



# The Ceylanikaum

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of AUSTRALIA

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## The Ceylon Society of Australia

### PRESIDENT

Harry de Sayrah OAM, JP  
Mobile 0415 402 724  
harold.166@hotmail.com

### VICE-PRESIDENT

Dr Srilal Fernando

### SECRETARY

Thiru Arumugam  
Int. + 61 2 8850 4798  
thiru.aru@gmail.com

### TREASURER & PUBLIC OFFICER

Deepak Pritamdas  
Mobile 0434 860 188  
PO Box 489 Blacktown NSW 2148  
deepakpsl@yahoo.com

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Sunimal Fernando  
Int. +61 2 9476 6852

### PUBLICATIONS

Sunil de Silva  
Int. + 61 2 4340 5940  
sunsil@optusnet.com.au

### EDITOR/LIBRARIAN

Doug Jones  
int. + 61 2 8677 9260  
109 Oakhill Drive Castle Hill NSW 2154  
dougjay20@gmail.com

### SOCIAL CONVENOR

Chandra Senaratne  
Int. + 61 2 9872 6826  
charboyd@iprimus.com.au

### LIFE MEMBER

Hugh Karunanayake  
Int. + 61 2 9980 2494  
hkaru@optusnet.com.au

### EX-OFFICIO

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Dr Robert Sourjah<br>Int.+ 61 2 9622 2469<br>robertsourjah@yahoo.com | Tony Peries<br>Int. +61 2 9674 7515<br>srini.p@bigpond.com    |
| Srikantha Nadarajah<br>Int.+ 61 2 9980 1701<br>vsnada@bigpond.com.au | Ron Murrell<br>Int. + 61 2 9484 4070<br>ron.murrell@gmail.com |

### MELBOURNE CHAPTER

Shelagh Goonewardene  
Int. + 61 3 9808 4962  
shelaghlou@yahoo.com.au

### COLOMBO CHAPTER

Convenor/Local President  
Tissa Devendra  
+9411 2501489 email: tdevendra@eureka.lk  
Vice-President  
Mohan Rajasingham  
+9411 258 6350 / 0722 234644  
email: mohanandranee@gmail.com  
Local Hon. Secretary  
M.D. (Tony) Saldin  
+94 777 363366, 244 0769 (office)  
email: saldin-sojitz@sltnet.lk  
Local Hon. Treasurer  
M. Asoka T. de Silva  
Int. 011 282 2933 Mob. +94 775097517  
email: matdes@sltnet.lk  
Committee Members  
Srilal Perera  
077 5743785 email: ssrilalp@ymail.com  
Daya Wickramatunga  
+9411 278 6783 /0773 174164  
email: dashanwick@gmail.com

## The Ceylankam

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## *From the Editor...*

**W**ith this edition we conclude another year of publication and are heartened to acknowledge that with the help of our regular contributors (and, of course, a willing and dedicated editorial team assisting) *The Ceylankan* is once again ready to get to your mailbox. Not without a degree of concern on the part of the editor wondering if he can make it on time. There have been occasions when its production cut to the wire. However, the important thing is nothing untoward happened.

On a positive note, we salute two CSA members for great personal achievement on winning international accolades recently for their contribution to literature. Our past president Sunil de Silva attained twin laurels when, firstly, he won a 2013 State Literary Award in Colombo for translating into English Dr Gunadasa Amarasekera's book *Vithrea Maranaya*. In addition, the Sri Lankan community in Sydney feted the diminutive colossus of the Bar on his reaching a milestone of 50-years in the legal profession. Also, distinguished playwright and CSA member Ernest Macintyre was awarded the Sri Lanka 2013 State Literary Award for the Best English Play published in Sri Lanka for his classic drama *Irangani* based on 'Antigone of Sophocles'. Ernest is synonymous with drama everywhere. While these two gentlemen make us proud, I am delighted to have in this issue of the journal Thiru Arumugam's excellent piece of creative research on the Ceylonese teenager awarded Royal Patents for inventing methods to better reversing gear for steam locomotives, getting one-up on steam engine pioneers, the Stephenson of England. Equally readable is *The Rambler* who discovered an old school magazine containing a treasure of sporting memorabilia – a collage of autographs of the most talented cricketers in Ceylon in the mid-20th Century. This enabled the author to share for posterity the exploits of these willow-wielding immortals. This will be a priceless addition to any collection.

Then we have Tony Peries reaching out to the wide blue yonder aboard those single engine flying machines, endeavouring to master the art of aviation. Seems he succeeded, with a lot of help from most of his trainers and considerable determination.

We tried to maintain the usual features, but as you will find out, we got no letters telling us how good or indifferent the previous issue had been and no recipes came our way through the good offices of Ammi's words of culinary wisdom.

Be that as it may, compliments of the Season from the Editorial team and may those creative juices erupt in your literary veins in the Coming Year.

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## About the Ceylon Society of Australia

The CSA is a non-profit organisation, incorporated in Australia. Its main objectives are to foster, promote and develop interest in the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka, especially the post-medieval period when this country was first exposed to, what we now call, globalisation. Apart from publishing the journal – **The Ceylankan** which has attracted much international appreciation – the Society holds meetings quarterly in Sydney, Melbourne and Colombo. Most importantly, it is non-political and non-partisan and studiously steers clear of political and similar controversial issues. CSA is not a formal, high profile Society but rather, a gathering of like-minded people, open to receiving and imparting new ideas, who greatly

enjoy a quarterly meeting in reasonably modest and intimate surroundings. While Sydney is home to the parent body and looks after the needs of the society in all of NSW and the ACT, the Melbourne Chapter covers members and others residing in and visitors to Victoria; the Colombo Chapter caters to CSA members in and passing through Sri Lanka, and the Sri Lankan public! Members of the public with an interest in the study of Sri Lankan history, culture and heritage – the young members of the public are especially welcome! – are invited to attend. Admission to these meetings is free, while donations to defray expenses are much appreciated.



## Ernest Macintyre and Sunil de Silva honoured in Colombo CSA members win Sri Lankan State Literary Awards

Stalwart members of the Ceylon Society of Australia, **Ernest Macintyre** and **Sunil de Silva** won State Literary Awards in Sri Lanka for the year 2013 held recently at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall in Colombo for their outstanding contributions to Sri Lankan literature.

Ernest Macintyre won the Award for Best English Play published in Sri Lanka in 2012 for his play 'Irangani' – a tragedy of our times – after *Antigone* of Sophocles.

"This play brings forward into the open



arena of theatre the events and circumstances of the insurgencies that took place in Sri Lanka in the second half of this century, where a fictional generic president takes on the history of the entire turbulent

• **Ernest Macintyre**

era of Sri Lanka which confronted his niece on the mould of Sophocles' *Antigone*." (A Journal of S.Asian Perspectives)

A fictional play that searches in depth the issues of war, peace and political solutions in present day Sri Lanka, the book launch held in Colombo in 2012 saw a number of prominent Sri Lankan theatre artistes supporting him with readings of excerpts from the play. *Irangani* was staged in Sydney and Canberra in 2009 ("Fascinatingly cross cultural ... the outcome is moving" – Canberra Times) and in Sri Lanka in 2013. The play was published by Vijitha Yapa Publications. It was translated into Tamil in 2011 and published in Chennai.

During the 1960s Ernest Macintyre was one of Sri Lanka's most creative and successful playwrights in English and was Director of the drama school of Aquinas University College (1968-1969); he was one of the initiators of a performing group, Stage and Set, which produced international plays as well as his own. Some of his plays include: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1967), *The President of the OBA* (1970), *The Education of Miss Asia*, *Let's give them Theatre*, *The Theatre of Migration*, *The UN Inspector*, *The Loneliness of a long distance runner*, *Transit Lounge* and *A murder in Colombo* and others.

He migrated to Australia in 1973 and has since made a name for himself in the Austral-

ian theatre, particularly with his plays *Let's Give them Curry* (1981), *Rasanayagam's Last Riot* (1990) and *He Still Comes from Jaffna*. He has also used works by Woolf, Gogol and Chekov and tailored them for the stage with a Sri Lankan slant, as well as updating the script for Ludowyk's *He Comes from Jaffna*.

In 2009 a Ph.D. Thesis on "Diasporic Longing And The Changing Contours of Resistance in The Plays of Ernest Thalayasingham Macintyre" was successfully submitted to The University of Madras by Sumathy Thangapandian and subsequently published.

### A life of law and theatre

Law and Theatre are inextricably intertwined in Sunil's life. A former Attorney General of Sri Lanka, Sunil had his primary education at Richmond College, Galle where he acted in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*! He completed his education at Royal College. His major roles on the stage in Sydney, since 1992 when he migrated have been in Macintyre's *Theatre of Migration*, *The UN Inspector is a Sri Lankan*, *President of the OBA* and in the *Transit Lounge*. He has presently written the script for a Kolam Maduwa production titled *Yata Giya Bakko* (to be staged in June 2014).

His acting career, however, does not stop



• **Sunil de Silva**

with the stage, he played in the film *Colombo Sanniya* and in the Australian TV mini series *Singapore Sling: Midnight Orchid*.

He was well-known for his roles in the Ralahamy series with the famous

EBC Wijesinghe and acted in *He comes from Jaffna*, both in Sri Lanka and here in Sydney, in *Well Mudaliyar*, the *Dowry Hunter*, *The Senator* and *FiftyFifty*.

The latest addition to his literary honours list is the Sri Lanka State Literary Award that he won (2013) for his translation into English of Dr. Gunadasa Amarasekera's 'Vithrea Maranaya'

Sunil represented Sri Lanka on the international stage on a number of occasions. In 1991 he presented the 'Sri Lanka Report' to the Human Rights



Committee of the UN in New York. He also presented reports on behalf of Sri Lanka to the UN Commission on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

During that period from 1978–1980 he was appointed Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions, and appointed Deputy Solicitor General (Sri Lanka). He took silk in 1988 and subsequently served as Attorney General of Sri Lanka from 1988–1992.

Sunil has presented many papers to local and international legal conferences on topics ranging from human rights, white collar crime in third world countries, sentencing, and computer law. One of his more noteworthy presentations was his paper entitled, "Are we sacrificing justice at the altar of expeditious disposal?" delivered at the 1993 LAWASIA conference held at Colombo, Sri Lanka. After migrating to Australia, he spent some time working for the Office of the DPP and the Legal Aid Commission before being commissioned as a Crown Prosecutor for the State of NSW in 1996.

Sunil has prosecuted many famous cases over the years. Of particular note was his prosecution of the political activists who painted the words "no war" in red paint on the white sails of the Opera House. More recently he prosecuted one of the longest running fraud trials in the history of the District Court of NSW.

Contributed by **Dorothy Macintyre**

## Our Readers Write

### *Letters -your views are valuable!*

*Readers are invited to contribute to our letters column because we like to know what you think about our journal, what subjects you would like to see published, in keeping with the reasons of our existence, of course. We value your thoughts and erudite comments on the articles that appear. If, through your own research, you can shed new light on the subject matter of something published, we will be delighted to learn from you. This is the kind of feedback that engenders life to The Ceylankan. So we urge you to keep your letters coming in. Please keep them as brief as possible, but we will try to accommodate lengthy missives as long as they are constructive and to the point. If your contribution calls for lengthier treatment we can accommodate your ideas as an article.*

*The Editor, however, reserves the right to edit your letters for reasons of length, clarity and content.*

Asked if she really had nothing on in the (calendar) photograph, Marilyn, her true blue eyes wide, purred: "I had the radio on.

—Marilyn Monroe (Time, August 1952)

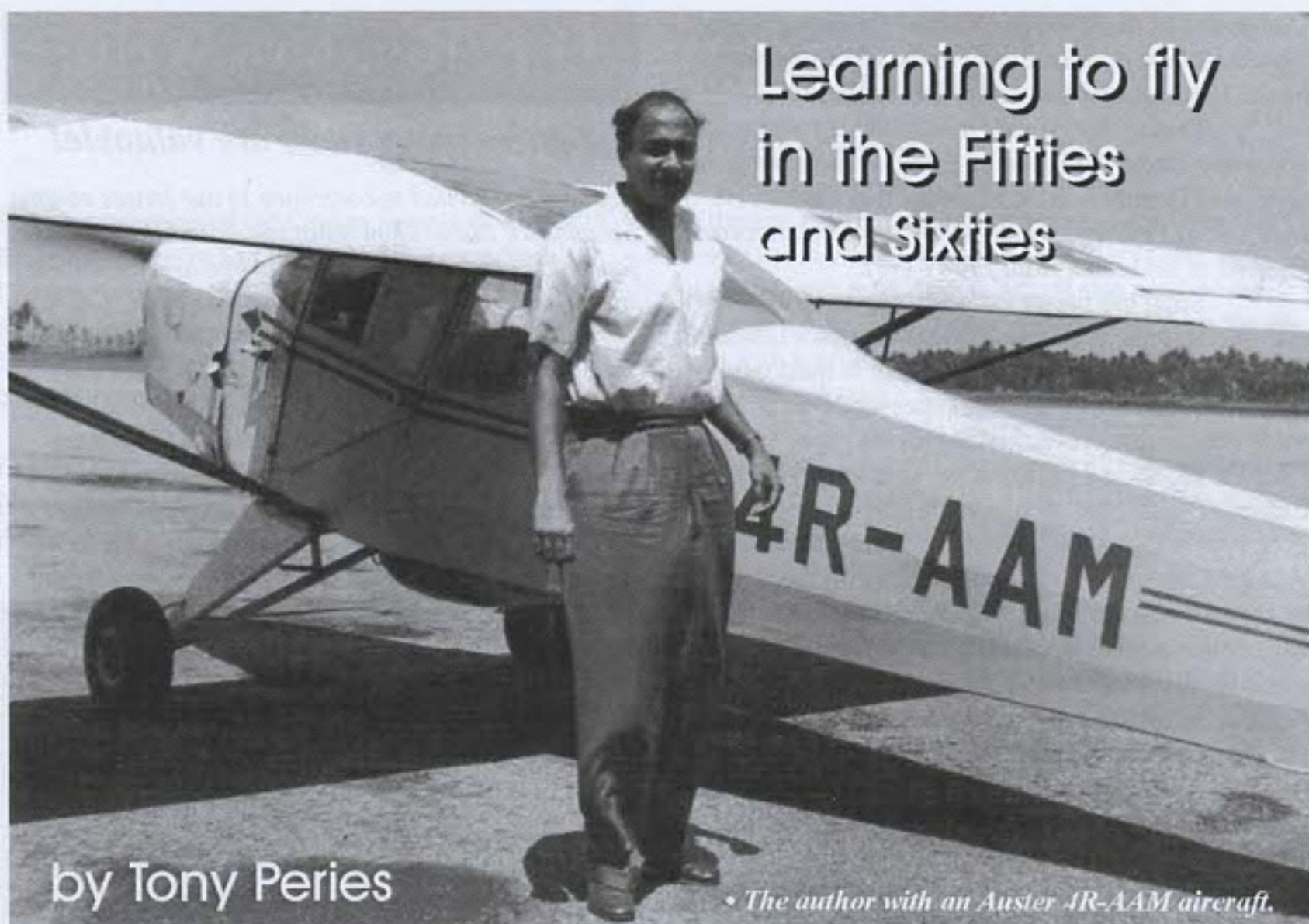
## Old Moratuwite

In the palmy days before World War II there were a few men who lived in places like Moratuwa and despite having no permanent employment, they managed very well being fortunate enough to own a house with quite a lot of land around it on which grew coconut and fruit trees. They sold the nuts, of course, and kept a cow, grew vegetables and made a few rupees from various sources, not all strictly above board. One such individual was (let's call him) Mr Madugoda and as he lived next to the Moratuwa railway station, he often spent a while there of a morning chatting to the commuters who worked in Colombo. He knew them all naturally, sometimes obliged friends who lived further away by asking one of his commuter mates to pick up an item from a Colombo shop that was not locally available—delivering it later on his bicycle and at worst getting a cup of tea and a biscuit.

Mr Madugoda asked a friend from the station to drop by Cargills pharmacy and purchase a bottle of Mendis's Cough Syrup which was not available as Mr Madugoda had made up the name. During the next few weeks he repeated his request—asking different people who were happy to oblige. Eventually Mr Madugoda dressed up in his best white drill suit and dropped into Cargills Pharmacy where he introduced himself as the maker of Mendis's Cough Syrup—the European pharmacist was quite keen to purchase this sought after elixir and ordered 50 bottles which were duly delivered and paid for. The tale needs no further telling!







## Learning to fly in the Fifties and Sixties

by Tony Peries

• The author with an Auster 4R-AAM aircraft.

**M**y first ambition was to be a railway engine driver (steam, of course) but this was supplanted by wanting to be a pilot, doubtless from reading about Biggles, Rockfist Rogan and other mythical heroes of the air. The bug really bit when I had my first flight in, I think, 1940 or 1941 at a 'Silver Wings' Carnival at Ratmalana Airport, probably organised by the Aero Club of Ceylon in aid of war charities. There was a stunt-flying display, and joy flights were offered to the public. My father took me and a friend, and I recall that the aircraft in which we flew (in all likelihood a WACO YQC-6 single-engine, enclosed-cabin biplane of Tata Sons, India) had a seat beside the pilot (grabbed by the friend!) while my father and I sat behind.

Wanting to fly lurked at the back of my mind, and several years later, the desire was awoken when Trevor Moy, one of my colleagues at work, told me he had been taking lessons until his new fiancée forbade it. He did, however, take me to Ratmalana to introduce me to Capt. C.H.S. Amarasekera, the chief flying instructor and head of the Ceylon Air Academy which was set up in November 1950 when Sir John Kotelawala was Transport Minister. 'CHS' had flown as a bomber pilot in World War II and thereafter for Tata/Air India until he was headhunted by Air Ceylon at its inception in 1947. He was a good teacher, but by the time I encountered him, the Air Academy seemed to have no priority with the Government of the time, and the ensuing problems of getting spares, etc, were weighing heavily on his mind, making 'CHS' feel insecure and at times, paranoid.

Having completed all the formalities, including making a cash deposit at the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) I had my first lesson on 22 December 1959, with 'CHS', from 5.45 pm to 6.00 pm, in a de Havilland Chipmunk with registration 4R-AAV. At the time the Air Academy had a modest fleet comprising two Austers (4R-AAJ and 4R-AAM), a Stinson L-5E

Sentinel (4R-AAD), two de Havilland Tiger Moths (4R-AAB and 4R-AAN), two de Havilland Chipmunks (4R-AAV and 4R-AAW), and two Czech-built aircraft, both purchased new: a Mraz Sokol M.1D (4R-AAG), and a twin-engine Aero 45 (4R-AAF). The Tiger Moths were of pre-war vintage, one of which was reportedly gifted to the then Aero Club of Ceylon by Lord Wakefield of Castrol lubricants fame. At some time the Air Academy had also acquired two gliders, albeit not operative in 1959, and a Hiller UH-12B helicopter (4R-AAO). 'CHS' flew the helicopter often, mostly taking Santa Claus to Christmas parties and Sir John Kotelawala on visits to his family-owned Kahatagaha Graphite Mines.

My log book (British Ministry of Civil Aviation issue!) tells me I had two more lessons on 23 and 24 December, and regularly on most evenings until 12 January 1960 when I started circuits and landings, which were easier to perform in the calm mornings of the North East Monsoon period. The Chipmunk – three examples of which (a fourth followed later) were loaned to the Air Academy by the Royal Ceylon Air Force (RCyAF) – was a single-engine, low-wing monoplane basic trainer of post-war design and very



easy to fly. It had flaps, brakes and an enclosed cockpit in which the pupil sat in front of the instructor, easily able to talk to each other on the intercom. When I started flying the Chipmunk it had radio, so that we could also communicate with the control tower, but that broke down and was not repaired.

Taking off is a skill easily acquired, but landing is not (at least to this inept pupil), and 'CHS' was a nervous teacher, too ready to take over the controls. A young American, Milo Kamstra, also then a pupil, did not want to give up the controls and had tug-o-wars with 'CHS' until the former quit in disgust. The rate charged to pupils was Rs. 25 an hour: a real gift to foreigners who some years later were put on a higher rate.

After the first two or three hours I began to enjoy flying, and often persuaded 'CHS' at the end of a lesson to fly along the coast to the Port or in the other direction. Early-morning flying in January/February is a particular delight as the air is still, and often without a cloud in the sky. Small 'planes like the Chipmunk are mostly landed – especially by novices – with power off (although the engine is idling) and ideally the Chipmunk was glided in at about 50 knots (nautical miles per hour), its stalling speed being about 40 knots. ('Stalling' refers to the point at which the airflow over the wing stops generating lift to sustain flight, and has nothing to do with the stalling or involuntary stopping of the engine, as in a motor car.) Light aircraft used the grass surface of the airport, not the sealed runway. 'CHS' constantly reminded me that "speed is salvation" while telling me I was coming in to land too fast! All the aircraft we flew had small tail wheels so that at rest the fuselage (body) sloped down to the tail wheel. Coming in too fast means that when the pilot levels off, the aeroplane is still defying gravity and will not come down to land.

After about nine hours of not quite teaching me to land properly, 'CHS' gave up and sent me off for nearly an hour with Captain L.B. de Silva, an Air Ceylon pilot who often helped students. He set me straight, so after 12½ hours I went solo. Those with natural aptitude could solo after about seven-plus hours of instruction, but at 29-years of age, I was over-cautious and not helped by 'CHS's' timidity. The Air Academy did have a deputy instructor, Stanley Fernando, who was a good pilot but he was often not available, being prey even then to intemperance which later destroyed him.

At that time there were other student pilots mostly with commercial careers in mind, and a few private pilots who were pleasure-seekers. The only learner I knew then was Lucien Ratnayake, who went on to become an Air Lanka captain. Having gone solo I was authorised to fly alone in a Chipmunk; but to carry passengers a Private Pilot's Licence (PPL) was required. Now that I could fly by myself I was able to have a bit of practice and fun, whenever I could get to

Ratmalana. Sunday mornings brought out the fun-flyers, so over the next few months I got to know many like L.A.D.I. Ekanayake (the noted meteorologist) and Cyril Berenger, who was later killed in a flying accident at Ratmalana. I also made the acquaintance of Anil Rambukwelle, J.A. 'Ossie' Jayawardene and Dudley Ranabahu, all Air Ceylon pilots who helped students.

To qualify for a PPL one had to sit for two-hour written examinations in Meteorology and Air Traffic Control procedures, as well as the technical aspects of one type of aircraft. Besides, there was an oral test on radio communication with the control tower, which was made difficult as nothing we flew had an operative radio. We were also a bit limited by the fact that Ratmalana did not handle many flights apart from a few daily Air Ceylon domestic and regional flights, and one Indian Airlines service. But a couple of friendly air traffic controllers let me sit in the tower listening to the actual procedure.

Theory apart, to get a PPL you had to have 40 flying hours, of which at least 20 had to be solo, including a 300-mile cross-country flight with two intermediate landings, and last but not least, a flying test.

Although my memory indicates that when I started flying only one Auster and two Chipmunks were operational, my log book shows that I flew three different Chipmunks (4R-AAV, -AAW and -AAX) until June 1960, when 'CHS' introduced me to the Auster. That was a single-engine high-wing monoplane with an enclosed cabin with two side-by-side seats as well as a rear seat (which required the ability of a contortionist to reach!), and a centrally-placed throttled lever that was accessible by either pilot. Because solo flying meant the left hand would be on the stick and the right on the throttle, I found the Auster difficult, particularly as it landed at a very low speed, so I went on flying in the hands of the clumsy novice!

Towards the end of 1960, the Tiger Moth and Stinson Sentinel were restored to service and I had flights in them. The Tiger Moth was a single-engine biplane of 1930s design in which several generations of pilots had had their initial training. It had two open cockpits tandem-style, no brakes, and a tail skid instead of a wheel so the friction of the skid on the ground acted as a brake. The 'Tiger' was flown solo from the rear cockpit, and thus the pilot had poor visibility on the ground, which was countered by swinging the nose from side to side when taxiing.

To prevent eardrum damage in an open-cockpit aircraft, a helmet is essential and goggles too, while the pilots communicate via a 'speaking tube' but in reality by yelling. The Tiger Moth was the delight of those who had learnt in it, but I hated it and found the Stinson very pleasurable instead, being extremely stable and easy to land. Our Stinson was a war-surplus machine, of similar configuration to the Auster, and a



type said to have been designed for short takeoff and landing behind enemy lines, especially for airlifting the wounded. The fuselage behind the rear cockpit had a space large enough for a stretcher, and on the dashboard a plate carried the intriguing legend 'Do not spin when carrying litter patient'!

I flew regularly, but lacked the confidence (and courage) to do the 300-mile cross-country solo for the first time, though younger learners took it in their stride. I thus got 'CHS' to come with me. The intermediate landings were at Minneriya and Puttalam (Palavi), where the wartime strips were kept in tolerable repair and a watcher lived hard by. Quite apart from other fears, I also had no confidence in my navigational abilities, which were, however, strengthened after my flight with 'CHS', in December 1960, when I located prominent landmarks en route.

In February 1961, I finally set off on my solo cross-country, in a Chipmunk. This aircraft had quite small fuel capacity so refuelling was required at Minneriya, the necessary arrangements being made with the Shell Company, there being no fuel at the strip. As luck would have it, Shell was not awaiting me so a boy on a bicycle was despatched. After a long wait, the fuel arrived, and although Ceylon was well into the 20th century, it was in a 44-gallon drum on a cart drawn by a bull. Then the fuel had to be hand-pumped into the two wing tanks.

After a long delay I was able to set off again and, reaching Puttalam, overflew the airstrip to alert the watcher, who lit a 'smoke flare' (coconut husks in a chatty) to show me the wind direction. After landing there and signing the book to confirm my presence, I set off again, reaching Ratmalana at noon. I had told my boss at work I would be late on that day. When I was still absent at 11 am he rang the Ratmalana tower staff, who told him not to panic; despite which he rang my wife, Srimi, and panicked her!

Later that month I undertook the flying test and was finally able to carry passengers, although not for 'hire or reward' as specified in the Civil Aviation Act. Now I could lure unsuspecting friends and relations to a display of my newly-acquired (if a shade doubtful in my own mind) skills. It took over a year to get Srimi up in the air, after which she declared she would not be flying again except in a much more substantial craft with at least two engines.

At that time, a number of non-Ceylonese were flying at Ratmalana. Among them was Ron, an English engineer working in the Kalatuwewa scheme, who was really keen to keep a Private Pilots' Association going, but it died with his departure. In March 1961 one of the Chipmunks, 4R-AAX, was destroyed when it crashed into a house beside the railway line at Ratmalana, but only minor injuries were incurred by the instructor and trainee pilot.

Toward the end of 1961 there were many Ceylonese student pilots seeking to be professional

pilots, but the Air Academy ceased to exist in October 1961 for reasons best known to the bureaucrats. My logbook shows no flights between 17 September 1961 and 16 March 1963, a period I would not have allowed to pass if there was any means of flying. The plight of those seeking commercial licences must have been desperate.



• A Chipmunk on display at the RCyAF Museum in Ratmalana.

However, in March 1963 private flying recommenced under the aegis of a loosely-constituted 'flying school' with four aircraft – the two Austers, the Stinson and the Aero 45, all transferred into the custody of Air Ceylon – but no full-time instructors. Leslie de Silva, 'Ossie' Jayawardene and a few Air Ceylon pilots were volunteer instructors, as far as I recall, for no pay. By mid-1965 I had endorsements to fly the Auster, Stinson and Tiger Moth. The British High Commission Defence Advisor, Wing Commander Michael A.N. Hills, who also served as an honorary instructor at Ratmalana, was very keen on flying light aircraft, particularly the Tiger Moth, and insisted I loop-the-loop in it, with him as second pilot. I did not enjoy it at all, particularly as the dirt on the cockpit floor fell on my head while we were inverted!

Quite a few foreigners were learning to fly because it was still cheap. The German Cultural Attaché, Dr. Kuhne, was one, also Coelho, the Portuguese Chargé d'affaires, and Mrs. Sally Kindness, whose husband worked at the Mercantile Bank in Galle. She drove all the way to Ratmalana, at breakneck speeds, for lessons. A few local lads were persistent enough in the mid-1960s to obtain commercial licences and started off as first officers with Air Ceylon, one being Ravi Jayawardene, son of 'J.R'.

Except for the hiatus following the closure of the Air Academy, I flew regularly all through the 1960s, almost entirely in both Austers, one being the aircraft (4R-AAM) flown from the UK to Ceylon by J.P. Obeyesekere in 1946, then registered VP-CAO. On 6 June 1966 flying training activities were again for



malised with the inauguration of the Flying Training School by the D.C.A., initially with only two aircraft: one Auster and the revitalised Tiger Moth 4R-AAB. They were later joined by the fourth Chipmunk (4R-ACM) loaned by the Air Force, and in 1968 I flew this aircraft for preference, though the Auster was better for taking a passenger who sat next to the pilot, making conversation fairly easy.

When the Stinson had reached the end of its certificated life, in 1965 or 1966 it was purchased by an Austrian/French/Italian film company who were permitted to use it one last time but without the aircraft leaving the ground. With L.B. de Silva at the controls, a spectacular crash-and-burn was staged at Katukurunda airstrip for the climactic scene in the B-minus spy/martial arts thriller *Three Yellow Cats* (a.k.a. *Death is Nimble, Death is Quick*). As the superannuated Stinson with 'bad guy' aboard was starting its takeoff roll, the plane's path was blocked by a herd of elephants, allowing a Citroën DS19 to ram into it, ensuring that both car and aircraft ended their respective careers literally in a blaze of glory!

In January 1970 the Indian Government gifted a Hindustan Pushpak two-seat trainer to the Flying Training School. It was officially handed over to Governor-General Mr. William Gopallawa by Indian President V.V. Giri, who was visiting Ceylon at the time. This aircraft (4R-ACP), similar in configuration to the Stinson and Austers, was built in India by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and had a Continental 90 hp engine. It was very stable and easy to fly but looked like a duck. It may be wondered why any manufacturer would include 'push' in the name of one of its products. But 'Pushpak' is in fact derived from 'Pushpaka Vimana', an ancient Indian name for the

mythical 'aerial vehicle' better known in Sri Lanka as the 'dhandu monara' (wooden peacock) of Ramayana/Rama/Sita/Ravana fame.

By mid-March 1971 both Austers had been written off in fatal accidents. However, the burnt-out, twisted wreckage of 4R-AAM (while on loan to the Air Academy/Flying Training School from J.P. Obeyesekere it had claimed the life of Cyril Berenger and his passenger Ralph Setunge) was restored to static display condition a few years ago, and is now a key exhibit, wearing its original VP-CAO registration, at the Sri Lanka Air Force Museum, Ratmalana. The Air Force had reclaimed Chipmunk 4R-ACM, and Tiger Moth 4R-AAB was yet again 'retired hurt', leaving only the Pushpak in operation. I had my last flight in the latter on 31 October 1971, when my flying ceased forever. Those years remain cherished memories.

#### Footnotes:

1. Sadly, the Pushpak was destroyed in a fatal crash in June 1977.

2. The Sri Lanka Air Force Museum at Ratmalana is excellent, with attractive, well laid-out gardens, and definitely worth a visit. One of the flying exhibits is 'my' former Tiger Moth 4R-AAB. After being taken over in derelict condition by the Sri Lanka Air Force, it was restored to airworthiness in the 1980s with the assistance of a British expatriate Air Lanka captain, and now wears the SLAF's military serial (registration) CX-123.

(I have to thank Captain Gihan A. Fernando of Sri Lankan Airlines for checking my facts; and C.S.A. member Roger Thiedeman for also checking facts, adding information and editing this article.)

#### Let's define 'em!

- Office *n.* A place where you can relax after a strenuous night at home.
- Smile *n.* A curve that can set a lot of things straight.
- Tears *n.* The means by which masculine will-power is defeated by feminine water-power.
- Acre *n.* Someone that aches.
- Afterdraft *n.* Life following conscription.
- Atomise *v.* To transform from a male cat to a female.
- Carnation *n.* Country where each citizen owns an automobile.
- Childhood *n.* Cowl for an infant.
- Colander *n.* Someone who arrives with you on the same plane.
- Coroner *n.* A round corner.
- Cytology *n.* The study of real estate.
- Diode *n.* A pair of long poems.
- Emotion *n.* Electron movement (also e-motion).
- Evening *n.* The first Chinese woman God created.
- Exercise *n.* Her former body measurements.
- Immediate *v.* To refrain from mediating.
- Liquor *n.* How a male animal cleans his mate.
- Maritime *n.* Hour of a wedding.
- Nitrate *n.* The price after sundown.
- Season *n.* Male offspring of Poseidon.
- Syntax *n.* Tariff on immorality.



*Only fourteen and the London Patent Office recognised this engineering wizard's application for his improvements to Reversing Gear for Steam Locomotives. Here THIRU ARUMUGAM, with some original research, reveals previously unknown facts about the young inventor in ...*

## Ceylonese teenager granted a Royal Patent – 100 years ago!

**M**ore than 100 years ago, on 21 October 1909, Bertram Elibank Dawapurathna, a 14-year old student of Royal College, Colombo, applied to the London Patents Office for a Royal Patent for Improvements in Reversing Gear for Steam Engines and the Royal Patent No. 24199 was granted to him on 09 June 1910, when he was 15-years old.

This achievement is recorded in the book "The History of Royal College, formerly called Colombo Academy/written by boys in the school, 1931" published when Royal College was almost one 100-years old. The book records on page 96 that "Two remarkable performances must not be left out. First, the unique achievement of P L Jansz, who came first in the British Empire in the Junior Cambridge, and later won the University Scholarship; second the invention of B E Dawapurathna, who improved the reversing gear for steam engines. This invention was patented in London".

Bertram was born in 1895 and was the youngest son of David Dawapurathna. (As there are small variations in the spelling of the surname Dawapurathna, for the purpose of this article, the spelling will be the same as that used in his patent applications.) At the time of Bertram's birth, Sir Arthur Elibank Havelock was the Governor of Ceylon and that is why Bertram was given the middle name of Elibank. David was from Galle and won a scholarship to study at Royal College. He qualified as a lawyer

and had a good practice in Colombo. Bertram's older sister Lilian, was one of the first girls to pass the Cambridge Senior Examination. She married Gregory Weeramantry. Gregory was a student at St Benedict's College, Colombo, where, in 1909, he came first in the British Empire in the Cambridge Junior Examination. He subsequently studied in the University of London, graduating in 1916. Justice Christopher Weeramantry is the youngest son of Gregory and Lilian. Christopher was a Supreme Court Judge in Ceylon, Professor of Law at Monash University, Melbourne and a Judge in the International Court of Justice in The Hague. In Volume 1 of his autobiography "Towards One World: The Memoirs of Judge C G

Weeramantry", he has, in pages 173 - 179, outlined the life of his uncle (mother's brother) Bertram Dawapurathna. Justice Weeramantry records (p. 173) that Bertram as a schoolboy "earned such a reputation for his mechanical skills that people from far and wide would seek his help to repair their motor cars, motorcycles, rice mills or any sort of machinery you could name".

### Royal Patents

A few years later, while still a teenager, Dawapurathna was granted a second Royal Patent, No. 6883 dated 20 March 1914, for an Improved Valve Mechanism for Internal Combustion Engines. The texts of the two Patent applications are reproduced in Justice Weeramantry's book, but not the engineering drawings that would have accompanied the applications. To understand the patent applications, one needs to study the drawings in conjunction with the text. The drawings have now been tracked down and are reproduced here for the first time, together with the texts of the patents.

Dawapurathna's application for a patent for Improvements in Reversing Gear for Steam Engines is dated 21 October 1909. He was then a Form V student in Royal College, aged about 14 years (Weeramantry p. 173). Railways were then very much in the news with the opening of the Northern Line to Kankesanthurai in 1905. The Royal Patent was granted to this genius on 09 June 1910, i.e. less than eight months after submitting his application. Nowadays, it takes, on average, about four and half years between applying for a patent and being informed whether it is successful or not. Last year over 150,000 patents were awarded in the UK.

To understand the background in which the patent application was made, a brief history of the steam engine would not be inappropriate. It was the steam engine that sparked off the industrial revolution. With the invention of the stationary steam engine it became possible to locate a manufacturing factory to manufacture them anywhere, whereas previously such factories had to be located adjacent to a stream to obtain motive power from a waterwheel. The first commercially successful stationary steam engines were built by James Watt in the latter part of the 18th century. In 1804 Richard Trevithick demonstrated the first steam powered railway locomotive. In 1825, George Stephenson built a steam locomotive for the



• Bertram Dawapurathna in 1912



Stockton and Darlington Railway and this was the first steam powered railway open to the public.

Steam engines in locomotives are double-acting engines. In this respect they differ from internal combustion engines which are single acting engines. Steam is introduced at one end of a cylinder and as the steam expands it pushes a piston towards the other end of the cylinder. When steam is then admitted to the other end of the cylinder the piston is pushed back, meanwhile the originally admitted steam is released from the cylinder. The piston is connected by shafts and connecting rods to the driven wheels of the locomotive. This is the double acting principle. The introduction of steam to the two ends of the cylinder and the exhausting of used steam is done by a slide valve which slides and uncovers and covers ports leading to the cylinder. The motion of the slide valve is derived from linkages to the wheels, connecting rods or axles and this is the valve gear.

#### *Stephenson's Valve Gear*

Early stationary steam engines were used in factories and for driving water pumps, and the reversal of the direction of rotation was rarely required. In the case of steam locomotives, reversal of direction of rotation is essential, particularly for shunting locomotives which require frequent reversal. From 1841 to the end of the 19th century, the most popular type of loco-



• *Figure 1: Stephenson's Inside Valve Gear.*

tive valve gear was the Stephenson valve gear. This was developed in Robert (son of George) Stephenson's locomotive works in Newcastle upon Tyne.

It consisted of two eccentrics mounted on the driven locomotive wheel axle, out of phase with each other, which were connected to link rods. The other ends of the two link rods were connected by pins to the top and bottom of a vertical slotted expansion link. This link was connected to a reach rod ending in a lever or screw handwheel in the engine driver's cab. Forward or reverse motion of the engine was attained by raising or lowering the expansion link from the driver's cab. The slide valve which admitted and released steam to and from the engine cylinder was connected by a valve rod and by a pin to a slide which could move up or down in the slot of the expansion link.

Figure 1 shows a typical example of the drive mechanism for Stephenson's inside valve gear. This photo was taken of a Beyer Peacock 2-6-0 steam locomotive which was built in 1890 and used by the New South Wales Government Railway. The valve gear is internally mounted, i.e. within the frame and directly under the boiler. The bottom and top link rods get their oscillating simple harmonic motion from eccentrics (not in picture) on the left and mounted on the wheel axle. The second pair of top and bottom link rods in the background are for operating the valve on the other side of the locomotive. The link rods are pinned to the top and bottom of a slotted expansion link which is partially obscured by the vertical reach rod in the front of the picture. It is this reach rod which is used to raise or lower the slotted expansion link. The reach rod is connected by links to a lever and a notched quadrant in the engine driver's cab. This lever controls the forward and reverse motion of the locomotive by bodily lifting or lowering the expansion link. The slotted link position also controls the percentage steam cut-off, i.e. the percentage of piston travel at which the admission of steam to the cylinder is cut off. A long cut-off (say 75%) is required for high torque when starting to move, and this percentage is progressively reduced as the locomotive picks up speed. This procedure is known as 'notching up'. The connection from the valve drive gear in the picture to the actual steam slide valve (not shown) is by a valve rod pinned on to a slide which can move up or down in the slot of the expansion rod. The valve rod passes through a hole in the vertical plate on the right of the picture.

Stephenson and Co. was the largest single supplier of steam locomotives to the Ceylon Government Railway (CGR). Of the 410 steam locomotives purchased by the CGR, 64 nos. were manufactured by them, including the first five locomotives purchased by the CGR. Many of them would have been fitted with Stephenson's valve gear, as well other steam locomotives purchased by the CGR. It would have been these examples of Stephenson's valve gear that Dawapurathna would have studied when formulating his ideas for his patent application.

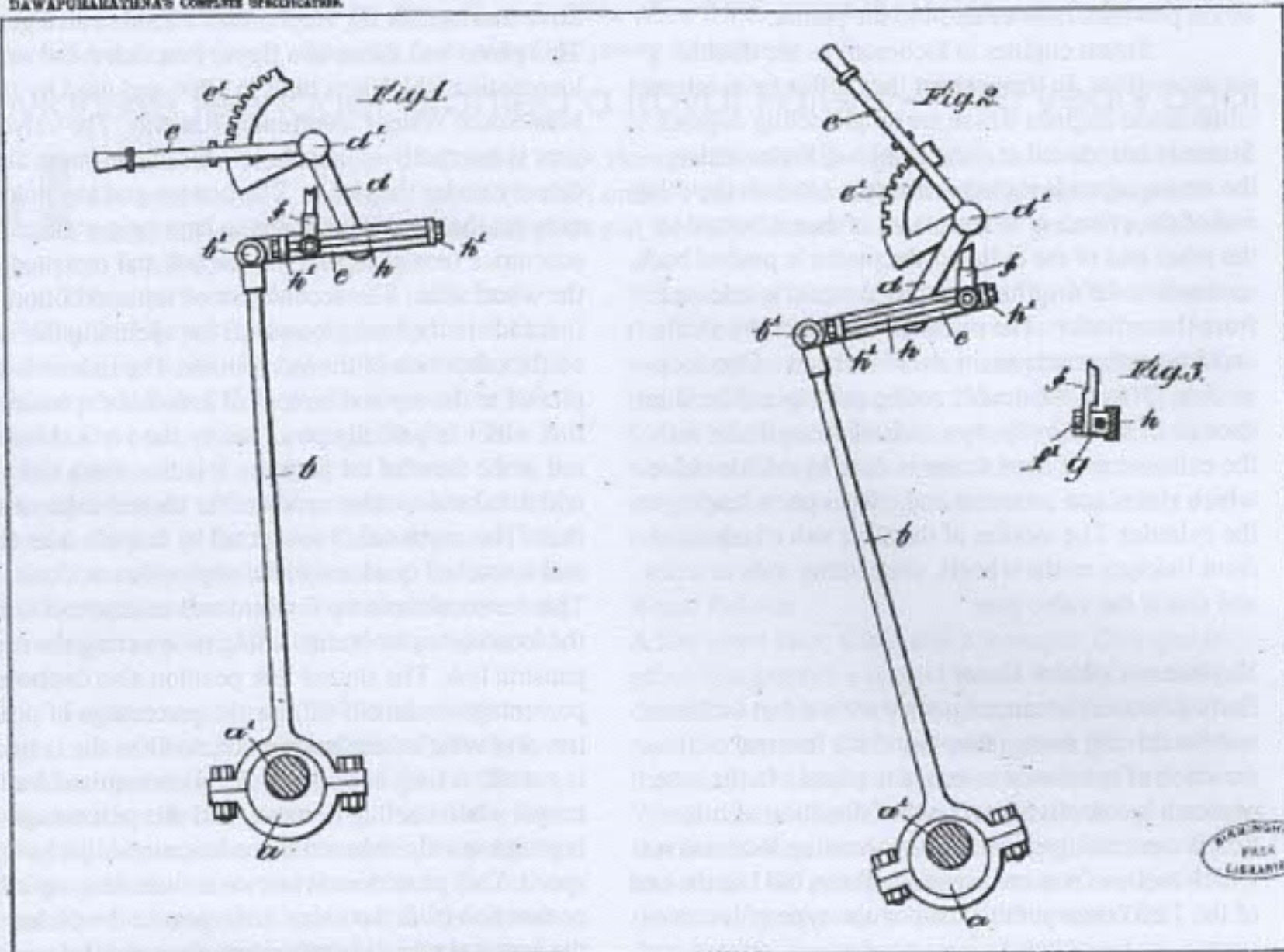
An early example of a steam locomotive built by Stephenson and Co. which was supplied to the New South Wales Government Railway was a 0-6-0 built in 1864, the same year that the first train ran in Ceylon. It has internally mounted Stephenson valve gear with an inside steam cylinder. It weighed 50 tons, had a tractive effort of 18,000 lbf and a top speed of 25 mph (40 km/h).

#### *Dawapurathna's steam valve gear*

The innovation that Dawapurathna proposed in his patent was that only one eccentric link be used instead of the two links used in Stephenson's valve gear. This is shown in the drawing attached to



[This Drawing is a reproduction of the Original on a reduced scale]



• Diagram attached to Patent Application in Figure 3.

the patent application in Figure 3. The eccentric 'a' is connected to a link rod 'b' the other end of which is pivoted to a rocking arm 'c' which is fulcrumed to an arm 'd' which leads to the valve control rod 'e' in the driver's cab. The control rod position is adjustable on a toothed quadrant 'e1'. The rod 'f' which leads to the valve gear is pivoted to a block 'g' which can slide on the guide bar 'h' mounted on the rocking arm. The engine driver by altering the position of the lever 'e' on the toothed quadrant can change the position of the block 'g' and go forward or reverse. It can be seen that the block 'g' will move the valve rod 'f' in the opposite direction when it is on the left hand side of the rocking arm 'c', compared with when it is on the right hand side. The position of the block 'g' will also control the percentage steam cut off. This simplifies the valve gear and also reduces the cost. Also because the valve gear is much lighter, it requires much less physical effort for the engine driver to 'notch up' or change from forward to reverse motion.

The only point that remains uncertain is whether the rocking arm 'c' should be a straight link as shown, or whether it should in the form of an arc so that the valve rod is a sort of a radius bar to maintain the required valve lead and lap at different valve cut off settings. Overall, what an ingenious idea to be conceived by a 14-year old schoolboy without any

formal engineering training. The boy is nothing short of a genius.

#### Comparable valve gear

Although a careful search of steam valve gear literature was made, a commercial application of this arrangement could not be found. At that time patents were valid for 14 years provided the annual renewal fees were paid. If a manufacturer wants to make commercial use of someone else's patent, he must buy the patent outright from the patentee or obtain a licence from the patentee and pay him royalties. An example of a royalty payment was when the locomotive manufacturer Beyer Peacock obtained the sole rights from the design engineer Herbert Garratt to manufacture Garratt engines using his patent for articulated steam locomotives. Beyer Peacock agreed to pay royalties to Garratt of two pounds sterling per ton weight of Garratt locomotives manufactured. Over a thousand Garratt locomotives were finally made with some of them weighing up to 250 tons!

Patent Licence transactions are recorded in the Register of Patents. Dawapurarathna's patents gave a contact address in Hulftsdorf, Colombo, which could either be the address of the family home or the address of his father's legal practice office. Any applicant who wanted a licence would have had to contact Dawapurarathna at this address but it appears that no such licence applications were received.

(Continued on page 15)



• For better appreciation of the inventions, Patent application on this page and those on pages 14 and 15 to be read with reference to drawing on opposite page.

N<sup>o</sup> 24,199



A.D. 1909

Date of Application, 21st Oct., 1909 – Accepted, 9th June, 1910

COMPLETE SPECIFICATION.

Improvements in Reversing Gear for Steam Engines.

I, BERTRAN ELIBANK DAWAPURARATHNA, of 7, Hultsdorf Street, Colombo, Ceylon, Student, do hereby declare the nature of this invention and in what manner the same is to be performed, to be particularly described and ascertained in and by the following statement:—

5 This invention relates to improvements in reversing gear for steam engines of the kind wherein one eccentric and rod is employed which is coupled to a pivoted bar to which is slidably connected the valve rod. The object of the present invention is to provide an improved construction of such gear.

10 To this end the eccentric rod is pivoted to a rocking arm, the fulcrum of which is carried upon a pivoted lever which is adapted to be locked in the required position by a toothed quadrant.

In order that this invention may be more fully understood, it will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:—

15 Figures 1 and 2 are diagrammatic views illustrating the gear in two positions, and

Figure 3 is a detail hereinafter referred to.

20 As shewn in the drawings, the eccentric sheave *a* is keyed on to the crank shaft *a*<sup>1</sup>, the eccentric rod *b* being pivoted as at *b*<sup>1</sup> to one extremity of a rocking arm *c* fulcrumed upon an arm *d* pivoted as at *d*<sup>1</sup> upon which pivotal point is also mounted a lever *e* designed to engage a toothed quadrant *e*<sup>1</sup>.

The valve rod *f* is pivoted as at *f*<sup>1</sup> to a perforated block *g* designed so as to be slidably carried upon a guide bar *h* mounted between lugs *h*<sup>1</sup> carried on the rocking arm *c*.

25 It will be seen that by moving the arm *d* by means of the lever *e*, the block *g* will be caused to slide upon the bar *h* so that the valve rod *f* may be brought to any position relative to the fulcrum of the rocking arm *c* upon the arm *d*, within practical limits, and the movement of the valve accordingly regulated.

30 It is obvious that the details of construction may be varied considerably without departing from the spirit of this invention, and I do not restrict myself in this respect.

Having now particularly described and ascertained the nature of my said invention and in what manner the same is to be performed, I declare that what I claim is:—

35 1. A reversing gear of the kind described characterised in that the pivoted bar to which the valve and eccentric rods are connected is mounted upon one arm of a bell-crank lever whilst the other arm is provided with means for locking same in desired position, substantially as set forth.

40 2. The improved reversing gear for steam engines such as claimed in Claim 1, comprising the combination and arrangement of parts, operating substantially as described and shewn with reference to the accompanying drawings and for the purposes specified.

Dated this 21st day of October, 1909.

CASELL & Co.,

Jessel Chambers,

88, 89 & 90, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.,

Registered Patent Agents.

Redhill: Printed for His Majesty's Stationery Office, by Love & Malcomson, Ltd.—1910.

[Price 8d.]





N° 6883



A.D. 1913

Date of Application, 20th Mar., 1913—Accepted, 20th Mar., 1914

## COMPLETE SPECIFICATION.

## Improved Valve Mechanism for Internal Combustion Engines.

I, BERTRAM ELIBANK DAWAPURARATHNA, Engineering Student, of 1, Hultsdorf, Colombo, Ceylon, at present residing at 34, Blythswood Drive, Kelvinside, Glasgow, do hereby declare the nature of this invention and in what manner the same is to be performed, to be particularly described and ascertained in and by the following statement:—

This invention relates to valve mechanism for internal combustion engines.

It has reference in particular to the known type wherein a single rotating plug or taper valve member having suitable inlet and outlet ports therein is adapted to co-act with ports in a valve casing common to two cylinders, the said valve being so formed and rotated as to permit of the function of the four stroke cycle being carried out at each revolution of the said valve, the exhaust port in the valve being formed in the same plane as the inlet port and having a transverse oblique passage to a side main exhaust. In this connection, the device also embodies known arrangement whereby the plug valve is adapted to be pressed within the casing by spring and collar means in order that any slackness due to wear may be automatically taken up and thus always maintains a tight joint.

The present invention consists in a specific arrangement of the above type substantially as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

The accompanying drawings illustrate valve mechanism made in accordance with the invention in which:—

Fig. 1. is a part plan in section of a pair of cylinders.

Fig. 2 is an elevation of the valve with the casing in section.

Fig. 3. is a part similar view of Fig. 1 with the parts in a different position.

A, B, are two cylinders cast *en-bloc* with a common conical valve casing C, the one A communicating with said casing by the port *a* and the one B by means of the port *b*. *d* is the exhaust port leading from the casing C, said exhaust port being disposed at a lower level than the ports *a b* and said cylinders are water jacketed in the usual manner as at *e*.

*f* is a conical valve mounted in the casing *c* and adapted to be rotated at half engine speed by suitable tooth or other gearing by the spindle *f*<sup>1</sup> on which the valve is mounted. This valve *f* is provided towards the upper or wider end with an inlet port *g* communicating by the pipe *h* to the carburettor.

*j* is an exhaust passage formed through the body of the valve in an oblique manner the upper end opening into a gap *k*, similar to and in the same plane as the one *g*, and the other end *j*<sup>1</sup> opening on the opposite side of the valve in the same plane as that of the main exhaust *d*.

It will be seen that the ports *a* & *b* open into the valve casing at 90° apart and thus as the said valve is driven at half the speed of the engine shaft, the cranks of the respective cylinders must be disposed at 180 degrees. This arrangement of having the cranks at 180 degrees is preferable to ensure balanced or even running of the engine but if desired such as in the case where more than one pair of cylinders are employed in one engine, the cranks and consequently the position of the ports *a* & *b* could be varied. The position of the

[Price 8d.]



*Improved Valve Mechanism for Internal Combustion Engines.*

gaps or ports *g* & *k* would of course have to be formed in corresponding position.

In operation assuming that the parts are in the position of Fig. 1 it will be seen that the cylinder A is just commencing the suction stroke whilst the cylinder B is exhausting. Upon the continued movement of the valve in the direction of the arrow, the port *g* will fully open the inlet and then close same to allow of the compression. During the compression stroke the port *g* will have come opposite to the port *b* of cylinder B when its piston will be in the position to effect the suction stroke. When the valve has rotated one half revolution it is in the position shewn in Fig. 3, the charge in cylinder A is being fired and that in cylinder B being compressed. On further movement the cylinder B fires by which time the gap *k* and passages *j* will be in the position to allow of the exhaust gases of A escaping. The cycle of operations is then recommenced by the valve moving into the position of Fig. 1.

For the purpose of taking up any slackness due to wear between the valve *f* and casing C the spindle *f*<sup>1</sup> is provided as has already been proposed with a collar *m* keyed thereon and a washer or ring *o* is rotatably mounted by ball bearings or otherwise, upon the lower end of said casing whereby an interposed spring *n* serves to maintain an efficient seating between the casing and valve and thus loss of power through leakage is obviated.

The spindle *f*<sup>1</sup> will be coupled to the driving mechanism through suitable means such as a slidable connection, as will permit the valve being always maintained closely against the seating without affecting the drive.

Having now particularly described and ascertained the nature of my said invention, and in what manner the same is to be performed, I declare that what I claim is:—

1. The improved valve mechanism for internal combustion engines constructed arranged and adapted to operate substantially as set forth.

Dated this 19th day of March, 1913.

CASELL & Co.,  
Registered Patent Agents,  
Jessel Chambers, 88—89—90, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

Redhill: Printed for His Majesty's Stationery Office, by Love & Malcomson, Ltd.—1914.

(Continued from page 12)

To get things in their proper perspective, at the time that Dawapurathna applied for his patent, there were already over a hundred steam valve gear patents which were in force. Only a handful of these went into commercial manufacture. The vast majority of them used two links for driving the motion of the valve gear, only three or four designs used a single link like Dawapurathna's design. The nearest to his design was the Southern valve gear.

This was designed by William Sherman Brown, an employee of Southern Railways (USA) and used on their locomotives. Figure 4 shows this valve gear installed on a D55 2-8-0 Australian Consolidation locomotive built in 1918 which was used by the New South Wales Government Railway. The valve gear is driven off a single cranked drive bar off the driving wheel on the left. It is the rod below the main connect-

ing rod. The rod is pivoted and hung by a bar, the left bar of the two vertical bars in the centre of the picture. The top of this bar is pivoted to a block. The position of this block can be varied by the engine driver by sliding it within the curved link. Note that this curved link is firmly bolted down to the engine frame at both ends. To the end of the cranked drive bar is linked a second vertical bar which is the right hand bar in the centre of the picture. The upper end of this bar is linked to a bell crank which translates the up and down motion of cranked drive bar to a horizontal motion to control the slide valve to give forward and reverse motion to the locomotive and also control the percentage steam cut off. An interesting working model of the Southern valve gear made up with Lego pieces can be seen at: [youtube.com/watch?v=MqGdjl7ltg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqGdjl7ltg)

(To be continued in next issue)



**I**t is on record that the game of cricket was introduced to Ceylon around 1832 when the Rev. Brooke Bailey came to the country to teach at the Colombo Academy now known as Royal College. Rev. Bailey was said to be "an excellent cricketer and joined the boys in their games". He is said to have done much to make cricket a popular pastime. 150 years later, the game of cricket in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) achieved international recognition when the International Cricket Council granted the country "Test cricket status". In the words of a well known sports writer: "cricket in Sri Lanka joined the 'high table' hobnobbing with the greatest players in the world. Some Sri Lankan players such as Muralidharan, Sanath Jayasuriya, Kumar Sangakkara, Mahela Jayawardene, Dilshan being recognised as leading exponents of the game. It has been a long and hard struggle, however, in the years that preceded conferment of test status. The improvement of cricket standards was the result of the influence of those great players, as well as efforts of administrators of the game who contributed to its development in Sri Lanka over the years preceding test status.

Sometime in 1949, a young cricket fan attended a game of cricket at the Colombo Oval. The match was between Ceylon and Pakistan played on 23 and 24 March, 1949. At that time the Oval had not changed its name to P.Saravanamuttu Stadium, but it was the major cricket ground in the island and home to the Tamil Union Cricket Club. The young cricket fan (who will remain anonymous), was so enamoured with the game that he could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw the crème de la crème of Ceylonese cricket participating in the game together with many other national cricketers who were present as spectators. Cricket fans of today in search of autographs tend to arm themselves with a mini cricket bat on which cricketers would place their signatures. On that occasion, however, the young man had with him a copy of his school magazine which he had taken to the oval to read during breaks. Using the rare opportunity that presented itself, he used the back cover of the magazine for the cricketers' autographs. The resulting collage of autographs represents a galaxy of names of that era and is unique in that it has captured on one manuscript the signature of every reputed cricketer of the 1940s and 1950s without exception. Only a few of them are alive today and the signatures are therefore all the more poignant. The names are so renowned and presented in such an assortment that it was most opportune to present it in our journal. So here it is for the discerning readership of *The Ceylankan*.

It has been said that the decades of the 1940s and 1950s was the era which saw the game of cricket played in Sri Lanka and in other cricketing nations in the best traditions of the game. It was the pre-Test era for Ceylon, the age of the amateur cricketer who

## Ceylonese Cricketing Greats of the mid-20th century

by *The Rambler*

played it for the love of the game. Most cricketers then were employed either in government or mercantile service, bar the few that described themselves as landed proprietors. That was a time when Ceylonese society was stratified by class and it was only the English speaking middle and upper classes who indulged in the game. The vast majority of the country's population who were non-English speaking and whose usual attire was not the shirt and trouser, did not participate either as players or as spectators.

Interest in the game was thus restricted by class and education. Young cricketers of that age were nurtured in the more affluent schools in Colombo and in other parts of the country. Cricket was very much a game for the elite most of whom could afford membership of the clubs of Colombo. Thankfully, however, various governmental policies in ensuing years, particularly in education, have led to a new egalitarianism which entered the game, thus making available to the game the hitherto unavailable rural talent. The outreach created thus has in no small way helped Sri Lanka to reach the highest level in international cricket. Some cricketers playing for Sri Lanka today are considered to be the world's leading exponents of the game, something not even dreamed of during the 1940s and 1950s. Let us not, however, forget the glory days of the past when the best talent available to the game in those times, gave of their utmost to bring the game forward to what it is today.

The 41 cricketing greats whose autographs are presented here are those of S.S. (Sargo) Jayawickrema, F.C. (Derek) de Saram, M. Sathasivam, C.I. (Ivers) Gunasekera, Mahes Rodrigo, Malcolm Spittell, E.B. (Tita) Nathanielsz, Ben Navaratne, Sathi Coomaraswamy, A.P. Calladine, Pat McCarthy, Gamini Goonesena, B.R. (Russell) Heyn, R.B. (Bertie) Wijesinghe, L.E. (Lucien) De Zoysa, L.C.A. Leefe, R.L. (Robert) de Kretser, Owen Kern, Malcolm Wright, F.J. (Koo) de Saram, A.J.D.N. Selvadurai, H.I.K. Fernando, E.G. Waddilove, V.G. (Vernon) Prins, E.C. (Edward) Kelaart, H.S. Oorloff, Makkin Salih, F.G. (Fairlie) Dalpathadu, Lionel Wadsworth, S. Nagendra, M. Kasipillai, H.C. (Hugh) Aldons, C.E. (Charlie) Allen, B.J. Bahar, Bertus Perera,



**Hector Perera, H.T. Gunasekera, Clarrie Abeysekera, T.H. Burah, Neil de Silva and J.E.M. Fernando.** Also included was the signature in Tamil of **Arul Mary**, the world's only female cricket groundkeeper.

#### BRIEF NOTES ON THE NAMES

**S.S. (Sargo) Jayawickreme** captained his school Royal College, his club, the Sinhalese Sports Club and his country whose national team was then called **All Ceylon**. During a long and prolific cricket career he amassed 56 centuries. **F.C. de Saram** known to his friends as Derrick or "Papa" captained his school, Royal College at cricket, tennis and rugby football. He joined Keble College, Oxford and played for the University in cricket, tennis and golf. A stalwart of the Sinhalese Sports Club, he was one of the greatest all-round sportsmen of that era. **M. Sathasivam**, the mercurial batsman of that age played for his old school Wesley College, his club the Tamil Union, and for his country, Ceylon, as well as for Singapore where he was domiciled for a few years. Satha as he was known to his friends, has been widely acknowledged as a batting genius. **C.I. Gunasekera** played for Royal College, the Sinhalese Sports Club and Ceylon captaining the national side. Famed for his powerful hitting, he was noted for his quick fire scores against visiting international teams. He was also a tennis champion, winning in the national doubles and mixed doubles titles. **Mahes Rodrigo** captained Royal College, played for the Sinhalese Sports Club and was a regular member of the national side. He has the unique distinction of representing his country in cricket and rugby where he was a cerebral scrum half. **Malcolm Spittel** played for St Josephs College, the Nondescripts Cricket Club and Ceylon. He was a fine all-rounder who holds the unique record of taking all 10 wickets in a Saravanamuttu (Sara) Trophy match in 1953. **E.B.(Tita) Nathanielsz** sometimes called the "human catapult" for his two step run up sending off fast deliveries, played cricket for the Colts and for Ceylon for several years. **Ben Navaratne** played for Zahira College, the Sinhalese Sports Club and for Ceylon also for several years. A classy wicketkeeper, he was known for his chatter behind the wickets. **Sathi Coomaraswamy** played for Royal College, the Tamil Union and for All Ceylon for several years. **A.P. Calladine** who played for the CCC, was a left arm all rounder. **Pat McCarthy** was an outstanding cricketer who played for Royal College, and represented Ceylon while at school. He later migrated to Australia and played in the Sheffield Shield, the first Ceylon born cricketer to do so. **Gamini Goonesena** was another outstanding cricketer for Royal College, Cambridge University and Ceylon. He captained Cambridge and Ceylon and is the holder of many records in the Oxford-Cambridge cricket encounters. **B.R. Heyn** played for Royal, the BRC, and for Ceylon and was

a dependable batsman. **R.B. Wijesinghe** played for St Thomas, the SSC, and for Ceylon and later was a cricket commentator. **L.E. de Zoysa** played for Royal, the SSC and for Ceylon as a spin bowler. **L.C.A. Leefe** played cricket for the CCC for several years as a wicket keeper. **R.L. de Kretser** played for Royal College, BRC and Ceylon. **Owen Kern** played for the Colts CC and was mainly a bowler. He was a member of the Colts team that toured India in 1948. **Malcolm Wright** played for Trinity College, the Shell Co and NCC. **F.J. de Saram** played for Royal College, the SSC as an opening batsman, and for Ceylon. He was also a tennis champion winning the doubles title at the National Championships with his brother Derrick. **A.J.D.N. Selvadurai** played for STC, the Tamil Union and Ceylon as a fast bowler. **H.I.K Fernando** played for Prince of Wales College, the SSC and for Ceylon and was a prolific run scorer. **E.G. Waddilove** played for the CCC and was also a rugby player who represented Ceylon. **V.G. Prins** Captained STC and represented Ceylon He was a top order batting all-rounder. **E.C. Kelaart** was a double international having represented the country both in cricket and hockey; and played for Royal College and the BRC. **H.S. Oorloff** played as a middle order batsman for Royal and later for the BRC. He was a member of the All Ceylon team of 1948. **Makkin Salih** was an opening batsmen playing for St Josephs, the Moors Sports Club, and for Ceylon. **F.G. Dalpathadu** turned out as a middle order batsman for the SSC and was a dependable medium paced bowler. **Lionel Wadsworth** captained Trinity College in 1948/49 and as a 18-year old, captained the Combined Colleges team against the visiting West Indians in 1948. **S. Nagendra** played for Wesley College, the Tamil Union and Ceylon mainly as an opening batsman. **M. Kasipillai** captained the Royal College team of 1947 and later played for Cambridge University and Ceylon. **H.C. (Hugh) Aldons** played for Royal College, the Colts CC and Ceylon as an all rounder. He was also a good rugger player representing Royal and Havelocks. **Charlie Allen** played for the CCC for many years and opened bowling for Ceylon. **B.J.H. Bahar** played in the Ceylon XI which played against the Pakistan team in Ceylon 1948.49 was a right arm medium pace bowler. **Bertus Perera** played for Wesley College and for the Police. **Hector Perera** played for St Josephs College, the SSC and Ceylon. He was regarded as one of the best fielders of histime. **H.T. Gunasekera** played for Royal and the SSC. **Clarrie Abeysekera** played for Sty Thomas, and the NCC and for the Ceylon XI against Pakistan in 1948/49. **T.H. Burah** captained the Zahira College Cricket Team in 1951. **Neil de Silva** captained the Combined Colleges Cricket Team in 1949. **J.E.M. Fernando** played for the NCC and represented Ceylon as an opening batsman. Many of these photos were taken during their playing days.









M. SATHASIVAM

16



MAHES RODRIGO

17



18



G. GOONASEENA

19



20

F.J. de SARAM



21

R.L. de KRETZER



22 OWEN KERN

## Galaxy of Ceylon's cricketing greats

We regret the quality of these photographs is not of the best. However, the pictures are rare and untouched and depict in their original state as they appeared in newspaper and magazine articles at the time. They are named and numbered to assist identify them.

(1) Ben Navaratne (2) C.I. Gunsekera (3) E.C.Kelaart (4) S.S.Jayawickreme (5) E.G. Waddilove (6) F.C.de Saram (7) Malcolm Spittel (8) P.C.D.McCarthy (9) Hector Perera (10) B.R.Heyn (11) H.S.Oorloff (12) Hugh Aldons (13) M.Kasipillai (14) R.B.Wijesinghe (15) Sathi Coomaraswamy (16) M.Sathasivam (17) Mahes Rodrigo (18) V.G.Prins (19) Gamini Goonesena (20) F.J.de Saram (21) R.L.de Kretser (22) Owen Kern.

**Arul Mary** (photo at right) was no cricketer but she was the world's first groundswoman. Her husband was in fact the groundsman of the Colombo Oval, but being physically weak and many years older than herself he relied on the wife to do the work and she was the *de facto* groundswoman. She was responsible for a controversy when the Australian Cricket Team of 1948 led by Don Bradman played a game at the Oval and discovered that the pitch was a yard shorter than

the prescribed length. They discovered it only after the game was over but Bradman made an observation on this in his book "Farewell to Cricket". After the game was over, officials found that the tape used to measure the length of the pitch was worn off at the end, hence the incorrect measurement! An amusing aspect of the way in which international cricket was played during a period which some are wont to describe as the "golden age"!

Here she meets visiting Australian captain Bob Simpson at the Colombo Oval in April 1964.



AUSTRALIAN CAPTAIN MEETS ARUL MARY AT THE OVAL, COLOMBO, APRIL 1964



*Consultant Psychiatrist DR CHANAKA WIJERATNE focuses on traditional beliefs about treatments for mental illness in Sri Lanka and the response of western counsellors to the tsunami in ...*

## SPIRITS, SUICIDE AND TSUNAMI

Defining mental illness is notoriously difficult. Unlike physical illnesses - such as an infection which is caused by a particular microbe or coronary heart disease from diseased arteries - mental illness is far more complex in its causes, clinical presentation and treatment. This is mostly due to the complexity of the brain itself which typically consists of one hundred billion (100,000,000,000) neurones, with each neurone connected to one thousand to ten thousand other neurones.

There is another aspect of mental illness which differentiates it from physical illness which is stigma. Stigma is the combined effects of prejudice, ignorance and discrimination and results in people's reluctance to discuss their problems with a loved one, let alone present their symptoms to a professional, refusal or even denial of treatment, so there is a great deal of suffering in silence. Human rights violations of psychiatric patients are routinely reported in most countries. These include physical restraint, seclusion and denial of basic needs and privacy. Few countries have a legal framework that adequately protects the rights of people with mental disorders.

The common perception of mental illness in the Sri Lankan psyche is that of people with so called "major mental illnesses" such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder (manic depression) require care in an asylum, such as at Angoda. These illnesses are actually uncommon - schizophrenia affects one in 100 - but are severely disabling conditions. The other side of the coin is the far more common disorders like depression and anxiety which usually do not lead to hospitalisation but are disabling in their own right. Suicide is the ninth leading cause of death in Sri Lanka.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has estimated that depression is the leading cause of disability in the world. There is no epidemic of depression or anxiety. However, as a society, we are far more aware of these conditions than in the past, especially as there have been important advances in treating physical diseases. A 100-years ago, infectious disease was the scourge of the times - it was heart disease 50-years ago, and there is no doubt, the current century will be the era of neuroscience with a growing emphasis on depression, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. No mental illness is endemic to any part of the world, although extreme poverty, political instability and natural disasters increase the risks.

Globalisation has brought western beliefs and therapies that, whilst beneficial, may in some circumstances conflict with traditional methods of understanding and healing mental illness. I will focus

here on three aspects of mental illness in modern Sri Lanka. First, the traditional beliefs about the causes of mental illness, such as **spirits**; second, the rates of **suicide** which until recently were among the highest in the world; and third, the controversial response of western-trained counsellors to the 2004 **tsunami**.



• Dr Chanaka Wijeratne

### *Traditional beliefs about mental illness*

Our understanding is that mental illness is associated with genes, early childhood issues - such as trauma and the kind of relationship you had with your family of origin - your temperament and personality and adverse life events. That is pretty much a modern, scientific view and we no longer believe that masturbation or the fact of having a womb cause mental illness as we used to.

A study by Perera and Hettiarachchi of 700 tsunami-affected families in Peraliya North and Monroviawatte determined the language used to describe mental illness, understanding of causes and treatments. The Sinhalese terms *pissu*, *olmada*, *vikara* and the Tamil terms *kolam*, *kalla*, *kachal*, *paiththiyan*, all denote an inability to think rationally and the experience of a mental illness such as schizophrenia. In contrast, the Sinhalese terms *oluwa awul* and *mole awul*, meaning "muddled mind," refer to an essentially rational person with stress, anxiety or mild depression.

While there was some belief in family history, genes or stress causing mental illness, traditional beliefs have incorporated the Buddhist concept of impermanence and karma - the reaping of the consequences of the person's actions - which provides an avenue for contextualising illness; malevolent charms such as acts of revenge (*Huniyam*, *Kodiwina*); the effects of planets and the zodiac system (eg. *Rahu*, *Kethetha*, *Senasuru*, *Chandray*) the effects of evil spirits (*Kalukumara*, *Mohini*, or dead relatives) and even excessive studying (*Ugath pissu*). In contrast "evil-eye/evil-mouth" (*as-vaha / kata-vaha*) were not seen as causes.

The responses of a family to a loved one with mental illness were variable and depended on the nature of the relationship prior to illness and the person's position in the family. Possible responses included social isolation within the family, adequate care and affection within the household or exclusion from family gatherings. Marriage was discouraged



unless the person was seen as fully recovered and there was exclusion from employment in responsible jobs.

The treatments that are preferred tend to be traditional, although western methods are trusted and sought typically at a later stage. The former include religious activity at home or temple (pirith, bodhi pooja, pilgrimages) which are seen as protective. For example, bodhipuja is a Buddhist ritual often conducted for the emotional and devotional needs of an individual in association with a stressful event and helps give a sense of physical and emotional healing.

A horoscope may be interpreted by an astrologer to indicate that illness or trauma was pre-determined, unavoidable and therefore, out of one's control. In this regard, the belief in one's horoscope allows a person to attribute a negative experience and resultant symptoms to a 'bad period'. As, according to astrology, these 'bad periods' come and go, the believer is given hope that the traumatic period will pass and better times will come. This belief in a horoscope may provide inner strength to persevere through difficult times.

Moreover, horoscope readers may provide remedies for 'bad periods' that are believed to be protective. These may be simple, such as wearing gemstone rings or some kind of propitiatory ritual - a minor one like lime-cutting (dehi-kepima) or a major one, like a bali ceremony or thovil - depending on the seriousness of the case.

Bali is the ceremony in which the presiding deities of the planets (graha) are invoked and placated in order to ward off their evil influences. Thovil is essentially a demonic ritual, mainly exorcistic in character and hence, a healing ceremony. In its exorcist form it is meant to curb and drive away any of the innumerable hosts of malevolent spirits, known as yakshas who are capable of bringing about pathological states of body and mind. Prethas or departed spirits of the malevolent type, referred to as mala-yakku (mala = dead) or mala-pretha, are also brought under the exorcist power of thovil. Such ceremonies may be dying out as they require a lot of manpower and it is difficult to find a reliable "Adura." (See [www.lankaritual.moonfruit.com](http://www.lankaritual.moonfruit.com) for more information and graphic images).

### ***Suicide in Sri Lanka***

On average about 800 000 people throughout the world commit suicide every year, 86% of them in low and middle-income countries.

Before 1960, most suicides in Sri Lanka were by hanging and in the 1960s, by ingestion of acetic acid which was used in rubber processing. The opening of the economy led to increased pesticide

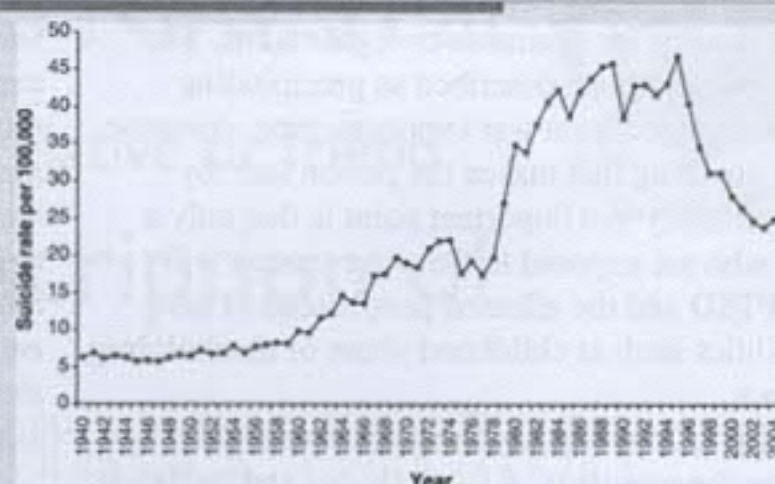
imports in the late 1970s. Suicide peaked in 1995 when almost one in 2000 took their own life and Sri Lanka had the second highest suicide rate in the world, largely due to the very high lethality associated with the methods used and poor access to timely medical care in rural areas.

Deliberate self-poisoning with agricultural pesticides is the commonest means of suicide in rural Sri Lanka. Three quarters of people who ingested pesticides in acts of self-harm used products that were available within the home or in close proximity; relatively few purchased the pesticide to commit the act.

Yellow oleander poisoning is the second most common method of suicide. This plant grows extensively in gardens throughout northern Sri Lanka where it seems to be a major problem. Ingesting an oleander seed is equal to that of swallowing 100 digoxin tablets with resultant effects on the heart. The person experiences symptoms of vomiting, diarrhoea, dizziness, and heart block. Before the 1980s, accidental yellow oleander poisoning was unheard of, but in 1980 two school girls committed suicide through the ingestion of oleander seeds in Jaffna, which probably led to a resultant epidemic.

The suicide trend is highest among late adolescents and young adults; and is increasing among the older population. The high suicide rate reflects the large amount of social, emotional and physical

### **SL suicide rate**



stress that is present in the population - areas with large displaced populations, grinding rural poverty, family separation and social disruption associated with migrant work and unfair labour practices. Set against a background of the civil war, the risk of psychological distress is great. The high incidence of suicide also demonstrates the lack of community mental health services.

The reasons for attempting suicide can seem quite trivial; young people poison themselves



because they were scolded by their parents, caught misbehaving, wanting attention or trying to spite others. Older people might do it because they could not marry off their children, their children have moved away from home or because they lost a family member. Concurrent depression and alcohol abuse are associated problems.

The overall suicide rate fell by over half from its peak, to 20 per 100 000 in 2009, mainly due to improved medical management, roads and transport (there was no restriction on the general availability of pesticides). It is possible an increase in knowledge about the high lethality of pesticides and oleander have led to people without the intention to die, to avoid these methods. Despite the drop in suicide rates, self-poisoning has become more common with increasing use of standard medicines such as paracetamol and tranquillisers, which is similar to the pattern of ingestion in the developed world and may represent a form of social acceptability.

#### *Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the tsunami*

War and other major disasters have a large impact on mental health and psychosocial well-being. Rates of mental disorder tend to double after emergencies.

PTSD refers to the re-experiencing of a trauma in nightmares and flashbacks, with heightened arousal, anxiety, numbing and foreboding about the future. This was originally described in American soldiers after the Vietnam War when the term PTSD came into use. It must be said that even in western populations in which it was first described, PTSD remains a controversial and complex diagnosis, which may be exploited for insurance or legal claims. The traumas that have been described as precipitating PTSD have ranged from war exposure, rape, domestic violence, anything that makes the person fear for their life or safety. An important point is that only a minority who are exposed to the same trauma will develop PTSD and the affected people tend to have vulnerabilities such as childhood abuse or alcohol/drug dependence.

Up to 25-years ago, post-disaster relief focused on the provision of food, shelter and medicine only, and no thought was given to possible effects on the psyche. However, since then, PTSD has become such a well accepted concept that the management of psychological trauma has become as important as physical care. It is a western construct and it remains unclear whether it can be applied to other populations and cultures.

When the tsunami hit, a veritable people's army of trauma counsellors and researchers descended on Sri Lanka, most funded by NGOs or research grants. There was an assumption on the part of the counsellors that the tsunami would inevitably lead to a second wave of psychological suffering and that in

a country with experience of civil wars and poverty, people would be more vulnerable to psychological trauma from the tsunami, compounded by lack of local trained trauma counsellors.

The approach of the trauma counsellors was cavalier. Their first priority was to warn the locals of the potential for PTSD. Debra Wentz, not a clinician but executive director of the New Jersey Association of Mental Health Agencies, coincidentally on holiday in Sri Lanka at the time of the tsunami, warned the population on national Television: *"I told them the psychological damage was going to be unlike anything they had experienced before, and the impact could be multi-generational ... But without a sophisticated mental health system or trained counselors, where were the survivors going to turn?"*

There were equally concerns about the counsellors themselves – their lack of consultation with local government and health authorities, clinicians and academics, unlike aid agencies who did consult local authorities. They failed to consider a public health approach using pre-existing community resources. In particular, the above quote highlights the counsellors' inability to appreciate the possibility of psychological resilience in the locals – protection from Buddhist and Hindu beliefs such as the acceptance of pain and suffering, recompense through reincarnation, the protective effects of local healing traditions like ayurvedic medicine. Religion, spirituality and rituals, as noted before, enhance resilience and help people cope and rebuild through acceptance and finding some meaning in suffering and loss. In fact some observers commented that the tsunami only bolstered faith.

Ivy Dieltens came to Sri Lanka to work for Homeopaths Without Borders and published her experiences on the internet in 2005: *"It has been my perception that patients will consult a doctor (homeopathic or otherwise) only for physical pain. It has been frustrating not being able to use homeopathy to its full potential. Experience so far has shown that my own patients generally will not seek help for emotional disorders suffered as a result of the tsunami, though this often comes out in the case taking with symptoms of loss of appetite, insomnia etc. ..."*

This comment highlights the fact that trauma reactions are not automatic physiological reactions, but are culturally distinct communications. In Sri Lanka, the response to the tsunami was much more likely to be through physical symptoms like joint pain or muscle aches, than psychological symptoms (ie the trauma was like a physical blow to the body). As a result these symptoms were usually presented to physicians and surgeons rather than mental health professionals.

Another difference was that unlike the western concern for the impact of the trauma on the individual, Sri Lankans focused on the damage to the social and community fabric. The failure to



fulfill one's responsibilities to family and community was the primary source of distress, rather than the western concept of individual suffering leading to the secondary inability to function in one's usual role.

Actual counselling had its inherent, general limitations. The counsellors had no knowledge of the culture they were entering, in particular to grieving rituals and some openly espoused a non-denominational approach to counselling which ignored local methods of healing. Qualified translators were thin on the ground. Ivy Dieltens again:

*"Counselling of patients has been difficult as one needs to converse through the translators, and with a limited understanding of Sri Lankan culture (e.g. re-incarnation and other Buddhist beliefs), it becomes a tough area to venture into and to interpret the individualised reactions. One has also to deal with time constraints and lack of privacy in an open setting, so patients tend to provide only the physical complaints."*

Specific treatment of PTSD consists of psychological first aid or critical incident debriefing, the rationale being to encourage the victim to retell the story as quickly as possible, so as to process and master the memory of the trauma. An important assumption is that truthful re-telling is more effective than suffering in silence or the stiff upper lip.

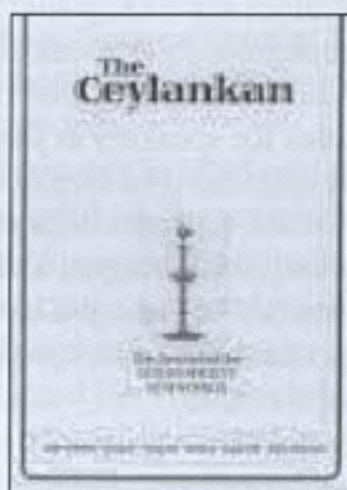
However, re-telling may have been harmful given the results of previous studies of Sri Lankan villagers exposed to violence during the Civil War. These showed that an important way of coping with violence and trauma was NOT to discuss what had been seen or heard. Stories or even words describing violence were considered dangerous and euphemisms were often used.

Finally, research was a major part of the aim of western academics response to the tsunami, such as determining the number of people experiencing PTSD. The methods used ranged from self-report questionnaires to even collection of blood samples for genetic testing, sometimes without approval from local ethics bodies and questionable consents obtained from study participants. As an eminent Sri Lankan psychiatrist, Dr Athula Summathipala said: *"When research is combined with aid, relief and at times clinical care, there is undue inducement for participation in this vulnerable population."*

This area has been well covered by Ethan Watters in his book *Crazy Like Us. The Globalisation of the American Psyche*, Scribe Publications 2010.

*(From the Don Wijeratne Memorial Oration delivered on 26 May 2013 by the author to the CSA in Sydney as a tribute to his father) .*

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## A TRIBUTE TO THE UNSUNG

by Geraldine de Saram-Jansz

Over the years *The Ceylankan* has published interesting individual perspectives on the Japanese raid on Colombo, Easter Sunday April 1942. This piece is a tribute to a team of Colombo ladies and their female servants who filled a serious breach during those grim times.

To begin, when our father heard that the expected Japanese raid was imminent my brothers and I were sent to the family coconut estate Areliyakele, in Mirigama, 40 miles north of Colombo in the care of our grandfather and uncle and aunt. Areliyakele was a lovely home surrounded by beautiful gardens now marred by trenches dug in case of a Japan attack. While Areliyakele was already a second home to us the conditions in which we were now going were strange and frightening. Our father, a medical doctor, could not leave being essential services; our mother would not leave without him. And while my brothers and I never discussed our circumstances, I feel sure that they were as bewildered as I. What would happen to our parents? would we ever see them again? were my own anxious thoughts.

Meanwhile as Colombo was emptied of its frightened citizens so did the normal ways of workers acquiring their lunch for now even the small eating houses had closed. Mrs Leslie de Saram came to the rescue organising a team from those Colombo ladies who had remained in town. Opening a canteen in the Fort she asked her team to contribute pounds of seenie sambol which she in turn supplied the Fort workers with hunks of bread.

On our return to Colombo after the All Clear I found that our mother had employed a special amé to chop up pounds of red onions which she would hand over to the kitchen to be turned into sambol. I can't remember how it got to the Fort for these were the days of petrol rationing.

The Colombo to which we returned had changed subtly. And while the following experiences are my mother's they, in various degrees of intensity, were the experience of all who returned to Colombo. For instance looming on the horizon, was a previously unheard of phenomenon - The Black Market. There was also a scarcity of reliable servants - both conditions aggravated by the presence of the military who, in the former instance, soaked up all available food leaving what was left of poor quality and in the latter paid better salaries. The military presence in Ceylon was enlarged after the fall of Singapore and now comprised - besides Ceylon's own military - the British, Americans with the Canadian Air Force in the south of Colombo. (It will be recalled that it was Canadian S/L J. Birchall and his crew who spotted the approaching Japanese invasion fleet. And while his Catalina was shot down and he remained

a Japanese prisoner for the duration of the war his warning message alerted the Island's defences to be ready and Ceylon was saved). In Kandy Lord, Louis Mountbatten and his South-East Asia Command occupied the Queen's Hotel.

Our mother, an enterprising lady, now faced with running a large house with a small staff, an ailing but demand-ing father-in-law; five children & a husband occupied with his work now turned a portion of our large back garden into a mini-farm. She was aided by her son Willie. Here they reared ducks, Muscovy and Alesbury

for eggs & meat & a goat for its milk; someone in the family seemed to need goat's milk. But similar to many Colombo ladies confronting this enormous crisis our mother and her friends would gather to share their grumbles and then return to their homes & the extraordinary duties of caring for their families.

Frequent visitors to our home was our father's cousin, Steve Dassenaike and his wife Joan, Steve never failed to tease my mother saying that if he ever learned that she patronised the Black Market he would report her. My guess is that while our mother took his teasing in good part she was probably exhaustively mad inside.. And so slowly but surely through the devoted care of their families our mothers, their faithful ayahs & kusi amés guided us through an incredibly complex time to which they were hardly fitted. This article is a salute to those brave ladies.



• Lord Louis Mountbatten

## WE NEED SPEAKERS

The Society welcomes knowledgeable and persons with academic backgrounds to speak at our meetings in Sydney, Melbourne and Colombo. You may have potential candidates for speakers in your families, among friends or relatives who live in or visit Australia or Sri Lanka. Our meetings are held quarterly in February, May, August and November of each year. Dates can be arranged to suit the availability of speakers. Overhead projection and PA facilities are also available.

If you would like to share your knowledge and expertise among a group of like-minded people, please contact our President Harry de Sayrah on (Mob) 0415 402 724 or Hemal Gurusinghee (Mob) 0427 725 740 (Melbourne) or M.D. (Tony) Saldin 2440 769 (Colombo).



## A look at the Rodiyas

by RIVIKULA

**T**he Rodiya people, who constitute less than one percent of the population, are regarded as the lowest caste in Sri Lanka. It is believed that they are the same people known as the Candalas of the *Mahavamsa*. Though treated as outcasts, they have a place in society to this day.

Many of the Rodiya people have their own distinct Buddhist beliefs and practices from ancient times. Perhaps this is due to their historic exclusion as outcasts; their name is based on a word for filth. Although as outcasts they may seek alms, they are generally denied work and once were even denied clothing! Yet work they do – dancing, juggling plates and making cane handicrafts. With increased urbanisation, their lot in life is improving.

As Rodiyas see it, they are descended from a Sri Lankan princess who was ostracised for cannibalism. They praise her in songs and poems. Her depiction, however, is very much like the Hindu goddess Kali, recipient of human sacrifices, repugnant to Buddhists. Despite these questionable origins, the Rodiyas are beginning to be assimilated into the larger Sri Lankan society.

Many have now converted to Christianity. They are simple, humble people who earn their living (though occupations can be rigid) like everybody else and rightly a proud people with much self-respect.

According to the *Mahavamsa*, King Pandukabhaya (377 -307 AD) when founding Anuradhapura set Candalas to the menial occupations of street cleaning, maintaining sewers, burying the dead and looking after cemeteries.

Later King Ilanga (95-101 AD) made Candalas to supervise a clan of Lambakannas, who were ordered to construct a road to Ruvanvalisaya as a punishment for misbehaviour. Then Vijayabahu, who ruled from 1271 to 1273 AD, employed Candalas as hired labourers when the city of Polonnaruwa was being rebuilt. While the Rodiyas played a prominent part in the feudal system in the Kandyan period, little is mentioned about them except that Dutugemunu's son Prince Sali had a relationship with a Candala lass in the first century BC.

A.M.Ferguson in 1895 said that the Rodiyas' contribution included making coir brooms, rags and ropes in addition to preparing skins for use on drums. They also reared cattle, pigs and poultry. The Rodiya connection with hunting goes back to the third century BC when the Sacred Bo Tree was brought to Ceylon.

More recently, Rodiyas have been connected with palmistry, scavenging, charming (involved in demonology) and prostitution. Making broom, combs (the material for the combs is the horn obtained from the buffalos), drums, ropes and nooses are among the other occupations pursued by them. The Rodi women

are good dancers and they collect money by dancing and singing poems before the public.

However, a lot has changed now. Rodiya children attend central schools and rise to good positions in public life.

Legend has it that during the reign of a king called Maha Sammata long ago, an elaborate ritual took place in his court where five Brahmins cut up a bull, heaping the flesh into five lots. After much chanting and if the ceremony had been correctly



• Rodiya people.

— Photo courtesy Lankapura.

performed, it is said, the bull would rise in jubilation.

At one such ceremony, there had been a huge gathering at the royal palace, where emissaries from other lands too had arrived to see the ritual in progress. It transpired that the youngest Brahmin's wife was pregnant with her first child and requested her husband to get her some raw beef to satisfy her craving (*dola duk*) insisting on her having it before dusk. While cutting the bull, the young man hid a tiny piece of meat for her. At the conclusion of the ritual, the bull struggled but could not get to its feet. Something had gone awry. The king wondered what sacrilege had been committed to cause the debacle. The young Brahmin whispered to his neighbour about his act. Put the flesh back immediately, the other man sternly insisted. The piece of flesh was tossed towards the struggling animal and it landed on the bull's shoulder. That is how the bull got his hump (or *molli*) on its shoulder, or the story goes.

With its missing piece now enjoined, the bull rose, dancing to the chants and drum beat. At the end of the ceremony, the chief Brahmin, complained to the king and chased the offender from their midst. The young man was ashamed to return to his people and was soon despised by all who knew what he had done. He begged the king for a small job in the palace. The sympathetic king allowed him to sweep the palace compound of all the litter (*rodu*). The ostracised young man soon came to be known as *rodha* and that, they say, was how the word Rodiya originated.

Sources: Joshua project;  
Lankapura;

Department of Sociology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka Paper.





## Erin de Selfa ... a tribute to Sri Lanka's music legend

A few days ago, we heard the sad news of the death of Erin Fernandes (nee de Selfa), in London.

She was born in Ceylon, on 19 March 1926 and was domiciled in London for the past 50 years, where she died in September, 2013.

As a teenager in Colombo, she drew crowds of music lovers to her performances at the Silver Fawn night Club in Union Place, which was owned by Mr. Cyril Gardiner. Her stage name was Dinah & the Red Tails Minstrels.

In a short while, she graduated to the Mascarilla Night Club at the Galle Face Hotel, where she sang with leading names in our musical scene – Luis Moreno, Luis Pedroso, Mario Manricks, Sacha Borsteinas, the Italiars, etc. She had two shows a night and every show was sold out. According to a leading music critic, this “fabulous legend of yesteryear, has yet to be paralleled in our show biz scene”. In 1960, with Lyle Godridge and the Italiars, she appeared free at a concert in aid of the ‘Missions to Seamen’. The Governor-General and the Bishop of Colombo attended.

She first married Donovan Andree, the show biz promoter who was many years her senior.

From Ceylon (as it then was), she was invited to sing at the Taj Mahal in Bombay and toured India – the highlight of her tour being a command performance for the Maharajah of Baroda.

At 18, she set her sights on the UK and entering the International music scene. She was

engaged by Jack Hylton with whom she performed for over two years, including a performance at Windsor Castle. She also sang with Edmondo Ros at the Copacabana, the Café Royal, the Blue Angel, the Hironnelle and the Casanova Club. She worked with Tony Burrello who was Frank Sinatra's pianist, through the William Morris Agency in New York and performed at the Mocambo in Hollywood following after the famous Lena Horne. She also performed at the Theatre Lirico in Milan for the Italian producer, Giganto.

Erin was featured on BBC Radio and on BBC TV. In 1946, she made her debut in films in the movie “Caravan”, starring Stewart Granger, Denis Price, etc.

Almost 50 years ago, she married Neri Fernandes who was one of three Goanese brothers who were fine pianists in the UK.

Lord Louis Mountbatten, one of her fans, wished everyone to express in healthy fashion, their appreciation of excellent entertainment.

In later life, she was plagued by bronchial problems which brought the curtain down on her singing career.

My last memory of her singing was in Colombo in the 1970s with Neri Fernandes, her husband, accompanying her.

She was a regular visitor to Sri Lanka and often stayed at the Galle Face Hotel. Neri Fernandes played at the “1864” Restaurant during the season and Erin was always at his side, greeting her old friends and keeping everyone entertained with her anecdotes.

A few years ago, Malcolm Andree organised a show in memory of his late father Donovan at the BMICH and Erin made a brief appearance. This show was also televised.

Her son with Donovan Andree, had to undergo a tricky lung transplant a few years ago, and unfortunately, did not survive. This was a great blow to Erin.

Erin is survived by husband, Neri and their children and grand-children, who live in London.

– LALITH RODRIGO  
Colombo, 4 October 2013.

## ERIN de SELF A – A postscript

Erin De Selfa, who died in September, is remembered for her husky voice and the beautiful rendition of old jazz favourites in the Ella Fitzgerald style, as well as popular favourites including “Blue Moon”, “Oh My Papa”, “As Time Goes By”, Paper Moon etc. Erin was also, in her time, a woman of many alliances. In the mid-1950s she was the centre of a *cause celebre* enacted in the District Court of Colombo. As undergraduate students, a trio of us somehow found the time to attend court proceedings and to listen to



some of the salacious material laid bare in the courtroom.

The plaint seeking a divorce on the grounds of adultery was filed by her then husband Donovan Andree citing Erin de Selfa and Gerald Walter Leigh as respondents. Leigh was alleged to have committed adultery in London on several occasions. Donovan Andree had hired a former Scotland Yard detective to watch the movements of his wife and the detective flown from London gave evidence outlining the results of his surveillance. It is over 50 years since the case was heard, but some of the courtroom drama still remains in my memory.

The presiding judge was L.W. De Silva, a genial man who seemed to enjoy every bit of the drama that was being enacted before him. A man learned not only in the law but known also for his abiding interest in the classics, Judge de Silva was indeed an amiable dispenser of justice. C. Thiagalingam QC, a foremost practitioner very much in demand in the divorce courts, was the lawyer for Donovan Andree. N.K. Choksy QC appeared for Gerald Leigh and Dr Colvin R. De Silva with K. Shinya appeared for Erin de Selfa. From the very beginning of the case, there were several "breezes" in court between Colvin and Thiagalingam when the court was looking at procedural matters and in the thrust and parry of the exchanges, Thiagalingam came off second best – he was no match for the quick-

witted and brilliant Colvin. Colvin whose usual stomping grounds were the Assizes and the Court of Criminal Appeal, rarely appeared in civil cases and his decision to appear for Erin de Selfa may partly be due to her persuasive powers as there was talk that he appeared *pro deo* for her, something equally rare for him unless the defendant was a member of the Sama Samaja party. After the first couple of days Thiagalingam mysteriously dropped out of the case and Donovan Andree was thereafter represented by E.G. Wikramanayake QC a redoubtable lawyer and a man who brooked no nonsense and for him the barbs across the bar table fired by his opponent were shrugged away without allowing himself to be drawn into argument.

It transpired during proceedings that Donovan first met Erin when she was nine-years old when she was a member of the performing group *The Red Tail Minstrels* managed by him. Judgment was given in favour of Donovan and Leigh ordered to pay Rs25,000 as damages. Not long after the end of the case, Erin who had once exclaimed: "I know how to get my man" was in liaison with her counsel K. Shinya whom she married and produced two children Shinzo and Shigeo. Although domiciled in the UK for the last decades of her life, Erin lived for a few years in Colombo after her separation from Shinya in a house in Park Road, Havelock Town.

– The Rambler



Meals  
Ammi  
Made

### Send us your recipes

As you can see our column is devoid of any recipes in this issue. No matter if you have contributed before, you are welcome to contribute again -surely you learnt to prepare more than one dish at your Ammi's elbow.

Readers are invited to submit their favourite recipes for publication in this column. Preferably your recipes will be simple and easy to prepare. They must be of Sri Lankan origin and as this is a family-orientated column, we suggest that your recipes be of meals you learnt to prepare from your Ammi' or Achchi.

So why wait? Send those mouth-watering recipes to the editor without delay.

Keep those recipes coming!

### CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS RECENTLY?

Have you recently changed your contact details – home address, email, telephone number and so on? If so, Treasurer Deepak Pritamdas would like to hear from you so he can update his mailing list and other records. This will help ensure you receive the Journal without interruption.

Contact Deepak on (Mob) 0434 860 4798  
Email: [deepakpsl@yahoo.com](mailto:deepakpsl@yahoo.com)

### YOUR MEMBERSHIP – keep it up-to-date

Subscriptions for 2013 are overdue and those for 2014 are now due. This is just a reminder for you to stay financial at all times. Australian members may send a personal cheque or MO in favour of the Ceylon Society of Australia to **Deepak Pritamdas, PO Box 489, Blacktown NSW 2148** OR arrange direct payment to the Society's bank account BSB 062-308 A/c No: 1003 8725 at the Commonwealth Bank. Overseas members are kindly reminded to send their remittances by Bank Draft in Australian currency or pay by using SWIFT Code CTBAAU2S. Personal cheques in foreign currency cannot be accepted. Those making direct payment to banks are requested to inform the Treasurer by email where possible of their transaction to avoid any confusion. For details about your subscriptions status please contact the Treasurer.





### Lanka Railway Digest

Editor: Vinodh Wickremaratne  
\$15.00 for 3 issues per year (inclusive of postage). Contact Victor Melder, who handles all Australian subscriptions for

LRD, at [tormel@aardvark.net.au](mailto:tormel@aardvark.net.au) or phone (03) 9309 4040.



It will come as no surprise to readers of *The Ceylankan* that one of the greatest legacies of British colonial rule in Sri Lanka is the country's railway network. But it may surprise many to know that in Sri Lanka today there is a band of enthusiasts dedicated to fostering an interest in the

nation's rail transport system, while accumulating and disseminating information and records on all things railways, and even attempting to preserve such aspects of Sri Lankan Railways (SLR) that are capable of being preserved.

Starting out as the Model Railroad Club of Sri Lanka, in 2009, this group of 'railnuts' took to the full-scale 'mainline' as the Ceylon Railway Enthusiasts' Circle (CREC). Since then, the CREC has grown in strength and membership, and in 2012 boldly produced issue No. 1 of what they describe as 'Sri Lanka's First Railfan Magazine', the Lanka Railway Digest (LRD).

Published three times a year, LRD reflects great credit on Editor Vinodh Wickremaratne – one of Sri Lanka's most knowledgeable transport historians – and his production team comprising the equally enthusiastic and industrious Lahiru Weerasinghe, Lahiru Kannangara, Stefan Felsinger, Thivanka Ekanayake, Ifthar Rizvi, Gayantha Samaradiwakara and Thurya Owitipana.

LRD provides a good balance of subject matter, almost entirely related to railways in Sri Lanka. News about latest developments, historic and nostalgic 'feel-good' pieces about trains and railwaymen of days gone by, technical discourses on various types of locomotives, railway buildings, personal recollections of working and travelling on trains in Sri Lanka, and much more, are complemented by attractive illustrations, many in colour. Importantly, the variety and quality of the contributions, and the multitude of backgrounds from which their writers are drawn, are further reasons behind the growing success of LRD.

Although primarily an English language journal, edited, proofread, designed, and produced to very high standards, the LRD team must be commended for also catering to modern Sri Lanka's cultural and educational fabric by featuring contributions in the Sinhala language. It is worth noting that in terms of content and articulation these articles are every bit as good as the ones in English. But Sri Lankan readers of LRD who may have "forgotten" their Sinhala, or were never proficient in the vernacular to begin with, need not worry: most of the Sinhala articles are either translated into or synoptically presented in English too.

With LRD having celebrated its first anniversary earlier this year and now steaming into its second volume, no better endorsement of the journal's worth comes from none other than the former Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Ambassador to the Holy See (Vatican), The Honourable Tim Fischer, AC. An avid enthusiast of railways everywhere and Sri Lanka in particular – with first-hand experience of the latter – Mr. Fischer is a subscriber to LRD, a regular contributor of feature stories. He even sent a message of appreciation to the editorial team on the occasion of the magazine's first 'birthday'.

But why let Tim Fischer and the growing band of LRD readers in Sri Lanka and abroad have all the fun? You too can hop aboard the LRD 'rail wagon' by purchasing your 'ticket to ride' for only \$15.00 for 3 issues per year (inclusive of postage). Contact Victor Melder, who handles all Australian subscriptions for LRD, at [tormel@aardvark.net.au](mailto:tormel@aardvark.net.au) or phone (03) 9309 4040.



*Congratulations and a  
Warm Welcome to our New Members*

Nicholas Samuel, Hornsby, NSW;  
Roger Benjamin Jayasekera, Oatlands, NSW.

*Gift subscription from Dr Srilal  
Fernando to*

Ulrik Plesner, Tel Aviv, Israel.



### Aspirations

The young have aspirations that never come to pass, the old have reminiscences of what never happened.

– Saki (Hector Hugh Monro) - *Reginald at the Carlton* (1904)



SYNOPSIS of Meetings  
Colombo Chapter - 3 May 2013

The quarterly meeting was chaired by Mr. Tissa Devendra, the President. The Honorary Secretary Mr. Tony Saldin introduced the Chief Guest and Guest Speaker Mr. Muhaj Hamin as a Member of the Institute of Supplies and Materials Management. He also has a Diploma in Journalism. He is a freelance journalist, TV presenter, compere and moderator. He was employed at the Imperial Lighthouse Service and handled Logistics of Lighthouses from 1962 to 1975. He was thereafter seconded to the Sri Lanka Navy Lighthouse Service from 1976 to 1985 in the same capacity when the Imperial Lighthouse Service was taken over by the Government of Sri Lanka. Owing to Northern Area commitments, the Sri Lanka Navy handed over the Lighthouse Service to the Sri Lanka Ports Authority in 1985. Mr. Hamin retired from the Sri Lanka Ports Authority Lighthouse Service in 2004 and is currently employed as a Manager cum Marine Surveyor at M/s. Interocean Maritime Enterprises (Pvt.) Ltd. Prior to Mr. Hamin, his father, grandfather and great grandfather all served in the Imperial Lighthouse Service, Ceylon and Minicoy.

The topic for the evening was "LIGHTHOUSES IN SRI LANKA AND LIFE IN A LIGHTHOUSE". In his lecture/presentation Mr. Hamin questioned the role of lighthouses in contemporary society. As lighthouses were an aid to navigation, he made the audience ponder on what their positions would be had ships not sailed in and out of our ports.

He stated that the legacy of lighthouses commenced with the Pharos Lighthouse built in 285 BC in Alexandria, Egypt, emphasising that the main feature of a lighthouse is that it should be visible and recognisable during both day and night. "No two lighthouses are the same," he said and went on to show slides of beautiful lighthouses with colorful day marks and different structures of lighthouses for recognising by day and various designs of Catoptric, Dioptric, Catadioptric Systems, Mirrors and Sealed Beam Lamps that provide the intensity and characteristics for recognising by night.

In its humble beginnings and throughout centuries, various methods of keeping the flame varied from wood, coal, whale oil/coconut oil lamps and candles and kerosene were used to fuel the fire. Because of the need to continually keep the flame lit, keepers lived at often isolated lighthouses. It is these heroic keepers that made the lighthouse more than just a tower. It became a symbol of safety. Both the physical demands and the extended positions at lighthouses made the lighthouse-keepers some of the greatest heroes. Lighthouses were vital to safe guidance of ships through reefs, strong currents, rocks and sandy shoals.

Mr Hamin thereafter spoke of the different types of lighthouses: Landfall lighthouses; Rock lighthouses; Coasting lighthouses; Lighthouses marking the end of Piers and Lightships. Examples of these lighthouses were shown with beautiful slides.

Having now understood the concept of lighthouses, the audience was shown the strategic location of Sri Lanka and its territorial waters in the Indian Ocean which is at the cross roads of all maritime routes in the region where 70 per cent of the global oil trade and 60 per cent of container traffic pass through. Today 36 000 ships and 4500 oil tankers pass the southern tip of Sri Lanka annually. Therefore, lighthouses play a vital role in guiding ships to our ports.

The second part of his lecture/presentation "Life in a Lighthouse" was very interesting. He spoke of life at the two off-shore lighthouses in Sri Lanka: Great and Little Basses lighthouses. While speaking on the profile of these lighthouses, he briefly dwelled on its construction and at length on the sea voyage to the lighthouses travelling in time from past to the present and to the future. He spoke of the planning, preparing and execution of the sea voyage called the 'Basses Relief Operation' and the difficulties in boarding the lighthouses and illustrated the expertise of the people who performed those tasks with slides.

He then spoke of living in a lighthouse: the cadre of the lighthouse keepers, their duration of duties, communications, diet (provisions), recreation facilities, isolation from their family, general maintenance and uniforms. The ghost stories at the lighthouses, the stories of the giant squid relating real instances, the stories of whales, dolphins and octopuses kept the audience spell bound. In the course of these stories, he also spoke of the wrecks, the historical and archaeological significance of the area and went on to assert that he believed the wreck "Universal Trader", which hit the Little Basses Reef and sank in 1968, sits on the lost city of Lankapura of King Ravana. *The Ramayana* mentions that the royal architect Vishva Karma had built it close to the coast in the south of Sri Lanka.

Finally, Mr. Hamin spoke on the past, present and the future of lighthouses in light of today's technology. Will emerging generations be captivated by lighthouses? Navigational aids of the future will largely become unseen and instrumental. Therefore, our coasts may become littered with derelict lighthouses or museums of the sea. It is unrealistic to suggest that just because new super navigational aids, like satellite navigation become available one should dismantle all the lighthouses and convert them to archaeological edifices. While the new wonder systems may be extremely useful and economically beneficial, such systems rarely turn out to be the panacea for all known ills. There are 29 000 pieces of space debris rotating around the earth that could kill these satellites.



It is the mariner who will determine the future of lighthouses and the trend will be to retain what one knows to be effective. It is likely, therefore, that rocks, reefs, shoals and pier heads will continue to make their immediate presence known by visual means – THE LIGHTHOUSE. To prove his point he showed a slide of a giant container carrier that ran aground in New Zealand in 2011 despite the advanced technology.

Mr. Hamin concluded with a slide showing his father receiving the MBE from the British High Commissioner on his retirement and dedicated this lecture to the memory of his father from whom he inherited this legacy.

The vote of thanks was delivered by Lt. Commander (Rtd) Somasiri Devendra, Past President CSA CC.

– Tony Saldin

#### **Colombo Chapter - 23 August 2013**

The quarterly meeting was chaired by Mr. Tissa Devendra, President, who introduced the guest speaker, M. Asoka T. De Silva, BSc (Lond.), MSc (Lond.), who began his career at the Coconut Research Institute as a plant nutritionist from 1955 to 1976. In 1977, he joined the National Science Council as its Assistant Secretary General and later, was Deputy Director General at the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority, the successor to the National Science Council. Before retirement in 1994, he also served as an international consultant to UNCTAD, UN-ESCAP, UNESCO, UNDP, FAO Commonwealth Science Council and several other agencies. After retirement, his expertise was sought by Council for Agricultural Research Policy (CARP) and the Sri Lanka Country Office of IUCN. His professional career, spanning a period of over 55 years, had resulted in more than 85 scientific papers and publications, the last of which was a book titled, "Evolution of Technological Innovations in Ancient Sri Lanka", published by Vijitha Yapa Publications in 2011.

Mr De Silva spoke on Award Winning Technical Changes in the Second half of the Last Century. The phrase 'Technical Change', though not in frequent use, had been clearly defined in the late 1970s as a dominant and visible transition of an existing socio-cultural or socio-economic framework to a new order, usually generated by a combination of technical and non-technical innovations. Taking three well-known examples of socio-cultural changes generated by the introduction of foreign technology, namely, photocopiers, computer technology and mobile phones, he ensured that the phrase 'Technical Change' was clearly understood by the audience.

The main focus of his presentation was, however, two highly significant 'Technical Changes' that evolved from endogenously developed innovations during the second half of the last century. The first of these was the "Green Revolution", by

means of which Sri Lanka rose from a position of 45 % self-sufficiency in the staple food rice in 1952 with a population of only seven million, to 95 % self-sufficiency in 1979, with a population of 15 million people. This was achieved by the efforts of Sri Lankan rice breeders, who in a phased out development programme, facilitated the production of new hybrid varieties of paddy, which increased the original yield potential (of traditional varieties) from 1.5 t/ha in 1952, to 2.5 t/ha in 1957, to 5.0 t/ha in 1964/68, to 7.0 t/ha in 1970/73, and to a possible target of 10.0 t/ha in 1979, an achievement considered at that time to be unattainable.

A special feature of their development plan was that they sidelined the so-called "Miracle Rice" or IR-8 (yield potential 5.0 t/ha) which appeared with banner headlines in 1964 from the International Rice Research Institute in Philippines. Interestingly, the Sri Lankan breeders justified their stand and vindicated themselves by introducing paddy varieties which outshone the "Miracle Rice" in many features.

However, it has been conceived that although Sri Lanka is currently in a position to export the surplus rice, it was most unlikely that the country would have been in this position if supportive policy innovations or instruments were also not in place during 1955 to 1980. These included the Import Substitution Trade Policy, Fertilizer Subsidy Scheme and Free Irrigation Water for farmers, the Guaranteed Price Scheme for Paddy purchases, Easy Credit and Crop Insurance, as well as an Excellent Extension Service. Nevertheless this achievement did not go unnoticed, as this team of rice breeders won the first "Presidential Award for Scientific Excellence in 1984".

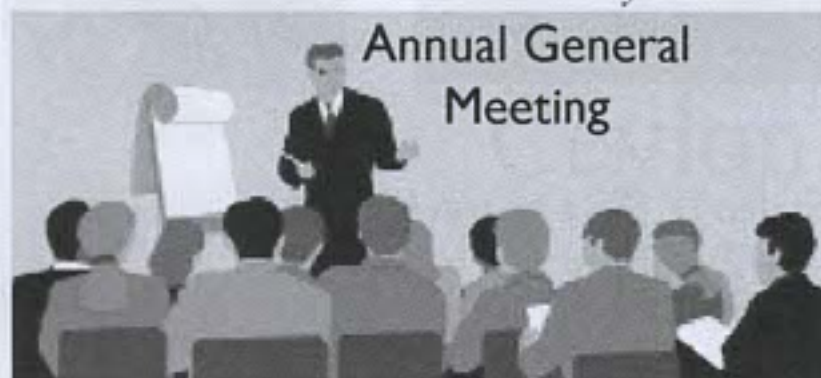
The second 'Technical Change' generated endogenously was the resurrection of Sri Lanka's traditional rubber industry which, in the early 1950s, enjoyed a windfall due to an ongoing war in Korea. However, the entry of Synthetic Rubber (SR) and the ending of the Korean War in the mid 1950s brought misery to the industry, which was by that time considered doomed. However, Sri Lankan innovators from the Rubber Research Institute (R.R.I.) as well as entrepreneurs from the private sector rubber industry injected fresh blood into the industry during 1980 to 1998, with highly innovative new products and processes, which enabled the Sri Lankan rubber industry to revive and transform itself from a position of an exporter of primary rubber products (creperubber) to an industry that effectively had the capability of substituting imported rubber goods with high quality finished products. This achievement was all the more significant considering the enormous threat posed by western countries, which during this period, not only produced synthetic rubber to the international markets, but also began stock piling of rubber with the intention of manipulating the global demand and supply position as well as the market price of rubber.



This effort by Sri Lankan innovators, especially of the researchers of the R.R.I. under the guidance of its Director, was rewarded by the World Intellectual Property Organisation through the award of the "Scientist of the Year 2000 Gold Medal" in recognition of the Number of Implementable Patents produced by the Head of the Institution and its staff.

After the discussion, Mr. Srilal Perera proposed the Vote of Thanks, complimenting the speaker for presenting a fascinating talk of a semi-technical nature in the most comprehensible manner which was appreciated by the audience.

– Tony Saldin



## SYDNEY

### Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 23 November 2013 at 7.00 pm  
for 8.00 pm Dinner

**Pennant Hills Community Centre Hall**  
70 Yarrara Road, Pennant Hills 2120  
(See details on Page 33)

## COLOMBO CHAPTER

A talk presented by  
**MR. ROHAN PERERA**  
on

### **"Changing Nature of International Law; Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Countries."**

Friday 29 November 2013 at 5.30 p.m

The presentation will deal with the sweeping changes that have taken place and continue to take place in the sphere of International Law, since its origins in the 16th and 17th centuries in a European-Christian context. These changes present both challenges and opportunities to developing countries, who need to harness the potential that contemporary developments present, while minimizing the negatives which may affect their political, social and economic imperatives. The particular importance of injecting traditional Asian Values into a discourse essentially perceived and approached from a western perspective will be discussed. Contribution made both by Australia and Sri Lanka to the contemporary developments in

International Law will also be dealt with. Mr. Perera is President's Counsel, International Legal Consultant. Former Legal Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Member International Law Commission (2007-2011) Chairman, UN Ad Hoc Committee on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism (2000-to present) Chairman, Eminent Persons Group of the Asian - African Legal Consultative Organization, and Visiting Lecturer in Public International Law, Faculty of Law, University of Colombo, and Department of Law, University of Peradeniya.

Venue: The Organization of Professional Associations (OPA), 275/75, Prof. Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha, off Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7. Contact: Tissa Devendra, (President) e-mail: tdevendra@eureka.lk 011 250 1489

M.D. (Tony) Saldin (Hony. Secretary) e-mail: saldinclan@sltnet.lk +94 777 363366/011 2936402 (O), 2931315 ®

Asoka de Silva (Hony. Treasurer) email: matdes@sltnet.lk 011 2822933/ +94 775 097517

## WE NEED SPEAKERS

The Society welcomes knowledgeable or those persons with academic backgrounds to speak at our meetings in Sydney, Melbourne and Colombo. You may have potential candidates for speakers in your families, among friends or relatives who live in or visit Australia or Sri Lanka. Our meetings are held quarterly in February, May, August and November of each year. Dates can be arranged to suit the availability of speakers. Overhead projection and PA facilities are also available.

If you would like to share your knowledge and expertise among a group of like-minded people, please contact our President Harry de Sayrah on (Mob) 0415 402 724 or Hemal Gurusinghee (Mob) 0427 725 740 (Melbourne) or M.D. (Tony) Saldin 2440 769 (Colombo).

## JOURNAL REPRINTS

Wish to bring your collection of THE CEYLAN LANKAN up-to-date? Yes you can! Reprints and some back issues of the Journal are available in limited quantities. The cost to members is \$7.50 per copy. Non-members pay \$10.00 per issue. This does not include postage and handling. P&H within Australia is \$5.00; Asia/Pacific \$10.00; rest of the world \$15.00 per package of up to 5 issues. Contact Hugh Karunanayake Int. + 61 2 9980 2494 or hkaru@optusnet.com.au

It takes patience to appreciate domestic bliss;  
volatile spirits prefer unhappiness.

– George Santayana -Life of Reason (1905)

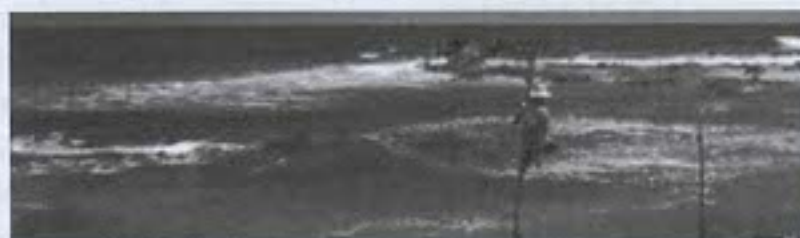


Ceylon Society of Australia (Melbourne Chapter)

presents

## *An Evening with Friends*

Featuring



- An illustrated talk by Stefan D' Silva on travels to "PLACES ONCE DENIED" - the title and content of his 3rd book on Sri Lanka

- A photographic presentation by Dr. Harin Dias on Sri Lanka's wildlife & natural beauty



Sri Lankan Dances  
Stefan's book launch



Sri Lankan books on display and for sale

Dinner : KOTTHU ROTTI & STRING HOPPERS  
(by Lakmi caterers)

SUNDAY 17TH NOVEMBER  
from 5.00 pm - 10.00pm

ST SCHOLASTICA'S HALL, Burwood  
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## Ceylon Society of Australia

AGM, Annual Dinner  
& Sing-along

on Saturday 23rd November  
commencing at 7.00 PM  
for 8.00 PM Dinner

at

the Pennant Hills Community Centre  
70 Yarrara Road, Pennant Hills

**\$35 per person**  
**BYO**

**Dress: Smart Casual**

**Those with special dinner needs  
please contact Chandra Senaratne  
on 9872 6826**

**Tickets from the Treasurer  
Deepak Pritamdas on 0434 860 188  
email: [deepapsla@yahoo.com](mailto:deepapsla@yahoo.com)**



## BOOKSHOP & WEB RESOURCES

This is a regular column for the benefit of members (& others) who author books or have books, maps & other collectibles and would like the Society to promote these materials on their behalf. No charges apply to members, **but donations are encouraged from all using this service.** Regrettably, items can be listed only in three (3) consecutive issues. Please contact the editor for further details.

### BOOKS & PAMPHLETS FOR SALE

Available from Gillian Branagan

**The Polonnaruwa Period...** ed S D Saparamadu... publishers Tisara Prakasakayo (1973); **Veddhas in Transition** by Nandadeva Wijesekera publishers M D Gunasena & Co Ltd (1964); **The Kandyan Kingdom of Sri Lanka** by L S Dewaraja publisher Lake House Investments; **The Rifle & Hound in Ceylon** by Samuel Baker publisher Tisara Prakasakayo (1970); **History of Ceylon** by Father S.G. Perera SJ publisher Lake House Colombo; **My Personal Ark** by A N Weinman publisher Lake House (1968); **A sketch of the constitution of the kandyan Kingdom** by Sir J D'oyly publisher Tisara Prakasakayo (1975); **Early Sinhalese Sculpture** by Nandadeva Wijesekera publisher Gunasena (1962).

*Each of the above priced at \$2 a copy.*

*The following pamphlets by Archaeological Department, Ceylon and are priced at \$1 each*

**Ancient city of Anuradhapura** by W B Marcus Fernando; **Polonnaruwa; Medawala Vihara Frescoes; Polonnaruwa Bronzes; Buddha Statues;**

**Terracotta Heads; Murals at Tivanka Pilimage; Sinhalese Dance & Music; Panavitiya Ambalama Carvings; Guardstones; Sinhalese Doorways; Moonstones.**

Contact Gillian Branagan by email, phone (02 99587127 ) or she can bring them to the Sydney meeting on 23 November.

### THE FOLLOWING BOOKS BY E.C.T.

#### CANDAPPA FOR SALE

**First Born**, a collection of religious and secular poems. \$5.00

**A Cage Of Her Own**. A collection of short stories. \$5.00

**Headlines & Deadlines**, a memoir of the author's Fifty Years in journalism, \$25.00

**Something Personal & O Little Town**, two Nativity Plays \$5.00.

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## HEADLINES & TAILPIECES When sub-editors nod

**Man Kills Self Before Shooting Wife and Daughter** - Dead giveaway!

**Police Begin Campaign To Run Down Jaywalkers** - Now that's taking things a bit far.

**Panda Mating Fails: Veternarian Takes Over:** What a guy!

**Cold Snap Linked To Temperatures** - Who would have thought.

**Miners Refuse To Work After Death** - No-good-for-nothin' lazy so-and-sos!

**Juvenile Court To Try Shooting Defendant** - See if that works any better than a fair trial!

**War Dims Hope For Peace** - Can see where it might have that effect.

**If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last Awhile** - You think?

**Something Went Wrong In Jet Crash, Experts Say** - Guess again

**London Couple Slain; Police Suspect Homicide** - They sure are on to something!

**Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges** - You mean there's something stronger than duct tape?

**New Study Of Obesity Looks For Larger Test Group** - Weren't they fat enough?

**Man Struck By Lightning: Faces Battery Charge** - He probably IS the battery charge!



## So who's asking?

Q: In golf, where did the term 'Caddie' come from?

A: When Mary Queen of Scots went to France as a young girl, Louis, King of France, learned that she loved the Scots game 'golf.' So he had the first course outside of Scotland built for her enjoyment. To make sure she was properly chaperoned (and guarded) while she played, Louis hired cadets from a military school to accompany her. Mary liked this a lot and when returned to Scotland (not a very good idea in the long run), she took the practice with her. In French, the word cadet is pronounced 'ca-day' and the Scots changed it into 'caddie'.

Q: Why are many coin banks shaped like pigs?

A: Long ago, dishes and cookware in Europe were made of a dense orange clay called 'pygg'. When people saved coins in jars made of this clay, the jars became known as 'pygg banks.' When an English potter misunderstood the word, he made a container that resembled a pig. And it caught on.

Q: Did you ever wonder why dimes, quarters and half dollars have notches (milling), while pennies and nickels do not?

A: The US Mint began putting notches on the edges of coins containing gold and silver to discourage holders from shaving off small quantities of the precious metals. Dimes, quarters and half dollars are notched because they used to contain silver. Pennies and nickels aren't notched because the metals they contain are not valuable enough to shave.

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## On yer bike!

Cricket is not all seriousness and it has its funny and humorous moments. In one South African Curry Cup game, Eddie Barlow was captain of Western Province against Zimbabwe. He didn't get along all that well with Allan Lamb, who was playing for Wests in those days.

One evening, the teams were invited to a social gathering and Lamb played a prank on Barlow by pouring flour all over his head covering his spectacles with it. The skipper didn't take calmly to the incident.

The next morning, when Barlow made Lamb field from fine leg to fine leg for about 15 overs, the rest of the side knew exactly what was happening.

Then Lamb spotted a bicycle parked at the edge of the ground, and after one particular over, he rode it full length to his fielding position. Everybody burst out laughing and it relieved the tension between the two of them.

## BACK COVER STORY



### A footnote from *The Rambler*:

To return to the unparalleled collection of cricketing memorabilia in the article on page 14, this far-thinking young man (who will stay anonymous) utilised the rare opportunity that presented itself and used the back cover of the school magazine he had taken with him for reading during the long breaks, to collect the autographs of the cricket stars gathered there as players and spectators. The resulting collage represents a galaxy of names of that era and is unique in that he has captured on one manuscript, the signature of every reputed cricketer of the 1940s and 1950s. He made sure he got everybody to sign, including the world's first and only (at the time) groundswoman. Only a few of them are alive today and the signatures are therefore all the more significant from a collector's point of view.

A serendipitous discovery of the old school magazine with a unique set of autographs has helped us remember some leading exponents of the game, men who were highly regarded in their glory days.

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Our soft grass and mild climate has enabled us to foster new sport. Racing, golf, football and particularly cricket – a game which the English, not being a spiritual people, have invented in order to give themselves some conception of eternity – all owe their development to our climate.

– Lord Mancroft - *Bees in Some Bonnets* (1979)

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