



The Ceylankam

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The Ceylon Society of Australia

PRESIDENT

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

VICE-PRESIDENT

Dr Srilal Fernando

SECRETARY

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

TREASURER & PUBLIC OFFICER

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

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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

PUBLICATIONS

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

EDITOR/LIBRARIAN

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

SOCIAL CONVENOR

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

LIFE MEMBER

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

EX-OFFICIO

Dr Robert Sourjah Int. + 61 2 9622 2469 robertsourjah@yahoo.com	Pauline Gunewardene Mobile 419 447 665 Int. 61 2 9736 3987 paulineg@ozemail.com.au
Srikantha Nadarajah Int. + 61 2 9980 1701 vsnada@bigpond.com.au	Leslie Perera Int. + 61 2 9498 3497

MELBOURNE CHAPTER CONVENOR

Hemal Gurusinghe
Mobile 0427 725 740
hemguru@hotmail.com

COLOMBO CHAPTER

Convenor/Local President
Deshamanya Tissa Devendra
+9411 2501 489 email: tdevendra@eureka.lk
Vice-President
Mohan Rajasingham
+9411 258 6350/ 0722 234644
email: mohanandranee@gmail.com
Local Hon. Secretary
M.D.(Tony) Saldin
+9411 2936402 (Off.) +9411 2931315 (Res.)
Fax: 9411 2936377 Mobile: +94 777 363366
email: saldincan@sltnet.lk
Local Hon. Treasurer
M. Asoka T. de Silva
Int. 011 282 2933 Mob. +94 775097517
email: matdes@sltnet.lk
Committee Members
Srilal Perera
077 5743785 email: srilalp@mail.com
Daya Wickramatunga
+9411 2786783/0773 174164
email: dashanwick@gmail.com

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From the Editor

Well, well, well, It happened again! For a second time. My computer breakdown this time was devastating, debilitating and devilishly destructive. Whatever kind of demon took possession, it destroyed everything I had created through the many, many years. When I turned my machine on, all I received was an empty black screen, like a smack in the face. It was devastating! Everything I had burnt the midnight oil on, had literally been devoured. All my software programs – MS Office, Adobe InDesign, Photoshop Elements, my emails, articles awaiting publication, all fonts, some that I had used to design our logos; all erased. The backups I'd made were not there to back me up - lost forever. Now I know what it is to be a cripple; a digital cripple, that is.

As I tried to grope out of the dire depths, thank God, I had help. Friends with computer know-how, community support from various providers and others whose help I sought came to my aid in various ways. Earlier on, I had absolutely no hope in hell. Gradually, things started looking up. I had to get new software programs, I was told, if I was to proceed any further. That done by about mid-April, I had to reconstruct the broken building, foundations and all. I accidentally consulted a highly qualified digital expert in my neighbourhood who put things back for me, some from my backup files he was able to dig out that others could not, taking advantage of the new programs I had purchased and downloaded. By this time the May 2017 issue deadline had gone down the gurgler.

The most consoling thing was that I had unquestioned support of the CSA. In my desperate search for articles, that ever-obliging pair President Thiru Arumugam and Hugh Karunanayake and others re-sent all the articles that had been submitted earlier by them and other contributors within deadline. Then

they both arranged for more articles and fillers and I have also had unequivocal assurance of literary contributions from our Colombo Chapter. With the literary talent abundant in Colombo, I am consoled that the filling up the 36 pages of J79 (August 2017 issue) will be, colloquially speaking, easy peasy. Not even mentioned our Melbourne Chapter yet. With the kind of talent that Melbourne has, I have no doubt that we will receive an avalanche of contributions from our Chapter in the South.

In fact, this issue can boast an excellent contribution from the CSA Vice-President Dr Srilal Fernando of the Melbourne Chapter, who has recalled to us all a world famous teacher J.P. de Fonseka who was well-known to the intellectuals of the world in his time. Anyone who was a friend of the great G.K. Chesterton has to be someone worth knowing about.

So starting with that, let me point you to our 'Happenings' column on page 4 of this issue. This is the first time, I believe, that a CSA member has been bestowed in Sri Lanka, with a prestigious National Deshamanya title. We have had Queen's Honours bestowed on CSA members in Australia (Harry de Sayrah (OAM) comes to mind), but we salute Tissa Devendra as the first CSA member to be honoured by Sri Lanka for his services to his nation.

Articles abound in our late, depleted journal, but give it a read – there's a story about a Ceylonese on board the First Fleet to Australia; a 'Colombo Sahib' ahem! Room 37 at Queen's Hotel; intriguing; and rare ethnic names as well as the usual features - Meals Ammi Made, a Synopsis and other information about CSA activities.

And sadly, heartfelt Vales to CSA member Azad Raheem and Vama Vamadevan. Vama was a founder member and first Treasurer of the CSA. A loving husband, dear father, a most generous contributor to The Ceylankan and one of Sri Lanka's very distinguished DIGs was Vama.

Rest in peace gentlemen!

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.

National honour for Tissa Devendra



Local President of the CSA's Colombo Chapter Tissa Devendra has been awarded the highest national (civilian) honour and the title of Deshamanya for distinguished service to the nation. The honour was bestowed by Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena in Colombo recently.

Deshamanya Tissa graduated in English and French from the University of Ceylon where he played an active role as President of the Dramatic Society (DramSoc) in the era of Professor Lyn Ludowyk.

He joined the Public Service as a District Land Officer and served in many Districts. He rose to become Government Agent (Chief Administrative Officer) of Matara, Trincomalee and Jaffna Districts. His last administrative posting was as Secretary of the Ministry of Hospitals and Family Health.

After retirement he was selected as National Expert in both the F.A.O and U.N.D.P. TD (as he is affectionately known) was appointed Chairman of the Public Service Commission and later Chairman of the National Salaries Commission.

TD is a well recognised writer on historical, cultural, administrative and miscellaneous topics. His books *Tales from the Provinces*, *On Horseshoe Street*, *Quest for Shangri La*, *A Fiery Finale* and two children's books *Princes*, *Peasants* and *Clever Beasts* have been well received. He has headed the Judges' Panels of the Gratiaen Prize 2013 and the Fairway Literary Award 2017. He is Founder President of the Colombo University Alumni Association, and President of the Ceylon Society of Australia, Colombo Chapter.

TD enjoys reading a wide variety of books – and writing. He lives in Colombo with his wife Indrani, surrounded by their children and three grandchildren.



The living crafts using traditional methods

Pottery is a living craft that permeates life in Sri Lanka. It has come to represent the fundamentals of rural life – small votive lamps for worship, graceful water jugs and versatile cooking vessels.

Several government-sponsored pottery centres have introduced new equipment and ideas to the craft. Yet throughout the island, there are scores of potters' villages where craftsmen still employ the traditional methods. Most of the pottery is thrown on low wheels that the potter keeps turning. A lump of clay is placed on the wheel and the potter forms a vessel from the spinning mass. The work consists largely of simple undecorated pieces, but there is a growing demand for the supply of decorated pottery as well.

Decoration is usually done by incising patterns or stamping on a wooden die while the clay is still wet. Sometime a glaze is painted on the spinning pot prior to baking. Most pots are fired in a primitive kiln built of brick or stone and covered with a vault with a wattle and daub roof. Small holes at the top of the kiln act as flues while the opening at the base allows firewood to be inserted. After baking, the kiln is dismantled to reveal the baked pottery. Some pottery might then receive further decoration: some incised patterns might be filled with a contrasting clay, while other pieces might be painted. But most of the

of the pottery is left with its newly baked beauty intact.

Sri Lanka has a variety of handicrafts that fall under the broad category of textiles – batik, weaving, embroidery and lace.

Batik is one of the most visible of Sri Lankan crafts. Galleries and factories line their major highways while every tourist destination and hotel offers batik clothing for sale. Batiks are also hung as works of art. They are available from single-colour designs to intricate multicoloured masterpieces.

Batiks are created through a process of waxing and dyeing. A pattern is drawn on a plain piece of material, then molten wax is applied to those areas of the cloth that are *not* to be dyed. This is done by pouring it in fine lines through a tiny funnel-like device, stamping with a dye or painting with a brush. After waxing the material is dyed with the desired colour. The process is repeated until the artist achieves the desired colour combinations. Originally, only one artist created the entire batik from start to finish. Today in assembly-line factories, young women carry out each step in the process separately. The finished product is still handmade, but it passes through many hands on the way to completion.

(Reproduced from A Legacy of fine craftsmanship: Insight Guide to Sri Lanka).

Was there a Ceylonese in the First Fleet?

by Thiru Arumugam

Introduction

Wickrema Weerasooria studied at Royal College and graduated with a First Class Honours degree in Law from the University of Ceylon. In 1971 he obtained a PhD from the London School of Economics and from 1972 to 1977 he lectured at Monash University, Melbourne. He returned to Australia in 1986 as High Commissioner for Sri Lanka. In 1988 he published a 368 page book titled *Links between Sri Lanka & Australia*.

On page 219 of his book, Weerasooria states that Al Grassby, a former Labour Minister for Immigration, has stated in his book *The Tyranny of Prejudice* that there was a Ceylonese in the First Fleet.

Albert Jamie Grassby (1926-2005) was appointed in 1972 as Minister for Immigration in the Whitlam Labour government and he made several reforms in immigration policy and is referred to as the founder of 'multi-culturalism'. He was responsible for dismantling the White Australia policy and he promoted immigration from non-English speaking countries. What he wrote in page 54 of his book *The Tyranny of Prejudice* (AE Press, 1984) was: "One of the typical examples is the constant reference to the First Fleet bringing 1000 Englishmen to settle in Australia. This is the beginning of the homogeneous myth. In fact, in the First Fleet, as I have mentioned, there were twelve nationalities and they included, of course, Englishmen, people from other parts of the United Kingdom, and also people from Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Poland, Ceylon, and West Indian blacks among seamen, soldiers and prisoners."

The search for the elusive Ceylonese in the First Fleet was on ...

The situation in UK in the late 18th century

There was considerable lawlessness in the UK in the late 18th century. To try and control this, long periods of imprisonment were imposed for relatively minor offences e.g. seven years imprisonment for stealing a lace handkerchief. As a result, the prisons were overcrowded and some prisoners were accommodated in floating hulks in harbours. The solution was to send off some of these convicts to America where they were sold for twenty pounds each as indentured servants. About 50,000 convicts were sent off in this way, but this came to an end in 1784 when the newly independent United States refused to accept any more convicts. An alternative destination had to be found and a few convicts were sent to West Africa, but this was a total failure as almost all of them died within a few months due to malaria and other tropical diseases. Finally, it was decided to send convicts to the newly discovered country of Australia.

The settlement was established in Botany Bay, Australia, about 13 km south of the centre of present day Sydney and now the site of the Sydney Airport runways. In 1770, James Cook's first landing on the continent of Australia in HMS Endeavour was in Botany Bay. He described the place as 'capacious, safe and commodious'. In August 1786, Lord Sydney asked the British Treasury to arrange for shipping to take 750 convicts to Botany Bay. Captain Arthur Phillip (see Fig 1) was appointed to lead the expedition and become the Governor of the new colony. The First Fleet was beginning to take shape.



• Fig. 1: Captain Arthur Phillip.

The composition of the First Fleet

The eleven ships of the First Fleet are listed below. The number of crew members is estimated because the names of about 100 crew members are not available.

Two Naval Escorts:

HMS Sirius: The flagship of the fleet with Captain Arthur Phillip on board. 511 tons. 71 marines on board. (See Fig 2)

HMS Supply: Naval escort. 175 tons. 42 marines on board.

Three Storeships carrying supplies required for establishing the new colony:

Borrowdale: 272 tons, 20 crew.

Fishburn: 378 tons, 30 crew.

Golden Grove: 331 tons, 20 crew.

Six Transporters carrying convicts:

Alexander: 452 tons. 40 crew.

Charlotte: 345 tons. 30 crew.

Friendship: 278 tons. 20 crew.

Lady Penrhyn: 338 tons. 32 crew.

Prince of Wales: 333 tons. 25 crew. Transported female convicts.

Scarborough: 418 tons. 35 crew.

The Voyage of the First Fleet

The fleet set sail from Portsmouth Harbour on the first leg of its historic journey on 13 May 1787. The first port of call was Tenerife, in the Canary Islands, which they reached on 03 June 1787 after 21 days sailing. A convoy can only travel as fast as the slowest ship, which was the *Lady Penrhyn*, and Captain Phillip made sure that the ships kept together. In Tenerife they took on supplies of fresh water, vegetables, fruits and other supplies. These were required because Scurvy was a limiting factor in long distance sea journeys and was caused by lack of Vitamin C.



• Fig. 2: HMS Sirius.

The fleet left Tenerife on 10 June 1787 and instead of hugging the west coast of Africa, they crossed the Atlantic Ocean and headed for Rio de Janeiro. Although this was a longer route, it was a faster route due to more favourable winds. They reached Rio on 06 August 1787 after 57 days sailing. After 29 days in Rio where essential repairs to masts and sails were carried out and fresh water and supplies obtained, including 115 bottles of rum, the fleet set sail on 04 September for the Cape of Good Hope, 3000 nautical miles away.

Table Bay in Cape Town was reached on 14 October, after 40 days sailing. In Table Bay, fresh water and supplies were obtained. Also livestock was purchased for the new colony. This included horses, cattle, poultry, goats, pigs and geese. Plenty of live fruit plants and seeds were also purchased. The fleet set sail on 12 November on the last, but longest, lap of 6000 nautical miles non-stop to Botany Bay, Australia. A stopover in Ceylon was not considered as it was a Dutch colony.

On 03 January 1788, the coast of Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania) was sighted but the Fleet sailed round it without stopping. The Fleet was now racing northwards parallel to the New South Wales coast (though in the opposite direction to the present day Sydney to Hobart yacht race) and there was considerable excitement among all on board as they were finally nearing their destination after nearly eight months afloat. The naval escort *HMS Supply* was leading the fleet and it anchored in Botany

Bay on 18 January 1788, with the rest of the First Fleet following in the next day or two. The First Fleet had arrived safely. The route of the First Fleet is shown in Fig 3. Tremendous credit goes to Captain Arthur Phillip for shepherding the eleven ships for eight months over a distance of about 16,000 nautical miles and bringing them safely to Botany Bay, although there were many storms and gales along the way. At that time the only way of communicating between ships was by hoisting different flags and pennants and the amount of information that could be conveyed was necessarily limited. If a ship was out of sight, then communication was not possible.

However, Botany Bay was not found to be a promising site for a settlement. The bay was not well sheltered and it was shallow, fresh water was limited and the soil did not seem particularly fertile. A few days later the First Fleet sailed 13 km north and found Port Jackson to be a large sheltered bay with ample fresh water and decided to found the first settlement here. Sydney and modern day Australia were born. See Fig 4.

Rob Mundle in his book *The First Fleet* (Sydney, 2014) records the significance of the arrival of the First Fleet as follows (page 156): "*The face of the modern world was about to change – the first pioneering steps towards European settlement of this unknown land were about to be taken. The enormity of the moment, and the hopes embedded in the hearts of those who had worked so hard to be there, were reflected in a note written by Watkin Tench, reading: 'To us it was a great, an important day, though I hope the foundation, not the fall, of an empire will be dated from it'.*" (Watkin Tench was a Captain in the Marines aboard the *Charlotte* and wrote a book about the first settlement).

Searching for the Ceylonese

There are many books on the subject of the First Fleet, but perhaps the most comprehensive book on the subject as regards the persons on board is Mollie Gillen's *The Founders of Australia: A Biographical Dictionary of the First Fleet*. This 656 page book which was published



• Fig. 3: Route of the First Fleet.

by the Library of Australian History, Sydney, in 1989 contains 1442 biographical entries of First Fleeters. All 1442 biographies were studied in the search for any Ceylonese. Gillen says that according to available records a total of 1420 persons embarked on the First Fleet at Portsmouth, but details of about 110 more crew

members are not available. During the voyage 22 babies were born, 69 persons died, were discharged or escaped at Rio and Cape Town. Her final total of arrivals at Botany Bay is 1373 persons, made up as follows: Male convicts 543; Female convicts 189; Convict's children 22; Ship's crews 306; Marines, their wives and children 299; and Officials and passengers 14.

Appendix 10, pages 453 to 529 of her book contains an Abstract of Biographical data of the 1373 persons who reached Botany Bay. A perusal of this Appendix does not show any names which are obviously



• Fig.4: First Fleeters landing in Sydney.

Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim or Malay. It is unlikely that a Ceylonese of that era would have an anglicized name because serious British presence in Ceylon commenced only a decade later in 1796. That only leaves the possibility of a Portuguese or Dutch Burgher of Ceylonese origin.

The only name listed which Mollie Gillen says as being possibly of Portuguese origin is Paul Joseph (page 406). This is not a typical Portuguese name, so he could have been originally from Ceylon. The entry against his name says "Paul Joseph a seaman aged 29, said to have come from Portugal, joined *Sirius* as able seaman on 28 March 1787, having previously served on *HMS Elizabeth*. He deserted *Sirius* on 14 September 1787 at Rio." Since he deserted his ship in Rio he did not reach Botany Bay, so that leaves him out.

There is only one name listed as being possibly of Dutch origin. His first name is given as Cornelius and his last name as either Duhig or de Hague or Duhagen (page 110). The entry against his name reads "Cornelius Duhig (de Hague or Duhagen), a seamen on the *Friendship* (who may have been Dutch)....". The name is typically Dutch, so if he was not Dutch he may have been a Dutch Burgher, but as a seaman he did not settle in the colony. When his ship *Friendship* set sail for the return trip to England from Port Jackson seven months later on 14 July 1788, he is listed as being on board.

First Fleeters who may have settled in Ceylon

A careful search of the biographies of the First Fleeters does not reveal anybody of definitely Ceylonese origin.

On the other hand, there is a possibility that the reverse may have happened and that some First Fleeters may have subsequently settled in Ceylon. The circumstances under which this arose are described below.

When the first settlement started in 1788, the Marines who arrived with the First Fleet were responsible for security. In 1791-92 these Marines were recalled to England and the New South Wales Corps was established to replace the Marines. The Officers in the Corps became very powerful, obtaining large land grants and getting involved in the rum trade ending with the 'Rum Rebellion'. To control the Corps, England sent Lachlan Macquarie and the 73rd Regiment of Foot to Australia in 1810 and Macquarie took over as Governor of NSW.

Lieutenant Colonel Macquarie was with the 77th Regiment of Foot in Calicut, India when the British ordered him to lead the invasion of Ceylon. He and his troops landed in Negombo on 04 February 1796 and marched to Colombo. He started a siege of the Dutch Fort in Colombo and called upon the Dutch Governor to surrender, which he did two days later. On 19 February he set out for Galle and the Dutch there surrendered with hardly a shot being fired. The British had now taken over from the Dutch. A few days later on 30 March, Macquarie received a message that his wife was seriously ill and he returned to India. She died not long afterwards of tuberculosis and he never returned to Ceylon.

In Sydney, Governor Macquarie did not get on very well with Lt. Col. O'Connell who was in charge of the 73rd Regiment of Foot. Macquarie persuaded England to re-deploy the Regiment elsewhere and they gave orders to O'Connell to proceed to Ceylon with his Regiment. O'Connell left for Ceylon with the main body of his Regiment by the sailing ship *General Hewitt*, leaving Port Jackson on 06 April 1814 and reaching Ceylon on 18 August 1814. The remainder of the Regiment followed in other ships and finally the wives and children of the Regimental soldiers sailed in the *Kangaroo* on 19 April 1815. On its return trip from Colombo, the *Kangaroo* brought the O'Dean family, the first Ceylonese family to settle in Australia (see *The Ceylankan*, November 2015). In Ceylon, the 73rd Regiment of Foot fought against the King of Kandy in 1815. It was also involved in suppressing the Uva Rebellion of 1817-18, but at a heavy cost to the Regiment. Of the more than 1000 regimental soldiers who took part, 412 were killed.

About a dozen or so First Fleeters had signed up and joined the 73rd Regiment of Foot as soldiers and were posted to Ceylon. Apart from four of them, there are records to show that the others returned, either to Australia or to England, when the Regiment was disbanded a few years after the Uva Rebellion. There is a distinct possibility that any of these four plus the wife of one of them may have decided to settle in Ceylon, or perished in the Uva Rebellion and are buried somewhere in Ceylon. The details of these First Fleeters, as given by Mollie Gillen are as follows:

Laurence Richards (c1759-)

He was a Marine from Devon who embarked on the *Prince of Wales* in the First Fleet, with his wife Mary. He decided to become a settler and was given a government grant of 60 acres of land in the Sydney suburb of Bankstown. Imagine what that would be worth today! He and his two sons joined the 73rd Regiment in 1810. Laurence sailed to Ceylon by the *Windham* in April 1814. There is no record of his return to Australia or England.

Mary Richards (c1765-)

Mary was the wife of Laurence Richards, and had come with him on the *Prince of Wales*. They had eight children, seven of them were born in Australia. There is no record of her death in Australia, so she must have accompanied her husband to Ceylon.

Samuel Richards (1787-)

Samuel was the son of Laurence and Mary Richards above, and he was born in the *Prince of Wales* while on its First Fleet voyage to Australia, making him one of the youngest of the First Fleeters. He joined the 73rd Regiment and sailed for Ceylon in the *General Hewitt* in April 1814. He was stationed in Kandy in December 1815 but there are no subsequent records of his return to Australia or England.

James Walbourne/Walburn (c1765-)

James was born in North America. 18 year old James was convicted at the Old Bailey, London in 1783 and sentenced to transportation for seven years for the theft of a linen handkerchief valued at 12 pence. He was caught pickpocketing it from a gentleman at Temple Bar. (Shades of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*!, published a few decades earlier). He was transported in the *Scarborough* in the First Fleet. He later joined the 73rd Regiment and was sent to Ceylon. He was separated from his wife and she did not accompany him. He is recorded as being in Ceylon in December 1815. There is no record of his death or return to Australia.

Peter Wilson (c1766-)

Eighteen year old Peter was convicted of theft of a purse in Manchester and sentenced to transportation for seven years. He was transported by the *Alexander* in the First Fleet. Having served his term he joined the NSW Corps. He was transferred to the 73rd Regiment in 1810 and in April 1814 he sailed for Ceylon in the *Windham*. He is recorded as being in Ceylon in December 1815 but there are no further records of his return to Australia.

Conclusion

Al Grassby in his book *The Tyranny of Prejudice* written in 1984, claims that there were Ceylonese in the First Fleet but does not state his source. A study of Biographies of First Fleeters in a subsequent book by Mollie Gillen published in 1989 does not show conclusive evidence of a First Fleeter from Ceylon. Al Grassby wrote about 25 books, in addition to a busy Parliamentary Ministerial career, so perhaps he was pressed for time to check his facts.

On the other hand, there is a distinct possibility that up to five First Fleeters may have subsequently

settled in Ceylon and/or are buried there. Further research is required to verify this possibility.

Captions

- Fig 1: Captain Arthur Phillip – who led the First Fleet (Courtesy: National Portrait Gallery, London).
- Fig 2: HMS Sirius, 511 ton Flagship of the First Fleet, later wrecked on a Norfolk Island reef. (Courtesy: Australian National Maritime Museum).
- Fig 3: The Route of the First Fleet (Courtesy: First Fleet Fellowship).
- Fig 4: The Founding of Australia, a painting by Talmadge. (Courtesy: State Library of New South Wales).

Birdwatching in Sri Lanka

There are some 400 different kinds of birds to be seen in Sri Lanka. The beginner will find many species easy to identify as they are colourful and sometimes large. Twenty one species and 81 sub-species are endemic to Sri Lanka, mostly in the southern mountainous half of the country.

Wherever you travel, even in Colombo and on the tourist routes, there is plenty of avifauna to be spotted. For example, the ancient cities are surrounded by countryside which is home to some spectacular species. In Anuradhapura, you can often see the Ceylon Red-Necked Woodpecker which seems to inbreed with the Ceylon Golden-Backed Woodpecker, producing some birds with backs of bright red and gold. The tanks attract birds like the dainty Pheasant-Tailed Jacana.



Many species, for example the ubiquitous Ceylon Common Mynah and the Common Babbler as well as the iridescent Purple-Rumped Sunbird are found both in wet and dry zones. Other species are adapted to either climate and to lower or higher elevations. The Ceylon Blue Magpie, for example, prefers the hills and mountains of the wet zone. It needs forests to survive and the continuous destruction of these presents a threat to it and other forest birds. Strangely enough, the dry zone has by far the most water birds, they are mainly migrants wintering in the tanks and coastal lagoons, mudflats and salt pans between September and May.

(From *Odyssey Illustrated Guide to Sri Lanka* by Gillian Wright).

A unique event at Royal College in 1925

Royal College as well as the other leading schools in Colombo have produced some outstanding orators who have graced the national scene, both in and outside the legislature. Names that readily come to mind are SWRD Bandaranaike from St Thomas, G G Ponnambalam from St Joseph's, H L de Silva from St Peter's, Sir Thomas de Sampayo from St Benedict's, Dr N M Perera from Ananda College, and Dr Colvin R de Silva, Pieter Keuneman, and J R Jayewardene from Royal College. All of the leading schools in Sri Lanka have Oratorical contests to select the best orator in the school and, in fact, these contests serve as an incentive to encourage senior students to excel in the art of public speaking. Inter-school debates are



• Stanley de Zoysa (centre), Finance Minister of the 1956 SWRD Bandaranaike government, addressing the Australian Parliament at a luncheon meeting to greet him in 1957. He was a very witty and entertaining speaker as could be seen here. On the left is Dr Herbert Evatt, Leader of the Opposition and on the right is a highly amused Sir Arthur Fadden, the then Federal Treasurer.

also held to further motivate students to participating in oratory. In Royal there is a Gold Medal awarded annually to the best orator.

In the year 1925 the MH Jayatilleke Gold Medal was the coveted prize offered to the best orator in Royal College. The contest was held in three divisions from which the finalists were chosen. In that year there were six finalists who were:

D.S. Jayawickreme,
Stanley de Zoysa,
George Chitt,
T.S. Fernando,
Colvin R de Silva and
J.R. Jayewardene.

All six finalists were from the same class and on leaving school they pursued law as a career and all passed out as Advocates. D S Jayawickreme, George Chitty and T S Fernando were awarded the honour of

appointment as Queen's Counsel, an honour which would have been readily granted to Dr Colvin R de Silva who refused to apply for "silk" as he considered that an "imperial honour" something which he crusaded against all of his adult life. Stanley de Zoysa became the first Finance Minister in the 1956 Government of SWRD Bandaranaike and J R Jayewardene was Finance Minister and later the first elected President of Sri Lanka. Stanley de Zoysa presented the first budget of the SWRD Bandaranaike Government in 1956. Stanley was a polished speaker in English but struggled with his Sinhalese so he presented his first budget speech in English, and ironically, so from a Government elected to make Sinhala the National Language within 24 hours! Dr Colvin R de Silva opened the debate for the Opposition and was quick to pounce on the paradox of the Sinhala Only Government presenting its first budget to the nation in English! His party stood for parity of status for both languages Sinhala and Tamil, but would have been on difficult grounds if pressed to state which language his party would have chosen to present the budget, as it could be presented only in one language. He attempted to circumvent the issue by berating his old classmate and stating that the budget should have been presented in "the mother tongue". Up jumped Phillip Gunawardene from the Government benches with the query "which tongue is that?" Anyone else would have been rattled by the interjection, but not Colvin who retorted with "only those with two tongues will ask such a question". Needless to say that retort left Phillip squirming in his seat.

That was the standard of debate in that day and age. The six finalists in the Oratorical Contest at Royal in 1925 would surely stand out as an unrivalled and unmatched group of orators in the history of any school in Sri Lanka. The winner of that contest was J R Jayewardene who was awarded the Jayetilleke Gold Medal.

SIGIRIYA GRAFFITI

After Kasyapa's suicide, Mogallan moved his capital back to Anuradhapura, Sigiriya was not instantly forgotten. For at least 500 years after Kasyapa's death, sightseers scaled the citadel to gawk at the Sigiriya Maidens and admire the view. Sri Lanka's oldest graffiti verifies this. Incised in tiny pearl-like script into the so-called Mirror Wall, beneath the frescoes pocket, are prose and poems more than 1,000 years old.

(Source: Insight Guide to Sri Lanka).

Room 37 - Queen's Hotel, Kandy

- THE RAMBLER

Queen's Hotel, Kandy was established in 1841 and completed 175 years of service as the principal hotel and hostelry in Kandy, last year. It is located in the heart of the ancient city of Kandy and has been patronised by visiting Royalty as well as the crème de la crème of society in Sri Lanka right through the British colonial period and thereafter. For many decades the hotel was managed by the Kandy Hotels Co. which also managed the Hotel Suisse, both archetypal colonial hotels. During its long period of service, the Queens as it was known through its history, had provided accommodation to a few permanent residents, mainly those who had served as



• *Padikara Mudaliyar.*

Manager and retired to continue living in the hotel. In 1941, at the height of colonial rule, when rooms were almost entirely occupied by expatriate Britishers, the hotel took in as a permanent guest - a wealthy Sinhalese who was allotted Room 37 and who lived there till his death six years later in 1947. As occupant of Room 37, the man led a very reclusive life and kept only the company of his manservant by the name Udurawana who, at times, was known to co-habit the rooms of his master. Whether the relationship went beyond the traditional master-servant role is not known, but what was established was that the room occupant was a married man who left his wife and almost secretly went into occupation in the hotel. The man was none other than Padikara Mudaliyar Don Arthur Silva Wijeyesinghe.

Born on 12 November 1888, Padikara Mudaliyar, the scion of a wealthy land owning family, had his early education in a school in Colombo and thereafter had his entire education in England. There is no record of his attending any British University, but he seems to have been much attracted by the stately homes of England and on his return to Ceylon during the first decade of the 20th century, he used his immense inherited wealth to build a large mansion on 42 acres of land in Palatota, Kalutara, which he named Richmond Castle. A massive 19-roomed mansion, the building was neither a castle nor a fortress but a grandiose building lacking finesse and the sophistication of a truly inspired indigenous design. The architecture of the building seems a hybrid born out of the great houses and castles of England and the grandiose Maharajah palaces of India. The Padikara Mudaliyar was apparently awarded the unique title of Padikara Mudaliyar during his stay in England where he took a great interest in Ceylonese history and its links with the metropolitan power of the time. He claimed that he was the first Ceylonese to see the throne of the last King of Kandy (a claim disputed by some) then exhibited in Windsor Castle, and did participate actively in the movement to have it transported back to Ceylon. As an active member of the Royal Asiatic Society's Ceylon Branch, he not only held high office within the Society but also delivered many lectures on historical subjects. He was also a great benefactor to a diversity of charities, especially those associated with the Roman Catholic religion. Consequently, he has been the proud recipient of papal awards and regarded highly by the church in Ceylon.

The Padikara Mudaliyar was the younger son by the second marriage of N D Paulis Silva, a man who made his fortune in plumbago mining in the mid to late 19th century. Paulis Silva was born in the Galle District to Buddhist parents both of whom passed away when he was 18 years old. He sought his fortunes in the Kurunegala district where good fortune and hard work combined to make him one of the leading plumbago miners in the country. As a young man he converted to Catholicism and in his hey day was a staunch financial supporter of the Church. He acquired a large building called Wiesbaden on Galle Road, Kollupitiya, where his head office was based. He renamed the building Isabel Court presumably after his second wife Isabella, the mother of the Padikara Mudaliyar. Isabel Court was at one time a lodging house and later was the Chinese Lotus Hotel, a popular restaurant for many decades in the mid to late 20th century. The building is no longer

in existence, having been demolished to make way for modern commercial buildings. Paulis Silva had several children by his two marriages and all of them were left very comfortable fortunes at the time of the death of the patriarch in 1902.

In 1916 at the age of 28, the Padikara Mudaliyar married Miss Clarice SuryaBandara in a marriage arranged by elders of both families. The



• *Podikara's wedding to Miss Clarice SuryaBandara.*

wedding was attended by the Governor and other dignitaries in a ceremony marked by pomp and pageantry. There were snide rumours floating about that the marriage was not consummated and that the union was not a happy one, although both parties lived under the same roof. As the years passed, the Mudaliyar had been observed to have made regular trips to Kandy where he had befriended Udurawana, a man 12 years younger than him. In 1941, the Mudaliyar moved to the Queen's Hotel, Kandy with Udurawana his manservant in attendance. Meanwhile, he sought to the material needs of his wife through regular disbursement of funds to her although it is not clear whether she knew his whereabouts exactly. The Mudaliyar lived in Room 37 for six years and it is believed, (but there is no record in support) that his wife did not visit him there.

In 1947 the Mudaliyar suffered a heart attack at the hotel and was transferred to a nursing home in Kandy. He had previously willed that upon his death his estate should be administered by the Public Trustee with due provision made for his wife's needs. However, when he realised that he was on his death bed he sent a hurried message to his lawyer Mr S J C Kadirgamar in Colombo to testify to certain donations that he since wanted to make. Mr Kadirgamar rushed

to the Mudaliyar's bedside where he wanted cheques written for Rs 10,000 to Udurawana, Rs 10,000 in favour of the Bishop of Kandy and Rs 1000 in favour of his motor car driver. The cheque book was not available at the nursing home and Udurawana was sent to the Queen's Hotel from where he returned with the cheque books. The doctors in the nursing home, however, forbade the Mudaliyar to write or sign anything as any exertion by him may prove instantly fatal. The Mudaliyar then instructed Mr Kadirgamar to execute a codicil to his will giving effect to his intentions. Mr Kadirgamar, however, had no licence to practice as a notary in Kandy, and Mr Gurusamy a practicing Proctor in Kandy, was fetched. The two Proctors drafted the codicil but before the Mudaliyar could sign it he expired. He was 59 years old.

The Public Trustee who executed the Mudaliyar's estate refused to accept the oral proceedings at the deceased Mudaliyar's deathbed, resulting in Udurawana suing the Public Trustee for



the Rs 10,000 donated by the Mudaliyar. The District judge gave him judgment but the Public Trustee appealed. The Appeal was heard By Justice R F Dias and Justice Windham. Mr H V Perera with B H Aluvihare and R S Wanasundera argued the case for Udurawana and Mr EB Wikramanayake with HW Jayewardene appeared for the Public Trustee. In a judgment delivered on 22 November 1949 read out by Justice Dias with Justice Windham agreeing, the Appeal Court dismissed the appeal. Part of the judgment reads thus: "The late Mr N.D.A Silva Wijesinghe the "Padikara Mudaliyar" on his death bed



• *Richmond Castle*

in the presence of witnesses expressed the intention to give the plaintiff (Udurawana) his old and faithful servant who was then present by the bedside, a donation of Rs 10,000. The plaintiff, when he heard his master express this intention to donate Rs 10,000 to him, placed the palms of his hands together in

oriental fashion and bowed low to his master saying something which Mr Kadirgamar did not hear. The plaintiff says that he bowed to his master saying that he thankfully accepted the donation. That is precisely how a Sinhalese man of lowly status would signify acceptance and thanks to his master for largesse promised."

The Mudaliyar's wife continued her cloistered life by moving into a convent after her husband's death. She died at the age of 80. The Mudaliyar owned two estates Woodslie in Galagedera, and Irahandayawa in Heneratgoda which together with Richmond Castle and several other properties were administered by the Public Trustee. Richmond Castle had since been used as a childrens home and is now open to visits by the public. Very little, however, is known about his last days despite the details that emerged during the court case Udurawana v The Public Trustee, since preserved for posterity as a New Law Report.



This historic photo of the two teams in the game which featured the visiting All Blacks from New Zealand and All-Ceylon. The two teams are shown. The game against All - Ceylon consisting entirely of Ceylonese of British descent was won by the All Blacks with the final score at 10 to 3 in favour of the All Blacks. The game was played at the Colombo racecourse on the CH and FC grounds in August 1907 and was the first occasion in which the haka was performed in Ceylon and the first game played by the All Blacks in Ceylon. (Photo courtesy of the Times of Ceylon Annual 1907).

(Submitted by Hugh Karunanayake)

Note: Rugby in Sri Lanka dates back to the days of British colonialism. Rugby was first introduced to Sri Lanka by Kingswood College in Kandy, and the first club, Colombo Football Club, was established on 28 June 1879. The Ceylon Rugby Football Union was founded on 10 August 1908. In 1974 it changed its name to the Sri Lanka Rugby Football Union. In 1932 the Ceylon RFU XV won the All India Cup at all India Rugby Football Tournament.

J.P. de Fonseka – a teacher of yesteryear



BY DR SRILAL FERNANDO

Joseph Peter (J.P.) de Fonseka was a man of many parts. He was in his day known as an essayist, a teacher in English at St. Joseph's College in Colombo, who would not only teach but inspire his students, and a great contributor to Catholic belief and social values. He was born into the well known de Fonseka family of Kalutara. The de Fonseka family is descendent from the Varnakula Additye clan. There are three swords in the Colombo Museum along with documents of land grants by the Sinhalese Kings. Michael de Fonseka was the name given on conversion to Christianity and around 1658 he is mentioned in Baldeus' account of the island. J.P. de Fonseka was a direct descendent of Michael de Fonseka.

He had his education at St Joseph's College, Colombo, where he excelled in studies and cricket. He captained the first IX cricket team in 1917.

It was in Cambridge from about 1927 that J.P. became known as an essayist. He was a great admirer



• JP de Fonseka with Gilbert Keith Chesterton.

of G.K Chesterton with whom he had a lifelong friendship.

While in England he edited a book called GKC as MC which was a collection of Chesterton's introductory essays to books by other authors. Many years later, Edmund J. Cooray wrote a review of this book where he described J.P.'s introduction as "running over with wit and wisdom". He had close contact with other English writers of the day such as E.V. Lucas, Hilaire Belloc, Robert Lynd, Phillip Gibbs and Eric Gale.

Returning to Ceylon in 1931, he continued his literacy pursuits. He joined St Joseph's, his alma mater, and over time he became a legend. He was not only a teacher but inspired his students to delve into classics of literature. He was a portly figure,



•J.P. de Fonseka according to Prof, A.C.G.S.Amarasekera.

immaculately dressed in a three-piece suit wearing his trademark bowler hat which he would throw on the desk upon entering the classroom. His idiosyncrasies, his humour and wit endeared him to his students.

When Father Peter Pillai, who had known him from Cambridge returned to Ceylon in 1936, J.P. was one of the first to greet him. As recollected by Father Peter Pillai, in the Blue and White magazine J.P., Fr Hugo Fernando and another great journalist at the time, S.J.K. Crowther decided to act on "social justice" values which were a counter to the communist movement which was active around the world.

J.P. contributed to every issue of the social justice newspaper and in the words of Father Peter Pillai, "J.P. it was who carried the paper on his shoulders". This paper was read by many people from all around the world and received encomiums from great literary figures.

J P was known for his wit and his verses in lighter vein reflected this. These include "Lines to a Mosquito" in the deliriously free verse of the

contemporary malarial school) and "The Law is an Ass, is he really?" As most great men do, he could laugh at himself. He wrote entertaining articles on anything and sometimes made something out of nothing. He wrote articles on the "Fatman", "Gastronomer Royal in Ceylon" reflecting his rotund figure. Others were "Hail to the Tax Payer" and the "Real Santa Claus".

His collected essays and writings were published after his death and reflected his broad range of interests. Contributions from Father Peter Pillai, Hilaire Jansz, Quintus Delilkhan, Father Justin Perera, and Noel Crusz, make fascinating reading.

His contribution to Catholic thought was profound. He was a lay OMI (Oblate of Mary Immaculate) the holy order that provided the priests to St Joseph's College Colombo. He was made a Chamberlain of the Honour of the Sword and Cape in 1946. However, ill-health prevented him from visiting Rome to receive the Papal Honour.

He died in 1948. Father Justin Perera writing in the Blue and White magazine summed it in a few words, "you have expanded your philosophy with a lot of joy and laughter, and if there have been those who have taken the laughter and forgotten the philosophy, the fault is all theirs."

CEYLONISMS

by a "Part Putting Catcher"

As a schoolboy, a recollection is of an English class where the teacher, L A H Arndt, was talking about Ceylonisms, i.e. words used in Ceylon English (CE) which were not current in British Standard English (BSE). An example that he gave was the then Prime Minister, D S Senanayake's favourite words used at the beginning of a sentence "*Actually, as a matter of fact ...*". If it is a fact, then the word 'actually' is redundant. Another example that he gave was "*the man was injured and blood was bleeding.*" Here the word 'blood' is redundant. A final example was "*I am going to go to the cinema this evening*", where the words "to go" are redundant.

There are two authoritative books on the subject of Ceylonisms. The first is Prof Manique Gunasekera's "*The Post-Colonial Identity of Sri Lankan English*" (Katha Publishers, 2005, revised 2010). The late Prof Gunasekera was Head of the Department of English at the University of Kelaniya. She has an interesting comment on p 11 of her book "*For a language which has been part of the culture and identity of a country for nearly 210 years, English occupies a peculiar position in Sri Lankan society. It is only now, in the 21st century that at least some users of English are prepared to say that*

they speak or use Sri Lankan English. For generations, people have believed and declared that they speak British English or the Queen's English."

The second book is Michael Meyler's "*A Dictionary of Sri Lankan English*" (Colombo, 2007). This Dictionary of about 2500 entries contains words and phrases which are in current use in CE but do not have the same meaning as in BSE. Prof Ryhana Raheem says in the Foreword to the book that "*It charts the social and cultural nuances of the words and phrases that we use, nuances that we as Sri Lankans are scarcely aware of ... vividly demonstrating that our English is distinct in a number of ways.*"

Meyler works at the British Council in Colombo. His website is www.mirisgala.net. Given below are samples of Ceylonisms. In his Dictionary, Meyler quotes examples of English usage by Ceylonese fiction writers in 30 books written between 1982 and 2006, ranging from "*Anil's Ghost*" by Michael Ondaatje to "*Zillij*" by Ameena Hussein. Some of these quotations are reproduced here where appropriate.

Ask from: The 'from' is a CE addition, not found in BSE. "*I think we have lost our way, ask from that man the way to the station.*"

Aunty or Uncle: A polite way of a young person addressing any elderly person, who is not necessarily a relation. In BSE it is rarely

used in this sense, and then only when a child addresses a friend of the parents. *"You must call me Auntie, dear. In Sri Lanka, that's how we address older people"*. Shyam Selvadurai, *"Swimming in the Monsoon Sea."* p 110.

Batchmate: Contemporary student. Not in BSE. *"More visitors and Ravi recognised several batch mates he had not met since they left school, four years ago."* Nihal de Silva, *"The Far Sent Day"*, p 2.

Batta: Maintenance and travelling expense of an employee. Not in BSE. *"I went on a work related outstation trip and on my return claimed batta to cover expenses."*

Bucked: A feeling of elation. Not in BSE. *"I was highly bucked when I found that I came first in the end of term examination."*

Bucketing: To pour (contaminated) water on a fresher during a student ragging. Not in BSE. *"I have learned a new word today – bucketing. Why did these seniors inflict such misery on innocents like us? How can they possibly consider bucketing good fun?"*, Nihal de Silva, *"The Giniralla Conspiracy"*, p 16.

Bugger: Referring to a person, but not in the pejorative sense of the word. BSE's main meaning is a person who practises buggery. *"These buggers are worse than our buggers."* Carl Muller, *'Yakada Yaka'*, p 222.

Cap: To make a pass to a girl. Not in BSE. *"Why don't you put a cap to Therese?"*, Carl Muller, *"Once Upon a Tender Time"*, p 195.

Catcher: Sycophant or toady. Not in BSE. *"I know she's beautiful, but that doesn't mean that she's going to marry this catcher"*, Karen Roberts, *"July"*, p 284.

Chummery: A group of friends rent a house and share the living costs. Not in BSE. *"They had their own cook too, a Tamil, and shared all the expenses. A 'chummery', yes, that's what they called it, a 'chummery'"*, A Siva-

nandan, *"When Memory Dies"*, p 18.

Con: This word has many meanings in BSE but CE has the additional meaning of a falsehood. *"He is a real conner, no men, all his stories have to be taken with a pinch of salt."*

Cousin-brother or -sister: The children of two brothers or two sisters. No BSE equivalent. *"It is a strict convention among Tamils that one does not marry one's cousin-brother or cousin-sister, but the children of a brother and sister can marry."*

Cut: To skip a class. Very rarely used in this sense in BSE. *"Machan, shall we cut lectures tomorrow afternoon and go for a matinee show at the Majestic?"*

Dicky: Luggage boot of a car (not what you first thought!). Archaic and specific different meaning in BSE. *"There were two suitcases and a steamer trunk on the back seat of his car and a second trunk in the dickey."* Michelle de Kretser, *"The Hamilton Case"*, p 145.

Eating drinking people: A group asking for inclusion on the grounds of equality. Not in BSE. *"The Clerks Union asked the management for a common dining area for all grades of staff on the grounds that 'we are also eating drinking people'."*

Face cut: Similar facial appearance. Not in BSE. *"... you have the look of a Manipal boy, I can tell the face-cut anywhere"*, Pradeep Jeganathan, *"At the Water's Edge"*, p 93.

Fully worth: Good value. Not in BSE. *"Although a Rolls-Royce is expensive, I think it is fully worth the money."*

Funk-stick: Chicken-hearted. Not in BSE. *"I challenged him for an end of term fight, but the funk-stick backed out of it"*.

Homecoming: A Reception arranged by the bridegroom's parents to receive the bride a few days after the wedding. Not in BSE.

"The wedding was on the first of March and Nimal's parents arranged a Homecoming three days later to welcome the new couple home."

Hotel: In BSE, Hotel is a place providing accommodation whereas in CE it also means a café or restaurant. *"The best Buriyani in town can be had at Buhari Hotel."*

Lamprais: A special rice and curry preparation. Seen in some menus as lump rice! Not in BSE. *"... she would produce such marvellous things as true Dutch Lampries (from the Dutch word 'Lomprijst' – rice cooked in stock and baked in a wrapping of banana leaf)..."*, Carl Muller, *"The Jam Fruit Tree"*, p 186.

Murder the Queen: Speak or write faulty English. Archaic in BSE. *"In order to test the students, the teacher gave them a paragraph to correct in which he deliberately murdered the Queen."*

Off or On: The word "switch" which should come before these words is often omitted in CE. *"When the program finishes, please off the TV."*

Our people: An ethnic group, nationality or clan. Not in BSE. *"Our people have occupied these regions from antiquity"*, Nihal de Silva, *"The Road from Elephant Pass"*, p 130.

Played out: Deceived. Not in BSE. *"He tried to play me out of my dowry, that's what, and then he tried to buy my land."* A Sivandanan, *"When Memory Dies"*, p 9.

Putting parts: Show authority. Not in BSE. *"Just because he has been appointed a Prefect, now he is putting parts."*

Rice puller: Something that tickles the palate and makes one eat more rice. Not in BSE. *"And here some lime pickle also. Real rice puller. Give you appetite."*, Carl Muller, *"The Jam Fruit Tree"*, p 99.

Shape: To resolve a problem to a friendly outcome. Not in BSE. *"If your friend is angry with you, I will speak to him and shape things up."*

Short-eats: Snacks. Not in BSE. *"Amrith and the girls usually ordered a selection of cakes and short-eats, which were brought to them on tiered serving plates."* Shyam Selvadurai, *"Swimming in the Monsoon Sea"*, p 103.

Then we will go and come: Bidding farewell after a visit. Not in BSE. *"Our relations came on their usual annual visit and their final words on departing were 'Then we will go and come'."*

To put a shot: To drink a peg of an alcoholic drink. In BSE 'put' would not be used in this context. *"So they 'put a few shots', as Ed called it, and talked about everything from politics to parenting"*, Karen Roberts, *"July"*, p 45.

To give tight: To give another a licking, verbally or physically. Not in BSE. *"I heard a big row there. Must have given the bugger tight."*, Carl Muller, *Once Upon a Tender Time*, p 106.

What are you talking: What are you saying? Not in BSE. *"What are you talking? Of course she was much, much fairer"*, Manuka Wijesinghe, *"Monsoons and Potholes"*, p 26.

With thanks to Michael Meyler for permission to quote from his book.

Time for Truth

Truth has no special time of its own. Its hour is now—always, and indeed then most truly when it seems most unsuitable to actual circumstances.

Albert Schweitzer (1875 - 1965)

Mystery of “Colombo Sahib” interred in Dhaka cemetery in the 18th century

by Hugh Karunanayake

Dhaka in Bangladesh known as Dacca in colonial times, is a very unlikely place for anyone from Ceylon to be interred as there were very few political, commercial or social connections between East Bengal (as Bangladesh was then known) and Ceylon especially as far back as the early days of colonial rule of India. Although British rule of India commenced in 1858, British influence and the anglicisation (or attempts thereof) of India commenced as far back as 1612 through the influence of the East India Company, a British joint stock company which sought to pursue trade with India but ended up taking political control of the country. Although British rule and influence impacted on India's social, political, religious and economic activities through almost four centuries, it did not seek to colonise the country as a settlement as it did in the case of its conquests in Africa, America, and Australia. This was largely due to India's own indigenous culture and highly developed social, political, educational, and religious institutions. British rule in India was ephemeral as historical evidence asserts, whether or not British intent in occupying India was originally conceived to be temporary. When it relinquished rule in India it left behind a legacy of a partly anglicised society with a multitude of artefacts, antiquities, institutions, and cultural and social values which to this day remind its people of a once influential alien culture. Among these are the splendid architectural remains of British rule evident in the grand buildings which still dominate parts of the Indian landscape.

Bishop Reginald Heber, the Metropolitan of Calcutta, consecrated the Narinda Christian Cemetery in Dhaka on July 1824. He described the place as wild and dismal and surrounded by jungle and ruins. Most of the tombs in the cemetery dated back to the commercially prosperous days of Dhaka as a producer of jute, grain and leather, when the city had a large number of European residents. Perhaps the most prominent and largest tomb in the Narinda Cemetery was a mausoleum three stories high with an octagonal domed tower over it. Its architecture was predominantly that of 18th century Mogul design. The Bishop was curious to know more about the tomb and was told that it was that of a “Colombo Sahib” from Company **ka Naukar** indicating that the description suggested someone who held high office (Accountant?) with the Company, presumably the East India Company, probably with connections with Ceylon. The large mausoleum also contained

several other unnamed tombstones believed to be members of the family of Colombo Sahib. No further information was available on the identity of Colombo Sahib. There is a belief that Colombo Sahib could be an early Dutch trader from Colombo where the Dutch East India Company had operated. No other definitive information on Colombo Sahib's identity has emerged.



• *Colombo Sahib's tomb in 2015.*

The British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia known by the acronym BACSA publishes a most informative quarterly journal called the *Chowkidar* through which it publicises its highly commendable activities in preserving and identifying tombstones and monuments relating to the period of British rule in South Asia. CSA member Dr Eileen Hewson who is closely associated with BACSA runs the Kabristan Archives which published several books on graveyards in Sri Lanka. These are invaluable resources to genealogists and puts together information which may otherwise be lost forever as the tyranny of age and negligence takes over. In an article written by BACSA member Charles Greig published in *Chowkidar* in 2012, he revealed that the



Kayman's Gate - the Dutch legacy to Pettah

If, like me, you are a lover of Sinhala songs, you will no doubt have been mesmerised by the Sunil Edirisinghe song "Kayman dorakada indapan mama enathuru Selesssina" (Selesssina, please wait at Kayman's Gate till I come). Since this song is about the various old landmarks of Colombo, I was always curious to find out where this actually is. Then I found out that it is actually in Pettah, just a few minutes' walk from my office.

Once Colombo's smartest residential area, Pettah is now the city's bazaar, a jungle of streets jammed with bargain-hunters, herds of trucks, lorries, carts and the ubiquitous three-wheelers where the Dutch colonial facades still survive proudly beside gleaming new mercantile shops. After visiting Colombo's Dutch Period Museum, our next visit was to Kayman's Gate and Wolfendhal Church. A visit to Pettah isn't complete without at least visiting these two Dutch monuments.

A sense of anticipation gripped us as we left the Dutch Period Museum and strolled along Second Cross Street towards the busy Main Street. Having reached Main Street, we continued along. On either side, as we dodged down Main Street, shops were bursting with garments hung like bunting from merchants' doorways.

Crocodiles

Suddenly, we glimpsed a curious sight through the gauntlet of street vendors and bustling shoppers beyond the huge bill boards adorning buildings. Unmoved by the chaos around it, an ancient belfry stood defiantly, symbolising Pettah's proud past. It is all that remains of Kayman's Gate which stands where the crocodiles, or caymans, from the Beira Lake once scavenged.

(From page 17)

famous European artist Johann Zoffany had painted a picture of the mausoleum in 1787 giving it the title "Nagaphon Ghat". (a 'ghat' refers generally to a series of steps beside a river, invariably used to place funeral pyres for cremation). At the opening of the Zoffany exhibition at Yale, USA in 2011 the painting was acclaimed by experts as one of the most beautiful paintings ever, and a work of the highest quality. An

In Portuguese times, the Colombo Fort was fortified by a ring of 12 bastions with intervening ramparts and supported by a moat, flanked on the east by a crocodile-infested lake and on the west by a boulder strewn shoreline.

To the south of the canal named De Revir is the Roa de Casa, while to the north of it is the Roa Directo which is the Main Street of today's Pettah. At the end of this street is seen the Poorta Reinha,



• The bell, now barricaded, as seen from Main Street, Pettah.

(Queen's Gate), the principal exit which was a massive gateway built at the mouth of a tunnel under the eastern rampart, with access via a drawbridge over the moat. These were later called Kayman's Gate and St. John's River respectively. This gate opened on to the road to Hanwella, which followed the left bank of the Kelani River. The Dutch captured the city in 1656 and held possession of it.

After capturing Colombo, the Dutch set themselves to alter not only the fortifications but also the streets, which were laid out on a more regular grid pattern and are still so, today. The Dutch called the present Pettah, 'oude stad' or 'old city', because they found this to be the active centre when they took over. The walls and fortifications round the

image of the painting (please see back cover) shows the tomb in its original splendour standing beside a river with a funeral pyre alight beside the building. The ravages of time have, however, brought on the gradual deterioration of the building as could be seen in a photograph taken two years ago. BACSA is taking the initiative to restore the tomb to prevent its further destruction, but the identity of Colombo Sahib continues to remain a mystery.

'oude stad' were allowed to remain, but they were subsequently removed, though a mud wall on the east near Kayman's Gate survived until British times. It is all that remains of Kayman's Gate at the end of the Main Street of the Pettah on the right leading to 4th Cross Street. The Department of Archeology has built a fence around the base which is confined to a small rectangular space. Near the age old bell, crows build their nests. Public executions were held at its foot. An Electricity Board transformer and commercial establishments block access to the site.

Worshippers

In Dutch times at the foot of the Wolfendhal Hill (present eastern end of Main Street) stands the old belfry with the bell which summoned worshippers to



•The watercolour painting of Wolfendhal Church by Dutch artist Van Dort 1833.

prayer at Wolfendhal church. The bell is said to date back to the 16th century, during which time it hung in the Portuguese church dedicated to St. Francis. It is said that this church once stood in the Royal city of Kotte. The Dutch reoccupied this city which had been abandoned in 1565. The bell was found among the ruins and later mounted on the belfry at Kayman's Gate.

In the Dutch period, the Main Street was known as 'Koning's Straat' and stopped at Kayman's Gate, after which the belfry is named. 'Kaaiman' is Dutch for crocodile, from which Kayman is probably derived. In the years of Dutch times, there had been crocodiles in the Pettah because the crocodile infested Beira Lake extended right up to Kayman's Gate via St. John's River. It is said that crocodiles from Beira Lake once scavenged for food along the St. John's River close to Kayman's Gate.

Another historical anecdote says that the Dutch have minted a large number of VOC coins in the building close to Kayman's Gate because of its security and protection provided from the crocodile-infested moat.

The bell still hangs majestically in the belfry which was decorated with some flower motifs on both sides. Although it did service as a Church bell for special services at Wolfendhal Church in the recent past, it seems to be desolated and neglected today.

After visiting Kayman's Gate, we strolled towards Sea Street crossing Wolfendhal Street and walked a little up a hillock. We continued on Central Road and crossed again to Wolfendhal Street where the imposing edifice of Wolfendhal Church stands crowning the hill and overlooking the city and harbour of Colombo. Built in 1749 in the Doric style, with walls made of clay ironstone 1.5 metre thick, upon which the gables were raised, it is the finest historic monument of the Dutch period and has been left intact despite the changes that have come all round it. Its transepts, directed to face the four points of the compass, are facaded by four lofty gables supported by pilasters with spreading scrolls at the side. Its roof is composed of four brick-lined, plastered domes which radiate from a central tower. The high roof galvanised sheeting is painted in red.

Carved into the gable over the southern entrance are the initials IVSVG. That associates the building with the name of Governor Julius Valentyn Stein van Gollennesse who was chiefly responsible for its construction. The date (1749) is seen over the doorway.

On the southern façade, prominently displayed is the date AD 1749 which is evidence of the year the foundation was laid. Strolling around the church premises, we witnessed the western part of the exterior walls of the church displaying many gravestone dedications dating back to the 1700s in remembrance of loved ones.

'Dale of wolves'

Wolfendhal Church is just one of four remaining structures in any decent state of preservation built by the Dutch in every settlement of importance. Wolfendhal literally means 'dale of wolves' and has probably been derived from the marshy lowlands haunted by jackals lying immediately outside the walls of the fort of Colombo.

When Colombo capitulated in 1796, many Dutch officials, settlers and clergymen returned to Holland (present Netherlands) or retired to Batavia. In 1800 there were only about 900 Dutch inhabitants left on the island. It is to them and their descendants the Burghers, that credit must be given for the preservation of one of the few monuments in Colombo which stands as a memorial to the oldest Dutch institution in Sri Lanka.

We said goodbye to these magnificent edifices thinking for how many years can we see them as they were once managed and venerated by people who lived in the past. Go there and experience the places for yourself. It is a worthwhile excursion for anyone with history in their hearts.

(Reproduced from the Sunday Observer, 25 December 2016)

Rare ethnic names soon to go extinct

by Rex Olegesekeram

The multi ethnic Sri Lankan society has since recent decades witnessed innumerable changes and many of the most notable ethnic communities are now on the brink of extinction, with the population dwindling to a noble handful. Some of the most colourful surnames that once stood as a beacon to help distinguish ethnic backgrounds of locals have now gone into abeyance.

The ethnographers are of the opinion that the frequent intermarriages with members of the prominent Ethnic groups and death of male line descendants have gradually airbrushed the identities of many minorities. It is sad to note that there is hardly any material written on the subject of Lankan Onomatology, however, it is unmistakably clear that many of the Lankan patronymics and surnames have European roots.

CEYLON BURGHER COMMUNITY

The Ceylon Burgher Community is the finest exponent of this European Onomatology in Sri Lanka, as the members of the community carry some of the world's rarest surnames which at present verge on extinction. The ancestors of the Dutch Burghers were not necessarily Dutch by ethnic origin as the Dutch East India Company installed hundreds of mercenaries from all parts of Europe who later reached the shores of Lanka to strengthen the Dutch garrisons on the Island. These Europeans later espoused local women and paved the way for the Lankan Eurasian Community, which later came to be known as 'Dutch Burghers' meaning 'Town Dwellers'.

The Dutch surnames can be recognised by the 'tussenvoegsel' referring to the words positioned between the forename and last name similar to the Scottish prefixes. Many Dutch surnames begin with 'Vanden' a collective term meaning 'from the', while prefixes such as 'Van' meaning 'of or from', 'der' meaning 'of the' and 'de/het/t' meaning 'the' are commonly used by the Dutch Burghers in Sri Lanka. The fifth Solicitor General of Sri Lanka was Mr. James Van Langenburg and based on his surname it is clear that the progenitor of his family hailed from the German village Langenburg.

The Ceylonese Van Geyzals descend from Franc Van Geyzal from Belgium (St. Nicholas) who married the daughter of Angelo Pegolloti, an Italian, and his descendant Carl Theodore van Geyzel, was a first class Lankan cricketer. While the Vandorts, trace their lineage to the Dutch hamlet named 'Dordrecht', and the first Vandort to have set foot on Lankan soil was Cornelis Jansz Van Dort from Utrecht who arrived on the ship "Bellois" in 1700 and settled down in

Galle. One of his descendants was Leonhard Kalenberg Van Dort, born in 1831, a famous artist whose watercolours of 19th century Sri Lanka can still be found in Leiden and Lankan cricketer Michael Vandort is yet another descendant.

The famous 'Van' prefixed surnames include van Arkadie (from Arkadiem, France), van Cuylenburg (from Culenbergh, Germany), van Dersil, van der Straaten (Van der Straeten, presumably Flemish), Van Hoff (also spelt as Van't Hoff like in the case of Jacobus Henricus van't Hoff, Dutch Physical and Organic Chemist), Van Rooyen (also spelt



• *Miliani Claude Sansoni, Chief Justice (1964-1966)*

Van Rooijen, meaning those from the remote areas), Vander Zeil (from the rail), Vander Putt (topographic name for someone living besides a 'putt' meaning pit or well- Village 'Putte' in Netherlands and Belgium), Van Sanden and Vander Gucht.

The origin of surname, Van Houghton remains blurry as 'Houghton' or Hutton is an Anglo Saxon habitation locational surname referring to a 'High Town' while 'van' is purely Dutch. However, the early English names had three parts, the first name (Christian name), followed with 'De' and the name of the place which the family lived (locational name) and Houghton is derived from 'De Hocton'. Nevertheless, Van Houghton is at present an endangered surname in the world, and based on the geographical spread its only the Ceylon Burghers who use this uncommon surname.

The De Soysas, De Silvas, Peiris, Rosayro, Dias and De Serams identify themselves as 'Sinhalese' though they are bearers of Portuguese surnames.

However, Dr. Lucian de Zilwa, the first Ceylon F.R.C.O.G. and former Senior Physician and Gynaecologist was a Dutch Burgher and not a Sinhalese, as substituting the letter 'S' for letter 'Z' is yet another Dutch Burgher feature seen in their surnames like Diasz (days), Peiriz, De Zoysa etc. The prefix 'De' meaning 'the' was used by both the Dutch and Portuguese.

Surnames like De Kresters (e.g. Dr. David Morritz de Kretser, a Ceylonese Medical Researcher who later became Governor of Victoria, Australia), De Hoedt, De Koning, De Niese, De Kauwe, De Wet, De Vos and De Coan helps exemplify the 'De' prefixed Dutch Burgher surnames. Among the Lankan Burghers we do find abbreviated patronymic surnames, like Jansz which is originally the Dutch surname Janszoon meaning 'Son of Jan/ John' while Loos is the abbreviated patronymic of 'Lodewijk' meaning 'akin to Louise'. Other Dutch surnames used by the Burghers include Prins (meaning Prince), Antonisse, Andriesz, Baldesinger, Brohie (R.L.Brohier, an Engineer who built Ceylon's first whole irrigation system), Bulne, Beekman (meaning 'Creek man'), Claasz, Ebert, Engelbrecht (glorious Angel), Foenander, Fernandez (son of Fernando/ Spanish), Frugtniet, Kegel (Dutch and German origin) Kelaart, Martinus, Melder, Meynert, Milhuisen, Neydorff, Passe, Philipsz, Scharenguivel, Werkmester, Wille and Willenberg.

'Barthalomeaucz' is, of course, such a totally unheard of name in present day Sri Lanka. However, in the bygone era, this particular patronymic was so popular that people couldn't ignore it. As we delve deep into the etymology of this distinctive surname it is clear that the patronymic is derived from 'Bartholomew', meaning 'son of Ptolemy' based on Aramaic literature. The Dutch variant of Bartholomew known as 'Bartholomeuszoon' has filled several volumes of military history and Egbert Bartholomeuszoon Kortenaer (1604-1665), who bore the same patronymic, was a renowned hero of the Second Anglo-Dutch War.

The earliest known ancestor of the Bartholomeaucz clan in Sri Lanka was Daniel Bartholomeaucz (1735-1798) who made settlement in Jaffna and after the advent of the British, the family expanded and domiciled in the Western and North western provinces of British Ceylon. Some of the notable Bartholomeucz who have stamped their identity in Ceylon include Surgeon Noel Bartholomeusz and Ramani Bartholomeaucz, former model, actress and Miss Sri Lanka. The Sansoni's (Sansone), yet another unique patronymic, which is neither Dutch nor German and based on onomastics it is of Italian origin. The name is originally the Italian variant of English Samson meaning Sun child or bright sun in Hebrew. Guiseppi Joseph Sansoni born in Italy, regarded as the progenitor of the

Sansoni clan in Ceylon was the commander of the ship "Livorna" which served the Dutch belligerents during several battles.

Sansoni's have definitely left their mark in Lankan history, and former Chief Justice Miliani Claude Sansoni who chaired the Sansoni Commission which investigated the 1977 communal violence helps testify the importance served by a Sansoni in the Lankan Judiciary.

The ancestor of the Oorloff clan in Ceylon hailed from Russia as the Patronymic is derived from the Russian Eastern Ashkenazic personal name 'Orlov' corrupt form of 'oryol' meaning eagle. Andris Andriesz Oorloff (b.1730) of Rypdewack, the founder member of the family arrived in Ceylon in 1761 in the ship "Fransz Elizabeth" which served the Dutch East India Company. Back in the days of the British both the Medical sector and the Railway Department benefited from the services extended by the Oorloffs. Besides the Oorloffs, the surname Heins/ Heyn (Major General Bertram Russel Heyn) is also derived from Russian Hutterite/ Mennonite.

Though the bearers of the patronymic 'Ohlmns' identify themselves as 'Dutch Burghers', sources reveal that the founder member of the family was originally a German and his descendants later intermarried with other



• Dr RL Spittel

Eurasian families in Ceylon thus making this rare German surname part of the Dutch Burgher Community. The founder member, Jan Carel Ohlmns, born at Hildesheim an ancient town located in North Western Germany arrived in the ship "Amelisvaart", and later settled down in Sri Lanka as a mercenary serving the Dutch.

While surnames like Koch, Gogerly and Landberger are also derived from German literature and the name Koch refers to a Cook. The surname

Lourensz is derived from German (Roman) word 'Lorenteus' meaning 'from Lorentum' and Cole is derived from German 'Khol' meaning 'swarthy'.

The French in Sri Lanka are also identified as Burghers, a common term used by the locals to identify those of Eurasian descent, and this French factor is clearly manifested by the use of Lankan surnames like Toussaint, Kherkovan, Crozier, Delile, Andre, Gauthier, and Spittel. The Toussaint is French patronymic of baptismal origin and the Medieval English surname 'Spittel' is derived from "spital", an aphetic form of the Old French "hospital" while Crozier is derived from old French word 'Crois' for crook. Dr. Richard Lionel Spittel, was a foremost expert on Lankan Vedddha community and authored several books on Lankan heritage.

The Anglo Saxon (English) Burgher surnames include Villiers (from Villiers, Normandy), White (Athlete Duncan White), Arndt (derived from Ernault or Arnolt, meaning an eagle/ rule), Wright (from 'wryhta' or 'wyrhta', meaning worker or shaper of wood), Herft (Model Sabrina Herft), Bevan (from Welsh 'ab Evan' meaning 'Son of Evan'), Deutrom, Hepponstall (Habitation surname derived from Parish Hepponstall, Yorkshire), Sella (Scottish occupational surname used to refer a merchant who works in a cellar or saddler), Rode from 'Rodd' a village in Harefordshire, Steinwall, Robertson, Greig (pronounced 'Greg' originated in Scotland from the Scottish Highland clan MacGregor), Baldsing, Holdenbottle, Fraser (Scottish surname derived from French word 'Frederius') Keegal, Hingert, Barker etc. Morrel is a Medieval English surname derived from 'morel' originally from the nickname More or 'Moore' meaning dark complexioned man.

Last but not least, the famous Ondaatje's aren't really Burghers as the progenitor of the clan was a Tamil Ondaatchii from Tanjore South India who was commissioned by the Dutch to serve in Ceylon.

THE CASE OF SRI LANKAN MALAY SURNAMES

The Malay Community is indeed an entity famous for its unique sounding patronymics, alas, since recent past many Malay surnames have gone extinct presumably due to frequent intermarriages. Unlike their Muslim counterparts, the Malays use distinctive prefixes along with their rare sounding surnames. The prefixes Tuan/ Maas/ Raden are used by the male folks while their women use Gnei/Nona/ Sitti Nona/ Gnonya. The Malay community despite its small number is made up of an intricate network comprised of several sub ethnic groups who trace their descent from the archipelagos of Indonesia and from the Malayan Peninsula. So the patronymic helps trace the ancestry, social class, creed, caste etc. of a Sri Lankan Malay individual. For example, the Malay

patronymics such as Lye, Chunchie, Doole, Kitchilan, Kutinun, Kanchil, Sainon, Bongso, Bohoran, Kuppen, Lappen and Booso helps reveal their Peranakan lineage or those of mixed Chinese-Malay heritage. Patronymics of Sanskrit/ Indian origin include Jayah, Weerabangsa, Sinhawangsa, Jayawangsa, Wangsa, etc. while Saldin, Rahman, Drahaman, Buckner, Ramlan, Rajap, Jumat, Mannan, are those derived from Arabic literature.

The progenitor of the Malay Kayath family in Ceylon was a local Chieftain from the Banda Archipelago known as Orang Kayat who was exiled to Ceylon by the Dutch, so the present day Kayaths aren't really Malays by ethnicity instead they are Bandanese. Alas, Deen, Azeez, Kayaths are on the brink of extinction with just a single family left on the Island with no male line descendents. While the Raden's anglicized as Rawdin belong to an aristocratic clan, however, Raden is a Javanese title of respect and not a patronymic as used today. The ancestor of late Minister, Dr. T. B. Jayah was Raden Thurtho Perma Jayah, an aide de Camp to the Javanese King who was exiled to Ceylon.

Thus it is clear that some of these quirky yet ethnic surames which can be considered 'endemic' to Sri Lanka are dying out rapidly while some have already gone extinct.



Congratulations and a Warm Welcome to our New Members

MANOHARI & GOPI RATNABALASURIAR,
23 Kenyon Crescent, Doonside NSW 2767.

Mr MARTEN van der WALL, 4 Hood Street,
Hamilton Hill WA 6163.

KANISHKA & RADISHKA NADARAJAH,
11 Angel Road, Strathfield NSW 2135.

Dr LEONARD PINTO, 87 Poole Road, Kellyville
NSW 2155.

LALITH & MARIA BENEDICTA
WIJESURENDRA, 24/50-56 Boundray Road, Chester
Hill NSW 2161.



Of course liberty is not
licence. Liberty in my
view is conforming to
majority opinion.

(Baron Hugh Scanlon 1913 -)



Meals
Ammi
Made

Coffee Cake (in an instant)

by Dr Eulie Herat
Baulkham Hills, NSW

Ingredients

125 gm Butter
2/3 cup Brown Sugar, packed firm;
1tbsp Instant Coffee Powder
1/2 cup Milk
1/2 Bicarbonate of Soda
1 Egg
1.5 cups Self-raising Flour

Method

Combine butter, sugar, milk and coffee powder;
Stir over heat till butter is melted, do not boil.
Remove from heat and stir in bicarb
Let it stand for 5 mins, then stir in beaten egg
and flour
Bake at 180 deg oven for 30-40-mins in 20x10 loaf tin
Spread with coffee icing while cake is still hot.

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.

When a stupid man is
doing something he is
ashamed of, he always
declares that it is his duty.

(*Caesar and Cleopatra* - George Bernard Shaw
1856 -1950)

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.



Robert Knox

At the General Meeting of CSA Sydney on 28 May 2017, Dr Palitha Ganewatta spoke about Robert Knox and his book *An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon*, in the East Indies which was first published in 1681. Given below are some excerpts from Knox's book:

Suitability to be a King:

Insomuch that it is a usual saying among them, that if they want a King, they may take any man, of either of these counties, from the plough, and wash the dirt off him, and he by reason of his quality and descent is fit to be a King.

Adams Peak described:

On the South side of Conde Uda is a Hill, supposed to be the highest in this Island, called in the Chingulay Language, Hamalell; but by the Portuguez and the European Nations, Adams Peak. It is sharp like a Sugar-loaf, and on the Top a flat Stone with the print of a foot like a mans on it, but far bigger, being about two foot long. The people of this land count it meritorious to go and worship this impression.

Anuradhapura:

Anurodgburro where they say Ninety Kings have reigned, the Spirits of whom they now hold to be Saints in Glory, having merited it by making Pagodas and Stone Pillars and images to honour of their Gods, whereof there are many yet remaining: which the Chingulayes count very meritorious to worship, and the next way to Heaven.

Houses are independent:

They do not care to make Streets by building their

Houses together in rowes, but each man lives by himself in his own Plantation, having a hedge it may be and a ditch round about him to keep out Cattel.

Jakfruit:

There is another fruit, which we call Jacks, The Inhabitants when they are young call them Polos, before they be full ripe Cose; and when ripe, Warracha or Vellas; But with this difference, the Warracha is hard, but the Vellas as soft as pap, both looking alike to the eye no difference; but they are distinct Trees.

The understanding of Elephants:

As he is the greatest in body, so in understanding also. For he will do anything that his Keeper bids him, which is possible for a beast not having hands to do. And as the Chingulayes report, they bear the greatest love to their young of all irrational Creatures; for the Shees are alike tender of any one's young ones as of their own: where there are many She Elephants together, the young ones go and suck of any, as well as of their Mothers.

Leeches:

These Leaches seize upon the Legs of Travellers; who going barefoot according to the custom of the Land, have them hanging upon their legs in multitudes, which suck their blood till their bellies are full, and then drop off. They come in such quantities, that the people cannot pull them off as fast as they crawl on.

Monkeys

Monkeys, of which there are abundance in the Woods, and of diverse sorts, some so large as our English Spaniel Dogs, of a darkish grey colour, and black faces, with great white beards round from ear to ear, which makes them shew just like old men.

Appeals against Court Convictions

They [the accused] may appeal to the Adigars, or the Chief Justices of the Kingdom. But who so gives the greatest Bribe, he shall overcome. For it is a common saying in this Land, That he that has money to see the Judge, needs not fear or care, whether his cause be right or not.

The Temples

The Pagodas or Temples of their Gods are so many that I cannot remember them. Many of them are of Rare and Exquisite work, built of Hewn Stone, engraven with images and Figures; but by whom and when I could not attain to know.

Marriage and Separation

Women and Men do commonly wed four or five times before they can settle themselves to their contention. And if they have Children when they part, the Common Law is, the Males for the Man, and the Females for the Woman.

Work that can be done by a Gentleman

Nor is it held any disgrace for Men of the greatest Quality to do any work either at home or in the Field, if it be for themselves; but to work for hire with them is reckoned to be a great shame: and very few are here

to be found that will work so; But he that goes under the Notion of a Gentleman may dispense with all works, except carrying, that he must get a man to do when there is occasion. For carrying is accounted the most Slave-like work of all.

Sports

They have but few Sports, neither do they delight in Play. Only at their New Year, they will sport and be merry one with another. Their chief Play is to bowl Coker-nuts one against the other, to try which is the hardest.

Betel

Betel leaves they are most fond of, and greatly delighted in: when they are going to bed, they first fill their mouths with it, and keep it there until they awake, and then rise and spit it out, and take in more.

The Laws

Here are no Laws, but the Will of the King, and whatsoever proceeds out of his mouth is an immutable Law. Nevertheless they have certain ancient usages and Customes that do prevail and are observed as Laws; and Pleading them in their Courts and before Governors will go a great way.

Other Laws

If a woman goes away from her husband without his consent, no Man may marry her, until he first be married.

In the lending of money by the use of it in one year's time, it becomes double. And if the Creditor receive not his money at the expiration of the year, but lets it lie in the Debtor's hands never so long after, no more than double is to be paid, the increase never runs up higher.

Building houses

No man building a house either in his own or another man's ground, if he be otherwise minded to leave his Land, where his house stood, may pull it down again: But must let it stand for the benefit of whosoever comes after him.

Thou or You

They have seven or eight words for Thou or You, which apply to persons according to their quality, or according as they would honour them. And they are so, Topi, Umba, Umbela, Tomnai, Toms, Tomsela, Tomnanxi. All these words are gradually one higher than the other.

Receiving Gifts

When one proffers something as a gift to another, altho it be a thing that he is willing to have, and would be glad to receive, yet he will say, 'E eppa queinda', No, I thank you; how can I be so chargeable to you? And in the same time he reacheth forth his hand to receive it.

Writing Documents

They write not on Paper, for of that they have little or none; but on a Talli-pot leaf with an Iron Bodkin, which makes an impression. This leaf thus written

on, is not folded, but rolled up like a Ribbond, and somewhat resembles Parchment.

Purgatives

For purging they make use of a Tree called Dallugauhah. It bears no leaves, nothing but thorns, and is of a soft substance. Being cut there runs out a white thick milk; in which we soak some whole corns of Pepper a whole night. The next day the Pepper is taken out, and washed clean, and then boyled in fair water with a sour fruit they call Goracca. This they drink and it purgeth very well.

The Mongoose

The mongoose has a cure for snake bite. The knowledge of these antidotal herbs they have learned from the Mounggouttia a kind of ferret. This creature when the Noya and he meets always fight. If he chanceth to be bitten by a Serpent, which is very venomous, he runs away to a certain herb and eats it and so is cured, and then comes back and fights again.

Mourning for the dead

Their manner of mourning for the dead is, that all the Women that are present do loose their hair, and let it hang down, and with their two hands together behind their heads do make a hideous noise, crying and roaring as loud as they can, much praying and extolling the Virtues of the deceased, tho there were none in him.

Kabaragoyas

There is a Creature here called Kobbera guion, resembling an Alligator. The biggest may be five or six feet long, speckled black and white. He lives most upon the Land but will take the water and dive under it: hath a long blue forked tongue like a sting, which he puts forth and hisseth and gapeth, but doth not bite nor sting, tho the appearance of him would scare those that knew not what he was.

Proverb:

None can reproach the King nor the Beggar. The one being so high, that none dare; the other so low that nothing can shame or reproach them.

Passports are a requirement:

None to pass from the Kings City without Passports. But especially in all Roads and Passages from the City where the King now Inhabits, are very strict Watches set: which will suffer none to pass not having a Passport: which is the print of a Seal in clay: It is given to Court to them that have Licence to go thro the Watches. The Seals are different according to the Profession of the Party.

Money

Money is indeed the most important thing in the world; and all sound and successful personal and national morality should have this fact for its basis.

(Irrational Knot - George Bernard Shaw)

OBITUARIES



Remembering Vama Vamadevan

(3 March 1933- 1 June 2017)

Valentine Vamadevan popularly known as Vama and self described as Vama Vamadevan, passed away on the 1st of June suddenly and unexpectedly. His funeral on the 8th March was attended by a large gathering of relatives, friends, and many from the Wattle Grove community in Sydney, in which he lived for over two decades.

Vama was a stalwart, indeed a pillar of the Ceylon Society of Australia. He was not only a Founding Member and the Founding Treasurer of the Society, but together with his wife Charmaine were proactive members engaged in all of the Society's activities. Many readers may not recall or be aware of the very significant role played by Vama in founding the Society. Prior to the official launching of the Society 20 years ago, a few of us met informally to set the foundation of the Society, and to "brainstorm" ideas on how the proposed Society should take shape. These informal meetings were held at the residences of the founding group, and Vama and Charmaine hosted the second preliminary meeting accompanied by a sumptuous dinner. Although declining health prevented him from playing a more prominent role in the work of CSA during the last few years, he and Charmaine continued to attend meetings on a regular basis and were always stalwart supporters. Members may recall Charmaine at the piano leading the sing-a-long, year after year, at the Annual Christmas Dinner.

Members may also recall Vama's many learned contributions on a variety of subjects, to the Society journal *The Ceylankan* to which he made countless contributions, bringing to the reader many aspects of life in Sri Lanka in times past. Vama's departure has left a void that can never be filled, and we remember him with great affection and gratitude as a person who enriched our lives.

Born on 3 March 1933 to his parents Vaitilingam Subramaniam and Thangachi Nagalingam, he commenced schooling at Chundikully School and later at St John's Jaffna. On the completion of his secondary education, he joined the University

of Ceylon, Peradeniya, from where he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Arts. On graduation, he joined the Sri Lanka Police Service as a probationary Assistant Superintendent of Police and his exemplary career in the police service, reached its pinnacle when he was appointed Deputy Inspector General in the early 1980s. Meanwhile he had earned a name for himself for pioneering various police initiatives including being a prominent member of the Police Horse Brigade as a competent horse rider and as the chief organiser of the Police Hewisi band which he proudly led at the Edinburgh Tattoo in the 1970s.

A sad note in the life of a man who devoted his energies to making the land of his birth a better place for all, was struck when his home in Talakotuwa Gardens was attacked by a band of goondas during the notorious 1983 communal riots that enflamed Sri Lanka. The impact of that incident must have made an indelible mark on his psyche, as he left Sri Lanka with his family the following year, never to return even for a brief holiday.

Vama and Charmaine, with their two young children Shivi and Rajeev, arrived in Australia in 1984 and were warmly received by friends who they knew before in Sri Lanka and others who were to be their life long friends. They settled down in the quiet suburb of Kogarah in southern Sydney and later built their own home in Wattle Grove. Vama took to a career with the Correctional Services Department and worked at the Long Bay Gaol for over a decade before opting for retirement. Although emotionally scarred by the events of 1983, he had an unrelenting affection for the land of his birth. This manifested itself in his quest for any publications which dealt with Sri Lanka which he acquired and consolidated into an admirable collection of books.

His interest in the history of Sri Lanka may have led him to publish his own memoirs entitled "the Ceylon we Knew" which recounted his life in Sri Lanka and summed up a very eventful and distinguished career in the police service.

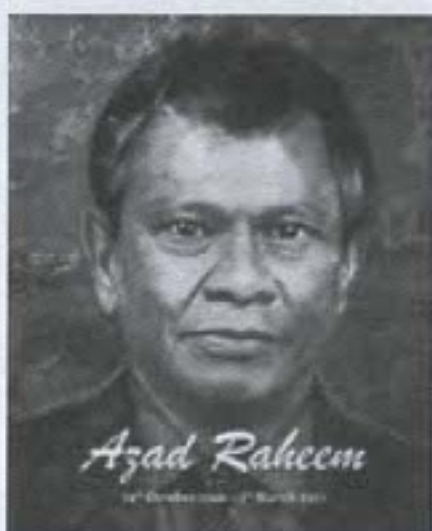
He also authored another book on "The Muslims of Sri Lanka" a product of indefatigable research and interest in the old country. It was the book collecting trait in him which connected me to him 30 years ago and we have been close friends over the years, visiting each other's homes, sharing meals, and enjoying all the emotions that a close friendship brings. Indeed our friendship has also brought in their own friends to our circle making our lives all the more enjoyable. Charmaine and the children have added lustre to these bonds and we were privileged to attend a surprise party organised by the family to celebrate Vama's 75 th birthday, nine years ago. He was visibly moved by that occasion which nearly brought him to tears but, no doubt, gladdened him to hear his close friends speak eloquently on the man and his endearing traits.

Vama and Charmaine are excellent hosts and always there to lend a helping hand to friends whenever the occasion rose. I am aware of many erstwhile friends of theirs who visited the Vamadevans from Sri Lanka and enjoyed their hospitality for long periods of time.

If I may touch on a matter which afflicted his health, it is only to focus on his stoic resolve and determination to handle the loss of his kidney function which dogged him for over 15 years compelling him to dialyse his kidneys three times a week for the past 15 years. He never complained about this added dimension to his regular chores, but faced it with a steely determination which won the admiration of his physicians. In this enterprise he was lovingly cared for by Charmaine who drove him to hospital and shared the load cheerfully. Charmaine has been an absolutely wonderful companion to him for well over 50 years, and his demise will undoubtedly be a loss that would be unimaginable to her.

Our thoughts are with Charmaine, Shivi, Rajeev and their families at this time of great sorrow. They may find some consolation in the knowledge that their loss is shared by many others who had the privilege of knowing Vama. May he find eternal peace.

– Hugh Karunanayake



**Azad
Raheem**
(14 October 1940 –
01 March 2017)

We lost an astute lawyer and a loyal friend when Azad Raheem moved to the next stage of his life on 1st March, 2017.

We take solace in the assurance that Azad now lives in an existence outside the human body in a form of intermediate spiritual resurrection.

I first met Azad in 1952 when we joined the boys of the "First Form" as Year Six was then known, at Royal College, Colombo. I continued as a class mate for four years till we bifurcated, Azad in to the science stream and I into languages and Arts. We met again in 1959 when we joined the Ceylon Law College. We have remained friends since then.

Azad had gained three distinctions in Double Math and Physics, a sure fire path to a degree in Engineering. But his father M.M.A. Raheem had other plans for his brilliant son. As you are probably aware, the nine Raheem siblings – six boys and three girls, each qualified in a different profession.

The father was a Senior Proctor [Solicitor] with an extensive clientele of prosperous Pettah businessmen and wished Azad to join him with a view to taking over the flourishing practice. Azad had no choice, when MMA had spoken, he had spoken! Azad did extremely well in the exams and was only beaten by one mark at the Final exam by Laki Wikramnayake, his brother-in-law to be. They did joint study at the Wikramanayake household and it is obvious now that Azad's eye had not been on the books they jointly read.

Azad took over his father's practice and concentrated on civil law. Though I joined the Attorney General's Department and mainly practised criminal law, we continued to meet socially.

I cannot fail to speak of the hospitality and bonhomie that Azad and his law school friends enjoyed at the home of Therese's parents. We were as welcome when we turned up past mid-night to drop Laki home or when we dropped in on an evening. Therese had proved a supportive wife. Running house attending to the children's needs and driving Azad, not around the bend, but on the myriad warrens of Melbourne Streets. They knew each other when she was a shy teenager and Azad had barely reached 20 years of age.

Azad and Therese devoted much time to the Ceylon Society of Australia [Melbourne Chapter] of which they were stalwart members having joined over 16 years ago, and engaged in much appreciated social service.

I made a visit to see him in the third week of January this year and while the ailment that claimed his life, had gnawed away at his solid rugger playing body, his mind was alert and sharp as when he was a young law student.

An example of his wit remains with me. One of the lecturers at Law College, erudite in the law but totally impractical in applying his knowledge to the realities of the legal arena devised a hypothetical question on the law of damages for a wrongful act. The question stated an obvious case for the plaintiff [A] to be awarded damages against the defendant [B] but artfully concealed within the scenario were several exceptions to the rule that would deny the award of damages.

With a pontifical air, the lecturer dramatically asked "Can A sue B?" - Azad piped up "He can sue, but he won't win" the laughter that ripped the class room apart and the expression on the face of the lecturer are vivid in my memory.

I recall an incident that demonstrates the caring that Azad showed those who needed help. In our last year at Law College, a group of Law Students made a visit to Sri Pada [Adam's Peak]. On our way down a child in a group that was descending ahead of us slipped and fell down cliff side. She was clinging onto a bush that did not look strong enough to bear her

weight for long, and before anyone could react, Azad leaned over and grabbed the child by her arm and pulled her up.

The parents were full of thanks and could only show their gratitude by offering us a few bananas that they had with them. Azad promptly said [in Sinhala] words to the effect 'thank you but I don't eat fruit' and returned the gift.

I am no expert in Islam but if there is a Sirratthat provides a link to paradise, Azad must certainly traverse that bridge to reach the eternal garden of spiritual and physical delights. The palaces filled with streams of milk, honey pleasant fragrances and soothing voices.

"Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return [Qur'an 2:156]"

– Sunil de Silva

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.

The Galle Fort



The south coast's oldest landmark is the Portuguese and Dutch Fort. Today, the 90-acre Galle Fort shows no evidence of its Portuguese founders. The Dutch incorporated the Portuguese northern wall in a great rampart in 1663. a second, taller wall was built inside of it. Between the two walls, a covered passage connected the central bastion with the fort's two half-bastions overlooking the sea. The Dutch also installed a sophisticated drainage system, complete with brick-lined underground sewers that was flushed twice a day by the tides.

The original gate to the fort was by the harbour. It is still there, marked by the old Dutch V.O.C. (for Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie - or Dutch East India Company) arms with a rooster crest. The main gate was opened in the wall by the British in 1873. Not far from the gate is the old Government House dating from 1683.

Churches and graves

Several important churches are within the fort, including the Groote Kirk, the oldest

Protestant church in Sri Lanka. Originally constructed on the site of a Portuguese Capuchin convent upon the Dutch conquest in 1640, the present church was raised in 1755. The interred of the Dutch were moved here in 1853, their gravestones pave the floor and coats-of-arms coat the walls. Outside the fort walls is the Kerkhof (1786). On the gates of its interesting cemetery are the Latin words: *memento mori*, "remember death".

Close to the Groote Kirk is one of Sri Lanka's leading remnants of the colonial era, the New Oriental Hotel. It is neither new nor oriental. Constructed early in 1864 as the Dutch command headquarters, it later served as quarters for British troops and was converted to a hotel in 1865. It has been in the ownership of a single family, the Brohiers, since 1902. the hotel boasts lovely gardens, quaint bedrooms, and a massive dining hall.

In Galle, as perhaps nowhere else in Sri Lanka, the memory of fine, old colonial mansions is preserved even if their fabric is fast crumbling. Most of these great homes survive as private residences – **Eddstone, Armitage Hill, Mount Pleasant, Mount Airy and Garstin Hill**. Possibly the best preserved is **Closenbergh**, former the home of a shipping line captain, now a quiet guest house on a point of land overlooking the once-lovely Closenbergh Bay with its cement factory. Another "great house" **Buona Vista**, named after a fine view of the region from a hill behind Closenbergh.

(From Insight Guides Sri Lanka ; photo Google)



TEAMS IN THE LOW-COUNTRY vs. CEYLONESE MATCH

Standing—M. Pereira (Linesman), W. Winter, A. P. Koolmeijer, P. de Silva, H. E. Roberts, C. W. Brown, E. W. N. W. Weerasinghe, A. H. G. Campbell (Referee), W. B. McQuinn, E. W. Shattock, C. A. Cameron, J. C. E. M. T. Gey, A. D. Lister, G. S. W. Marshall, A. C. Milford (Linesman)

Seated—S. G. de Zoysa, J. W. Serasinghe, Godwin Pereira, E. P. N. Gratien, P. A. Buultjens (Capt. Ceylonese), J. C. E. M. T. Gey, A. D. Lister, G. S. W. Marshall, A. C. Milford (Linesman)

On Ground—S. Roberts, E. de Silva, E. Serasinghe, J. C. E. M. T. Gey, J. A. Brown, H. W. Pappas

Teams in the Low Country vs Ceylonese match

Pictured here are the teams in the Low Country v Ceylonese match played on the CH & FC Grounds in August 1934. The Low Country team consisting of British planters from the KV, Kalutara and Sabaragamuwa districts. The Ceylonese almost entirely consisted of CR & FC players as the Havelocks was not existent at the time. The Ceylonese team was captained by P A Buultjens and included Godwin Pereira, Noel Gratien, Sydney de Zoysa, Willie Serasinghe and H S Roberts all well known sportmen of the day. Low Country included C A Cameron later to head Colombo Commercial Co, and R M Shattock of Lee Hedges.

The Ceylonese fared very well but conceded defeat to Low Country after extending play to extra time

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: hemguru@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.

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.

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 7th April 2017

by Lt. Cmdr (Rtd) Somasiri Devendra
RIVERS, CANALS and FERRIES

Waterways and Watercraft

- antiquity, rationale, types - and the men who built and used them

The scope of the talk was the relationship between Man and inland waterways particularly post-Polonnaruwa period.

From earliest times Rivers were considered:

- As a means of accessing the interior from the coast, negotiated,
- As a means of transporting heavy or bulky goods economically.

Early settlers looked for river mouths to drop anchor and settlements resulted. Traders from overseas followed, seeking shelter from the monsoons in Lagoons formed at river-mouths. After the population and kingdoms shifted to the SW, rivers came to be recognized, as a natural resource to be utilized.

Inland waterways were in use from earliest times, not in the dry zone but the West & South, where we have discovered sunken river craft. In the Gampola, Kandy, Kotte and colonial periods rivers, lagoons, lakes and also marshes were encountered, and made use of. Rivers were used to demarcate the old Raja, Ruhunu and Maya Rata may be traced to this period.

When waterways were first encountered they came to be recognized as efficient in terms of energy use:

QUOTE: "If we take a reasonable load for a man to transport on foot as 25 kg it may be said that the same energy expended is sufficient to move 250 kg on wheels on a road, 2,500 kg on rails, and 25,000 kg on water. These figures bring home forcefully the economic advantage...."

Usage of waterways for transport followed the following stages:

Stage 1 – The river as an obstacle to be negotiated. (Rafts and ferries)

Stage 2 – Transport of heavy cargo with minimum energy. (Cargo boats, or parau, are poled or towed.)

Stage 3 – With increased demand, parau sail down river to canals, lagoons and ports.

Stage 4 – The canal network imposes uniformity: specific canal parau size develop,

Seagoing and Inland river craft were linked technologically but evolved differently:

- All our watercraft were based upon the hollowed-out log. We never went beyond that. When we wanted larger craft we extended the craft sideways to include outriggers or balance logs.. (Example: the pila-oru.)
- At sea, the dugout oru developed into larger sailing craft, culminating in the yathra dhoni. On inland waters the pila-oru swapped the outrigger for parallel dugout hull, joined with a platform deck. (Example:

the basic angula).

- The angula developed into both as a passenger carrier and a cargo carrier.

- As a passenger craft it developed into a covered craft: some with small cabins and some meant for larger numbers. One specific form was the palam-paru, large ferries for people and vehicles. The angula and the palam-paru forms yet survive.

- As a cargo craft, the angula developed into the parau, commonly called "padda boat", which was a capacious punt-shaped floating box with considerable cargo space which played a major part in the movement of cargo in the Kotte period and after, but remains of which have been found dated to over a thousand years ago. The parau is the major focus of this talk.

In search of the Parau

- Several foreign scholars have studied the ma-del parau. It is a craft that deserves this attention. But no one seems to have tried to do the same with the parau of the inland waterways

- The parau of the river is essentially a country craft. It was noted by photographers only as a prop for picnic parties or when they carried sail. The best descriptions, or studies are by James Hornell and J.P.Lewis. Brohier also contributed nuggets of information, particularly in relation to canals. Cave is the best source of photographs but there are many more photos now on such websites as images of lanka.com or Lankaputra.com. But these must be studied in detail to understand why and how they were built, by whom and how, and why they are no more. Much more material is found in Sinhala sources, but most references are anecdotal and not scholarly.

- In August 1981, the Peoples Bank publication, "The Economic Review" devoted an entire issue to "Inland Waterways" which collected information from various sources, including an important piece by Sunil Sarath Perera titled "Folk Songs of the Waterways".

It was possible to find odd bits of information such as that, in 1961, different classes of parau, referred to as "paddy boats" had been recognized and charged different Toll Rates, viz:

The rates shall not exceed the following: viz:-

	s.	d.
Paddy boat, battel or lighter of and under (loaded)	3	0
50 feet in length		
(unloaded)	1	6
Paddy boat, battel or lighter of and over (loaded)	5	0
50 feet in length		
(unloaded)	2	6

Further research showed that the smaller ones were made to fit the existing canals which had to accommodate two abreast. These, therefore, served as feeders, shuttling cargoes from the larger ones plying the rivers to destinations inland or to the port

of Colombo. The larger craft carried bulk cargo from upriver and could go under sail 60 miles along the Kelani and along the coast to the port.

Their cargoes included "a variety of merchandise" (Cave): pottery, building material, chests of tea, bamboo, timber trees and up to 25,000 coconuts. Another major cargo was graphite from the mines. The craft could navigate up river until the rapids marking the foothills of the hill country.

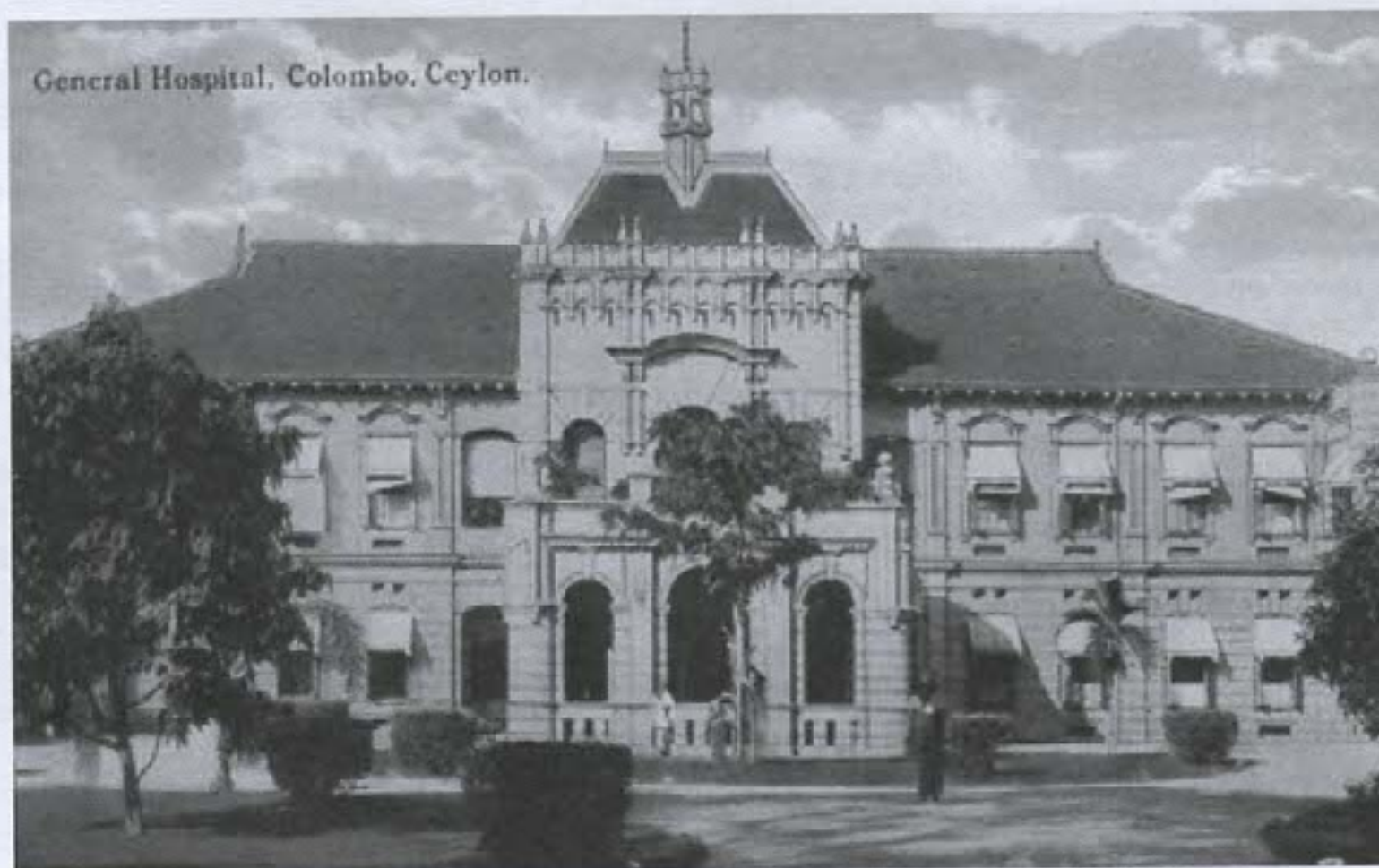
In 1994, a few of us undertook a field trip to an area where, we hoped to learn more about this craft from the boatmen and the boat builders. It was at Kottangahamulla, Kotikawatte, on the old road to Kandy, which followed the river bank.

What we did find, finally, were only wrecks, memories and stories. (An album of photographs and drawings recording the visit was shown) My friends and I sought out the remains of the last of the paru, spoke to the aged last paru Baas-unnehe, locally known as "Hartal Albert". He gave me the names of the different parts of a paru, the dimensions of a 50-ft paru, gave me the Bill of Quantities for building one, and explained why he last ones were all 50ft. long. He added, the old inland waterway stretched from Negombo to Matara though now it stops at Panadura .

The PARUWA now exists only in memories and stories: it has become an intangible heritage.

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.



• The National Hospital of Sri Lanka (NHSL) as the General Hospital is now known, was established during Sir Henry Ward's governorship (1855-1860), with 3000 pounds sterling set aside for the project. It was opened at Longdon Place and in 1900 the street was renamed Kynsey Place after Sir W.R.Kensley. The General Hospital, Colombo was the first hospital to employ women in the nursing staff. To start a College for Nursing, a director and a nurse arrived from England. With the enrolment of well-educated young women, the College opened in 1878. Based on the methods used by Florence Nightingale, the first administrative building was established in 1904 and known as White House, it still stands today in all its majesty in Ward Place, Colombo.

(Photo and caption courtesy Lankapura).

Something rich and very strange

As a one time student of English, (long ago in another century) I have been interested, intrigued and amused at the subtlety with which the Sinhalese 'elite' transformed English spelling into "something rich and strange" – as an indicator of social status, totally absent in phonetic Sinhala spelling of the very same names.

'Old' Families

In 19th century Ceylon, our British rulers favoured the spelling 'oo' to indicate a specific Sinhala sound – which can be seen in the names of old estates such as 'LabOOkellie'. It is thus a fair conclusion that family names spelt, for example, as G-oo-newardene or G-oo-netilleke originally belonged to families that began writing their names in English (i.e. Roman script) in the 19th century. This pattern can also be seen in name endings spelt 'wardene', 'tilleke', 'naike'. Note the 'e' ending. Invariably these families tended to be Christian as well, for the simple reason that the British favoured English competent natives of that faith. It would not be far wrong to conclude that most of those who thus spell their names descend from families who became Anglophone in the 19th century and were probably Christian at that time.

By the 20th century the spread of English education in Ceylon produced a host of not-so-elite families who preferred the example of the 'new' spelling of the British who (for reasons unknown) decided to drop the use of 'oo' and replace it with the less phonetic 'u'. as a result, in the English Telephone Directory G-u-newardenes, G-u-natilakes and others who spelt their names with 'a' endings (29 pages) far outnumber their 'oo' namesakes with the 'e' ending (3 pages), Sadly, for social upmanship, these strange signals automatically disappear in a Sinhala Directory.

The 'C' Factor

I now venture deeper into the more dangerous quicksands of caste, creed and (yes) colour where English competent Sinhalese twisted the English alphabet to make it a marker of caste. The Portuguese 'Perez' is spelt 'Pie'ris', 'Pei'ris', 'Pei'ries' or 'Pee'ris' though spelt and pronounced only in one way in Sinhala. But the manufactured variant English spellings are zealously protected by their protagonists as recognised markers of caste identity. Amusingly casts too are referred by the shorthand of the

English initial of the Sinhala name for each caste e.g. G,K,D etc.

The Portuguese 'Sous(z)a has been phonetically adapted as 'Soysa' in Sinhala. The subtle (English speaking) Sinhalese have worked out a canny formula to indicate caste by the injection of the letter 'Z' (totally non-existent in the Sinhala alphabet) into the English spelling of this name.

Some families possessing other Portuguese names that proved to be popular among several castes took to hyphenating their name with the original (i.e. pre-Portuguese) family name, as an unmistakable marker of caste. The most distinguished example of this practice is Dias-Bandaranaike.

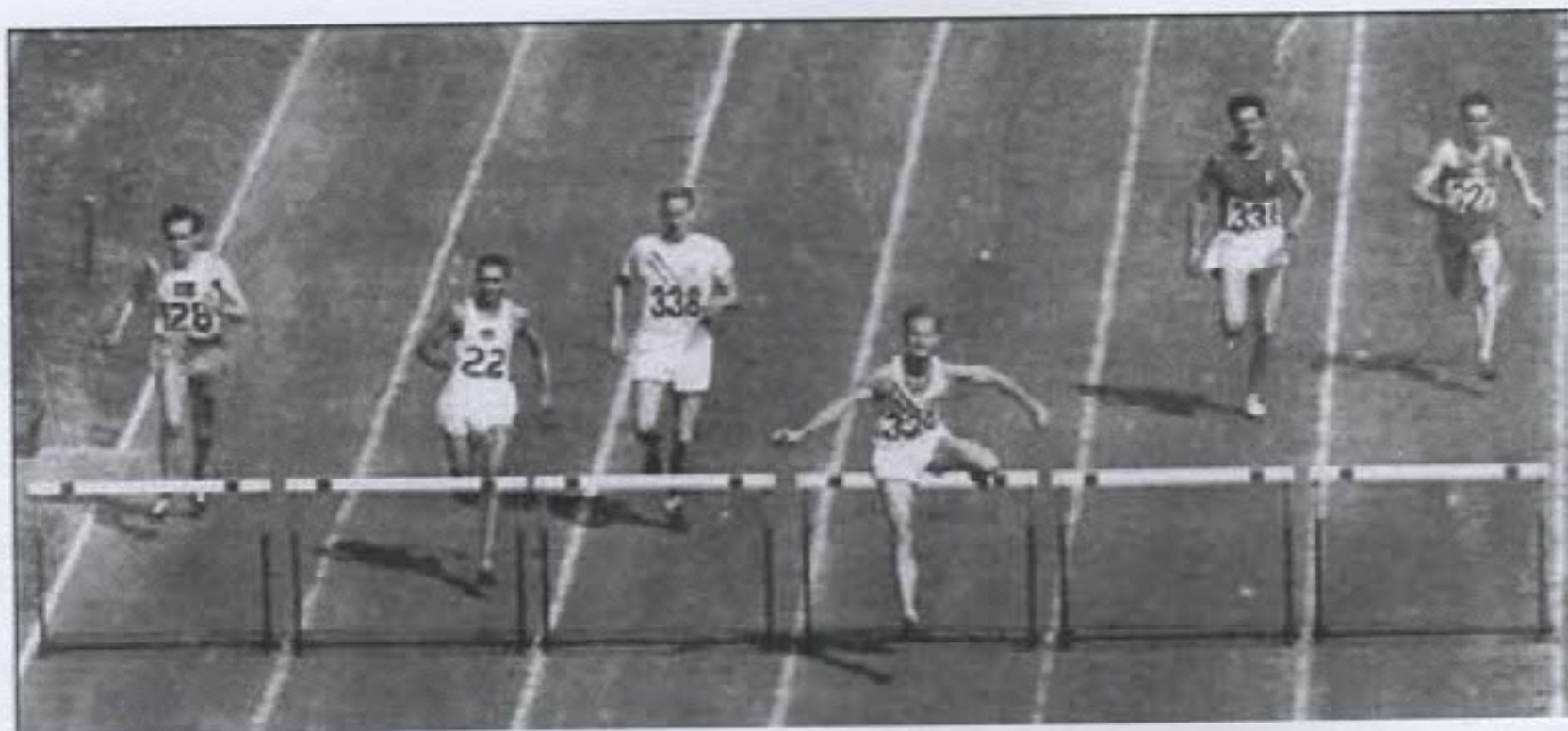
The 'B' Factor

Faced with the massive adoption (exploitation/) of Portuguese, and other European names by the ever-so-adaptable Sinhalese, the Burghers fought a rearguard action using the alphabet to which they had hereditary right. Their main weapons were the absolutely non-Sinhala letters 'F' and 'Z'. The most popular Portuguese names among the Sinhalese (why?) are 'Perera' (75 pages in the Telephone Directory) and 'De Silva' (22). The Burghers reclaimed the plebeian/Sinhala misspelling of 'Perera' by the insertion of an 'I' thus transforming it into 'Pere'I-ra' and flagging their European ancestry. Another version went yet further and dropped the 'P' altogether and substituted it with 'F' thus becoming 'F-ere-I-ras' – unmistakably Burgher.

In the Phone Directory only one descendant of the Portuguese spells his name in the correct way as 'Da Silva' (as does the Brazilian President Lula Da Silva). Most Sinhalese spell their names as 'De Silva' or plain and simple 'Silva'. The Burgher reconstruction (reclamation?) of this European name used the good old non-Sinhala letter 'Z' – thus distinctly marking 'Zilwas' and 'De Zilwas' as clan members.

However, there has been one amusing transformation where an exaggerated bow to phonetic accuracy had led to the well-known Scottish name 'McCleod' being spelt 'Macklawood'!!

From Tissa Devendra's *Quest for Shangri-la* (pp129-131).



(Duncan) White gave Lanka Poetry in Motion and the Silver Lining

OLYMPICS: Dateline London July 1948. Ceylon was known only for its tea. And then the commentator in a worldwide BBC commentary gripped the attention of listeners glued to their radios and transistors:

This is Abrahams of the BBC speaking to you from London. The first event on the cards for this Fourteenth Olympiad—the first heat of the 400 metres hurdles for men, has got off the starting blocks.

And it's the little man in the outer lane who has sprung to a good start. There he is gliding over the hurdles. It's amazing this, but it's true—he is ahead of all others. And now he's making the winning dash for the tape.

Fantastic! Oh! In the excitement I've not even given this little man's name. Yes, he is from Ceylon—and the name's Duncan White!

Well that was how listeners world over received the news when the little man from the little Island became the greatest world class athlete that Sri Lanka has ever produced. Duncan had the best timing in all the heats but there were anxious moments too. In the semi final he was nearly eliminated when he misjudged the finishing

point but in a late spurt made it to get into the final. And what a final it was!

Duncan was leading until he hit the fifth hurdle when he missed his stride and got behind but fought back to third position at the last hurdle. Roy Cochrane of the USA and Bob Larson of Sweden were ahead.

Then came Duncan's do-or-die spurt for the tape when he beat Larson to come second; win Silver; and give his country that ever precious Silver lining.

Both Cochrane and White broke the Olympic record that year and the Ceylonese had the timing of 51.8 secs. (the world record today held by American Kevin Young stands at 46.78secs). When Cochrane and White met in the USA years later, Cochrane said to White magnanimously: 'I had trained specifically for the Olympics for four years and I knew you trained for four months. I had a measure of your run and the strategy was set to beat you. I wonder what would have happened if you had the same training facilities that I enjoyed?'

(This is an excerpt of an article that appeared in the Sunday Observer, July 15, 2012).



COLOMBO CHAPTER
Professor Raj Somadeva ,
Senior Lecturer (Archaeology) &
Professor in Archaeology
will speak on
“Recent Archaeological
findings in Sri Lanka”

On Friday 23rd June 2017
@5.30pm

Questions and discussions will follow

Venue: Organisation of Professional Associations (OPA) Professor Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha, Off Baudhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7 (the OPA is situated midway down Prof Stanley Wijesundera Mw, one end of which is near the army checkpoint close to General's house down Baudhaloka Mw and the other end, opposite the Colombo University grounds, between the newly refurbished Turf Club complex down Race Course Avenue and the Arts/Law Faculty of the Colombo University)

Professor Raj Somadeva is a Senior Lecturer (Archaeology) & Professor in Archaeology. He graduated with a B.A. (Special degree) in Archaeology in 1986 and M.Phil. Degree in Archaeology in 1994 from the University of Kelaniya. In 2006 he was awarded the Ph.D. degree in Archaeology from the Dept. of Archaeology and Ancient History from the Uppsala University of Sweden. In regard to professional training, he has received certificates in “Paleo climatic reconstruction; Advanced geographical information systems applications; Historical Archaeology and Landscape Dynamics in Archaeology from the Dept. of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University of Sweden. He also received certification in Management of Complex Systems from the Swedish Agricultural University in 2000. He is also a Fellow of the Sri Lanka Council of Archaeologists and Member of the World Archaeological Congress. He has held positions as Assistant Director – Sigiriya – UNESCO Sri Lanka Cultural Triangle Project from 1989 – 1994; Field Director – Sri Lanka German joint excavation project 1989 – 1992; Field Director – Sweden Sri Lanka

Settlement Archaeology Project

1989-1994; Co-Director – Pallemalala Excavation Project in 1997; Institutional Coordinator – Sri Lanka Western Australia Maritime Archaeology project held in Galle in 1990; Institutional Coordinator, Exhibition of Ancient Bronze heritage in Sri Lanka, organized by the Dept. of National Museums in 1994. He has been awarded the “Top Ten in Sri Lanka Award for the category of academic leadership and accomplishment in 1998 and the Charles Wallace Research Fellowship awarded by the Institute of Archaeology, University College, London in 2005. He has submitted several papers both locally and internationally at various Archaeological forums. He has been Consultant Archaeologist for excavations at the Pillikuttuwa monastery Gampaha District; Samanabadda monastery in the Colombo District; Pallemalla Shell Midden in Hambantota District; Situlpauvva exploration; Lower Kirindi Oya basin settlement survey; Thanthrimale Cist burial excavation in Anuradhapura. Currently he is researching “Archaeology of the Udawalawe Basin, PGIAR, University of Kelaniya and “Cultural promotion of the Veddah people in Sri Lanka” PGIAR, Ministry of National Heritage & Cultural Affairs.

Members please invite any/all persons who are likely to be interested in attending and/or the proceedings and the Society.

Interested? Please contact persons below.

No fee for attendance.

CONTACT:

Tissa Devendra, (President) e-mail: tisdev@sltnet.lk
 011 250 1489; M.D.(Tony) Saldin (Hony. Secretary)
 e-mail: saldinclan@sltnet.lk +94 777 363366/
 2931315 (Res), 2936402 (O); Asoka de Silva
 (Hony. Treasurer) email: matdes@sltnet.lk
 011 2822933/ +94 775 097517

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*Nagaphon Ghat, Colombo Sahib's mausoleum, Dhaka, 1787,
painting by Johann Zoffany, (See story on page 17).*