting to be held on 28th February.

 Mr Michael
Sourjah (02) 9831
0089 (b.h)

Areas of interest

Areas of interest are innumerable. There is so much to enjoy and learn about Lanka and sometimes it is easier for someone who has never even visited the country to perceive a bigger picture - something about 'if you're in the middle of the trees, you don't see the woods!'. Are there members who can talk about the art of Ceylon, or the wildlife, what about the fishing industry or Sinhala history. For me the primary interests at this stage are the building of the Colombo Breakwater (my grandfather was involved in the engineering of the 3rd stage of the early 1900s and the canals which formed an important communication and means of transportation started by the Sinhalese to a minor extent, continued by the Portuguese and latterly by the Dutch and British. The history of the Kings of Lanka, village life, the politics of the country, coffee and tea, and the development of writing are just a few of the plethora of topics which could be interesting - everything about Lanka is interesting!! Everyone will have something to share with members and guests, a presentation or two at each meeting would be a real boon. So have a go everyone and look forward to hearing the next interesting presentation on Lanka.

Champagne Jelly With Summer Berries

By Dr. Nalini Kappagoda

1 x 750ml bottle Champagne
2 cups sugar
2 cups cherries (stem-less)
4.5 tbl spns gelatine in 1/2 cup hot/water
1 punnet raspberries
1 punnet blueberries
1 punnet ripe strawberries - hulled and
cut in half

Pour the champagne into a large saucepan, add the sugar and bring to boil. Drop in the cherries and the liquid to simmer. Cover and cook gently until the cherries are softened (5-8 mins). Do not overcook or the skins will split. Pour the cherries, syrup and the gelatine into a bowl and allow to cool (NOT to set).

Add all the berries and stir carefully with a wooden spatula. Oil a large mould and carefully ladle in some of the liquid (approx. 3cm deep) and add some of the fruit. refrigerate (overnight to set) and then cover with plastic wrap. Before serving briefly dip the bottom in cold water and then unmould to serve. Enjoy!

Courtesy Vogue Entertainment Guide Feb '95

Next Meeting

REMINDER!

The next public meeting

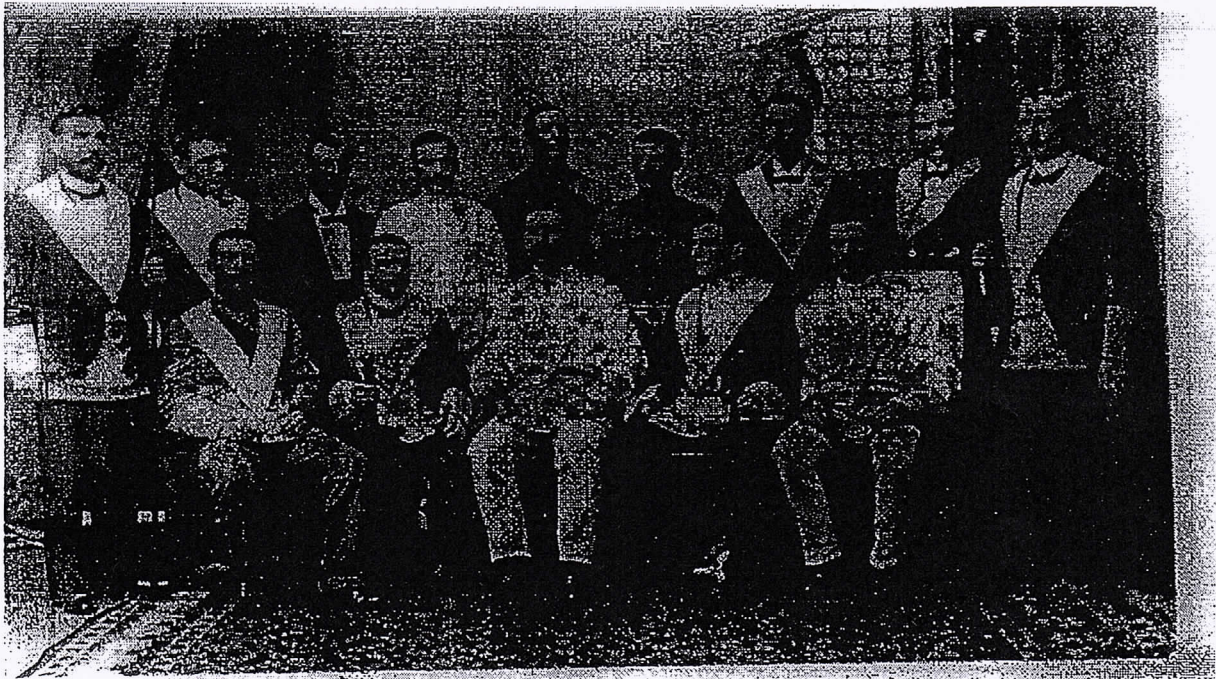
28th February 1998

at Willow Park - 25 Edgeworth David Avenue Hornsby

commencing at 7pm

Light supper will be provided.

*Can anyone identify any of these gentlemen ? Taken in the early 1900s of
a lodge membership in Colombo*



Produced by Scarth Productions 1998