



The Ceylankam

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From the Editor

I guess all our members have by now received the May/June 2017 issue of the journal. The date tells a story, doesn't it? It is a relief to me, I must say. What encouraged me most was the generosity shown by members to assist the hapless Editor in his time of need. I had offers for articles from many quarters. While the regular contributors sent in material, others offered to write in, while still others sent in work out of the blue. We also had a great response from Colombo after Secretary Tony Saldin alerted the Chapter to my predicament and uncoiled a magnanimous response from those members – Asoka de Silva has initiated a series of articles on Classical writers from early history who commented on Sri Lanka in their writings; Tony himself submitted a brief article and obtained permission of the author for us to use "Ten Wonderful ways we have to thank the Malays" for their culinary and other enduring pastimes they introduced to Sri Lanka. Then we had Somasiri Devendra come to the fore and submit two readable articles (one of which appears here). Then there is a sad element relating a contribution from the late ECT (Manny) Candappa. I had requested Manny for his assistance with an article and despite him being very ill, he prepared a piece for me, before leaving for hospital for his routine dialysis treatment. I have published his brief skit as a 'thank you' to him. For further details relating to this please see my note in 'Manny's Musings' on Page 28. Tributes to Manny from a close colleague of his as well as one from his youngest daughter are published in this issue.

Manny has been a dear friend of mine and my Mentor in all my literary forays throughout a lifetime and if I dwell too long on him, I crave your indulgence. What I know today about writing, without question, is through the care and guidance shown by Manny. We were family friends; starting with our parents – Lucas and Mary Candappa were very

close to my parents Dodwell and Matilda. That was a friendship we children have inherited and will remain undiminished. Manny was the most obliging person I have met. He gave of his limited time to show me the ropes in journalism and direct me painstakingly on what clicks in the trade and ways to avoid the pitfalls. His generosity was without parallel.

A very busy man was Manny - journalist for various newspapers, columnist, theatre and movie critic, editor - but he took me on every time I sought his help. He dissected my literary forays thoroughly, critically; but always made sure I understood where he came from. I benefitted immensely from the sincere and impartial tuition he offered. Rest in Peace my friend with the biggest heart!

Once again Thiru Arumugam, intrepid researcher that he is, has grounded a fighter plane called "Jaffna" and weaves this absorbing story about how a Ceylon Tamil helped fundraise the cost of airplanes. Absorbing reading.

Then in "Barbara, the Takaranga Maligawa and I" we have then bachelor Naval officer Somasiri Devendra, relate the story of how he had to escort a WWII lieutenant commander's artist wife Barbara Sansoni who wanted to visit old buildings in Diyatalawa.

With the 102nd Anniversary of the Battle of Lone Pine happening on 15 August 2017, Dr Sanjiva Wijesinha in "Gallipoli - and the Ceylon Planters' Rifle Corps" relates of Britain's attempt to conquer Constantinople, capital of the Ottoman Empire, by sending colonial troops called the ANZACS which included men from the Ceylon Planters' Rifle Corps.

Hugh Karunanayake has contributed his findings about Sir Charles Forbes, Commander-in-Chief and Admiral of the Home Fleet who served his country Britain with distinction in both World Wars.

All this and the usual features Meals Ammi Made, Synopsis Colombo Chapter Meeting and the details of the Sydney General Meeting on 27 August.

Enjoy the diverse coverage.

About the Ceylon Society of Australia

The Ceylon Society of Australia (CSA) is a non-profit organisation, incorporated in Australia and its main objectives are to study, foster and promote interest in the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka, especially the post-medieval period when the country was first exposed to globalisation.

It is non-political, non-partisan and endeavours to steer clear of controversial issues, the CSA is a gathering of like-minded people, open to receiving and imparting new ideas, who greatly enjoy a quarterly meeting in reasonably modest

surroundings. While Sydney is home to the parent body, looking after the needs of the society in all of NSW and the ACT, the Melbourne Chapter covers members in Victoria, the Colombo Chapter tends to CSA members in Sri Lanka. Quarterly meetings are held in Sydney, Melbourne and Colombo where members and others from the public interested in Sri Lankan culture and heritage are welcome to attend.

The quarterly publication The Ceylankan is the flagship of the society and is distributed to members worldwide.

Our Readers write

On Sir John D'Oyly article

I refer to the excellent and well researched article on "Sir John D'Oyly – an Englishman with a Ceylonese heart" in J75, August 2016 issue of *The Ceylankan* written by Dr. Palitha Ganewatte.

However, in page 14 he says "Keppetipola Dissave and Ehelepola Adigar were "beheaded" after

Kandyans, "hanging" was for common criminals and not for the "Radala class" or nobility. They opted for "decapitation by the sword" which was the preferred mode of execution.

On 27th October 1818 the execution took place close to the Bogambara tank. What followed was a horrible exhibition. After the Governor's warrant was read out in both English and Sinhala, Ellepola Maha Nilame knelt down and resting his hands on the grass, bent his head forward. The executioner (Gahalaya), whirling a heavy



Copyright: Dominic Sansoni

• The monument over the grave of Ehelepola Maha Nilame in St. Andre's forest in Mauritius.

the Kandyan war". Yes Keppetipola Dissav beheaded (together with Madugalle Uda Gabada Nilame) at Bogambara on 25 November 1818 for treason on the orders of Governor Robert Brownrigg, but Ehelepola was not executed – he was banished to Mauritius where he died in exile on 4 April 1829, aged 57 years, due to dysentery. Please refer or Google my article "The 1818 rebellion and the execution of Keppetipola Dissawe" in the Sunday Island of 29 June 2003 for details.

A similar sounding Kandyan Chief "Ellepola Maha Nilame" who was a former Adigar under the Kandyan King and a shrewd chief among the Kandyan nobles, was executed by the British for fomenting the 1818 rebellion.

Ellepola was declared an outlaw and a reward of 1,000 Rix Dollars was offered for his arrest. He was arrested on 6 October 1818 and the court martial sentenced him to "death by hanging".

Kandyan Chiefs did not want to be "hanged" which was the British method of execution. To the

"Maharashtra" sword struck him on the exposed neck, inflicting a deep wound, when the blade snapped in two, "rendering the severing of the head from the body a longer act than desired".

The horrified spectators were compelled to look on while a second sword was brought to complete the gruesome task. Ellepola left strict instructions that his body should be left to be devoured by dogs and jackals as was the Sinhalese custom at that time, but the British ignored his wishes and had him buried.

Coming back to "Ehelepola", the book "Rebels, Outlaws and Enemies to the British" by Millewa Adikaranage Durand Appuhamy gives a heart rending account of the last days of Ehelepola Maha Nilame who was a state prisoner in Mauritius. On his death bed he bequeathed his goods and money in Mauritius to his servant Dingiriya, whom he freed, and Spanish Dollars 100 each to Kendagamue Nilame and Dawgadeniya Arachchi who were with him in exile. He requested the British Government to pardon

the said Kendagamue Nilame and Dawgadeniya Arachchi and permit them to return to their country of origin.

He also requested the Ceylon government to bequeath his property and money which was in the charge of the Kandy Kachcheri, to his kinsman Pilima Talawe Dissawa who was his close relation, and a sum of 3550 Star Pagodas, his Sinhalese watch, carriage and a large ring, set with diamonds to his major domo Don Bastian Mudliyar. All his linen was offered to the Dalada Maligawa. He also bestowed on Don Bastian all his landed property, after the death of his sister, and a ring to the doctor who attended to him in Mauritius. His will was witnessed by Ihegamme Babaya.

The monument over the grave of Ehelapola Maha Nilame in St. Andre's forest in Mauritius is inscribed with the following words:
"Sacred to the memory of Ahelapola Wijesoondara Wickramasinghe Chandrasekera Amerakoon Wahalanodianse, Late First Adikar or Prime Minister to the King of Kandy who died on 4th April 1829 aged 57 years.

It is apparent by the many stubs of candles at the grave that there are still persons in Mauritius who light candles in his memory.
M.D. (Tony) SALDIN – Hendala, Wattala, Sri Lanka.

Unforgettable issue

Just received J 78 and read it from cover to cover in one sitting - at least the parts that I had not proof-read.

Of all the 33 issues of *The Ceylankan* that you have edited, J 78 must stand out as the most difficult and time consuming to produce. I am sure you will not forget it ever. The great thing is that in spite of all the problems, it finally saw the light of day. Well done, it is truly a stand out issue. CSA is in your debt.

Good to see the promise of a steady flow of articles for future issues.
THIRU ARUMUGAM, Castle Hill, NSW.

Late delivery

I normally receive my copy of *The Ceylankan* (mailed to me here in Thailand), in about the third week in the month of issue.

I have not received a recent copy of the journal, which I believe would have been published last month, and would appreciate confirmation that the May issue has been dispatched to subscribers.

The mail services here in Thailand are sometimes erratic and unreliable; although they have been fairly regular recently.

On receipt of confirmation that the issue has been sent out I will accept that it has 'been lost in the mail' and no longer await its receipt in the post.

I regret if I have have mis-addressed my inquiry to you and would appreciate it if you could

pass on my query to the member of the committee that normally handles such matters.

AUBREY KOELMEYER, Nakhon, Ratchasima, Thailand.

Note: A computer glitch caused the long delay in production. Devoted readers like yourself make these hassles easier to bear – ED.

Phoenix-like

Congratulations! So *The CEYLANKAN* rises anew from the ashes, like the Phoenix. All credit to you. We will continue to support you in the future: a paper by me dedicated to Vama is in the making.

Re "Was there a Ceylonese in the First Fleet?" (J78 May/June 2017) I wonder whether it is possible that the elusive Ceylonese was O'Deane himself? He was a prisoner sent by the British Forces in Ceylon to serve out his sentence in Australia, arriving there on the *Kangaroo*. He fits the bill more than any other person who came from Australia to Ceylon. What would the author of the article Thiru think?

SOMASIRI DEVENDRA – Dehiwela, Sri Lanka.

Corrections required I

This is to bring to your kind notice that an error had inadvertently crept into *The Ceylankan* of August 2016, Vol XIX, No: 3. In this number, the pictures and the description on the back cover had been provided by Mr. Srilal Perera, (a Committee Member of the CSA Colombo Chapter) and not by myself.

This error was brought to my notice by Srilal a few months back, but unfortunately it had slipped out of my mind, until he reminded me about it again a few days back. So could you kindly do the needful in the next number?

Sorry for any inconvenience caused.
ASOKA DE SILVA - Kalubowila, Dehiwela, Sri Lanka.

Editor's note: Apologies to Mr Srilal Perera for the mix up.

Corrections required II

Authorship of the article "Rare ethnic names soon to go extinct" (Page 20 of J78 May/June 2017) was incorrectly attributed to Rex Olegesebare. The article, author un-named, originally appeared on the internet on Ceylon Today on 28 December 2014. The error is regretted.

DEFT DEFINITIONS

COMPROMISE: The art of dividing a cake in such a way that everybody believes he got the biggest piece.
CIGARETTE: A pinch of tobacco rolled in paper with fire at one end and a fool at the other!

YAWN: The only time when some married men ever get to open their mouth

A Fighter Plane called "The Jaffna" fought against the Germans in World War One!

by Thiru Arumugam



• Fig 1. The FE.2B Fighter plane "The Jaffna" funded by Ceylonese in Malaya.
(Courtesy: C Alma Baker)

Introduction

Towards the end of the 19th century, Ceylonese started migrating to Malaya to seek their fortunes. The majority of the migrants were from the Jaffna Peninsula and most obtained employment in Government Departments. In fact, at one stage it was estimated that 40 percent of the administrative staff of the Malayan Railways were Ceylonese. Others made their mark in the professions, and a few ventured into business.

When World War I started and aircraft construction was in its infancy, the British Government assumed that aircraft would only play a limited part in the war effort and would be limited to being used as observation aircraft. As the war progressed, it became apparent that aircraft could also be fitted with machine guns to be used as fighter planes and could also be used to drop small bombs.

The problem facing the British Government was funds. The war effort was already costing five million pounds a day. A decision was therefore made to ask the residents of the British Empire to contribute financially to the war effort. As a spin off to this, a request was made to fund the cost of aeroplanes. A person who responded enthusiastically to this request was Charles Alma Baker who was born in New Zealand to British parents in 1857 and died in Malaya in 1941. He trained as a Surveyor and went to Malaya to work for the Government where he carried out the earliest cadastral surveys. He also cleared large tracts of jungle on his own account and planted rubber trees which earned him a considerable fortune.

Alma Baker set about encouraging individuals, groups and state governments to contribute towards the cost of purchasing airplanes. By the end of the war, he had been personally responsible for encouraging groups to raise the funds required for 94 planes, out of which 53 planes were funded from Malaya and 41 planes were funded from Australia. Of the 53 planes funded by Malaya, 16 planes were paid for by His Highness the Sultan of Johore, at that time one of the richest men in the



• Fig 1a. Close up of nameplate.

world. Baker himself met the cost of four planes. For his efforts, Alma Baker was made a Commander of the British Empire (CBE). In all, about 350 planes were paid for by fund-raising in the British Empire.

An example of the rhetoric used by Alma Baker in his fund raising is this extract from a letter from him to the *Times of Malaya*:

It cannot be possible that at this stage in our history there is a single subject of our King, and

a member of the most glorious Empire the world has ever seen, who can pause and think whether he or she is called upon to do all they can to help to hold it, by saving the lives of the brave men who have given their all for our great cause.

Fundraising for "The Jaffna"

One of the groups that responded to the appeal to fund the cost of aeroplanes was the Ceylon

American Missionary, Dr Samuel Fisk Green, see *The Ceylankan*, May 2009 and August 2009. In 1904/05, Dr E T MacIntyre travelled to Edinburgh and obtained the medical degree of MD at his own expense. On his return to Malaya he was never promoted above the low grade of Medical Officer, on the grounds that his initial medical qualification was not from a British University. Dr E T MacIntyre's grandson is the

FROM THE RIGHT HON. ANDREW BONAR LAW, SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR COLONIES.

Letters of
Appreciation

Downing Street,
April 27th, 1916.

SIR,—I am desired by Mr. Bonar Law to acknowledge receipt of your letters of the 3rd and 11th of March relating to the completion of the Malayan Air Squadron.

The thanks of His Majesty's Government for your own generosity and for that of the other subscribers are being conveyed officially through the High Commissioner for the Malay States, but Mr. Bonar Law desires in addition to take this opportunity of expressing to you his special interest in the work which you have so successfully brought to a conclusion and his appreciation of the patriotic spirit shown by the Jaffna Tamils from Ceylon in subscribing for an aeroplane out of their comparatively small resources.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

F. G. A. BUTLER.

C. Alma Baker, Esq.

• Fig 2. Letter from Bonar Law, Secretary of State for the Colonies. (Courtesy: C Alma Baker).

Tamils resident in Malaya. A public meeting was held at the Town Hall, Kuala Lumpur which was well attended. A Committee was elected to carry out the fund raising. Dr E T MacIntyre was elected Chairman and W F Wijayaratnam of the Federated Malay States Railways was elected Secretary. Representatives from other States were also elected to raise funds in their States. The writer's grandfather, Sitiawan Ganapathypillai, was responsible for collection in the Taiping area and also gave a significant personal donation.

Dr E T MacIntyre, the Chairman of the fund raising Committee, qualified as a Doctor at the Colombo Medical College in 1895 and decided to migrate to Malaya in 1896 to practise as a Doctor. He was the son of Dr C N MacIntyre, who qualified as a Doctor in the Medical School run in Jaffna by the

Sydneysider Playwright, CSA Member and frequent contributor to *The Ceylankan*, Ernest Macintyre.

At the inaugural meeting, the Committee decided on a target of raising 2250 Pounds (19,300 Straits dollars) to meet the cost of a fighter plane. A Ceylonese businessman, M Cathiravalu, offered to contribute 1000 Straits dollars to the fund and also said that if there was a delay in the Committee raising the target amount, he agreed to take responsibility for underwriting the shortfall. The success of the project was therefore assured.

The Committee informed the British Government of their intentions and what happened next is described in the *Whitehall Gazette* of March 1920:

"And, more than this, when the Jaffna Tamils, residents of the Malay States – not possessed of too

much wealth – were asked whether they would rather give an observation-plane, which would be less costly, their anxiety to know whether this would actually cause destruction to the enemy and their insistence on paying the full sum for a first class battle-plane looked rather as if the German propaganda not only failed to convince even those who were not bound to the British flag by ties of birth, but came out in an inverse ratio to what was expected."

Within five months the Secretary of the Committee announced that the sum of 14,500 Straits dollars had been remitted to the British War Office. A few weeks later the balance amount of 4800 Straits dollars was remitted, to form a total of 2250 Pounds. The funds were used by the British War Office to purchase a FE.2B fighter plane which they named "The Jaffna". The plane was handed over on 22nd December 1915 and can be seen in Figs 1 and 1a.

The contents of a letter dated 27 April

1916 in which the thanks of Bonar Law, Secretary of State for the Colonies, are conveyed is reproduced in Fig 2. Bonar Law subsequently became the Prime Minister of UK.

World War 1 aircraft were built primarily of wood and fabric and were very flimsy. The net result was that the life of an aircraft averaged months rather than years. In fact, about 40 percent of the nearly 10,000 Allied aircrew fatalities in World War 1 were during training exercises and not during combat. Although the parachute had been invented, they were not issued to pilots on the grounds that the pilots may use the parachutes when in difficulties, rather than try their utmost to save the plane! Such was the value placed on human life in that war that was supposed to end all wars. In view of the short life of planes, the War Office gave the assurance quoted below, which ensured that throughout the entire duration of the war there would always be a fighter plane called "The Jaffna".

"The War Office further decided to replace any subscribed aeroplane that was damaged or lost, and will affix a new nameplate, bearing the original name plate, so that the generous gifts of His Majesty's subjects from all parts of the Empire, towards helping to build up the Empire's air forces during the Great War, will remain imperishable and permanently recorded both during the war and after, of the donors' generosity."

A few months later the residents of all nationalities of Kuala Kangsar also raised sufficient funds to meet the cost of an aeroplane. Prominent among the fund raisers was a prosperous Ceylonese businessman, Solomon Ramanathan, who donated 1000 Straits dollars. The plane was named "The Kuala Kangsar" and was handed over on 20th February, 1917.

Meanwhile in Ceylon, the newspaper the Times of Ceylon invited all nationalities to contribute to a fund to pay for the cost of aeroplanes for the British War Office. Sufficient funds were collected to meet the cost of four aeroplanes and the names of the planes and the amounts raised were as follows: Ceylon No. 1 "A Paddy-bird from Ceylon" (1500 Pounds); Ceylon No. 2 "A Devil-bird from Ceylon" (2250 Pounds); Ceylon No. 3 "A Nightjar from Ceylon" (2250 Pounds); Ceylon No. 4 "Flying Fox" (2250 Pounds). Separately, F J de Saram contributed 1500

Pounds for the full cost of a plane. Judging by the amounts raised, it is likely that Ceylon Nos. 2, 3 & 4 were Vickers FB.5 fighting biplanes. Ceylon No. 1 and the F J de Saram plane were probably BE.2C reconnaissance aircraft built by the Royal Aircraft Factory.

The FE.2B Fighting Bi-plane

"FE" is an abbreviation of Farman Experimental. The aircraft was

designed by the Farman brothers, Maurice and Henri, working in France. The FE2Bs were built either by the Royal Aircraft Factory or by sub-contractors. It was a relatively large aircraft in its day with a wing span of 48 feet and was 13 feet tall. It was built of wood, fabric and wire, and had a maximum all up weight of 3300 lbs. It was initially fitted with a 120 hp Beardmore engine made in Scotland, but as it was found to be underpowered, the engine size was soon increased to 160 hp, with a top speed of 1300 rpm. The slow running engine required a four bladed propeller. There was heavy steel armour plating on the floor to protect against machine gun fire from the ground. A fixed observation camera was fitted on the outside of the aircraft fuselage. The maximum bomb load was 350 lbs. The top speed was a leisurely 75 mph and the rate of climb a sedate 300 feet/min. It had a crew of two, a pilot and an observer/gunner.

Fairly early in WW1, the Germans had developed interrupter gear which enabled their fighter



• Fig 4. A reproduction FE2B built by The Vintage Aviator Ltd, Masterton, NZ in 2009. (Courtesy: Phillip Capper, Wellington, NZ).

planes to fire through the arc of the propeller without damaging the propeller. This was done by driving a cam off the propeller shaft. A follower was riding on the cam and this was linked to interrupt the firing of the machine gun when the muzzle of the gun was in line with the propeller blade. Any incorrect adjustment or jamming of the interrupter could result in the propeller blade being shot off with disastrous consequences. This was fitted to the German Fokker E III Eindecker mono-planes which inflicted carnage on the British planes which did not have interrupter gear and were handicapped by having to fire outside the propeller arc.

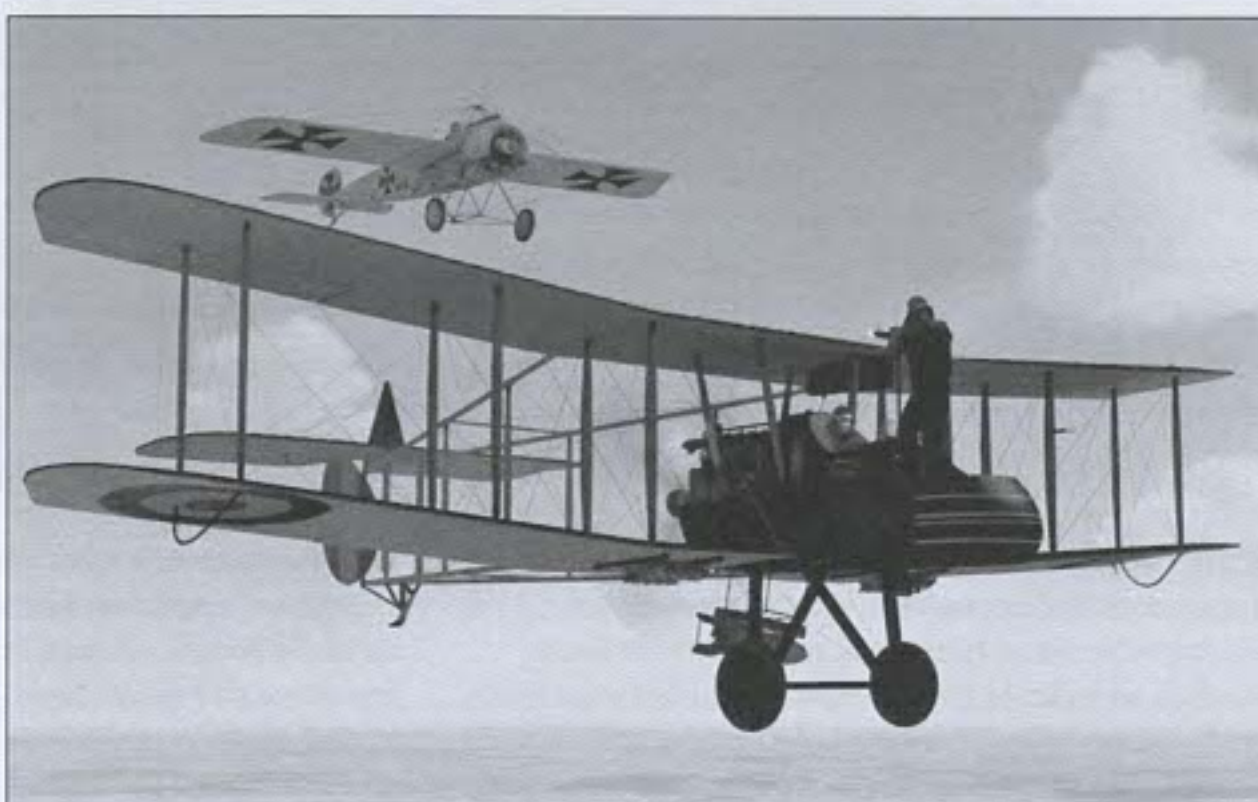
The British responded by developing 'pusher' aircraft like the FE.2B where the engine and propeller were facing backwards and were fitted behind the pilot. The observer/gunner sat in front of the pilot and below him, right in front of the plane and had a magnificent view forward, upwards and downwards. He had two machine guns, one facing forward and the other facing to the rear. The latter had a restricted field due to the obstruction by the plane, and the FE.2Bs were vulnerable to attack from the rear. To avoid restricting the movement of the gunner, he did not have a seat. He had to crouch down when firing forwards and stand up when firing backwards, making sure that he was not thrown out of the cockpit as he was not belted down. Needless to mention, the observer/gunner was a sitting duck as far as oncoming enemy aircraft line of fire was concerned. Fig 3 shows a FE.2B gunner lining up an approaching Fokker Eindecker in his gunsights.

The German Flying Aces: Max Immelman and Manfred von Richthofen

Max Immelman (1890-1916) was the first German flying ace of WW1. An 'ace' is defined as a pilot who has destroyed at least five enemy aircraft. Immelman is credited with destroying at least 15 enemy aircraft. On 18 June 1916, Immelman flying a Fokker E 111 Eindecker encountered a flight of FE.2Bs flown by the 25th Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps (the predecessor of the Royal Air Force). Immelman was shot down by a FE.2B piloted by McCubbin with Waller as the gunner. Immelman died when his plane hit the ground. It appears that

Waller's gunfire damaged Immelman's propeller. The taking out of the Germany's leading flying ace of the time was considered a major triumph for the Royal Flying Corps and for the FE.2Bs. Who knows, perhaps "The Jaffna" may well have been part of that historic squadron of FE.2Bs which downed Immelman.

Later in the war Manfred von Richthofen (1892-1918), better known as the 'Red Baron' became the German 'ace of aces' and was credited with destroying 80 enemy aircraft. On 06 July 1917 while flying an Albatross DV he encountered a formation of FE.2Ds flown by the 20th Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps. The FE.2D is an improved version of



• Fig 3. A FE2B Gunner lines up an approaching Fokker Eindecker in his gunsights.
(Courtesy:Wikimedia Commons).

the FE.2B with a more powerful Rolls-Royce engine developing 250 hp. Richthofen was hit in the head by a single bullet but managed to land the plane safely. He underwent major surgery and was out of action for several months, but was never the same again. On 21 April 1918 he was engaged in a low level dogfight in northern France with two Sopwith Camels and crashed and died. It has never been definitely established who fired the fatal shot, but it is most likely to have been from machine gun fire from the ground by a gunman from the Australian 24th Machine Gun Company.

A Reproduction FE.2B Aircraft

A presentable vintage aircraft can be made in one of three ways. Firstly, it can be a restored aircraft. The starting point here is an original aircraft, usually in a dilapidated condition, which is then carefully restored as far as possible to its original condition using either modern or original components, and to look like the original. Secondly, it can be a replica aircraft. A replica aircraft is built to look like the original. It does not necessarily use an original



• Fig 5. A restored Farman Shorthorn in the Point Cook Aviation Museum, Melbourne.
(Photo: Thiru Arumugam). Please note that Fig 4 is the picture of the plane (No. 6341) in a field, Fig 5 is the picture of a plane (No. 20) in a hangar.

engine or airframe and components. The original dimensions and appearance are maintained, but modern simplified construction methods are used. Replica aircraft are commonly used in movies. Finally, we have reproduction aircraft. A reproduction aircraft is built from scratch using the exact specification and drawings of the original aircraft. Original materials are used in its construction and original components made. It is exactly like an aircraft rolling out of the original production line, but many decades later.

An example of a reproduction FE.2B is the one built by The Vintage Aviator Ltd (TVAL) of Hood Aerodrome, Masterton, New Zealand. About ten years ago, TVAL were commissioned to build a reproduction FE.2B. They were fortunately able to procure an original Beardmore 160 hp engine, interplane struts, radiator shutter controls, oil and fuel tanks and wheels. These were overhauled and reconditioned and brought up to as-new condition. Everything else, including the complete air-frame, controls, instruments etc. were built up from scratch using the original blueprint drawings which were converted to CAD drawings. The same materials and processes used in the original design were used e.g. Irish linen fabric, ash and spruce timbers, hand spliced cables etc. Using the original drawings, special jigs had to be built. The whole process of hand-built construction took about three years. TVAL describes the cockpit appearance of the reproduction aircraft as follows:

"This one of a kind airplane hasn't been seen in the skies for nearly a decade. In the pilot's cockpit

the colours and textures bring you back to a time when plastic and vinyl didn't exist; shiny copper tubing is carefully routed all over; brass control stick, air valve, fuel valve and magneto switches glisten, rich brown leather cushion and Sutton harness catch your eye, aluminium seat frame and nickel plated control levers dot the space and the big glass topped liquid filled compass becomes the centrepiece."

Construction of the aircraft was completed on 25 April 2009 and the NZ Certificate of Airworthiness was awarded. A second reproduction FE.2B was completed by TVAL in 2012 and the two aircraft are often seen flying in tandem on flying days. A picture of the aircraft can be seen in Fig. 4.

A Farman Shorthorn in Melbourne

The Point Cook airfield is the birthplace of the Australian Flying Corps (AFC) and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). It is the oldest continually operating military airfield in the world and has been operational since 1914. It is located in the outskirts of Melbourne. Within the premises there is an RAAF Museum which is open to the public.

The Farman Shorthorn is a World War I biplane which has many similarities to the FE.2B, and it was the first armed aircraft to engage in aerial combat in WW1. It was first built in 1914 and a total of about 300 planes were built. It was designed by the designers of the FE.2B, the Farman brothers. Like the FE.2B it is a pusher aircraft with the engine behind the pilot and the propeller facing backwards. It is powered by a Wolseley-Renault air-cooled V8 engine developing 80 hp, giving it a top speed of about 66

mph. It is predominantly made of wood and fabric and a maze of struts and wires hold the two wings in place and prevent them from warping in flight. As in the FE.2B, the observer/gunner sits in front of the pilot, but the two sit at the same level, and therefore the observer/gunner does not get as clear a view forward as in the FE.2B. Also the pilot's view forward is obstructed by the observer/gunner.

The AFC purchased a total of five Shorthorns in 1916/17 and used them for flight training at Point Cook. After the war they were sold to a private individual who used them extensively for joy-flights, advertising and barnstorming. In 1981 one of the five aircraft, CFS-20, was donated to the RAAF in a dilapidated condition, in which only about 30 percent of the parts were re-usable. It was painstakingly restored and is now on display in the RAAF Museum at Point Cook. This aircraft is shown in Fig. 5.

A Centenary Sky

The first plane to arrive in Ceylon was a French Bleriot imported by Colin Brown which arrived by sea freight in September 1911, but there is no record of Brown flying the plane. It was built by Louis Bleriot, who in July 1909 was the first person to fly a plane across the English Channel and won the Daily Mail prize of £1000.

The first plane to fly in Ceylon was an Austrian made Etrich Taube. The pilot was Franz Oster who took off from the Colombo Race Course on 25th December 1911. Unfortunately, he was unable to control the plane and crashed. Oster tried again five days later, but this time too he crashed on landing and damaged the plane. Not to be deterred, Oster tried again, this time flying Colin Brown's Bleriot. He took off successfully but when coming in to land he hit a bamboo pole in the Royal College grounds and crash-landed on the Race Course.

Although there were three attempted flights in the preceding twelve months which ended in crashes, the first aeroplane flight to safely take-off and land was on 7 December 1912 when two Frenchmen, Georges Verminck and Marc Pourpre, flew two Bleriot planes with 25 hp engines at the Colombo Racecourse. The planes made several more flights on the same day, and this date has been taken to be the date of inauguration of successful powered flight in Ceylon.

Towards the end of 2012, the Civil Aviation Authority, Sri Lanka, made a belated decision to publish a book titled *A Centenary Sky* to commemorate 100 years of civil aviation in the country. Captain Elmo Jayawardena was given the task of researching, editing, designing and publishing the book within only three months so that the book could be released on the 100th anniversary of safe powered flight in Ceylon, which was on 7 December 2012. It is difficult to conceive how he achieved the herculean task of completing this 223 page hardcover book, with almost every page in colour. It appears that

he worked 18 hour days during the three months.

Captain Elmo, as he is mostly known, flew for Air Ceylon, Air Lanka and for 20 years in Singapore Airlines where he was finally an Instructor on Boeing 747s. Apart from flying, he is an accomplished writer in very lucid prose. His novel *Sam's Story* was awarded the Gratiaen Prize in 2001 for the best work of literary writing by a Sri Lankan in English.

When Captain Elmo was collecting material for *A Centenary Sky* he sent out emails requesting those who had access to relevant materials and photographs to help him in the task of writing the book. The writer of this article, who in the halcyon days of his youth held a Private Pilots Licence, responded by sending Captain Elmo information and photographs of the plane called "The Jaffna". This formed the nucleus of a chapter titled "An Aeroplane called Jaffna" in Captain Elmo's book *A Centenary Sky*. Captain Elmo introduces the topic as follows:

However, during these silent years of aviation in Sri Lanka, there is a fascinating story that needs to be mentioned, though it may not belong to the centenary sky. The year was 1915. A group of Jaffna Tamil people who had migrated to Malaya comes to the forefront to relate an unusual story about a British Royal Flying Corps (RFC) fighter plane that carried a Sri Lankan name.

The copy of the book held by the writer of this article has this hand-written inscription by Captain Elmo: "To Thiru: Thank you for giving me the information and the photo to write about the aeroplane named 'Jaffna'. Blue skies. Elmo Jayawardena."

Captain Elmo concluded his Chapter about the 'Jaffna' with the following words:

"Having the choice to name the plane, the Tamil community in Malaya elected to call it 'Jaffna'. It was in remembrance of a birthplace in a faraway land, where the heartstrings often resonated nostalgic bells..... But the first gift to the sky, was the little fighter plane 'Jaffna'. Certainly less known, but very much in the annals of aviation. It did fly in some war-torn sky, in formation or in dogfight, but it flew. Then she went into oblivion till someone decided to resurrect her.

That is what I write, and that is what you read, and that is how memories stay alive for the generations to come."

Who is a ...

DIPLOMAT: A person who tells you to go to hell in such a way that you actually look forward to the trip.

BOSS: Someone who is early when you are late and late when you are early

Barbara, the “TakarangMaligawa” and I

By Somasiri Devendra

Re-reading a piece by Sally Hulugalla, in an old “Sunday Times” article *Leaf through Barbara’s Masterpiece*, on the launch of the new version of Barbara Sansoni’s “Viharas and Verandahs” and, in particular of the ‘iron house’ in Diyatalawa and the temple at Dowa, I was transported to those delightful days of the early 1960s when all these things happened.

In 1962, I was the only unmarried officer, in our ‘ship’ in Diyatalawa – Her Majesty’s Ceylon Ship “Rangalla”, or “Uva Camp” to the locals – living in solitary splendour in the Wardroom: that made me the official host to visiting dignitaries. One day, I was told to stand by to entertain a Second World War officer, a Lieut. Cdr. Hildon Sansoni who would be coming

on a long-ish holiday, with his family. He turned up alone, a day ahead of the rest and proved to be a most enjoyable character with a puckish sense of humour and a fund of stories. Hearing my name, he asked me “Are you D.T. Devendra’s son?” When I said “yes” he surprised me by talking about my father’s account of Embekke Devale, recalling the title “The Pillared Pride of Embekke”, and added that I would enjoy talking to his wife who would be here the next day.

Tomorrow brought Barbara, Simon of the beautiful face and the curly-mopped little Dominic of the mischievous smile. She was delightful company and wanted to know whether there were any old buildings in the area. I, having being bred on a diet of all things old and beautiful, had noted several on my twice-monthly trips to the Bank in Badulla (for the sailors’ fortnightly pay), then a most lovely drive. I remarked that there was somebody who was writing a weekly illustrated column featuring brick kilns, hen-houses etc. and she admitted – not bashfully, (something she never could be) – that she was the culprit. So I volunteered to be her guide.

Our first stop was Dowa temple where I saw her at work for the first time. I was surprised and impressed. She did several drawings while I was shooed-off to look after the children.

And so began several forays down various roads, in her Volkswagen, stopping at various houses, mostly Muslim ones. She visited them alone. Alone, she said, she could get to see the insides: accompanied by a raucous brood, she would have been refused.

One evening she wanted to see a particular place, Bogoda Bridge, to which she had been directed by Roland Silva. I did not know of it. Following his instructions, we got nowhere and so we kept asking assorted people where it was. Finally, we found the narrow, winding, gravel road leading down to the river. It was an overcast day, I remember, because I was to take the photographs that formed the base of her drawing: so I remember adjusting for light. It was a fantastic place. On our return, it began to rain and the gravelly road turned a trifle slippery. Barbara, at the wheel, was decidedly on edge and I kept up a patter of interesting trivia interspersed with helpful driving hints. Suddenly, Simon decided to do his bit. From the back seat, he recited – in a distinctly doleful voice – a popular Radio Ceylon Commercial Service jingle: “Death rides on bald tyres”! Only a mother’s love must have stopped her from strangling him!



Sinhalese Secular Vernacular Buildings - THE ARCHITECTURE OF AN ISLAND 79

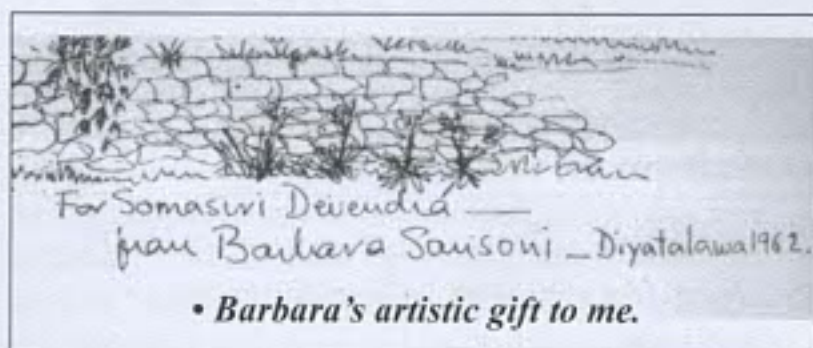
• *Bogoda Bridge.*



• Navy wardroom in Diyatalawa.

Every evening became an animated talk-shop: Barbara talking of Geofferey Bawa and Ulrik Plesner, Hildon about his threat to 'thrash' 'Big' Bill Tilden, the world tennis champion (resulting in the headline "Hildon 'beats' Tilden!"), and I slipping odd bits in-between. Barbara was impressed that my father's "Classical Sinhalese Sculpture" had been published by the prestigious publishing house of Alec Tiranti of London (now, alas! no more, as I learnt when I searched for it in London) where she bought her art materials.

One night I produced my copy of Ananda Coomaraswamy's "Medieval Sinhalese Art". This was her introduction to the man and she became a devotee overnight.



• Barbara's artistic gift to me.

We had finished visiting all the old houses for miles around when I asked Barbara, "Why don't you draw this building?" "Why? What's so special about it?" she countered. "Look beyond the *takarang* cladding", I persisted, "See the proportions and balance. See the Australian *Jarra* wood frame, with the metal outside and the panelling inside. The *takarang* absorbs the heat during the day and at night, when we close the doors and windows, we can stay bare-bodied inside. The pillars, floor and fireplace are of teak. This is a perfect house for this climate. That's

"She sat herself down in the middle of our sunken garden and made the basic drawing and sketches of the foliage. She announced that she would finish it back home.

"And now", I said, "there is the question of my fees". "Fees?" she asked. "Yes", I said, "this drawing". "Oh that! But of course" she said and so it has hung in my home these many years. Her gift to me."

why it was the holiday retreat of the C-in-C, East Indies Fleet". Next day, she inspected the building and saying "You are right", sat herself down in the middle of our sunken garden and made the basic drawing, and reference sketches of the foliage of the trees. She announced that she would finish it back home.

"And now", I said, "there is the question of my fees". "Fees?" she asked. "Yes", I said, "this drawing". "Oh that! But of course" she said and so it has hung in my home these many years. Her gift to me.

Gallipoli -

and the Ceylon Planters' Rifle Corps

by DR. SANJIVA WIJESINHE

Those of us who call ourselves ABCs (Australians Born in Ceylon) have come to realise after spending so many years in our adopted country how important ANZAC Day, Gallipoli and the ANZAC legend have come to be in Australia.

I was fortunate to visit Gallipoli last year as part of an Australian army contingent participating in the remembrance ceremonies there.



•The Australian ANZAC cemetery at Lone Pine.

One of most famous battles of the Gallipoli campaign – which Australians refer to as the ‘Battle of Lone Pine’ and the Turks as the ‘Battle for Kanli Sirt’ – was fought over four days in August 1915. On a battle field where the trenches were sometimes no more than 30 metres apart, the ANZACs from the colonies and the Ottoman forces of Turkey fought each other ferociously. At the end of the four days struggle almost ten thousand men from both sides had been wounded or killed.

For me, standing on the Lone Pine plateau which was once was a savage battlefield, was certainly an emotional experience. As I looked on the rows and rows of sombre gravestones and neat flower-beds, it was hard to picture those dreadful scenes of violence. Lone Pine is hauntingly beautiful – and surprisingly small. It is a place where people come to commemorate and contemplate the meaningless slaughter of war.

In April 1915, Britain decided to land a force of soldiers, mainly colonial troops (the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps or ANZACs, drawn mainly from Australia and New Zealand but with

a small number from the Indian subcontinent) onto the west coast of Gallipoli with the intent of capturing the peninsula and moving north to conquer Constantinople, the prize capital of the Ottoman empire.

The ensuing Gallipoli campaign was a costly failure for the Allies. By the time they evacuated their troops in December 2015, they had lost almost 45,000 men - 8000 from Australia, 2800 from New Zealand and 1400 from India. The Turks paid a heavy price for their victory – over 86,000 Ottoman soldiers lost



• Two soldiers of the Ceylon Planters' Rifle Corps who acted as Lt. Gen. William Birdwood's bodyguard throughout the Gallipoli campaign.

their lives. One regiment, the Turkish 57th Regiment, lost almost all its men during the Gallipoli war.

Many of those who died on Gallipoli were buried en masse and have no known resting place. The gravestones in these cemeteries do not always mark actual graves – they are merely gravestones documenting the names of those who were killed there.

I discovered that among the ‘British’ troops engaged in the Gallipoli campaign were men of the Ceylon Planters Rifle Corps (CPRC). On 27 October 1914, approximately 230 of them under the command of Major J Hall Brown sailed from Ceylon to Egypt, where they were attached to the 1st Battalion



• Regimental badge of the Ceylon Planters Rifle Corps,

Wellington Regiment (part of the ANZACs) and deployed as garrison troops in the Suez Canal area until March 1915.

In April 1915, when the ANZACs were reorganised in Egypt for the invasion of Turkey, over 100 members of the CPRC contingent were granted commissions in the British and British-Indian Army. The remainder were attached to the 1st ANZAC Corps, functioning as a bodyguard to the ANZAC Commander Lieutenant General William Birdwood who is quoted as saying: "I have an excellent guard of Ceylon Planters - they are such a nice lot of fellows."

The CPRC contingent landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula between 25 April and 01 May 1915 at the

Ari Burnu beachhead (now known as Anzac Cove). Several of them are known to have died on Gallipoli but their graves are unknown. Colonel T.Y Wright who was commanding officer of the CPRC from 1904 to 1912 has stated that the unit suffered overall losses of 80 killed and 99 wounded during the First World war.

Today, the memorials and gravestones on Gallipoli are a poignant reminder of the young men on both sides who fought and died on this barren peninsula.

But I could not help thinking, as I looked on the well-maintained headstones in the Gallipoli cemeteries, of that poem *The Battle of Blenheim* by Robert Southey that I learned many years ago as a schoolboy in Ceylon:

*'They said it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory'*



• Tombstone to Indian soldier at ANZAC Cove.

KIDDIE STYLES

These days there appears to be little difference, except in size, between adults' and children's clothes. Little girls can be seen in the identical denims and halter tops or 'salwar kameez' worn by their young mothers. At weddings little boys are stuffed into scaled down lounge or 'Nehru' suits. Far from being cute, the poor things look like circus midgets. Reading the foreign news I gather that this is now a universal (i.e. Western) trend.

It was not always so. From as far back as my childhood in the 1930s till the childhood of my own children in the 1960s, children's clothes were in a very different category from those of adults. I seem to remember entire sections of Women's Pages in newspapers, as well as in those once-popular British journals for women, devoted to do-it-yourself children's fashions. I recall with affection ruffled silky

suits for page boys and Bo-Peep crinolines for little flower girls, now frozen for ever in the non-essential wedding portraits from 'Donalds'.

[The 'Romper'] was basically a home made one-piece garment of patterned cotton. Both girls and boys wore it without any variation - 'unisex' in today's jargon. It can be described, fairly accurately, as similar to the exceedingly modest one-piece 'bathing costumes' (as swimsuits were then called) of that period. I seem to recall that it was buttoned up at the back - which meant aided unbuttoning when in a hurry! There was no specific Sinhala word for the romper. Ayahs called it 'junjee' - but that was a catch-all phrase for undergarments.

Out growing the romper and qualifying for shorts, and frocks was a longed-for right of passage.

*(Excerpt from Quest for Shangri-La by
Tissa Devendra)*

Brief biographies of Classical Writers and Historians who commented on Sri Lanka - I

by **M. Asoka
T. De Silva**



This planned series of articles is dedicated to the memory and honour of the Classical, Mediaeval and Colonial commentators and historians, whose observations of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) from countries far and wide, have supplemented and glorified the historical narrations of our own Sinhala and Pali chronicles. I have tried to present this series in the alphabetical order of their well known names. This collection of biographies was included as an Appendix in my book titled, "Glorious Historical Antecedents of a Cultured Civilization: Sri Lanka" published in 2013 by Vijitha Yapa Publications, Colombo. What is presented here is the first part of the collection of brief biographies.

AGATHEMERUS (ca. 272 AD)

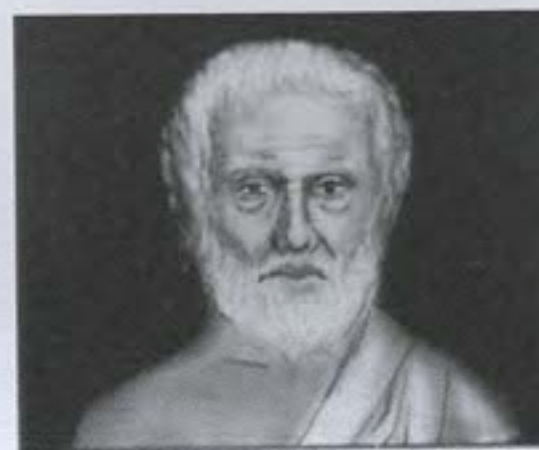
Agathemerus (in Greek: Ἀγαθήμερος) was a geographer who during the Roman Greece period published a small two-part geographical work titled "A Sketch of Geography in Epitome", addressed to his pupil Philon, The son of Orthon, Agathemerus is speculated to have lived in the 3rd century AD. Although much is not known about Agathemerus historically, he lived after Ptolemy and before the formation of Constantinople on the site of Byzantium by Constantine the Great in 328 AD, as he mentions only the old city Byzantium. From his speaking of Albion, it has been thought that he wrote not very long after the erection of the wall of Severus.

Agathemerus's work consists chiefly of extracts from Ptolemy, Artemidorus Ephesius and other earlier writers, but depended more on Ptolemy's work. In his work, he gave a short account of the various forms assigned to the Earth by previous geographers. He calculated the distances between land masses and seas, and then laid down important distances on the inhabited part of the Earth using the stadia-metric method.

He had described Ceylon as the largest of all islands, formerly called Simonda, but now as Salice in which are found all the necessities of life, and every kind of metal. He makes the point that next to Salice, the next largest islands were Albion and Ireland.

ARISTOTLE (384 – 322 BC)

Aristotle was the great Greek philosopher born in 384 BC, about 55 km east of the modern day Thessaloniki, who began teaching at Athens in 335 BC and died in 322 BC. At about the age of eighteen, he went to



• Aristotle (384 - 322 BC)

Athens to continue his education at Plato's academy. He was a pupil of Plato. He had continued to be at the Academy for nearly 20 years before leaving Athens around 348 BC.

Significantly, Aristotle reversed his teacher's idea about the role of mathematics, and maintained that truth was to be found only in reality – an idea known as empiricism.

A treatise titled *De Mundo* believed to be of Aristotle, mentions Taprobane as a country smaller than Britain. Sir James Emerson Tennent (1859) conjectures that this notice on the island of Taprobane could then have been the earliest (pre-Christian era) reference to Ceylon, which could have resulted from Alexander's Indian expedition. However, Tennent (1859), disputes this view on the grounds of the authenticity of *De Mundo*.

ARRIAN (86 – 160 AD)

Lucius Flavius Arrianus 'Xenophon' was born ca. 86 AD in Nicomedia, Bithynia, Asia Minor, and died ca. 160 AD in Athens. He was a Greek historian, public servant, military commander and philosopher of the second century AD of the Roman period.

He studied philosophy in Nicopolis in Epirus, under the Stoic philosopher Epictetus, and wrote two books about the philosopher's teachings. At the same time he entered the Imperial service, and served as a junior adviser on the consilium of Gaius Avidius Nigrinus, governor of Achaea, and a close friend of the future Emperor Hadrian, around 111-114 AD. Very little is known about his subsequent career

- though it is probable that he served in Gaul and on the Danube frontier. In 131 AD he was appointed governor of the Black Sea province of Cappadocia and commander of the Roman legions on the frontier with Armenia.

As with other authors of the Second Sophistic, Arrian wrote primarily in Attic (a form of Greek used by ancient Athenians) *Anabasis of Alexander* (not to be confused with *Anabasis*) is believed to be his best known work and is generally considered one of the best sources on the campaigns of Alexander the Great. Arrian is also considered as one of the founders of a primarily military-based focus on history. His other works include *Discourses of Epictetus* and *Indica*.

Arrian wrote a military treatise called *Ektaxis kata Alanōn*, which detailed the battle against the Alans, and the *Technē Taktikē* in which he described how he would organise the legions and auxiliary troops at his disposal. However, Arrian's work may have been entirely hypothetical, because there is no historical record of a battle between Romans and Alans that year. During this period Arrian wrote several works on military tactics.

The scholarly consensus is that Arrian's work is to a considerable extent a reworking of Ptolemy; albeit with material from other writers, particularly Aristobulus, brought in where Arrian thought them useful.

Arrian left Cappadocia shortly before the death of his patron Hadrian, in 138 AD, and there is no evidence for any further public appointments until 145/6 AD, when he was elected Archon at Athens, once the city's leading political post. It was here that he devoted himself to history, writing his most important work, the *Anabasis Alexandri* or "The Campaigns of Alexander". He also wrote the *Indica*, an account of the voyage by Alexander's fleet from India to the Persian Gulf under Nearchus. Arrian is known to have made Sri Lanka stretch almost to the east coast of Africa, giving it a length of 9500 stadia and a breadth of 7500 stadia. He had claimed that the northern part of the Island was cultivated and its produce conveyed by swift sailing ships to a promontory on the east coast of Africa.



AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS (c.330–c.400 AD)
Ammianus Marcellinus, after retiring from a successful military career, he wrote a history of the Roman Empire as a sequel to that of Tacitus, his

model. The history, in 31 books, covered the years from AD 96 to 378; only Books XIV–XXXI, covering the years AD 353–78 have survived. Though written in an extremely rhetorical style, this reliable and impartial history is praised not only for its coverage of military events, but for detailed information concerning economic, administrative, and social history, biographical information about the

Ammianus had referred to Sri Lanka as Serindib, Serenduil, and Σουλδοιβ, from the latter of which it is conjectured, that the name of Zeilan or Ceylon had been derived.

various emperors, and tolerant descriptions of foreign cultures. Although a pagan and an admirer of Julian the Apostate, Ammianus was able to write about Christianity without prejudice.

Ammianus together with other authors of the west had referred to Sri Lanka as Serindib, Serenduil, and Σουλδοιβ, from the latter of which it is conjectured, that the name of Zeilan or Ceylon had been derived. He had also referred to an embassy sent to Julian by the Sinhalese, but does not discuss its outcome

ABOU-ZEYD HASSAN (911 AD)

Abou-zeid Hassan was a amateur geographer who contributed the 2nd Part of the publication titled "Voyages of the Two Mohametons" in 911 AD, the Part I of which was written earlier in 815 AD by the merchant Soleyman who made frequent visits to these areas at the height of trade and commerce in Bagdad (under Khalifs). Abou-zeid's descriptions based on narrations of informants, especially Ibn Wahab apparently included much of conventions of the national religions, and especially of Buddhism. He also described the magnificence of the temples of the Sinhalese and to the colossal dimensions of statues. He also refers to the great tolerance of the Sinhalese to all religious sects in the 9th Century. According to Tennent (1859), the most interesting passages in his narration are those which allude to the portion of Ceylon which served as the emporium for active and opulent trade of which Ceylon was then in every sense, the Centre.

BERTOLACCI, ANTHONY (1817)

Anthony Bertolacci had been the Comptroller –

General of Customs, and the Acting Auditor General of Civil Accounts of Ceylon during the 16 years of his stay in Ceylon. His father had served the Royal French Government in Corsica, as a Judge for nearly 25 years, and had taken a decidedly and prominent part against the revolution.

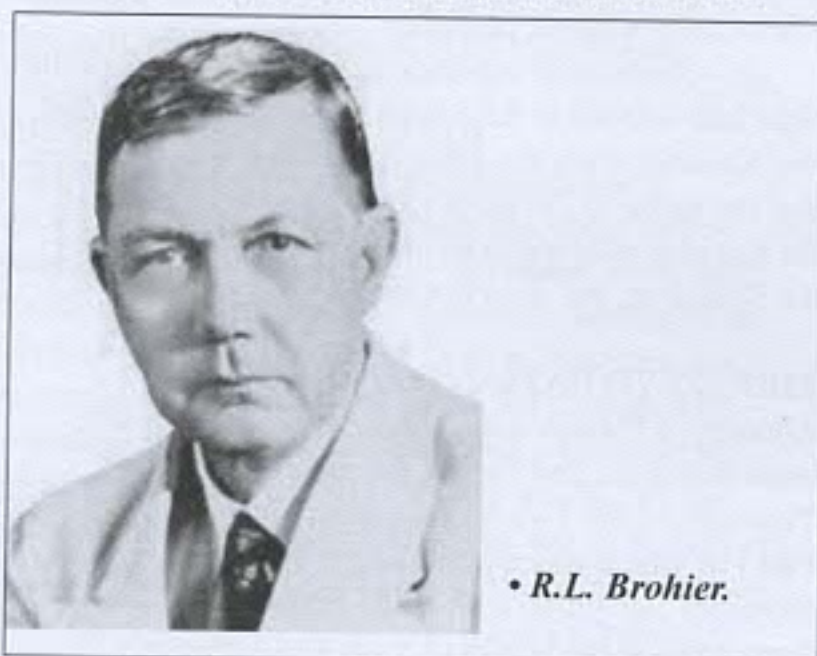
Anthony Bertolacci had been then an Assistant in the Office of the Secretary of State. Nothing else is known about Bertolacci, except for the fact that he had offered an apology to the public for some imperfections in his book including the language, which was less familiar to him during his early years. His principal aim in producing this work had been to benefit the colony (Ceylon). He was unfortunately compelled to retire early in life due to a debilitating health condition.

BISHOP JORDANUS (1330 AD)

Bishop Jordanus in 1330 AD reported the presences of over 8000 boats under the authority of the King of Kandy. Except for the fact that he had been working 3 months at a time in Ceylon, nothing more is known about him.

RICHARD LESLIE BROHIER – (1892 – 1980)

Richard Leslie Brohier (RL) was born on October 5, 1892 in Pettah, the residential area in Colombo 11



• R.L. Brohier.

at that time. Born of parents of French (Huguenot) origin, he had a claim to an ancestry that made Sri Lanka its home from 1777 serving under the Dutch East India Company.

He was educated at the Colombo Academy in Hulftsdorp, the precursor of Royal College, Colombo. After the completion of his secondary education, he joined the Technical College, Colombo to follow the surveying course. He passed out in 1910 and gained employment as an assistant surveyor in the Survey Department of Sri Lanka – one of the oldest departments in Sri Lanka.

Soon afterwards, he was seen with his theodolite and chisius surveying irrigation works and lands in

the Rajarata – Dry Zone and also the Ruhunu Rata. His labour of love was to compile text books on our ancient civilization, irrigation tanks and works. In this connection his magnum opus was the Irrigation Works in Ceylon. It consists of three volumes.

As time passed, it fell on Brohier, as the first Ceylonese surveyor, during 1910-1949, to make plans not only for computing the country's length and breadth, but also surveying the life and culture of its people from which he drew inspiration to form the backdrop of the bulk of his prolific writing. This eventually brought him to limelight, which culminated in his enjoying national recognition to earn an honorary doctoral degree from the University of Ceylon. He had the distinction to be the first Ceylonese Surveyor to join the Department run exclusively by the British colonial officers.

The then Prime Minister in recognition of his yeomen services mainly in the irrigation field, in course of time got R.L. Brohier appointed as a Director of the Gal-oya scheme – Development Board. A scholar of no mean repute, he was also connected with some academic research institutes.

Brohier had roamed the country almost in its entirety for a life time with the theodolite and tape, but more so with a seeing eye, which many hundreds of his like had missed. Going further with a nature of his public duty, enriched with authentic and authoritative information on what he had seen and discovered, he made known his experiences in several publications which have now been reprinted for the reading pleasure of his admirers.

His writings have displayed his in-depth study of sociology and environmental science among the peasants mostly in the dry zone. He was so deeply absorbed in the environment and the scenic beauty of the surroundings of the Kantale area, that he never failed to refer to crocodiles, peacocks, migratory birds, wild buffaloes, wild boar and monkeys swinging to and fro from branch to branch.

Finally when R L Brohier passed away on February 14, 1980 at the age of 87, he left behind undying memories of distinguished unique services to the land of his birth.

CAIUS PLINUS SECUNDES (Pliny) (23 – 79 AD)

Pliny the Roman historian and naturalist usually called the Elder, to distinguish him from his nephew of the same name, who was equally eminent in letters but in a different field, was born of an illustrious family of Verona in the 23rd year of the Christian Era.

Pliny was a nationalist who was born in Novum Comum in Gallia Cisalpine (today Como, Italy). He completed his studies in Rome where he received education in literature, oratory, and law, as well as military training. At the age of 23, he began a military career by serving in Germany under Pomponius Secundus, rising to the rank of cavalry commander.

Twelve years later he returned to Rome, becoming the legal advocate during the reign of Nero (died in 68 AD). He gained favour under Vespasian and assumed various official positions. He served as a procurator in Gaul, Africa and Spain, where he gained a reputation for integrity. He also served on the imperial council for both Vespasian and Titus.

Despite his active public life, Pliny the Elder still found time to write enormous amounts of material. He was the author of at least 75 books, not to mention another 160 volumes of unpublished notebooks. His books included volumes on cavalry tactics, biography, a history of Rome, a study of the Roman campaigns in Germany (twenty books), grammar, rhetoric, contemporary history (thirty-one books), and his most famous work, his one surviving book, *Historia Naturalis* (Natural History), published in A.D. 77. Natural History consists of thirty-seven books including all that the Romans knew about the natural world in the fields of cosmology, astronomy, geography, zoology, botany, mineralogy, medicine, metallurgy, and agriculture. The unifying thread of this work was anthropocentrism.

A novel feature of the Natural History was the care taken by Pliny in naming his sources. Book 1 consisted of an index of topics and authorities for each of the succeeding thirty-six books. In it he cited nearly four thousand authors. Book 2 dealt with cosmography, meteorology and terrestrial phenomena. It was followed by books 3-6 (geography), 7 (man), 8-11 (animals), 12-17 (botany), 18-19 (agriculture), 20-27 (materia medica from botanical sources), 28-32 (materia medica from animal sources) and 33-37 (metals, stones and their uses in medicine and architecture).

He dedicated his great work on the History of Nature to the then Roman Emperor (Titus Vespasian). After his short career in the army he returned to Rome and was enrolled in the College of Augurs, a post which favoured his philosophic inquiries. He was later appointed procurator, or Vice Governor in Spain.

In the realm of Nature and Art no object was indifferent to him; in the province of Fine Art, the accuracy of his judgement and the fidelity of his details seemed only to be out measured by the extent of his acquirement; and as a historian, a critique and a catalogue, nothing more precious in letters than his 34th, 35th and 36th books, which had escaped the ruin with the fall of the Roman Empire.

Pliny in his description of Taprobane had claimed that it had long been considered another continent. Pliny had also made the interesting point that though Taprobane is so far removed from the Roman World, it was still not free from the vices of Rome. This reference was probably to the greed of Romans for Gold and Silver (objects of cupidity). Although Pliny never visited Sri Lanka, he gives a lengthy description about the life and times of the

people of Sri Lanka, during his time, which included social as well as the political situation of the country. His sources of information included Sri Lanka's Ambassadors to Rome, as well as the mariners returning from the jaunts in the East.

Finally, the events of the day that closed his mortal career in the 79th year of the Christian Era have been minutely and touchingly detailed to Tacitus the historian in one of the most elegant of the epistles penned by a nephew, who was the worthy inheritor of the wealth, the form and virtue of his uncle.

The body of Pliny was found three days after its destruction by the eruptions of the Vesuvius (volcano), and interred at Misenum.

Philemon Holland, who translated and published Pliny's books during 1847 – 1848, in a tribute to Pliny concluded that, 'To his humanity and scientific curiosity, he became one of the most memorable martyrs that stand on record'.

CAVE, HENRY WILLIAM (1854 – 1913)

H. W. Cave was a photographer, publisher and writer. He first travelled to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) as private secretary to the Bishop of Colombo. In 1870 he set up a small bookshop in Colombo, which by 1884 had diversified into a flourishing publishing house, H. W. Cave & Company, and a printing firm equipped to produce books with excellent quality photographic reproductions. He took a serious interest in photography, and this enabled him to illustrate the pictorial travelogues written by him and published by his own firm. His close supervision of the details of book production and photographic reproduction gave him a competitive edge over other commercial photographers. He returned to England in 1886 after the death of his wife and settled down in Oxford. He made occasional visits to Ceylon, but continued to manage his firm's business from England.

His publications include, i. "Works on Ceylon", ii. "Picturesque Ceylon", iii. "The Ruined Cities of Ceylon", and iv. Golden Tips (a description of Ceylon and its great tea industry).

(Note: Part II of this series will appear in the next issue of The Ceylankan).

She saw shrewdly that the world is quickly bored by the recital of misfortune, and willingly avoids the sight of distress.

(Somerset Maugham - Moon and Sixpence 1919.)

Pain

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
That is not paid with moan;
For we are born in other's pain,
And perish in our own.

(Francis Thompson - 'Daisy' Poems 1913)

HERO FROM CEYLON: Sir Charles Forbes

Commander-in-Chief of the British Home Fleet

Sir Charles Forbes, Admiral of the Fleet and Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet was a man who played a key role in guiding the British Navy in both Great Wars I and II. He belonged to a family with intimate links with the growth of the mercantile sector in Ceylon in the late 19th and 20th centuries; his family playing a critical role in the establishment and development of the tea industry, which remains a cornerstone of Sri Lanka's economy to date.

Sir Charles was born on 22 November 1880 in Colombo, the second son of James Forbes and his wife Caroline. James Forbes, the founder of the tea broking firm Forbes and Walker arrived in Ceylon in



March 1876, having trained as a tea taster in Gow Wilson and Co, Mincing Lane. He was the first trained tea taster from Mincing Lane to work in Ceylon. After a two-year stint as a tea planter, he joined Somerville and Co. as an assistant but left the company to form Forbes and Walker, the leading freight and produce brokers in the island for many years. As Senior Partner of the company, James Forbes saw it progress, playing a flourishing and dominant role in the development of Ceylon's tea trade. Upon retirement, he returned to England where he settled down in Potters Bar in Middlesex where he continued to live up to his death. The company in Sri Lanka still exists but its business has since diversified over the years and no connection

By
Hugh Karunanayake

remains with the founding family.

In 1878 James Forbes married Caroline Delmege, sister of Toby Delmege, founder of the firm Delmege Forsyth and Co. a company which exists in Sri Lanka to this day, albeit sans any connection to the Delmege family. A melancholy connection still remains, however, as a memorial to Toby Delmege's wife Agnes Jessie, and her infant son Robert John who died in February 1875, both buried at the All Saints Cemetery, Galle.

James and Caroline Forbes had two sons of whom the elder, Oswald, better known as Colonel OB Forbes continued to live in Ceylon and became Chairman of Forbes and Walkers. Oswald Forbes, on retirement, also moved back to England by which time his father James had long passed on. The younger son, Charles Morton Forbes, after his early education in Ceylon and England, chose to join the British Navy.

The contribution made by Forbes and Walker in developing the tea industry in Ceylon is very significant and worthy of note. The firm was founded during the early days of tea planting which largely took place on estates devastated by the failure of coffee. Much of the central and south western parts of Ceylon were eventually planted in tea but the challenge was in the provision of finance and of the organisation of logistics to ensure that the end product reached the consumer in Europe. The failure of the coffee industry brought with it the collapse of agency houses and export services, and a local economy lacking in finance.

Sir Thomas Villiers in "Mercantile Lore" stated "Forbes being the first qualified Tea Taster to start as a Broker, the firm of Forbes and Walker reaped the benefit on the development of the Ceylon Tea Industry and consequently built up the largest Tea Broking business in the Island."

Charles Morton Forbes, the second son of James Forbes, joined HMS Britannia as a cadet at the tender age of 14 years in 1894. He specialised in gunnery and in 1902, was given entry to the elite HMS Excellent specialising in naval gunnery. By 1914 he was assigned to the newly commissioned Queen Elizabeth in which he sailed to the war front in Gallipoli. He was later in command of the cruiser Galatea in which he witnessed the surrender of the German Fleet in 1918. Having been in the thick of

battle during World War I he continued as a senior officer in the British Navy and was promoted to full Admiral in 1936 as Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet.

Charles Forbes served in the Second World War as Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet. He was on board the battleship HMS Rodney when she came under air attack by German Luftwaffe bombers and was hit by a 500 kg bomb that pierced its armoured deck on 9 April 1940 during the Norwegian



• Sir Charles Forbes.

Campaign in which his fleet suffered severe losses. Among the losses to the fleet was aircraft carrier HMS Glorious and nine destroyers. Forbes was promoted Admiral of the Fleet in May 1940 and awarded the Knight

Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath in July 1940. He had disagreements with Winston Churchill on the deployment of ships on anti invasion duties which resulted in his appointment as Commander-in-Chief Plymouth in which capacity he organised the defence of Plymouth as well as initiating a series of attacks on enemy shipping. He retired from service in August 1943 before the conclusion of the war.

A distinguished career ended, he was one of the very few officers of Britain's forces who saw active duty in both Great Wars, spanning a period of more than 30 years. On retirement, Sir Charles Forbes settled in Wentworth, Surrey where he led a leisurely life pursuing his interest in golf. He attended the funeral of King George VI and was also invited to the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II which he attended. He was twice married, first to Agnes Millicent Ewen of Potters Bar in 1909 by whom he had a son and a daughter. Six years after her death in 1915, he married Marie Louise Berndsten of Stockholm by whom he had a daughter.

Charles Forbes died at Queen Alexandra Military Hospital on 28 August 1960 at the age of 80 years. Although there is nothing on record to show that Charles Forbes derived any proprietary interest in the considerable assets of his father in Ceylon, it is likely that he may have been a beneficiary of the deceased estate of his father.

During the course of his illustrious career, Sir Charles Forbes was the recipient of many military honours and awards including the Distinguished Service Order 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory

Medals, 1939-45 Star, Atlantic Star, Defence and War Medals, Jubilee 1935, Coronation 1937. These medals have been with the family for almost 60 years after the death of Sir Charles.

The dust and destruction of war having long settled and the glory of victory almost forgotten, the history of nations move on. A total of eleven medals representing the valour and dedication of a man who served his king and country without fear or favour is now about to move on from the family. The lot of eleven medals will be auctioned by Dix Noonan and Webb Auctioneers of London on 19 July 2017. A colour photo of the group of eleven medals appear on our back cover. The auctioneer's estimate of the hammer price is £6000. What price glory? a cynic may say.

Service unchanged!

A husband visited a marriage counselor and said, "When we were first married, I would come home from the office, my wife would bring my slippers and our cute little dog would run around barking. Now after ten years it's all different, I come home, the dog brings the slippers and my wife runs around barking." "Why complain?" said the counselor. "You're still getting the same service!"

Doctor and a lawyer at a party

A doctor and a lawyer were talking at a party. Their conversation was constantly interrupted by people describing their ailments and asking the doctor for free medical advice.

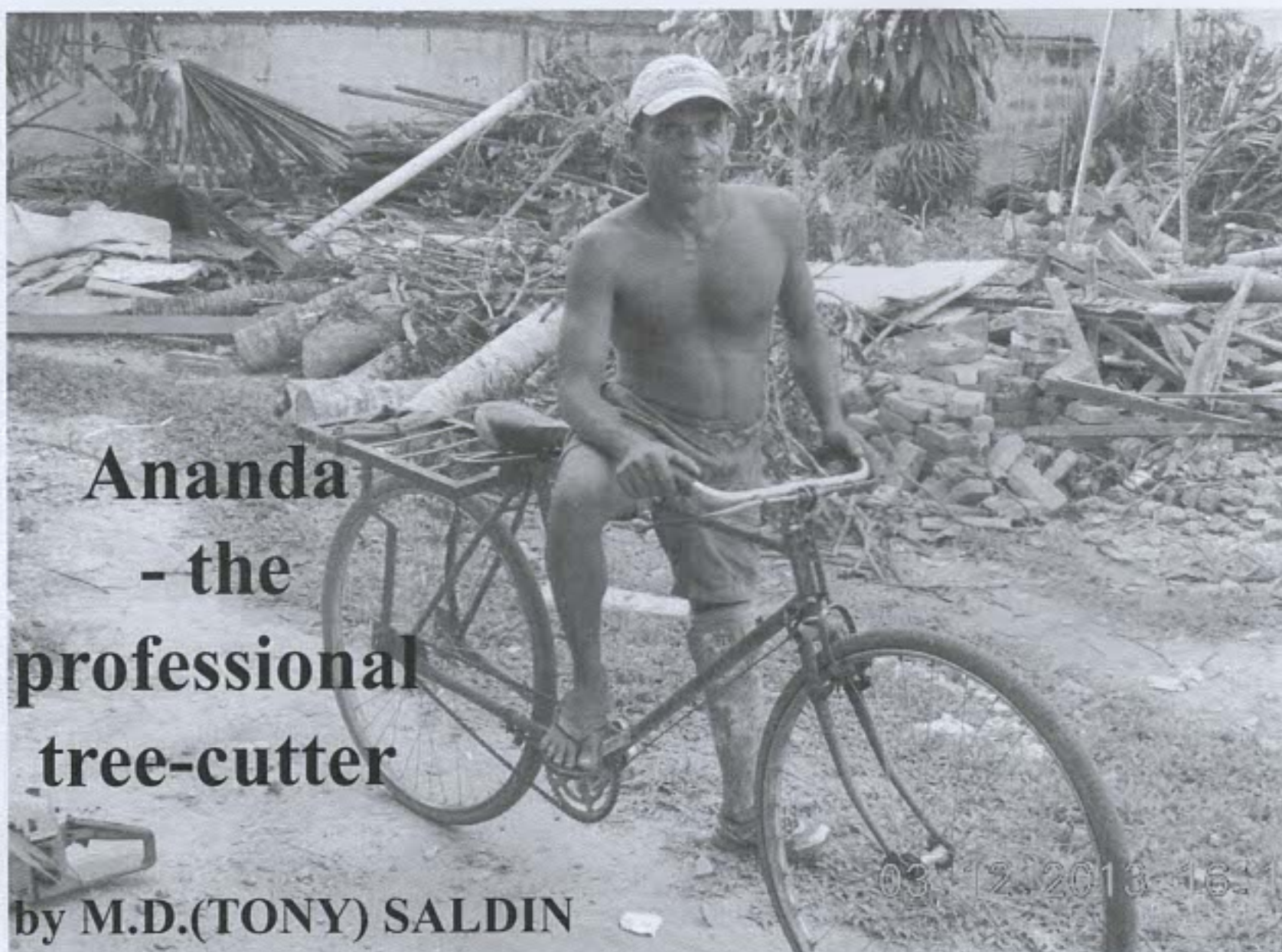
After an hour of this, the exasperated doctor asked the lawyer, "What do you do to stop people from asking you for legal advice when you're out of the office?" "I give it to them," replied the lawyer, "and then I send them a bill."

The doctor was shocked, but agreed to give it a try. The next day, still feeling slightly guilty, the doctor prepared the bills.

When he went to place them in his mailbox, he found a bill from the lawyer.

The Sarong and the Saree

An American tourist travelling in an Indian Airlines flight observed the demure Indian air hostess getting about her work quietly and efficiently and thought he should pay her a compliment and said "That's a nice sarong you are wearing madam" to which she replied "I am sorry Sir it is not a sarong - it is a saree that I am wearing but thanks for the compliment." The quick-witted guy replied: "then I should be sorry (saree) that I was so wrong (sarong)."



His wife left him in 1996 when he was a dynamic and young tree-cutter of 30-years, after his serious accident. That act literally dramatized the adage of the “bull goring the man who fell off the tree”.

Tragedy

The unforeseen mishap occurred when he was chopping off the branches of a jak tree at a height of around 40-feet down Balagala Road in Hendala, Wattala. Suddenly a huge branch mysteriously hit him flush on his face on the downswing, throwing him right off the tree. He came crashing down and hit the earth.

Amputation

The villagers rushed him to the Ragama General Hospital, and thereafter he was transferred to the Peralanda Government Hospital. Surgeons over there made a clinical decision to amputate Ananda's left leg below his knee to stall the spread of gangrene which had by then set in.

Spirits

Ananda believes he hadn't made any technical error while chopping those branches off that jak tree. In keeping with existing village folklore, he attributes the disaster to some “unseen forces” in the vicinity of the tree. It was after this tragedy seventeen years ago that his wife, who hailed from Hikkaduwa, decided to leave him, harboring the notion that he would cease to be a breadwinner. She was wrong.

Background

Mitupitiyaarachchige Ananda from Etampolawatte, Hendala, Wattala, now pushing 50, is no ordinary tree-cutter. He hails from a family of professional woodcutters descending down generations. Ananda learnt the diverse intricacies of cutting trees from his father and uncles at age 15. He now lives alone, practising his profession at his original pace with only one foot! No ordinary tree-cutter, Ananda, a fighter for survival who never gives up!

Artificial Foot

Ananda was fitted with a Jaipur foot on two occasions, but he felt very uncomfortable on every such occasion in view of legs swelling up. Subsequently, his friend's father, who sported an artificial leg passed away, resulting in his friend gifting Ananda the artificial leg, which fitted him perfectly.

Work Efficiency

On an average, Ananda cuts around 15 to 20 trees a month, clearing the way mostly for building constructions. He also cuts valuable trees such as jak and teak, which are sawn into timber. Notwithstanding his disability, Ananda is still an expert at climbing trees and riding a push bicycle. He still uses an axe to cut trees, but for cutting and sizing trunks into more manageable sizes, he uses a motorised chain saw, far quicker, and keeping in pace with technological advancement.



Meals Ammi Made

Kalia curry (Brinjal, ash plantain and chicken liver curry)

by Sharni Saldin
(of Hendala, Wattala, Sri Lanka)

Ingredients:

250 grams brinjal
150 grams ash plantain
100 grams chicken liver
1 small tomato chopped
1 onion chopped
2 green chillies chopped
A small piece of ginger
3 pips of garlic
A little bit of mustard seeds
A sprig of curry/rampe (pandan) leaves
½ teaspoon saffron
1 teaspoon of chillie power
1 teaspoon of coriander power
½ teacup of thin coconut milk
½ teacup of thick coconut milk
Salt to taste

Method : - cut the brinjals and ash plantains into small cubes,
Mix in a little saffron and bit of salt and deep fry them separately.
Boil the chicken liver. Then temper the chopped tomatoes, onion, garlic, green chillies, ginger, sprig of curry leaves, rampe and mustard seeds. Then mix in the saffron, chillie powder and coriander powder.

SEND US YOUR RECIPES

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

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

pour in the thin coconut milk. Put in the fried ash plantains and liver and cook for a while. When the gravy thickens, pour the thick coconut milk. Add salt and let it simmer for a bit. Lastly put in the fried brinjals and mix it gently with a fork.



Congratulations and a Warm Welcome to our New Members

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

From Hugh Karunanayake, Melbourne VIC to
• Prof. E.M.Sedgwick, 85 Lakewood Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO53 5AD UK.

CORRECTION: In the May/June 2017 (J78)

issue of the journal welcoming new member Lalith Wijesurendra, his name was incorrectly linked to Maria Benedicta who is the wife of Dr Leonard Pinto. also new members. Our apologies to Lalith, Dr Leonard and his wife Maria Benedicta for the error and any embarrassment caused.



USA in RECESSION

The recession has hit everybody really hard...

- My neighbor got a pre-declined credit card in the mail;
- I saw a Mormon with only one wife.;
- If the bank returns your check marked "Insufficient Funds," you call them and ask if they meant you or them.;
- McDonald's is selling the 1/4 ounce;
- Angelina Jolie adopted a child from America;
- Parents in Beverly Hills fired their nannies and learned their children's names;
- My cousin had an exorcism but couldn't afford to pay for it, and they re-possessed her!
- A truckload of Americans was caught sneaking into Mexico;
- A picture is now only worth 200 words;
- When Bill and Hillary travel together, they now have to share a room;
- The Treasure Island casino in Las Vegas is now managed by Somali pirates;
- History will re-name this President "Owe" Bama.

(From Google)

Ten wonderful things we have the Malays to thank for

by Asiff Hussain

Sri Lanka's Malays, despite being a happy-go-lucky people, are well known for their diligence to duty. This is perhaps a spillover from the days of their ancestors, most of whom came as soldiers from the Indonesian archipelago to serve the Dutch colonial regime here.

They were at one time the Gurkhas of Ceylon so well known for their martial prowess. Robert Percival says in his *Account of the Island of Ceylon* (1805): "Along with their other arms they always wear their kreeses or poisoned daggers by their sides: in the heat of an engagement they often throw down their musket and bayonet, and, rushing upon the enemy with their kreeses, carry terror and destruction wherever they come".

A Dutch cartographer, in his plan of the town of Kandy C. 1765, even thought it fit to adorn his work with a Malay soldier standing near Dutch Governor Baron Van Eck, proudly raising the severed head of an adversary, the blood-covered keris (curved dagger) still in his hands, as we may gather from the compendious *Grote Atlas* compiled by R. Van Diessen and B. Nelemans (2008). In British colonial times, the Malays showed a particular fondness for state service and served in the army, police, and fire brigade, the last of which was almost wholly manned by Malays. Police Day to this day commemorates the sacrifice made by Constable Saban who died in the line of duty trying to arrest the famous outlaw Saradiel.

But there is much more to the Malays than meets the eye. They have contributed immensely to local culture from dress and food to popular pastimes, in spite of being settled here for no more than four centuries.

Here are some of the more notable ones:

1. Sarong – Malay Man and Boy in Sarong

The sarong, as we all know, is the traditional lower garment of the Sri Lankan male. The attire, known as sarama among the Sinhalese and saram among local Muslims, is basically a tubular length of cloth wound round the waist and reaching down to the ankles. It is usually fastened by tucking in a part of its upper portion at the waist. These sarongs are most likely to be made of cotton and often come in plain white or coloured material. The Sinhalese prefer striped sarongs, while Muslims prefer checked patterns. This garment no doubt has its origins in the Malay sarong so widely worn in the Indonesian archipelago and Malayan peninsula. The term literally means a 'sheath' or 'covering' (as in sarung kaki 'socks', sarung surat 'envelope' and sarung bantal

'pillowcase'. In fact, the early Sinhala lexicographers always spelled the name of the garment not as sarama but as saroma. Thus we have Benjamin Clough in his *Sinhalese-English Dictionary* (1892) giving saroma as 'native dress made of cloth the ends of which are joined together'.

Interestingly, the sarong was worn by both Malay men and women in the olden days. An early 19th century writer, describing the customs of the Malays of his time, says "The principal and most characteristic, perhaps the original, article of dress



• A old photograph of a Malay man and boy in a traditional sarong.

is the sarong, which is common to both sexes" (*The Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* edited by J.R. Logan, 1849) Even in Sri Lanka, the Malay women of the olden days used to wear sarongs, though understandably these covered much more of the female anatomy than that of the men. Robert Percival in his *Account of Ceylon* (1805) records that Malay women wear the sarow, a large piece of cloth wound round the body and folded low down on the waist. By sarow Percival no doubt meant sarong. In support, we have John Stavorinus who says that the dress of Javanese women consisted of a piece of cotton cloth which they called saron and which was wrapped around the body (*Voyages to the East Indies*, translated from the original Dutch by Samuel Wilcocke, 1798). This was, of course, their indoor dress, and whenever they went out the women wore a loose robe known as badjou or a long scarf known as *selendang*.

But does this mean that local men went about naked from the waist downwards before the

Malays introduced the item here, say 300 years ago? Absolutely not. What the Malays introduced was the sarong whose ends are sewn together and has a tubular appearance. Before this what local men wore was an unstitched waistcloth somewhat like the Indian dhoti that is wrapped around the waist and reaches down to below the knees. Such garments were known locally as kambaya, a colourful cloth worn by the lower classes, somana, a richer cloth worn by the upper classes, and tuppotiya, worn by the aristocrats.

2. Karabu (Ear Ornaments)

Today, ear ornaments are popularly known among the Sinhalese as karabu, which can refer to a range of jewellery for the ear from ear-studs to pendant earrings. These ornaments did not catch on here due to Western influence. Nay, they first came here by way of the Malay world and were possibly introduced by our local Malays. The karabu of the Sinhalese have their origins in the Malay kerabu. In Malay kerabu means 'a flat, round ear-stud, usually of a large stone in a cluster of smaller stones'. An older account gives krabu as 'small earrings of gold sometimes with a diamond set in them' (The Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia, edited by J. R. Logan, 1849). It also applied to pendant earrings. For instance, bell-shaped earrings were known as karabu kudung kudung (Gold Jewellery of the Indonesian Archipelago, Anne Richter and Bruce Carpenter, 2011). What all this suggests is that the Malays of old played a big role in introducing these fancy ornaments when they first caught on among our more fashionable ladies.

This is not to say that ear ornaments were not known among the Sinhalese before the Malays arrived here. They certainly were, but these differed from the types we know now. In the Sigiri graffiti we come across many a damsel adorned with large circular ear-rings that would have turned modern lassies with hoop earrings green with envy. Then there were the kondol, ear-pendants hanging from the lobe of the ear, pullimal, large flower-shaped ear-studs, todur, gold or copper rolls inserted into a large perforation in the lobe of the ear and the eye-catching kooru, a corn-shaped trinket passed through the helix or upper rim of the ear as seen in the photos of Sinhalese women published in the Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon (1907), all of these testifying to the pains the women of old took to beautifying themselves for their men. However, with the growing popularity of the fancier karabu, these other types gradually fell into disuse so that our modern ladies need have only one little piercing per ear, for which they have the Malays to thank for.

3. Vattalappam (Brown Pudding)

Vattalappam, a favourite dessert especially among the Moor community, has Malay origins. Sri Lanka's Muslims are well known for a delicious brown pudding made of palm sugar, coconut milk, and eggs, known as Vattalappam. Nobody rhapsodised about this

lovely dessert better than J. P. De Fonseka who in his Gourmet's Guide to Ceylon published in the Times of Ceylon Christmas Number of 1937 described it as follows eighty years ago: "The Muslim's is a sweet tooth. He has a pudding (for which Allah be praised) called wattilappam, a soft, succulent one of jaggery and eggs and all the spices of the earth, which goes down with a demure sweetness like that of the houris in paradise".

This dessert is today considered a specialty of the Moors, a large community of non-Malay Muslims who claim Arab ancestry, though it has now been



• *Vattalappam, a favourite dessert especially among the Moor community, has Malay origins.*

Image: courtesy writer

commercialised with a few food companies selling it in closed plastic cups. However, there is reason to believe that it has its origins in the Malay world. This dessert is not known in the Arab world or India and must have come from elsewhere. So why not look eastwards whence our Malays came? It is here and nowhere else that we find a similar pudding known as serikaya, described as a steamed custard made of eggs, coconut milk, palm sugar, and pandan, or screwpine leaves.

Yes, it is the Malay serikaya that evolved into our vattalappam. This is supported by the fact that the word vattalappam used by the Moors is a corruption of the Tamil vattil 'cup' + appam 'cake', hence vattilappam or 'cup-cake'. The dessert was also formerly known as vla, evidently a Dutch loan. Louis Nell in his An explanatory list of Dutch words adopted by the Sinhalese published in The Orientalist of 1888-89 notes that the Dutch term vla meaning 'a custard' is applied by the Moormen to a custard which has a vernacular name in vattil-appam. The fact that the Moors called it by a Dutch term at a certain period of time suggests they themselves did not have a word for it till they coined the word vattilappam, which in Tamil means 'cup cake'. Thus the Moors found it necessary to employ the term the Dutch colonialists used to refer to the pudding so deliciously turned out by the Malays they had brought to this country. The Moors would have had no reason to do that had this dessert been their own, and all the evidence tells us we have the Malays to thank for this delightful pudding.

4. Dodol (Black Muscat)

One can hardly find a Sri Lankan who does not love dodol, that oily, dark-brownish muscat made of rice flour, coconut milk, and jaggery, prepared in Sinhalese



• *Kalu dodol. Image: courtesy Pinterest.*

Hambantota. This item, more specifically known as kalu-dodol or 'black dodol' after its dark colour, has its origins in the Malay sweetmeat of the same name. To this day various confections known as dodol are in wide use among the Malays of Indonesia and Malaysia. In fact, this writer has even had durian dodol gifted to him by a Malaysian friend and boy did it taste good!

The Moors of the eastern districts also prepare this sweet, and call it either dodol or lodal, depending on the locality. It was probably introduced here by Malay migrants since there is evidence to show that a group of Malays did settle down in the areas like Kinniya in the Trincomalee district, while to this day there exists a kudi or matrilineal clan in Kalmunai known as Yavuka kudi, implying a Javanese origin. It's also interesting that Hambantota should be famed for its dodol. Hambantota was once a thriving Malay settlement and still has a considerable number of Malays. The place name Hambantota itself seems to have meant 'the harbour of the sampans', sampans being the little boats or skiffs the Malays are supposed to have used to come hither even before the Dutch set their sights on our happy island.

5. Bibikkan (Coconut Cake)

Bibikkan is a rich brownish cake made of rice flour, scraped coconut, sugar, and sweet cumin very popular among the Sinhalese. This cake probably has a Malay origin, since in Indonesia *bikang* refers to a 'rice flour cake' or 'yellow-coloured rice flour cake often with bits of jakfruit'. There is also the Malay *bingka* made from rice flour, coconut milk, eggs, and sugar. We also find in the Philippines, where a language akin to Malay is spoken, a rice cake known as *bebingka* made of flour, eggs, and coconut milk, baked in a pan or pot lined inside with wilted banana leaves. In Baba Malay spoken by the ethnic Chinese *bengka* means

'baked cake'. Thus *benkga pulot* 'baked glutinous rice flour cake', *bengka telur* 'baked egg cake', *bengka ubi* 'baked tapioca cake'.

6. Seenakku (Cup Cake)

In the olden days the Sinhalese loved a cup cake known as *seenakku* which was made by steaming in special moulds a mixture of rice flour, *kitul* jaggery and coconut milk, after which it was served with grated coconut. It was so popular that it was even produced for sale. N. T. Karunatilaka, who reminisces the village life of old, writes in his *Bem gangabada vitti* (1991):

Seenakku vikunana gehenu sinasi bala siṭiti kollo kellantat kello kellantat seenakku aran deti. (The women who sell *seenakku* smile and watch the boys buy for the girls and the girls buy for the girls *seenakku*).



• *Cina Kuwe. Image: courtesy writer.*

This item has a Malay origin and derives from the Malay cake known locally as *Cheena-kuve* literally meaning 'Chinese cakes' (from the Malay *Cheena* 'China' + *kueh* 'cake'). This may suggest that its ultimate origins lie in China.

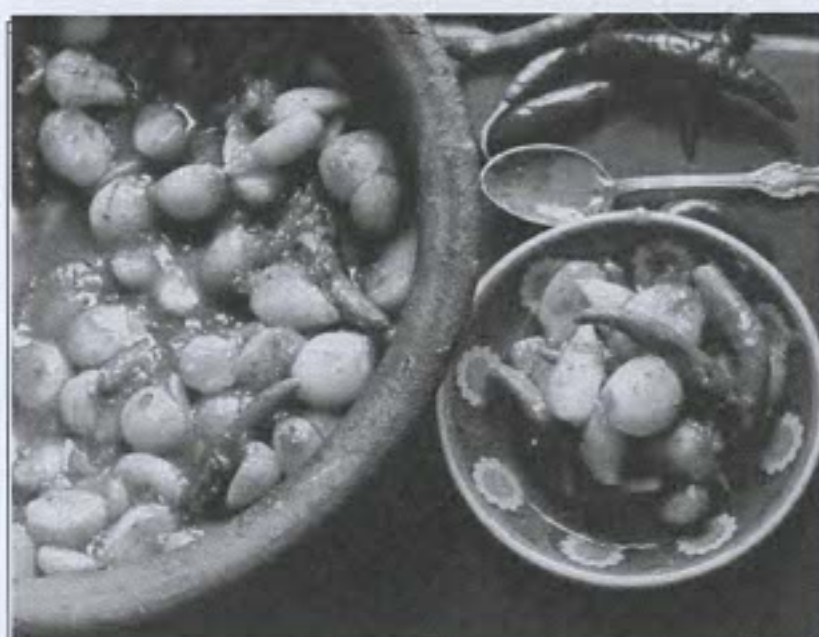
In fact, such cakes are still quite popular among the Peranakans or ethnic Chinese settled in Indonesia and Malaysia, who call it *kueh bakul* and prepare them for the Chinese New Year. This steamed, glutinous rice flour cake often wrapped in banana leaves seems to have originated in China where similar cakes are known as *nin-gou* meaning 'high year'. The Chinese believe that it could be used to seal the lips of the 'kitchen god', a deity installed in some Chinese homes. Myth had it that this kitchen deity would meet up with the Jade Emperor to give his yearly report of the family. But before this, the family would make offerings of this sticky cake to seal his lips so that he would not be able to tell on the family, especially regarding things like quarrels, so that the family would be in the good books of the Jade emperor. Quite a story for our humble *seenakku*.

7. Achcharu (Pickle)

Who doesn't like our sour-sweet pickles that titillate the taste buds like no other. Even our English-speaking households do not disdain to call it by the

vernacular name of achcharu because merely calling it pickles does not do it justice. There is little doubt this is a Malay contribution. The local Malays have a variety of achar, as they call pickles. This includes the famous Malay pickle made of onions, capsicum, dates, ground mustard, chilli, sugar and vinegar. Such pickles have been known for a considerable period among the Malays of the Malayan peninsula and Indonesian archipelago.

Although we Sri Lankan prefer fruits like pineapple, mango, guava, and wild olive for our achcharus, the Malays of South East Asia have shown a preference for vegetables, so much so that achar usually refers to a kind of vegetable pickle commonly served as a condiment to eat with a main meal like nasi goreng or 'fried rice'. In Indonesia, it is made of little chunks of carrot, cucumber, shallots, pineapple and chilli, and marinated in a sour-sweet solution of sugar and vinegar. However, in the olden days, fruits too were widely pickled by the Malays. George Meister, a German landscape architect who travelled to many of the Dutch outposts in Asia, observed in his *Der Orientalische Indianische Kunst und Lust Gärtner* (1692): "One lays these green mangoes in salt and



• *The Sri Lankan Malay pickle a great accompaniment for many a Sri Lankan meal.*
Image: courtesy islandsmile.org

vinegar, like our cucumbers, or cut in small pieces, and makes achar of them".

However, the Sinhalese do have an achcharu that very closely resembles the vegetable pickles made in the Malay world. This is called Sinhala achcharu after their own race and is made with unripe papaya, carrot, green chillies, shallots, mustard seed, vinegar, and salt to taste. It is commonly taken as a relish with rice.

8. Sambol (Relish)

Pol sambol, another Sri Lankan favourite. It needs no gainsaying that we Sri Lankans love to take our rice with pol sambola, that orange dish of grated coconut, onions, chillies, lime juice and salt which we consider 'a rice puller', a condiment that gives relish to our



• *Pol sambol, another Sri Lankan favourite.*
Image: courtesy srilankanfusioncooking.wordpress.com

otherwise tasteless rice. This dish has its origins in the Malay sambal.

In the Malay world, uncooked condiments are known as sambal, the most popular of which is the delicious sambal belachan made of dried shrimp, hot chilli, lime and salt. The type that resembles our pol sambol is also known and is called sambal kelapa though this is usually fried.



• *The rabana is one highlight of any Sinhala avurudu celebration.* Image: courtesy Pinterest

9. Rabana (Large one-sided drum)

The rabana is a large one-sided drum played by women during the Sinhala New Year. It is beaten with the hands often to the accompaniment of songs known as raban pada. This type of drum originated from the Malay rebana. It most closely resembles the rebana ubi which for instance is played after harvests as in the Malaysian state of Kelantan.

Interestingly, the Malay word has derived from the Arabic rabbana meaning 'Our lord' which occurs in Islamic devotional music sung to the accompaniment of drums.

10. Sarungal (Paper kites)

Sri Lankans love kite flying, but little do we realise that this national pastime was introduced to us by the Malays. The Sinhala word for kite, sarungalaya does not have Aryan or Dravidian roots, but is rather connected to the Sundanese dialect of



• *Sri Lankans love kite-flying – Galle Face is proof of that. Image: courtesy wa.lk*

Java where *sarenkol* refers to 'a small tubed bamboo, crooked at every joint, diverging at some angle from the preceding one'. In this Malay dialect, *sarang* also refers to 'cross laths of split bamboo'. It goes without saying that bamboo is the best material for making kite frames and so there you have it!

Louis Nell in his Explanatory List of Portuguese Words adopted by the Sinhalese published

in *The Orientalist* of 1888-89 refers to the *gaviam* (meaning sparrow hawk) applied by the Sinhalese of his time to hawk-shaped paper kites, some of which he says had an Aeolian contrivance in a vibrating thin ribband of bamboo reed stretched to a bow and emitting a strong sound in a high wind. Of relevance to us is his statement that it used to be prepared by the Malay population of the country. To this day, flying paper kites is a very popular form of recreation in the Malay world with festivals and master kite-flyers, with decades of experience behind them. Some of the most spectacular kites the eye could see at such events include the famous crescent-shaped *wau-bulan* or 'moon kite'.

We have much to thank the Malays for: they made some truly wonderful contributions that have enriched our culture for the better.

(This article first appeared in Roar Media, Arts & Life segment on 21 January 2017 and is published with author's permission).



MANNY'S MUSINGS

Some unforgettable characters...

Douglas Senaratne

There are some persons who by their birth, nature and behaviour are unforgettable. Here are some I know. The first was Douglas Senaratne. He was not like the rest of men in so many ways. He was also known to be an inveterate liar. Some of the things he said were so fantastic that they beggared belief. Once he claimed that during a time when he was a sailor he broke his leg. But many didn't believe that story thinking the circumstances false. Another time he claimed to have seen an albatross and a tiger in Fort, the heart of the city. Nobody believed it but he swore it was true. So many of his stories were similar.

But he was a very dear friend of mine. He was, like me, an inveterate reader and cinema goer. He loved talking of literary topics and going to see plays. We talked long hours on these topics over innumerable cups of tea. He never drank alcohol although many thought he was an alcoholic because he walked with a limp and was frequently red-eyed.

He was incredibly strong. No one could wrestle with him - and no one tried. He was also ingenuous. On one occasion while commuting in a

bus, a pickpocket had tried to take his wallet. When Douglas felt it he grabbed the hand. The man tried to wriggle out but the grip of Douglas was so firm that he could not. Douglas then held on to it and told the driver to drive straight to the nearest police station.

Some thought he was stingy. But on one occasion, one memorable morning, he took the entire office staff to a five-star hotel and bought them breakfast of each one's choice.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Manny Candappa wrote this little piece on receiving my request for contributions after the recent computer debacle. He could not send it to me immediately as he had to go to hospital for treatment on Friday 30 June. Before doing so he insisted on his daughter to remind him to send the article to me when he got back from hospital later that night. He never got back. He passed away in hospital early Saturday morning of 1 July. He's done a whole series on **Some Unforgettable Characters** and I hope to publish them from time to time.*

Manny has been a member of the CSA since 2010 and a regular contributor to the journal for as many years.

Boys, bikes and other things

When I was young I used to pray for a bike, then I realised that God doesn't work that way, so I stole a bike and prayed for forgiveness

What did the gangster's son tell his dad when he failed his examination? "Dad, they questioned me for 3 hours, but I told them nothing!!!"

Farewell Manny, kind spirit of the inky way

— an appreciation BY GASTON DE ROSAYRO

With the death of Manny (E. C. T.) Candappa, last week in Melbourne the media mourned one of its most eminent and proficient personages who wielded a pen as newspaperman, author, poet, playwright and broadcaster for more than six and a half decades.

Manny, full moniker, Emmanuel Christopher Thomas Candappa survived three transitional technological generations in the changing newspaper era with admirable aplomb and equanimity.

Following nearly a half century stretch at Lake House where he cut his teeth and rose to be one of its most prolific and popular scribes in what is considered by many as the Homeric ages of local journalism, he migrated to Australia in 1987 with his wife Yvonne and four children. He became a household name as a writer and editor in some of the prestigious newspapers in Melbourne. His was an exceptional saga of a committed newsman who succeeded in his craft both in the land of his birth as well as in the country of his adoption.

Manny was a veteran when I joined Lake House as a greenhorn and was always supportive with a kind word to young scribblers. In truth, he was a journalist extraordinaire, who became a comrade who stood head and shoulders above us all.

We his colleagues considered Manny a magnificent human being, a great family man, a consummate professional and a journalist par excellence. You couldn't meet a more warm-hearted, unassuming man in a fraternity that was peopled by a bunch of unruly, inquisitive, rebellious and strong-willed professionals imbued with their notorious craftsmen's testiness and egotism. Amid these wild and rambunctious elements, Manny's charisma shone out in a packed newsroom long before you were introduced.

He had a beaming, expansive personality as well as a sharp mind and a facility for expression. And Manny did so with grace and charm, combined with a quick wit and unfailing humour. Yet with all his inherent benevolence, Manny was often at the centre of office pranks during lulls in deadlines. His impish streak with fellow conspirators included bogus phone calls to colleagues in heavily accented watchmen's voices, summoning them to the reception. The victims returned to the editorial with flushed faces while Manny and the perpetrators pretended to be innocently bashing away at the much-abused typewriters.

Manny enjoyed his tipple moderately and was a splendid companion to enjoy a chat with while raising a friendly glass or three. These are the sessions I will miss most — his stories, his incisive wit that could reduce me to tears of mirth, great tales,

brilliant company and his kindness. Manny's advice and wise counsel have served me well on countless occasions and I will miss him hugely. He was always interested in work and family and was quick to offer big-brotherly advice when warranted most. For

instance he took time despite his debilitating illness to commiserate with me following the recent death of my wife, Thelma, who was also a former colleague. Here is an excerpt of a condolence message he mailed to me:

"My very dear friend and confrere. The news which reached me a few days ago saddened me greatly. It was the suddenness of her passing that shocked me. My heartfelt condolences to you all and the rest of the family on both sides. I shall miss Thelma. Every time I phoned you it was she who answered and was always in a hurry to pass the phone to you. And I always assured her I wished to speak to her as well. I can never forget what a generous and gracious hostess she was, what a devout Catholic she was, how delighted she was when Dishan became a priest.

"We have already remembered her at a Mass. Now for a very brief bit of elderly brotherly advice. You know how dearly your welfare and particularly your health mattered to Thelma. Do please honour her memory — and for the sake of us your beloved friends — look after yourself and take recourse in your Faith, and not in the weed and bottle. Please keep in touch. Yours as ever, Manitou."

Missives such as this were typical Manny, signing off as Manitou with the nickname I had conferred on him ages ago. For the record Manitou is the great spirit of the North American Indians. Manny was also the master of pun and in another instance signed off his letter with the name of his wife. Love from Yvonne and Manny-too.

All who really knew Manny loved him just for being himself. In an industry of larger than life characters, Manny stood out as one of the giants, a true legend who was an inspiration to generations of journalists. Ink ran through his veins, he was passionate about writing, the welfare of his family, his friends, his fellow man and to his God. In all he was a generous spirit, a kind and compassionate man.

So here's to you Manny, cherished friend, comrade and colleague. You left a legacy and



reputation as an exceptional professional and human being which has been a hard act to follow.

His funeral was preceded by a Mass at St John Vianney's Church on July 15 in Melbourne. Manny's wife Yvonne preceded him in death. We offer our heartfelt condolences to his children Orion, Chrismarie, Fr. Dishan and Nirmalene (Nimmi) and to his only sister, Prudence.

(This article was also published in The Sunday Times and The Island newspapers in Sri Lanka on 15 July 2017).

EULOGY

A daughter's loving tribute to her "Dadda"

They say that daughters look for in a husband, someone similar to their father. At Dad's 75th birthday celebrations, I remember telling him no wonder I didn't marry – for to find someone like him is so difficult and so rare.

Comments from his friends at his passing indicate this sentiment was more than just a typical familial bias. Before I go in to a combined eulogy of our experience of Manny as father, I quote a few comments from his journalistic colleagues and friends: "We his colleagues considered Manny a magnificent human being, a journalist par excellence. You couldn't meet a more warm-hearted, unassuming man..."

Manny's charisma shone out in a packed newsroom long before you were introduced. He had a beaming, expansive personality as well as a sharp mind and a facility for expression. And Manny did so with grace and charm, combined with a quick wit and unfailing humour. He was an exceptional professional and human being, which has been a hard act to follow."

Another refers to him as a "man above men"; another, "in one word Manny was integrity": "Manny stood out as one of the giants, a true legend who was an inspiration to generations of journalists. Ink ran through his veins, he was passionate about writing, the welfare of his family, his friends, his fellow man and his God. In all he was a generous spirit, a kind and compassionate man. A gentleman to his fingertips, an affectionate, charming, gracious, illustrious man."

Hearing some of these words, brings me much joy but also some sorrow. As children, we can sometime shrink a parent's stature in to one based on daily grind or children's demands. We are sometimes too close to appreciate fully the grandeur of a person. Dad was a well-known journalist in his time, a household name in Sri Lanka, and a familiar name among Catholics in Australia. Only a year ago, I was at a party where one guest was disbelieving that I was actually the daughter of the great "ECT", Dad's initials and pen name. A high profile military man in Sri Lanka is reputed to have said he doesn't start

his day before reading "Candappa's column". Dad's journalist colleagues can state in detail the wide work Dad was involved in, including being a political journalist and photographer, having his own editorial column, being sent on a project to England at the age of 24, and being an editor of a Catholic magazine. But Dad's multi-talented nature and enthusiasm to try his hand at anything saw him diversifying, from writing several books, including one novel on the assassination of Sri Lanka's Prime Minister SWRD Bandaranaike, to producing plays, being on radio, and becoming a prolific writer of Catholic poetry. He has even recorded a CD and was interviewed recently on TV on his Faith.

As kids we were happily oblivious of this fame of Dad's, and Dad was never one to boast. As the years went on and we progressed in to adulthood, and we built a relationship on a mutual and deep friendship, I gradually started seeing the beauty of the soul of Manny. Dad, or Dadda as we often called him, I felt came to the fore as a parent after the death of my mum Yvonne. Although himself wracked by grief, he stoically took on the role of single parent, doing what needed to be done to care for us. As the youngest, I in particular benefitted from his counsel, his incredible support and pride in his children, and his intrinsic trust in God that helped us through many a struggle.

As others outside the family experienced, Dad was an amazing source of inspiration to his children, growing up and during adult life. During periods of diminished health, experiencing pain from foot ulcers that doctors described as unbearable, Dad recorded an album of some of his favourite songs as a keepsake for his grandchildren. Sometimes being supported by friends on each side he would wait for the pain to abate before continuing singing. As a boy, Dad was surrounded by music and singing, and this love of music continued through his life, sharing his love for singing particularly with his daughters and culminating in this CD. My older sister even recorded a duet with him, which will be played during the refreshments later on.

Dad inspired us also through his supreme optimism. He rarely if ever sulked or complained about anything. He had an infuriating habit of talking down any negativity, encouraging those around him to focus on the positives. During the last five years of his life, dad spent 3,120 hours doing dialysis. Even when his body was struggling to cope with the physical demands of this ritual, he never once complained or felt sorry for himself - he looked at it as an investment, with the return being life. His attitude to dealing with life's big and small challenges with a smile was inspiring to all of us.

As children we have inherited much of this marvellous quality to look on the bright side of life.

Dad had a nature about him that drew affection and respect from a wide range of people. I

can walk in to a bakery Manny frequented nearly 10 years prior and I'd still be asked how Dad is, such was his effect on people. Dad loved rich conversation, reading and writing, he loved people, and above all, he loved God. Dad would partake in conversation and show the same interest, sincerity and enthusiasm irrespective of the person. We have lost count of the number of friends and acquaintances who have said how much they enjoyed talking to Manny, the inspiration they gained from his faith and humility, the admiration they had for his intellect, his wide knowledge in literature, politics and history, and his near photographic memory.

Adding to the ability for conversation, Dad had an amazing ability to listen well. Perhaps because of his journalistic background, Dad would quietly hear what we'd say, until the end, then ask several questions before providing a well-considered opinion or advice. He somehow seemed to make his comments relevant to the person he was talking to, whether the person at the bakery, the local Bishop, or his grandchild. From his carers, to the nurses at dialysis, to his journalist friends, we have been receiving comments on how good it was to listen to Dad talk. His incredible knowledge in literature that held me in awe of him, his keen desire always to learn and learn more, his clear and wide grasp of politics and history, so much so that he would inform my sister of what's happening in politics in Canada where she lives, his near-photographic memory, and his fair approach to all issues made him an asset at all dinner parties, with him being described as the life of the party at a very recent outing. He would very rarely judge, so people often felt comfortable divulging their problems and seeking a consoling shoulder.

Dad was not all serious though, he had a quick wit, loving to tell jokes, stories and puns, always with an impish smile, looking most pleased when he got the desired laughter. One colleague at work, after yet another dry joke by Dad, had admonished nearby colleagues, "don't laugh you are only encouraging him!" At least two of his grandkids have absorbed this inclination for joke telling.

Dad's five grandchildren were drawn to him, remembering his loving nature, arriving at Dad's house with a familiar "where's Grandpa". One grandchild states "Grandpa gave me the best hugs. They were warm and 'huggly' and always made me feel safe". Another commented on the games Dad played with them, remembering that "Grandpa was very generous. He had a game where he gave me a big bag of coins and I could take as much money as I could collect with my hands". Another grandchild initiated an email correspondence with her Grandpa, telling him what was going on her life, listening to his response and advice. Dad gave responding to these emails the highest priority, feeling quite distressed that he was not able to answer her last one. She says

"Grandpa was an incredibly inspirational role model to all his grandchildren. He was supportive of all our dreams and taught us that we could achieve our aspirations in life if we worked hard and put our faith in God. He was an amazing storyteller and would tell us stories that would make our imagination run wild. When we were down, his smile never failed to lift our mood and he always gave the best hugs. Although I wish that I was able to see him one last time before he left us, I will cherish the moments we had together for the rest of my life. Grandpa will always have a special place in my heart and I will miss him dearly. However, I know that he will be looking after us from above."

Another says, "I cannot put into words all the memories grandpa has left me with. I can remember how when I was younger he would always tell me jokes and riddles that would make me laugh without end. I also remember how I would hold his hand and guide him up and down stairs when we went on walks together, with an 'upstep Grandpa' and a 'downstep Grandpa'. His love of writing is something that he has passed onto me and for that I will always be grateful. In the poignant words of an unknown author, 'a life that touches others goes on forever.'"

Dad was a protective man: being up to date with his children's movement, travelling internationally to be with my sister for each of last two births in place of my mum. This protective nature was infuriating though for the young me, and after I had expressed my displeasure that he would ring frequently to see where I was when had gone out for the evening, he found an innovative way of checking if I was ok. He would call, asking me to bring a loaf of bread or milk... and then at the end of the conversation say, "how far are you from home anyway"!

I struggled writing this eulogy. I have inherited from my Dad a desire and skill for writing but for this, I stared at a blank page for quite some time. How do we capture our deep love for someone in a few minutes? However, one comforting thought a friend presented to me was that so many of these beautiful qualities of Dad are seen through his children and grandchildren, that he never really dies but lives on in us. That in our belief in the afterlife, we still continue our relationship with Manny, only now at another level. That my close friendship that I had developed during the time I was looking after him does not disappear but expands.

It is unusual for one to have two wonderful parents but we were blessed as such. Manny shared a deep and mutual love of his family and friends. I thank God for the blessing of this wonderful man that we loved so much, and pray for consolation during this time of intense grief. We have been left with a painful void, and we truly appreciate your support and kind words during this time.

– NIRMALENE (Nimmi) CANDAPPA

Important notice to our contributors

The Ceylankan is a quarterly publication that is looked forward to both here in Australia and worldwide. The Editor is constantly on the lookout for literary contributions from our members and others. Contributions are given careful consideration with a view to publication when received.

While original, previously unpublished articles are preferred, submissions relating to the culture, history and heritage of Ceylon/Sri Lanka in keeping with the ideals of the CSA and are of a non-racial, non-political, non-religious and non-controversial nature are always welcome too.

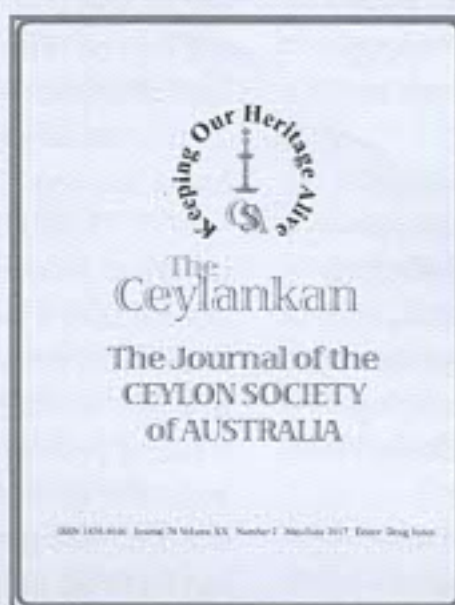
New writers with a passion for Sri Lankan culture and heritage are welcome. You don't have to be a professional writer – even contributions from someone who has not previously put pen to paper will equally receive our careful attention.

Who knows, an enormous treasure of hidden literary talent with recollections of life in the Motherland – the people, the places events and other memories that you can share, from whatever era, pre- Colonial, post-Colonial to modern. Your fascinating story waiting to be written may be very story that our worldwide readership is waiting to enjoy.

To facilitate design/layout, submit your articles with very little or no formatting as possible – no indents at the start of paragraphs and no double spacing between lines; no space after full stops. Always use percent or per cent but never %. Where applicable, contributors are also asked to annotate bibliographical references, both for copyright purposes and to assist with further research by other members. Photographs to accompany your article, in colour or monotone, are welcome. They must be of a high resolution and in JPEG format.

While every effort will be made to print material that is relevant and correct, we cannot take responsibility for errors. If any errors of fact are found, the Editor would appreciate if any such inaccuracies be brought to his attention as early as possible.

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Synopsis of Meeting

Colombo Chapter
held on 23rd June 2017

Prehistoric hunter-gatherers in Transition: a case in Sri Lanka

A recent archaeological project titled 'Hunters in Transition' carried out in the mountainous hinterland in Sri Lanka has revealed evidence showing a techno-cultural transformation of the traditional hunter-gatherers inhabited in that areas which took place in the mid-Holocene period. Intensification of wild plant exploitation and a leap towards symbolism makes this transformative dynamism more explicit in the artifacts excavated in four distinct dry tropical cave habitations of the hunter-gatherers. Scientific dates suggest that this event was set in motion in the period between 8000 and 5500 cal. BP.

An assemblage of charred seeds and nuts excavated from Lunugalge (lit. salt cave) in the village Illukkumbura in the Ratnapura District has disclosed 25 varieties of floral species. 2 out of 25 has been identified as edible wild forms viz. *Oriza* sp. and *Paspalum* sp. rest of the samples consists of wild banana (*Musa* sp.), wild berry (*Ziziphus* sp.), wild dates (*Phoenix* sp.), wild mustard (*Brassica* sp.) and a couple of seeds like *Embalia* ribes and *Toddalia asiatica* which are currently being used in indigenous medicine in Sri Lanka. The other cave excavated was Alugalge, which has also yielded charred seeds from its prehistoric levels.

Intensification of floral resource exploitation both qualitatively and quantitatively was an adaptive response to the climatic regime of the Holocene. It consisted of several changing episodes from wet to dry viz. (a) > 10,000 BP (very dry); (b) 6,200 BP (dramatically wet); (c) 5,000 BP (dry); (d) 3,600 BP (dry). The wet phases reflect by the increased utilization of land snails (*Acavus* sp. *Oligospeira* sp) in the hunter-gatherer groups as suggested by the abundance of shells of such species recovered from the excavations. According to the presence and absence of the land snail shells in the excavated sites, it can be concluded that a dry climate prevailed in the period between 6270 and 6085 cal BP, and from 5455 to 3355 cal BP was a relatively moist period.

Symbolic artifacts found in the material repertoire of Mesolithic hunter-gatherer sites in Sri Lanka, are not well representative in comparison with other material objects.



• Prof. Raj Somadeva

However, the four caves excavated have yielded artifacts that suggests that a considerable energy has been invested upon producing what seems to be non-utilitarian objects (hence their interpretation as symbolical). The excavation at Alugalge in Illukkumbura has revealed 4 beads made out of animal bones and teeth. The bead of animal tooth (level III) shows a comparatively high skill of craftsmanship: its cylindrical shape has been enhanced by two edges to obtain a collar like appearance. The shaping of the tooth required hard labor and curation. The most sophisticated bead recovered is an altered Shark tooth. Its nutritive groove was enhanced through a perforation. The natural color variation between the crown and the roots in the tooth together with the natural symmetry most probably created an aesthetic appeal to the bead.

– Professor Raj Somadeva

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 Thiru Arumugam on (02) 8850 4798 (email thiru_aru@gmail.com) or Melbourne Chapter Convenor Hemal Gurusinghe (Mob) 0427 725 740 (email: henguru@hotmail.com.) or Colombo Chapter Secretary M.D.(Tony) Saldin 22936402 (email: saldin@sltnet.lk). And they will be delighted to give you details of forthcoming meetings.

Spirit of Man

It is easy—terribly easy—to shake a man's faith in himself. To take advantage of that is to break a man's spirit is devil's work.

We have no more right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it.

(George Bernard Shaw - *Candida* Act 1, 1898)

Books & other publications for Sale

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

Changed your address lately?

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

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

OUR LIBRARY

Books from the CSA library are available for borrowing by members. Some of these books have been donated by members and friends out of their goodwill and kindness, while some others are donated by authors who have held book launches to promote their books at CSA general meetings. While a complete list of the books in the library will be published from time to time, please note that only new additions will be listed on a regular basis as when books are received.

CSA Membership subscriptions for 2017 -2018

Now that we are all well into 2017 and well nigh approaching 2018 we would like to urge all Members who have not yet paid their Membership Subscriptions to please arrange payment, together with any arrears where applicable. If you are unsure about the current status of your membership Subscriptions, please contact our Treasurer Deepak Pritamdas on 0434 860 188 or email Deepak on deepakpsl@yahoo.com. Payment methods are as follows: Australian dollar cheques are to be drawn in favour of the Ceylon Society of Australia or pay by Bank Transfer to the CSA Bank Account at the Commonwealth Bank: BSB 062308 Account No.10038725 and include your name as remitter.

For payments from overseas, if you have difficulty in sending payment in Australian dollars, you could please send a bank draft or bank transfer in US dollars or Pounds Sterling. 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 total and convert to US dollars by multiplying by 0.75 or by sending by Pounds Sterling, multiply by 0.60. These multipliers reflect the current rates of exchange used by our bank. For overseas bank transfers our Commonwealth Bank Swift Code is: CTBAAU2S.

Please post cheques to Deepak Pritamdas, P O Box 489, Blacktown NSW 2148 Australia. Email: deepakpsl@yahoo.com.

Primal passion

The natural man has two primal passions, to get and beget.

(Sir William Osler - Science and Immortality 1904)



CSA General Meetings

Sydney 27 August 2017

The Third General Meeting of the Ceylon Society of Australia for 2017 will take place on Sunday, 27th August 2017 commencing at 6.30 pm at the Pennant Hills Community Centre, Ramsay Road, Pennant Hills, NSW 2120. Ramsay Road is off Yarrara Road and the Community Centre is opposite the Pennant Hills Railway Station. The entrance to the building is from the car park at the back of the building. Members and their Guests are welcome.



The guest speaker is **Rod Ferdinands** who will speak on 'THE CEYLON ELEPHANT'

Rod Ferdinands is an environmental and freshwater management consultant who has had extensive research and consultancy experience internationally and in Australia. An old boy of St. Joseph's College and St. Peter's College, Colombo, he obtained his Bachelor's Degree (Honours) in Zoology with additional majors in Biochemistry and Human Physiology at the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

In his postgraduate studies, a Master's degree followed in Environmental Pollution Science at Brunel University, United Kingdom, then a Graduate Diploma in Aquatic Studies at the Water Studies Centre, Monash University, Melbourne and finally a PhD at the Water Studies Centre, Monash University. Rod represented Australia in the 1998 UNESCO "Man and the Biosphere" Ecohydrology conferences and workshops held in Poland, Austria, Hungary, Croatia and Italy.

He was involved in post-doctoral work for 12 years in rural and outback Australia

managing and monitoring water, soil, feral animals, noxious weeds and vast tracks of land, forest and water/groundwater bodies in the Great Artesian Basin, Lake Eyre and the Murray-Darling catchments. In 2013 he was Technical Water Quality Advisor for Australian Volunteers for the International Development program at the National Centre for Environmental Health & Water Supply in Vientiane, Laos.

Synopsis: The talk will focus on the following areas:

- Origin and evolution of elephants
- Extant elephant species and varieties, their differences and zoogeography
- Interesting aspects of the biology and lifestyle of the Ceylon Elephant
- Recent history of the Ceylon Elephant
- Conflict between the Ceylon Elephant and humans; what can and is being done to redress this
- Future of the Ceylon Elephant

3. Social: After a brief discussion period, the usual Social will be the next item on the Agenda.

Those who are able to, please bring a plate of finger food. Kindly avoid cakes with icing as the general preferences are for plain cakes, sandwiches and savoury pastries.

Those unable to bring a plate are kindly requested to make a donation to the CSA to help defray meeting costs.

Sunimal Fernando
Hony. Secretary, CSA
4th July, 201

MORE DEFINITIONS

MARRIAGE: It's an agreement wherein a man loses his bachelors degree and a woman gains her masters

TEARS: The hydraulic force by which masculine will power is defeated by feminine water-power!

CLASSIC: A book which people praise, but never read.

SMILE:
A curve that can set a lot of things straight!

OFFICE: A place where you can relax after your strenuous home life.

DOCTOR: A person who kills your ills by pills, and kills you by his bills!



Sir Charles Forbes

"He was one of the very few officers of Britain's forces who saw active duty in both World Wars, spanning a period of more than 30 years. On retirement, Sir Charles Forbes settled in Wentworth, Surrey, where he led a leisurely life pursuing his interest in golf. He attended the funeral of King George VI and was also invited to the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II which he attended. He was twice married, first to Agnes Millicent Ewen of Potters Bar in 1909 by whom he had a son and a daughter. Six years after her death in 1915, he married Marie Louise Berndsten of Stockholm by whom he had a daughter.

Sir Charles Forbes died at Queen Alexandra Military Hospital on 28 August 1960 at the age of 80 years."



"A total of eleven medals representing the valour and dedication of Sir Charles, who served his king and country without fear or favour, is now about to move on from the family. The lot of medals was auctioned by Dix Noonan and Webb Auctioneers of London on 19 July 2017."

Photos from and text by Hugh Karunanayake (Full story on page 20)