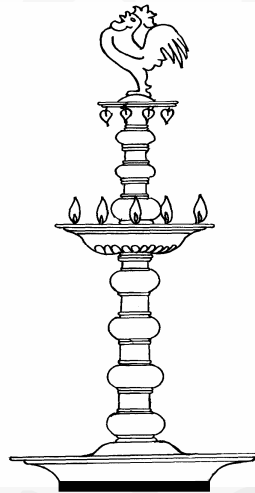


THE CEYLANKAN



Journal of the Ceylon Society of Australia

Journal Number 38 (Vol X No 2) May 2007

Editor: Sumane Iyer

CONTENTS	
Editorial <i>Sumane Iyer</i>	2
As I remember... The Sacred Heart Convent Galle in 1930 s <i>Barbara Misso</i>	3
Schooling in Wartime Ceylon 1941-1945 <i>Tony Peries</i>	6
'Neath the shade of an old Banyan Tree <i>Douglas Jones</i>	8
Duty & Valour -The Talalla Brothers <i>Chung Chee Min</i>	11
Ceylon Volunteers of the Burma Campaign: The Forgotten Veterans of the Forgotten Campaign, (1941-1945) Part 2 <i>Sergei de Silva-Ranasinghe</i>	15
My Adopted Country - A Poem <i>Clive Meares</i>	18
Some Memories of my years in Jaffna - Part 3 <i>Neville Jayaweera</i>	18
A Speaking Picture: The Centenary E.F.C.Ludowyk Memorial Lecture 2006 Part 2 <i>Yasmine Gooneratne</i>	21
Dr Lilamani Raffel - an Appreciation <i>Dr Harold Gunatilake</i>	24
Letters to Editor	25
Synopses of Meetings <i>Sydney - Doug Jones</i> <i>Melbourne - Dilhani Kumbukage</i>	27
Book Review	29

EDITORIAL



To begin with, this issue leads with three articles on the theme “school time memories” - that is the theme for this Journal. They are all written by members who have earned their ‘wings’ as seniors to write about a period fast vanishing from our collective memories. As Tony puts it aptly “*unless those of us who recall schooling in the war years set down our memories soon, they are likely to be forgotten forever.*” Most younger readers may be bemused by the antics described by these writers who have passed their three score years and ten - be reminded, the writers

were once young too. Events and incidents, people and places that touched them are presented with a touch of nostalgia and a sense of humour.

To continue the idea of presenting a theme in each issue, the Editorial team invites articles on “places that touched your heart and mind”. To kick off we have in our coffers one on Diyatalawa by one of our members who breathes life into the place it was in the 1940 s. He paints an idyllic picture. Let us hope each one of you will have your favourite corner of Sri Lanka to write about. In the meantime do not forget we need material for our bumper issue—Journal # 40 which commemorates our 10th year in existence. This will be a collector’s item so get moving and get counted. Material to be in by 1st October 2007. It may seem like plenty of time, but time is a slippery entity.

It is rewarding to see responses to articles which add more depth and colour to writers’ contributions. Jeanne Jayasinghe’s article on Kandy and Ransiri Menike Silva’s prose titled “To Let for a Song” (J 37) has drawn Letters to Editor from Somasiri Devendra and Darnley de Sousa respectively. Darnley has not answered Ransiri’s question but poses one himself. But how lively all this is!! More curiosity leads to more knowledge - and that is what *The Ceylankan* is about.

19th Century Image



SINHALESE BUDDHIST PRIEST.

Sinhalese Buddhist Priest

As I remember....

Sacred Heart Convent Galle, in the 1930s

by Barbara Misso

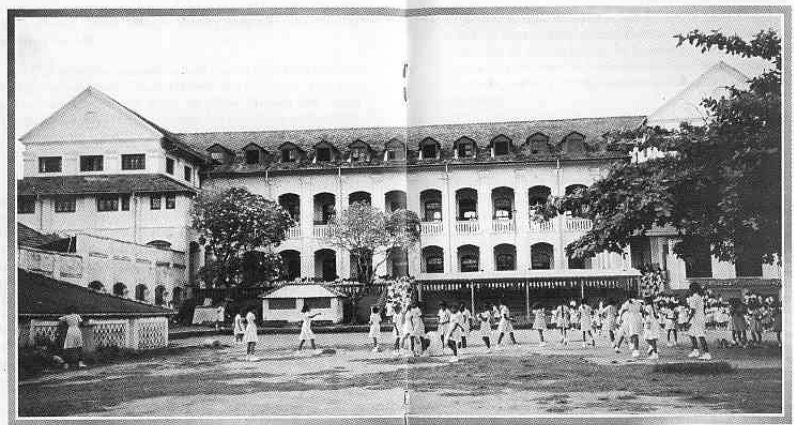
My mother left me, alone for the first time in my life, in a class of 5-6 year old boys and girls. She had recently converted to Roman Catholicism, and in her company I had grown used to the appearance and accents of foreign priests. But nuns were not a familiar sight. Their heavy robes of black and white and wide headgear, lent a fearsome aspect to their persons. They were from another world. I lost my voice in their presence. Since, in my time at school there was a strong presence of nuns in the convent, my experience of school was coloured by my relations with them.

The three lowest grades occupied a large room that doubled as a Hall for formal occasions. The Lower Kindergarten was closest to the front entrance of the school; the Upper kindergarten next to it and the 1st Standard at the further end. Sister Cuthbert reigned over this early-education area. She taught 1st Standard. At the age of seven, having skipped Lower Kindergarten and spent my first year in the middle grade, I reached 1st Standard and Sister Cuthbert. She took a dim view of my voicelessness. She had me stand on a chair and read out loud to the class. My pain soon turned to pleasure...there followed a ritual that became familiar as the year wore on. Sister Cuthbert reached for a bunch of keys slung round her waist. She walked to one of the cupboards set into the wall of the room and brought out an enormous jar of coloured sweets. The best ones oval in shape, red on one side and yellow on the other and rated highest in the scale of rewards. The class clapped as I received the sweets, the boys glad of a chance to be rowdy. I was appeased. Nearly every boy and girl in the class was a winner at some time in the year, except for really incorrigible ones, like the boy who cut school to go fishing with his older brothers.

My next encounter with a nun was in Standard 3. Sister Michael was not at all awesome. With her I

learnt to separate the person from the costume. Her voice was soft and more often than not she was joking. I forgot to speak in a frightened whisper during the year I spent in her class and became dedicated to the causes she espoused: religion first, with Ireland a close second. Only Sister Michael's class celebrated St. Patrick's Day and we did it in style, wearing green shamrocks we had made in class pinned to our uniforms and green ribbons on our plaits.

The kitchen of the school was large, catering for the boarders, the nuns and a vernacular Order of religious women who carried out tasks around the



REAR VIEW - S. H. C
Young Heartians To The Fore

school and had care of the very young boarders. It was out of bounds to the curious among us but when we were in primary school we liked to tease the families of geese that wandered in the grass outside. The poultry was reared by Sister Damase. She managed the kitchen and looked kindly on youngsters turned out of their sewing class because they had forgotten to bring their needles to school. She always found us replacements from some store of her own, so she was popular though she had little other contact with us.

Another area of the building that lured us but was definitely taboo was the sickroom on the second floor. Here our friends among the boarders were locked away with infectious diseases. Sister Godlieb, a rosy-cheeked fresh-faced nursing Sister in those days, smiled and joked with us but kept us

firmly away. She and another young nurse from the Mother House in Belgium were recent arrivals. We liked young nuns because they were friendlier and more relaxed than the older nuns who would notice when we were in the wrong place – the second floor- and send us back peremptorily to the garden.

Standard 4 brought Sister Mary into our lives. She was different. Anglo-Indian, young and laidback (for a nun). She would take us into the back garden for Physical Education, PE and accompany us in the exercises. No teacher except the sports teacher, who was not a nun, did that. In her class we had a

school essay competition for all years from Standard 4 to Senior Cambridge. We might have had different topics for the Forms but so unconcerned were we in Standard 4, that we did not use the weeks we had for preparation. I remember the topic, 'the country you would like to visit and why'. I remember writing about Italy (I wonder now what I knew about Italy when I was ten years old.). The result was announced at some ceremony or other, perhaps end of the term. A senior student won the prize. But to everyone's surprise, our headmistress, Sister William announced that a special prize was awarded to me in Standard 4. I walked to the podium in a daze and received it. Now I had an elevated status in the school. Lots of senior students turned around to look at me. I was famous. The next competition was in handwriting. I knew I had no chance. The seniors always took the prizes, in time the competitions soon petered out.

Sister Mary was in the habit of making fun of her students, a practice that did not appeal to me because she pounced on my dislike of Netball training and even PE. She did realise that it was the publicity I disliked not the sport. Eventually we came to terms over it, me by finding creative excuses and she by being kind enough to accept them. I was further grateful to her for marking Needlework and Art alphabetically instead of numerically. A result of E or even F for Needlework didn't impact on one's place in class. Few students remembered Sister Mary in later years because she left during the Christmas break after a year with us and did not return. She looked frail even if she was keen and enthusiastic.

Nuns did get ill. Their heavy serge garments in our climate and the hard work of teaching caused the

weaker ones to collapse. It is possible they were moved to more suitable regions of the world, wherever the Order was established.

Sister Estelle was a dedicated teacher of singing. So dedicated, that our School Choir won the Singing Competition in the Galle District. There were several other schools in the competition but as I was very, very young, all I remember is that we sang "An owl and a pussycat went to sea". Sister Estelle was a favourite with us but for the wrong reason. She was earnest and hardworking but not successful at control. The relaxed atmos-



Sister William,
headmistress

phere in the singing room, away from the eyes of the sterner nuns brought out the demon in all of us. The class disliked the scales she made us practice and her choice of songs was considered dull, so the singing room was generally in an uproar. But even we, thoughtless and cruel, felt remorse when we heard that Sister Estelle had become too ill to teach and had been sent back to Belgium. She was never replaced unfortunately and I missed the music lessons. She laid a foundation in choral music that served me for the rest of my life.

Standard 5 was taken by a lay teacher but one of the subjects in that year was taken by the head of the needlework department, Sister Francis Xavier. The Convent had a good reputation in such fine arts as painting, lace making and embroidery. Past pupils and other adults had classes at weekends. Sister Francis Xavier was a big intimidating presence with a heavy Flemish accent but with a kind heart. I was probably her worst student but she took it in her stride and greeted me always with a pitying smile. Under her tuition my peers produced exquisite embroidery, but I never progressed beyond patching and darning. Sister would call out, rolling her Rs, "Barbara, show me your work!" For which she had only one comment, "Onpick!"

Forms 1 and 2, both taught by lay teachers came after Standard 5. The next form was called the J.S.C., the Junior School Certificate (formerly the Junior Cambridge.) It was Sister á Kempis' Form. She was English, from the North Country. She taught us Sri Lanka's history, pronouncing the names of Sinhalese kings in her Yorkshire accent to the best of her ability. She loved Wordsworth and gave an impassioned attention to his sonnet on London in our poetry book. She also gave us

sound practical advice for our age, giddy teenagers as we were. I found her advice very relevant in later life. A nervous and fragile woman she had favourites – a practice that divided the class. Those of us who had started our schooling together in the Primary years remained loyal to each other but there was a large influx of strangers at that level who were not of our time and turned teacher's pets. Not us! Sister á Kempis taught most of our classes except religion and mathematics. We had an assistant parish priest come in weekly to extend our knowledge of religion. Whoever had this bright idea did not choose well. Our first priest-teacher was asked to teach in the presence of our Form teacher, Sister á Kempis. Whether this cramped his style I do not know, but he was foreign with blurred speech and wore glasses with thick lenses that further alienated him from us. We did not understand his words or the concepts he was presenting. No one dared speak because of the nun's presence even if we had any idea of what he was saying. His successor was even more memorable. He was a Ceylonese like our parish priest. He had refused to have a nun sitting in on his lessons. Alas, he was a disaster. His manner was confident and jovial before he had sized up his class. As a result he had the girls so relaxed that they treated him with casual friendliness. Even the most staid of girls was soon throwing paper balls at him. I was appalled. I felt sure it was some sort of esoteric sin to throw paper balls at a priest so I kept some decorum and so did a very few others. Strangely no one told on us. The class was not punished but the practice of sending newly-fledged parish priests ceased and Sister á Kempis continued to give us practical and very relevant instruction.

Sister Marcelline was our mathematics teacher, with scholarly distinction in her subject. She declined to waste time on explanation of new topics. Anyone could see they were self-explanatory. Instead with little encouragement, she launched into anecdotes of her life in Belgium during World War One on the lines of ... 'how we outwitted the Germans.' Later she took French in the senior classes instead of maths. Perhaps she needed a change.

Sister Mary Paul was the Form teacher of the Senior Forms –Preparatory and Senior Cambridge. She herself was in a preparatory stage, handpicked to take over as Principal of the school from the aging Sister William. She taught English Language, English Literature, Geography and Latin with fervour and enthusiasm to both classes, in the same room, a total of about 30 girls. Other subjects were taught by visiting lay teachers.

Full of energy and happy, as though she had found the ideal niche in life for her talents, she strode along corridors, her rosary beads and keys flying and clashing wildly, making no attempt to warn us of her approach, so we had time to compose ourselves before she burst into the room. She was a sport. She pretended we hadn't been in upheaval in her absence. Sister Mary Paul brought a freshness that revived our school. She introduced a Gym class for her senior girls by taking it herself in the Hall. We had our Company of Girl Guides and even a Jamboree in Colombo that was our first taste of freedom away from the boundary of school. In the classroom she kept us in touch with British education. I was able to take a higher paper in Latin instead of reading and translating Julius Caesar's war exploits which the rest of the class did. It often left me a free period which I enjoyed doing errands around the school for Sister Mary Paul. She brought in new teachers, the most notable being Dorothy Anghie whom she had 'nobbled', so we heard, during a chance meeting on a train journey from Kandy to Galle.

Outside our daily life was the Mother Superior who came from Belgium and was Head of the community of nuns. We had two Superiors in my time in school. Both were kind, loving women who showed affection for us whenever we chanced to meet them in our rambles round the school. Their purpose was to serve the community of nuns in their religious role. Our Order of nuns was called Sisters of Charity whose "Mother House" was in Belgium until World War II started. The Mother Superior was a well-educated and accomplished woman, sometimes a woman of 'quality', an aristocrat who had decided to take the vows. Not that we were supposed to know that. They spoke French as all our nuns did, to each other. One of our Superiors played the piano in the singing room for Sister Estelle until one day, to our surprise, she moved into the position of Superior. There was no pride in position in the Order.

We were never in the presence of Mother Superior except when she presided at the celebration of the Feast of the school in June. Then it was the Superior who sat with the Bishop and other dignitaries. Also on the feast of the Sacred Heart, Mother Superior walked among the boarders and distributed little gifts. Belgian chocolates were a gift worth having. Day-scholars had a holiday. A little woman ruled the school with an iron hand. She was Sister William. She administered

the school, but had more leisure in my time because she shared her burden with Sister Mary Paul. We saw her walk around the school appraising the changes with some satisfaction, during our hours of recess. She was one of the five Sisters of Charity sent from Belgium in the late 1890s to establish a school for girls, (sister-school of St. Aloysius College for boys), and its first Principal. She had seen the school grow from a little house in the shadow of the boys' school catering to 36 girls, to a large modern school with over 400 students. In my time the school spread out to embrace a house in the same street for a separate Kindergarten, run on modern lines by the capable Sister Cuthbert. The old kindergarten became a Hall fully equipped with a stage and lighting for concerts and other festive occasions. Sister William still had a hand in the school, taking relief classes; we were pleased to have her because she was an admirable teacher. She seemed to accept any changes made by Sister Mary Paul with one exception. She would not have girls in trousers. So to the end of my schooldays, we wore knee-length divided skirts for sporting events much to our embarrassment when we had to appear in public.

Being a day scholar I had less insight into the inner life of the school. But there was one occasion when I spent a night in the school dormitory, the night before my first Communion in the Catholic Church. The rest of the class had already passed this milestone. I had one companion, who was a boarder. The Convent decided to make it an occasion for both of us and invited me to stay overnight in the Convent. And so I was caught up in the regimen of boarding school life. That night I walked upstairs to the third floor with my friend and the rest of the junior boarders, accompanied by one of the Sisters. I was given a bed in the dormitory. It was my first night away from home and felt strange. Mass was at 6.30 a.m. in the Convent Chapel. The service was sung by the nuns in their clear soaring voices. It was for me the first of many such experiences over the years I spent in the school. As a child I accompanied my mother, rising at 5.30 to reach the Chapel in time. When we lived closer to the school in my senior years I walked alone in the cool morning enjoying the freedom, the quiet road leading across railway lines, past the old jail, the College, and downhill to the peace of the Chapel and the singing of nuns.

ΩΩΩΩΩΩ

Schooling in Wartime Ceylon 1941-1945

by Tony Peries

Barbara Misso's extremely evocative article in the May '06 issue of "The Ceylankan" forcibly reminded me that World War II started more than 65 years ago and that unless those of us who recall schooling in the war years set down our memories soon, they are likely to be forgotten forever.

I started school in Standard 3 of St. Peter's College in Jan 1940 and I don't believe the war intruded on my immature consciousness until early in 1942 when all our friends and relatives were suddenly talking of evacuation from Colombo. The fear presumably was air raids rather than invasion but people left the capital and its environs in droves and I recall talk in later years that palatial Colombo houses could be bought cheap. Those with habitable estate bungalows away from the coast moved into them as did those fortunate enough to possess holiday houses in Nuwara Eliya, Bandarawela or Kandy. My father's elderly widowed sister, a Colombo dweller like us, had a large house in a village called Bolawalana near Kurana railway station on the Negombo railway line (and very close to that town) so she moved there and my immediate family with her. We were there for the famous Japanese air raid of April 1942 which I remember only for more aeroplanes in the sky than we had ever seen, and the sound of distant gunfire. Later that day we saw heavy traffic of bullock carts and similar vehicles taking people and household goods away from Colombo.

I went to Maris Stella College, Negombo for the second term of 1942: their buildings had been acquired for some military purpose so we had classes from 8.a.m. to 1.p.m., with a half hour break, in cadjan sheds purpose built on (I think) church land. I thoroughly enjoyed the change as Bolawalana was fairly rural so I roamed around with boys of the area, trying to catch fish in the streams, shooting small birds with air-guns or catapults and watching the village blacksmith shoeing bulls, a novelty to an urban child. Meantime, St Peters had opened a branch in Minuwangoda, not far away, with boarding facilities, though some Colombo families were living around the Catholic Church in fairly primitive accommodation. My parents took me to see the school, where numerous classmates were enjoying

the informal atmosphere, learning to swim in a nearly river etc, and I was desperate to join them but my fond mother would have none of it!

Later that year we went back to our Colombo (Havelock Town) home as did many other people so doubtless the threat of air raids had diminished though shelters were being built everywhere with Air Raid Precaution (ARP) and Auxiliary Fire Service having become important departments, employing vast numbers. Every street had one or more “House Fire Parties” equipped with buckets of sand for incendiary bombs, and other buckets full of water, to be used with a “stirrup pump” which could provide a powerful jet through a short hose. Going to play at the houses of boys who had such equipment was a delight as the stirrup pump could be used to soak each other and on occasion, un-suspecting passers by! Many houses in our street had been acquired by the British Army so uniformed men walking around and trucks of all sizes as well as dispatch riders on motorbikes were everywhere.



The Racecourse runway. Photo taken in 1942

Courtesy : Michael Tomlinson - The Most dangerous moment.
William Kimber & Co, London 1976.

St. Peters started a branch, housed in the usual cadjan sheds, in the grounds of St. Mary's Church Dehiwela and I went there for the rest of the year 1942, with cousins who lived nearby. Their father was a Municipal doctor who was entitled to a generous petrol ration thus we all travelled by car. By the end of 1942, the school announced a branch would open in Bambalapitiya, in the grounds of the Roman Catholic seminary where the Govt. flats were built in later years. I attended school there until the end of 1945 and we had regular air raid practices when we took shelter in slit trenches or under our desks. These were of course glorious opportunities for horseplay and during one practice at Dehiwela the boys “sheltering” in the Parish Priest's house ate most of the food in his fridge. The house was a no go area for future practice raids!

Every Colombo school of size was acquired in wartime and the administrators exercised prodigious feats opening branches in other premises – both Royal and St. Thomas' had boarding establishments in Bandarawela and Gurutalawa respectively, with the former school also having classes in large Colombo houses. Ananda College was relocated to

Gampaha. Part of STC shared the buildings of St. Paul's Girls School, Milagiriya, and the fair sex having the morning session and the boys the afternoon. Teenagers of other schools were rather jealous of this arrangement and at least one couple I know, still married, met in school at that time.

Our parents and teachers seemed to cope with the hazards and stresses of wartime remarkably well. I now look back with admiration of the teachers who managed us in difficult conditions. Heavy rain

caused huge disruption when the cadjan roofs leaked or, in really bad monsoon weather, the floors flooded, though much to the delight of the pupils. Well soaked cadjan, close to the sea, in my school, went mouldy and stank abominably when the sun came out. We lacked a tuck-shop and two enterprising housewives who lived near the school cooked up amazing quantities of things

like patties and sent a servant to conduct sales at break time- there was never unsold stock.

In retrospect, I don't recall of ever being frightened even when air raid sirens sounded at night, as happened a few times but, rather excited by new sights and sounds; for example, in the early war years the many anti aircraft guns sites in Colombo had occasional practices when they fired at a target (called a drogue and it was a long open tube) towed behind a plane; watchers could clearly see the shells bursting. Barrage balloons flew everywhere and at night searchlights often lilt the sky. The Colombo racecourse (that was) operated as a fighter aerodrome in wartime so the adjoining stretches of Reid Avenue and Bullers Road were closed, as too some roads that led to Bullers Road, (from behind the Police Park) at the entry to Bullers Road, where fighters were serviced in fairly makeshift hangars. We could ride our bicycles up to these hangars for a closer look and very occasionally a friendly mechanic would let us past the barrier for a detailed examination. After all this, the return to normal school hours, and life, in 1946, was a mild shock.

ΩΩΩΩΩ

'Neath the shade of an old Banyan Tree

by Douglas Jones

When I joined St Benedict's College in the late '40s Bro. Austin FSC, a quietly efficient, handsome Englishman was Director and the College was renowned for its champion soccer and gymnastic teams, the discipline and a luxuriously spreading Banyan tree.

The Banyan tree, as old as St Benedict's, had almost a maternal part to play in our growing up as schoolboys. Providing a welcome shade from the



The Banyan tree was as old as the College and its gigantic roots symbolised the solid, all-round education imparted by the De La Salle brothers

scorching sun at lunchtime as the boys played marbles or some other game, this tree, with its lush all-embracing branches standing on a firm foundation of trunk and roots of gigantic girth, personified the wholesome education the De La Salle Brothers imparted to us.

Silently watching our demeanor, sometimes in dismay, but most times in rustling approval, it witnessed the making of people of all walks of life

from among the hundred of thousand odd who traversed those hallowed precincts. Within the first 50 years of existence, St Benedict's produced outstanding academic results. To name a few, Peter Pillai, who later became a priest, topped the list in the London Matriculation in the entire British Empire; Sir Thomas de Sampayo was the first Ceylonese Chief Justice and a host of other firsts included the fields of Orthopaedic Surgery, Bacteriology, Tropical Medicine, Physics, Agriculture, Journalism, Accountancy, Commerce, Film and Music.

St Benedict's College was first a Roman Catholic Seminary in Wolfendhal Street that began in 1839. The Silvestro-Benedictine monks arrived in 1849 and they had the school built in Kotahena in 1865 to provide "superior English education". The building, designed in the style of an Italian Benedictine Monastery, was cradled in the shadow of St Lucia's Church (as the imposing Cathedral was then known). The school was called St Benedict's Institute. By the end of the first year, there were 368 boys, 170 girls and four teachers.

The De La Salle brothers took charge of the school on January 16, 1867. Bro. Hidelfus FSC assumed duties as Director of the Brothers' Community and Headmaster of the school. While the Institute became St Benedict's College in 1889, from the beginning the growth of St Benedict's seemed to run parallel to the development of Colombo City (that's another story for another time).

My entry to St Benedict's was not by reason of a geographical proximity of home to school. My parents lived in Ragama and I was boarding with my uncle's family in Kotahena. My primary education came from St Lucia's, the Cathedral school a hoot away across Wall Street (now St Benedict's College Mawatha). I passed St Benedict's each day as I trudged to school from Santiago Street, to Pickering's Road, on to Kotahena Street and then through St Lucia's Lane (or 'Ja Muddukuwa' as we used to know the dark alleyway which was the scene of so many schoolboy pranks) wending my way past those winsome Good Shepherd girls, then a trudge on the square, past St Benedict's, believing that one day that's the school I wanted to be going to!

With much trepidation I started in Fifth Form, situated near the school bell and adjacent to the tennis courts. My class teacher was a very young Bro. Alexander Cyril FSC, a small bespectacled and caring man who was also new to the school. He made an effort to make us welcome, myself and another newcomer, Alan Smith, an English boy whose family had just arrived in the country. Bro. Alexander had a knack of bringing out the best in his pupils. This fine teacher went on to become Director of St

Benedict's twice and later became the Brother Provincial Visitor of the De La Salle schools in Sri Lanka. He now lives in "semi-retirement" (or, so he says) but at 73 years young, he still continues to teach English full-time at St Anne's College, Kurunegala or anywhere else he is wanted.

Among the visiting teachers were formidable men and the gentle Geography teacher Capt. Joachim Mendis, of Ceylon Cadet Corps fame, was the most liked. What 'Jokka' (as he was affectionately known to all his students) did not know about anything was not worth knowing. He challenged those classroom bullies - and there were many- to a combat. "You bring your rowdies and I'll bring my rowdies" was his favourite taunt. We walked across the quadrangle to a classroom beside the clock tower for Art under K S Perera, a kindly man despite the Hitler look-alike reputation.

Among the many colourful classmates was George Rodrigo (the unfortunate victim of polio in his young days with both legs in metal braces to help him walk) who would drive his classy Wolseley convertible through the gates past the tuck shop and up to the classroom. Another was Boris Marks, a great classroom orator who went on to become a swimming champion.

There was Neville Casie Chetty, a cavalier cricketer and one-time captain of the First XI, who's batting, was reminiscent of the West Indian Rohan Kanhai. Neville later played for Sri Lanka and the Tamil Union.

I remember the multi-talented Maxwell de Soysa, a poet and fine thespian who was known for the well-manicured 'goatee' he sported in the senior forms that was a perfect complement to the tall, lanky frame and slight forward droop of the shoulders. He played Shakespeare's Shylock so brilliantly and with passion in the school productions of Merchant of Venice. Later, Max joined the sports desk of The Daily Mirror and is now a journalist on the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong. With his 'goatee' now nourished into a luxurious pepper and salt beard, Max still plays his favourite character and looks the part even in real life.

Discipline got top priority in college under gymnastics teacher George Atkinson. He once decreed that when the first bell rang at the start of school, students and teachers alike (even Bro. Director) must stop in their tracks as mark of respect for the school. They wait for the second

bell to ring before proceeding in an orderly way to classes. At the first bell, boys being boys, they would stop arms, legs and torsos contorted in wild and fluid poses like modern-day sculptures in a park.

Of course, those who dared to arrive after the second bell had to march round the quadrangle as punctuality was paramount. Their numbers dwindled as the months passed, but there would be some latecomer, doing his trudge, books and all, to the amusement of the entire school!

Another contemporary, Rienzie Rupesinghe was a great hockey captain of the College. He was also a pioneer in the Young Christian Students movement at St Benedict's and went on to become its national President. He was also the first Asian to be President of the International Young Christian Workers as well as the first Asian to be nominated by Pope Paul VI as a member of the Post-Vatican II Pontifical Council of the Laity.

And St Benedict's had oodles of Casperszs in the student ranks through several generations. Among them, in my time, was the indefatigable, irrepressible, indomitable Ryle Caspersz. He was a jazz freak. Ryle could strum on a guitar, swing it on the keyboard, set a beat on drums, touch a mood on the double base, or croon to the roof tops - he just oozed music.

A big, burly, bespectacled bloke, he bubbled with enthusiasm. The loud, bellowing laughter would thunder across the college hall as Ryle was preparing for another evening's concert or entertainment. A good student and finally Senior Prefect, Ryle went to England at the end of his schooling where he made a success in public relations and in the very competitive music industry. Sadly, Ryle passed away at a very young age.

Another remarkable fellow student was Jay Jansen.



Clock Tower is heritage listed for preservation. The College Hall is to the rear of the tower.

The Times of Ceylon, in conjunction with the New York Herald Tribune, ran an essay competition at the time, for senior school students on the subject "The World We Want". Jay brought international prominence to College when declared the winner. A trip to New York, meeting high school students there, including dinner at the White House with President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the First Lady Mamie was part of the prize.

Bro. Oliver became director-a popular administrator, hard as nails, but a kindly, pragmatic man who treated all students as people until they proved to be otherwise. I had the misfortune to defy a Bro. Oliver edict one day and still carry the scars to show for it. A new single storey block was under construction for the ever-increasing primary classes to meet the needs of the different language streams. This was an outcome of the new Sinhala policy of the government. The construction site was declared strictly out of bounds by Bro. Oliver. However, curiosity got the better of me one lunch break and I took off on an inspection tour.

Walking down a plank put there for easy access of the workers, I slipped on some builder's sand, rolled over and fell on a stack of bricks, fracturing my right arm in two places. A teacher who was nearby was on the scene immediately. He was full of admonition to the wayward, sounded dire warnings to all and sundry to stay away from the site and promptly dispatched me to hospital.

The arm was in a plaster cast for six weeks and that was the only time I came to being near-ambidextrous. There was a rowdy disruption in the class not long after and Bro. Oliver happened to be passing by. Appalled and angered by the behaviour of senior students expected to set a better example, Bro. Oliver meant business. He marched us to the college hall adjacent to the clock tower (now a National Heritage site) sat us down and demanded a letter of apology to be written to the class teacher and handed to the Director in his office within the next 15 minutes. Till that time, I didn't know I could write with my left hand.

In addition to a whole lot of De La Salle Brothers who have dramatically influenced the life of thousands of Benedictines and where no tribute is good enough to praise these dedicated followers of St John Baptist De La Salle, there is one lay teacher who remains unforgotten by every stu-

dent of that era. Eternal gratitude is owed to Major Douglas Chapman. He looked indestructible and many, in awe, thought he'd go on forever. He taught us, among other things, the beauty and refinement of the English language and the undying relevance of Shakespeare's writings in any age. He was the consummate teacher, also someone educated by the De La Salle brothers at St Benedict's.

ΩΩΩΩΩΩ

Fly QANTAS... the safest airline ...here's why

After every flight, Qantas pilots fill out a form, called a "gripe sheet," which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems; document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight. Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humour. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by Qantas' pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers.

By the way, Qantas is the only major airline that has never had an accident... Enjoy!

P: Left inside main tyre almost needs replacement.
S: Almost replaced left inside main tyre

P: Something loose in cockpit.
S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.
S: Evidence removed.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.
S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.
S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

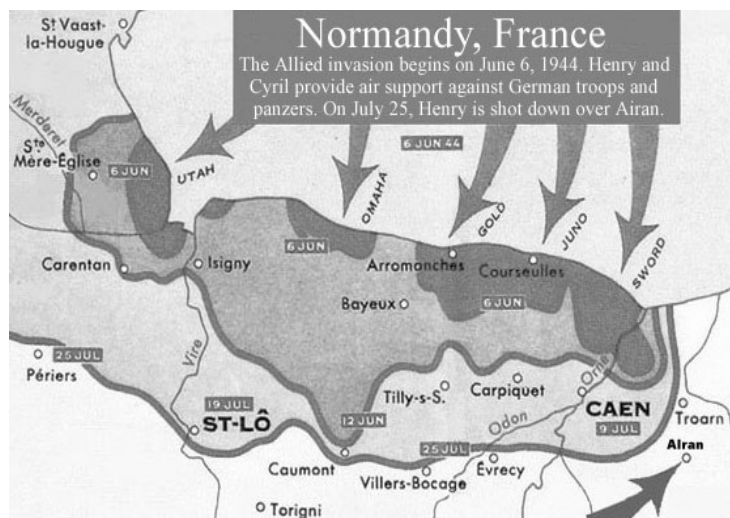
P: Aircraft handles funny.
S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Mouse in cockpit.
S: Cat installed.

.. And the best one..

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

S: **Took hammer away from midget**

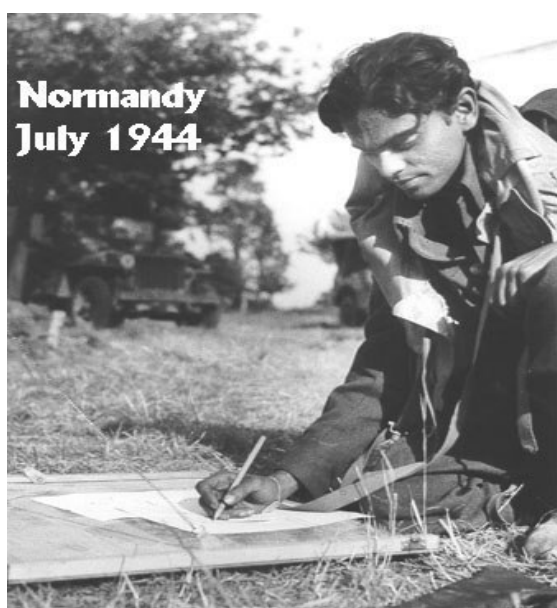


Part 2

by *Chung Chee Min*

On D-Day, 6th June, 1944, both Henry and Cyril played an integral part in providing fighter support for Allied bomber, ground and naval forces in the invasion of Nazi-occupied France. By the end of June, the Normandy beach head in France was wide and secure enough for Henry's squadron to use a forward base near the French town of Coulomb.

On 18th July, the Allies launched Operation



Henry is debriefed at a forward field shortly before he is lost in action against German forces.

[Photo: Imperial War Museum]

Goodwood against the Germans. Following intensive aerial bombardment, the Americans attacked on the western front forcing the Germans to withdraw to the west of St-Lô. Supporting these operations, the 2nd British Army and the 1st Canadian Army on the eastern front line attacked in the direction of Falaise, south of Caen. By this time, the Germans were shifting their Panzer Divisions towards the British forward line, and a week later, there were three times more German tanks facing the British than in the American sector. They had also over one hundred of the formidable 8.8 cm anti-aircraft guns putting up a barrage of steel in a desperate bid to halt the deadly aerial attacks by 1,600 Allied four-engined bombers and 600 two-engined bombers and fighter-bombers. This desperate German defence in the first fifty days after D-Day had already cost the British 6,000 killed. Soon it would claim an ex-Victorian as well.

At 11:45 a.m. on 25th July, Henry's Typhoon was one of four planes attacking German panzers at Fontenay-le-Marmion, six miles south of Caen. Henry was then flying third in line, and usually it was the fourth plane that took the brunt of enemy fire when German guns finally homed in on the attackers. This time it turned out that intense anti-aircraft fire had found Henry while the pilot flying behind him



was spared. His Typhoon was observed heading northeast and was not seen by his comrades again. Henry went down over farmland ten miles southeast of Caen between the towns of Airan and Moulton, in farmer Louis Brée's field which was under grass at that time. At that time

all French civilians had been evacuated by the Germans from the area and were not allowed to return to their homes until 15th August. Brée returned to find the wreckage of the Typhoon on his property and a fresh grave beside it. His assumption was that the pilot had been buried by the German SS, for when he returned to his farm the SS were the only people still around. In truth Henry had been discovered and buried on the spot by members of the French *Maquis*, the Resistance movement.

Cyril had by 1944 been serving with No 122 Squadron as Flight Commander, flying a different kind of plane, the American P-51 Mustang. When he heard the news about his brother, he obtained permission to fly over the area to search for Henry's Typhoon. But it was a near impossible task scouring a mangled, smoking landscape strewn with the detritus of war. With a heavy heart he had to call off the search for his brother. Soon after the air-borne operations at Arnheim, Cyril's squadron was recalled to England to provide fighter escort for the heavy bombers in their pulverisation of the Third Reich. By Christmas Eve 1944, Cyril had completed his 250th and last sortie over enemy territory. He stood down from operational duties and spent the rest of the war as a flying instructor. With two enemy aircraft destroyed, one shared destroyed and one damaged, he was now an acknowledged ace credited officially with "3.83 victories". He gained a bar for his DFC in March 1945, and was invested by King George VI at Buckingham Palace. The citation for

the bar read: *"This Officer has participated in a very large number of varied sorties. He has displayed the greatest keenness to engage the enemy and has invariably pressed home his attacks with determination. Among his successes is the destruction of four enemy aircraft."*

It was only when the Japanese forces in Malaya surrendered in September 1945, that the devastating news of Henry's loss finally reached the surviving Talallas, though the RAF

at that time had no inkling of where he or his plane was.

This was not good enough for a grieving Hewage who immediately travelled to London to demand some action by the British Government. He was put in touch with the French authorities who were very cooperative and appreciative of anyone who had come to the aid of France against the Germans. Talalla Senior tracked down Louis

Brée with the help of two local policemen in Ar- gences and succeeded in locating Henry's Ty- phoon in the spot where it had come down.

Hewage removed the part of the fuselage with the serial number on it and shipped it back to Malaya. Henry's remains were exhumed a year or two later and reburied at the Banneville-la-Campagne British Cemetery. A marble and concrete marker was erected in Louis Brée's farm in a small copse of trees beside a field of corn. In recent years it was moved closer to the original crash site by the side of the field so that it is visible from the road.

Cyril returned to Malaya in October 1945 a flight lieutenant. He had been away for nearly five years. In the Malaya of 1945 it was extraordinary for an Asian, not to mention an Air Force veteran, to be wandering around Kuala Lumpur in the uniform of a flight lieutenant of the RAF. On one occasion he was stopped by a suspicious military policeman in Kuala Lumpur who demanded to see his papers. Not in the mood for any officious nonsense and veiled racism, Cyril glared at the MP and said to him coldly that he would produce his ID if the policeman would produce his. The MP, who had been rather overbearing throughout, with hands on hip and feet astride, reluctantly commenced the exchange. Mutual identity was established with the MP pronouncing Cyril's papers in order. As there was still no overall change in the policeman's attitude, Cyril decided to put him in his place once and for all. He ordered the MP to stand to attention when he was speaking to an officer. And he did!

In 1949, the V.I. paid tribute to its war dead. A war memorial with the names of fallen masters and pupils of both world wars, including Henry's, was unveiled in the school library on 17th March by Mr Anthony Eden (who was later to become Prime Minister of Britain). Mr and Mrs H. B. Talalla and other parents planted yellow flame trees in front of the school in memory of their loved ones. These trees are still flourishing in the V.I.



1949
Newly
planted
Yellow
Flame
trees
(foreground)



Henry is honoured on the V.I. War Memorial (Talalla is misspelt)



Jimmy in RAF tropical uniform
in postwar Singapore

grounds today. On his return to civilian life, Cyril formally changed his name by deed poll to Jimmy and joined the Department of Civil Aviation as an air traffic controller, and later worked in his father's firm. At the end of 1953, he

was made the Commandant of the Federation of Malaya Air Training Corps which was comprised of cadets from his *alma mater* and other

over the world and met with the Brée family at Airan to pay homage to the fallen airman. Fifty years on, the sacrifice of Henry was still not forgotten by the grateful people of the two French towns between which he fell. The local church at Airan was packed with locals attending a special service in honour of Henry. Similar services were held in almost every Normandy village in memory of their own adopted "heroes". The Talalla family paid their respects at Henry's grave where the epitaph - selected by his mother a half century ago - read: *"Father in Thy gracious keeping, Leave We now Thy servant Sleeping."* There is a Typhoon Memorial at Noyers Bocage which commemorates the 151 Typhoon pilots, including Henry, who lost their lives in the Normandy campaign. (In all, 660 Typhoon pilots and approximate 12 ground crew lost their lives in the Second World War.) On September 29,



Normandy 1996

Michel Deuzet (Mayor of Airan) and Alain Touret (Mayor of Moullet) jointly name the highway between their towns *Route Henry Talalla*

schools. Jimmy next joined the Federation Air Services (which was the fore-runner of the Royal Malaysian Air Force) and flew Beavers, ferrying personages like Tunku Abdul Rahman (Malaysia's first Prime Minister) and cabinet ministers Leong Yew Koh and Sardon Haji Zubir around the country. The Tunku got to know Jimmy personally and would always ask to be flown by him. Jimmy then flew for Malayan Airways and later became its Kuala Lumpur Manager. He resigned from the position in 1963, retired to Llangerdeine in Wales and opened a pub, where he was a popular figure.

He passed away on 18th August 1973. In 1994, on the fiftieth anniversary of D-Day, members of the Talalla family and Henry's former Typhoon comrades converged from all

1996, the mayors of Airan and Moullet unveiled a sign officially naming the route between the two villages, *Route Henry Talalla*. His memory was now forever stamped in this little corner of France.

Today the two families - the Brées and the Talallas - vigorously maintain the very special relationship started by Louis and Hewage. For half a century, they have corresponded and exchanged cordialities, and even after the passing of their respective patriarchs, their descendants continue to reach out to each other. The third generation of Brées and Talallas now carry the torch. A lasting bond, across time and across nations, now links two disparate families united in common homage to the brave young man from the Victoria Institution who had come to help liberate France.

*To you from
failing hands we throw
The Torch
Be yours to hold it high
If ye break faith
with us who die
We shall not sleep*

Inscribed on the VI War Memorial

EPILOGUE

The following email was received on October 21, 2006:

I have just found your contribution to The V.I. Web Page entitled *The Talalla brothers*. I served with Jimmy [Cyril] on No 122 Squadron R.A.F throughout the Normandy campaign. Jimmy and I joined 122 Squadron on the same day and finished our tour about the same time, Jimmy flew his last operation on 24th Dec 1944, in fact he was to have led the Squadron on Christmas Day but his aircraft would not start. As a result I led the squadron on what was a fighter sweep. I flew my last operation on 1st January 1945 and we left the squadron together a couple of days later. I deeply regret that despite the fact that we had been very close mates throughout our tour we were never able to meet up again. About 1975, my youngest son spent time in Malaysia and made enquiries about Jimmy on my behalf but was unsuccessful, now obviously evident that was because he was deceased. Just recently one of my grandsons was showing me how to search the web and I asked him to try finding 122 Squadron. To my delight he also came up with your wonderful contribution. Congratulations on a great effort.

Although sad to learn that Jimmy is no longer with us, it has stirred wonderful memories of our friendship. If you have had any response from other pilots who served with us on 122 Squadron, I would be most appreciative of receiving their contact addresses. Thank you for what you have done.

"Snow" Davis
412934
R.A.A.F

Thank you for your rapid response to my email. It is raining here today so I am trying to get through the frustrations and master something on my computer. A new chapter has opened - what a difference a [wet] day can make.

After sixty years of not wanting to remember the war a chance personal advertisement in Sydney paper made me get out my old logbook, photos fell out and soon I was hooked, now Jimmy Talalla is back to haunt me. Since my email this morning memories have flowed back. When Jimmy and I finished our tour we were

both "tired" - mentally and physically which was why we were "rested". I had one thing in mind to get married and this I did as soon as formalities could be completed. The English were not all that keen on their girls marrying "colonials" so there were formalities. In the excitement I foolishly severed all connections with the Squadron, something which, in later years, I have come to regret.

I served with three different squadrons, the first two operating from permanent bases in England which meant there were formal photos of personnel with names on the back. However, as Jimmy and I joined 122 Squadron only days before D-Day and were straight into the action there was no time for formal photos. The "game" was on, most of us had nicknames [Jimmy/Snow] some blokes you never knew their proper Christian names or even how to spell their surnames which strains memories after sixty years. There were several Canadians on 122 Squadron, the only names I can recall were "Speedy" Cush & "X" Exel [I think]. Speedy from, somewhere near Calgary, "X" from London, Ontario, again I think. My apologies if I have bored you.

Regards
"Snow" Davis

The Ceylankan thanks the author and Victoria Institution for permission to reproduce this article from their web site
www.viweb.freehosting.net/talalla-bros.htm

ΩΩΩΩΩ

Ostrich Feathers

by John Riminton.

Display

Veldt pride reflected in the successful brood,

Outrunning the horse – but not the bullet.

Dark Edwardian commerce

to grace the graceless,

simpering on the arm of a fop into dinner.

And then

Decay

Ceylon Volunteers of the Burma Campaign: The Forgotten Veterans of the Forgotten Campaign, (1941-1945) Part 2

by Sergei De Silva-Ranasinghe

Brian Randall Kriekenbeek

Now an elderly gentlemen of 83, yet vibrant and alert, Brian Kriekenbeek recalled for the first time, during his telephone conversations with me, his memories of over 64 years. When war began, Brian felt assured of his motivation to fight, inferring: "I accepted the fact the British were occupiers, and felt the Empire was guarding Ceylon from the Japanese." On completing his schooling at Royal College and turning 18, he volunteered to join the Ceylon Defence Force (CDF) and was accepted for officer cadet training at Diyatalawa. In December, 1942, after finishing a six month basic training course, he obtained a commission as a Second Lieutenant in B Company, 2nd Battalion, CLI.



In November, 1943, he volunteered to serve at the Burma front. Within days of selection, he entrained from Colombo to Talaimannar and embarked on a ferry to Dhanushkodi, the closest proximity from Talaimannar to Southern India on the Rameswaram coast. On January 1st, 1944, he was attached as reinforcement to the 114th Indian Infantry Brigade in the Arakan and posted to D Company, 4/5th Gurkha Rifles, as a 2nd Lieutenant. Brian's tour with the 4/5th Gurkha Rifles was an outstanding experience. In his short three week stint he was accepted by the other ranks and officers of the battalion. Ethnically, the unit's composition was typical of the British-Indian Army of that time, mostly British officers and Indian other ranks.

His first experience of patrolling through the jungle was uneventful. However, his experiences soon changed. As he sardonically recalled, his first combat experience was: "Quite frightening because no one had shot at me before". However, on his second dusk patrol they stumbled on to a Japanese platoon near a paddy field. Immediately both patrols began firing at each other from a distance of about 200 yards. The loud clatter and confusion of rifle and sub-machine guns firing went on for several minutes before both patrols hastily withdrew

into the jungle – as he remembers, there were no likely casualties in the skirmish. Out of the six patrols with the 4/5th Gurkha Rifles, four made contact with the Japanese.

At that time, due to the static nature of their portion of the front, they had simple orders to collate field intelligence on Japanese positions, movement and numbers. As Brian interpolated: "I conducted all my patrols at night, scouting for Japanese positions, which was pretty grim work. Night patrols were normally conducted after dinner, around 7 pm, and usually lasted several hours. We tended to stay away from the jungle tracks as they were prone to ambushes. The 'No Mans Land' area we operated in was normally between three quarters to a mile in distance. At night we could not see, so we navigated with a hand-held compass which was difficult. When we encountered Japanese patrols it was always nerve wracking and confusing and we were not quite sure where they were, so we fired wildly in their direction. Once contact was made we would either drop flat on the ground or take cover and frantically scan for enemy silhouettes or muzzle flashes. If we spotted them we fired our weapons and threw grenades. The duration of these skirmish actions lasted sometimes for up to 15 minutes. Quite often contact was made out of the blue with the Japanese patrols." Through his encounters and experiences, he had developed an ungrudging respect for the Gurkha's he served with mentioning: "It was a brotherhood. They treated me in an excellent manner. The Gurkhas were so special, it was like working with military machines." Once his brief tour with the Gurkhas was over, he was posted to another unit on the Burma front for an even shorter tour as a 2nd Lieutenant in the all British composed, 1st Somerset Light Infantry, better known as the 'SomLI'.

His posting was with C Company, 1st Somerset Light Infantry, which was attached to the 7th Division's, 33rd Indian Infantry Brigade. His duties were identical to his experience with the Gurkhas, taking part in three uneventful night patrols with no sign of the Japanese. As destiny would have it, Brian's short two week tour of duty with the SomLI was to be a starkly different experience. He remarks rather indignantly: "When they found

out where I originated from, there was a definite change in their attitude towards me. They had very ill-informed and negative views of Ceylon and its people to the point of been condescending and just bloody rude. They didn't like that I was an officer, didn't respect my commission and displayed irritation when saluting me!" Once his five week tour of Burma ended, he was ordered back to Ceylon in February 1944 and rejoined the 2nd battalion, CLI at China Bay, Trincomalee where he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant.

Soon after, he attended an advanced infantry training course for NCOs and junior officers at the 'Battle School', near Weliveriya. Subsequently, he was sent to India to attend the Jungle Warfare School, at Shimoga, in January, 1945, for one month, before rejoining the CLI in February, 1945. In mid 1945, he led a group of 10 soldiers from his battalion on a special mission, escorting 26 interned Japanese POWs to India. As he recalled, "They were just poor harmless bastards who were captured probably from the merchant navy." The escort party travelled by train from Colombo to Talaimannar, and the group was ferried to Dhanuskodi. Once in India, they travelled by train all the way to the Red Fort, Delhi, where the POWs were transferred. Brian affirms that by the end of the war the CLI furnished guards as POW escorts for at least 6-8 missions, between Ceylon and India.

Demobbed in mid 1946 he was awarded the Burma Star and the War Medal. Subsequently in 1947, he signed up as a 2nd Lieutenant in the British Army, *General List Infantry (Ceylon Section)* and agreed to serve with the 1st battalion, Ceylon Corps of Military Police (CCMP); that was deployed in Malaya from August, 1947, to June, 1949, where he was promoted to the rank of Captain. After Malaya, Brian returned to Ceylon and in 1949 migrated to Australia.

Bonaventure Schofield

Bon Schofield was born in Ceylon in 1922 to a Burgher planting family of four boys and two girls. He attended school at St. Joseph's College, Maradana, but left school when he was 17 years old to start a career as a tea Planter with his father's up country plantation at Talawakele. When the Second World War began, Bon and his three brothers Joe, Paddy and Charles were very keen to enlist to fight overseas, which he says was spurred by his family tradition of military service in the British Army. In November, 1941, Bon,

who was then 19, and his three brothers volunteered to join the British Army, affirming: "I was fighting to protect Ceylon, my mother country."



Once enlisted, they travelled by train to Talaimannar and embarked on a ferry to Dhanushkodi, then once again embarked on another train to Wellington, where they all joined their new unit, the 2nd Worcestershire Regiment. In February, 1943, Bon was drafted as reinforcement for the 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers (RWF), 6th Independent Brigade, 2nd British Division. A unit and formation he would remain with until February 25th, 1945. As reinforcement Bon was sent to Chittagong and then on towards Donbaik, to participate in a major offensive thrust against the Japanese in the Arakan, as he explained: "The 1st battalion RWF were in Burma. I joined them with 224 others on the 22nd February, 1943 as reinforcements. The battalion had been in action, and had suffered heavy casualties in Burma. I was posted as a Rifleman to B Company, 12 Platoon."

After months of inactivity at the frontline, the British Army launched a divisional sized offensive into the Arakan, with the aim of capturing the strategically important Mayu Peninsula and air field at Akayab. The First Arakan Campaign extended from December, 1942 to May, 1943. The British advance at Donbaik met fierce and well fortified Japanese resistance, which in counter-attack after counter-attack proved impossible to dislodge. Practically upon arrival Bon was thrown into action and received his 'baptism of fire' in a skirmish action against Japanese snipers. The 1st RWF sustained heavy casualties around Donbaik and was forced to withdraw by night, along with the rest of the division, to the village of Indin, 20 miles away.

Parallel to these events, the Japanese 112th Infantry Regiment had outflanked the division's exposed left flank in a surprise attack, overrunning several units including the 6th Brigade headquarters. The 1st RWF was immediately involved in heavy fighting when it arrived at Indin. Heavy fighting continued all day and a dire situation developed for the entire 14th Indian Division, as Bon surmised: "We suffered more casualties and retreated at night along the beach. We fought our way back to India over

mountains, rivers and jungle.” After recuperating for 39 days in hospitals around Northern India, Bon was rewarded with three weeks leave in Ceylon. Afterwards, he rejoined his battalion in June, 1943, at Ahmednagar, 117kms northeast of Pune. The 1st RWF underwent more jungle training and a refit until March, 1944, when it was transferred to Assam to relieve the siege of the desperate British garrison at Kohima.

The over-ambitious Japanese offensive code named Operation U-Go, began on 7th March 1944, with the primary objective of capturing Imphal, the capital of the hill state of Manipur Province and Kohima, with the principal intention of invading British-India’s eastern periphery, Assam. The Japanese were keen to capture the massive supply dumps that existed at Imphal and Kohima, which they heavily relied upon to sustain their grand offensive plans. Burma, was considered the gateway into India, where the Japanese believed a general insurrection against the British Raj would take place once their troops along with Subas Chandra Bose’s, Indian National Army, had established a foothold in Assam, within reach of Calcutta. The Japanese began their siege on April 5, 1944, which forced the British to supply the garrison by air. The desperate battle received accolades from the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia Command, Lord Louis Mountbatten who described it as “probably one of the greatest battles in history... the British/Indian Thermopylae.

It was in this setting that Bon Schofield encountered fanatical resistance from Japanese soldiers and his hardest fighting of the entire campaign, which he vividly explained: “In March, 1944, we were rushed to Kohima in Assam, the Japs had already captured most of the Kohima ridges. Our battalion reached Dimapur from Ahmednagar on April 12th with a full strength of 35 officers and 869 other ranks. The next day we advanced 18 miles down the road digging in and sent out recce patrols. My platoon reached Zubsa at Mile Stone 38. The battalion then positioned itself covering the road to the south of Zubsa, with a small force in the village itself.” On April 18th, after much fighting the British led forces finally lifted the siege at Kohima, but considerable fighting still lay ahead. The next day his unit was involved in heavy fighting, as he stated: “From then on we were in constant contact with the enemy and many hand-to-hand battles and we occupied Garrison Hill.”

Although the siege was lifted, the Japanese still held the forward positions they had taken around Ko-

hima and fiercely defended it. As Bon testified, a grim war of attrition ensued: “On April 29th, the battalion was brought up in carriers along the road still under fire by enemy snipers, and relieved the Durham Light Infantry on Garrison Hill. B & C companies came under fire while crawling through the shallow muddy communication trenches to take over the forward dug outs and fox holes. The most lasting impression of all was caused by the stench of decaying bodies, half buried or lying in the open between the lines. The fighting in Kohima was bloody hand to hand fighting with no quarter asked and no quarter given. The few yards of no man’s land were strewn with the dead of both sides. In some of the trenches, rotting bodies of Japanese were used as a protective parapet. But mercifully lime was available to make the task less distasteful. Space was so limited that dug-outs, latrines, cook houses and graves were all close together. When the rains came it poured in buckets and the trenches filled up with water. We were so tired, that we went to sleep with the water up to our chest. It was almost impossible to dig anywhere without uncovering a latrine or a grave. Flies swarmed everywhere and men were wretched as they dug in. The stench hung in the air and permeated ones clothes and hair. The ground everywhere was ploughed with shell fire and it stank.”

“I will never forget C Company going in to attack Kuki’s Piquet coming out of their trenches, they reached a jeep track near the top of hill, when the Japs opened up with their machine guns killing everyone in their sights. The following morning was our turn. We went through A Company lines and attacked the Japs. Almost immediately, our Company Commander, Platoon Commander, and Sergeant were wounded by sniper fire. We all dropped where we were, out of line of the sniper, but this was not for long. We were ordered to move forward. I’d only just started when a grenade came over. I got down quickly and saw Bren Gunner, Fusilier Ron Jones running not ten feet in front of me, I yelled out ‘Get down, Get down!’, but tragically the grenade exploded with Private Jones crumpled up on the ground in front of me on the slope. Fusilier Morris and I crawled up to Fusilier Jones. There was not a thing we could do, he was dead. Planes came over parachuting our rations, when a huge basket of rations came with a bang dropping close to both of us. The mortars then dropped some smoke bombs and we pulled out back to our lines.”

To be concluded in Journal # 39

MY ADOPTED COUNTRY

by Clive Meares

I, too, love a sunburnt country
 Alien child that I am
 The reefs and the giant clam
 The Marlin that bears no taming
 High tides that wash the shores
 I have marvelled at all the vastness
 The seed that burns ere it grows

The steaming heat of the forest
 The crystal streams that flow
 I've seen both drought and tempest
 Grey skies that quickly glow
 The rock that dwarfs all others
 The roos the land has reared
 I've heard the cry of the homeland
 For the tracts its sons have bared

I've seen the birds and the possums
 The dingoes and wombats too
 The eagles gracing the heavens
 Alas! They are but few
 Lets join to beat the pollution
 That harms both land and sea
 And save this sunburnt country
 For the ones that are yet to be!

Some memories of my years in Jaffna Part 3

by Neville Jayaweera

Extracted from Mr J 's unpublished memoirs

The Jaffna District of 1963, the year I took over as Government Agent (GA) had hardly changed since the time Leonard Woolf had been Office Assistant and Magistrate 1904-1906, so much so that I was able to identify all the landmarks in Jaffna town referred to by him in his autobiography. The bungalow in which he had lived along Sea Beach Rd, the buildings in the Fort, the King's House, the magistrate's quarters, the prison, the Dutch Church, the belfry and even the gibbet standing sentinel looking out from the ramparts, were still intact. The Main Street where Woolf was alleged to have struck Mr Sadarasagara, the town's leading attorney with his horse whip, while the two were out horse riding, was exactly as it had been when the incident occurred in 1905, as was the veranda of the Residency where the indomitable Mrs Lewis, wife of the then GA, Penry Lewis, often entertained Woolf to tea and cucumber sandwiches.

Coroners' Inquest

From the reports sent to the Colonial Secretary from the several District Judges, it appears that there have been 167 Inquests held during the last year and the following Verdicts have been returned:-

Accidental deaths – By falls from trees	57
Falling into wells	15
Accidentally drowned	25
Fall of houses	3
By gun bursting	1
Accidentally shot	2
From the bites of serpents	8
Killed by elephants	6
By Wild Hogs	3
Suicide by hanging	16
From the violence of others	12
From other casualties	3
Drunkenness	3
Natural sicknesses	13
Total	167

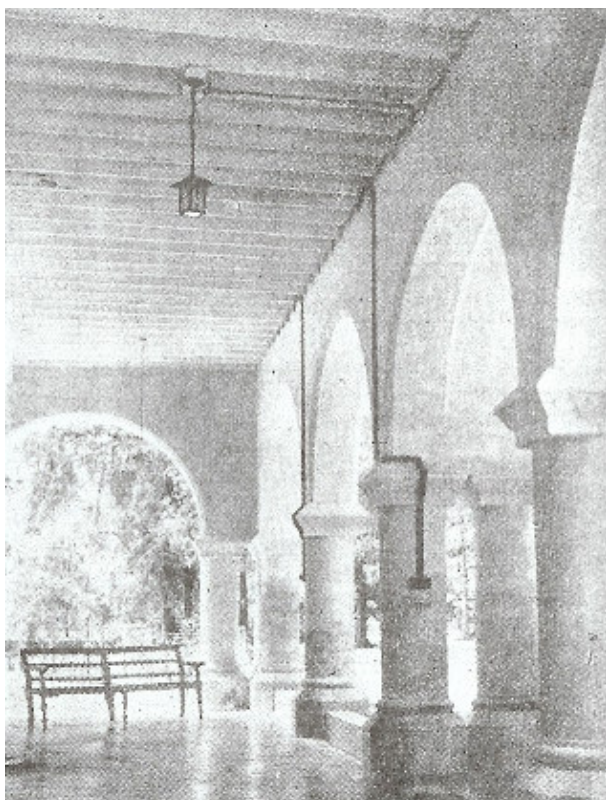
Results of Coroners' Inquests during the year 1835 taken from the Ceylon Almanac & Compendium of useful information for the year 1836

Submitted by Hugh Karunanayake

The Residency

A central feature of the Jaffna town since the mid 19th century had been the Old Park, a four acre extent of land which stood at the entrance to the town on the Kandy Rd. It was really a grove of enormous mahogany trees, some well over 150 years old, under which clustered dozens of mango trees bearing the most succulent mangoes one can ever hope to taste. In the centre of the Park stood the rambling Residency (the GA's official bungalow) which boasted a most interesting history, and the tennis court alongside it, also built about the same time as the house.

The Residency, bombed out in the 1980s and now only a mound of rubble, was a magnificent mansion, so vast that during the 3 years my wife and I occupied it, we could afford to live only in a part of the upstairs floor, the whole house being too sprawling for us and beyond our capacity to furnish. It had been built as the private residence of the first Government Agent of Jaffna, Percival Acland Dyke, who served as GA for over 30



Colonnaded verandah of the Jaffna Residency

years, from 1833 to 1867. The building had 6 enormous bed rooms with high ceilings, 2 large reception rooms on the ground floor, covered with Italian marble, 2 banqueting rooms on the first floor, a large billiard room, stables for 8 horses and innumerable outhouses for the servants and even a paddock for an elephant. The whole building was enclosed within a circular wall about 10 feet high, giving the mansion an appearance of a fortress surrounded by a high rampart. Obviously, regardless of the affection the "natives" had for Dyke, he was not taking any chances, hence the high wall! Only a moat was missing! The inside walls of the building had been glazed over with a plaster made of the white of egg mixed with king coconut water, which produced a mirror like quality that baffled even the engineers who had to renovate the building from time to time. In his hand written diaries, which I found in the Kachcheri record room, Dyke had left a vivid account of the building of the structure, giving even the daily pay roll for over a period of 2 years, which was the time it took to complete the work.

The Jaffna Residency was more than merely Acland Dyke's residence. It was obviously intended as a powerful metaphor of colonial power. After all, Dyke was only a bachelor throughout his life, so what was the need for such a grandiose structure,

what was the need for 6 bedrooms, 2 banqueting rooms and all that? Besides, the Jaffna middle class of those days of sufficient social, financial or political clout, as to be invited or entertained at the Residency, must have been minuscule. Even the European community who might have received an occasional invitation to the Residency might not have exceeded a dozen. Why then this vast and imposing mansion standing sentinel over a township of a few thousand straggling houses? I believe it was a subtle way of convincing the natives of the colonial master's invincibility and paramountcy. The Residency, above being Dyke's home was an unmistakable symbol of power and prestige.

I believe that some time in the early 1980s, one of my successors as GA of Jaffna, Devanesan Nesiah, wanting to restore the fast decaying Residency, asked the then President J.R. Jayawardena for a special grant for restoration work. I felt that, regardless of its colonial roots, the building should not only have been restored but should actually have been declared a national heritage monument and been brought under a preservation order under the Antiquities Ordinance and used as the Jaffna museum. Shortly thereafter, in the ensuing war following Nesiah's departure from Jaffna, the building was bombed and reduced to rubble.

19th Century furniture and rare books

One of the loveliest aspects of the great mansion that Acland Dyke built and handed down to his successors was some pieces of 19th century furniture. Chief among them was a long banqueting table made of beautifully grained teak, and constructed in four sections, all slotting into each other neatly, and each section resting on a tripod of delicately carved curving legs. The table could sit 26 guests but most of the GAs and their wives, including Trixie and I, used it only as four separate tables, except on one occasion when Trixie used it as a



Chippendale chair of the type found at the Residency

single extended table for a buffet for over 30 guests.

Another feature of the Residency furniture was a massive dresser/cabinet made of even more beautifully grained tamarind, inlaid with a variety of local hard wood and to go with it, a side board made in a similar style. All those pieces of furniture must have been at least a 100 years old even in 1963 and I was deeply distressed to hear later that they had all been turned to cinder during the turmoil of the 1980s. As interesting, was a huge book case also made in the 19th century with its glass panes all criss-crossed in diamond shapes with strips of lead, and stacked with books of ancient vintage, some published as far back as the 1860s. Among them were several books on Ceylon by Emerson Tennent, Henry Parker, Codrington, Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy and several others and a whole range of other books, including a first edition of the priceless "Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon" published in 1907 and weighing about 20 lbs. It was at that time the best collection that I had seen of ancient books on Ceylon. Before I left Jaffna I had the enormous book case along with its priceless contents transferred to the record room of the new Secretariat built across the road from the Residency in 1963, but I learnt later that they too had vanished, looted and carried away by vandals. Such is the price of war.

While still a Cadet in the Civil Service I had cultivated the habit of reading the diaries of the GAs and AGAs of every district to which I had been posted, so as to absorb from them the discipline and work ethic that had guided them. In Jaffna I was fortunate to find that all the diaries written between 1830s to 1940s were still available in the record room of the Kachcheri, though covered in layers of dust. (Incidentally, I understand that those diaries too were among the casualties of war.) Reading them I was astonished to find that the Northern Province, which included the present Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts, had had only 2 GAs between 1830 and 1890s namely, Percival Acland Dyke (1833 to 1867) and Sir William Twynham (1867 to 1896). I will write about them in my next episode.

To be continued

ΩΩΩΩΩΩ

Overheard in ladies toilet...

...her IQ and dress size are close neighbours..

meeauw

A CORDIAL WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS



Michelle Burns

Rivervale WA

Dr Leslie P Mendis

Colombo 6 Sri Lanka

Lucky & Sandra de Silva

West Ryde NSW

Ralph Wijesinghe

Burnaby BC Canada

Ivor & Maurine de Silva

Westport MA, USA

Erika & Prof. Hiran Dias

Nugegoda Sri Lanka

John Barry & Indrani Muller

Battaramulla Sri Lanka

Gary & Lakshini Watson

Belgrave VIC

Anil & Sunetra Goonewardene

Finchley, London UK

Noel & Helen Luther

Pendle Hill NSW

M S Subramaniam

Burnwood VIC

Ajanti & Kosala Gunatilleka

Pennant Hills NSW

...who have joined since publication of Journal # 37

...we also welcome the following gift subscription recipients of four issues of *The Ceylankan* awarded by Members

Noel Ranasinghe

Coburg VIC

L T Visvalingam

Caringdale VIC

Denis Cox

Wheeler Hill VIC

Ronald Perera

Brampton, Cambs, UK

Arthur E A Bartholomeusz

Arizona USA

Celine Tower

Ontario Canada

Lakshmi Jeganathan

Colombo Sri Lanka

Kanishka Nadarajah

Strathfield NSW

Neville Overlunde

Ontario Canada

A Speaking Picture: The Centenary E.F.C.Ludowyk Memorial Lec- ture 2006 Part 2

by Yasmine Gooneratne

To me, as to every writer of novels, fiction, no less than poetry, is what Sir Philip Sidney defined as ‘an art of imitation ... that is to say, a representing, a counterfeiting, or figuring forth to speak metaphorically. A speaking picture’. James Boswell, you may remember, created his great portrait of Dr Johnson by recording the conversation of his mentor. Professor Ludowyk, whose lectures had the ease and openness of fluent conversation, is often remembered by the words that students such as myself memorized or took down in the form of notes. My fictional portrait of Professor Ludowyk in *The Sweet and Simple Kind* is meant to show that he knew very well when *not* to speak, because words would have been wasted. By contrasting him with his ultra-nationalist colleague in that brief extract from a novel, I hoped to capture an endearing aspect of Professor Ludowyk’s personality which was, that his devotion to English literature thankfully stopped this side of idolatry.

The 1950s was a period during which people seemed prepared to kill each other on questions of language and cultural identity – indeed, as we were to see in 1958, they *did* kill each other on such grounds – but Ludowyk ignored the barbs and insults that flew hither and yon on the campus at Peradeniya as various among his colleagues whose names are now best forgotten leapt on the nationalist bandwagon to denigrate the imperialist’s language and the (largely Burgher) academics like Ludowyk, LaBrooy and Passé who continued to value and use it. It was during the 1950s that a member of Ludowyk’s circle of friends, the satirist E.M.W. Joseph, published weekly parodies of English literary classics in his newspaper column as ‘Sooty Banda’, in the guise of gems in a *Golden Treasury of Trilingual Verse*. Joseph’s parodies are triumphs of comic ingenuity that can still make a reader smile, but there was a message implicit in them at the time for the country’s chauvinists, in the fact that the full range of the satirist’s wit could only be grasped and appreciated by readers whose literary taste was not blunted by communalism.

Always avoiding the extremes of malice and vulgarity, Joseph’s ‘trilingual’ versions of well-known passages from Milton, Wordsworth, Johnson and Gray create – especially when read aloud in the tones reserved by Sri Lankan elocutionists for the English classics – an exquisitely comic effect. Joseph awarded an honoured place in his trilingual *Treasury* to Gray’s great poem, the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, which no less a critic than Samuel Johnson had considered the finest poem in the English canon:

Oft did the *goyam* to their *kaththa* yield
Their *nagul* oft the *vayal haarathi*
How jocund did they drive their *gon* afield,
How bowed the *gus* beneath their *pol-adi* ...

Ludowyk did not purse his lips and take offence at such sacrilege. He was himself a master of parody, as every student-actor knows who has had the experience of being gently ridiculed – ‘sent up’ – by his director at the party following a DramSoc first night, or the privilege of being shown in the *Passés*’ album a memorable photograph of Lyn Ludowyk on the deck of what looks like a Channel steamer, bidding (in the character of Mary, Queen of Scots), “Farewell to France!”. He was keenly aware of the folly of pretentiousness, and was perfectly capable, not only of composing ‘tri-lingual’ conceits of his own, but also of introducing them into his teaching.

‘The dictionary tells us,’ he once said while defining the various literary devices with which he expected a class to become familiar, ‘that Onomatopoeia involves the choice or formation of words that imitate or suggest the sounds that they stand for.’ We looked up “onomatopoeia” in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and found that it offered us as examples of the “onomatopoeic”, the words *plop* and *sizzle*. How much more effective and memorable was the home-grown example provided by Professor Ludowyk!

“She came running down the stairs in her wooden clogs – *takang bookang, takang bookang*...”

The aim of creating ‘a speaking picture’ in art, according to Sir Philip Sidney, is ‘to teach and delight’. Every student whom Ludowyk taught left the university with a personal list of delightful memories. Advice, when he gave it, was pithy and memorable: like his words to a beautiful but brainless undergraduate, the daughter of an old

friend, who had confided to him that her life's ambition was to become a London model. 'You will be choosing,' he warned her, 'a way of life in which you will have to claw your way to the top. It will not be enough to do as you do here, drift about your parents' house like an untidy houri.' Another student who, under the influence of first love, had taken to skipping her tutorials with Professor Ludowyk was handed a note from her tutor. It contained a reference to a poem by Robert Browning. When she looked up the reference, she found that a message from Professor Ludowyk was embedded in Browning's text: 'Escape me? Never!'

As a first-year student at the University of Ceylon, the highlight of my first term at Peradeniya was, without any doubt, Dr Ludowyk's weekly class in Practical Criticism. (Years later, thousands of miles away in Australia, I was assigned an Honours class in The Literary Uses of Language. It was another place, another phrase; and yet, beneath the fashionable, updated vocabulary, I recognized an old familiar friend: "Practical Criticism", the method of literary analysis which had identified Ludowyk at Peradeniya as a disciple of F.R. Leavis, I.A. Richards, Denys Thompson and the Cambridge School; and which later, when I was invited in the 1970s to write studies of Jane Austen and Alexander Pope for Cambridge University Press, was to mark me out – not entirely justifiably, I should add – as "a Leavisite".)

"Practical Criticism", for the benefit of those persons here who are unfamiliar with the curriculum of the 1950s, was a subject to which an entire paper was devoted in the Final Examination for the Honours degree in English. In one part of this paper, candidates were expected to analyse a piece of English writing (usually poetry) and express an opinion regarding its literary quality. In another part of it, they would be presented with two, possibly three, passages of writing on the same or a similar theme, asked to compare them, and rate them in order of literary quality. The third part of the paper – and to me the most enjoyable, as well as the most difficult – presented candidates with a selection of prose and verse passages, and asked them to 'place' each passage within 30 years of the time of its composition. It will be seen that to acquit themselves creditably in such an English paper as this, candidates whose first language was not English had to work towards developing not only analytical skills, judgment and good sense, but a command of logic and a lively sense of English historical continuity.

They had to learn, in fact, to feel 'at home' in the world of English letters. Professor Ludowyk made the nurturing of these qualities in his Honours students his especial concern, and his wit and obvious enjoyment of the subject made every Practical Criticism lecture a delight.

When the news got around the campus that Professor Ludowyk would be leaving Sri Lanka at the end of that first term in 1956, and settling in Britain, I decided that I would attend every lecture of his that I possibly could, whether that lecture was intended for my class or not. This didn't prove to be too difficult. Nobody objected, for instance, when I sat in on a Final Year course on Modern Poetry, a notebook in my hand and my fountain pen at the ready. I transcribed the notes that I made then into a Monitor's exercise book, and treasured them for years afterwards. They have survived the experience of migration, and thirty years of living and working in Australia. Especially precious to me are the notes I made while sitting in on Ludowyk's Final Year lecture on Browning and Tennyson.

Few poets, Professor Ludowyk informed us, could match Tennyson in the art of exploiting the musical qualities of language. Was it not a pity, then, he added, that when Tennyson's poems were most musical and sweet, they seldom made any sense?

*"Where Claribel low lieth,
The river gently floweth,
The beetle softly boometh,
Where Claribel low lieth..."*

'One asks oneself,' Professor Ludowyk said, looking sharply up at us over the top of his spectacles, 'what is the woman *doing*? Yes, yes, we see that she is lying low. But for what reason? With what *purpose* is she lying low? And the inescapable answer is: with no purpose whatever. The poet has come upon a sequence of soft sounds that please him tremendously, and he is developing the music of those sounds with absolutely no regard for whether he is making any sense or not. Now, think for a moment what would happen to this verse if we were to change the first line to accommodate a new idea:

"Where Claribel long jumpeth ..."

With the substitution of two words he had created a powerful vision of a hefty young woman hurling herself through the air. It is not really surprising that I could never again take any of Tennyson's heroines seriously, the Claribels and Mauds and

Lady Claras that drift through the hazy landscapes of the Laureate's poems.

While on the subject of the English Department's teaching practice in the 1950s, I should mention that turning fact into fiction was not something that could be learned at Peradeniya in the 1950s, where original creative writing of any kind, plays, stories or verses in English, was not encouraged or promoted as part of the regular curriculum. (This is, of course, in obvious contrast to the case today, when Universities everywhere, and possibly Peradeniya too, offer courses and award degrees in 'Creative Writing'.) Such exercises do not always contribute, if I may say so, to the benefit of literature; nor, of themselves, do they create great writers. Speaking for myself – and probably against the convictions of many people here of a later generation – I do not personally believe that 'creative writing' can be taught. Creative *reading* certainly can – and by that term I mean the sensitive and intelligent reading of literary texts as we learned to read them under the guidance of Ludowyk, and of the many gifted students who graduated from his classes in the University to fan out through our schools as teachers of English language and literature.

Creativity in that part of the English Department which involved itself in theatrical activities was strongly focused, then, not on the writing of plays, but in the extra-curricular acting of them, i.e., in representing on the stage for the pleasure and instruction of audiences, characters and incidents that had had their first existence as words on the printed page. Many tributes have been paid, notably by Shelagh Goonewardene in her book *This Total Art*, and by Neville Weeraratne in *Applause at the Wendt*, to Ludowyk's tireless and inspirational work in and for the Sri Lankan theatre. On the academic side, the teaching of drama, which was part of the Honours curriculum, was Ludowyk's special interest and concern; and the plays we studied in the classroom, from Marlowe and Shakespeare to Synge and Eliot, were illuminated by our teacher's devotion to theatre, and the skills that he demonstrated and generously passed on. The account of his teaching by Professor Ashley Halpe that was published by the editors of his Felicitation volume indicates this very well:

Every lecture had its creative design that yet seemed instinctive and not deliberate; the deft deployment of scholarship was beautifully balanced by superb readings from his authors and the sensitive expli-

tion of the words on the page. He was at once the most demanding and the most appreciative of tutors. He inspired in his students a deeply personal commitment to the experience of literature while encouraging them in sustained critical reading and awareness of nuance as the bases of judgment. His students became aficionados, recalling the memorable phrase, the telling gesture, the comment on tutorial, years afterward.

It will be seen that the focus here is on two indispensables of literary criticism: *understanding* and *judgment*. Dr Johnson would have approved. We were not called on to imitate a playwright, or study the process by which a play had come to be written. We were taught to *understand* the similes and metaphors that authors used, to assess their aptness to the theme of a work or a passage, and to *judge* the skill with which the authors deployed them. To 'experience' literature in this way was to enjoy simultaneously every aspect of the words on the page: from 'diction', by which was meant the writer's precision in the choice of words, to 'imagery', by which was chiefly meant his ability to create new imaginative linkages of simile or of metaphor, to 'rhythm', i.e., the 'music', whether smooth or measured or turbulent, that pulsed through the lines of prose and verse.

ΩΩΩΩΩ

To be concluded in Journal # 39

Think about it...

The truism, "The pen is mightier than the sword" was born in the days of the quill. Imagine! in our typewriter/computer age a person forgets to hit the space bar after the word pen and continues on ... oops

Men can read smaller print than women, but women can hear better (hubbies watch out)

Q. What do bullet-proof vests, fire escapes, wind-shield wipers, and laser printers all have in common?

A. All invented by women. (thank you ladies)

Q. What is the only food that doesn't spoil with age?

A. Honey

Dr. Lilamani Raffel..... an Appreciation

Her close friends called her “Toots”. We invited her for lunch on the 10th December (2006) in Sydney. She spoke, cracked jokes, and met so many of her friends she hadn’t met for sometime. None thought that it would be her last opportunity to meet them. She was looking gorgeous and healthy, friends commented about it. When she left, I hugged her and commented how lucky she was to be born to a family with no diabetes and hypertension, and longevity would be her future. It was not to be. Two weeks later, she was hospitalised in North Shore Hospital Sydney, with stomach pains, later diagnosed as a liver tumour. We paid her a visit and she wasn’t looking good. Perhaps she knew it was the end as she said, “I wish you good bye for the last time, pray for me”. Leaving her room was one of the saddest moments for both my wife and me. She passed away peacefully just two days later.

One of her daughter’s Neelaka, in her eulogy said, “Our mother was an extraordinary woman in myriad ways. She is reputed to be the first woman to ride a motorcycle through the streets of Colombo, or at least the first to do so wearing a sari. She added that Mum was a vital, gregarious, adventurous, and wonderful person and her close friends recall her as sociable, well loved, and her grandmother’s favourite. She was capable, adaptable, compassionate and unconventional.

She was the first Sri Lankan to become a Fellow of the Royal Canadian College of Pathologists. Born in Colombo, in 1932, she was head girl of Visakha Vidyalaya - Buddhist School for girls before joining Medical College at University of Ceylon.

In 1958 against the wishes of both families and all convention, Lilamani married a Burgher Christian – Lorenz Raffel, a Tea Planter by profession. She was carried away in his sports car, which I believe was a MG coupe.

They migrated to England where her children, Dassana, Kumara and Kaniska were born. When Kumara was only a few weeks old he died an unexpected death. This experience affected her so much that she elected not to pursue her original intended career in Obstetrics, and as Lorenz suggested, followed a course in pathology instead. In 1966 they migrated to

Canada, where Neelaka was born, and Lilamani commenced and completed her training in pathology.

The family migrated to Australia in 1972, and Lorenz died suddenly from a heart attack. Lilamani loved him dearly and missed him until the day she died. The turmoil caused by this event presented her with a challenge to work as a single parent, bringing up three young children. With her experience as a qualified Pathologist, she was quick enough to secure the position of Senior Pathologist at Blacktown Hospital in Sydney, where she worked until she retired. For much of her time at Blacktown she was head of the Pathology Department.



Dr Lilamani Raffel
1932-2006

She was interested in people and very community minded. Whilst settling in Sydney as a migrant, her popularity was rewarded by being elected the first woman President of the Sri Lankan Association of New South Wales in the late seventies.

During her tenure of office, she organised many fund raising events and sent substantial donations to flood victims in Sri Lanka. Among her other volunteer activities were

services through the Castle Hill branch of Soroptimists International, Australian Volunteers International, - a Public Health research project in the Maldives Islands, as a pathologist in Eritrea etc. She did enjoy immensely the change of pace, the simpler life, and the many friendships she made with locals and other volunteers.

In recent years she moved residence to Perth to spend time with her Pastor son Kanishka and family, devoted more volunteer time to help refugees, then returned to Sydney last year and renewed her place in the lives of the daughters, Dassana, Neelaka and grand-daughter Nadia. She got the opportunity again to renew old friendships in Sydney and was a regular attendee at the Ceylon Society meetings. Her last was the AGM Dinner in December 2006 where she joined gustily in the ‘singalong’ after dinner.

Peter Zelas, Medical Superintendent, Blacktown Hospital, had this to say “A wonderful person has passed our way. It is with gratitude that we have been given the opportunity to be a small part of her life”.

Friends: the song has ended but the memory lingers on. May she attain Nibbana.

Dr Harold Gunatillake

Lilamani was the elder daughter of Dr M W M & Maisie de Silva, the latter was the well known artist. Her elder brother Dr R K de Silva (Rajpal), is a long standing member of CSA who has made many presentations in Sydney & Melbourne

Letters to Editor

Dear Sir,



As one who had his boyhood in Kandy, I read Jeanne Jayasinghe's piece on Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe (in *Ceylankan* No. 37) with appreciation and interest. I would like to make some comments that would add depth to her contribution.

To understand my comments one needs to know a bit of history. We start from the medieval kingdom of Gampola, which was under pressure to contain the influence of the Jaffna Kingdom, which had spread its influence down the coast to Panadura. Finally, Gampola and Jaffna signed a CFA but Gampola, naturally, continued seeking a fortified citadel from which to recommence the struggle for supremacy. Finally, Kotte was decided on, both for its geographical position *vis-à-vis* the furthest point of Jaffna's reach and for the protection it was afforded from the surrounding marshes. Militarily, the choice was proved correct, when Jaffna's reach was decidedly shortened and she succumbed to the counter-thrust of Parakramabahu VI. Jaffna had become a semi-autonomous principality paying tribute to Kotte at the time of the Portuguese visitation.

But, the incident involving the ascetic, the hare and the jackal took place, before Kotte was chosen. The ascetic, aware of the search for a secure base for a kingdom under siege, realised that this was a fit place for turning back the tide of war, and informed the King. It resulted in a princely state of Kandy being established. The site of the incident is where the Natha Devale now stands. Its dome features a sculpted frieze of hares and jackals. Nowhere else in Sri Lanka is this motif to be found. The Kings of Kandy – which had also harboured visions of self-government had been reduced to a tribute-paying, semi-autonomous principality by Parakramabahu VI – were always crowned at this Devale. It is interesting that coronations were not held at the Dalada Maligawa, but at this Devale which had adopted a Bodhisatva as its Hindu deity: this was Avalokatesvara, also known as “Lokeswara Natha”.

By the time Kotte had split up, Kandy comprised, nominally, five provinces, or *ratas*: Udunuwara, Yatinuwara, Hewaheta, Harispattuwa, and Dumbara which led to it being called “Kande Uda Pas Rata”. The Portuguese called it *Candea* and British made that “Kandy”

There was widespread objection to the submergence of the paddy field to form a lake. But Kings were Kings then (as Presidents are now!) and the lake named “Kiri Muhuda” was constructed: it was called “Kiri” because that is the adjective for muddy water. What happened

to the mud dredged up mud from the site was that it was dumped behind the ramparts surrounding the Natha Devale complex, raising its ground level and burying much interesting things. (As primary school boys at Dharmaraja College in the early 1940s, we would play cricket in the Devale grounds, while inter-class matches were played on the grassy wilderness of the Maha Maluwa!) In the 1990s this site was excavated and among the buried sites that were exposed were a *bodhi ghara* and many small shrines which had been vandalized by the Dutch when they invaded Kandy in 1764 or so. On one of them, a soldier had used a pointed implement to draw a fleet of European type ships defacing the wall paintings on a small shrine. I published a research paper identifying the ships it as :



Ship graffiti at Natha Devale in Kandy

'Sailing ships and temple walls' in 'Honouring Martin Quéré o.m.i', ed. Gérard ROBUCHON, Viator Publications 2002, ISBN 955-8736-00-7

but it can be more easily accessed on our website:

<http://cf.hum.uva.nl/galle/topics/shipgraffiti.html>

It occurred to me that the story of Sri Wickrema's cruelty to Ehelepola Kumarihamy has also to be viewed in context. It was the law (unjust and cruel though it may be) that, if a traitor was discovered and he takes flight, his property would be taken over by the State and his family given the punishment due to him. The decision would be taken after a hearing by the Court, consisting of the highest nobles. When the accused was deemed guilty, the prescribed punishment would be read out and the King would ask the Court to confirm whether that was right. If they agreed, the King meted out the punishment. Ehelepola would, no doubt have been aware of this system: he would have served on cases like this, himself. So it was Ehelepola who sacrificed his Kumarihamy and children. There is more to be said on this, but I must stop somewhere

I look forward to more Myths and Legends from Jeanne Jayasinghe.

Somasiri Devendra

Letters to Editor cont;

Dear Sumane,

Congratulations on yet another very readable Journal.

It is not often that The Ceylankan contains a simple theme that Ransiri Menike Silva beguiles us with in "To Let for a Song" (Journal No.37). The recall of nature in her home environs is charmingly evocative of her love for all things wild and beautiful, to coin a phrase.

I was fortunate enough to spend the 1940s in a home in Borella with a delightfully large treed garden in the company of much of the bird and animal life that Ransiri talks about. They prospered in a green setting of coconut, mango, jak, *Jambu*, breadfruit and *Billing* among other trees and shrubs.

The flocks of water birds that Ransiri alludes to were not even sighted in the Borella skies for the obvious reasons and it was too suburban for the White Bellied Drongo (*Kanda*) and the Kingfisher. (Incidentally, there appears to be a transcription error as the Sinhala term for the Woodpecker is *Kerella* not *Kottorwa*). It was also too built-up for her companions of Iguana (*Talagoya*), Mongoose (*Mugatiya*) and Rat Snake (*Garandiya*). But around about 1945 I saw a *Talagoya* in the prisons sports ground nearby.

It was a surprise though to see only a fleeting reference by Ransiri to the Crow, ubiquitous as it is in city, town and village. Alas, I cannot enlighten Ransiri over the dance of the Rat snakes. Instead, I can only pose a question of my own in which the Crow features. On living in Melbourne it was startling to see my backyard the feeding ground of numbers of the Spotted Dove/Turtle-dove/Indian Turtle-dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*) which had been introduced into Victoria in 1863. I had never seen its Ceylon cousin The Ceylon Spotted Dove/Ash Dove (*Streptopelia chinensis ceylonensis*) in my Borella garden or any other suburban Colombo garden. And so I asked the inevitable question. Why here and not in Colombo? The answer I was given at a Ceylon Society Meeting was that in Sri Lanka the crows frightened off the doves. This was a hypothesis seemingly based solely on the fact that Crows and the Ash Dove do not appear to co-exist in Sri Lankan suburbia.

(Continued on page 27)

BOOKSHOP AND WEB RESOURCES

BOOKS/MAPS/COLLECTIBLES

This column is a regular feature for the benefit of members who publish works, and others who wish the Society to sell material on their behalf. No charges apply to members but donations will be gratefully received. Others pay a handling charge. Please e-mail the editor if you wish to take up this offer.

Blossoms of Wisdom on Peace and Environment

— by *Erika Dias*. This is an anthology of 123 poems that presents the beauty of nature, giving its hidden wisdom to man, and is illustrated with 39 breath-taking colour photographs. Hard cover with dust jacket ISBN: 955-599-403-X; 133 pp.; Published: April 2005; US\$ 30.00. Available from Wisdom Gift Publications, email: hideva@sltnet.lk

The Sweet & Simple Kind -by Yasmine Gooneratne 648 pp., Rs. 1,000. Perera-Hussein Publishing House 80A Dharmapala Mawatha, Colombo 7.

Mahaweli Meadows -by Valentine Perera, 275 pp soft cover, \$ 20 + p& h available from the author—at 21 Nursery Way, Burwood VIC 3125, 03 9830 6329 Email: valperer@hotmail.com

Essaying Cricket Sri Lanka & Beyond - by Michael Roberts - 372 pages + xvi prelim pp + 60 pages of outstanding pictures Publisher: Vijitha Yapa Publications, Colombo Orders/Enquiries to: vybooks@gmail.com Attn: ASELA Web: www.vijithayapa.com

Softcover: ISBN 955-1266-25-0 SL Rs 3499/ Aus \$45 Hardcover: ISBN 955-1266-26-9 SL Rs 5399/ Aus \$69. Australian buyers, please send cheque made out to "Michael Roberts" addressed to Vasee Nesiah, 35 Moules Rd, Rostrevor, SA 5073, who will arrange delivery.

Distant Warriors - by Dr Channa Wickremesekera Perera Hussein Publishing House, 217pp, Fiction. Rs 450 contact www.ph-books.com

Please note P&H is within Australia only, overseas postage quoted on request.

WEB SITES WORTH VISITING

www.srilankancooking.com
www.lib.mq.edu.au/all/journeys/menu.html
www.sellipi.com/srilanka
www.webquarry.com

(Continued from page 26)

This unfortunately cannot be proven one way or the other. Ransiri has observed what she calls the Speckled Dove in her garden, but from the context of her article it would seem she was in the outer fringes of suburbia, if in suburbia at all. A large hole in this hypothesis is that the Crows in Sri Lanka and the Ravens in Melbourne do not compete with these Doves for food. Both doves are ground feeders and the Crow and the Raven live mainly on carrion, so conflict is very unlikely. Possibly the answer is that the Indian Turtle Dove found in Melbourne is less wary of humans, unlike its cousin in Sri Lanka.

Again, any enlightenment from your readers?

Darnley de Souza.

SYNOPSIS OF MEETINGS

Sydney, 28 January 2007

The President Tony Peries called the meeting to order and requested the audience to observe one minute's silence in respect of two recently deceased members of the Society – Dr Lilamani Raffel (Sydney) and Mr Percy Samarawickrama (Canberra).

He then introduced the guest speaker Dr Ian Smith, Associate Professor of Language & Linguistics, York University (Toronto, Canada) and University of Sydney and stated that the subject chosen was **Ceylon-Portuguese – The linguistic legacy of Lanka's first European colonisers.**

Dr Smith holds a doctorate in Linguistics from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, with specialisation in South Asian linguistics. He has taught at Monash University in Melbourne, the National University of Singapore and, since 1984, at York University where he is Associate Professor of Linguistics.

He is currently spending a year as visiting lecturer at the University of Sydney. Chief among Dr Smith's diverse research interests are historical

linguistics and language contact.

He has had a long-standing interest in Sri Lanka Portuguese and is the author of *Sri Lanka Creole Portuguese Phonology* and has written many articles on its grammatical structure and historical development.

There was considerable interaction between audience and speaker throughout the evening. Dr Smith's numerous references to the Burgher community and the culture they inherited touched enough nostalgic nerve to evoke knowing nods of acknowledgement from those present.

Dr Smith provided this synopsis for publication in *The Ceylankan*.

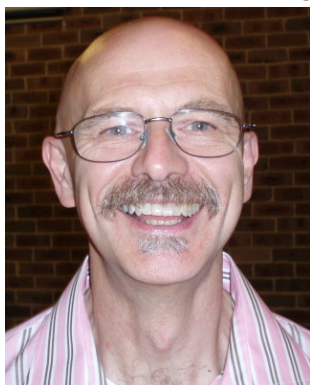
"The linguistic consequences of the Portuguese presence in Ceylon (1517-1658) are not limited to the many Portuguese loanwords in Sinhala and Tamil. The simplified Portuguese used to bridge the language barrier was developed with grammatical input from Sinhala and Tamil into a new language. Ceylon-Portuguese (a.k.a. Sri Lanka Portuguese) that became the home language of the mixed race communities, which sprang up wherever the Portuguese established trading settlements.

Once the Dutch period began, Standard Portuguese was no longer used in the island, but the Dutch found Ceylon-Portuguese a useful *lingua franca* and continued to use it throughout their reign. In fact, it became the language of the families that the Dutch men established with their local wives.

When the British came into power at the end of the 18th century, most of the functions of the Dutch were taken over by English, and Dutch soon fell into disuse, just as Standard Portuguese had done previously.

The British did not follow the Portuguese and Dutch in marrying locally and thus never adopted Ceylon-Portuguese as their own. Moreover, diaries and reports of missionaries and travelers in the early 1800s indicate that simplified English was their primary contact language. The result was that Ceylon-Portuguese became confined to the mixed-race community, to whom the term "Burghers" was applied.

Many of these Burghers with Dutch ancestry had worked for the Dutch administration, and many of these found employment under the British. Most of this group of Burghers abandoned Ceylon-



Dr Ian Smith

Portuguese in favour of English in the latter part of the 19th century. The remaining Ceylon-Portuguese speakers were an economically depressed group. With no lands of their own, they engaged in petty trades such as carpentry, smithy, and the repair and maintenance of machinery. Although earlier last century speakers of Ceylon-Portuguese could be found here and there throughout the island, the language survives now only on the east coast, around Trincomalee and Batticaloa.

All speakers in Batticaloa and Trincomalee are bilingual in Tamil, with some also speaking Sinhala and/or English. In many families, Tamil has supplanted Ceylon-Portuguese as a home language. This is due to a number of factors: the small size of the Burgher community; marriage with non-speakers; migration for work; peer pressure on children to speak Tamil; modernisation and economic pressure (many parents feel they should encourage their children to speak a more useful language at home); natural disasters (the cyclone of 1978 and especially the tsunami of 2004).

The community preserves a tradition of song and music, some of which I collected in Batticaloa in 1975 along with Kenneth David Jackson of Yale University. A couple of Cafferinha verses are given below.

Numistaimpa na poorta noona numistavaza lagri
Amiyam atardi, ev lomanda solistarsi.
*'Don't stand in the doorway, woman, don't pour tears
Tomorrow afternoon, I'll send a marriage proposal,'*

Jamanada solistarsi, japidi per kaza
Mama tem kontenti, mina papa tenega.
*'He sent a marriage proposal; he asked to marry me.
Mummy is agreeable, [but] my daddy refuses.'*

A lively question time was followed by the usual social

Doug Jones

Melbourne

25 February 2007

The Chairman Dr. Srilal Fernando introduced the speaker, Mr. Daniel Brown on the topic **"Some aspects of postal history of Ceylon"**. Mr. Gary Watson who was billed to speak sent in an apology. The first post office was established in Colombo in 1796. This was before Australia had one. The letter and the address were written on a single sheet of

paper due to the scarcity and value of paper in mid 19th century. Letters were posted from Colombo to Kandy and England in 1846 and 1843 respectively. In 1857 envelopes embossed with postal rates ranging in value from 1 pence to 2 shillings were issued. Two booklets with stamps and Air Mail labels were issued to mark the silver jubilee of King George the V in 1935 and coronation of King George VI in 1937.

Throughout 40s and 50s Anti TB labels were posted in normal mail to help raise awareness of tuberculosis. Between 1869 & 1891 numeral obliterations with an allocated number were used to cancel postal rates. The postal rate for foreign mail in 1891 was 15 cents per half ounce. In 1894 a case of plants from Peradeniya Botanical Gardens was posted to France. During the Boer War letters were censored and were posted from war camps. Civil censorship was prevalent during war and letters were opened under martial law. Mail was posted to Ceylon forces in Congo in 1960s. Parcel post by air mail was very expensive and cost 50 cents per half ounce. In 1935 an Imperial Airways plane crashed and 71 bags of air mail were discovered without stamps. Perhaps the people who found them removed the stamps for some reason. Boxes and packages were sent as commercial mail. Concessional rates were applied for sending tea. Colonial Ceylon exchanged most mail with England but letters were also sent to India, Holland, France, Switzerland, U.S.A., Australia and Germany. During WW II the Cocos Island mail was dispatched in tin cans and processed in Ceylon or Fremantle. Railway Express Service required 25 cents per letter. Crudely printed 5 cents bank notes were utilized as emergency currency during WW II. Large hotels of Ceylon were advertised on envelopes. Photos of these valuable artifacts displayed at the meeting recounted a very interesting postal history of Ceylon. Mr. Brown readily answered many questions raised by the audience.

Dr Fernando then introduced Mr. Valentine Perera, a dramatist who graduated from Peradeniya University in classics. He introduced his novel *"Mahaveli Meadon"*, which he said was written during the happiest period of his life. The speaker offered his gratitude to Dr. Ashley Halpe and Shelagh Gunawardene for encouragement in publishing his novel. The novel evolves round an inter hall drama competition at the Peradeniya campus in mid 50s with Tony and Devika being the chief protagonists. Tony

has a reputation for directing drama and an appellation as a 'lecherous larrikin'. Devika is an undergraduate reading English. In a review of the book, Maureen Cox, said that "the author used an interactive commentary technique in the novel". During the 1950s experience at Peradeniya was described as 'golden age', 'arcadia', 'magical time' and 'idyllic'. Since then Sri Lanka has undergone a transformation. Shelagh's review says that it is a light and entertaining book which attracts the discerning reader. Two themes emerge from this review; a sound system of values which balances the needs of the individual with a collective wisdom..., acute need in civil society for individuals to realize the wider perspective... The novel highlights the friendship of Tony, Aru and Larry as enduring despite the racial violence that is erupting in the background. The love affair of Tony and Devika forms the core of the novel. Shelagh's review noted that "Tony is a maverick who masks the real feelings and intentions with a facade of jokes, witty remarks... Devika on the other hand comes across as a forthright person who is very much a modern liberated woman. With that the writer draws a remarkably sympathetic portrait of this phenomenon which instantly strikes a chord in most women".

Copies of "*Mahaveli Meadow*" were available for purchase during the meeting. After a lively discussion of Peradeniya life, the raffle, drawn by Shelagh was won by Mrs. Marjorie Jilla.

from the Caribbean to the Pacific islands. The Polish born Joseph Conrad, one of the finest English novelists, once wrote "I have not chosen the English language, it has chosen me."

In the hands of Erika Dias the language takes on a suppleness and sinewy strength to explore both environmental and spiritual themes in this remarkable collection of 123 short poems. Conceived as a 'Tea Table' book - in a self-consciously Sri Lankan reaction to the profusion of 'coffee table' books that adorn the drawing rooms of the West - the poems are interspersed with some striking photographs of wild life, nature and underwater scenes.

An award-winning poet in many countries, Erika Dias is not easily compartmentalised as a nature poet although she writes on nature and the environment. Nor is she a religious poet although she writes on spiritual topics, on peace and on Buddhist philosophy. There is both a rejoicing in the many splendoured beauty of nature and a mystical perception of the serene peace that pervades nature. The words 'stillness and silence' recurs in more than one poem as if the poet experiences a religious experience in her enjoyment of nature.

I am sure readers will derive the same tranquil enjoyment from this volume of poems as I did.

Jayantha Dhanapala
Former United Nations Under-Secretary-General and
Ambassador of Sri Lanka.

Dilhani Kumbukage

BOOK REVIEW

Blossoms of Wisdom on Peace

and Environment – by Erika Dias 133pp hard cover with dust jacket, US\$ 30, Wisdom Gift Publications email: hideva@sltnet.lk

There has been an efflorescence of creative writing in the English language among Sri Lankans in recent years. It is part of the globalization of the English language and of English literature. It is also an illustration of the vast resources of a language that can give expression to the innermost thoughts and feelings of writers from a wide range of cultures



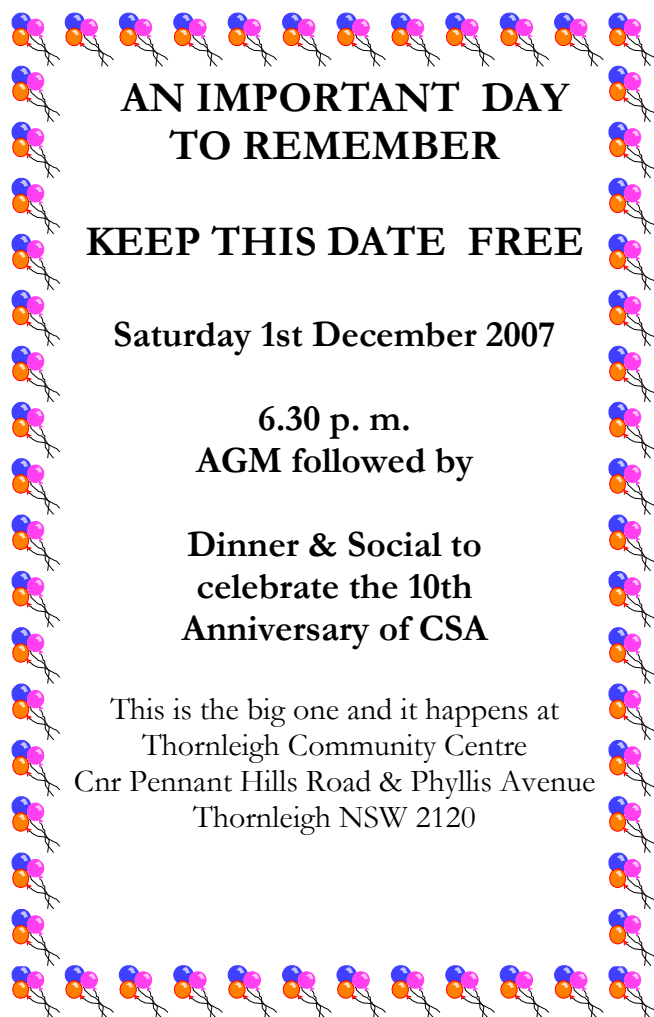
For you lovers of trivia, interesting, but are they true or apocryphal?

It was the accepted practice in Ancient Babylon 4,000 years ago, that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the honey month, which we know today as the honeymoon.

In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts... So in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them "Mind your pints and quarts, and settle down." It's where we get the phrase "mind your P's and Q's."

The first novel ever written on a typewriter was "Tom Sawyer."

Compiled by Rambler



AN IMPORTANT DAY TO REMEMBER

KEEP THIS DATE FREE

Saturday 1st December 2007

**6.30 p. m.
AGM followed by**

**Dinner & Social to
celebrate the 10th
Anniversary of CSA**

This is the big one and it happens at
Thornleigh Community Centre
Cnr Pennant Hills Road & Phyllis Avenue
Thornleigh NSW 2120

REMINDER MEMBERSHIP DUES

2007 subscriptions are now due. Kindly draw your cheque/MO in favour of the Ceylon Society of Australia and mail to Srikantha Nadarajah 50A -The Esplanade - Thornleigh NSW 2120. Please note subscriptions are for a calendar year. Kindly check with Treasurer if you are in arrears.

Annual subscriptions are:

All Members	AU\$ 30.00
Pensioners/Students	AU\$ 20.00

**If in doubt of your subscription status please
contact Nada on
Int + 61 2 9980 1701**

E-mail: vsnadarajah@bigpond.com

OFFICE BEARERS OF THE CEYLON SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

President:

Tony Peries
Int + 61 2 9674 7515
E-mail: srini.p@bigpond.com

Vice President:

Dr Srilal Fernando
Int + 61 3 9809 1004
E-mail: srilalf@bigpond.net.au

Secretary:

Doug Jones
Int + 61 2 9894 7449
E-mail: deejay20@bigpond.net.au

Treasurer:

Srikantha Nadarajah
Int + 61 2 9980 1701
50A The Esplanade Thornleigh NSW 2120
E-mail: vsnadarajah@bigpond.com

Public Relations:

Harry de Sayrah
Mobile: 0415 402 724
E-mail: harolddes@hotmail.com

Publications:

Mike Udabage
Int + 61 2 9879 7728
E-mail: mike_udabage@itechne.com

Editor/Librarian:

Sumane Iyer
Int + 61 2 9456 4737 & 6384 3287
48 Helvetia Avenue Berowra NSW 2081
E-mail: sumane@pacific.net.au

Social Convener:

Chandra Senaratne
Int + 61 2 9872 6826
E-mail: charboyd@iprimus.com.au

Melbourne Chapter Convener:

Shelagh Goonewardene
Int + 61 3 9808 4962
E-mail: devika@netstra.com.au

Ex officio:

Dr Robert Sourjah
Int + 61 2 9622 2469

Hugh Karunanayake
Int + 61 2 9980 2494
E-mail: karu@internode.net.au

Sunil de Silva
Int + 61 2 9983 1116
E-mail: sunsil@smartchat.net.au

Ron Murrell
Int + 61 2 9484 4070
E-mail: ronchris@tpg.com.au



NEXT SYDNEY MEETING

Sunday 15 July 6.30 pm
Talk by Dr Raja Bandaranayake

**"Twixt Isles - the story of the life in exile
 in Mauritius of Ehelepola Adigar and the
 State prisoners from Ceylon"**

Venue: Thornleigh Community Centre - cnr
 Pennant Hills Road & Phyllis Avenue

For information call:
 Tony: 9674 7515
 Doug: 9894 7449

NEXT MELBOURNE MEETING

T B A

Venue: Holy Redeemer Church Hall
 Cnr of York Street and Mont Albert Road
 Surrey Hills VIC 3127
 (Melways Ref: 46 H10)

Shelagh -AH 9808 4962
 Or Srilal -AH 9809 1004

How to become a member of the Ceylon Society of Australia

1. Contact Hony. Treasurer Srikantha Nadarajah
 50A The Esplanade Thornleigh NSW 2120
 Ph: 02 9980 1701 OR
E-mail: vsnadarajah@bigpond.com
2. Request an application form, mail it to the treasurer completed in all aspects along with applicable subscription. Incomplete application forms may delay enrolment.
3. Only personal cheques/cash/Money Orders in Australian currency will be accepted. Due to the high bank charges in exchange conversion, foreign currency payments cannot be accepted. Thank you for your understanding.
4. Members awarding Gift Subscriptions to friends & relatives, must complete the application form available from the Treasurer and return it to him along with full payment in Australian currency.

In search of speakers

The committee would welcome nominations of knowledgeable and academic persons to speak at our regular meetings, both in Sydney and Melbourne. You may have friends, relations who live in or visit Australia. Our calendar for the year is - April/May, September/October and November/December. Dates can be arranged to suit availability of eminent speakers. Please contact President :Tony Peries on
 02 9674 7515 or E-mail: Srini.p@bigpond.com

Reprints of this Journal and some back issues are available in limited quantities. Members pay \$ 7.50 - Non members \$ 10.00 per issue + postage & handling. P & H within Australia - \$ 3.00 - Asia/Pacific \$ 6.50 & rest of the world \$ 9.00 per package up to 5 issues. Please contact Tony as above.

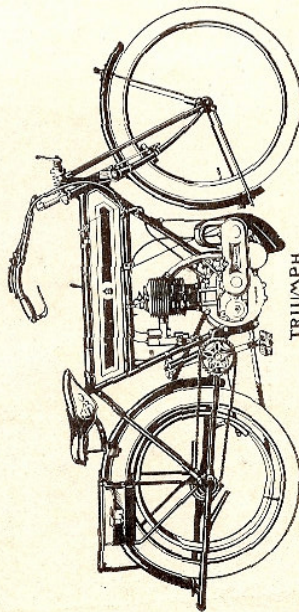
"THE CEYLANKAN is published quarterly. Every effort is made to print material that is relevant and correct, but we do not take responsibility for errors. The editorial committee would appreciate if inaccuracies are brought to its attention. Original material is sought, preferably of an anecdotal, historical nature, but any material will be considered provided it contributes to the Society's ideals of being non racial, non-political, non-religious, and non-controversial.

Where applicable, contributors are requested to annotate bibliographical references to facilitate further research & study by interested members.

The Editorial Committee of THE CEYLANKAN, at its discretion, now accepts advertisements for products and services suitable for our members. Those related to genealogy, antiquarian and contemporary books, maps, art, memorabilia, and other collectibles are welcome. For further details and rates please contact Publications Officer Mike Udabage at Int + 61 2 9978 7728, E-mail: mike_udabage@itechne.com

Brown's for Motor Cycles and Cars.

SOLE AGENTS FOR THE BEST AND MOST POPULAR MAKES.



TRIUMPH

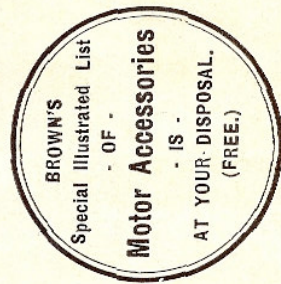
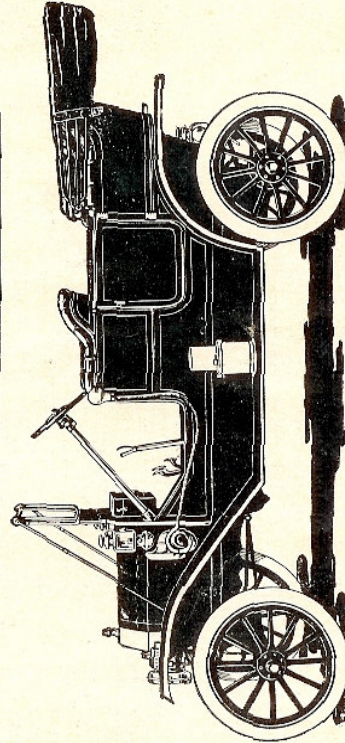
3½ H.P. "Triumph" Free Engine Model.

The "Triumph" Motor Cycle is the most popular Machine of the day, and is universally acknowledged to be the best Motor Cycle yet produced, being thoroughly reliable, durable and easily managed. "Triumph" efficiency and reliability are household words in the Motor Cycling World, while the material employed in its manufacture is the outcome of years of experience and stands unequalled for its suitability and high quality.

Patent Free Engine Plate Clutch, Ball-bearing Engine, Patent Carburetter, Handle-bar Control Variable Pulley, Magneto Ignition.

"FORD" CARS.

Buy a "Ford" because it is a Better Car, not because it is cheaper. The only Car of Vanadium steel construction, and with the Magneto built into the Motor. Public appreciation proved by the fact that there are over 75,000 Ford Cars in actual use to-day.



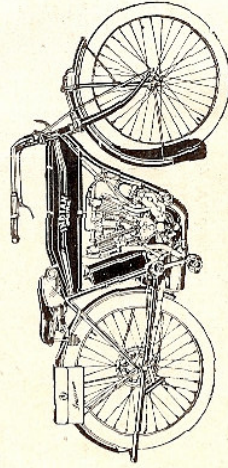
OTHER MOTOR CYCLE AGENCIES.

"Motor-Reve" Lightweight Models.

"F. N." Shaft-driven Motor Cycles.

Phelon and Moore Chain-driven Motor Cycles.

MAY WE SEND YOU PARTICULARS?



5 H.P. Twin-Cylinder Model "Indian."

The most desirable all-round touring mount that has ever been offered to the public, for it has abundance of power for touring work, and in addition possesses just that turn of speed which adds so greatly to the pleasure of Motor Cycling.

It is of superior design, material and workmanship throughout and is popularly known as "The Silent Indian" on account of the smooth and inaudible working of its Motor.

Ball-bearing Engine; Indian Cradle Spring Fork, strongly braced and fitted with chrome vanadium laminated spring; Automatic Compensating Carburetter, Bosch High Tension, Magneto Ignition. Renold roller chain drive with Indian Free Engine.

TALBOT "CARS."

Efficiency is a *sine qua non* to Independence. "Talbot" efficiency is world-famed; and its excellent design and workmanship, smooth running, silence and power on hills win public confidence at first sight.

BROWN & CO., LIMITED, Colombo.