

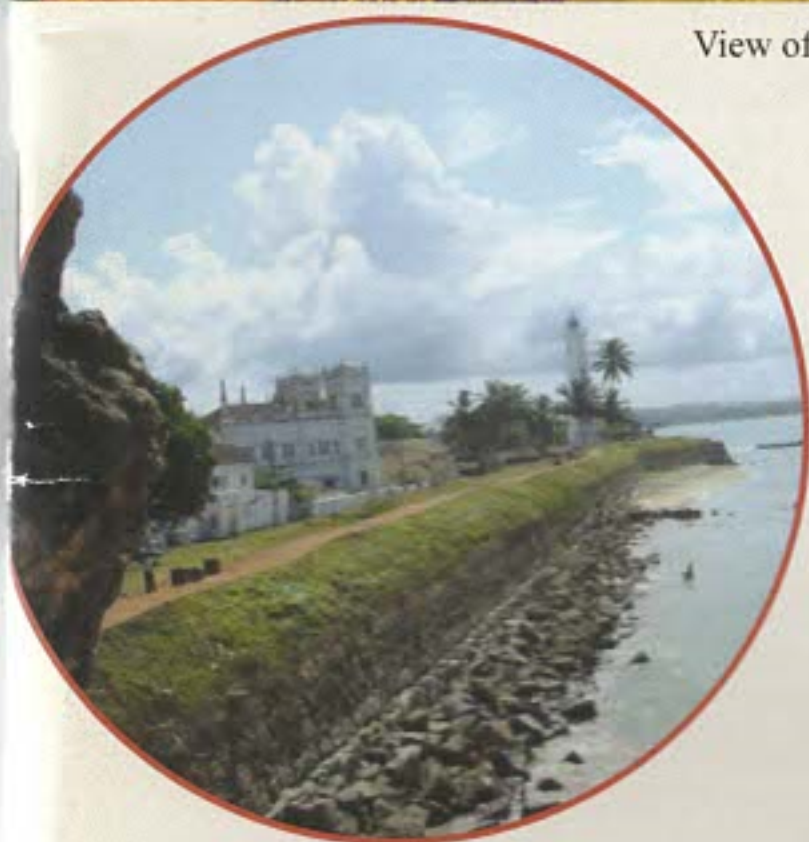


The Ceylanikaum

The Journal of the Ceylon Society of Australia



View of southwestern bastion and southern ramparts today — Photo by Juliet Coombe.



COVER STORY

PICTORIAL EXCURSIONS IN & AROUND GALLE FORT

From nostalgic recollections of MICHAEL ROBERTS who was born and bred in Galle. Photo on left is by the author. Story on page 7.



The Ceylon Society of Australia

PRESIDENT

Pauline Gunewardene
Mobile 0419 447 665
Int. 61 2 9736 3987
paulineg@ozemail.com.au

VICE-PRESIDENT

Dr Srilal Fernando

SECRETARY

Sunimal Fernando
smfernando@optusnet.com.au
Int. 61 2 9476 6852 Mob. 0404 462 412

TREASURER & PUBLIC OFFICER

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

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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

PUBLICATIONS

Sunil de Silva
Int. + 61 2 4340 5940
sunil.desilva41@gmail.com

EDITOR/LIBRARIAN

Doug Jones
int. + 61 2 8677 9260
12/11 Garthowen Crescent Castle Hill NSW 2154
dougjay20@gmail.com

SOCIAL CONVENOR

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

LIFE MEMBER

Hugh Karunanayake
Mobile 0448 998 024 Int. + 61 3 9878 5307
karu@internode.net.au

EX-OFFICIO

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

Leslie Perera
Mobile: 0418 230 842
lesanvee@bigpond.com

Srikantha Nadarajah
Int.+ 61 2 9980 1701
vsnada@bigpond.com.au

MELBOURNE CHAPTER CONVENOR

Hemal Gurusinghe
Mobile 0427 725 740
hemguru@hotmail.com

COLOMBO CHAPTER

Convenor/Local President

Deshamanya Tissa Devendra
+9411 2501 489 email: tisdev@sltnet.lk

Vice-Presidents

Mohan Rajasingham
+9411 258 6350/ 0722 234644
email: mohanandranee@gmail.com

Fredrick Medis

+ 0722 256993
email: fredrickmedis@gmail.com

Local Hon. Secretary

Anandalal Nanayakkara
+077 3272989

email: anandalal10@gmail.com

Local Hon. Treasurer

M. Asoka T. de Silva
Int. 011 282 2933 Mob. +94 775097517
email: desilvaasoka@yahoo.com

Committee Members

Srilal Perera
077 5743785 email: srilalp@ymail.com

Daya Wickramatunga

+9411 2786783/0773 174164
email: dashanwick@gmail.com

M.D.(Tony) Saldin

+9411 2936402 (Off.) +9411 2931315 (Res.)
Fax: 9411 2936377 Mobile: +94 777 363366
email: saldinclan@sltnet.lk

The Ceylankam

CONTENTS

• From the Editor	3	• Thomas Shadrach James (1859-1945) by Thiru Arumugam	17
• Our Readers Write	4	• Meals Amme Made	23
• Brief Biographies of Classical Writers by M.Asoka.T de Silva	5	• Natural history of Crabs of Negambo Lagoon (Part II) by Dr Leonard Pinto	25
• Vanishing lifeways at the foot of Galle Fort in the 1830s (Cover Story) by Michael Roberts	7	• Pioneer Planters of Maskeliya by Hugh Karunanayake.....	29
• A remarkable loyalty in the artistry of Ivor Denis by Dr Tony Donaldson	9	• Obituary - Maurice Raymond	34
• The tea planter & his cook by Hugh Karunanayake		• Public meeting -Melbourne Chapter 18 November 2018	35

From the Editor

We have traversed through another year and a successful one in every sense of the word; an year under the direction of a new President. Our public meetings have been most absorbing with erudite speakers of the calibre of Dr Siran Daraniyagala, former Director-General of Archeology in Sri Lanka, Dr Palitha Kohona, Attorney-at-Law, Master of Law, Doctorate from Cambridge University and among other things, an International Civil Servant of the United Nations and to add that sporting touch we had Harry Solomons, cricket guru and enthusiast extraordinaire of many decades, have graced the podium at our well-attended quarterly gatherings. The success and demand for these meetings can be attributed to our Presidents who have pursued well-qualified speakers, encouraging them to share their expertise with our enthusiastic members. Most of our speakers oblige without fail at their own time and expense. New President Pauline Gunawardene has enthusiastically taken on the practice from where her predecessors left off.

As a follow-up to these meetings, we endeavour to run a full text or synopses of these talks in later issues of *The Ceylankan* for the benefit of members and for the CSA's own records.

In this issue we have CSA member Dr Tony Donaldson in "A remarkable loyalty in the artistry of Ivor Denis", writes with authority on Sri Lankan music woven round the creations of Guru Dev Sunil Santha. Dr Donaldson has written copiously about the work of Santha and how the island's music evolved,

developed and was inspired by the musical genius. The article not only delineates the grassroots and growth of the genre but also the immense part played by Sunil Santha in the development of music in the country.

Yes, Thiru Arumugam has discovered an unlikely connection between an Indian Tamil and Australia's Aboriginal people. It is the story of a Tamil youth who migrated alone to Australia at the age of 19 years and went on to become a teacher in this country. He taught his students to fight for their rights and among his students was one who went on to become a State Governor. This is yet another example of the author's research skills.

Our other prolific contributor Hugh Karunanayake has two of his very readable articles published in this issue. His first deals with the Tea Planter and his remarkable cook who niched a distinguished place for himself in the history of Western cuisine in Ceylon.

In his second essay, Hugh looks at the slow deterioration of Coffee plantations in Maskeliya, the final demise of Coffee on the island and its replacement with Tea. Well worth a read!

We next have Part II of Dr Leonard Pinto's three part series on "The Natural history of Crabs of the Negambo Lagoon". You will enjoy the fascinating study of the much-sought after crustacean.

One cannot ignore the eye-catching cover pages adorning this issue. We are obliged to renowned historian, blogger and CSA member Michael Roberts for this fascinating item. The photographs carry a unique history and the story is an excerpt from the blog used here with the blessings of the author.

It's all up to you now.

Advertising in The Ceylankan

For some time, CSA members and others have indicated an interest in using the Journal to promote their goods and services. However, we have been maintaining the ideal of the founders of the CSA, that the Journal must not be made a means for commercial profit, but only a vehicle for research, study and broadcast of the rich heritage and culture of Ceylon/Sri Lanka.

Now, with the constant rise in costs of delivery of the Journal to members worldwide, we need to look at additional sources of revenue. Accordingly, the Committee has decided to accommodate advertising and promotional matter in the form of loose-leaf flyers, but not as part of the body of the Journal.

Suitable material, in keeping with the non-political, non-partisan aims and ideals of the CSA, will be considered. All such copy is to be submitted to the Editor for consideration.

Once accepted, the advertiser will need to supply the printed flyers in sufficient numbers for inclusion in that particular issue of the Journal.

The cost of inserting such flyers is \$500 per issue of the Journal, paid in advance.

How we started

The society has been organised over the past few months because of interest in matters relating to Sri Lanka. Dr Chris Puttock, a Canberra scientist, has been one of the prime movers, organising the initial meeting. The society envisages discussion and dissemination of information on any aspect of Sri Lanka: history, antiquaria (books, memorabilia, ephemera) art, coins, architecture, costumes, genealogy, cartophily etc. (From first editorial, Vol. 1 No.1 - February 1998)

Our Readers write

Saga of the battleship Emden's crew

Thank you for the very interesting article by Tissa Devendra in the last issue of the Journal.

Readers may be under the impression that Helmuth von Mücke and his Cocos Island landing party of 50 German sailors made it to the Middle East in the *Ayesha*, but that is incorrect. *Ayesha* belonged to the Clunies-Ross family who "owned" Cocos Islands. It was a 100 ton three-masted top sail schooner used to transport copra overseas but with the advent of steamships, it had outlived its usefulness and lay abandoned with a rotting wooden hull and torn sails.

But for von Mücke and his men the only chance of avoiding being taken prisoners of war was to attempt a getaway on the *Ayesha*. They provisioned the ship with food and water. An example of how strictly the Germans followed the rules of war was that von Mücke made a list of all the foodstuffs that they commandeered and said that he would arrange for the German Government to refund the cost some day!

They set sail at sunset on their 1200 km journey to a neutral port in Dutch East Indies, narrowly avoiding HMAS *Sydney* which steamed in a few hours later after the terminally damaged *Emden* ran aground on North Keeling Island. Von Mücke soon found that he had problems on his hands. The bilge was getting flooded and they could not start the bilge pump. Fortunately, they were able to repair it using rags soaked in oil in place of the rubber packing. The rotten sails kept tearing in every gust of wind and had to be continuously stitched together.

The other problem was that there was no sextant to determine their position. There were no detailed maps, they only had some old sailing guides. They did, however, have a patent log which they could trail behind the ship and determine their speed and distance travelled. However, by extraordinary luck, just over three weeks later they sighted Padang Harbour in the island of Sumatra, in neutral Dutch East Indies.

In Padang there was a German Consul and after three days of negotiations with the Dutch, they allowed the *Ayesha* to re-provision and sail away, ostensibly to the Middle East, but in actual fact a secret rendezvous had been arranged with the Nord-Deutscher Lloyd 1700 ton freighter *Choising*, a few days sailing away. When the two vessels met von Mücke and his men transferred to the *Choising* and *Ayesha* was scuttled and sent to a watery grave.

There still remained the problem of the 6000 km crossing of the Indian Ocean to the Middle East without being spotted by a British or French warship. They decided to change the name of the ship to *Shenir*

of Genoa and painted this name on the stern, an Italian ship of approximately the same dimensions, and stitched together an Italian flag which they hoisted.

They avoided the main shipping lanes and changed course whenever they saw a puff of smoke on the horizon and six weeks later they were able to safely reach the Red Sea port of Hodeida, now in present day Yemen, but at that time in the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

Tissa's article does not describe how the subsequent encounter between the Germans and Bedouin bandits ended when they met in the Arabian desert. The battle continued for three more days when the Bedouins made an offer. Von Mücke and his men were free to go if they paid a ransom of 11,000 sterling Pounds worth of gold and handed over their camels, arms and ammunition. Since he did not have that sort of money, the battle continued for two more days when suddenly two Arabs came with white flags and told him that Abdullah, the second son of the Emir of Mecca was coming to meet him. Abdullah told von Mücke that his father the Emir was very impressed by the way he stood up to the bandits even though heavily outnumbered, and the Emir had ordered safe passage to Jeddah for von Mücke and his men. Abdullah later became the King of the newly created State of Jordan until he was assassinated in a mosque in 1951 by a Palestinian militant in view of rumours that he intended to sign a peace treaty with Israel. His great-grandson Abdullah II is the present ruler of Jordan.

Von Mücke and his men finally reached the Turkish city of Constantinople on 23rd May 1915. Turkey was an ally of the Germans in World War I. The 13,000 km journey from Cocos Islands had taken six months and when they finally reached Germany the Kaiser showered the contingent with Iron Crosses, one for each of them. Their journey has been described as "an epic journey of danger and deprivation, audacity and courage, unmatched to this day in the history of sailors at war". It is indeed surprising that the story of this epic journey has not yet been made into a movie.

THIRU ARUMUGAM (Castle Hill, NSW)

Superb well-researched articles

I am sorry that I have not acknowledged your editorial skills in publishing a very excellent Journal and Journal 83 is once again a superb volume with such good articles, so well researched. I was impressed and educated by the Cover Story by Hugh Karunanayake on the Wolvendaal Church. There was so much I learnt by reading this account about this so very well known landscape in Colombo.

How much better everything is when kept in "simple language" and you mention that this was drilled into you by your father. All the very best and with all good wishes.

GORDON COORAY (Noble Park, VIC.)

Brief biographies of Classical Writers and Historians who commented on Sri Lanka – Part V



By M. Asoka T. De Silva

The author is Treasurer of CSA's Colombo Chapter and a retired scientist who has written more than 100 research papers, including books. Many of his scientific papers have been published in prestigious journals worldwide. This is the fifth in the series written exclusively for The Ceylankan.

Liesching, L. F. (1861)

Liesching, L. F. was a civilian Government Agent in Sri Lanka. He followed Major Skinner, a road building engineer, 30 years after the latter, and found himself in his loneliness, constrained to write virtually the 'epitaph' of Anuradhapura, calling it emphatically a "City of Dead". He had claimed that scarcely could one take a step in Anuradhapura before the eye falls on some memorial of the past. He is the Author of the book, "A Brief Account of Ceylon"

Mandeville, John (14th Century AD)

Sir John Mandeville from St Albans in England began his travels in Asia in 1322 AD, about 50 years after Marco Polo. The original copy of his Travels had been published in 1499, and edited anonymously in 1725 in the versions for which a "Cotton" manuscript in the British Museum is the only extant authority. The name Sir John Mandaville, is said to be a nom de guerre, borrowed from a real knight of the same name, who lived in the reign of Edward II. He may have taken the name from a funeral inscription of the real Sir John Mandaville, in a church in Liege.

Mandeville described Ceylon as an island that was about 800 miles in size, with much wilderness, and infested with serpents, dragons, crocodiles and elephants. He also gave a description of Adams Peak and its environment and especially of the widespread occurrence of precious stones. Interestingly he claimed that men applied an ointment made of lemons, to keep off venomous animals including crocodiles.

Marco Polo (1254 – 1324)

Marco Polo visited Ceylon in 1294 AD on his way back from a long journey in Asia ending in China, and reached the Gulf of Mannar. This journey is reported as the most extensive Survey hitherto made of the East, and the most complete description of it ever given by any European in an age which hardly had any knowledge of these regions.

The Polos' were a patrician family of Venice. The Polo family left for Asia in a northwesterly direction through Greater Armenia, Persia and Iraq in 1271 AD and returned only in 1295 AD. The trip took them to Khoten, a town well known in that era, and entered western China, where the great Khan received the information of their arrival. Polo was well received by Khan and was later employed by him in various assignments. After 17 years the Polo family decided to re-visit their home. Although Khan had been reluctant to allow them to leave, an opportunity

arose when an embassy from a Moghul – Tartar prince from Persia visited Kublai Khan to seek a bride for the reigning monarch. Marco Polo apparently got the approval to escort the visitors back home and thus returned to his homeland.

Chapter 9 of his book titled 'The Travels of Marco Polo', is devoted to a description of the "Island of Zeilan", in which he provides some unusual features of Ceylon and its inhabitants. He claimed that the people worship idols, and that both men and women go nearly in a state of nudity, wrapping only the middle part of the body with cloth. He had also given a description of the ecological features of the country as well as of the precious stones, which he had claimed were more valuable than those found anywhere else in the world. According to him the reigning King of the Island possessed the grandest ruby that was ever seen, being a span in length and thick as a man's arm.

Marco Polo also gave the same exaggerated dimensions of the Island as the others before him, but claimed that the island was now only one half of its earlier size.

Megasthenes (ca. 350 – 290 BC)

Megasthenes (Gr. Μεγασθένης) was a Greek traveler, ethnographer, and geographer during the Hellenistic period and author of the work called 'Indica'. He was born in Asia Minor (present Turkey), to whom the subsequent Greek writers were chiefly indebted for their accounts of India. Megasthenes was a friend and companion of Emperor Seleucus Nicator, and had been sent by that monarch as ambassador to Sandracottus (Chandragupta), King of the Prasii, whose capital was Palibothra (Pataliputra), a town, probably, near the confluence of the Ganges and Son in the neighbourhood of the modern Patna. Little is known in respect of the personal history of Megasthenes, except for the statement of Arrian. Whether Megasthenes accompanied Alexander or not in his invasion of India, is uncertain. The time at which he had been sent to Sandracottus, and the reason for which he was sent, are also equally uncertain. Other authorities place the embassy a little before 302 BC, since it had been about that time that Seleucus had concluded an alliance with Sandracottus; and since Megasthenes had resided some time at the Court of Sandracottus, it is believed that he may have been sent to India at a subsequent period, and since however, Sandracottus had died in 288 BC, the

mission of Megasthenes is conceived to have been placed previous to that year.

Megasthenes had entered India through the district of Pentapotamia, describing extensively about the rivers, possibly referring to the tributaries of the Indus, and had proceeded by the "Royal Road" to Pataliputra. He also seems to have visited Madurai the then capital of Pandyas, but does not appear to have visited any other part of India.

In his "Indica" he is said to refer to the prehistoric arrival of Dionysus and Hercules in India. This story had been very popular amongst the Greeks during the Alexandrian era, and of particular interest were his comments on the religions of the Indians, where he had mentioned about devotees of Heracles (Lord Krishna) and Dionysus (Lord Shiva), but strangely nothing had been said about Buddhism. This had led to the belief that Buddhism may not have been known widely before the reign of Emperor Asoka. Most modern writers, from the time of Robertson, appear to have accepted a passage of Arrian [pollakis de legei (Megasthenes) aphikesthai para Sandrakotton ton Indon Basilea] that Megasthenes had paid several visits to India, but since neither Megasthenes himself, nor any other writer, alludes to more than one visit, these may just mean that he had several interviews with Sandracottus during his residence in the country. The work of Megasthenes titled 'ta Indika', is said to have been divided into four books. These had apparently been written in the Attic dialect, and not in the Ionic, as some modern writers had asserted. Megasthenes is repeatedly referred to by Arrian, Strabo, Diodorus, and Pliny. Of these writers Arrian, on whose judgment most reliance is to be placed, speaks most highly of Megasthenes, but Strabo and Pliny apparently treat him with less respect. Although his work had been known to contain many fabulous stories, similar to those which are found in the Indica of Ctesias, yet these tales appear not to have been fabrications of Megasthenes, but accounts which he may have received from the inhabitants, frequently containing, as modern writers have shown, the real truth, though disguised by popular legends and fancy. It is claimed that there is every reason to believe that Megasthenes had given a faithful account of every thing that fell under his own observation; and the picture which had presented of Indian manners and institutions is said to be on the whole, more correct than might have been expected. Everything that is known respecting Megasthenes and his work, are claimed to have been collected with great diligence by Schwanbeck, in a treatise entitled 'Megasthenis Indica. Fragmenta collegit, commentationem et indices addidit', as collected by E. A. Schwanbeck, Bonnae in 1846.

Although Megasthenes had not apparently visited any part of India, South of the River Ganges, as noted by some authors, he had not been able to

gather much information about Ceylon. Pliny quoting from the 'Fragments of the Indica of Megasthenes' (collected by E. A. Schwanbeck and translated by J. W. McCrindle) had claimed that Megasthenes referring to Taprobane had said that it is separated from the mainland (India) by a river, and that the inhabitants are called Palaigonoioi, and that the country is more productive of gold and large pearls than India. Megasthenes had also apparently claimed that 'one part of the Island abounds with wild beasts and elephants much larger than India breeds, and man claims the other part'.

Nicolo di Conti (ca. 1440)

Nicolo di Conti – The Venetian Traveller around 1444 AD. According to Bennet (1843) in the 15th century, Nicolo di Conti, on his return from India had described Ceylon as Zeilan, and after noting its Cinnamon and other products had stated that he sailed from there to the great island of Sumatra which some of the ancients had called Taprobane.

Onesicritus (330 BC)

Onesicritus was one of the commanders of the fleet of Alexander the Great in 330 BC which he dispatched from Indus to Persian Gulf. It had been said that the Island of Ceylon or Taprobane was first known to Europe only through the reports of Onesicritus and his companion Nearchus.

At an advanced age Onesicritus became a pupil of Diogenes the Cynic, and gained such repute as a student of philosophy that he was selected by Alexander to hold a conference with the Indian Gymnosophists. When the fleet was constructed on the Hydaspes, Onesicritus was appointed chief pilot (in his vanity he calls himself commander), and in this capacity accompanied Nearchus on the voyage from the mouth of the Indus River to the Persian Gulf.

He wrote a diffuse biography of Alexander, which in addition to historical details, contained descriptions of the countries visited, especially India. Its historical value was considered small, it being avowedly a panegyric, and contemporaries (including even Alexander himself) are believed to have regarded it as untrustworthy. Strabo especially takes Onesicritus to task for his exaggeration and love of the marvellous.

Onesicritus is known to have proposed that the size of the Island of Taprobane to be greater than 5000 stadia (1 stadia = 185 meters). Although vehemently assailed by Strabo for his geographical errors, and by other writers for his sycophancy, he may be recognized for the merit of correctness of the description as well as to the discovery of Taprobane, which he claimed was 20 days sailing from the continent.



Michael Roberts needs no introduction to readers of The Ceylankan. His world-renowned blog THUPPAHI- WORDPRESS.COM carried several items on Galle in recent times. Born and bred in the historic Southern Sri Lankan town, there's no one who knows better and loves this magnificent town and its lore more intimately than the author.

Vanishing Lifeways at the Foot of Galle Fort in the 1930s by **MICHAEL ROBERTS**

The four images presented in this item were snapped by my maternal uncle Lincoln Perera (also spelt "Pereira") in the early 1930s. They were one part of a small set of pictures that came into my hands way back in London in the 1960s when Lincoln, a confirmed bachelor, passed away there.

They had no captions or dates. However, one image shows the Old Lighthouse at the south western corner-bastion. This edifice (see pic on back cover) burnt down in 1936 and was eventually replaced by a lighthouse at the south eastern corner which still functions today.



• *Rock fishermen 1930s. Photos by Lincoln Perera.*

All images display some fisher folk from yesteryear plying their trade along the rocks on the western side of the Fort ramparts. These personnel were not necessarily residents within the Fort. They would have clambered in past the few rocks at sea/ground level, around the north western corner of the ramparts, where the walled-in prison is also found.

I can vouch for the feasibility of their 'operations. I have clambered out of the Fort that

way as a teenager. Between 1948 and 1959-60 my pater lived in a rented house at Middle Street not far



from the Judges' Bungalow (a military camp for quite some time since). The Boys Bathing Place (see my Pic on page 8) opposite the Judges Bungalow was my stamping

ground—swimming, snorkelling, wandering with pals or alone in boys playtime mode.

Fishermen from outside the Fort used to pass along the rocks, along the Fort rampart edges or fish at a spot just south of the Boys' Bathing Place or along the big rock complex abutting the Fort yet further south where some of us used to indulge in thrilling (and risky) spray baths from waves which used to dash themselves during the south-west monsoon season. "Us" here refers to a cluster of Fort youth encompassing my sister, Audrey, the brothers Vijay and Lakshman Wickremasinghe, Rabin Pulle-nayagam, Tony Perera with Trevor Roosmale-Cocq, Elmo de Alwis and the Conderlags, visiting from outside the Fort.

When Cynthia Perera joined us one of these exercises, it was a scream—that is, the rotund Cynthia screamed at high pitch

because she was no swimmer and not a sea 'urchin' in the manner born like several of us.

Those were the days, yeah!



But for the fishermen presented here, the sea was a partial source for their meagre living. We must thank Uncle Lincoln for capturing one aspect of their hard circumstances

The Old Lighthouse Point De Galle

Photograph on the back cover is by Frederick Fiebig, from an album of 70 handcoloured salt prints, of the lighthouse at Point de Galle in Sri Lanka (Ceylon). Fiebig's photographs of Ceylon, probably taken in 1852, are considered the earliest surviving photographic record of the island.

Galle, on the south-western coast of the island, has a natural harbour and is one of the most ancient settlements of Sri Lanka, a port from pre-Christian times. It is protected by a promontory called the Rock or Galle Point. Galle was the main port of the island even though entrance to its harbour was dangerous because of submerged rocks and reefs, until supplanted in the 1870s after the construction of breakwaters in the development of Colombo's harbour. The Portuguese arrived in the early 16th century and built a small fort here, but it was after Galle was captured by the Dutch in 1640 that it achieved its greatest prosperity. The English replaced



• *The boys' bathing place. Photo Michael Roberts.*

the Dutch in 1796 but made few changes to the town and today it is the surviving Dutch architecture of the 17th and 18th centuries which lends Galle its charm. The lighthouse was built by the British in 1840 and burnt down in 1936. The existing lighthouse was erected here about 100 metres from the old site in 1939.



Important notice regarding CSA subscriptions for 2018

The annual CSA membership fees have not been changed for over ten years. However, during this period there have been sharp increases in postage charges, printing costs, hall hires, insurance etc and it is no longer possible to make ends meet. The CSA Committee at its last meeting reluctantly decided to **increase the annual membership fees for overseas members from AS 30 to AS 40, and for Australian Pensioners from AS 20 to AS 25.** The annual membership fees for other members resident in Australia will remain unchanged at AS 30, and the rates for Colombo Chapter members will remain unchanged.

Membership subscriptions for 2018 are now due and please arrange payment, together with any arrears where applicable. Payments could be made by an Australian dollar cheque in favour of "Ceylon Society of Australia" posted to Deepak Pritamdas, Treasurer CSA, P O Box 489, Blacktown, NSW 2148, Australia. Alternatively, a direct bank transfer could be made to the CSA Bank Account in Commonwealth Bank: BSB 062308, Account No. 1003 8725. Please do not fail to include with the transfer your name as payee, otherwise we will have no way of identifying the payee. We have had two payments recently without the payee's name and we are unable to identify who has sent these payments.

For payments from overseas, if you have difficulty in sending the payment in Australian dollars, you could please send a bank draft or bank transfer in US dollars or Sterling pounds. We regret that personal cheques in foreign currencies are not acceptable. Since our Bank charges us 10 Australian dollars for converting a foreign currency payment to Australian dollars, please add 10 Australian dollars to the amount due and convert to US dollars by multiplying by 0.80, or if sending in sterling pounds, multiply by 0.60. These multipliers reflect approximately the current rates of exchange used by our Bank. For overseas bank transfers our Commonwealth Bank Swift Code is: CTBAU2S

If you need any clarification please contact our Treasurer, Deepak Pritamdas, by email to: deepakpsl@yahoo.com. Also please send him an email when you send a direct bank transfer.

Need for Inconsistency?

The price of championing human rights is a little inconsistency at times.

– DAVID OWEN, *Hansard* March 1977.

A REMARKABLE LOYALTY IN THE ARTISTRY OF IVOR DENIS

by DR TONY DONALDSON

Three giants of the Sri Lankan arts world have passed away this year. The visual artist Neville Weeraratne died in Melbourne on 3 January 2018, aged 86 (Donaldson, 2018); the filmmaker Lester James Peries died in Colombo on 29 April, aged 99; and the singer Ivor Denis passed away at his home in Seeduwa on 18 June, aged 86.

I knew Neville had passed away, but I only heard about Lester and Ivor by chance during a lunch



• Ivor Denis.

meeting with Prasanna Gamage, the Consul General of Sri Lanka in Melbourne. The meeting took place on 24 August and it was uncanny that at the very moment he was telling me the news about Lester and Ivor, the then Australian Prime Minister

Malcolm Turnbull was being toppled by far-right conservatives in the Liberal Party. The contrast between the life of Ivor Denis and the madness taking place in Canberra on that Friday afternoon in late August was unmistakable. Loyalty can be as fickle in the music world as it is in politics as Sunil Santha experienced. But Ivor was different. His strength of character was on a higher level as seen in the unbreakable loyalty to his guru for 66 years, from the day he met Sunil Santha in 1952, till the day he died. It was a remarkable loyalty, rare in human relationships, and it was not surprising that those paying their final respects to this icon of Sinhala music included artists, musicians, ministers, and Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena.

It was also uncanny that Ivor, Lester and Neville should pass away so close to each other in the first six months of this year because the three were connected to a seminal period in Sinhala film history in the 1950s marked by Lester's first two full-length feature films – *Rekava* (The Line of Destiny, 1956) which Lester describes as "an indictment against rural superstitions" (Hautin, 1980: 40), and *Sandesaya* (The Message, 1959), was set in Portuguese colonial Ceylon. The music for the songs in the two films were composed by Sunil Santha. Ivor led the singers in

recording the songs while Neville designed the posters for *Sandesaya*.

Lester seemed to know everyone in the Sri Lankan arts from actors to artists, composers, poets and writers. He knew Neville and his artist wife Sybil Keyt. He attended their art shows, and in 1999, he opened a painting and drawing exhibition by Sybil and Neville at the Barefoot Gallery in Colombo. Lester was one of the very few able to transcend artistic and cultural boundaries in Sri Lanka and was never taken in by intellectual ideologies or cultural orthodoxy that plagued Sinhala music (Abeysekera, 2007).

I spent a morning with Ivor in late 2016 joined by fellow Sunil Santha supporters Vijith Kumar



• *Rekava*, 1956: shooting interiors with natural light.

Senaratne, Lloyd Fernando and Daya Dissanayake (Donaldson, 2017). As I stepped into his home in Seeduwa, the noise from the busy Colombo road was terrific and I wondered how Ivor could live next to it. The noise made it impossible to interview him there so Lloyd drove us a short distance away to a quiet spot in Kindigoda and we did the interview in a church.

Ivor was born Pasquwalge Don Augustin Ivor Denis in Seeduwa on 28 May 1932. He was educated at Maris Stella College and Loyola College in Negombo. He made an early mark with English and Sinhala, but it was a talent for music – which emerged when he began singing at school at the age of 12 – that was to set the pattern for the rest of his life. His father was Francis Aloysius – a landed proprietor and regular churchgoer who played organ and sang in the church choir, but Ivor credits his mother,

Maria Rodrigo, for introducing him to the music of Sunil Santha.

In 1952, aged 20, Ivor sang a Sunil Santha song called Varen Heen Sere, Ridi Valave in a music program broadcast on Radio Ceylon. Sunil was listening and thought he was singing the song until he heard a mistake and realised it was a different singer. Sunil asked his student Patrick Denipitya whether he knew this young singer. Patrick replied, "I know him very well. He is my good friend."

"Please bring him to my hotel. I would like to meet him."

The meeting took place at the Siri Sanda Hotel in Bambalapitiya where Sunil was living at the time. Though it was only a brief ten-minute meeting, Ivor regarded those precious moments as one of the great pleasures in his life. Ivor's first impressions of



• Lester James Peries (1919 - 2018)

Sunil Santha were: "He was a very popular artist but a simple person in his talk and dress." During the conversation, Sunil asked Ivor if he would like to sing with him for a Jayantha Weerasekara Commemoration Program. Ivor accepted the invitation. He was thrilled to be given the opportunity to sing with Guru Devi Sunil Santha.

Jayantha Weerasekara was an influential figure in the life of Sunil Santha. He was a journalist, a Sinhala scholar, and a leading figure in the Hela Havula (Roberts, 1977) – a movement of poets and intellectuals seeking to promote a refined and disciplined style of Sinhala. Sunil's first contact with the movement took place in 1942 when he met its leader Munidasa Cumaratunga (1887-1944) but his influence on Sunil was not immediate. It was only after he died in 1944, that his successor Jayantha Weerasekera finally persuaded Sunil to join the Hela Havula which may explain why Sunil decided to sing a commemoration song for him.

The Weerasekara event took place at the YMBA Hall in Borella on 18 July 1952 – the fourth anniversary of his death. This was the first time Sunil and Ivor performed together in public. The song sung that day was Hitha Atha Paa – a commemoration song written for Weerasekara with lyrics by Amarasiri Gunawadu and music composed by Sunil Santha. The audience were ecstatic to see Ivor with Sunil. After the performance, Sunil praised Ivor for singing the song well and invited him to join his music classes.

Ivor's parents didn't want Ivor to study under any musician because of their low social status at the time. However, Sunil told Ivor he was "embarking on a different journey" and even if musicians were not held in high regard, this was not a reason for his parents to be afraid of him studying music under Sunil Santha. Persuaded by this logic and reasoning, Ivor's parents changed their minds and supported his decision to join Sunil's music classes.

After completing his music studies in 1956, Ivor took part in most of the music programs and projects organised by Sunil Santha. His first major project was in the film *Rekava*. Sunil initially refused Lester's request to compose the songs for the film but finally agreed on condition that Fr. Marcelline Jayakody write the lyrics for the songs, B. S. Perera direct the music, and Ivor lead the singers (Senaratne, 2016).

The first attempt to record *Rekava* songs took place in early 1956 at Government Film Unit studio.

Lester had connections there as he had previously made three films with the



• Jayantha Weerasekera (1875-1949)

British documentary filmmaker Ralph Keene who had taken charge of the Government Film Unit as a guest producer. The songs recorded were *Anurapura polonnaruwa* – a vrindu sung by Ivor Denis to the accompaniment of a rabana and talampotta; and *Sigiri Landakage* – a beautiful lullaby performed by Lata Walpola to an accompaniment of three violins, cello, guitar and bass guitar. However, Lester was dissatisfied with the technical quality of the recordings and he decided to record the music at a studio with better facilities in Madras. He arranged air flights and accommodation for the singers.

In April, Ivor flew to Madras with Sisira Senaratne, Indrani Wijayabandara, and Tilakasiri Fernando. The singers checked into a hotel in Egmont and celebrated the Sinhala New Year together. The recording sessions took place over two weeks at the Vahini Studio with an orchestra comprising Indian musicians. The instruments included violins, cello,



• Ivor after becoming a student of Guru Devi Sunil Santha in 1952.

guitar, mandolin, a wooden xylophone and tabla. Tilakasiri Fernando played violin with the orchestra.

Sunil Santha's style

As the leader of the Sinhala orchestra at Radio Ceylon, B. S. Perera was familiar with Sunil Santha's style of orchestration. His orchestrations achieved a rich texture suitable for the melodic and rhythmic structures of Sunil Santha's music. In directing the singers, Ivor found the main challenge was in the lyrics because it was important for Sunil Santha that the words of his songs be pronounced in correct Sinhala. The combination of B. S. Perera directing the music and Ivor leading the singers was magical and the results were sublime as seen in *Olu Nelum Neliya Rangala* – a joyful song used in the scene of a boatman going down a river set against a verdant background. But though *Rekava* was a breakthrough in Sinhala cinema and the music was superb, the film was "a total disaster at the box office." Lester's explanation for this was the film was completely outside the kind of thing people were used to seeing in the Sinhala cinema such as love scenes or fights."

When Ivor returned to Sri Lanka, he continued to develop his career. In 1958, he was appointed an A-Grade Recording Artist at Radio

Ceylon. In 1959, he obtained his first teaching appointment at Gatangama Vidyalaya – a government school in Ratnapura. He taught music, particularly Sinhala folksongs.

After the release of *Rekava* in December 1956, it took Lester a year before embarking on his next film – *Sandesaya*. The project began in early 1958 when Lester met William Blake to discuss making a film based on the Portuguese occupation of Ceylon. The film took 18 months to complete. In an article published in the *Ceylon Daily News* on 22 October 1959, Lester discussed the challenges and problems in making the film which involved researching the history of Portuguese colonisation, devising a screenplay, obtaining funding, scouting out a location to shoot the film, recruiting technicians and actors, commissioning and recording the music, and shooting the film on celluloid (Peries, 1959).

Sandesaya was set around a Portuguese garrison during the colonial period. With the severity of colonisation, Sinhalese leaders in the low-country meet secretly to send a message to the King



• Ivor Denis playing violin.

of Kandy in the central highlands which was free of foreign occupation. In their message, the low-country leaders say they would be ready to join in an attack launched by the king against the colonial invaders to drive them out. Woven into this narrative are songs, dances and antics.

The lyrics for the *Sandesaya* songs were written by Arisen Ahubudu with music composed by Sunil Santha. Ivor was selected again to lead a group of Sinhalese singers to India but this time, he had to take leave without pay from his teaching job in Ratnapura. The singers were Mohideen Baig, Lata

and Dharmadasa Walpola, Sydney Attygala, and H. R. Jothipala. The singers flew to Madras to record the songs for the film which took place in a different recording studio. However, the music didn't work out as expected.



• *At a musical gathering in the 1960s with the violinist Lionel Ranwala (1939-2002).*

The film was produced by K. Gunaratnam – the Managing Director of Cinemas Limited. He appointed R. Muttusamy as Music Director for the film as he knew him and because he had previously provided music to several productions for Cinemas Limited. However, he began tampering with the music without having a firm grasp of how Sunil Santha used melodic motifs to unify his song compositions in the orchestrations. Though *Sandesaya* was a commercial success at the box office, for Ivor the recording sessions were unpleasant and for the composer, the results were unsatisfactory, as Ivor discussed in an interview filmed in December 2016.

“Muttusamy was credited as music director for *Sandesaya*. However, apart from a little directing and changing part of the melody of *Puruthugeesi Kaarayaa*, he mainly spent his time sitting on a chair in the studio. Most of the music was directed by an Indian musician in the orchestra, not Muttusamy. The Indian musician orchestrated the music and thought it was a good idea to use a shehnai. I could see they were not following Sunil Santha's style of orchestration, but I had no choice. We had to sing the songs. It was an obligation.

When the recording sessions were over, I flew back to Colombo and visited Mr. Sunil Santha at his home. He asked me about the recordings and was very displeased to learn the melody of *Puruthugeesi Kaarayaa* had been changed and that a shehnai had been used in his songs.”

In an interview recorded five months earlier by Daya Dissanayake, Ivor said he did raise an

objection to the shehnai being used in the *Sandesaya* songs, but Muttusamy didn't listen to him and dismissed his concerns.

At the premiere of *Sandesaya* in late 1959, Sunil Santha walked out of the theatre when he saw his song *Ko Hathuro* had been used as background music for the opening titles. Sunil Santha had composed this special warrior song with great care and effort for a scene in the film. Lester's explanation for using the song as background music was that no funding was available to do the scene for which the song had been composed (Santha, 2018), which suggests Gunaratnam was responsible for sabotaging the song. However, there are certain indications that other factors besides money may have been involved. As Lanka Santha points out, in contrast to the scenes of many Sinhalese being killed in the film, the song *Ko Hathuro* expresses something about the power and belligerence of the Sinhalese people against an enemy, and Gunaratnam, being a Tamil, may not have wanted such a scene in the film (Santha, 2018).

When Ivor returned to his teaching post in Ratnapura, he received an invitation in the early



• *Sunil Santha returning to the stage at YMBA Hall in 1966, singing *Olu Pipila* and *Handapane* with Ivor Denis*

1960s from W.B. Makuloluwa to join two of his music dramas called *Hela Mihira* and *Depano* as the leading singer and main actor. These two dramas gave Ivor the opportunity to display his versatility as an actor and singer of Sinhala folk songs.

In 1972 Radio Ceylon changed its name to Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC). To mark the occasion, a special musical show was organised at the YMBA Hall in Borella. After an absence of 16 years, Sunil Santha returned to the stage for this special event and performed the songs *Olu Pipila* and *Handapane* with Ivor Denis.

With his return to SLBC, Sunil began composing new songs for two popular radio programs called *Madhura Madua* and *Pancha Madhura*. Ivor was involved in every program. The process would



• *Ivor in December 2016.*

begin after Sunil received a letter from SLBC notifying him the date for recording a specific program. He would start composing songs, and when he had sufficient material for a 30-minute program, he would give the lyrics and notation of the melodies to Ivor to practice. On the day of the recording, Sunil

would set out in his little Bug Fiat with his eldest son. He would drive to Ivor's home, pick him up and drive to SLBC.

One of the most moving moments of our interview occurred while Ivor was giving an account of Sunil Santha's funeral procession. As he walked through the streets of Ja-ela in the procession, Ivor sang the song Paan Tharuwa Netha Hela Gee Ambare. The lyrics of the song were penned by Arisen Ahubudu and music by Ivor Denis. It was bizarre that SLBC did not consider this historic song worthy of recording and though Ivor continued to sing the song at Sunil Santha commemorative events, it was never recorded. It serves to remind us that while Ivor was widely known for singing Sunil Santha songs, he was also a composer in his own right. Some of his finest melodic inventions can be heard in songs such as Abhimananiya wu navodaye and Nilwala Ganga.

After Sunil died, his daughter Kala was encouraged or "pushed" into music by her mother (Senaratne, 2018). In the mid-1980s Ivor started to come to their home in Rajagiriya to give Kala singing lessons. Sunil Santha Junior bought a keyboard so the two could practice music and sing together. Sunil had taught Ivor for free in the 1950s, and now he returned the favour by teaching Kala for free. Ivor and Kala went on to record a cassette titled Guwan Thotilla which was produced by Mrs. Leela Sunil Santha. They recorded the songs Bovitiya Dam, GuwanThotilley, Ira Besa Yanney, Komala Detha Naga and Leney which were composed by Sunil Santha. Kala later released it as a CD. She also produced a CD with Sigiri Gee originals which was released as an EP by SLBC (Senaratne, 2018).

In a career stretching over five decades, Ivor was honoured with awards including the Presidential Award for the best Playback Singer in the film Hima Kathara, and the prestigious Kala Keerthi award which was presented to him by President Maithripala

Sirisena at the National Honours 2017 festival. But for all these achievements, which he rightly deserved, Ivor always felt blessed and fortunate to have been attached to a major talent in Sunil Santha.

NOTES: 'These short documentary films included Conquest in the Dry Zone (1954) – a film on tackling malaria and its eradication in the North-Central province of Sri Lanka; and Be Safe or Be Sorry (1955) – an educational film on road safety.

SOURCES

ABEYSEKERA, TISSA. Cultural orthodoxy and popular Sinhala music - part 2. Daily News, 11 August 2007, <http://archives.dailynews.lk/2007/08/11/fea03.asp>

DISSANAYAKE, DAYA. Interview with Ivor Denis, Kindigoda, 23 July 2016.

DONALDSON, TONY. Oral history interview with Ivor Denis, Kindigoda, 8 December 2016.

_____. Sunil Santha: The Man who Invented Sinhala Music for a Modern Age. In English and Sinhala. Translated into Sinhala by Dr. Ruvan Ekanayake. Guru Devi Sunil Santha Memorial Lecture. Colombo: Sunil Santha Samajaya, 14 December 2016.

_____. In Search of Sunil Santha. The Ceylankan, 20(4) November 2017: 5-14.

_____. Neville Weeraratne: the Artist and his Distant Homeland, 17 February 2018, <https://thuppahi.wordpress.com/2018/02/17/neville-weeraratne-the-artist-and-his-distant-homeland/> Republished in the Sunday Island in two parts in Life Style on 25 February: 1 & 7; and 4 March: 1-2.

EKANAYAKA, RUVAN. Personal communication with the author, 4 October 2018.

FOUR CORNERS. A Form of Madness, ABC, 27 August 2018 <http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/a-form-of-madness/10170850>

GUNAWARDANA, A. J. AND LESTER JAMES PERIES. A personal cinema: An interview with Lester James Peries. The Drama Review: TDR, 15(2), Theatre in Asia (Spring, 1971): 303-309.

HAUTIN, JEAN-PIERRE. Entretien avec Lester James Peries [Interview with Lester James Peries]. Positif-Revue mensuelle de Cinéma, Nov. 1980:40-44.

In pictures: Funeral of veteran musician Ivor Dennis. Sunday Times (Sri Lanka) 21 June 2018, <http://www.sundaytimes.lk/article/1044492/in-pictures-funeral-of-veteran-musician-ivor-dennis>

PERIES, LESTER JAMES. Sandesaya. Ceylon Daily News, 22 October 1959.

ROBERTS, MICHAEL. Elites, Nationalisms and the Nationalist Movement in British Ceylon, in Documents of the Ceylon National Congress, Vol I. Colombo: Department of National Archives, 1977.

SANTHA, LANKA. Personal communication with the author, 2 October 2018.

SENARATNE, VIJITH KUMAR. Personal communications with the author, 2016-18



THE TEA PLANTER AND HIS COOK

Two little known but significant contributors to the western ethos that is part of the modern homogenous Sri Lankan culture.

by Hugh Karunanayake

Occidental influence on Sri Lanka could be conjectured as first arising from the visits of famed international travellers like Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta, Van Lin Schoten and others from the West who first discovered the delights and pleasures of this land known as Serendib. Indeed, the word "serendipity" is now a much used word in the English language meaning "surprisingly pleasant discoveries".

From the 16th century onwards, however, the social dynamics of the country, especially along its maritime areas, came under the influence of three dominant powers—Portugal, Holland and Great Britain. The conquest and settlement within the country brought in its wake substantial influences not only on the economic development of the country but also, very significantly, on its social manners and customs. Thus we have today a Sri Lankan culture consisting of many contributing strands including a fairly heavily influenced western ethos confined not only to the use of the English language and the many sporting activities including cricket, rugby, and other sports, but also as presented by the general way of life of its people. Today's Sri Lankan culture, although dominated by the original Sinhala Buddhist, Tamil Hindu, Moor Islam base, it also has the occidental elements showing through and is like the proverbial "scrambled egg" difficult to unscramble, to expose its constituent elements!

I have chosen the lives of two persons, comparatively unknown but whose remarkable contributions are significant in the evolution of some aspects of present day Sri Lankan identity.

John Loudon Shand was a pioneer tea planter who arrived in Ceylon during the dying days of "king coffee" in 1866. Born on 1 October 1845 in Scotland, he arrived in Ceylon in 1866 at the age of 21, seeking his fortune as a coffee planter. He pioneered the clearing and planting of Pendleton Estate in the Kandy District by the time he was 25 years of age. The estate was managed by Keir, Dundas and Co., a big name in the coffee industry of the time.

Loudon Shand was an impressive figure well known for his commanding personality and his manner of public speaking which soon earned him the sobriquet "Silver-tongued Shand". In 1879, at the age of 34 years, he was elected Chairman of the powerful and then very influential Planters Association of Ceylon, at a time when the planting industry was

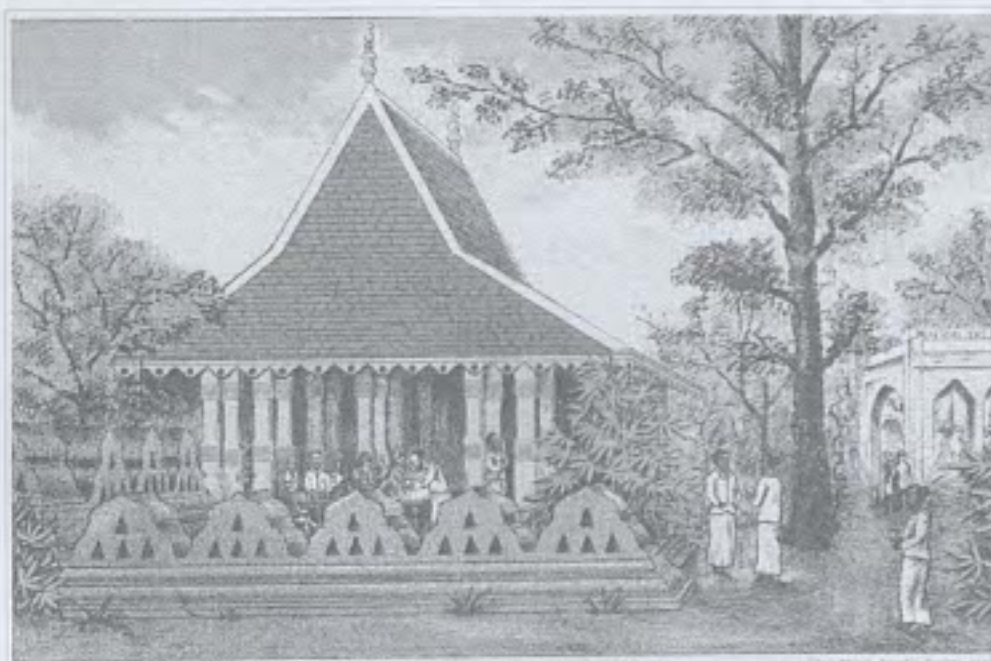
going through one of its most difficult times in its history. By 1882, he had progressed in his planting career fast enough to part-own Hatton Estate which was then planted in coffee covering 120 acres of land. It was a successful, speculative move following the crash of "king coffee". He was responsible for the



• **Mr J.L. Loudon Shand** replanting of the estate in tea which was later to expand to nearly 300 acres. His reputation as a planter was on a steep upward trajectory, and he was later to spearhead the promotion and development of Ceylon's tea industry. With his outstanding personal attributes he was well equipped for the task. After living in Ceylon for 20 years, he returned to England as Planting Commissioner

for the Colonial and Ceylon Exhibition in 1886. As a well known promoter of the tea industry in Ceylon, he lectured at the Royal Colonial Institute, the Society of Arts and other public organisations extolling the prospects of the tea industry in Ceylon. His wife Lucy who travelled over from England to marry him at the Christ Church in Colombo on 29 November 1873, bore him ten children, five of them were sons, three of whom took to planting in Ceylon. Their second son Stewart Loudon Shand served in the Great War and was awarded the Victoria Cross for extraordinary bravery, an outstanding achievement.

John Loudon Shand arrived in London for the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition, accompanied by his butler and five servants. The five servants were to work as waiters in the Ceylon Tea House a major feature of the Ceylon Court at the Exhibition held in London. Loudon Shand as representative of the Ceylon Planters Association was one of the five members of the Commission appointed by the Government of Ceylon to run the Ceylon Court. The others were Sir Arthur Birch, F.R. Saunders, Member of the Legislative Council, Henry Trimen, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Peradeniya, and J.G. Smither, Government Architect. There were scores



CEYLON TEA HOUSE.

The Ceylon Tea House at the 1886 London Exhibition. Daniel Santiagooe could well be one of the waiters in the foreground.

Note: The image of The Ceylon Tea House shows its design derived from the Audience Hall in Kandy. The wall in front adapted from the design of the wall surrounding the Kandy Lake. The Tea House designed by Govt. Architect JG Smither, well known of "The Architectural Remains of Ceylon" published in 1884.

of other officials and private individuals from Ceylon who participated in the exhibition, their names all well documented in a commemorative book published to mark the occasion. Tea being the principal product that the government wanted to publicise, it fell upon John Loudon Shand to do the needful. Having accomplished his objectives and earning well deserved plaudits from his countrymen, Loudon Shand continued to reside in Scotland after his visit in 1886. He did not elect to return to Ceylon and lived out the rest of his life in Scotland and passed away in Dulwich on 2 February 1932 at the age of 87.

Francis Daniel who served as Loudon Shand's butler in Ceylon also described himself as a fiddler who originated from Trichinopoly in South India. His father and grandfather were tom tom beaters in the Indian Light Infantry and shared a common musical heritage. The butler's son Daniel Santiagooe was born in Ceylon, and since the age of 16 served in various planter's bungalows in Ceylon as cook's assistant, house boy, dressing boy, general servant and approved cook. He was 23 years of age when he arrived as Loudon Shand's cook to serve also as a waiter in the Ceylon Tea House.

A pioneer in his own right, Daniel Santiagooe's own life story as professional cook is not only remarkable, but serves as a trail blazer in the development of Western oriented cuisine in Ceylon. The man obviously would have settled down in England after the exhibition and his line of descent would probably be today at least five generations after him, most likely carrying his name if not some aspects of his origins. He is remembered for posterity, however, as the author of the first ever cookery book based on Ceylonese cookery. Titled "The Curry Cook's Assistant" first published in London in 1886, Daniel Santiagooe, the author, describes himself very

modestly as "General Servant". In his preface Santiagooe acknowledges with gratitude "my two masters Shand, and Haldane and Co., of London who brought me over to England and Scotland with four other servants and allowed me to publish a little book to make my desired little fortune". The first edition of 500 copies sold out, at 4 pence each which surely must have helped the author to lay the foundation for the fortune he hoped to make. A first edition of this remarkable book cannot be found anywhere today, but a second edition and its reproduction can still be found.

There are some interesting observations made by Loudon Shand in his introduction; by Egmont Hake who wrote the preface to the first edition; and by the author Santiagooe himself which underscores the many changes that have occurred both in culinary

practices as well as in customs and manners at table since the publication of the book in 1887. Shand for instance thought that "all human nature requires to be occasionally stimulated, and a mild curry acts upon the torpid liver, reacts upon the digestive organs, and provides the necessary stimulants without injurious consequences." He also noted that "it is a remarkable fact that nearly all curry eating nations are abstainers from strong drinks." If only he were in Sri Lanka today, Shand would be able to see how alcohol consumption has almost totally negated his observation of 130 years ago!


Hake remarked that Santiagooe's written word was not "English as she is spoken". Santiagooe, however, said "I like broken English because ladies and gentlemen like that". Those were the times indeed, and reflects the colonial mind set very well. It is also interesting to note Santiagooe's own preferences in curries where he says "a Madras woman can beat any other Indian woman in curry cooking." He goes on to say "Madras is the only place you could take a proper curry, and also in Ceylon, as a good many cooks of Madras Presidency came to Ceylon several years ago and spread out the art of general cooking in Ceylon". An observation valid, if only one does not take into account the widespread and centuries old culinary practices in rural Sri Lanka which for centuries have developed a unique cuisine based on the vegetable and other resources so abundantly available in that tropical paradise.

There was also the emerging modern Ceylon that had as its nucleus, cosmopolitan Colombo, where curries were sneered at and the emphasis placed on Western cuisine. Just over 50 years after Santiagooe wrote his pioneering work, in 1940, the premier hotel in the island at the time

Just over 50 years after Santiago wrote his pioneering work, in 1940, the premier hotel in the island at the time, the Galle Face Hotel, would not have even a sniff of curry. The menu for a standard meal at the Galle Face Hotel in the year 1940 is reproduced at right.

the Galle Face Hotel would not have even a sniff of curry. The menu for a standard meal at the Galle Face Hotel in the year 1940 is reproduced below. The meals that were served although based on local resources were prepared in accordance with western cooking practices, and even presented on the menu in French! The Hotel was, of course, responding to demand which represented dishes suitable for the tastes of the western palate. The patrons of the hotel were "suddhas" with some adulating "kalu suddhas" as well. The "kalu suddhas" are, of course, well entrenched in Sri Lankan society, and being a dominant social group called the shots, led the way, and their life styles being aped by our unsophisticated rural folk who have been led to believe that anything foreign is better than anything local. There is, however, no gainsaying the fact that the diversity of cooking styles and practices in Sri Lanka and the emergence of a Sri Lankan identity in this field has contributed substantially to the wholesome image of Sri Lankan cookery worldwide, and for that we owe not a little to Western influences –much more than we give them credit for.





Ceylon Society of Australia

AGM, Dinner & Social
on Saturday 24th November 2018
AGM 7.00 PM
7.20 PM to 11.00 PM
Dinner & Dancing
at Pennant Hills Community Centre Hall
70 Yarrara Road, Pennant Hills
\$45.00 per person
BYO
Dress: Smart Casual
Music by
Roger Menezes
BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL
Contact: Deepak Pritamdas: 0434 860 188
Pauline Gunewardene: 0419 447 665
Les Perera: 0418 230 842



Thomas Shadrach
James (Fig. 1)

THOMAS SHADRACH JAMES (1859 – 1945)

A Teacher of Tamil origin who inspired his Aboriginal
students to become campaigners for their Rights

by THIRU ARUMUGAM

*(Warning: Readers are notified that this article contains names
and images of deceased persons.)*

Thomas Shadrach James was born in Mauritius in 1859. His father was of Indian Tamil origin, originally a Muslim but later converted to Christianity and his mother was a Tamil Christian. Both of them were originally from Madras. In 1878, when James was 19 years old, due to distressing family circumstances, James decided to migrate alone to Australia. He spent his lifetime as a Teacher in outback New South Wales and married the daughter of an Aboriginal elder. His students were mainly Aborigines, and he inspired in them a sense of pride in their Aboriginal culture and heritage. Some of his students became the first generation of campaigners for Aboriginal Rights. His most distinguished student was Douglas Nichols who was the first Aborigine to be knighted and the first Aborigine to become the Governor of an Australian State.

A valuable source of information and images for this article is the 364 page book "*Dharmalan Dana: An Australian Aboriginal Man's search for the story of his Aboriginal and Indian ancestors*" by George Nelson and Robynne Nelson, ANU Press, Canberra, 2014. George Nelson is a great-grandson of Thomas Shadrach James and Robynne Nelson is a great-great-granddaughter. The link to the book's website is: <https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/aboriginal-history-monographs/dharmalan-dana> 'Dharmalan Dana' means "Grandfather's Pathway" in the Aboriginal Yorta Yorta language. An extract from the dedication of the book is as follows:

*"Honouring Grampa Thomas Shadrach James,
Who through his own personal journey of oppression,
injustice and inequity,
By white man on Yorta Yorta land,
Continued to fight for the rights of Aboriginal people
at Maloga and Cummeragunja missions,
As he worked to empower our people through
'Leading and Writing'.
Where would we be today, without them all?"*

Mauritius

Mauritius is an island in the Indian Ocean about 2000 km off the coast of South-East Africa. It has a land area of 2040 square km and the present

population is about 1.3 million. The largest city is the capital Port Louis. In 1598 the Dutch visited the island and found it uninhabited. In 1638 the Dutch established a small colony and started exporting ebony and also planted sugar cane. The mean annual rainfall is about 2100 mm and sugar cane later on became a major crop in the island and the major source of revenue until tourism took over in the recent past. However, the Dutch abandoned the colony in 1710.

The French landed there in 1715 and established a colony and called it Isle de France. They expanded the cultivation of sugar cane using slave labour from Africa. They established a prosperous economy. In the early part of the nineteenth century they used the island as a base to attack British commercial ships which were sailing in those waters. This proved to be too much of an irritant to the British. A Royal Navy expedition was sent out to capture the island and the French surrendered in 1810. The British renamed the island Mauritius and it remained a British colony until it became independent in 1968.

The British continued the cultivation of sugar cane. In 1835 slavery was abolished and most of the slaves returned to Africa, leading to an acute labour shortage in the sugar cane plantations. The British solved the problem by getting down indentured labourers from India. The labourers were paid a nominal allowance plus rations and were contracted to work for five years. At the end of that period they had the option of a free passage back to India or they could remain in the country and work for any employer or engage in trading. During the period from 1834 to 1921, when the scheme was abolished, about 450,000 Indians were brought down. Most of them opted to remain in the island and as a result today the Hindu population of Mauritius is about 52 percent. It is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-cultural, multi-lingual secular state with freedom of religion enshrined as a constitutional right.

Mauritius was also the destination of choice for the banishment of Ceylonese by the British. Governor Brownrigg exiled to Mauritius, without trial, Ehelapola Maha Nilame and others in 1825. He died there in 1829 and a monument was erected

where his remains were interred. To this day, faded flowers and burnt out candles are found at the monument, indicating that perhaps he left behind some descendants. (See the August 2007 edition of this Journal.)

Peersahib and Thomas families

Samson Peersahib, a Tamil speaking Muslim, was born in 1832 and studied in a Christian School in Madras where he was a Monitor. The 1850s was a period of turmoil in India due to British imposed social reform and harsh land taxes. It later led to the Indian Mutiny of 1857 and the dissolution of the East India Company. In 1854, aged 22 years, Peersahib was unhappy with the situation in India and decided to sign up as an indentured labourer to go to Mauritius, although it meant that he would have to work as a labourer in the sugar cane fields for five years before he could get a worthwhile job. He sailed from Madras on 02 April 1854 in the *John Brightman* bound for Port Louis in Mauritius. He worked as a labourer for 20 months when his superiors found that he was an educated person with a flair for languages and he was appointed an Interpreter in a Magistrates Court.

Bishop Ryan was appointed in 1854 as the first Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of Mauritius. In his Journal entry for 14th December 1855 he records that an Indian Muslim named Peersahib came into his vestry and said that he wished to be converted. He was accepted and baptised the following year as James Peersahib. He became an active member of the Church and was a Catechist. He did well in life thereafter and when he died in 1905 he was the owner of seven properties in Mauritius.

On 14th July 1857, a family of Tamil Christians, 40 year old Anthonee Thomas, his wife Elizabeth and five children set sail from Madras in the ship "*Beernah*" for Mauritius. Their second daughter Esther was 14 years old and their youngest son Manuel was three years old. Anthonee Thomas only survived two years in Mauritius before he passed away and his wife Elizabeth had to bring up the family by herself. They were active members of the Anglican Church in Mauritius, and it was through this Church activity that James Peersahib and Elizabeth Thomas met. They were married in October 1858, he was 26 years old and she was 16 years old. Their son, Thomas Shadrach Peersahib was born in September 1859, followed by a second son Samson Peersahib who was born in 1861. On the first of February 1859, James Peersahib was appointed as an official Interpreter in a Magistrates Court in view of his flair for languages.

Tasmania

On 31st January 1875, Thomas's only sibling, his thirteen year old younger brother Samson passed away after a brief illness. This was followed by Thomas's mother Elizabeth passing away on 10th February 1877. Thomas's father re-married just over a year later on 16th March 1878. Thomas was 19 years

old and his new stepmother was 26 years old, just seven years older than him, and he had difficulties relating to her. The combination of all these events had a profound effect on Thomas and he decided to leave Mauritius. He went down to the harbour and got a working passage on the first ship he could find. The destination of the ship was Van Diemens Land, known as Tasmania since 1856. He arrived there in December 1878.

In Hobart, Thomas changed his last name from Peersahib to James and henceforth he was known as Thomas Shadrach James. In Hobart he got a job as a Deputy Postmaster and perhaps he got bored typing out telegrams on a morse key all day and in August 1879 he applied for a teaching post. He was interviewed by the Chief Inspector for Examination of Candidates who noted that "*He appears to have fair power as a Teacher*" and "*is sufficiently qualified by education for the charge of a small country school*". He was offered the post "*with the usual gratuity of 30 Pounds a year*" plus board.

Victoria

Meanwhile James changed his mind about the teaching post and went to Melbourne where he enrolled in the University of Melbourne's Medical School to follow a medical degree course. He followed the course for about a year when he fell ill with a severe attack of typhoid. He survived the illness, but it left him debilitated and the University Medical Officer suggested that he suspend his studies for five years. Also, the illness left him with a permanent tremor of his fingers and that was the end of his dream of becoming a surgeon.

It was in a mood of depression that James went for a walk on Brighton Beach on 3rd January 1881, when he found that there was a fund-raising Revival Camp on the beach. The Camp was being conducted by Daniel Matthews, an Englishman, accompanied by about 40 Aborigines. Matthews was running a Mission Reserve for Aborigines and a small school in outback Maloga. They fell into conversation and James offered to join Matthews as a Teacher in his school. Matthews explained that he mainly depended on donations and could not offer him a salary but would pay him a nominal allowance of 20 Pounds a year and provide him with free board and lodging in his own home. James accepted the terms. Many years later he told his daughter that "*the Lord had spoken to me that day, and it was a calling*." He was 21 years old, and he was to continue to work as a Teacher in the outback for more than forty years.

Daniel Matthews and the Maloga Mission

Daniel Matthews was born in Cornwall, England and migrated with his parents to Australia when he was 16 years old in 1853. His father originally tried his luck in the Victorian goldfields, but when that petered out, Daniel and his brother William moved to Echuca where they ran a very

successful ship's chandlers store. Echuca is a town on the Victorian side of the Murray River which forms a natural boundary between Victoria and New South Wales (NSW). The river flows from east to west here and north of the river is NSW and south of the river is Victoria. Echuca is the nearest point on the Murray River to Melbourne, being about 240 km from Melbourne. Agricultural produce such as wool and wheat came by paddle steamers from upstream and downstream to Echuca where it was unloaded and sent by the newly opened rail link to Melbourne. This made Echuca the largest inland port in Australia and dozens of paddle steamers were based here. Even today a couple of them ply up and down the river carrying tourists.

In this situation the Matthews ship's chandelling business prospered and in 1865 the two brothers jointly purchased 800 acres of land with Murray River frontage at two Pounds an acre, about 25 km east of Echuca, but on the New South Wales side of the river, and called the place Maloga.

Daniel was very fond of the Aborigines and felt that they were very badly treated by the white settlers. The Aboriginal tribe in this region was the Yorta Yorta, which means 'meeting of the waters'. On 26th May 1866 he wrote a letter to the Editor of the *Age* newspaper "*As a community have not the people of this colony ... benefitted by the land taken from this uncivilised race? On the Murray and Goulburn Rivers there are hundreds of these poor wretches worse than uncared for ... Large tracts of land should be set apart for them and they should be encouraged in everything that would raise them above their present state.*"

In 1835 when Melbourne was first colonised, about 15,000 Aborigines lived along the Murray



• Fig. 2 Murray River and Maloga Mission Huts in the 1880s. (Courtesy State Library of South Australia.)

River. By 1850 the numbers had been reduced to about 3000 due to deaths from settler introduced diseases like smallpox, cholera, syphilis, leprosy, typhoid and due to other causes. In fact, the general expectation was that the Aboriginal races would die out. The Melbourne *Age* newspaper of 09 July 1874 said "*No sensible person, we imagine, cherishes any expectations that the native race will long survive ...*

By a mysterious order of Providence, contact with his more civilized brothers is fatal to the savage. Nor is the fact of his gradual extinction to be altogether regretted."

Aborigines were welcome to come and live in Maloga Reserve where they were given space to build their bark huts and were given provisions. However, there were strict rules in the Mission and attendance at morning and evening prayer services was compulsory, alcohol was banned and the Sabbath had to be strictly observed. It was for many years the only refuge for Aborigines in New South Wales and Northern Victoria. A picture of the Murray River at that time and the Maloga Mission huts can be seen in Fig. 2.

Matthews taught the Aboriginal men agricultural skills like ploughing, fencing and shearing and they were able to get seasonal employment in neighbouring white settler farms which brought them some income. His wife Janet taught the Aboriginal ladies sewing, dressmaking and the duties of domestic servants.

In 1870 Daniel set apart 20 acres of his land for the establishment of an Aboriginal village and school which was started in 1874. In 1872 Daniel married Janet, daughter of Rev. Kerr Johnston and she became the principal teacher in the school. It was to this school that James came as a Teacher in January 1881. The school progressed and in August 1881 it was recognised as a State School. In 1883 Daniel Matthews stepped down as a Teacher and James was appointed by the Government as a Teacher on a salary of 168 Pounds per annum plus 44 Pounds per annum to cover board. He was now on a sound financial footing. The

school was also doing well under James and in 1885 the visiting Schools Inspector, Mr Wright, reported that the school is

being kept in a state of proficiency and that he '*had never seen boriginal pupils more advanced.*'

In the 1880s James started a cricket team in Maloga, James was the Captain and Coach of the team. The team went on to win the District Cricket Championship. A photo of the team can be seen in Fig 3.

In 1885 James informed Matthews that he had taken out a life insurance policy for 500 Pounds and that he intended to get married. The bride was Ada Cooper, whose father was an itinerant white



• Fig. 3. Maloga Cricket Team with Captain/Coach James seated in the centre. (Courtesy State Library of South Australia.)

labourer and mother was Kitty, who was from a family of Aboriginal elders. Ada was a former student of James and a star pupil. He was 26 years old and she was 18 years old. The wedding was on 14th May 1885 with the wedding cake made by James and the couple went on to have eight children, two of whom did not survive childhood. With this marriage he became one with the Aboriginal people.

Scholars Hut

With the increasing popularity of the school, James found that there were many adult Aborigines who wished to become literate. He therefore started a free night school which he called the "Scholars Hut" where by candlelight, adult Aborigines learned not only literacy and numeracy but also leadership skills, world politics and how to write formal letters and petitions, which was the usual mode of campaigning for causes at that time.

Dr Wayne Atkinson of the academic staff of Melbourne University, a great-grandson of James, has written a chapter about the Yorta Yorta people in the book *First Australians*, 2010, in which he has this to say about the Scholars Hut (p 188) *"This is the story, told from the Yorta Yorta world view, of my people's heroic struggle from its beginnings in the Scholars Hut at the Maloga Mission, to the present struggle for land justice and racial equality within the settler state. For it was by candlelight in what has become immortalised as the Scholars Hut that the seeds of Yorta Yorta political awareness and activism were cultivated. This became the catalyst for the rise of the Indigenous political movement in Australia – a revolutionary point in Indigenous thinking that led to the 1967 referendum and beyond."*

Dr Atkinson continues (p 191) *"Grandpa James encouraged his students to be confident in their own abilities. He taught them to be proud of their Yorta Yorta identity and to recognise the empowerment that comes from being able to articulate their grievances through the power of the voice and the spear of the pen. Being influenced by a passion for human dignity and respect for one's fellow people, regardless of race or creed, Grandpa was a strong believer in the political strategy of passive resistance. It was a process that required patience, leadership and collective people power."* This was decades before Mahatma Gandhi advocated the policy of passive resistance.

Dr Atkinson goes on to describe what life was like for the Aboriginal people in those times (p 199) *"Although it is hard to imagine, if you were black in New South Wales at that time, a long list of insults was your lot. You couldn't vote; you weren't allowed in hospitals, cafes or pubs; you would wait until last to be served in a shop; your kids couldn't go to the school in the town; you needed the mission manager's permission to move on and off the reserve; you could be sent out as a servant or labourer at the discretion*

of the board... and, worst of all, your children could be taken without a word of warning." It was in this climate that James's Scholars Hut created the first generation of activists who campaigned for Aboriginal fundamental rights.

Cummeragunja

In 1883 the New South Wales Government took over all Church run Aboriginal Missions when they established the Aboriginal Protection Board (APB). Daniel Matthews was reluctant to hand over the Maloga Mission to the APB. In any case, the Maloga Mission was on private freehold land. Matthews supported the Yorta Yorta people in their demand to set aside land for their use. The petition of the Yorta Yorta people to the Government said *"All the land within our tribal boundaries has been taken possession by the Government and white settlers; our hunting grounds are used for sheep pasturage and the game reduced and many exterminated, rendering our means of subsistence extremely precarious, and often reducing our wives and children to beggary ... and we believe we could, in a few years support ourselves by our own industry, were a sufficient area of land granted to us to cultivate and raise stock."*

In response the APB allocated 1800 acres of land fronting the Murray River, about seven km to the east of Maloga and called it Cummeragunja, which means 'raising up' in the Yorta Yorta language. This was a new Government reserve for up to about 500 Aboriginal people. The land was given in blocks of about 20 acres per family and they were told that if they successfully cleared and cultivated their lots, it would be given to them permanently. This promise was never kept and years later the Government took back the land but did not pay them any compensation for developing the land and making it cultivable. It was later given over to white farmers. It must be borne in mind that the average size of an allotment to a European family at that time was about 3000 acres.

In 1887 Matthews received a letter from the Aborigines Protection Association (APA) of New South Wales that his future duties must be confined to religious teaching as they wished to separate the spiritual and secular work of the Station. Mr Bellenger was appointed secular Manager of the Station and Matthews was asked to hand over to him all secular matters.

In February 1888, Bellenger started dismantling the houses in Maloga to move them to Cummeragunja. Only about 20 Aborigines loyal to Matthews stayed back in Maloga. In April 1888 the School was also dismantled for transfer to Cummeragunja, as a result James also had to move to Cummeragunja. Matthews was banned from entering Cummeragunja and was told that if he did so, he would be charged with trespass.

The School prospered in its new site in Cummeragunja and the APB Annual Report for 1889

says that *"The public school has been continued under the control of Mr James, who manifests considerable interest in the progress of the children, and is able to impart much valuable knowledge to them."* The APB Annual Report for 1892-3 also commended the work of James and said *"The Teacher is popular and esteemed. Also, he acts as a Medical Adviser in part; his influence is very beneficial. There are 50 children enrolled, 44% attending. The old pupils demeanour is good."* A picture of the school and children can be seen in Fig. 4.



• Fig. 4 James on the extreme left, with his pupils and School. (Courtesy George Nelson and Robynne Nelson).

George Nelson and Robynne Nelson had this to say in their book (p 155) about James's success as a teacher *"How did Aboriginal students from Cummeragunja take such an enormous leap? We suggest it was no accident at all, but a clever, calculated and systematic approach taken by Grampa to empower Aboriginal people to become great leaders and writers. And that's what many of them became! ... We know this is true as we look today at the wide range of powerful leaders who came out of his schoolroom and Scholars Hut. It's a who's who of Aboriginal politics in Australia in the early 1900s. Aboriginal men and women whose writing and leadership skills were second to none, had stepped directly out of his Scholars Hut on the Mission and onto the Australian political stage."*

By the early 1900s, in Cummeragunja over 1400 acres of the reserve had been cleared and over 400 acres fenced and cultivated. Paddle steamers called regularly at Cummeragunja and picked up the produce of the Aborigines which included wool, wheat, hides, hay and maize.

In 1907, George Harris the Reserve Manager announced the new policy that the blocks of land given to the Aborigines in 1888 were to be taken over and that they no longer had ownership of the blocks, but had to farm them for wages and the produce taken by the APB. In 1910, James complained to the APB that Reserve Manager George Harris was continuously

harassing him. The APB held an inquiry and the report stated that *"Whether due to the strained relationship with Mr James or not, Mr Harris has lost control over the men on the station and there is little hope of his ever being able to regain such control ... We are therefore of the opinion that a change is necessary in the management and recommend that Mr Harris be replaced by a suitable man."*

However, this was not the end of the problems in the Station. In 1921 the APB decided to lease the major portion of the reserve to white farmers. This was the last straw. Originally the Aborigines were given ownership of the land, then they worked the land as hired hands for the APB, now they could not even step on their former land. They were all herded into a 14 acre enclave.

The Yorta Yorta have not given up their claims to the land. Many separate legal native title claims were made unsuccessfully on the basis of their inherent rights. A native title claim was lodged in 1995 covering 2000 square km of land bordering the Murray and Goulburn Rivers by the Yorta Yorta people seeking recognition that they are the indigenous people belonging to that country. Justice Olney ruled in 1998 that the tide of history had washed away any real acknowledgement of traditional laws and any real observances of traditional customs by the applicants. An appeal was made to the Federal Court that the Judge had adopted a 'frozen in time' approach, but it was dismissed by a two to one majority. A further appeal to the High Court of Australia was dismissed by a five to two majority. It was at that time, Australia's longest running native title case. In 2004, however, a historic agreement was reached between the Victorian Government and the Yorta Yorta people. This gave the Yorta Yorta a say in the running of their traditional country. An eight member Board consisting of five Yorta Yorta and three Government representatives will manage the designated lands and waters, but the Environment Minister has ultimate responsibility.

The APB called James a trouble maker who was fermenting Aboriginal resistance and in December 1922 he had no option but to retire prematurely at the age of 63 years after having worked as a Teacher at Maloga and Cummeragunja for 41 years.

Having retired, James and his wife Ada moved to Melbourne in 1923 where his son Shadrach was living. Later they moved to Mooroopna, near Shepparton where his daughter Rebecca lived. Ada passed away in 1942 after a marriage that lasted 57 years. James passed away four years later in 1946. He was 86 years old. He was buried in the Cummeragunja Cemetery. A simple monument stands with a cairn and

the words *"They have been dead yet speaketh."*

John Ramsland, Emeritus Professor of History at Newcastle University had this to say about James *"Exceptional teachers are an unusual commodity in any educational system. Extraordinary teachers are even rarer. They take on a legendary quality ... Only one or two exceptional teachers can be located in the great silence that hovered over the schooling of Aboriginal children in New South Wales ... One exceptional teacher, Thomas Shadrach James, stood out in the colonial period, but few others came after him ... Mediocrity, unfortunately, reigned supreme from then on."*

The legacy of James

The legacy that James left behind was his former pupils. The most distinguished was Douglas Nicholls who was born in Cummeragunja in 1906. He was related to Ada, James's wife. After leaving school he became a professional Australian Rules Football player. He played for clubs and Victoria State. He did community work and was ordained as a Minister of the Aboriginal Church of Christ. He was an active member of the Aborigines Advancement League and edited their magazine. In 1972 he became the first Aborigine to be knighted and travelled to Buckingham Palace to receive the honour. In 1976 he was appointed Governor of South Australia, the first Aborigine to be appointed as a State Governor.

William Cooper was the brother of James's wife Ada and uncle of Douglas Nicholls. He was born in 1860. He was a product of James's Scholars Hut. He worked in farms for most of his life and



• Fig. 5 St. Stephens Anglican Church, Negombo, where James's cousin was the Vicar. (Courtesy Church of Ceylon.)

in the 1930s he started collecting signatures for a petition addressed to the King of England asking for the provision of a Member of the Australian Federal Parliament to represent Aboriginal interests. The petition was based on the premise that although Aborigines were not Australian citizens, they were British subjects and entitled to seek redress from the King. The petition says *"That whereas it was not only a moral duty, but a strict injunction, included in the commission issued to those who came to people Australia, that the original inhabitants and their*

heirs and successors should be adequately cared for; and whereas the terms of the commission have not been adhered to in that – (a) Our lands have been expropriated by Your Majesty's Governments, and (b) Legal status is denied to us by Your Majesty's Governments ..." He went from house to house on foot and collected nearly 2000 Aboriginal signatures but the Australian Government refused to forward it to the King on the grounds that the request could not be granted because there was no such provision in the Constitution and therefore the King could not do anything about it. Cooper was a prolific letter writer to the Editor and petition writer and the book *"Thinking Black: William Cooper and the Australian Aborigines' League"* by Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus has 100 extracts mostly written by Cooper from his writings campaigning for Aboriginal rights.

Shadrach Livingston James was James's eldest son. He was born in 1890. He enrolled in the Law Degree course in the University of Melbourne but could not complete the course because he fell seriously ill. As honorary secretary (1928-55) of the Aboriginal Progressive Association of Victoria, Shadrach persisted with appeals on behalf of Aborigines. He asked for full education standards for Aborigines and the teaching of technical subjects, for land and the facilities to develop it, and for employment of Aborigines in the public service. He also advocated Aboriginal representation in parliament, and equal rights and citizenship for all Aborigines in the Commonwealth. He died in 1956. It was only after 1965 that all Aborigines in every part of the country had the right to vote and after 1967 they were included in the Census returns. As George Nelson and Robynne Nelson say (p 355) they were *"No longer part of the Flora and Fauna Act."*

Other former students of James who went on to campaign for Aboriginal rights include Jack and George Patten, Margaret Tucker, Bill Ferguson, Eric and William Onus who were founders of the Australian Aborigines' League and many others.

The Ceylon connection

There are references to relations in Ceylon in the James's mother's side of the family. Robynne Nelson (James's great-great-granddaughter) says in a private communication referring to James's mother Esther Thomas that *"Grandmother Esther travelled from Madras to Mauritius in 1857. However, her brother Manuel Thomas and his children had lived in Ceylon on and off for some time with he and his sons Gamiliel and Abishegam being Deacons in the Anglican Church and travelling in Mauritius and Ceylon."* Now why would Manuel Thomas (James's mother's brother) travel frequently to Ceylon when he was well settled in Mauritius. Did the Thomas family have a prior connection with Ceylon?

We find that another son of Manuel Thomas, Rev. William Paranesam Thomas (James's first

cousin), known as 'Nesam', also lived for many years in Ceylon and is buried there. He was Vicar of St. Stephens Anglican Church in Selby Road, Negombo from 1921 to 1934. The Church was consecrated by Rev. Copleston, Bishop of Colombo in 1879. During his tenure, Rev. Thomas made many improvements to the Church and also raised funds and built a Vicarage. About 2010 George Nelson and Robynne Nelson say that (p 233, 239) they were given a letter dated 12 February 1948 written by Rev. Nesam Thomas from Ceylon to James's daughter Rebecca in Australia. It appears from the letter that they had been in correspondence for some time and Rev. Thomas expressed the hope that he could visit Australia "if it is God's will."

In 1992, George Nelson and Robynne Nelson say that (p 209) they came across a letter from Ceylon written many years earlier addressed to James's son Shadrach. The letter had remained unanswered as Shadrach had passed away. It was from Joyce Danforth, daughter of James's first cousin, Rev. Nesam Williams, and she was trying to find out details

of her relations in Australia. George immediately replied and she replied introducing her sister Yvette Caspersz in Negombo and also her first cousin Priscilla Thomas who had returned to Mauritius from Ceylon. Priscilla was a daughter of James's first cousin Abishegam Thomas. George continued corresponding with these ladies for 25 years.

In 2016 the academic, Dr Wayne Atkinson (great-grandson of James), travelled to Ceylon to try and meet some of his relations. He met 82 year old Yvette Caspersz in Negombo, daughter of James's first cousin, Rev. Nesam Thomas, formerly Vicar of St. Stephens Church, Negombo. She was frail but mentally alert and full of family stories. She took Wayne to St Stephens Church and proudly showed Rev. Thomas's name in the list of Vicars on a board on the wall. She also took Wayne to the cemetery and showed him the graves of Rev. Nesam Thomas and his brother Abishegam Thomas who was also a first cousin of James. It is therefore established that James's close blood relations lived and are still living in Ceylon.



Meals
Ammi
Made

Polos Acharu

by CHANDIKA KOTAGAMA

500gr. Polos pieces (young jackfruit)
1 teapoon salt
½ cup vinegar
¼ cup sugar
1 tablespoon mustard seeds ground with vinegar
1 tablespoon chilly powder
3 tablespoons dates cut into pieces
2 tablespoons mango chutney
2 green chillies and a few small red onions.

Method:

Boil polos with a little salt and saffron and slice them. Bring vinegar, salt and sugar to a boil. Add mustard, chilly powder and mix it. Cook the dates for a few seconds and add mango chutney, red onions, and the green chillies cut to long pieces and mix with the rest of the ingredients.



*Congratulations and a
Warm Welcome to our
New Members*

Daya & Wijitha Gonsalkorale, 32 Amaroo Avenue, Mount Colah, NSW 2079;

Chandra & Angeli Wirasingha, 30B Russell Street, Vacluse NSW 2030;

Praneetha Amaranath. 4 Francis Street, Epping NSW, 2121;

Kumar Rasiah, 60 Bareena Street, Strathfield NSW, 2135;

Mrs Shirley Rigg, Ruby Gardens, 81/225 Logan Street, Eagleby QLD 4207;

Mrs Dionysia De Almeida, Liberton, Brickley Park Road, Bromley, BR12 BE, Kent, England;

Dr Pren & Margaret Wickramanayake, 50 Hardy Street Dover Heights, NSW 2030;

Kumar Rasiah, 60 Bareena Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

From Fred Kreltszheim (of Vermont South, VIC.) to David Colin-Thome, 8-0 550 Isuru Uyana, Pelawatte 10120, Sri Lanka;

From Hugh Karunanayake (of Blackburn North, VIC) to Dr Ken Rajendra, 34 Pamankade Road, Colombo 6, Sri Lanka and Jitto Arulampalam, 3 Furness Street, Blackburn VIC 3130.



Part 1 of this article described the structure and functioning of Negombo Lagoon and the swimming crabs of the lagoon. Part 2 presents the crabs of the lagoon that spend most of their time on land or in their burrows and breathing with their gills, for they have no lungs to take oxygen from air, as terrestrial animals do. A fascinating adaptation to live on land!

Natural history of crabs of Negombo lagoon (Part II)

by Dr Leonard Pinto



Terrestrial crabs burrowing in muddy soils

Burrowing crabs perform a number of ecological functions, including vertical transport of detritus to the surface, release of nutrients by feeding on mangrove leaves and litter, stimulation of microbial activity, oxygenation of water in burrow by exposing it to air and increases the potential for oxidation of reduced chemical compounds, particularly those formed by sulphur, iron and manganese. Burrowing crabs of Negombo Lagoon belong to families Sesarmidae, Ocypodidae and Macrophthalmidae.

Burrows provide a physiological¹ and physical home, a refuge from predators, a dining table for feeding on mangrove leaves² and a chamber for sex in private. These crabs spend most of their time on land or in burrows, and hardly venture into swimming. As such, they do not have the paddle shape pair of legs, as in swimming crabs. Their burrows always end below the water table, so that the burrow is always moist, and they could have a dip in water to wet their gill for respiration (Figure 1). Locals call them 'shit' crabs. They are not marketable in Sri Lanka, though they are a delicacy in some parts of South East Asia.

Based on the literature available on these crabs at that time, I could confidently identify the burrowing crabs from Negombo Lagoon up to family Sesarmidae. However, the Journal of Bombay Natural History Society referred to most of them as belonging to genus³ *Sesarma*, now considered to be endemic⁴ to American continent, and hence not the correct naming. While I was struggling with their identifications, late Prof. George Dunnet⁵ and his post-graduate students from the University of Aberdeen came to Colombo in 1978 on an ecological expedition to conduct a joint research project at Yala National Park with colleagues in the Zoology Department of Colombo University. Prof Dunnet was a brilliant, pleasant and a humble academic, always encouraging his student. During the farewell function given to him and his team at the British Council, he indicated to us that he was happy to take my crabs to England for complete identification.

Prof. Dunnet took my specimens from the Negombo Lagoon to the British Natural History Museum for complete identification. Crabs of the families Ocypodidae and Macrophthalmidae

were confirmed by Dr R.W. Ingle of the British Museum, but those of Sesarmidae were sent to late Dr Raoul Serène in Paris, who had worked in the Raffles National Museum, Singapore as a UNESCO consultant in late 1960/1970, and was an expert on Sesarmidae crabs of South East Asia. So, I left it to taxonomists to confirm the species names, as my interest was in ecology of these crabs. The names of sesarmid crabs given in this article are the identifications of late Dr. Raoul Serène, and some

of their names and spelling have changed, since he identified them.

The following 6 species of sesarmid crabs were collected from mangrove islets of Negombo³ Lagoon:

Neosarmatium smithi,
Neosarmatium malabaricum,
Neoepisesarma versicolor,



• Dr Raoul Serène

Chiromantes bidens, *Chiromantes darwinensis* and *Chiromantes indiarum*. Three of them, *Neosarmatium smithi*, *Neoepisesarma versicolor* and *Chiromantes darwinensis* identified by Dr Serène have raised controversies regarding their names. *Chiromantes bidens* and *Chiromantes indiarum* also may raise issues in the future.

Neosarmatium smithi was the first species to create issues with respect to its burrowing habits and active time, collected from different countries. We collected them from the mangrove islets of Negombo Lagoon only at night, when the islets were

flooded after rains.

Similarly, Giddins⁶ et al. (1986) found

Neosarmatium smithi to be active and feeding only at night in Townsville mangroves, Australia. However, in Kenyan mangroves, Fratini⁷ et



• *Neosarmatium smithi*

al. (2000) and Gillikin⁸ (2000) found *Neosarmatium smithi* during the day and considered it to be a diurnal species. In 1994, Peter Davie from Queensland Museum revised the genus *Neosarmatium* of Serène

and Soh (1970) and found all Australian records of *Neosarmatium smithi*, including that of Giddins et al. (1986) to be *Neosarmatium trispinosum*.

Regarding the burrow shape of *Neosarmatium smithi*, there is another disagreement. We collected them from turrets of their burrows at night from the mangrove islets of Negombo Lagoon. Turrets are mud tubes, protruding from the ground upwards from complex burrows underneath (Figure 1). These open mud tubes are about 50-60 cm in diameter and about 50 - 150 cm in height. They are constructed adjacent to a plant to be supported by it. The turrets would be single or double (Figure 1). Turrets are an adaptation to maintain the conditions of the burrow, when it is flooded. So far, it is only in the islets of Negombo Lagoon that site-specific turrets and complex burrows of this species have been reported (Pinto 1984). Gillikin and Verheyden (2016) did not mention turrets of this species in Kenyan mangroves and quoted my observations on the complex nature of burrows of *Neosarmatium smithi* indirectly through Peter Davie of Queensland Museum (i.e. quoted as: Pinto 1984, cited by Davie 1994⁹). However, William Macnae (1968) who had a broader knowledge on mangroves of the Indo-West Pacific region had referred to the turret building habit of *Neosarmatium smithi* in mangrove environments, as we have observed at Kakaduwa, and Mandagas alamba in the mangrove islets of Negombo. Recently, when I visited the lagoon in 2017, I noted some changes in the shapes of islets, probably from the 2004 tsunami, and the boatman told me that Defence Secretary had ordered to release some troublesome monkeys from nearby towns into Kakaduwa. I wonder whether any consultation with ecologists had occurred before releasing them to Kakaduwa. I had no time to go into Kakaduwa to verify, whether the turrets of *Neosarmatium smithi* still occur there. I hope that monkeys have not destroyed these turrets, as someone can continue further research on this species in the islets.

The second species of controversy is *Neoepisesarma versicolor*. In the mangrove islets of Negombo Lagoon *Neoepisesarma versicolor* was observed during the day and they made simple burrows (Figure 1). But, in Bangrong Mangrove Forest in Thailand, they are in burrows during the day and come out at night to feed on mangrove leaves (Thongtham¹⁰ and Kristensen¹¹ (2005). In quoting this paper, Herbon and Norhaus¹² (2013) referred to this species as *Episesarma versicolor*, although in the reference list, they retained the name *Neoepisesarma versicolor*, as given by Thongtham and Kristensen (2005). It may be a mistake on the part of Herbon and Norhaus (2013) or a further revision with a new name. i.e. *Episesarma versicolor* instead of *Neoepisesarma versicolor*. If *Episesarma versicolor* is the new name of *Neoepisesarma versicolor*, then there

is a problem as *Episesarma versicolor* in Singapore climbs mangrove trees for feeding and is known as the "climbing crab," not a burrowing crab.

There is another disagreement on the shape of the burrow of *Neoepisesarma versicolor*. Thongtham and Kristensen (2003) noted that *Neoepisesarma versicolor* burrows in Bangrong Mangrove Forest in Thailand varied from simple straight burrows with few branches to complex labyrinthine structures with up to 5 openings. In our observation of this species in Negombo Lagoon, we noted that they make simple burrows. They observed that excavated soils usually lie near the entrance to the burrow, similar to our observations in Negombo. *Neoepisesarma versicolor* did not build turrets in the Negombo Lagoon as in Bangrong Mangrove Forest in Thailand¹³.

Comparison of burrow-shape, turret and feeding time of *Neosarmatium smithi* and *Neoepisesarma versicolor* from the mangroves of Negombo Lagoon with those from mangroves of Kenya, Thailand, Singapore and Townsville raise questions on the identification of the two species in relation to their habits and habitat. The discrepancy may have arisen because of:

- The species referred to in the four countries are different (unlikely, but possible), or
- They are different sub-species with different feeding and burrowing habits (possible), or
- These two crab species behave differently in different countries, with respect to feeding time, burrow shape and turret (species concept questioned, unlikely) or
- Dr. Raoul Serène, who identified the species or I, mixed up the labels of these two species (unlikely). I remember the red claw, and the turret that no author had referred.
- They had different burrows, but climbed the turrets to avoid flooding. Accidental occurrence at the burrow (possible, but unlikely).

A species with no controversy from the



• *Neosarmatium malabaricum*

mangrove islets of Negombo Lagoon is *Neosarmatium malabaricum*. It is about 3 cm in width, purple in shell colour with a rounded shell and a unique marking on the shell. It prefers

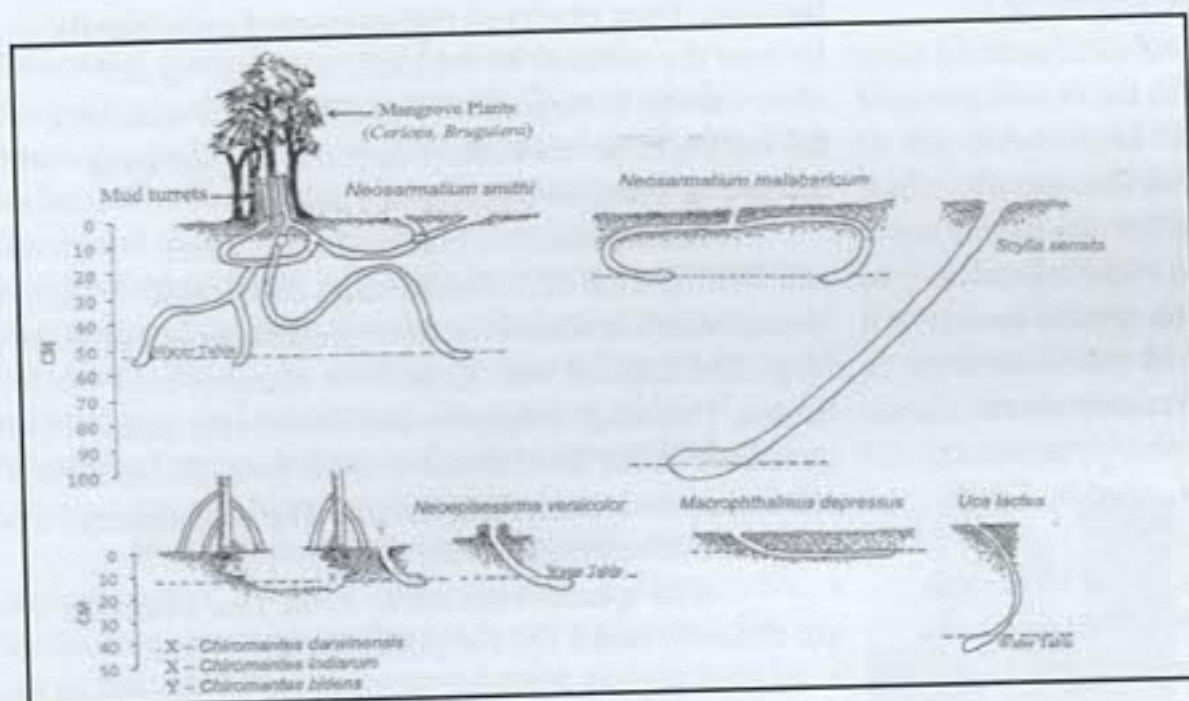
sandy soil and upper reaches of the shore where the soil is dry. We noted that it is active in the evening and makes T-shape burrows, so that it can move to the safer arm of the burrow, when threatened (Figure 1). In 1994, Peter Davie of Queensland Museum, compared Serène's specimen of *Neosarmatium malabaricum*, collected from a mangrove fringed coconut grove, near Pegasus Reef Hotel with the holotype¹⁴ in the British Museum, and found it to be

similar. Therefore the identification of *Neosarmatium malabaricum* from the mangrove islets of Negombo Lagoon and Serène's confirmation of the species is correct. It is a species of genuine identification with no controversy.

The third species of controversy from the mangrove islets of Negombo Lagoon is *Chiromantes darwinensis*. In 1975, Serène published a paper in *Spolia Zeylanica*, the journal of the National Museum of Sri Lanka on *Chiromantes darwinensis*.

claw, the pattern of dentition on the cutting margin of the claw and the degree of granulation on the outer face of the palm distinguished *Chiromantes darwinensis* from *Perisesarma bengalense*. Davie is of the view that *Chiromantes darwinensis* is endemic to northwestern Australia, and it does not go that far as Sri Lanka. What would be the fate of other two species, *Chiromantes indiarum* and *Chiromantes bidens* that Serène identified from my collection of mangrove crabs of the islets of Negombo Lagoon? Could the former now be *Perisesarma indiarum* or

Parasesarma indiarum and the latter *Perisesarma bidens* or *Parasesarma bidens*? Whatever the revised names be, our field observation was that Serène's *Chiromantes darwinensis* and *Chiromantes indiarum*, with black shells did not make burrows, but were found in crevices and furrows of puddles and small water holes or among mangrove roots. In contrast *Chiromantes bidens*, with mottled shell of golden yellow and blackish green, differed from the other two in making simple burrows in well-drained



• **Figure 1. Burrows of crabs of Negombo Lagoon (Pinto, 1984)**

In 1977 Serène identified 3 species of *Chiromantes* from the specimens that I collected from Negombo Lagoon and sent to him in Paris via British Museum. They are *Chiromantes darwinensis*, *Chiromantes indiarum* and *Chiromantes bidens*. Five years earlier, on 12 and 18 October 1972 Serène had collected specimens of *Chiromantes darwinensis* also from sites near Pegasus Reef Hotel and assigned holotype to the one collected on 18 October 1972, and paratype¹⁵ to the one collected on 12 October 1972. In 2000, Peter Davie re-examined the sesarmids collected and identified as *Chiromantes darwinensis* from Sri Lanka by Serène and deposited in Raffles Museum, Singapore. There were also specimens of this species, collected from the Andaman Coast of Thailand by an English expedition and deposited at the Phuket Marine Biological Centre, Thailand, which Naiyanetr had listed as *Chiromantes darwinensis* in 1998. Davie compared the Australian species *Perisesarma darwinense*, with *Chiromantes darwinensis* collected by Serène from Sri Lanka, *Chiromantes darwinensis* from Andaman Coast of Thailand and fresh specimens of *Chiromantes darwinensis* collected in 2003 from Sri Lanka. Davie (2003) concluded that "*Chiromantes darwinensis*" from Sri Lanka and Thailand are actually a new species, which he called *Perisesarma bengalense*¹⁶. The tubercles on the

soils (Figure 1). For the locals they were all 'shit crabs' of similar shape and size, co-occurred and feeding on muddy food.

In Part 1, we referred to mud crab (*Scylla serrata*) as a swimming crab found in the lagoon. But, we also found some of them in deep (1 m) unbranched burrows (Figure 1). Similarly, mud crabs have been reported from burrows in South Asia and from Western Australia, where many of them are found in burrows, when land is exposed during low tide. One view is that there are two populations of mud crabs; one population swimming in water and the other burrowing in mud. Mud crab seems to have received this name from its burrowing habit in mud.

Terrestrial crabs burrowing in sandy soil

Fiddler crabs of the family Ocypodidae, and more specifically the cosmopolitan *Uca* species, occur on well-drained sandy soils on shores, sand flats and mangrove islets of Negombo Lagoon. They make



• **Fiddler crab**

simple unbranched burrows and are active during the day (Figure 1). They are called Fiddler crabs, because the males have one large claw resembling a fiddler and wave it to attract females or fight with other males. Their social behaviour, particularly their mating systems, deceptive signaling, fighting and co-

operating have been extensively studied in the Indo-West Pacific region, from Central America to Japan, Australia, Thailand and Malaysia. Field experiments on this species can be conducted quite easily, as they occur in large numbers, are active during the day, reproduce frequently and can be partitioned with a mesh barrier. Robot fiddler crabs have been used in the field to manipulate actions of males and elicit responses. Although fiddler crabs of the species *Uca lactea* and *Uca dussumieri* are abundant on some shores of Negombo Lagoon, so far no serious study has been carried out on their social behavior in Sri Lanka.

In studies conducted by Japanese biologists, (e.g. Murai et al. 1987) in South East Asia on *Uca lactea*, noted surface mating (SM), as well as burrow mating (BM). The claw-waving males sometimes attracted wandering females and clawless males into their burrows, but rejected the males. They copulated with females within the burrow (BM), sealed the burrow for female to incubate, and dug a new burrow. But more often, they mated with nearby resident females on the surface (SM). Females mated at all stages of reproduction and some copulated repeatedly on the surface (SM), before wandering or incubating their eggs in the burrow. Wandering females had sufficient sperms to fertilize their eggs before copulating in the burrows of other males (BM). The neighboring females, who refuse to mate were displaced from their burrows by the aggressive males. Displacement by males was the major cause of female wandering. Unlike the female American fiddlers, who leave their burrows to be enticed by claw waving males in to their burrows to copulate (BM), in the Indo-Pacific fiddlers (e.g. *Uca lactea*), mating often occurs on the surface (SM), while retaining the burrow mating (BM). The sperms of the last male to mate, probably fertilized the eggs. Thus a male that entices a female into his burrow gains a reproductive advantage over previous mating. Does the energy spent on multiple-copulation contribute to an evolutionary advantage? Does the sexual behavior of these crabs show that sex is primarily for pleasure and secondarily for procreation in fiddler crabs?

Notes:

- 1 Physiological home, as their gills are kept moist and they can use them for respiration, as if in water.
- 2 The maximum C:N ratio for sustainable nutritional food is 17:1 (Russel-Hunter ratio). In mangrove leaves this ratio can be as high as 182:1 because of tannin, cellulose and lignin, containing carbon. Crabs drag leaves into the burrow and feed, reducing carbon content and releasing nutrients.
- 3 In scientific literature all animals and plants must have 2 names. First is Genus and second is Species.
- 4 Endemic means found only in.
- 5 1979-1981 President of the British Ecological Society.

6 Giddins, James Cook University of North Queensland, Australia.

7 Fratini, Dipartimento di Biologia, University of Florence, Italy.

8 Gillikin, Department of Biology, Vrije Universiteit, Brussel, Belgium.

9 Probably, they could not get my original publication in the Proceedings of the Asian Symposium on Mangroves held in Malaysia in 1980 or doubted my observations of *Neosarmatium smithi*.

10 Thongtham, Phuket Marine Biological Center, Phuket, Thailand.

11 Kristensen, University of Southern Denmark.

12 Herbon & Norhaus, Leibniz Center for Tropical Marine Ecology, Germany.

13 No mention of turrets for this species was mentioned in their paper, we assume that the species under consideration did not build turrets in Thailand.

14 A single standard specimen on which the description and name of a new species is based.

15 Other specimens of the species, but not the holotype.

16 Species is defined as a sexually isolated group of plants or animals that breed only with the individuals of the group producing fertile offspring. In earlier days, taxonomists used the differences in morphological (appearance) characteristics to determine sexual isolation. Now, genetical, chemical and behavioural (e.g. burrow shape) differences are also used in grouping. Taxonomists often split or lump groups or assign which characteristics are primitive or derived, and accordingly build an evolutionary tree (phylogeny).

References

- Davie, P. J.F. (1994). Revision of *Neosarmatium* Serene and Soh (Crustacea: Brachyura: Sesarminae) with descriptions of two new species. *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum* 35(1): 35-74.
- Davie, P.J.F. (2003). A new species of *Perisesarma* (Crustacea: Brachyura: Sesarminae) from the Bay of Bengal. *The Raffle Bulletin of Zoology* 51 (2): 387-391.
- Fratini, S., Cannicci, S., Vannini, M. (2000). Competition and interaction between *Neosarmatium smithi* (Crustacea: Grapsidae) and *Terebralia palustris* (Mollusca: Gastropoda) in a Kenyan mangrove. *Marine Biology* 137:309-316.
- Giddins, R.L., Lucas, J.S., Neilson, M.J., Richards, G.N. (1986). Feeding ecology of the mangrove crab *Neosarmatium smithi* (Crustacea: Decapoda: Sesarminae). *Marine Ecology Progress Series*. 33: 147-155.
- Gillikin, D.P. (2000). Factors controlling the distribution of Kenyan brachyuran mangrove crabs: Salinity tolerance and eco-physiology of two Kenyan *Neosarmatium* species. M.Sc. Thesis. Free University of Brussels, Brussels, Belgium.
- Gillikin, D. P. and Verheyden, A., (2016). A field guide

to Kenyan mangroves. *Neosarmatium smithi* H. Milne Edwards, 1853. www.madeinnys.com/mangrove/n_smithi.htm.

Herbon, C.M., Nordhaus, I. (2013). Experimental determination of stable carbon and nitrogen isotope fraction between mangrove leaves and crabs. *Marine Ecology Progress Series*. 490: 91-105.

Macnae, W. (1968). A general account of the fauna and flora of mangrove swamps and forests in the Indo-West-Pacific region. *Advances in Marine Biology*, 6:73-270.

Murai, M., Goshima, S. and Henmi, Y. (1987). Analysis of mating system of fiddler crab, *Uca lactea*. *Animal Behaviour*, 35 (5): 1334-1343.

Pinto, L. (1984). Some ecological aspects of a population of mangrove crabs occurring within the islets of Negombo Lagoon Sri Lanka. *Proceedings of the Asian Symposium on Mangrove Environment. Research and Management*. 311-330. Ed. E.

Soepadmo, A.N. Rao & D.J. Macintosh. UNESCO/University of Malaya, Malaysia.

Serène, R. (1975). Rediscovery of *Neosarmatium malabaricum* (Henderson, 1893) and *Chiromanthes darwinensis* Campbell, 1967. *Spolia Zeylanica*, 33:1-16.

Serène R. and Soh C.L. (1970). New Indo-Pacific general allied to *Sesarma* Say, 1817 (*Brachyura*, *Decapoda*, *Crustacea*), *Treubia* 27 (4): 387- 416.

Thongtham N. and Kirstensen, E. (2003). Physical and chemical characteristics of mangrove crab (*Neopisesarma versicolor*) burrows in the Bangrong mangrove forest, Phuket Thailand with emphasis on behavioural response to changing environmental conditions. *Vie et Milieu* 53 (4): 141-151.

Thongtham, N. and Kristensen, E. (2005). Carbon and nitrogen balance of leaf-eating sesarmid crabs (*Neopisesarma versicolor*) offered different food sources. *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science*, 65 (1-2): 213-222.



HOWLERS on Sydney TV

Many live Sydney TV Programs, such as News Programs, have on-line captioning (sub-titling) which is automatically generated without any human interface. Automatic Speech Recognition Technologies are used to capture the voice of the speaker and convert it on-line and live into a continuous streaming caption. The captioning has to meet a guaranteed accuracy level of 98 percent. However, this requires the speaker to enunciate his words clearly without mumbling or swallowing the start or end of a word. But this clarity is not always maintained, and this results in interesting howlers, some examples of which are given below. The correct word is given in *italics* within brackets.

"The Member for eyes acts will leave the Chamber" (*Isaacs*).

"The Opposition are kicking up the DOS" (*dust*).

"We do not have to accept that pack of lives" (*lies*).

"My question to the Minister is about the four pairs" (*au pairs*).

The above four examples are from ABC's Parliamentary Question Time, 20-9-2018.

"It was a major upper ration" (*operation*), ABC News, 20-9-2018.

"In the housing market, the steaks are sky high" (*stakes*), Channel 10 News, 02-10-2018.

"The FBI is going to X-Band its investigation" (*expand*), ABC News, 02-10-2018.

"The State fresh rears will have to make their own decisions regarding tax on tampons" (*Treasurers*), ABC News, 03-10-2018.

"One in five samples of honey tested was found to be adult rated" (*adulterated*), ABC News, 03-10-2018.

"This year's Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to human rights activists" (*Peace*), ABC News, 06-10-2018.

"He was excited to be tried for murder in Adelaide" (*extradited*), ABC News, 10-10-2018.

"This is a great opportunity to raise the tissue of ground water exploitation" (*issue*), ABC News, 13-10-2018.

"On the Stock Market, US fruit tours are up by two percent" (*futures*), ABC News, 13-10-2018.

Have you changed your address lately?

Have you changed your contact details lately? – home address, email address, landline and Mobile phone numbers? If you have, please contact CSA Treasurer Deepak Pritamdas so our records can be updated and help us ensure the Journal will be mailed to you without interruption.

Contact Deepak on his Mobile 0434 860 188 or email him on deepakpsl@yahoo.com.

Don't tell us what to do!

Ten thousand women marched through the streets of London in support of women's suffrage saying; "We will not be dictated to," and then went off to become stenographers. (*G.K. Chesterton, 1986.*)

Stealing, with respect!

Thieves respect property. They merely wish the property to become their property that they may more perfectly respect it. (*G.K. Chesterton, 1908.*)

THE PIONEERING PLANTERS OF MASKELIYA

by Hugh Karunanayake

The economy of Sri Lanka or Ceylon as it was then known, was basically a peasant economy which through the 19th century transformed into a plantation economy. The change commenced with the introduction of the first commercial crop, coffee. Commercial cultivation of coffee as a crop was introduced and encouraged during Governor Sir Edward Barnes' tenure in the 1830s and by the 1860s, had covered most of the upcountry areas. Maskeliya District opened up in the late 1860s, the first estate to be cleared and planted upon in the district being Bunyan Estate. Planting Districts (with the exception of Kegalle, Haputale and lower Walapane) were established by the government on the recommendation of the Planters Association which commanded a great influence in the administration of the colony. By 1871, Maskeliya District contained 7800 acres of land held on 25 estates planted with 1887 acres of coffee. The commercial cultivation of coffee in the island had already reached its peak in 1865 and Maskeliya came into planting towards the tail end of the upward climb of coffee and the beginning of the downfall soon to follow. Within the next decade tea was the dominant crop and the acreage under cultivation rose to 19700 held within 75 estates containing 23500 acres of land. Tea plantations have since dominated the landscape of Maskeliya and until today, is the source of sustenance of the district. The pioneering work of the coffee planters who set the base for developments that followed is a significant contribution often forgotten, and hardly acknowledged. It is hoped that this window into the lives of the pioneer planters will help encourage more information to surface and reveal the extent of the significance of pioneering activities in the district.

It has been said that the first planter in Maskeliya was Tom Gray who cleared and planted Bunyan Estate in the 1860s. That inveterate chronicler of life during early British times in Ceylon, Frederick Lewis was known to Gray and he has recorded how the latter went on a pilgrimage to Adams Peak where he had "hair breadth escapes from wild beasts; the crossing of boiling torrents of water; in crawling up precipices, in which his toes were more in use than his heels; in scraping off leeches with a hunting knife". He had then discovered a delectable spot for a Coffee estate which he bought and named Bunyan. It was the first estate in Maskeliya and Mrs Gray was the first European lady to reside in the district.

Frederick Lewis himself opened up Alton and Upcot estates later in 1875. The land belonged to GA Talbot and partners. Lewis recalls the felling and burning of the jungle and a tiny two-roomed bungalow constructed where he lived with Alfred Dickson, already on Lorne Estate, Dimbula but temporarily in Maskeliya to guide. Lewis's nearest neighbor was TKI Rumley on Gouravilla. Rumley was the brother-in-law of Walter Agar who owned Maha Nilu Estate. Another neighbor of Lewis was Frank Sykes who was opening up a land called Katudetiya which later came to be called Kahagala and still later, Kincora. Adjoining Lewis's boundary on Upcot Estate was Bargrove, originally cleared and planted by a Mr Tate and succeeded by F.L. Clements. Around these properties were Charles Brownrigg Pyper on Glenugie, CAS Ogilvie on Scarborough, Norman Macfarlane on Ormidale, Johnston on Annandale and Acklom on Ladbroke. The great pioneer of the district was, however, William Jardine who opened up at least "half the estates in the district" including Adam's Peak Estate. Frank Carey and William Mckenzie were two other pioneer planters, who between them, opened up Forres, Deeside, Glentilt, Kintyre, Moray, Laxapana and Suluganga which later became part of the Laxapana Group. Another pioneer was HA Webb who arrived in Ceylon in 1885 and purchased Hindugala Estate, Peradeniya, and later Mousakellie Maskeliya.

Frederick Lewis has written many accounts of his early planting days in Dimbula, Maskeliya and Kandy, and together with P.D. Millie's "Thirty Years Ago", Wiliam Sabonodaire's "Coffee planting in Ceylon", and "The Autobiography of a Periya Durai" by William Boyd, are the few insights we have of the lives of the pioneer planters.

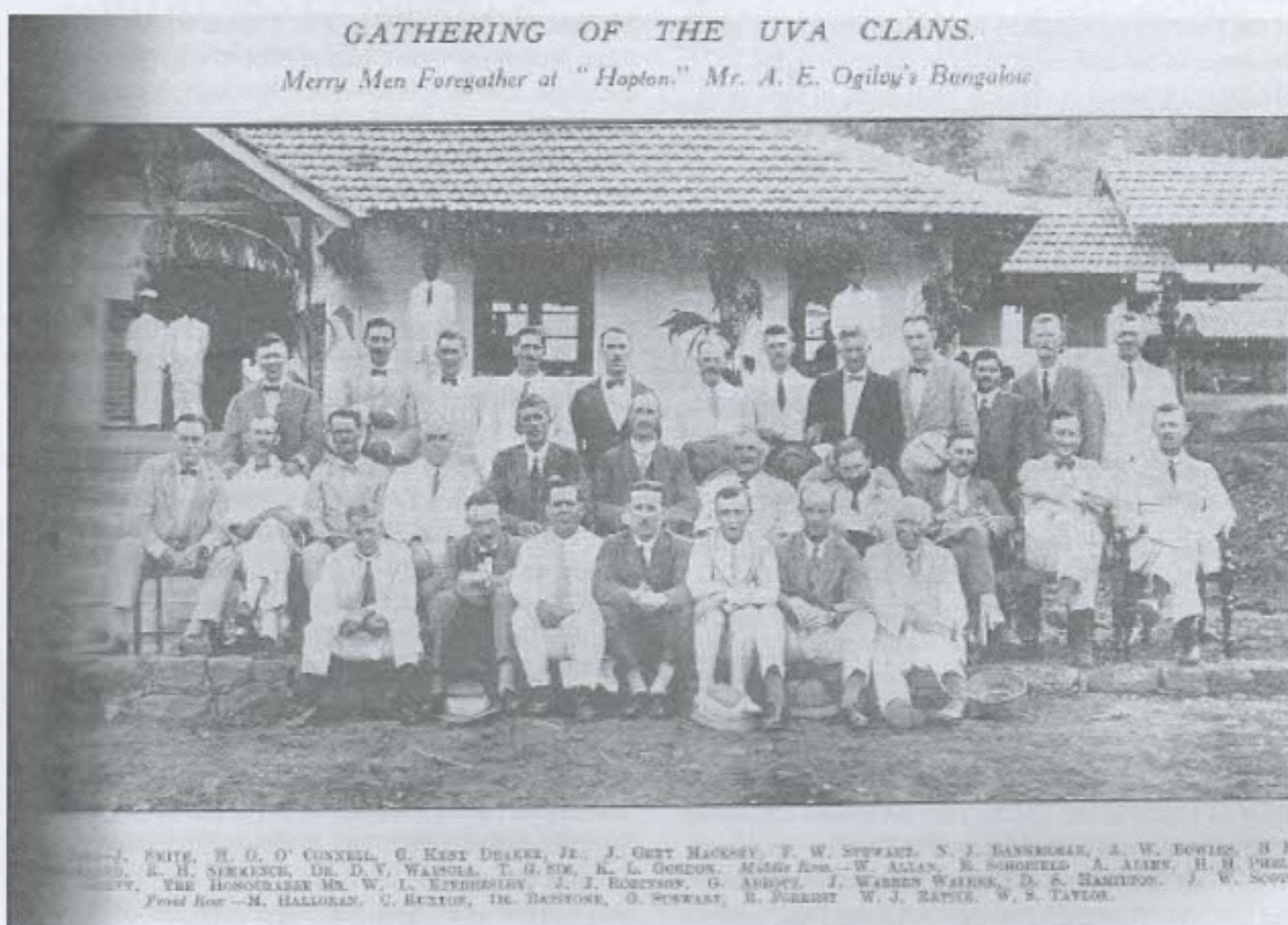
Born in 1858 in Kandy Frederick Lewis was just 14 years of age when he was appointed SD on Tellisagala Estate Kotmale in 1872. His father was the Superintendent. Lewis had an illustrious career, first as a coffee planter, and later as a pioneer tea planter. He also worked as an Assistant Superintendent of Surveys and had assisted in the surveying and mapping of large extents of land opened up for plantations. Despite being home schooled by his mother, after the early demise of his father, he proved to be a scholar in his own right. His excellent memoir "Sixty Four Years in Ceylon" published in 1930 makes excellent reading. He passed away on his 72nd birthday and was laid to rest at the Kanatte Cemetery.



• *Fredrick Lewis, who died at the age of 72, was laid to rest at Kanatte Cemetery. See gravestone at right.*



The photo (below) taken in 1873 on the occasion of the presentation of a gold watch to Mr William Jardine, then the oldest planter in Maskeliya. The convivial gathering including wives seem to have assembled probably in a club. The key below helps to identify most of those present.



Key

1. R. MacLure (Mocha)
2. --- Weston (once on Mariawatte and then to Maskeliya)
3. --- Kirk (who married John McLeod's daughter in Maskeliya)
4. H Martin (decd- was on Luccombe)

5. J Anderson (Deeside)
6. H. Drummond Deane
(Sec to Planters Assn was on Kintyre)
7. "Dodger" Wright (father of Lewis Wright of Brunswick)
8. Probably SE Tench of Glentilt
9. --- Pole (a connection of Pole Carews)

10. TG Hayes (on Gangewatte)
11. Robert Crabbe (decd- Brownlow)
12. ----Collinson(was on Rickarton)
13. Mrs Weston (probably)
14. ----- Wilkinson (now in Maturata)
15. May be either Mrs Collinson of Mocha or Mrs Tollar.
16. Hugh Mackenzie of Laxapana and later New Zealand.
17. -----
18. Captain Tollar(decd of Scarborough)
19. One of the Scovells(probably)
20. --- Chapman (proprietor of Dunnotar later of Nyanza)
21. ---- Dupuis (Asst on Maskeliya under Robertson)
22. ---- Wardrop of Mottingham aka "kicker"
23. RA Galton (of Elphindle)
24. ---- Freeze(also called "Frizzle" was Secy of the Darrawella Racing Club)
25. Mrs Collinson of Rickarton
26. Mrs Hugh Mackenzie (of Laxapana)
27. W. Jardine
28. Mrs Crabbe of Brownlow
29. Mrs Wright
30. Mrs Robert Brown (Nyanza)
31. ---- Collinson (Mocha)
32. ---- Carre (one of the first coffee planters- married to a sister of Mrs Wright)
33. ---- White(of Rutherford)
34. March Phillips (worked under Campbell on Moray Est)
35. JN Campbell
36. Robert Brown (decd)
37. ---- Rennie (of Rickarton)
38. Dr Tothill (decd)
39. ---- Robinson (on Bunyan)
40. Thomas North Christie (shikar from St Andrews)
41. JR Hood (decd)
42. ---- Jeffreys (later Head of PWD in Sarawak. Married daughter of Capt Williams -Mutiny veteran)
43. ___ Ogilvie (was on Scarborough later on Troy in the KV District.)

Demise of 'King Coffee' and emergence of "The Cup that Cheers"

By the mid 19th century the plantation industry of Ceylon based on coffee was galloping away with many British entrepreneurs investing heavily. Hundreds of acres of forest land were offered at between a shilling to 5s per acre, and felling and clearing of the land by imported labour from South India. The South Indian worker was happy to get away from famine stricken South India and often were content to work for a bowl of "conjee" which kept them alive. The middle man, the "kangany", was thriving out of the efforts of labourers over which he had much control. The late 1870s and the early 1880s saw the almost complete obliteration of coffee after

the coffee blight decimated coffee plantations. The Maskeliya District was still young and many investors were to see their precious investments evaporating and were reduced to penury. The knight in shining armour to save the country and its journey to further development was the newly introduced tea plant. By the late 19th century and early 20th century tea plantations had enveloped most of the hill country of Ceylon, including the Maskeliya District. This was the era when estate infrastructure was introduced in the form of better roadways, tea factories, spacious residential facilities for staff, and an emerging ethos of social stratification within the workplace to ensure a smooth production process. The colonial government was in firm control and the management of estates were well in the hand of Britishers. In fact, there were only a handful of Ceylonese entrepreneurs who ventured into ownership and management of tea estates. While the Maskeliya District had approximately the same number of estates as it did during the coffee era, many of the estates expanded, and also consolidated by incorporating smaller holdings into larger groups. Consequently, the largest estate Laxapana, followed by Moray, Adams Peak and Gouraville were becoming names to conjure up within the Maskeliya District.

The "golden age" of tea production and estate management would certainly be the first few decades of the 20th century. Everything was working well with all the hard work done by the pioneers and well established tea estates, well managed, and yielding abundant crops. Many young men from the UK ventured out to Ceylon to manage tea estates, play golf, and live the idyllic lifestyle.

The outbreak of the Great War of 1914 put at least a temporary halt to easy progress of the industry. Many young men from the plantations volunteered to fight for "king and country" and sailed out to the theatres of war in Europe. Sadly, many were not to return, plucked away at the prime of their life. There were an estimated 2000 young men enlisted to join British forces in their campaign against the Germans in the Great War 1914-18. Most planters enrolled with the Ceylon Planters Rifle Corps to defend "king and country" albeit the country was not Ceylon but the UK! Although accurate figures were not allowed it is believed that 80 from the planting community lost their lives and 99 wounded. Of these nine were planters from the Maskeliya District. The War Memorial tablet at the All Saints Church, Maskeliya listed the names of JB Chapman of Gangawatte, Ambrose Marshall of Kintyre, FMM Troup of Moray, CLM Scott of Ormidale, and TR Stannus of Glentilt as those fallen. To these may be added Lieut. R J Austin of Ladbroke, Capt. WA de L Bainbridge of Meeriacotta, Capt RW Braithwaite of Minna Estate, whose names seem to have been inadvertently omitted.



Pte. Douglas
Gordon



Capt. Lindsay
Murray Scott



Capt. E.M. Allfrey



Capt G.B.
Newbray



Capt. R.W.
Braithwaite



Major T.R.A.
Stannus

A major event that occurred in the district in later years was the construction of the Maskeliya or Mousakelle Dam to create a reservoir that held back the waters of the Maskeli Oya flowing down from the Peak Wilderness to reach the Kelani Ganga before flowing out to sea. The dam was constructed in the mid-1960s and the submersion took place in 1968. Many estates including Brownlow, Forres, and Glentilt were partly submerged.

Laxapana Estate, the largest in Maskeliya, faced a tremendous challenge with the creation of the dam.



• View of Adam's Peak taken
from Laxapana Estate in 1906.
Photo by Mrs AC Bonner, wife of
Superintendent of Kirkoswald
Estate, Bogowantalawa.

In addition to the substantial acreage of tea that went under water, it lost the Manager's bungalow, and the tea factory, all of which were submerged. Fred Kreltszheim the first Ceylonese Manager of Laxapana Group had served a few years as Assistant Superintendent before he was appointed Manager

in 1968. Tasked with the grave responsibility of steering the management of the estate through the period which in addition was a time of significant socio-economic and political change, he rose to the challenge in an exemplary manner. He negotiated with the government for an area of land to compensate for the cultivated area submerged, and took on the role of managing the construction of a new tea factory and Manager's bungalow, all tasks which an estate Superintendent is not usually trained for. The result of his endeavours is indeed splendid. A new division of 140 acres of tea called the Hamilton Division (named after a pioneer Maskeliya planter) was planted, the factory constructed, and the bungalow occupied. Fred, now living in Melbourne, a long time member of CSA, recounted his experiences in an article written for The Ceylankan (J41 of February 2008) ten years ago. The former Sri Lankan national rugby player, proved to the world that those who managed tea plantations almost 150 years after the work of the pioneers, still carry the spirit and work ethic of the pioneers. Long may their tribe live.!

THREE MASKELIYA PLANTERS FROM EARLY 20TH CENTURY



R.A. GALTON
Chairman, Maskeliya P.A.



L.A. WRIGHT
Son of Founder of
Brunswick Estate



H.A. WEBB
Prop. Planter

Old golf champ re-visits

In the mid-fifties Dr Bede Kenneth Muller was a much respected medical practitioner, popular family doctor and consultant to the Australian High Commission at the time A.R. Cutler was High Commissioner followed by Alan Eastman and Charles Kevin. Dr Bede married an absolutely gorgeous woman Thelma Solomons in London after a whirlwind love affair. Upon their return Thelma inaugurated Muller Travel services with the assistance of Sohli Captain and progressed an excellent travel service. They migrated to Australia and settled in Concord West, NSW seeking new pastures. They picked up the threads very quickly and got strongly established in a couple of years. Dr Bede is in town now visiting his home country and chosen friends particularly from the golfing fraternity.

Dr Bede was an excellent golfer at the Havelock Golf Club playing regularly in the company of Pin Fernando, Lance Fernando, George Ratnavale, Upali Senanayake and Hans Sigg. He won many miscellaneous trophies and several medal round competitions.

When the Havelock Golf Club folded to become the well-dressed Bandaranaike International Conference Hall, Muller migrated to the Royal Colombo Golf Club. He shot into fame smartly and quickly and took the Club Title event in 1968 in style beating two seasoned campaigners Robin McMichen, Chrisso Abeywardena and the finals the hot favourite John Hagenbach.

In the same year he was selected to represent Ceylon at the Pakistan Amateur Open in Rawalpindi with Pin Fernando, Alavi Markan Maarkar, Lance Fernando, C. Umagiliya and Chyrisso Abeywardena. Pin came second with Muller seventh.

Dr Muller is trying to throw in a few rounds of golf with old friends. I haven't known Bede well for 48 years. Today he is looking fresh-very fresh.

- Tita Nathanielsz

In 1968 Pakistan hosted their first open golf tournament in Rawalpindi.

The Sri Lanka Golf Association received an invitation to send their best golfers; six of us accepted the invitation to make up the 300 competitors. Looking past, there was Pin Fernando, our champion and yours truly who flew to Rawalpindi to play in their sparkling new course in this proud new city. After four rounds of golf, Pin Fernando came second and Bede came seventh - pleased with We were lavishly entertained and taken to meet



• (From left) Pin Fernando, Claude Umagiliya, Chyrisso Abeywardana, Alavi Markan Maarkar, Bede Muller, Lance Fernando, with Pathan Guard at Khyber Pass.

President Ayub Khan. We were also taken around Pakistan to Lahore, Peshawar, the Khyber Pass and the secret Swat Valley where there was a beautiful golf course that hosted an annual trophy. For the rest of the year, only the Sultan and his brother played there. It is supposed to be a healthy place where people live to over 100 years.

It was a wonderful trip lasting 17 days. Sadly I am the last one standing 50 years later to share my memory of it all.

The picture, posed with guns in the volatile Khyber Pass was taken with special permission of the tribal elders.

-Dr Bede Muller

APPRECIATION
Maurice Raymond
(16.06.1933 - 13.10.2018)

Maurice Raymond was the fifth child of Sydney and Adelaide (nee Bottoni) Raymond. He spent the vast majority of schooling years at St. Joseph's College in Darley Road, in keeping with the tradition of the Raymond clan. After completion of his schooling, Maurice qualified as a Valuer and was employed at the Ceylon Valuation Department. However, his 'calling' which was manifest as far back from his boyhood days of being deeply attracted to the family business of Funeral Undertaking became dominant. He pursued the family tradition and qualified as a Funeral Undertaker and became the Chief Executive Officer of A F Raymond & Co.

He married the love of his life Carol Pompeus in 1962. Not long after, he and his family decided to migrate to Australia in the mid 1970s. In Australia, Maurice joined Funeral Undertakers Alison Monkhouse in Melbourne shortly after arrival. This came about through an association that occurred while studying in the UK alongside Alison Monkhouse himself.

After a very few years in Melbourne, the owners of Alison Monkhouse who had a familial and business relationship with T J Andrews in Newtown, Sydney, required a qualified Undertaker to manage this business and Maurice was offered the position. On accepting the appointment, Maurice moved to Newtown with Carol and their three children, Francis, Melissa and Sean. He remained continuously at T J Andrews till he retired in the mid-1990s and then moved to their current residence in Denistone in NSW.

His passion/calling for serving in the family's traditional undertaking business was dominant even after retirement. He used his knowledge and immense experience of funeral undertaking and its management to share that knowledge with the up and coming generation who were keen to be successful in the business of funeral undertaking.

The above is a synopsis of Maurice the professional but there was another side to him. He had a dominantly insatiable love of Jazz music that he indulged from youthful days with his cousins and friends using improvised instruments in the back garden, in Campbell Avenue near All Saints' Church Borella – they were irreparable times of sensible enjoyment.



In addition to his love of jazz music, Maurice also had a desire to cook and I believe his favorite was crab 'curry' among a number of other dishes and and haven't we sampled the delicious results time and time again.

– DOYNE CASPERSZ

Give a valuable
 gift subscription
 to a family member
 or friend this Christmas!



**For just \$30 (or
 \$40 if the nominee
 is resident outside
 Australia).**

Your nominee will have
 four quarterly issues
 mailed to his/her home.

Please contact the
 Treasurer, Deepak Pritamdas
 on 0434 860 188

Adam's apple

Adam was but human—this explains it all. He did not want the apple for the apple's sake; he wanted it only because it was forbidden.

– Mark Twain (1835-1910)

What's hell?

I never give them hell (the public, that is). I just tell the truth, and they think it is hell.

– Harry S. Truman (1956)



**MELBOURNE CHAPTER
18 NOVEMBER 2018**

Dr Srilal Fernando
will present an illustrated talk on
**“Justin Daraniyagala:
Artist from Ceylon”**



After completing a law degree from Trinity College Cambridge University, Justin joined the Slade School of Art in London where he won many prizes. He then moved to the Academie Julian in Paris. He exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in London alongside the paintings of Picasso, Manet, and Toulouse-Lautrec.

Returning to Ceylon he was a founder member of the famous 43 Group of Artist. With this group he exhibited in London, Paris, the 1956 Venice Biennale and the Sao Paulo Biennale in 1957. He was invited to exhibit at the Pittsburg Carnegie International Exhibition in 1951 and 1958. His exhibit at the Venice Biennale won the UNESCO prize out of 4700 entries and was reproduced by the New York Graphic Society.

Born to privilege Justin Pieris Daraniyagala (1903-1967) did not have to sell his paintings to make a living. As a result, his paintings are tightly held in the family and not available for public viewing.

The talk will include an introduction to appreciation of art and the development of art in Ceylon, to provide context to the work of Justin

Deraniyagala one of the best painters to emerge from Sri Lanka.

Dr Srilal Fernando

is a Melbourne based Psychiatrist and art aficionado. His interests include Ceylon/Sri Lankan paintings, porcelain, coins and plantation tokens. Srilal had previously presented talks on the artist Donald Friend and plantation tokens to the Ceylon Society Melbourne Chapter. Srilal is also one of the founder members of the Ceylon Society and has served as the Vice President since its inception.

**The meeting will take place on.
Sunday, 18 November 2018, 5.00pm
Camberwell Bowls Club,
14 Bowen Street, Camberwell.
(ample parking available on the street and
at the Salvation Army building).**

**For enquiries contact Hemal
0427 725 740**

WE NEED SPEAKERS

The CSA welcomes professionals, members and non-members interested in speaking at our public meetings on a subject of their choice and expertise, that falls within the ambit of the Society's ideals and of interest to members. Our meetings are held in Sydney, Melbourne and Colombo and take place quarterly in February, May, August and November of each year. Dates can be arranged to suit the needs and availability of the speakers. Overhead projections and public address facilities can also be made available.

If any of our readers know of potential candidates from among family members, friends and other contacts to be suitable speakers at our meetings in the future and who live in or visit Australia or Sri Lanka at various times, please initiate the possibility of their sharing their knowledge with like minds. An enthralled audience is always assured.

If you have someone in mind, please contact CSA President Pauline Gunawardane on (02) 9736 39787 (email: paulineg@ozemail.com.au) or Melbourne Chapter Convenor Hemal Gurusinghe (Mob) 0427 725 740 (email: hemguru@hotmail.com.) or Colombo Chapter Secretary Anandalal Nanayakkara 077 327 2989 (email: anandalal10@gmail.com.)



More historic pictures of the Lighthouse in Galle



The lighthouse at Point de Galle in Sri Lanka (above and left) by Frederick Fiebig, from an album of 70 handcoloured salt prints, taken in 1852, considered the earliest surviving photographic record of the island. (Right) the present lighthouse, a Flickr Creative Commons photo by David Trattig.

