

Keeping Our Heritage Alive
CSA

The Ceylanikaum

The Journal of the Ceylon Society of Australia



A naturalist's paradise – **COLOMBO** in the 1940s

– HUGH KARUNANAYAKE Page 9

**The CSA's 20th Birthday
The Journal turns 21**



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The Ceylankam

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From the Editor

With this issue, the Journal (and the CSA) come of age. As J81 leaves the printer, it means that 21 volumes of the The Ceylankan has reached your doorsteps, giving you a great deal of reading pleasure through 20 years in the life of the CSA. Yes, our Society is now 20! These are anniversaries that deserve recognition and celebration. As for the Journal, a fitting way the Editor thought was to present our 'flagship' donned in new garb - colourful covers and a somewhat fresh layout and design. We trust all our members and readers will welcome the emperor's new clothes.

I have secretly waited for a suitable opportunity to give the journal a new look. As though Providence had conspired with him, Hugh Karunanayake submitted an article for publication as he normally does with each issue. This, however, was different. The article was accompanied by so many fine photographs in colour that we would normally convert to black and white. This was the opening I had been dreaming of for a long time. There is a place for everything and it would have been remiss of me to use these excellent photographs in any other way.

A host of people deserve praise and thanks for making these changes possible. Firstly, our contributors. Without their erudite and readable literary efforts, this would not have been possible. In very recent times our contributors have been regular and early with their submissions, enabling me to bring out the journal on time as it happened with the November 2017 issue. Same with J81, again out on time. Keep those articles coming in early and your journal will reach your letterbox by the due date.

Along with Hugh's confession of an undying love for Nature from early childhood, we have Thiru Arumugam in his inimitable fashion write a well-researched article on Dr R.L. Hayman who spent an

entire lifetime pursuing the education of Ceylonese. The author infuses his own sense of gratitude for the contributions this great gentleman made to the education of Sri Lankan youth, including himself as a student of Dr Hayman.

Prof. Mike Sedgwick writes engagingly about his growing interest in matters Sri Lanka which he calls his "Sri Lankan Thread". The professor was bitten on visits to the island country and that, it seems, has been bugging him ever since.

In "Double murder in Galle" The Rambler relates the story of how Van Schuler, the Dissawe of Matara at the time, treated the people in his district with disdain and his slave, an old Malay man died as a result of flogging ordered by Van Schuler. Van Schuler's fate was sealed. He was murdered and his pregnant wife was stabbed as a result during the attack.

While Mervyn Andriesz recounts his essay into the business of the seafood industry and the hurdles he encountered, M. Asoka T. de Silva engagingly continues with his absorbing Brief Biographies series. Classic history!

Samuel Thevabalan Arnold writes with devotion about the role of Christian Missionaries in Jaffna and his close connections with these good people. Another inspiring piece.

The CSA pays tribute to Thiru Arumugam, its President of four wonderful years during which he spared no pain, time or energy to ensure the CSA moved forward, with much determination and example. Thiru Arumugam, one and all, we salute you - you generous, gentle and amiable gentleman. That goes wholeheartedly to your devoted wife Malini for everything she did for the CSA, standing beside you, in difficult days sometimes.

Our warmest welcome to Pauline Gunewardene, who takes over from Thiru. No doubt she will steer the CSA with the zest and the creative zeal she is known for. Rest assured the CSA's magnanimous support will be forthcoming always.

Happy 20th Birthday CSA!

The Ceylon Society of Australia (CSA) celebrates its 20th Birthday on 28 February this year. It was two decades ago that Hugh Karunanayake and Dr Chris Puttock, a scientist from Canberra, seeing the growing interest in the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka, started a society and organised meetings to formalise matters.

The object of the society, (initially called Ceylon Research Society of Australia) to quote from the first editorial by first editor David Goodrich "... is to improve knowledge of Sri

Lanka in as many areas as possible and with members having expertise and interest in so many different fields, we have the potential to learn about "Lanka" in a most affable way. These objects have been followed faithfully to date. Prophetic words!

The CSA has grown from strength to strength under the stewardship of first President Dr Puttock, Hugh Karunanayake, Tony Peries, Sunil de Silva, Harry De Sayrah, Thiru Arumugam and newly elected incumbent Pauline Gunewardene.

Here's to many more years of friendship and camaraderie.

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Our Readers write

Enjoy reading about Colonial Ceylon

While it is 80 years since I moved to Victoria after birth and early childhood on a tea estate near Kandy, and a brief visit in 1985, I still enjoy reading about colonial Ceylon and Sri Lanka in *The Ceylankan*. I was pleased to read the article about Sir Charles Forbes, on page 20 of the August 2017 issue of the magazine. He was the younger brother of O.B. Forbes of Forbes and Walker, tea and rubber brokers in Colombo, who was brother-in-law of my father, who lived in Ceylon from 1912 to 1927.

It is some years since I contributed a couple of articles to *The Ceylankan* about Lionel Wendt, who was a close friend of my aunt Gladys Forbes, wife of O.B.F.; she left me some entertaining correspondence and photos by Lionel that I used for these articles.
BILL MACKIE, Vermont, VIC.

"Social stratification" in Uva plantation life

Regarding "The Merry Men of Uva", first sentence, the British administration of Ceylon lasted only about 152 years (1796-1948), not 250. I am also surprised that the author finds "quirky aspects of social interaction and especially social stratification", in the fact that the bungalow staff and visiting dignitary's staff are not included in the main group of important people in Uva for the photograph. I doubt that even today a group photograph of senior Sri Lankan businessmen and administrators would also include their domestic and office staff. However, as readers may be aware, group photographs of the managers and junior staff were usually taken when the senior manager of an estate (the PD) changed, and in this case, it was normal for the families to be included. Does this show "social stratification"?

With regard to the article by my old friend Brian Parker, there were until recently several people in the UK who participated in the incident with the cannon at the Passara Gun Club which he describes.
DAVID EBBELS, Harpenden, UK

Writer of "The Merry Men of Uva" HUGH KARUNANAYAKE, Melbourne, VIC replies:
Thank you David Ebbels for pointing out the obvious error regarding the period of British occupation.

With regard to social stratification, the photo only goes to confirm the very distinct social stratification that existed in the plantations then, and less today. The photograph seemed a fairly informal one, but the exclusion of domestic staff reflected the social distance that was kept. In those days even Assistant Superintendents were not deemed the social equal of a Superintendent or Manager and did not usually fraternise. The social gap between

Superintendents and what was called "minor staff" ie. staff in the factory and estate office, was more distinct and observed rigidly. A Superintendent was not expected to visit the home of a chief clerk for instance, although they may both live in separate quarters on the same estate and with the nearest neighbour miles away. That kind of social snobbery was not evident in life in the rest of the country and that aspect of life in a plantation was not only quirky but worth highlighting, in my view. If Senior Sri Lankan businessmen of today meet informally as they did in this photograph, I have little doubt that they would not deliberately exclude whoever else was present at the time the photo was taken.

Magic touch?

At page 19 you have published a report by Lorenz Perera of the 1958 Royal-Trinity [Bradby] encounter.

Our Rugby Master identifies the magnificent move by the Royal left winger Lal Senaratne, making a brilliant unorthodox move, passed the ball to Lorenz Perera who touched down to give Royal a 06-00 win in the Golden Jubilee encounter.

Among the heroes mentioned is "Rankine" who I believe is Tony [A.M] Rankine, who if I am not mistaken is a CSA Member and attends our meetings with his wife Melanie.

Perhaps I, as a proud Old Royalist of the 1950-1958 vintage should offer a postscript for the next journal

I have copied this, and could someone correct me if I, in my dotage, have encountered a Senior Moment!
SUNIL DE SILVA, Gosford, NSW.

Your views are valuable!

Do you have a point of view to share with our readers? Can you shed some new light on a topic discussed? Is there anything you like or dislike published here and have something constructive to offer about it? Then express your opinion in the Letters column. Please keep them brief, no more than 400 words preferably. Letters may be edited because of length and/or content.

Just move on!

A car's windshield is so large and the rearview mirror is so small? That's because our PAST is not as important as our FUTURE. So, Look Ahead and Move on.

All things in life are temporary. If going well, enjoy it, they will not last forever. If going wrong, don't worry, they can't last long either.

PRESIDENT THIRU STEPS DOWN

by Hugh Karunanayake

Thiru Arumugam, our President who guided the destiny of our Society for four consecutive years, has decided to step down. He is succeeded by Pauline Gunewardene. As members would, no doubt, have observed, Thiru



has led the Society in a most efficient manner, marked by a general sense of cordiality and inclusiveness which made the Society stand out as

a centre for well informed and open discussion on the history and heritage of Sri Lanka.

An engineer by profession, he was meticulous in the planning and organisation of the Society's work, be it the conduct of our quarterly meetings, the management of our membership roll and funds or the relations with our two Chapters in Melbourne and Colombo. Many members may not fully appreciate the volume of work put in by the President to ensure the smooth functioning of the Society. It certainly

takes a toll on one's time, especially when one is a retiree wanting to put his feet up after a lengthy working career.

Thiru's wife Malini has been a most willing and helpful partner in this enterprise and we thank her too for her invaluable contribution.

As members are aware, Thiru was the Secretary of the Society for three years before he took office as President. His contribution, however, does not end there. Anyone who flicks through the pages of *The Ceylankan* over the past decade or so would note the immense contribution made by Thiru in the numerous, well researched, original articles he had contributed through the years. His contributions have been the product of original research and not a composition from publications elsewhere and thus gives his articles the stamp of originality which in turn helps elevate the standard of the Society's flag bearer to an internationally acclaimed journal of its genre.

Although we will miss Thiru's quiet presence and gentle disposition, we are fortunate that he has agreed to serve in the Committee, thus giving the Society the benefit of his wise counsel and experience. We also do hope that he will continue to make those interesting contributions to *The Ceylankan*.

On behalf of our members, I would like to thank Thiru for his most valuable service and wish him and Malini good health and many more years of happy and contented retirement.

A warm welcome to new President- Mrs Pauline Gunewardene

Mrs Pauline Gunewardene was unanimously elected President of the CSA at the AGM held on 25 November 2017 at the Pennant Hills Community Centre hall. She has the honour of becoming the first female to be voted in to the important position.

Pauline was born in Colombo and educated throughout at Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitiya. She holds an ATCL Teaching Diploma in Speech from the London Trinity College of Music. She commenced her working career as a Personal Assistant (PA) to Arthur C. Clarke, the renowned scientist and writer, at the time when communication satellites burst upon the world in 1960 and Clarke was internationally

acclaimed for his foresight in writing a scientific paper on his theory of this technology as early as 1945.

Pauline believes that her time working for Arthur Clarke was the high point of her career. In addition to preparing his prolific writing of scientific fact and fiction for publication, she also handled his communications with NASA scientists like Wernher von Braun during the first human spaceflight in 1961, correspondence with science fiction writers like



Happenings (continued from page 5)

Isaac Asimov and Ray Bradbury, being part of the Clarke-Wilson Associates discovery of a treasure haul of silver coins from an ancient shipwreck off the Great Basses Reef now sitting in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, preparing scripts and doing the continuity for Mike Wilson's films *Ranmuthu Duwa* and *Getawarayo* and working as a result with Sri Lanka's famous screen stars Gamini Fonseka, Joe Abeywickrema, Amaradeva, and others.

Subsequently, she worked in Colombo as PA to the Chairman/MD of Pfizer and later to the Chairman/MD of Shaw Wallace & Hedges Co. Ltd.

In 1974 Pauline left for London with husband Laki and their son Ranil and daughter Anoushka, where she continued her PA career working for the Shell Company during their three-year stay.

She enjoyed working in London with the ease of travel to the Continent it brought and the fun of being there during the heady days of hippy and flower power with ABBA the full rage. The Gunewardenes returned to Sri Lanka in late 1976 and she began working in 1977 again as PA to Lal Jayasundera, the Chairman/MD of Hayleys. Pauline migrated to Australia with her family in 1978 and began working as PA to General Managers at City Mutual, then

Prudential, Union Shipping and lastly for Nestle, from where she retired in 2011.

In between her working life, Pauline has been actively involved in serving on the Committees of various community organisations, such as the Students Federation of Alliance Francaise de Ceylan in Colombo, the Sri Lanka Association of NSW, the Sri Lanka Cricket Development Foundation of NSW, the Sydney Kolam Maduwa and now at the helm of the Ceylon Society of Australia.

Her interests are varied with theatre, ballet, opera, history, politics and travel among them.

Pauline and Laki are blessed with five grand children.

(Photos by are by Mahal Selvadurai).

Also see Page 14 for more **Happenings**.

Books and blindness

A blind person asked the Pope: "Can there be anything worse than losing my eye sight?" He replied: "Yes, losing your vision!"

Friendship is like a BOOK. It takes few seconds to burn, but it takes years to write.

Important notice regarding CSA subscriptions for 2018

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

Membership subscriptions for 2018 become due shortly and please arrange payment, together with any arrears where applicable. Payments could be made by an Australian dollar cheque in favour of "Ceylon Society of Australia" posted to Deepak Pritamdas, Treasurer CSA, P O Box 489, Blacktown, NSW 2148, Australia. Alternatively, a direct bank transfer could be made to the CSA Bank Account in Commonwealth Bank: BSB 062308, Account No. 1003 8725. Please do not fail to include with the transfer your name as payee, otherwise we will have no way of identifying the payee. We have had two payments recently

without the payee's name and we are unable to identify who has sent these payments.

For payments from overseas, if you have difficulty in sending the payment in Australian dollars, you could please send a bank draft or bank transfer in US dollars or Sterling pounds. We regret that personal cheques in foreign currencies are not acceptable. Since our Bank charges us 10 Australian dollars for converting a foreign currency payment to Australian dollars, please add 10 Australian dollars to the amount due and convert to US dollars by multiplying by 0.80, or if sending in sterling pounds, multiply by 0.60. These multipliers reflect approximately the current rates of exchange used by our Bank. For overseas bank transfers our Commonwealth Bank Swift Code is: CTBAAU2S

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

Liberty means responsibility, That is why most men dread it.

— George Bernard Shaw

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



By M. Asoka T. De Silva

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

Cordiner, J. (1807)

Rev. James Cordiner resided in Ceylon for five years (1799-1804) as Chaplain to the garrison of Colombo, and was principal of all the schools in the island, during which time he was the only clergyman of the Church of England in any of its settlements. His "Description of Ceylon" contains an account of the Country, its inhabitants and the natural products of the country. It also includes a narrative of a tour round the island in 1800; the British Campaign in Kandy in 1805, and a journey to Rameswaran in India in 1804. Nothing more is known about his life and times.

Cosmos Indicoplustes (547 AD)

Cosmos Indicoplustes, an Egyptian merchant in the 6th century AD, probably from Alexandria, who plied his trade in Alexandria, the Red Sea port of Adulis (Sawākin), and Ceylon (Sri Lanka), calling at the island of Socotra and the ports of the Malabar Coast of South India on the way.



• Cosmos Indicoplustes.

He died in 550 AD before he could complete the revision of Ptolemy's cosmography done during 545 to 550, and one of the last portions on which he was employed was an account of *Taprobane* taken down from the reports of Sopater, a Greek trader whom he had met at Adule in Ethiopia when on his return from Ceylon.

Cosmos acquired the name of

Indicoplustes from the voyages he made to India. It is said to be the name given to an anonymous Nestorian author of the twelve-book - *Christian Topography*, written a few years before the Second Council of Constantinople. He had become a monk in the later period of his life. He was most probably a native of Alexandria, and may have been of Greek parentage. His education was confined to the more elementary branches of knowledge, such as would fit him for the career he pursued in the earlier part of his life – that of a merchant. Yet so inquisitive was his turn of mind, and so sharp his intellect that he eventually acquired such a knowledge of literature and science as raised him to the level of the culture of his time, and to his being accepted as a capable exponent and defender of the Christian faith.

Cosmas was a man of his time, one for whose interest in theological questions took precedence over those of topography and animal life, with which he

was also profoundly and intelligently concerned. He eventually became a monk. Though he had never studied theological questions systematically, he claimed to be a follower of the Nestorian Catholic. The *Christian Topography* was written over a period of several years: the first five books were compiled for a friend, Pamphilus, and the remainder as occasion arose: partly to answer critics of the original books, and partly to provide evidence from earlier writers for the truth of his understanding of scripture, and (Bk. XI) to describe the animals and other curiosities he had encountered in his travels, especially to the island of *Taprobane* (Ceylon).

Though Cosmos had written about Ceylon, there are no authentic records to confirm that he had visited the Island. It is believed that his account of Sri Lanka is based on Sopater's personal observations during his visit to the Island 30 years earlier, which had apparently been related to Cosmos. It is believed that Cosmos must have been writing his account about the year 547 AD.

The first concern of Cosmas, however, was theology. He aimed at proving, contrary to prevailing Greek and some Christian theories, that the universe had the same shape as Moses' tabernacle, that it was in the form of a cube and not a sphere. The earth was a flat, oblong table, 12,000 miles long and 6,000 miles wide, surrounded by ocean, beyond which was Paradise, where Adam and Eve had lived. The geographical descriptions that Cosmas provides are therefore incidental to his main purpose, but they were nonetheless very accurate.

Dionysius Perigetes (36 AD)

Dionysius Perigetes was an ancient poet and geographer, concerning whom there is no certain information, except for what is known from the elder Pliny. Pliny, speaking of the Persian Alexandria, afterwards called "Antioch", and at last "Charrax", could not miss the opportunity of paying his respects to a person who had so much obliged him, and whom he had professed to follow above all men in the geographical part of his work. Pliny notes that "Dionysius was a native of this Alexandria, and that he had the honour to be sent by Augustus to survey the eastern part of the world, and to make reports and observations about its state and condition, for the use of the emperor's eldest son, who was at that time preparing an expedition into "Armenia, Parthia, and Arabia".

This passage, though seemingly explicit enough, has not been thought sufficient by the critics to determine the time when Dionysius lived. Dionysius wrote a great number of pieces, enumerated by Suidas and his commentator Eustathius, but his "Periegesis," or survey of the world, is the only one remaining; and it would be superfluous to say, that this was one of the most exact systems of ancient geography, when it had been already observed, that Pliny himself proposed it for his pattern.

Although his book was said to be more valuable for matter than manner, it had been thought that he had a genius capable of more sublime undertakings, and that he constantly made the Muses the companions, though not the guides of his travels. As proof of this, reference has been made to his descriptions of the island of *Lucca* inhabited by departed heroes; of the monstrous and terrible whales in *Taprobana*; of the poor Scythians that dwelt by the Meotic Lake; to the account of himself when he describes the Caspian sea, and of the swans and bacchanals on the banks of Cayster, which showed him to have possessed no small share of poetic spirit. Dionysius apparently refers to *Taprobane* and its monsters, and describing the route to the island as, 'And from thence the vessel's course being turned towards the west, immediately in front of the southern promontory of Kolis, you will come to a large island, *Taprobane*, mother of Asia-born elephants' etc.

Diodorus Siculus (44 BC)

Diodorus Siculus was born in Agyrium, Sicily and flourished in the 1st century BC. This Greek historian was the author of a universal history, *Bibliothēkē* (known in Latin as *Bibliotheca historica*), that ranged from the age of mythology to 60 BC. Diodorus lived during the time of Julius Caesar and Augustus, and his



• *Diodorus Siculus*

own statements make it clear that he traveled in Egypt during 60–57 BC, and spent several years in Rome. The latest event mentioned by him belongs to the year 21 BC. His history consisted of 40 books, of which 1–5 and 11–20 had survived, and was divided into three parts. He outlined his plan in Book 1; Books 1–6 treated the mythic history of the non-Hellenic and Hellenic tribes to the destruction of Troy; Books 7–17 end with Alexander's death; and Books 18–40 continue the history as far as the beginning of Caesar's Gallic Wars. The extant Books 11–20, from the second and third parts, cover the years 480–302 BC. The *Bibliothēkē*, invaluable where no other continuous historical source had survived, remedies

to some extent the loss of the works of earlier authors from which it was compiled. Diodorus does not always quote his authorities, but in the books that have survived, his most important sources for Greek history were certainly Ephorus (480–340 BC) and Hieronymus of Cardia (323–302); for Roman history he was heavily dependent on Polybius and Posidonius.

Philalethes (1817) quotes from an account of *Taprobane* by Diodorus, which according to him is an equal mixture of fable and truth. Apparently Diodorus had described the inhabitants of the Island of Ceylon as characterized by extraordinary length of life and of low disease conditions. However, he is claimed to have had better information of the Island's position and extent than most of his contemporaries.

El Edris (Idrisi) (1099 – 1154 AD)

Idrisi or Edrisi was born in 1099 AD in Ceuta, of a family which ruled over Malaga after the fall of the Khalifs of Cordova. He died after 1154 AD. A Nubian philosopher and geographer, he traveled in Europe, Asia Minor, and Mediterranean lands

and settled at the court of Roger II of Sicily, for whom he made a silver celestial globe and a map of the earth engraved on a plate of silver. He completed a description of the earth, compiled from his studies and observations, and from the reports of travelers sent



• *El Edris (Idrisi)*.

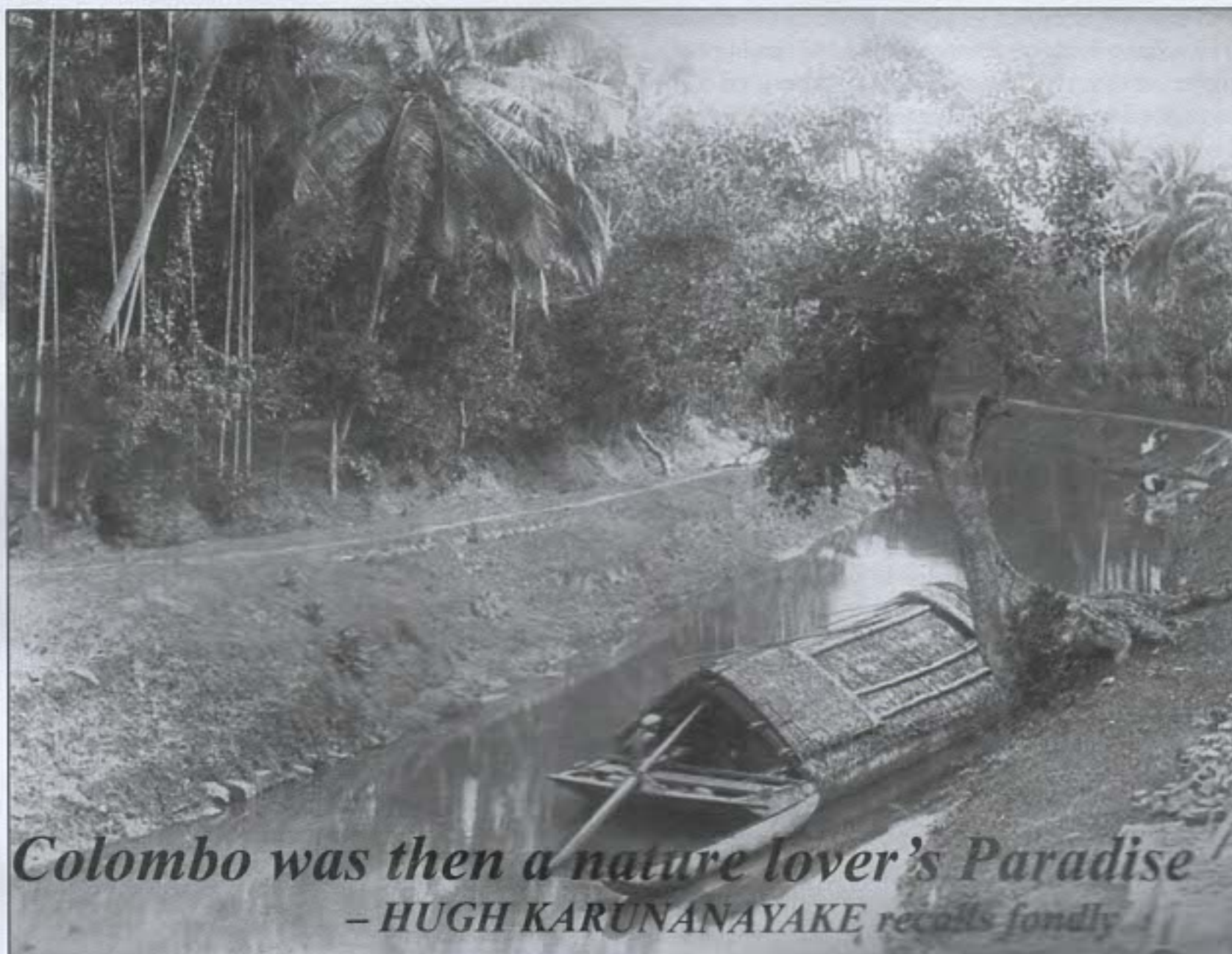
out by Roger II. This monumental compendium—called the *Kitab Rujjar* (the Book of Roger)—is the most important geographic work of the period. Idrisi divided the earth into seven horizontal climatic zones, each divided vertically into 11 arbitrary sections.

Writing in 1154 AD, Edrisi had confirmed the account of Abou-Zeyd Hassan as to the toleration of all sects of Ceylon by the main inhabitants. He had referred to 12 cities in the island which have however, not been identified. Of the Arabian authors of the middle ages, he is claimed to be the one who had dwelt mostly on Ceylon. Interestingly he had also mentioned that during that period, sugar cane was cultivated in Ceylon. However, he seems to have recognised two islands of Ceylon: 'Saranda' as being 1200 miles in circumference, and 'Sarandib' as being 80 miles long and 80 miles broad.

(All photographs courtesy Google).

Symphony by Wordsworth?

How thankful we ought to be that Wordsworth was only a poet and not a musician. Fancy a symphony by Wordsworth! Fancy having to sit it out! And fancy what it would have been if he had written fugues! – Samuel Butler in *Notebooks*.



Colombo was then a nature lover's Paradise – HUGH KARUNANAYAKE recalls fondly

•A view of the canal from the Pamankade Bridge taken in 1890 before the concrete slabs were introduced to line the sides. On the left is a footpath which was widened to become Sri Saranankara Road, on the right Dehiwela Canal Bank. Note the vegetation on either side and hardly a house to be seen.

growing up in mid-20th century Colombo was a fascinating experience to any young person. That was the era when urban growth was taking place at a pace that afforded local fauna to thrive at will without any restrictions. Colombo South with its tree lined avenues and homes with spacious gardens provided sanctuary to a wide range of fauna ranging from avi fauna to reptiles. As a five-year old just admitted to Royal Preparatory School, I was mesmerised by the “golden beetles” that lived in the Andara trees that stood on the perimeter of the school grounds on Racecourse Avenue. Many of us five-year olds fascinated by the shiny green gold sheen of the beetles, with great delight, collected the beetles some of them dead and others still alive and took them home. The live ones did not live long, they were away from their natural surroundings, and we innocents knew nothing about their sustenance requirements. Also, keeping beetles was done in secrecy as our parents would not have countenanced it. Looking back on those childhood days, I believe that my interest in natural history may have had its beginnings in the school yard. Not long after my interest turned into rearing and breeding tropical fish. That interest was

abiding and lasted through my adulthood even into retirement in Australia where I kept koi carp and other tropical fish for many years.

Our home was at the Pamankade end of Havelock Road. One side of our garden faced the Dehiwela canal. Between the canal and our garden fence was a footpath with bushes of lantana on either side. The footpath commenced on Havelock Road near the Pamankade Bridge and went along the side of the canal where it ended at Hampden Lane, Wellawatte. It was no road, just a footpath, only a bicycle could traverse along it, but it had an official name “Dehiwela Canal Bank” on a street sign board at the Havelock Road end. The area was teeming with talagoyas, kabaragoyas, and other reptiles. Very few families lived in the properties in the area, mostly owned by absentee landlords who invariably had a cadjan shack where a “caretaker” lived. Occasionally we would see a “mahattaya” (ie. a person who wore shirt and trousers as against the local folk who were in sarong or reddha, invariably barebodied from the waist upwards) arriving with a gun and shooting down a “talaya”. There were no shanties then, and the right to pluck coconuts from the trees that grew on the bank

had to be obtained with a permit from the government. The canal was clean and unpolluted and "padda boats" traversed along its waterway bringing firewood. Those were the days when most homes used firewood for cooking. Although town gas was available to homes within the Municipality, most homes did not avail of the service. Kerosene stoves became common about a decade later and with that the growth of the firewood industry slowed down. Next door to our home was one of the many firewood depots or "daramaduwas" that existed in Colombo at the time, serving homes with firewood. The firewood came in padda boats and were unloaded on to the daramaduwa where several people were employed to cut them down to smaller stakes for ready use in the kitchen. The wood was mainly old rubber trees being cut down in the Kalutara district to be replanted with the higher latex yielding bud rubber. The old rubber wood logs were called "bola dara". The canal, originally built by the Dutch and later expanded during British times, connected the Kalu ganga at Kalutara with the Bolgoda Lake, and thence veered along through Nedimale, Dehiwela, Pamankade on to Narahenpita.

The canal was lined on both banks with concrete slabs, each about four foot long, invariably about three of those slabs placed one over the other horizontally and held together with thick concrete posts hammered into the ground, which prevented the slabs from falling into the water. Every couple of yards there would be a concrete post just above water level and served as a useful perch for line fishermen. The water was clear and one could easily see the bottom of the canal on most days.

As a ten-year old schoolboy, I would often return home around 4 pm, have a hurried tiffin and then run to the canal and have a ringside view of happenings in the water. It had a very pleasing and near-tranquilising effect on me, and I was drawn to it like a man possessed. For many weeks I watched a big koraliya (*etropus suratensis*) with her large brood of newly spawned young leading them along the sides of the bank. There were plenty of koraliyas, loolas, titteyas, and udahandeyas in the water. During the monsoon the water levels of the canal would rise and bring in brackish water exotics normally seen in the canal where it pours out into the sea near the railway bridge at Wellawatte. The section of the canal near the Wellawatte Bridge was called Moda Ela or Layard's Folly. There would be scats (*scatophagidae*) and monos (*monodactylidae*) in abundance during the monsoon, all in better shapes and colours than native fish but not difficult to rear in a fish tank. Another attraction was a kingfisher who used to hover around the bank frequently but I could not find its nest though I saw the bird later with two new born chicks. The canal was quite deep as it was dredged regularly to enable boats to ply. One day my younger brother's classmate Gamini Wijepura visited to spend the day

with us, and we went to the canal to catch some Scats. I lost my footing, fell in, but could not swim and bobbed up and down like a cork, my feet not touching the bottom. I was able to grab Gamini's outstretched hand, however, to save me from an early watery grave. Four decades later on a visit to Australia, Gamini decided to give me a surprise visit. He called me and I was struggling to recognise his voice when he blurted: "What man, can't you even recognise the voice of someone who saved your life forty years ago?" That brought me to my senses!

Those were the days! With the unlimited growth of shanties in later years, that tropical paradise which I enjoyed as a young person was lost forever. Paradise Lost indeed!

Every time I passed a local waterway, I would take a close look, and one day on my way to the Public Library which was then in Edinburgh Crescent near the Museum, I looked into a large drain flowing with water and to my amazement saw a large number of multi-coloured guppies. All this led to my interest in tropical fish and when I was a teenager, was well and truly hooked on rearing and breeding tropical fish. In later years I used to travel down to Matugama, Agalawatte, Moragolla and other villages where there were many fresh water tributaries of the Kalu Ganga and where several varieties of the Genus *Puntius*, commonly known as Barbs, abounded. There was the attractive bulath hapaya endemic to Sri Lanka which became much sought after by overseas collectors and caught by exporters to near extinction.

The best aquarist in Colombo then was Vicki Atukorale who lived down Peterson Lane (within walking distance from our home) with his partner Eric Conway. Both were avid aquarists, and the garden of their home looked like a tropical paradise with fish ponds, orchids, and cacti all arranged very artistically. Atu was also adept with reptiles and he always had a pet estuarine crocodile, very snappy and difficult to tame. He also had a pair of tame otters kept well away from the fish, but one day the otters somehow managed to get into one of the gold fish ponds and feasted to their hearts content until they were discovered and led to their enclosure looking rather guilty! Among the reptiles kept by Atu were many of the viper family including the tic polonga, pala polonga and the kunakatuwa, all poisonous but not always fatally poisonous, if you were unlucky enough to be bitten especially by a tic polonga. An acquaintance of the time by the name Sidney Steinwall who was rearing a tic polonga tragically lost his life when his pet snake bit him fatally. At home I shared a room with my elder brother and I had a glass fronted reptile box on a small table by my bed with a lovely pol mal karawalaya or gold and black ornate tree snake (*chrysopelea ornata*). It was a beautiful creature, mildly poisonous but very docile, and easy to handle but my brother used to be very uneasy. Each night he

would make sure that the door to the box was firmly closed before he went to sleep. He obviously was worried but never did he tell me about his concerns. I also had a very tame eight-foot python which I used to force feed with strips of beef every three weeks or so as I did not fancy getting live prey for it.

My close friend Chelliah Canagaraj, now resident in Middlesex in the UK for the past four decades or more, then resident in his parental home close to ours, was also interested in reptiles and the two of us used to travel to the Attidiya marshes in search of arakukkas (*natrix stolata*) an extremely docile non-poisonous snake which grows to about 15 inches in length and curls into a small box easily. Canaks' elder brother Chellaraj was one of the first to own a Vespa scooter in Colombo which Canaks used to borrow for our forays into Attidiya. We saw beautiful flamingos from the Dehiwela Zoo who used to fly out daily to the Attidiya marshes and feed during the day, and by dusk they would fly back to the zoo! I wonder whether this still happens or whether the Attidiya marshes are still there? I had a few of the arakukkas, and when in a mischievous mood, which were not infrequent, take one of them with me to the movies carefully hidden in an empty cigarette tin. My close friends were aware of this, but I used to scare

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the living daylights out of acquaintances who did not expect the surprise that was to spring at them when offered a fag from my tin! Also in my menagerie were two star tortoises who lived in our garden for many years. One of them I found as a little baby about two inches in size, scrambling slowly across the Puttalam Road when I halted the car and picked it up. It was a great favourite with my kids when they were growing up. They would, now and then, stray into neighbouring gardens, but we were always alerted by our neighbours or the wandering tortoise brought by a domestic aide with the words "menna mahaththayage ibba"! We had to leave the ibbas behind when we migrated to Australia 33 years ago. In recent years, I have tried to purchase a star tortoise for my grandkids but they are a protected species now and international transport prohibited.

In those days there were many horticultural nurseries in Colombo supplying the needs of homes which generally had reasonably sized gardens. The larger gardens of homes in Havelock Town and Cinnamon Gardens invariably had a thota karaya or

gardener for garden maintenance, but the supplies such as seeds, plants, manures etc. came from the nurseries. Popular plants of yesteryear such as balsams, dahlias, chrysanthemums, and cannas are no longer seen, due most likely to the lack of pro-active horticulturists and, of course, the lack of space! Then, there was the large Oasis Nursery in Felsinger Town opposite the Spinning and Weaving Mills, run by a Greek named Cosmas. There was also Trevine Gardens at Layards Road run very efficiently by Ian Oorloff on a smaller block of about half an acre. After Cosmas went back during WWII, one of his staff took over the business under the same name and later moved to Reid Avenue. Most of the orchids which at the time were of the non-hybrid species type such as Cattleya Skinneri, Bowringiana, Gigas etc. all of which grew wild in South America, were plants grown by me. Although originally imported by Oasis Nurseries, importation of plants from South America was later banned due to potential risk to the rubber plantation industry. The great orchid favourites in that era, however, were Vanda Teres and Vanda Joachim. The latter is now the national flower of Singapore. They were semi-terete orchids which almost every decent garden in Colombo featured at the time. To generate interest in orchids was the Orchid Society of Ceylon which published a quarterly illustrated bulletin called *Orchidologia Zeylanica*. The prime mover in the Society for many years was Dr Ernest Soysa then living down Barnes Place. As for cannas, they were imported from a well known Indian Nursery, Pestonjee P Pocha and Sons, Poona. The President Canna was the best among the cannas then, very popular, but like the Vanda orchids hardly ever seen now.

On my recent visits to Colombo, the change in landscape became very evident, with hardly any greenery to be seen. The words of the Tom Jones song "It's good to touch the green, green grass of home" alas, is no longer applicable as there is no grass to touch! The younger generation growing up in Colombo would not have the pleasure of living in a naturally tropical environment as it used to be many decades ago. It is my belief that it is important for both young people and old to be able to commune with nature to enjoy a more wholesome and relaxed life style, and to draw inspiration from natural surroundings. This void which is quite stark to the observer, needs to be addressed by our town planners. Singapore has done admirably in this regard. Although it has urbanised very rapidly within the small land area that is available to that city state, it has given primacy to urban landscaping and the results are very pleasing indeed. In contrast urban sprawl radiating out of Colombo seems to have devoured the landscape around Colombo haphazardly, and the city and its environs need some intervention with well planned landscaping and the retention of the area's tropical character given adequate recognition and importance.



Prof. Mike Sedgwick

Prof. Mike Sedgwick *from Southampton sews cultural connections on discovering a Sri Lankan Thread*

Should a foreigner write about Sri Lanka and Sri Lankans? You don't even understand your own countrymen, a Sri Lankan friend told me, how are you going to understand us? True, but it is fun to try.

While enjoying a beer at one of the beach bars at Mount Lavinia, the young waiter asked what I was reading. It was Leonard Woolf's 'A Village in the Jungle.' One of the best books by a foreigner about Ceylon said the barman. His opinion is backed by Michael Ondaatje who also cited Robert Knox, 'An Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon in the East Indies' (1681). The barman sat with us for a pleasant few minutes discussing Sri Lankan literature.

He explained that he always read books by foreigners about Sri Lanka because he liked to learn what we foreigners thought of Sri Lankans. Because of him and any others like him, if there are any, I am determined to try and write something here.

Kandyan Thread

'Which are your best stamps?' asked a school friend when I was 10-years old. Those from Ceylon, I told him. They were attractive, showed colourful scenes of coconut groves, tea and rubber plantations and a temple of a tooth. What was that? I wondered. In those dreary post-World War II days in the north of England anything cheerful and bright was valuable. We had lessons about Ceylon tea and Ceylon began to spin a thread in my mind.

It was 25 years before I picked up the thread again early in my professional career. I was consultant clinical neurophysiologist in Southampton University Hospital and I needed an assistant. The tall but stooping and thoughtful figure of Nimal Senanayake appeared and we worked together for a year and a half. He subsequently became Professor and then Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Peradeniya University and every few years he invited me to Sri Lanka to give a lecture or two.

Meanwhile, we had developed a training scheme in Southampton for Sri Lankan doctors who came for two years or so to train in Neurology. One became a firm friend, Vajira Weerasinghe. Now Professor of Physiology and Dean of the Faculty and a former Deputy Vice Chancellor, he became my Sri Lankan mentor.

After retirement, my wife Brenda, and I decided that we would like to go and live in another culture. Live in a different culture, not visit as a tourist, a holidaymaker or a voluntary worker under the umbrella of a charity. Live, in the sense of renting a house, running it, paying the utility bills, cooking local food, getting on with the neighbours and doing something useful as well.

We met a wonderful Kandyan called Bernard Arnoldo who found us a house on a hillside just below Hotel Topaz in Kandy. Our next piece of good fortune was to discover Manoj who became our tuk-tuk driver and helped in so many ways. He did not demand US dollars but charged us fairly in Rupees, he came when we called for him or sent a friend if he could not come. He advised us and interpreted for us and if he heard of a problem, he was there to check that we were OK.

My wife had to develop new housekeeping skills. There was a host of small animals living in the house who needed to be discouraged. Bernard, brought up a Christian but now a fervent Buddhist, taught us how to manage pests without killing them. Using the oven for the first time was a challenge, testing our initiative and knowledge of gas bottles, taps and valves. Eventually it lit with a small explosion and as it warmed, no end of wild life fled the flames. The toaster was a surprise when it popped up the toast with a burned gecko as well.

That November it rained and rained. Land all over Kandy began to slide down hills. The tunnel in Anniewatte was blocked by a landslide, railway lines were closed and rivers burst their banks. Gangs of men were out clearing drains and fallen trees. 'I don't like the look of that rock up on the hill, I'm sure it has moved,' said Brenda. The next day, I knew she was right; it had moved and as I watched it suddenly broke away and came bounding in through our sitting room window together with buckets of mud and small stones. Glass shattered and the window frame was damaged. We cleared up as best we could and went out to Queen's Hotel for dinner.

Manoj drove us home that night along roads that were now rivers. It was not an easy journey. The next morning, we found that our front garden had disappeared and spilled into the rooms of Bernard's

house below. His house was structurally intact but full of mud. No one was hurt but he had to move out for a couple of months. In spite of this tragedy, Bernard turned up early in the morning to check that we were unhurt. While we slept he had checked during the night that our house was still standing.



• One house, near our local supermarket just slid down the hill slowly

The rains continued and a whole family living on Deveni Rajasinghe Mawatha was engulfed in a landslide. One house, near our local supermarket just slid down the hill slowly enough for the family to leave but they were unable to rescue any belongings, including their car. A professional geologist looked at our house and said that he would not care to live in it because of the instabilities.

Maybe we should pack up and go home. The thought occurred to us both. But, we came to live in a different culture, this is part of it, let's just get on with it. We did compromise a little by going down to the Galle Face Hotel in Colombo for a few days to recuperate.

Christmas

What happens at Christmas time in Sri Lanka? We were about to find out. Brenda had been drafted in to produce the school play for the Kindergarten and they performed Aladdin. She helped with the nativity play and we were delighted to see Mary was played by a Hindu, Joseph was a Buddhist and the three Kings were Christian, Buddhist and Muslim. Children of that age should be of no religion at all but the religious men get to them early.

The teacher of Islam confessed to Brenda, 'I am Muslim but I do like the story of your baby Jesus.' We found Sri Lankans embrace the Christmas Festival including the decorations with cotton wool snow, reindeer and gift giving. Father Christmas or Santa Claus is obviously a portly, old white man with a beard. I fitted the bill except for the beard and I was recruited to distribute presents to the Nursery and Playgroup classes at the end of term. We found a red outfit and made a beard and I attracted curious looks on the tuk-tuk journey to the school. My arrival was announced with bells and firecrackers and giving out the presents was a great pleasure.

Afterwards, I changed and joined in the party. 'Look at that man's shoes,' said one small girl, 'they are the same as those Santa Claus was wearing.' In subsequent years I have taken a change of shoes. The ability to enjoy the best of other religions is a force for integration and understanding between people and to be encouraged.

Marriage

The institution of marriage is much the same as in Britain. So it would be as the British formalised marriage during early colonial times. Earlier it could be a less permanent arrangement especially among chena farmers whose wives could elect to stay behind when they moved on. We learned of the arrangements a King of Kandy made for Moors to marry Sinhala girls. Some British soldiers took Sri Lankan girls in colonial times but abandoned them when their tour of duty was done. Sir John D'Oyly, first British governor of Kandy in 1815, tended to the welfare of many of these abandoned women.

We asked Manoj, the tuk-tuk driver, about marriage. Stupid of us really as he still lived with his Mother. 'Oh, it means a big truck loaded with furniture, fridge, TV, cooker, freezer and stuff coming to your house.' We learned something of the dowry system from him and from Bernard who had two nubile daughters. He worried about how many of his assets he would have to sell to provide for his girls.

One day we were in the foyer of an hotel in Anuradhapura. A small wedding party of the bride, her brother and two large aunts in voluminous saris came in. The brother went to speak to the concierge. Brenda lost her British reserve and spoke to the bride.

'What a beautiful dress, it's lovely, but you do not look happy.' The bride flung her arms around Brenda and wept. The two aunts looked on, severe and hatchet-faced.



'Come and sit with me and we will talk about it,' said Brenda. This was a woman to woman thing and I kept out of the way. The bride explained that she did not want to leave home. She was 26 years old and her family wanted to get rid of her. Brenda asked about the groom; yes, he was a good man and she liked him. No, he did not beat her and was not a drinker, he had a job and the house was ready.

I do not know exactly what Brenda said but she encouraged the girl to look forward to making her own home as comfortable and as happy as she could for them both. She would not forget her old home but would soon be able to look back with pride from her new home. After a quarter of an hour the bride began to smile, dried her eyes and gave Brenda a big hug. Then we went our separate ways.

*Once Sri Lankans
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have had enough
of the party.*

We were invited to a large formal wedding in Kandy. It was a wonderful occasion and included Kandyan dancers. The young men wore the traditional Nilame costume with mul anduma. The women looked so elegant in their saris. The ceremony, the dinner and then dancing to Baila music was conducted with a confidence and style peculiar to Kandyans.

The Party

If we had managed to adopt something of the new culture, we should throw a party and see if anyone came. We hired a caterer and a band and sent invitations. We need not have worried, everyone came, Sri Lankans love a party. Nimal Senanayake came and we persuaded him to sing. Once he started, there was

no stopping him. Another guest brought his tabla and demonstrated his expertise.

There was dancing, singing, chatting and eating. Bernard told us afterwards that the party would have gone on until the small hours if we had not let people eat. Once Sri Lankans get to the food, he said, they eat and then leave so keep the food back until you have had enough of the party.

The Thread

We learned something of Sri Lankan culture and enjoyed it. It is not difficult to fall in love with Sri Lanka and we have. We spend four months or so in Kandy every year and we learn new and interesting things every visit. We know the expat community, the academic and teaching community, something of the students at Peradeniya and we have got to know of the hopes and aspirations of our tuk-tuk drivers and their families and of our wonderful cook and housekeeper. We got to know some Maldivian families and then there are the expats. These Europeans who live in Sri Lanka are a mixed bunch. Some have married Sri Lankans, some are running away from something and others spent their childhood on tea plantations and returned to live their later life there.

The thread that started with stamp collecting is now a strong cord which keeps pulling us back to Sri Lanka.

More HAPPENINGS

Fred Medis receives *Order of the Rising Sun*



Frederick Medis, 92 years of age and Vice President of the Colombo Chapter of the Ceylon Society of Australia, was honoured on 18 January 2018 by HRH the Emperor of Japan by the award of the "Order of the Rising Sun, Golden Rays, with neck ribbon".

Fred was a founder, in 1956, of the Japan-Ceylon Friendship Society and was later its President. The Honour

is bestowed on those who have served to further the cause of Japanese Culture in foreign countries. In the speech by the Ambassador, mention was made of Fred's efforts at the time the Emperor, then the Crown Prince, had visited Sri Lanka in 1983 and the exhibition of Japanese porcelain that he had organised.



• (Photograph on left) Fred Medis, wearing the insignia of the *Order of the Rising Sun, Golden Rays* and (above) flanked by Somasiri Devendra, founder President of the Colombo Chapter and Mrs. Dayadari Devendra.

Drs. Brendon and Yasmine Gooneratne, Anandalal Nanayakkara and Srilal Perera of the Colombo Chapter represented the CAS at the presentation.

• Story and photographs by Somasiri Devendra.

A Double Murder in Galle and its consequences over 200 years ago

The Rambler

The fort of Galle was captured from the Portuguese by the Dutch in 1640 and Galle remained the Dutch capital city in Ceylon until the conquest of Colombo, also from the Portuguese in 1656. From 1640 onwards, the Dutch consolidated their presence in the coastal areas of Ceylon, the principal centres of Dutch settlement being Colombo, Galle, and to a lesser extent, Matara. The main areas of settlement were within the forts, but in Galle, some of the key officials built commodious villas in the village of Magalle outside the fort and about a kilometre away on the road to Matara.

Colonel James Welsh, a man who served the British army for 58 years, was a lieutenant in the 24th Infantry Regiment when he participated in the siege and subsequent capture of Colombo by the British from the Dutch in 1796. He spent a few years in Ceylon before and after the change of Maritime Governments and continued his military life until his retirement. In his memoirs published in 1830 titled *Military Reminiscences*, extracted from the journals he maintained during his military career in the East, he relates some of the noteworthy incidents that took place in the countries in which he served. One of these is the tragedy that took place in a villa in Magalla by the name *Vliet-Zorg*

A fairly large building named *Vliet-Zorg* at one time used as the Galle Kachcheri was the residence of the Dissawe of Matara during Dutch times. He was Pieter Willem Ferdinand Adriaan van Schuler who was born in Utrecht and married to Wilhelmina Catherina Leembruggen, daughter of Henricus Leembruggen who in 1744 was private secretary to Julius Valentyn Steyn van Gollennesse, the Governor. The year was 1796, the same year when the Dutch capitulated to the British. On the defeat of the Dutch, Von Schuler was relieved of his duties in Matara by an officer of the British army, and returned to his villa in Magalle "where he possessed a delightful

garden house, and every comfort which riches could procure; and being a man of respectable family, and well connected, he had married a lady of considerable personal charm, who unlike himself, bore a most excellent character, and was much esteemed by both Europeans and natives"

Van Schuler, during his term as Dissawe of Matara was known for his uncompromising manner of administration, often treating people in his district with cruelty. Those were the days when slavery was permitted and he owned an old Malay slave among others, who was working for him for several years, and lived in his home in Magalle. For some apparently small misdemeanour on the part of the old man, he was ordered to be tied and flogged which resulted in the man's death. Now Magalle was fairly close to a settlement of Malays known as "*Jakotuwa*", and the death of the old man created a great deal of anger and anxiety among the Malays. In the words of Welsh "Whether the infliction was excessive, or whether he was at all aware of the probable result, I could never learn; but the plain fact that the poor old man perished under the lash was undisputed, leaving a son, a



• *Vliet Zorg* was acquired by Clark Spence and Co. in the late 19th Century, and served as a store for their plumbago, copra and other produce. The photograph (above) taken over hundred and five years ago in 1912, shows part of the villa on the left and part of the extensive grounds surrounding it. The story related here took place about 100 years before the photo was taken. The writer has no information available to him regarding the present state of the building or the property and would appreciate any updates. The killings and the executions took place here.

powerful man in the murderer's services." Welsh also commented on what he considered a point of honour among Malays, which he said was too little attended to or understood. This was, inflicting revenge for every injury or insult, imaginary or real, and always sought in a manner which leaves the object little or no chance of escape. It would appear therefore that if that observation by Welsh was correct, then the fate of Van Schuler had already been sealed in advance.

Lex talionis is the legal concept of retributive justice or revenge expressed more commonly in the phrase "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth". Whether it was the extinction of Dutch power or an erroneous notion of British justice that induced it, the local Malays decided on their summary application of *Lex talionis*. The acknowledged leader of the Malay community in Galle was a man by the name Noor John, also known as the Prince of the Malays to whom the rest of the Malay community looked up and was much respected by the Dutch government. Noor got round Van Schuler's other Malay servants and slaves to execute his plan to be carried out by the son of the old man with the connivance of the other servants. The young man Gabong agreed and he was taken to the confidential slave of Van Schuler a man by the name Gaboo who surreptitiously allowed him into the bedroom of Van Schuler where he lay hidden under a bed, armed with a *kris* provided by Noor.

Van Schuler and his wife retired to bed as usual that fateful evening and being unusually tired he fell into sleep almost immediately. Mrs Van Schuler sat up reading and later went to bed. She was in her seventh month of pregnancy and was beset with anxiety over her pregnancy and worried over the possible prospect of not surviving the birth of the child. She lay down and just when she was falling to sleep heard a movement under the bed to which she tried to alert her husband but to no avail as he was in deep slumber and brushed aside her concerns in his somniferous state. Tired and fatigued she fell asleep but roused again when she heard a deep groan. She opened her eyes to see her husband steeped in blood and a man standing by the bed with a bloodied *kris* in his hand. Intent on saving her husband the brave woman sprang from the bed regardless of any concern for her own safety, and caught the man by his long hair. She twisted the hair around her hands to prevent the man from getting away and called for help. The man said "let me go madam, I do not wish to hurt you" but she screamed and hung on to him when he turned round and stabbed her in the stomach. She collapsed there but was not dead and she and her husband were discovered slumped on the floor in the morning. Van Schuler was dead but his wife recovered and lingered for a few days. The brave woman passed away after a few days as did the unborn infant, but she was able to give her deposition regarding the incident. Police investigations began in earnest and Gaboo

confessed to his role but Gabong absconded and was apprehended later. Meanwhile, he had cut his hair and denied all knowledge of the crime. When Gabong was brought before her by the police, Mrs Van Schuler with a firm voice exclaimed "No Gabong, you cannot deceive me, although you have cut your hair off since. I am now on the brink of eternity, and I swear that this man is the murderer of my husband". That statement sealed the fate of both Gabong and Noor John.

Gaboo gave evidence for the prosecution and Noor John and Gabong were tried in a case which

***He complained
that he did not kill
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be killed!***

was the most sensational criminal trial since the British took over government in Ceylon. Both Gabong and Noor John were found guilty and were sentenced to death. Although most of the Dutch community in Galle wanted a public execution of the two offenders, some senior Dutch officials pleaded for the life of Noor. The British administration ordered the public execution which took place in the compound of *Vliet Zorg* where the murders took place. Two gibbets were erected on the compound of the villa and both offenders were hanged for the ghastly crime before a large crowd. Noor John refused final spiritual assistance and even kicked a Malay priest out of his cell. He complained that he did not kill anyone but that he is about to be killed! Young and handsome in appearance his dying struggles lasted for a few minutes. Gabong on the other hand received the priest with acceptance and acknowledged his mistake and prayed for forgiveness and died without struggle. The two public executions were most likely the first and the last to be carried out in Galle under the British administration.

The Malay community in Galle was restive and uneasy after the executions and to prevent any reaction all or most of the Malay families were relocated to Hambantota by the British and are the founding families of the Malay community in Hambantota. Jakotuwa thus remains a name only, but of some historical significance.

***Old friends are gold! New friends are diamond! If
you get a diamond, don't forget the gold!
Because to hold a diamond, you always need a
base of gold!***

Gordon Jeyaratnam Duraisamy – an outstanding gentleman

(08 February 1925 – 03 September 2017)

by Samuel Thevabalan Arnold

Thanks to the great education imparted by the Colleges in Sri Lanka, the cream of boys and girls adorned unique positions in our nation. Many entered universities in Sri Lanka, India, UK, USA and other places for tertiary education. One is proud of the professionals in Medicine, Engineering, Education, Legal, Civil Service, Politics, Finance, Community service etc who served our Nation. All came from humble homes where the parents guided the youth to serve our community. We who come from Jaffna, Sri Lanka studied in schools run by Christian missionaries or taught by teachers who had their education in these schools and later joined state and secular schools. Education was considered to be a primary industry of Jaffna.

Gordon hailed from the village of Manipay-Navaly, considered to be a seat of learning and community service especially the Green Memorial Hospital established by the American Missionaries in 1848.

Born on 8 February 1925, Gordon was the second of seven children to Canapathipillai Duraisamy and Elizabeth Nesaratnam Lyman. His father was a well respected Station Master in the Ceylon Government Railways (CGR) serving in different parts of Sri Lanka. His siblings were Sam Duraisamy, distinguished Chemist, Mrs Nesam Arulampalam, Alfred Duraisamy, Mrs Devi Canagasingham, Victor Duraisamy and Mrs Ranji Bartlett.

He would recall his early life in Navaly, focused on the Church ministered by dedicated Pastors and laymen which included Reverends G.M. Canagaratnam and S. Selvaratnam (later Sevak and founder of the Ashram). Mr. S.C. Arnold, a respected disciplinarian nurtured the youth in their Christian walk. Many descendants of the reputed families of Mathers, Arnolds, Lymans, Ashburys, Rajasuriars, Mills', Cookes, Kadirgamars, Strongs, Pages, to mention a few, came from Manipay and Navaly churches.

School and professional education

Gordon was proud of his early education at Manipay Hindu College, a leading institution with quality education. His fellow mates in school and church included B.R. Devarajan, A.A. Page, Kirupai Mills, Jacob Chacko, Ratnam Arnold, Victor Mather and Robert Thuraisingham. They enjoyed education, sport and extra-curricular activities.

He later moved to St Joseph's College, Colombo under Rev Fr Peter Pillai as Rector. Three Duraisamy boys Sam, Gordon and Alfred were well known to the Rector. His brother Sam became an excellent student who did Chemistry for his degree becoming Government Chemist in Sri Lanka and later in Zambia.

From St Joseph's, Gordon joined Ceylon Technical College and did an apprenticeship in the Railway Workshop. He excelled in his field becoming the first in order of merit in the finals in 1948. He was appointed in charge of a workshop. Thus began his Engineering profession.



• ***Gordon Jeyaratnam***

Marriage to Catherine Sevanayaki Jebaratnam

As per the custom in Jaffna, marriage was arranged for Gordon to an accomplished young lady, Catherine Selvie only child of Mr M R M Jebaratnam and Mrs Lily Pooranam Backus. Selvie was an outstanding product of Uduvil Girls College under the Principalship of Miss Ariam Hudson Paramasamy. Much against the wishes of the Principal for Selvie to go for University education, the parents wanted her to

When anyone inquired after his health, he would say "God is good all the time."

He wrote an article in the newspaper about the bypass surgery he underwent in California, USA in January 1983. He was one of the few who went overseas for this miraculous procedure at that time. It all began with a myocardial infarction which put him in hospital in 1969 and had full recovery. However, towards end of 1981, due to changed climate at work, he developed recurrent chest pain (unstable angina pectoris). He had agonising days and nights, taking 36 pills a day for the pain. The doctor suggested that he go over to USA for bypass surgery. The estimated cost was \$ 25,000 which was beyond his reach.

Meets renowned cardiologist – Dr T A Don Michael
Sri Lankan born Prof. Don Michael who was on holiday in December 1982 was kind enough to examine Gordon. He suggested that Gordon should go over to LA for surgery without delay and that he would arrange the procedure. Well, God's guidance came through this great professional.

With the support of family the finance was organized and his son Ravin, a young mercantile executive was chosen to accompany him. On 14 January 1983, the journey began with faith on a flight to San Francisco. It was a 24 hour journey via Seoul. Sri Lankan friends Tony and Corinne met them on arrival and provided rest.

On Sunday 16 January, Tony drove Gordon and Ravin to Bakersfield to the home of Dr and Mrs Don Michael. The medical procedure began from here with preliminary procedure organised by Dr Michael on 17 January. After a flight to San Francisco, the patient reached St Mary's Hospital the same evening. The surgery took place on the 18th and it was successful. It was a miracle and he recovered after triple bypass.

Gordon and Ravin returned to Sri Lanka on 10 February, 1983 in the midst of a tearful and joyous welcome. He got back to normal work with a new lease of life.

Dark chapter in Sri Lankan history – 1983 communal riots

The comfortable home of Gordon and Selvie in Mt Lavinia, Colombo, was looted and destroyed during the riots. Many Sinhalese friends saved their lives by moving them to safe places. Gordon resigned his job at the end of 1983 and moved to Selvie's ancestral home in Jaffna – "Pooranagiri" – Anaicottai.

New chapter – life in Jaffna

Gordon and Selvie faced many challenges as they settled in Jaffna. Their son Suhen's family migrated to Australia in October 1987 and son Ravin's family to Canada in July 1988. The travel to Colombo by coach became dangerous. The Indian army occupation of Jaffna and counter militant forces brought about destruction and chaos. While they were away in

Colombo, their home was vandalised and some relatives were killed.

Migration to Australia

After much anxiety and hard logistics, Gordon and Selvie received clearance to residency in Australia. They arrived in Sydney on 2 September 1989 and joined Suhen's family to a pleasant life here. They lived in Campbelltown taking active part in Church and community programs.

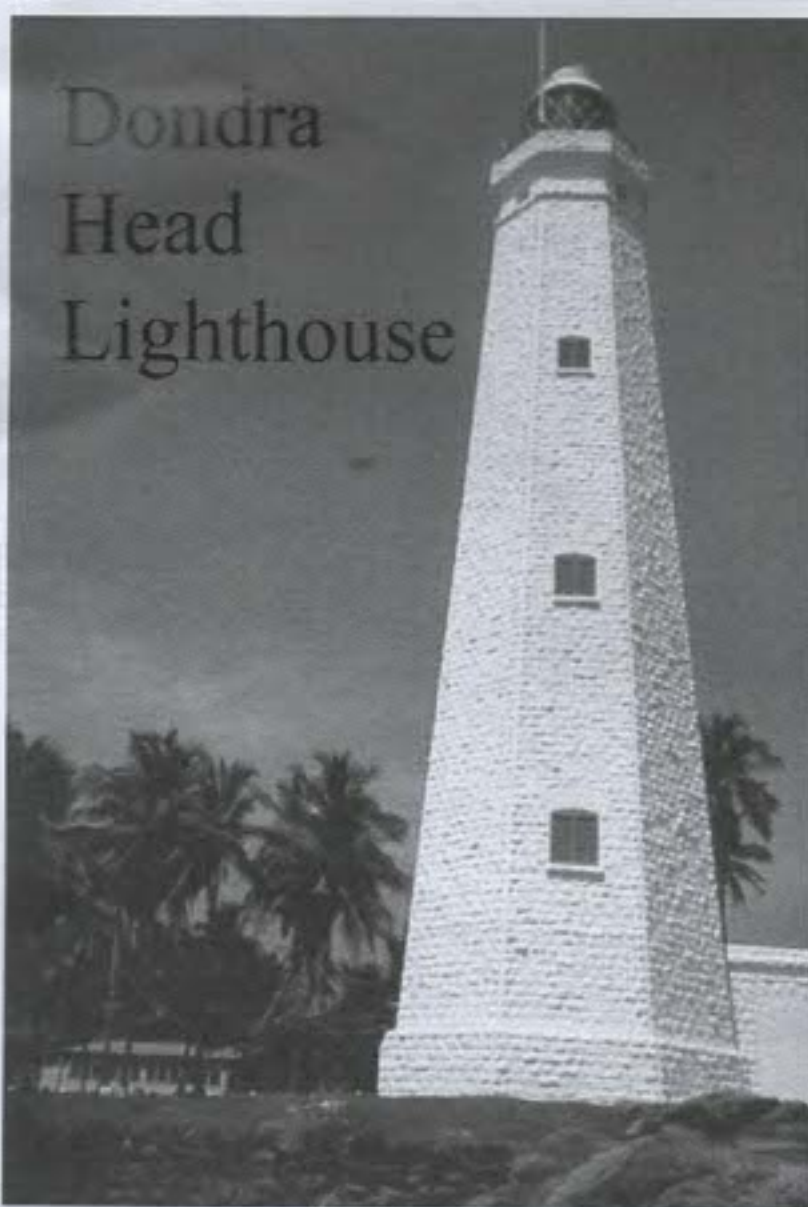
In spite of many health challenges, their faith kept them going. Gordon entered Glory on 3 September 2017. Selvie is living a blessed life in the Elders Home in Campbelltown.

Their life of contentment is summed up in the quote:

"All I have needed Thy hand has provided, great is thy faithfulness Lord unto Me"

About the author

Samuel Thevabalan Arnold is a cousin of Gordon and Selvie, known to them for more than six decades. All information was gathered from close dialogue and from articles written by them. The book "GOD'S AMAZING GRACE" published by the couple in 2014 speaks for their blessed life.



Regarded as the tallest lighthouse in southeast Asia, the majestic Dondra Head Lighthouse is the south-most lighthouse in Sri Lanka. This stately white brick octagonal building consists of seven storeys and is situated in Dondra (known as Devinuwara or City of Gods) and is visible from Matara, about six kilometres away.

Dr R L Hayman – a life dedicated to the education of Ceylonese

"An Institution is the lengthened shadow of a man"



by
**Thiru
Arumugam**

Early days

Rollo Lenden Hayman MA, DPhil (Oxon), MBE, was born on 14 December 1902 in the London suburb of Clapham. He was the son of William Hayman, a General Practitioner. The family later moved to Bournemouth on the south coast of England. Their beautiful house was right on the edge of a cliff overlooking the sea, in fact, the street was named Boscombe Overcliff Drive. Dr Hayman became the founding father of St. Thomas College, Gurutalawa.

Hayman started his schooling at Wychwood Preparatory School in Bournemouth and in 1914, he was admitted to Sherbourne School in Dorset,

not far from Bournemouth. This is a private school founded in 1550 and is in the top one per cent of all UK schools. Alan Turing studied here a few years after Hayman. Turing is considered to be the father of Artificial Intelligence and during World War II, he worked at Bletchley Park, the site for British codebreakers, and his Turing Machine cracked the German codes and ciphers and as a result it is estimated that the war in Western Europe was shortened by two years with the saving of 14 million lives.

About 1919, Hayman was admitted to the University of Oxford to read Physics. When he graduated, he decided to continue studying in Oxford and obtained the Phd Physics, his particular field was radiation. Although there was an offer of a Post-Doctoral Fellowship, he decided on a teaching career and trained as a Teacher in North London for Ministry in the Anglican Church.

Meanwhile, K C McPherson, who was the Warden of St Thomas College, Mount Lavinia, from 1926 to 1930, when he was on holiday in 1928 visited Keble College, Oxford where he was educated. He was looking for suitable recruits to join the staff of St



• Dr R L Hayman

Thomas College and he persuaded Dr Hayman, Rev. A J Foster, Rev. J G Elliot and William Thomas Keble to join St Thomas College. Keble College, Oxford, founded in 1870, was named after W T Keble's great-uncle, John Keble. In 1938, W T Keble founded St Thomas Preparatory School in Kollupitiya. This was the first Prep School in Ceylon and was modelled on a typical private Primary School in England. In 1942, during World War II, the Navy commandeered the School premises and Keble moved to Bandarawela and founded the St Thomas Prep School there. He was also a writer and author of several books, including the travel book "Ceylon Beaten Track."

When Dr Hayman told his parents that he was going to Ceylon they were initially against it, saying that they had spent a lot on his education and it may well be wasted. Dr Hayman contacted the SPG (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts) and they told him that Ceylon was working its way to independence and needed good teachers to produce the men who could lead the country. As Dr Hayman said "To this end anything I could teach in England would be equally useful and acceptable in Ceylon. So, in the end my parents rather unwillingly allowed me to follow my wishes."

Mutwal

St Thomas College was founded in Mutwal in 1851 by Bishop James Chapman. He was an old boy and Master at Eton College, Windsor, and graduated from Kings College, Cambridge. Eton College is arguably the most prestigious private school in England and Bishop Chapman wanted to model St Thomas College along the lines of his former school. It is believed that both schools have the same motto "Esto Perpetua" (Be thou forever). Boys in the highest classes at St Thomas were treated more like undergraduates than schoolboys and were addressed as 'Mister'. The Curriculum was complex and included the study of Xenophon (a historian and student of Socrates), Cicero (a great Roman prose stylist), Grotius (a 17th century author of theological works), Butler's Analogy (the full title is "Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed to the Constitution and Course of Nature"), Aristotle, Mental Philosophy, and Greek Testament. It is not surprising that Warden Baly said of his students "Were it not that their Latin Composition is deficient, they would be on a level with the average Oxford Undergraduates in their second year."

Mount Lavinia

In the early part of the twentieth century there

coaling in the adjacent Colombo harbour. The whole Mutwal school compound was covered in a layer of coal dust. In 1918, the decision was made to move to the more salubrious climate of Mount Lavinia. Dr Hayman arrived in Mount Lavinia in 1929, just over a decade after the school moved from Mutwal. It was believed that he was the first Assistant Master in any school in Ceylon who had a Doctorate, and that too from Oxford. He started teaching Physics and Mathematics with great enthusiasm.

He also started a long stream of donations to the College. His father was a well-to-do General



• *STC Mount Lavinia Swimming Pool donated by Dr Hayman in 1933 (Courtsey: Sanjeeve De Silva).*

Practitioner and built up a portfolio of investments in British stocks and shares which Dr Hayman inherited. This provided Dr Hayman with a steady income stream. He built and donated a set of Fives Courts in 1931. This was the first school in the country to have Fives Courts. In 1933 he built and donated a full-size swimming pool, complete with filtration plant and diving boards. This was the first school in the country to have a swimming pool. He also became the swimming and diving instructor. He also started Scouting in the school. In 1935 he was appointed Sub-Warden of the school.

In the new site in Mount Lavinia, the school had embarked on a substantial building program in the 1920s. The buildings included the chapel, classrooms and dormitories. The cost of these buildings was financed by borrowings and the issue of debentures with interest rates of 6 percent and in the 1930s the school was finding it difficult to meet the loan repayments. In 1930 R S de Saram was appointed as the Warden. He was the first old boy and Ceylonese to

be the Warden. He also had studied at Keble College, Oxford and won an Oxford Blue for Boxing.

The new Sub-Warden was a pillar of strength to the Warden during this difficult financial period, giving substantial donations to the school. As Warden de Saram said "What Dr Hayman has given to the school nobody knows. He gave us our Swimming Pool – everybody knows that. But he has given a great deal more which nobody knows about. It may be seriously doubted whether he knows himself. He does not let his left hand know what his right hand gives."

Hayman purchased the house named "Thalassa", the Greek word for sea, on the beach adjacent to the College and gave it to the College for use primarily as an Office. The combination of de Saram and Hayman at the helm of the school has been described as "a rare blend of Homer and Einstein!" In April 1942 the School suffered a major setback. The Military inspected the place and gave the School just five days to vacate the premises as they wanted to use it as a Military Hospital. It was decided to break up the School, which had 700 students, into four sections and have classes at St Paul's Girls School, Milagiriya, sharing the premises with the girls; at Girls High School, Mount Lavinia sharing the premises; at Kingswood College, Kandy, again sharing the premises. The fourth premises was to start a new school at Gurutalawa.

Gurutalawa

Mr and Mrs Leslie de Saram owned a farm of about 35 acres in a little village called Gurutalawa about five miles from Welimada. Leslie, an old Royalist, was a cousin of Warden de Saram. When they heard that St Thomas College was short of accommodation, they promptly donated the entire Farm to the College, lock, stock and barrel, even including the livestock. There was only one condition attached to the donation, agriculture should be a part of the school curriculum. It was a very generous donation and they even refused to allow their names to be mentioned on the plaque commemorating the donation, it merely says "from two well-wishers".

The only buildings in the Farm were the Manager's Bungalow, some out-houses, sheds and servants quarters. Dr Hayman was appointed the Headmaster of the school in April 1942 and he had to prepare the place to accommodate about 50 students. For Dr Hayman, it was a heaven sent opportunity. He had virtually a clean sheet of paper on which to fashion out a school according to his liking. In the long term, he wanted to fashion it after Gordonstoun, the famous school in Scotland where the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales studied, which had an emphasis on outdoor life and inculcation of the spirit of adventure. Hayman followed the policy of Gordonstoun which was "We believe that by offering our students a diverse range of experiences and opportunities which go beyond the classroom and

which will challenge and stimulate them physically, emotionally and intellectually, they will develop the qualities and attributes they will need to survive and thrive in a changing world and leave school ready to make a real difference in the world."

Gurutalawa was an unique school and ultimately had outdoor activities not generally found in other schools in Ceylon such as long distance hiking, horse riding, bird watching, involvement in the farm activities and so on. A typical hike was the day trip to World's End. We would set off at daybreak with a packed lunch of corned beef sandwiches and follow Dr Hayman for about two or three miles on the road to Boralanda.

At that time the road ended here and we would follow a climbing track of about seven miles to Ohiya railway station. From Ohiya there was a stiff climb along a bridle path for about a mile through a forest where leopards had been spotted, to the undulating hills of Horton Plains which has an elevation up to 7000 feet.



• Aerial view of STC Gurutalawa nestling in the hills, (Courtesy: STCG62 website)

It is difficult to imagine what sort of stupidity caused the Government to plant potatoes later in these beautiful plains in the 1960s. Fortunately it was abandoned. It was designated a National Park in 1988. The path would continue on the Plains, passing streams stocked with trout and the Rest House which was at that time accessible only on foot or horseback, and reach World's End after about four miles. World's End is so called because there is a sheer drop of 3000 feet (900 m) to Nonpareil tea estate down below.

On a clear day from World's End there is a beautiful view of southern Ceylon and the Indian Ocean 50 miles (80 km) away. About two years ago, a Dutch honeymooner standing at World's End stepped backwards to take a photo of his bride and fell over. He fell 130 feet and was entangled in a tree. He was rescued by troops and a helicopter and winched to safety. He was fortunate to have only minor injuries and was the first person to survive a fall from World's End.

After having our packed lunch at World's End we would walk back to Gurutalawa, an easier walk because it was downhill most of the way. We had to hurry to reach school before dark. The total distance

walked in a day was about 30 miles (nearly 50 km) in mountainous terrain.

Dr Hayman's immediate problem at Gurutalawa was to prepare temporary accommodation and classrooms for about 50 students. He also started building a small swimming pool at his own expense. The school started functioning and over the next four years permanent buildings for dormitories, classrooms, dining hall and the chapel were built. The Architect was Shirley D'Alwis who went on to design the University of Peradeniya.

Mary Rudd was a member of the Nursing Staff of the Military Hospital which occupied the Mount Lavinia premises. She had come to Diyatalawa with some Army Officers and they hiked the five miles over the patnas to visit Gurutalawa. The first time Dr Hayman met Mary, he had to remove the leeches which had got attached to her feet during the hike. Towards the end of 1945, Dr Hayman went to England on furlough and he and Mary got married there. C H Davidson was appointed Headmaster of Gurutalawa in Dr Hayman's absence. When Dr Hayman returned from leave, he was asked to act in Mount Lavinia for Warden de Saram who was on long leave, and Dr Hayman returned to Gurutalawa only at the beginning of 1948, after an absence of two years, and remained the Headmaster of Gurutalawa until he retired in 1963.

The first thing that he started on after his return was to enlarge the swimming pool into a full size swimming pool. A state of the art filtration plant was added and diving boards installed. All this was done at his own expense. Dr Hayman was the swimming coach and instructor. Allan Smith learned his diving as a student in St Thomas and later went on to represent Ceylon in Diving in the Olympics.

Mary, with her medical training, was the Matron of the six-bed sickroom. In the evenings she would dole out medicines to the boys who were sick. The main item was a foul tasting flu mixture which was purchased in bulk in one gallon size bottles. She would also apply dressings to the cuts and bruises sustained by the boys.

The writer started his school career at St Thomas College at the age of six years in 1942, when classes were being held at St Paul's Girl School, Milagiriya. After two years of study there, my father was transferred to Bandarawela. We went off to meet Headmaster W T Keble at St Thomas Prep. School in Bandarawela to ask for admission as a day boy. I was summoned into his Office for an interview. I went in, an eight-year old quaking in his shoes at the prospect of being interviewed by an Englishman. He must have been satisfied with whatever answers I mumbled because a place was offered. By the end of 1945, I had reached the highest class in the Prep. School and it was time to join the school in Gurutalawa in the lowest class there.

I joined Gurutalawa as a ten-year old Boarder in January 1946 in the lowest class, the Lower Fourth (Year 6). C H Davidson was the Headmaster and his nickname was 'Poeta' because of his love for Latin poetry. Mrs S J Anandanayagam was the Form Mistress. Her husband was later the Warden in Mount Lavinia from 1970 to 1977. There were about 20 boys in the class and a total of just over 100 boys in the whole school.

When I returned to school for the second term after the Easter holidays, I found that I was the only boy in the class. Even the Form Mistress had disappeared! What had happened was that Mount Lavinia had re-opened after the premises were handed back by the Military to the school and the rest of the class had opted to go to Mount Lavinia. I soon received a summons to see 'Poeta' in his Office. He told me that it was uneconomical to run a class for one student and that he had seen my report for the previous term and that it was satisfactory and he was therefore giving me a mid-year promotion to the Upper Fourth class. I had no choice in the matter, but it was initially a struggle to catch up with the year's work that I had skipped over.

A few weeks later, a new boy turned up in the class, his name was V Tharumaratnam and everybody soon called him 'Tharu'. His parents, who were of Ceylonese origin, were in Malaya but he was sent to Ceylon for his schooling because of the situation in Malaya. A few months later one of our lessons was interrupted by a messenger from the school Office handing over a telegram to the Master. The Master read it, then looked up and said "Tharumaratnam, I am sorry to tell you that your father has been killed". Tharu cried for a few minutes, then dried his tears and said "Well, I suppose that's that. But I have to get on with my own life." An amazing example of his resilience and strength of character for a thirteen year old, which he went on to exhibit over the rest of his life.

What had happened was this was the time of the peak of the post-war Communist insurgency in Malaya. The insurgents had kidnapped the staff of the Rubber Estate where Tharu's father was employed and

demanding ransoms for their return from the British estate owners. The owners paid the ransoms for the British staff but not for the others. Whereupon the insurgents executed the non-British staff.

A few weeks later the Bursar informed Dr Hayman that the monthly remittance of Tharu's school fees (about Rs 50) from Malaya had ceased coming after his father's death. Dr Hayman told the Bursar to give the matter some more time. Shortly afterwards, Tharu's school fees started coming in, but from a Ceylon source. Later when the Malayan remittances re-started, the payments from the Ceylon source stopped. Years later it was discovered that the Ceylon payments were from Dr Hayman, without any requirement of repayment.

One day a foreigner was spotted visiting Dr Hayman in the school Office. One of the boys identified the visitor from a newspaper picture and asked Dr Hayman in the class the next day whether it was Sir Ivor Jennings, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ceylon who visited him. He said "Yes, it was, and it is the third time he has come to see me. Each time he tried to persuade me to join the University as Professor of Physics and each time I gave him the same answer: that I find it far more challenging to mould boys into young men of character than lecture to undergraduates."

Dr Hayman tried to make his Physics and Maths classes as interesting as possible. One day he was teaching an abstruse topic in Advanced Maths which yours truly was finding difficult to understand. He spotted this and asked me

whether I had difficulty in following him. I nodded sheepishly. Just then the bell rang for the end of the class and he said simply: "Leave it with me". The next day he gave me two pages of notes in his own handwriting and said that if I read the notes I would understand the topic. Such was the nature of the man. Present day teachers would probably canvass private tuition!

In December 1949, a few days after my 14th birthday, I sat for the Senior School Certificate examination, the predecessor to the GCE 'O' Levels.



• Dr Hayman at Buckingham Palace after receiving his MBE. Mrs Hayman is on the left and his sister on the right. (Courtesy: Charmaine Tharumaratnam)

As this was the highest class at Gurutalawa, the next step was to move to the associated College in Mount Lavinia to the College Form which was the University Entrance class. All the boys in our class who were proceeding for further studies were looking forward to this because of the prestige of being in the College Form, which included graduating from shorts to long trousers!

A few days before the end of term, I received an unexpected summons from Dr Hayman to see him in the Office. He asked me whether I realised that I



• *STC Gurutalawa Swimming Pool donated by Dr Hayman in 1953 with the Chapel in the background (Courtesy: STCG62 Website)*

could not sit for the University Entrance exam in two years' time because the minimum age of entry to the University was 17 years. He suggested that instead of marking time for an extra year in the College Form, I could stay back in Gurutalawa for an extra year. He said that while I would nominally be a member of the Upper Sixth

class (Year 10), whenever he had an off period and he was free, he would give me tuition on a one-to-one basis in Physics and Maths at 'A' Level standard. I thanked him for the generous offer and gave the valid excuse that my father was on transfer orders to proceed to Colombo and that he was already looking for a house to rent near the Mount Lavinia school so that I could study there as a day boy. He accepted that and allowed me to proceed to the College Form. That was my last contact with Dr Hayman as a student.

Dr Hayman continued to teach Physics and Maths at Gurutalawa, but the writing was on the wall. The medium of school education switched to Sinhala and Tamil. There were insufficient students for an English stream at Gurutalawa. He made a valiant effort by studying Sinhala to 'O' Level standard, but did not feel confident to teach in the Sinhala medium. His usefulness as a school teacher in Ceylon was over. He had always intended to live his retirement years in Ceylon, but now that he had to retire early, he decided to go back to England and teach there for a few more years. His last Prize Day speech as a Headmaster was in 1962 when he said "A school is

not merely concerned with the attainment of success in the scholastic and sporting fields. One of its most important tasks is to prepare boys to take their place in life, when they leave school. Not only must it do this by inculcating a spirit of toughness and determination, but also by teaching them the art of gracious living ... It was not merely by a display of courtesy that a man was to be made ... but rather it was by his whole approach to life that a man would prove his mettle."

Dr Hayman retired on 14th March 1963 and returned to his home in Bournemouth. He and Mary did not have any children and he considered the Thomian schoolboys as his children and that is why he donated so lavishly to the College from his inherited wealth. The first 21 years, the golden years of Gurutalawa, were over. The school has continued to flourish and expand since then and last year celebrated its 75th anniversary.

Retirement days

The UK New Year's Honours list of 1964 included the award of an MBE to Dr Hayman for services to education in Ceylon. He decided to attend the investiture personally and went to Buckingham Palace accompanied by Mary and his sister. The awards were given out by the Duke of Edinburgh to the 150 recipients. Dr Hayman was surprised to find that the Duke had done his homework and spoke to many of the award recipients. He asked Dr Hayman whether he was still teaching in UK and how his former school was getting on. Dr Hayman considered this day the most memorable day of his life..

Dr Hayman continued to teach for a few more years at a local school in Bournemouth. He made a few visits to Ceylon after he retired. In 1970 he visited Gurutalawa to open the new Hayman Science Laboratory, to the cost of which he had contributed generously. The plinth in the building states simply "To spend and be spent in the service of others is his greatest privilege".

In 1978 Dr and Mrs Hayman visited Gurutalawa from January to April. On their return trip to England they stopped over in Ibadan, Nigeria as guests of his former pupil, V Tharumaratnam. Dr Hayman had been Tharu's Guardian when he was a schoolboy. Tharu's son, Biran recalls that the highlight of their visit was "to see the Oba (King) of Ife. After meeting the King (a man in his 40's), he was given a tour of the palace and noticed several women ranging in age from 90 to early 20's, it was explained to Dr Hayman that these were all of the King's wives which was in the order of 70 to 80 in number. When Dr Hayman inquired why the King had so many wives, it was explained that it was customary for the King not only to marry multiple wives to establish his status, but he was also required to inherit and look after the wives of his dead father as well. Not sure how Dr Hayman or Mrs Hayman both Christians, personally felt about this, as they did not show it, but

seemed quite fascinated about this custom at the time."

Dr Hayman's final visit to Gurutalawa was in early 1983 to open the Keble Dormitory, the cost of which had been met by Dr Hayman. The Income Tax Department promptly slapped on a charge of Gift Tax. It was an irony which appealed to his considerable wit.

Dr Hayman had not been very well during his last visit to Gurutalawa in March 1983 and in the first week of May there was news that Dr Hayman was terminally ill in a Nursing Home in Bournemouth. Tharumaratnam and I were residing in London at that time and we promptly motored down with our wives to Bournemouth to see him. When we went there, the Nurse told us that he was very tired and weak and we should go in two at a time and spend not more than five minutes with him. Tharu and I went in first and he spoke to us and thanked us for coming. Our wives then went in, and not recognising them as our wives, he told them excitedly "Did you see those two boys who just went out. We did not have many boys like them afterwards". It certainly made the day for the two 'boys' even though they were in their fifties!

Dr Hayman passed away peacefully a few days later on 07 May 1983 at the age of 81 years. His funeral was on 12 May in Bournemouth and the

funeral service prior to burial was by Right Revd. Lakshman Wickremasinghe, an old boy of Gurutalawa and Keble College, Oxford and uncle of present Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. The opening sentence of Dr Hayman's last will was "I direct that my funeral shall be of the cheapest kind consistent with decency and no expensive memorial stone should be erected."

Mary Hayman lived on in Bournemouth for another 25 years. She made two more trips to Ceylon. In 1987 she opened the R S de Saram Memorial Library and in 1992 she was the Chief Guest at Gurutalawa's 50th Anniversary Dinner. She passed away in Bournemouth on 17 November 2008, aged 94 years. In her will she left a substantial bequest to the College which formed the nucleus of the "Hayman Foundation" which was for fundraising for future school buildings.

Prof C C De Silva, an old boy and eminent Paediatrician and Member of the Board of Governors of the College had this to say about Dr Hayman "No single man has done so much or given so generously both materially and intellectually to St Thomas College, or to any other school for that matter in Ceylon, at any time in her long history. I think I can pronounce that as an indisputable, incontrovertible, statement of fact".

Important notice to our contributors

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

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

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

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

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

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



BOOK REVIEWS

"A Tale of Three Buddhas and Other Writings"

by Tissa Devendra

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REVIEWED by Thiru Arumugam

Tissa Devendra was born in 1929 and is the son of D T Devendra who was a Head Master and Archaeologist. As his father moved around from school to school, Tissa studied in several schools including Ananda College. He entered the University of Ceylon in Colombo and graduated with a degree in English and French in 1952. He later obtained a post-graduate degree from the University of Cambridge. He joined Government Service in 1953 as a District Land Officer and this was the beginning of a 40-year career in Public Service including spells as the Government Agent in Matara, Trincomalee and Jaffna. In March 2017 he was awarded the National Honour title of Deshamanya for highly meritorious service to the nation. He is the President of the Colombo Chapter of the Ceylon Society of Australia since 2013.

As he moved around working in different parts of Ceylon, he collected information and anecdotes which formed the basis of articles and stories that he wrote. He is the author of several books and his book *"Tales from the Provinces"* was short listed for the Gratien Prize in 1998. The Gratien Prize, funded by Michael Ondaatje, is awarded annually for the best work of literary writing in English by a resident of Sri Lanka. Tissa's latest book *"A Tale of Three Buddhas and Other Writings"* is a collection of articles, letters to the Editor, book reviews, tributes and a poem. Tissa says that *"These writings range from fascinating snippets of Sri Lanka's history to personal reminiscences of our recent past and other ephemeral odds and ends that intrigued me."* Presumably, most, if not all of the items have been previously published, but details of previous publication have not been included. This information would have been of added interest to the reader.

In the Acknowledgements section of the book, Tissa thanks the Editors of newspapers who published his articles and he also thanks Doug Jones, the Editor of this Journal. Over the years this Journal has published about 15 articles by or about Tissa. These range from *"The Felsianes Link"* in the July 2000 issue which is an article by Tissa

about his maternal grandfather from Mutwal, Lloyd Felsianes, who ran away to sea from school in 1876 as a cabin boy at the age of 16 years; to the article titled *"Something rich and very strange"* in the May/June 2017 issue. The latter article is an extract from Tissa's book titled *"Quest for Shangri-La: Stories and Diversions"*.

The 'Articles' section of the book includes 23 articles by Tissa on a wide variety of topics. The lead article *"A Tale of Three Buddhas"* which is the title of the book, is about three ancient miniature statues of the Buddha recovered in Trincomalee District when he was the Government Agent there in the 1970s. The first two were about ten inches high, one carved from soap stone and the other from crystal. They had been recovered by the Police from an alleged vandaliser of an ancient temple. The third statue was found in an ant hill by a villager. This sedentary Buddha statue was only four inches high but had been carved in granite with extreme precision. As Government Agent, Tissa represented in the District every Government Department, and the statues were duly handed over to the Archaeological Department.

The subjects of other articles in this section range from the last King of Kandy to a requiem for the demise of the wooden ballot box used in general elections, now replaced by plastic see-through containers. Other items in this section include articles previously published in this Journal such as *'Hats Ahoy'* (May 2014 issue), an interesting survey of headgear in Ceylon ranging from the hats of white cloth in the days of the Kandyan kingdom, through to the khaki solar topees of the British colonial days to the baseball caps worn back to front by today's young swingers; and *'Hoppers, Bone Setters, Botanists and the Weed'* (November 2015 issue) a fascinating article about the contribution made by migrants from Kerala to Ceylon when people could travel freely between India and Ceylon in British colonial days.

The 'Dear Editor' section of the book reproduces 13 letters to newspaper Editors. Tissa says *"I have been an incorrigible writer of Letters to the Editor and include a sampling of epistles on subjects that interested, irritated or appalled me."* The letters include one about the wild horses in Anuradhapura seen by him about fifty years ago and now probably extinct. One assumed that the only wild horses in Ceylon were on the island of Delft, off Jaffna. Another letter is a plea. He says *"The following aide-memoire attempts to expose and finish off this mad proposal to provide a mechanised lift to Sigiriya's summit, actively and incomprehensibly, supported by the Director General/Archaeology"*. One can only imagine how this proposed lift will deface this Rock which is part of our national heritage.

The section of the book dedicated to Book Reviews contains reviews of 16 books that impressed him. Included is a review of John Still's *"Poems in*

Captivity". The poems were written when John Still was a prisoner-of-war in Gallipoli for over three years during World War I. He survived the incarceration to return to Ceylon and write *"The Jungle Tide"* in 1930. Also in this section is a review of Prof Raja C Bandaranayake's book *"Betwixt Isles"*, the story of the banishment by the British of Ehelapola without trial and others to Mauritius in 1825. Tissa has this to say about Raja's book *"This is a truly amazing book ... The author has set about his 'crusade' with the meticulous scholarship of a true academic who has shown great courage by venturing into disciplines far removed from his own field of medicine ... It is a clearly written narrative, free of scholarly jargon and a work of monumental research."* Raja is a Sydney resident and a member of the Ceylon Society of Australia. He gave a talk about his book at a CSA meeting on 15th July 2007. Raja's book was also reviewed by Prof. Colvin Goonaratna in the August 2007 issue of this Journal.

The next section of the book consists of four Tributes; to Sam Wijesinghe who was Secretary General of Ceylon's Parliament, and died three years ago at the age of 93 years; to M B Mathmaluwe who is described as an essayist beyond compare; to Arlin Perera, Principal of Sri Rahula College, Katugastota; and finally a *"rather long account of the rich life of*

'The book is written in impeccable English... It is a pleasure to read with its easy flowing style. It is recommended reading without any hesitation to anyone who has the slightest interest in Ceylon.'
(Thiru Arumugam)

my father, the savant, D T Devendra – whose example inspires all my writing." The last tribute shows how the father encouraged his children by example to read widely and develop inquiring minds. *"He encouraged us to look in directions we had not looked at before, and which still retain their hold on us. He would have been glad that three of his children became published authors, though death deprived him of seeing the late blooming of his youngest daughter."*

The final section of the book is a poem titled *"On reaching eighty-five"*. It was written in 2014 and is dedicated to his grandchildren. The beautiful last verse which resonates with all grandparents, is as follows:

*The sounds of their laughter yet ring in my ears
As do their tantrums and childhood tears ...
While Mama and I grow frail and grey
Our children's children will never fade away.*

In the August 2006 issue of this Journal, Yasmine Gooneratne, formerly Professor of English at Macquarie University, Sydney, wrote a review of Tissa's book *"On Horseshoe Street"*. What she wrote about that book applies equally to this book. *"I would very much like to relate some of his 'tales' in this review, but have decided to practice restraint: as with all good stories from the pen of a good writer, they are best savoured on the page. The reader who enters the world of Sri Lanka in the 1950s in the company of such a gifted story-teller as Tissa Devendra is fortunate indeed"*.

The book is written in impeccable English as one would expect from an English Honours graduate. It is a pleasure to read with its easy flowing style. It is recommended reading without any hesitation to anyone who has the slightest interest in Ceylon. Those readers who are of a concurrent vintage as the author will come away with a feeling of vague nostalgia for the days that have gone by.



***Congratulations and a
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• Mahinda Wijesinghe, 100 Mahakurunduwatte Road Talangama South Battaramulla Sri Lanka
and • Mr Shamil Peiris 31 Primrose Road, Kandy, Sri Lanka.



SEND US YOUR RECIPES

Readers are invited to submit their favourite recipes for publication in the recipe 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.

My adventure into the Seafood industry in Sri Lanka

MERVYN ANDRIESZ writes

MERVYN ANDRIESZ returned to Sri Lanka in 1976, after 30 years in England, having worked in the seafood industry for many of those years. In the mid 1980's he was the No. 1 seafood exporter and had large processing factories in Colombo and Jaffna employing up to 1000 persons. He was the recipient of the Presidential Export Award in 1983, repeated in 1984 and 1987.

In my previous article published in your esteemed journal in November 2015, I covered my venture into Prawn farming in Sri Lanka, commencing in 1983. The many challenges, travails and successes were covered in that article, finally culminating in the closure of the Prawn farms due to the disease in the Ponds. In this article, I would like to go back to the time I returned to Sri Lanka in 1976. In the initial two years of returning, I studied the seafood market while selling frozen seafood to Japan and Europe. In 1978, I registered ANDRIESZ & CO. LTD. and rented processing and cold storage facilities in Galle from the Fisheries Corporation. Purchasing was done in Colombo and then trucked to Galle for processing. For two years Cooked and Peeled Prawns (Cocktail) were processed and exported to my business contact (also my friend) in Holland and the business grew steadily.

In 1979, I ceased operations in Galle and moved to Colombo, to rented premises and increased the number of products to include King Prawns and Lobsters (Crayfish). Brown Shrimp (Crangon Crangon) very small shrimp, caught in the shallow waters of the North Sea and are cooked and peeled and then sold in restaurants and bars as snack food. Peeling the tiny shrimp is a tedious process and in Holland they were sent to households where the housewives peeled them. The peeled shrimp were later collected and further processed by the factory. This had been done over several generations but as Holland became more affluent, the number of households who were prepared to do this reduced especially among the younger women.

My friend in Holland asked me whether he could send the shrimp to Sri Lanka for peeling and I told him to airfreight some for trial. He did better than that and brought them himself. He showed my staff how to peel the shrimp and although initially they had difficulty due to their small size, later became more accomplished at it. Due to the number of persons who would be required for peeling, we decided to do this in Galle and premises which we had used earlier in Galle, which we owned, would be reopened. Three container loads were shipped from Holland and we had to get police escorts to negotiate the narrow bridges at Bentota and Kalutara. The shrimp were sent to us without payment and once they were

shipped back, we were paid the peeling, re-packing and shipping charges. The Customs suspected that something shady was going on because there were no Letters of Credit or Drafts involved and questioned me at length as they could not believe that these transactions were done on 'On Trust'. After our Bankers confirmed this fact, they left us alone. About 150 tons were processed by us over the years.

Own Factory

I purchased land in Peliyagoda (near Colombo) and constructed our own factory including Cold Storage for about 200 tons. We moved in 1981 and the business grew, the Company's brand name "Amanda", named after my daughter, becoming firmly established in Japan.

I had been thinking that it did not make sense that most of the Prawns we processed came from Jaffna and the North of Sri Lanka and had to be transported all the way to Colombo, so why not take 'the factory to the product'. No one else in the business had done this and friends thought that I was crazy. However, I was convinced that this was the right move and visited Jaffna to study the possibilities. The roads were in a bad condition and at that time there were no refrigerated vehicles capable of making the long journey to Colombo.

None of the banks in Jaffna were equipped to handle international business efficiently, so everything had to be done in Colombo. Land suitable for a factory in Navatkuli (Jaffna) on the A9 road was identified as suitable for our purpose. Back in Colombo I initiated discussions with the Manager of a Dutch Bank that I had dealings with and outlined the project that I had conceptualised. Jaffna being unknown territory to him, various objections were raised, some verging on being ridiculous and finally I was able to convince the Bank that my project was viable. They agreed to provide the necessary funding to commence work on my dream Jaffna factory.

Setting up the factory was a monumental task, starting with the purchasing of all the equipment from Singapore and Europe including a 20-foot container fitted with a refrigerating facility. This had to be adequately cooled by plugging in to electricity supply in Jaffna and again in Anuradhapura when transporting seafood to Colombo. Finally, the factory was ready in 1982. Meanwhile, I had set up

a temporary facility in Navatkuli mainly for training staff. The required staff, mainly girls, were easily recruited as the wage I offered was double that offered by a local factory. The training staff, Sinhalese girls, came from my factory in Galle and convincing them to go to work in Jaffna was difficult and convincing their parents even more difficult. Several meetings were held with the families and after assurances that the girls would be well looked after as I would be on the spot as well, they agreed. The girls were welcomed by the Jaffna girls, treated with much affection and were welcome visitors into their homes. I was able to oversee the factory construction and being hands on, speeded up the process, with the factory being commissioned in 1982.

Jaffna factory

The opening ceremony was a lavish affair with my buyers from Japan, Holland and USA present as well as local politicians and VIPs. Many potential suppliers were invited and the opening ceremony was followed by many speeches. My foreign guests and I left for Colombo that evening by a chartered aircraft and it was reported that the party at the factory went on till late.

There was rapid growth in the business and we had opened purchasing centres all over the North from Pesalai and Silavaturai in the West to Mullaitivu in the East.

The quality of our products improved noticeably because of the freshness of the raw material used, resulting in increased orders. The factory ran smoothly and we had more than 300 excellent employees. Unfortunately, the civil riots in 1983 caused a lot of hardship with the Sinhalese girls having to be moved back to Colombo for safety reasons. This turned out to be only a temporary move as most of the girls came back to Jaffna after about three months, to be warmly welcomed by their Jaffna counterparts. There was rapid growth in the business and we had opened purchasing centres all over the North from Pesalai and Silavaturai in the West to Mullaitivu in the East. During peak production months, the total work force including casual labour was around 700. Andriesz & Co. won two Presidential Export Awards in 1983 and 1984 and another later by a group company. That was the good news.

The bad news was that several militant groups were springing up in the area and being

strapped for cash, we were targeted for many payroll robberies. Security was becoming a problem with the escalating war, with services being disrupted. As there was no public water supply we had purchased a site a few miles away where there was a natural spring with the purest water that one could hope for and all the water for the factory was transported by bowser. Fortunately, we had permission to transport this water through rebel-held land. The security situation worsened rapidly and I sent the Sinhalese girls back to Colombo but the factory continued to operate until war broke out in 1990 and the A9 was closed. We had large stock of King Prawns and other seafood worth several hundreds of thousand dollars in cold storage, which we were unable to send to Colombo. Electricity supply was cut off and our stock of diesel for the generators ran out in six weeks and we had no option but to close the factory, resulting in a massive financial loss in seafood stock, equipment and advances to suppliers. Several hundred loyal employees lost their jobs. Closing the factory was one of the saddest days in my life. We operated the factory under very difficult conditions for eight years, one of which was the water supply being completely cut off as the bowser carrying the water from the natural spring was blown up. Our (my wife, daughter and I) own safety was at risk, being kidnapped and held for ransom by a militant group and were lucky to escape unscathed. That is another story.

However, I am heartened by the fact that I was able to operate the factory for eight years under very trying conditions, with the safety of the staff paramount in my mind. It gives me a lot of satisfaction that during this period I was able to provide employment to hundreds, contribute to the economic development of the area and obtain much needed foreign exchange for the country. On a brighter note this allowed me to devote more time to my other 'love' – sport fishing, especially in view of my wife, Mersumi, catching trophy size fish in Australia and Alaska, which meant that I needed to sharpen my game.

Logic of our times

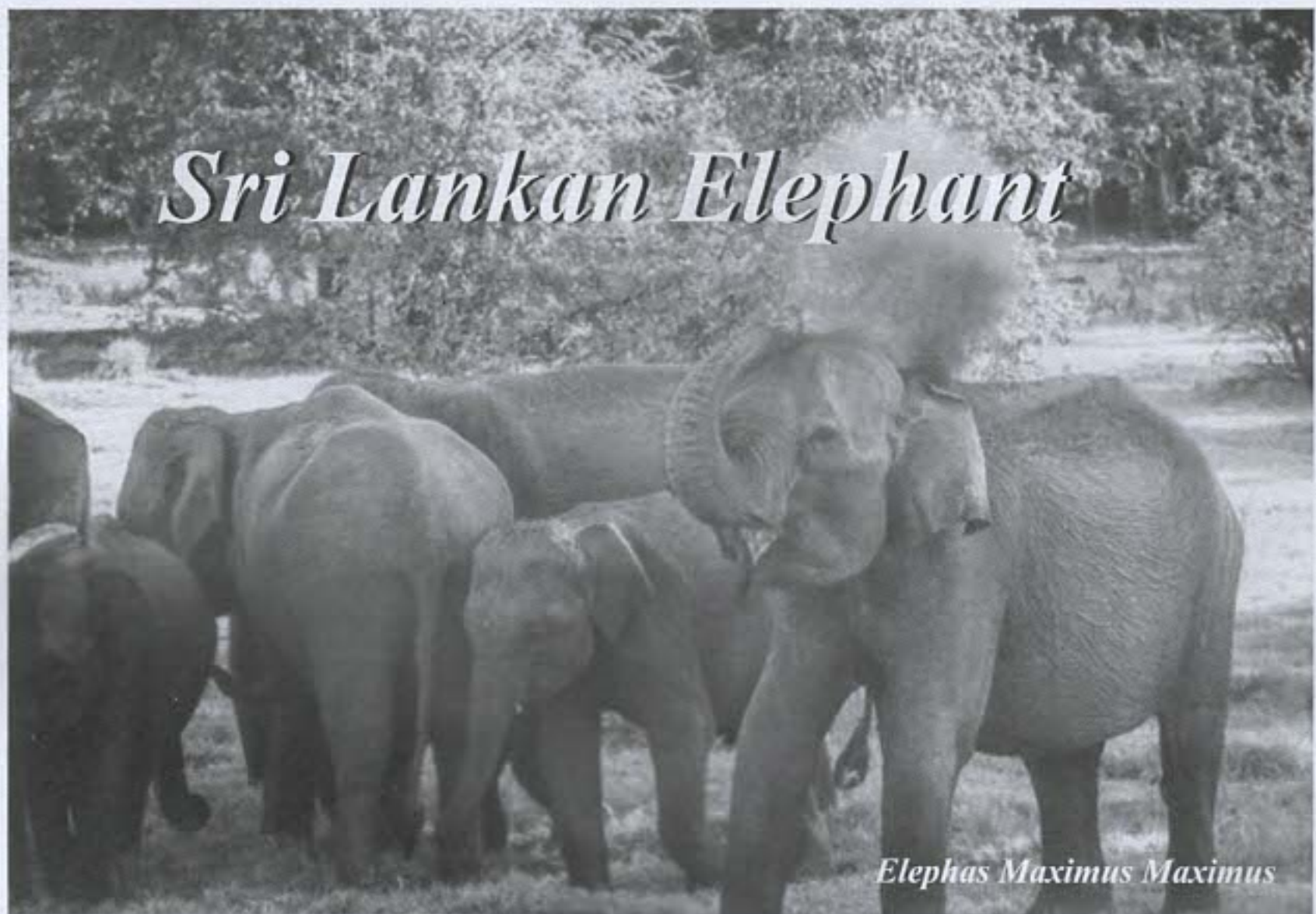
It is the logic of our times, No subject for immortal verse – that we who lived by honest dreams, defend the bad against the worse .

Tempt me no more, for I have known the lightening's hour, the poet's inward pride, the certainty of power.

– C. Day-Lewis

Treaties, you see, are like girls and roses: they last while they last.

– Charles de Gaulle.



Sri Lankan Elephant

Elephas Maximus Maximus

ROD FERDINANDS is an Environmental and Freshwater Consultant based in Melbourne. He was guest speaker at the Sydney CSA Public Meeting on 27 August, 2017 and this is a resume of the talk written by **SUNIMAL FERNANDO**.

Elephants may generally be classified into two species, the African (*Loxodonta africana*) and Asian (*Elephas maximus*) elephants. The word elephant is derived from the Greek word 'Elephas' that means ivory. There are two subspecies of African elephants, namely the savanna (*Loxodonta africana*) elephants that reside on the savanna and grassy plains of east and South Africa and forest (*Loxodonta africana cyclotis*) elephants that inhabit forested regions of central and western Africa. There are four subspecies of Asian elephants, the Ceylon subspecies (*Elephas maximus maximus*) the Indian subspecies (*Elephas maximus indicus*), the Borneo subspecies (*Elephas maximus borneensis*), and the Sumatran subspecies (*Elephas maximus sumatranus*).

Elephant ancestry spans over 55 million years and includes more than 300 proboscidean (derived from the Latin word 'proboscis' meaning trunk) species. Proboscideans have ranged throughout the world, except Australia, Antarctica, and a few islands. They inhabited numerous habitats, from the aquatic to tundra. The Order Proboscidea has one of the most comprehensive fossil records of any species. The African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) originated in Africa, about 1.5 million years ago.

The Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus maximus*) originated in Africa and migrated to Asia - once roaming through much of the Asian Continent south of the Himalayas, extending into China and south to the islands of Sumatra and Borneo. The Asian elephant is now restricted to isolated fragments in parts of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, China, Laos, Malaysia and Indonesia, but is now thought to be extinct in Pakistan.

When compared with the African elephant, the Ceylon Elephant is smaller - weighing between 2 and 5.5 tons, an adult male stands from 2.5m to 3.5m tall at the shoulder. The skin of this species is relatively smoother and darker with larger and more distinct patches of depigmentation on ears, face, trunk and belly. The ears are smaller and the back is more rounded. They have two humps on their forehead and the back is arched and convex while the trunk is more rigid with less rings ending in a single lip (as opposed to two in the African elephant), a finger-like projection with which it can scoop up tiny objects. The trunk provides a wide variety of functions from feeding, vocalisation, bathing and fighting. One of the characteristic features of an elephant is the tusks,

which are modified incisor teeth - however, only the bull has long tusks, though many bulls have no tusks at all. Cows have short tusks usually not visible. The tusks grow up to about 2 metres throughout the animal's life and elephants are usually right or left tusked as humans. The Ceylon Elephant's tusk which is slimmer and lighter can weigh up to about 35kg. The only other teeth they have are four molars that are replaced seven times throughout their lives. As the animal ages and the teeth are worn away with use, they are replaced from behind with the next set. If an elephant lives long enough to have used up all of its teeth, it then may starve to death. Anyway, of Sri Lankan elephants only a few bear tusks and the tusk population in Sri Lanka stands at less than 3 per cent of the total population of elephants.

The bull elephant is larger than the cow. A bull elephant has large trunk bases, bulges below and in front of their eyes, and swelling above the eyes as well. The cow elephant on the other hand has narrower trunk bases and lacks the prominent bulge above eyes. Bull's back is more rounded and curves more gradually into its hindquarters but the cow's is straighter and boxier with vertical hindquarters.

The Ceylon Elephant has a lifespan between 55 and 70 years. A female elephant usually becomes reproductive when she reaches about 9 to 12 years of age and can calve every 2.5 to 4 years, allowing for about seven offspring during her lifespan. Males become sexually mature at about their 14th to 15th year - but bulls do not mate until their twenties due to social hierarchy. Cows come into oestrus (are in 'heat') every three months, during which they are receptive to mating. When a female becomes pregnant, her oestrus cycle halts and she does not mate. Soon after she calves, her oestrus cycle begins again and she mates even if she is nursing. After a 22-month gestation period, the longest of any mammal, they give birth to a single calf (very rarely twins) which weighs between 75 to 115kg standing 0.8m-1.2m tall. A baby elephant that may consume about 12 litres of milk a day is taken care of not only by its mother but also by other cows in the herd whilst being weaned usually between 2 and 4 years of age. When referring to males, it is the oldest and largest ones that do most of the breeding during any time of the year. Bull elephants tend to breed during 'musth', when testosterone levels can be as much as 60 times greater than at other times, and they become sexually active as well as extremely aggressive.

The Ceylon Elephant normally lives and travels in a herd of about 8-12, although herd sizes can vary. Invariably, a herd may consist of female adults and their offspring headed by the matriarch. Males, who leave their birth herds when they reach sexual maturity, can be sighted wandering on their own or in temporary bachelor herds. Their cohesiveness is enforced by a complex communication system. A

range of vocalisations, from low rumblings to high-pitched screams and trumpets, along with assorted visual signals is employed when they are close to each other. Some of their rumbling, growling, bellowing, and moaning sounds of varied low frequency can span long distances. The Ceylon Elephant is a highly intelligent, self-aware, social, emotionally conscious animal - and has a long and precise memory and capacity for association, especially if it has been wronged in the past.

Inhabiting tropical forests, mainly lowland dry deciduous woodlands and frequenting nearby grasslands and cropped lands, the herds wander many miles in search of food and water. They feed on a wide variety of vegetation including grasses, leaves, climbers, shoots, barks, roots, fruits, nuts and seeds. An adult elephant can consume up to about 300 pounds of vegetation a day. The need for large quantities of food and water for sustenance requires a correspondingly extensive habitat, which unfortunately has been diminished by human habitation and activity.

Deforestation for human settlement and cropping of vast tracts of land leads to the loss, dilapidation and increased fragmentation of the elephant habitat in Sri Lanka. In the past, elephants were widely distributed from sea level to the highest mountain ranges. They occurred in the dry zone, in the lowland wet zone as well as in the cold damp montane forests. During the colonial period from 1505 to 1948, the wet zone was converted to commercially used fields and became heavily settled. Until 1830, elephants were so plentiful that their destruction was encouraged by the government, and rewards were paid for any that was killed. In the first half of the 19th century, forests in the montane zone were cleared large-scale for the planting of coffee, and afterwards tea. Only a small remnant population exists in the Peak Wilderness Sanctuary, with the wet zone population completely decimated. According to the elephant census carried out in 2011 by the Wildlife Conservation Department, Sri Lanka is home to 5,879 elephants of which 1,107 are babies and 122 are tuskers. Historically, the Ceylon Elephant population was estimated at around 13,000 in the early 19th century, dropping to less than 2,000 in the early 1990s.

Each year, nearly 120 wild elephants are killed by people in order to protect their crops and houses. Poaching for ivory is also a threat and because only males have tusks, populations can become extremely skewed towards females, thus affecting breeding rates. Conversely, about 65 people die annually after being attacked by elephants. The human-elephant conflict is compounded by the elephant's fondness for crops, such as sugarcane, bananas and other fruits grown by farmers. Conservation of the Ceylon elephant is a challenge, given the pressures of increasing development with in

The First Rugby Team Of S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia



• *First ever Rugby team of St Thomas College, Mount Lavinia - 1955 1st XV*

Standing (left to right): L.W.Abeywardene (Master-in Charge), Rohantha De Silva, D.M.Seneviratne, Asoka Wickramanayake, Rodney Ingelton, Michael Tissera, T.Gray, R.Kandiah, Thissa Molligoda. Seated (left to right): P.B.Jayasekara, R.Hewawasam, Lester Shockman, K.S.AAananthan, (C), Warden R.S.De Saram, S.B.L.Perera, Ifthikar Cader, Errol Jacotine, Dan Piachaud, Sudath Weerasuriya. On the ground: Van Cuylenberg and Mack. Absent: Coach Mahesh Rodrigo. The first ever official Rugby Match was played against Trinity College, Kandy on 25 June 1955 at Longdon Place Colombo 7 and Trinity College won that game 13-00.

(With thanks to Victor Melder)

Sri Lankan Elephant (Continued from previous page)

the traditional range of the elephant. CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), one of the largest and oldest conservation and sustainable use agreements in existence names *Elephas Maximus* as an endangered species. Participation in the multi-lateral treaty is voluntary, and although participatory countries are legally bound by the Convention, it does not take the place of national laws. Sri Lanka's domestic legislation to implement conservation policy at the national level is the Fauna and Flora Protection Act of 2009 – policed by the Department of Wildlife Conservation. The elephant conservation strategy of the Department of Wildlife Conservation aims at conserving as many viable populations as possible in

as wide a range of suitable habitats as is feasible. This means protecting elephants both within the system of protected areas and as many animals outside these areas that the land can support and landholders will accept and not restricting elephants to the protected area network alone.

Concluding on a positive note, several conservation initiatives are in operation and being developed such as the Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage where injured elephants are treated and orphaned baby elephants are cared for; the Udawalawe Elephant Transfer Home where orphaned elephant calves are rehabilitated for ultimate release back into the wild; Eco-tourism programmes for volunteering in elephant conservation work.

CSA dinner & Sing-along 2017 ... *A most enjoyable night*



• *President Pauline Gunewardene's inaugural speech.*



• *Perfect teamwork... Malini and Thiru.*



• *Dr Robert and Inez*



• *Ashra (left) and Sunil "Kolamba Hatha Aussie Gihini"*

• *Enelda and Harry*



• *Gunasmin (left) and Virasmi*



Photographs by
Mahal Selvadurai



• *From left: Basil, Menik, Senanie and Wijitha.*



• *(From left): Laki, Kevin, Sue, Virasmi, Les and Pauline.*

Synopses of Meetings

Melbourne Chapter

22 October 2017

Talking Tamil, Talking Saivism in Australia: language and religious maintenance in the Sri Lankan

Tamil diaspora

by Dr Niru Perera

My presentation was about the topic of language maintenance for Sri Lankan migrants, in other words, how do families keep using Sri Lankan languages like Sinhala and Tamil when they settle in an English-dominant country? Is this still important to them? Or are they inclined to shift to English for the sake of integration? To answer some of these questions, I drew from my PhD study into language maintenance in a Tamil Saivite temple in Australia. By doing so, I focused on the role of religion (and a religious institution) in helping Sri Lankan families to maintain their heritage language, Tamil. This study is set against the backdrop of Australian society, where Hinduism is now the fastest-growing non-Christian religion in the country, and where the number of people who speak Tamil at home is also increasing.

To understand how Tamil is maintained by the second generation in the temple, I presented some data collected in the temple's Sunday religious school. I recorded and analysed the language used by the small group of students in the Year 9 religious class and found some interesting results. Firstly, the students were using a lot of English despite the school being Tamil-medium. However, they were mixing English with Tamil at a regular rate. Their use of Tamil was important to express Tamil cultural concepts, such as kinship and food terms, and Saiva religious concepts.

The young students also felt strongly about using the Tamil language in order to be accepted into the local and international Tamil Saivite community and as part of identifying as a Tamil Saivite. Even if children could not speak Tamil fluently they could show their Tamil identity in other ways whether it was through wearing traditional clothes, following certain rituals in the home or watching Tamil (Bollywood) films.

The conclusion is that despite the dominance of English in Australian society there is still a strong motivation for young people to use some Tamil in their lives. While this kind of usage does not lead to pure or full maintenance of the Tamil language by younger generations, it does suggest that Tamil can continue in some form for the third and further generations of Sri Lankan migrants because the Tamil language has a significant role in the performance of the Saiva faith and Tamil identity.

– DR NIRU PERERA

Melbourne Chapter

19 November 2017

A Tough Apprenticeship: Sri Lanka's Military Against the Tamil Militants 1979 - 1987.

by Dr. Channa Wickremesekera

On 19 November Dr. Channa Wickremesekera delivered a talk on his latest book on military history: *A Tough Apprenticeship: Sri Lanka's Military Against the Tamil Militants 1979 - 1987*. In his talk, Dr. Wickremesekera outlined the evolution of the Sri Lankan military forces since their inception after Independence and especially after the outbreak of violence with the Tamil militants in the early 1980s.

Dr. Wickremesekera explained how the once ceremonial Sri Lankan army struggled to cope with the demands of a war it was not prepared to fight and the trials and tribulations that attended this learning experience. Facing a ruthless and committed guerrilla organisation and their efforts to come to grips with their challenge further undermined by the aloofness of the international community, the Sri Lankan military forces had to struggle with limited material and knowledge resources. A considerable part of the book is devoted to 'Operation Liberation' the operation to capture the Vadamarachchi sector of the Jaffna peninsula in May 1987. The operation marked the coming of age of the Sri Lankan military forces in many ways despite numerous setbacks and limited achievements.

– Dr. Channa Wickremesekera

WE NEED SPEAKERS

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

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

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

OBITUARY

James Morton

(09. 08. 1921 – 24. 10. 2017)



James Morton, known to everyone as Jim, was called to rest last month at the ripe age of 96. His was a very active life. He was a very gregarious person who enjoyed company, loved to share his knowledge of art with whoever was prepared to listen and was, of course, a great conversationalist. Jim was a very popular personality within the Sri Lankan community in Sydney. He and his wife Chitra were known for their legendary hospitality as well as for Jim's creative talents as an artist. Jim's capability as an artist was evident across all media; water colours, acrylic, oils, gouache and pastel. He loved painting scenes from Sri Lanka and portraits of his Sri Lankan friends. His artistic creations grace many a Sri Lankan home in Sydney as well as in Sri Lanka. A member of CSA since 1999, Jim and Chitra were regular attendees at our quarterly meetings as well as the Annual Dinner.

Born in Liverpool, England, in 1921, he was the second eldest of eight children, all raised in their home town by parents Robert and Sarah Morton. His early career included a stint with the Royal Air Force during World War II, which was followed by a short spell in India which seemed to have left an everlasting impression on him. He returned to England and was employed by Milford Astor & Co, the art and printing supplies company which continued to employ him after his migration to Melbourne in 1959.

It was in the late 1970s that Jim met the then recently widowed Chitra whom he married and settled down in Lane Cove where I first met this charming couple way back in 1984, not long after our own arrival in Australia. They moved to Carlingford a couple of years later and lived in their home almost adjoining the Carlingford Shopping Centre for the past 30 years. Jim and Chitra, a very hospitable couple,

loved company and would invite four or five couples to dinner each week. Their home in Carlingford was a veritable meeting place for Sri Lankans. I have met countless Sri Lankans who I had not known before, at Jim's home, and many have remained our firm friends thereafter. Jim's interest in men and matters were well complemented by Chitra's culinary prowess and the two of them really echoed the pithy Sinhalese saying "jaadiyata moodiya" or in English "matching each other like the lid that fits a jar"!

Jim's sense of humour was out of the ordinary and he would see the lighter side of life in general which most of us would not observe. When at times Chitra gets on the phone to chat with a fellow Sri Lankan, the conversation would often slip into the vernacular, which Jim would observe with some wry amusement. He would later take the "mickey" out of Chitra in the company of friends, with his version of Chitra's telephone chatter in Sinhalese. He would imitate Chitra on the phone saying "kohomda ithin"? "Aththada"? "Aney paw" etc in his hallmark Liverpudlian accent that would bring anyone to side splitting laughter.

A man deeply immersed in his work as an artist, which he took to, after retiring from Milford Astor, he gathered a great deal of knowledge and expertise in this his area of special interest. His visits to Sri Lanka, made him familiar with the landscape there which he reproduced on canvas with great fidelity. He was also conversant with the artistic styles of Sri Lankan artists and had his own views on their techniques and quality of work which he was always happy to discuss with art aficionados. That passionate area of interest did not confine himself to a corner. He was interested in local, international, and Sri Lankan politics and kept himself well informed of developments, not afraid of voicing his opinion either. He was physically active to the end, driving his car and going for his walks regularly. I personally thought that he would reach his 100th year without much difficulty and it was both sad and surprising to hear of his demise after a brief illness. It was typical of Jim's outlook on life that his funeral conducted according to his wishes was a unique mix of Buddhist and Christian tradition.

A most endearing personality, Jim will be missed by his family and many friends. He is survived by his wife Chitra, and his sons Alan, Michael, and Peter from his first marriage. May he be granted eternal peace.

– Hugh Karunanayake

Your abilities

When GOD solves your problems, you have faith in HIS abilities; when GOD doesn't solve your problems HE has faith in your abilities.



Sydney 3 February 2018

The first General meeting of the Ceylon Society of Australia for 2018 will be on Saturday 3 February, commencing 6.30 PM at the Pennant Hills Community Centre hall, Ramsay Road (off Yarrara Road). Parking is available at the rear of the Pennant Hills Public Library. Members and their guests are welcome.

The guest speaker for the evening is **Dr Siran Upendra Deraniyagala**. He will speak on "Prehistory of Sri Lanka".

Dr. Siran Upendra Deraniyagala was former Director-General of Archaeology, Sri Lanka (1992 to 2001).

Born in Chilaw in 1942, he is the third of four sons of Paules Edward Pieris (Director of the National Museum of Ceylon (1939-1963) and Prini (née Molamure). He was educated at St Thomas College, Mount Lavinia. Siran obtained a BA and MA in Architecture and Sanskrit at Trinity College, Cambridge before completing a postgraduate Diploma at the Institute of Archaeology, University of London. At the Institute he qualified with distinction and was awarded the Gordon Childe Prize, as one of two best all-round students in all fields of archaeology.

In 1968 he joined the Archaeological Survey Department of Sri Lanka as the Assistant Commissioner in charge of scientific excavations. In 1968 Siran discovered ancient human burials in the Fa Hien Cave. In 1969 he oversaw the excavation at the Citadel of Anuradhapura.

He received an MA degree at the University of Cambridge, a postgraduate Diploma at the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, and his PhD at Harvard University.

As a young man, fresh from the Universities of Cambridge and London, Siran returned overland to Sri Lanka in 1965, hitchhiking from London to India through Iran and Afghanistan. After a year's stay in India, working with Indian scholars on the latest findings in Indian prehistory, he journeyed home in 1966 to begin his work on the country's pre-Vijayan past, going on to later produce his book, *The Prehistory of Sri Lanka*.

His years in the UK and later at Harvard University in the USA where he gained his Ph.D. were an important formative period in his life, mainly on

account of the world-renowned scholars who taught him, such as Professors Sir Harold Bailey, K. de B. Codrington, Frederick Zeuner, Christoph von Furer-Heimendorf and Hallam Movius among others. (Information sourced from Wikipedia).

Social: A brief question time from the audience will be followed by a social. Those able to are requested to please bring a plate of non-sweet savory finger food. Avoid cakes with icing please as the general preference is for plain cakes, sandwiches and savoury pastries.

To avoid duplication of food items please contact our Social Convenor Chandra Senaratne on (02) 9872 6826, As an alternative a donation to the CSA to help defray costs could be made at the meeting.

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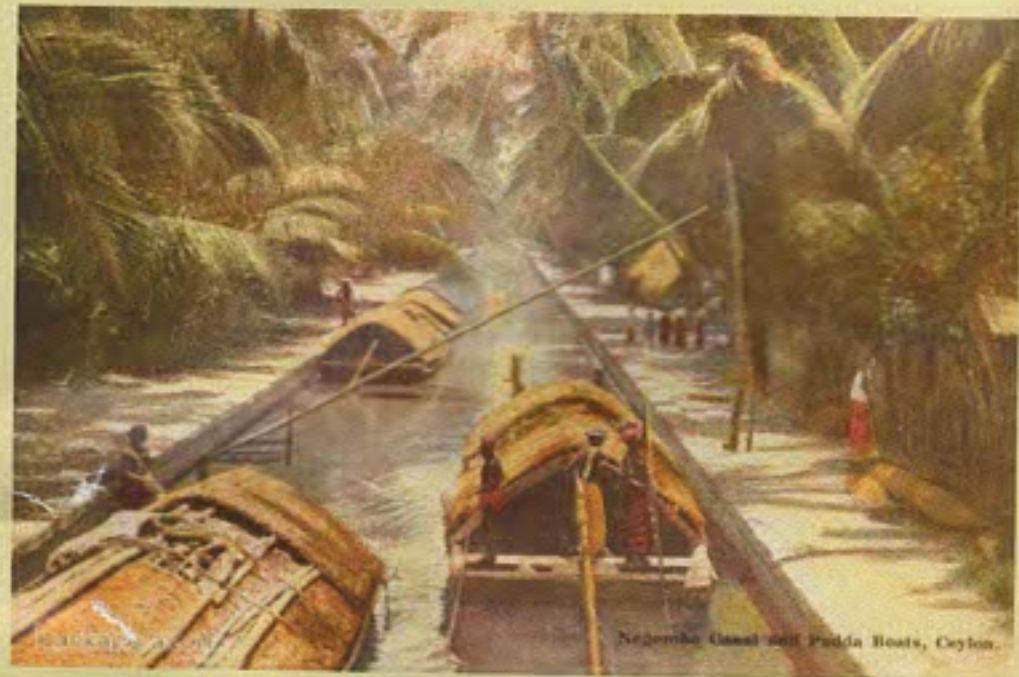
Star Tortoise (*Geochelone Elegans*)



Vanda Joachim



Cattleya Bowringiana



Padda boats in the Negombo canal, 1930



Arakukka or buff striped keelback -
(*Natrix Stolata*)

Hugh Karunanayake rekindles childhood days and after, with this magnificent array of photographs inviting us all to go back to nature like in our childhood days. It may be worth a try and a better world could be the outcome! Hugh's story is on page 9.



Scats (above) and Monos - the great brackish water combination. Monos are often called "Ceylon Angels".