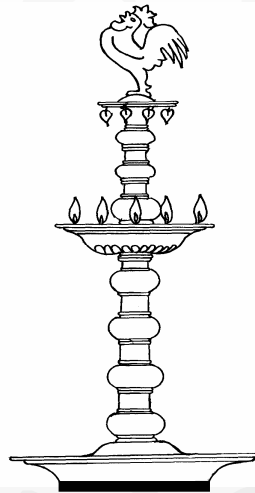


THE CEYLANKAN



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EDITORIAL



Continuing our “theme per issue” we bring two articles on Jaffna as experienced by senior administrators who knew Jaffna like no other in this era.

Neville Jayaweera served as Government Agent GA from 1963 to 1966 and Rama Sundaralingam as Superintendent of Police SP Northern Province from 1966 to 1972. They served at a time when major upheavals and dramatic changes in society were taking place. Neville Jayaweera is no stranger to our readers as this one is the 5th part of a series of his time in Jaffna. Each writer has a perspective to

explore and together they provide a vivid picture of Jaffna, not just as a geographic entity but as a living organism. We have seen similar prose on Galle, Kandy and Colombo. The Editorial team hopes that there are members who have their own favourite suburbs to write about. *The Ceylankan* is unique in character—and it is you the members who made it so. It is your contributions that have given the Journal its current stature. As one experienced journalist once declared

“I was under the impression that expatriates are people who are busy making money all the time and as a result they have no time left to ‘waste’ on such cultural enterprises like producing entertaining, informative and valuable journals like Ceylankan...”

I need to replenish the coffers for future issues, and if you have a tale to tell...tell it in *The Ceylankan*. Our Editorial team will gladly work on rough copy if that is what you can put together. We have done it many times before.

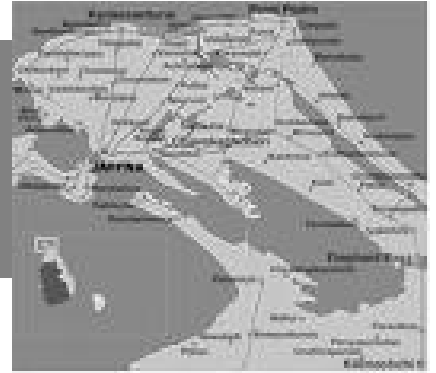
19th Century Images



Tamil grass cutter

The Jaffna I knew

by R Sundaralingam



While in Colombo with my wife, a few months ago, staying at the Taj Samudra Hotel, we were intrigued by the brides and grooms of traditional Jaffna Tamil Hindu weddings, catching up with Sri Lankan cricketers in the hotel, the Tri-series matches at the time being washed out. The bridal parties were posing for photos with the cricketers, Sanath Jayasuriya, Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardena being most sought after. I felt that this intermingling of races disclosed that deep down all are Sri Lankans with pride in their heroes, indeed I was reminded of times past and the Jaffna I left in 1972 nothing like that I saw in 2006.

In the background of the ethnic violence tearing at the fabric of this country for the past decades, I was immediately taken back to those bygone distant days when such a conflict would have been impossible to imagine. That was the golden era of Sinhala-Tamil harmony, when in the peaceful Jaffna town Tamils, Sinhala and Muslims excelled in different trading pursuits, all living in harmony. The Sri Lanka I remember, the Jaffna I knew, was vastly different from now.

I go back to the days when I served as Superintendent of Police (SP), Northern Province (NP) from 1966 to 1972 when one Senior SP was in charge of each of the country's nine provinces. My charge was what was then the single N.P. division, later separated into the Jaffna and Vavuniya divisions, through the days of the government of Dudley Senanayake (1965-70) and Sirima Bandaranaike (1970 -77). The national government of Dudley Senanayake led by the UNP came to power in 1965 on the support extended by the combined strength of the 20 elected Tamil M. P.'s of S J V Chelvanayagam's Federal Party and G. G. Ponnambalam's Tamil Congress. The Federal Party member M. Tiruchelvam was named the Local Government Minister. His job clearly was to formulate a workable proposition for the devolution of power at the provincial and district levels. This was the beginning of a conscious conjunction of

interests of a well defined political reconciliation be-

tween the Sinhala and the Tamil political parties. Senanayake's government with its mandate for communal amity created tremendous goodwill in the North and the East. Politically, the biggest talking point of the day was the Prime Minister (PM) Senanayake's visit in 1967 to Jaffna to lay the foundation for market complex. It was an occasion that has been etched in the memory of everyone present. The rousing welcome, the surging applause, the heartfelt reception that greeted the PM has been scarce repeated and never accorded to any political personality before. Even as the common man was effusive in his hospitality, leaders of rival Tamil political parties vied with each other to welcome a leader who was then the beacon of hope of Sinhala-Tamil harmony, who personified what all of us wanted for our country. There followed a continuous flow of Sinhala politicians and ministers to Jaffna, something that had only been a trickle earlier. They came on one pretext or the other, visiting the Tamil areas as a matter of routine.

R. Premadasa who took over from M Tiruchelvam as Minister, Local Government visited Jaffna and the rest of the province on assuming office and initiated several development projects. He was accorded a warm welcome. Five hundred metres of red carpet was rolled out for him from the Pallaly airport where he landed, to Tinnevely on the Jaffna road. This trend continued even in Mrs. Bandaranaike's time with ministers Dr. N.M. Perera, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Maithripala Senanayake, Pieter Keuneman and a host of others all being frequent visitors. The visits of the various ministers and Sinhala politicians created tremendous goodwill and promoted a close Sinhala-Tamil amity. This was the Jaffna I left in 1972, where law and order were at its best.

One of the missions accomplished during my posting as the SP in the NP and something that gave me an immense satisfaction, was

the eradication of caste discrimination in the region- particularly in terms of temple entry and the use of public wells. Of course, it attracted the ire of the influential, well placed high caste members of Jaffna society. I recall with pride that during this period there was little or no pre-meditated crime and the use of firearms was a rarity. Crime was largely petty and offences not serious. Interestingly, it was bicycle thefts that predominated in a region where sometimes a family owned as many as three bicycles. The only crime that concerned security forces was smuggling, which was concentrated in Velvettithurai. There was a flourishing two-way smuggling across the Palk Straits with Valvettithurai as the hub. Spices and coconut oil was moved out of Sri Lanka while India provided textiles of a bewildering variety ranging from silks from Kanchipuram and Manipur, as well as sarongs bearing the Chanku mark and Paalayakattu brand and joss sticks and perfumes. Tamil film magazines and song books and worst of all, Indian opium was the most sought after commodity smuggled into Sri Lanka at that time. In fact, this was an age-old practice with the exchange of coded messages like, 'I am sending Meenakshi and you send Kamalakshi.'

Smuggling rings were often broken on information received only to start again and be broken once more. The cycle went on with crests and troughs but smuggling was never completely eradicated. There was otherwise no militancy, insurgency or organized crime. There were pockets of rebellious youth activity, particularly over the policy of standardisation of marks for university admission that was introduced in 1970, but there was no widespread political agitation with violent and divisive elements in them. The police, nearly 1,000 strong, manned 24 police stations in the six districts of the N.P. and was the main law enforcement agency. Though Palaly camp was the military base, the army and navy played a very minor role in the region. The six army outposts comprised about 700 soldiers while the naval base in Karainagar had 100 personnel and two patrol boats that had little to do except occasionally patrol the shore to prevent illegal migration from Tamil Nadu and the rest of south India.

Anti-illicit immigration posts were set up along the coast of northern Sri Lanka in the 50 s and the 60 s to monitor and control the traffic from southern India to northern Sri Lanka. Now the tide has turned and the traffic is in the reverse direction.

There was a craze for Tamil films in the 60 s and 70 s to such an extent that the Tamil youths would take boats to India to see the "the first day show" and return the next day. Sinhala Buddhist pilgrims flocked in thousands to Nagadeepa once a year during the Poson festival. This was a revered pilgrimage, akin to the visit to Bodh Gaya in India.

When the JVP uprising in the early 70 s took place and the JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera was arrested in Amparai in 1971, the Security Council under Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike decided that he should be confined to the civilian Jaffna prison, within the Dutch Fort, under my direct custody. This was primarily for security reasons as the NP was the safest, most trouble free place in the country then. The Dutch Fort taken over by the Dutch from the Portuguese in 1658, had only four principal buildings, the prison, the Police Superintendent's residence,



A view of the Jaffna Fort

King's House (VIP residence meant mainly for the Governor and Supreme Court Judges doing the Jaffna assizes) and the Dutch Presbyterian Church. Its unique layout, imposing ramparts and designed moat made it a tourist attraction. Unfortunately, all that is gone today, razed to the ground.

My spin-off from the decision to send Wijeweera to Jaffna was that as the police chief I got to interact with him thus helping me to understand the JVP thinking. In fact, this brings to mind the prescience of Wijeweera that Tamil youth would also one day rebel against authority. Apparently, he could read the writing on the wall, during his stay in Jaffna prison for over an year, intermingling with the Tamil prison guards and the Tamil-speaking co-prisoners. The JVP insurgency of 1971 was an eye-opener for Tamil youth. It was the precursor of the expression and asser-

tion of the Tamil identity. As I see it, perhaps this is where the seeds of Tamil rebellion against the State were sown.

Education was the life blood of Jaffna. Satchel-carrying school children rushing for classes in the early hours was a common sight. Ambitious adults drove their children to academic excellence and the rewards that it would bring. This explains the attainment of Tamils in the professions and in many other walks of life. All the MP's from the NP were lawyers, upright and dedicated men of integrity and honesty, and never interfered with the administration of the police or other agencies of the government. They were complemented by the hard working peasant who eked out a hard living from the demanding soil. What they produced was an agricultural miracle, making their fields bloom in an arid climate. Their hard work produced a bounty of red onions, bananas, mangoes and much more, trucked across Elephant Pass to markets in Colombo and elsewhere.

India and Sri Lanka have shared a long and cherished history of harmony and goodwill, with trade, culture, history, anthropology and religion being part of the connection. The efflorescence of religious interaction in both Hinduism and Buddhism are a matter of everyday life and if Hinduism found an extended expression in the island, Buddhism came to its own in this land. The continued and sustained goodwill of Indian luminaries like V.V. Giri, Vijaylakshmi Pandit and Jayaprakash Narayan, with Jaffna part of their itinerary, nourished these ties. The bonding was so strong that I distinctly recall Vijaylakshmi Pandit's visit when torrential rain made consideration of an indoor venue necessary prompting Mrs. Pandit to remark, "When the Nehru family speaks, rain, thunder or storm, people flock to hear them".

One can but hope that reason will prevail despite the current chaos: perhaps given political will, the Buddhist message of peace and harmony the tenet of dharma cannot but prevail in this land.

The writer retired from the Sri Lankan Police as a senior DIG and worked for many years with Interpol as a specialist in narcotics. He is now domiciled in India.

Some memories of my years in Jaffna

Part 5 - the lighter side

by Neville Jayaweera

In part 4 of this chapter I said that from what I had written so far, I may have given readers the impression that my work as GA of Jaffna had to do only with the ethnic conflict and had little to do with much else besides. I said that that would be a wholly wrong impression. Although maintaining law and order, dissolving prejudices and misunderstandings between the communities, and building bridges between the government and the Tamil leaders, consumed a large portion of my time and energies, my work as GA also involved much else besides. Indeed, it involved the whole panoply of a GA's normal duties - land development, irrigation, agriculture, social services, forestry, protection of wild life, fisheries, co-operative development, food control, price control, customs and smuggling control, illicit immigration control, responsibilities as the Fiscal, serving as ex-officio president of a half a dozen or so voluntary organisations and associations in the district, co-ordinating the activities of all government departments in the district and not least receiving Ambassadors and High Commissioners who visited the district officially. While I cannot recount my work in all, or even in most of these sectors, without being tiresome and boring, in this part I will try to share some exciting and even some hilarious experiences connected with my work in a few of those areas that fell within the ambit of my work as GA.

The High Commissioner and a diplomatic incident

I said that one of the duties of the GA Jaffna was to receive visiting Ambassadors and High Commissioners in his office or Residency. It was a convention special to Jaffna from a long way back and did not normally devolve on the GAs of other districts. The normal protocol was for the Embassy concerned to inform the GA Jaffna of the intention of its Head of Mission to visit the district and to inquire whether the Ambassador/High Commissioner (HC) may call on him, whereupon the GA would give him a date and time to see him. During my time all Ambassadors and High Commissioners visiting Jaffna adhered to this protocol very strictly. I believe that this convention had been established by the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs be-

cause of the sensitive political circumstances prevailing in Jaffna, and visiting ambassadors had to be briefed about the diplomatic pitfalls and minefields waiting for them.

Accordingly, one day the Indian High Commission contacted me and said that their High Commissioner (HC) would like to visit Jaffna district and would like me to give him a date to call on me. At that time, although the tension with the Federal Party leaders had abated, some radical Tamil hotheads were imploring of India to intervene on the side of the Tamil people and had actually asked the Indian HC to visit Jaffna to see the "repression" for himself and recommend to Delhi that they should intervene on the side of the Tamil cause. Against that background, I thought it would be very unwise and embarrassing for the Indian HC to visit Jaffna at that time and advised him to put off his visit for a later date, and that if he came, he would most certainly be politically ambushed by the locals, exposing him to a grave diplomatic embarrassment. Not hearing from the HC thereafter, I assumed he had taken my advice and postponed his visit.

However, one day shortly thereafter, my Divisional Revenue Officer (DRO) Thunukai reported to me that the HC of India, whose name I shall not mention for reasons of courtesy, had been camping out in his division, i.e. well within the Jaffna District, on a shooting expedition. Even if I had ignored the violation of protocol by the HC in visiting my district without notifying me and against my advice, he had actually violated the law of the land by participating in a shooting expedition during a closed season and had now to shelter behind a claim of "diplomatic immunity" in order to avoid prosecution. Eventually when the HC got round to seeing me in my office the same week, without mincing my words, I pointed out to him the error of his ways. He was profusely apologetic and claimed that his office had not briefed him about the protocol and about the closed season etc, I had but to accept his apology.

The diplomatic *faux pas* on the part of the HC was quite understandable, because he was not a professional Indian Foreign Service diplomat, but a pompous retired colonel from the old British Army of India, who had been rewarded with a diplomatic appointment. He was the typical hunting, shooting, fishing, bluff and bluster colonel, who had neither an understand-

ing of, nor a taste for, diplomatic niceties and would have been happier in an officers' mess swapping yarns over whisky on the rocks than in discussing diplomatic issues around a table. However, with his personal apology to me, as far as I was concerned, the matter was closed, and should have ended there. It was not to be.

The public meeting

A nondescript group of locals calling themselves "The Tamil Citizen's Movement" had organised a public reception to the visiting HC to which they had also invited me along with the Puisne Judge, the District Judge, the Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police and a whole lot of politicians. Although I was a bit suspicious about the *bona fides* of the event, I had no alternative but to go along. The real intentions of the organisers became evident when the time came round for toasts and speeches. When proposing the "Loyal Toast", the chief organiser who was the principal of a school, and a good speaker he was, after launching a tirade against the government, formally proposed that the HC should recommend to Delhi to intervene in Sri Lanka on behalf of the Tamils, - and urgently too. There was no way I could drink to that charade of a "Loyal Toast" and I continued seated while to my horror the HC himself raised his glass and drank to it as did everyone else, bar the Superintendent of Police van Sanden. I not only remained seated but, as the others resumed their seats; got up from the head table and walked out followed by van Sanden, to signify our disavowal of the proceedings.

What I did not know, and perhaps not even van Sanden knew, was that some plainclothes men from the Intelligence Bureau in Colombo had been recording the proceedings. Early the following morning I had a call from the Permanent Secretary N. Q. Dias. He was furious with the HC for conduct which he interpreted as interference in the internal affairs of the country. He asked that I come down to Colombo and meet him the following morning. Simultaneously, he had summoned the HC also to Colombo. By the time I reached Colombo the following morning, all the papers, English as well as the Sinhala, were full of the story, and needless to say, they were rather garbled and hardly recognisable. The papers sensationalised the event to such a degree that when I arrived in the Fort Station by overnight train from Jaffna, there were a dozen or so journalists and cameramen waiting on the platform to talk to me. I drove straightaway to see N Q Dias. After hearing all the facts from me, which in themselves were not very favourable to

the HC and after listening to the HC himself, Dias obviously on instructions from the Prime Minister Mrs Bandaranaike, reported the incident to Delhi and conveyed to them the displeasure of the government over the conduct of its HC. In diplomatic jargon, conveying "displeasure" over the conduct of an Ambassador is only slightly less serious than declaring the diplomat concerned *persona non grata*. Delhi responded positively and the HC was recalled to Delhi on the grounds that his term was up in any case. This was a convenient face saving exit from a diplomatic *faux pas*. So ended another one of many crises, which transformed my time in Jaffna into a fascinating adventure.

Smuggling ruses

My work as a GA also involved keeping a stern eye on smuggling. For over a hundred years, the village of Velvettithurai along the northern coast of the peninsula had been the legendary hideout for smugglers, and the name of "Hitler Kandasamy" was ranked with some of the notorious names of all times. He was known to operate through an intricate network of officials and informers whom he had in his pay.

Early one morning the Principal Collector Customs in Colombo telephoned me to say that the Air Ceylon flight to Madras, a Dakota, which would be touching down in Jaffna within the hour, was carrying smuggled diamonds worth ten million rupees, belonging to Kandasamy. They would be found either on the person of a passenger, or hidden somewhere on the plane and I should try to arrest the smuggler and retrieve the diamonds. I had very little data on which to act, but I telephoned through to the Civil Aviation and Customs authorities at the Jaffna airport to impound the plane until I arrived, and not to let any passengers off the plane. Along with a posse of police, I was at the airport before the plane landed. We searched every passenger and their luggage thoroughly. After virtually stripping the seats and the carpets and emptying every tin of talcum powder and squeezing out every tube of tooth paste and cutting into slivers every bar of soap, we found nothing. After a delay of over four hours we released the plane to continue its journey to Madras. As happens more often than not, the smugglers had made fools of us. The diamonds had been on the plane all the time, right under our noses. They had been neatly wedged in the cheese sandwiches which were there on the ta-

ble in the galley of the plane for all to see, and we had never thought of sandwiches as a hiding place for diamonds! However, on arrival at Madras, when the stewardess, who was obviously in on the act, started stuffing sandwiches into her bag aroused the suspicions of a wary Indian customs officer. He apprehended her and found the diamonds we missed! The haul was valued at Indian Rs 12 million i.e. about Ceylon Rs 18 million at that time. About SL Rs 360 million today!. That was a big one that got away!

Later, there was another attempt. Acting on a tip-off, customs officials set a trap and arrested an agent of 'Hitler' Kandasamy, alleged to be carrying a blue, star sapphire worth Rs 5 million, on his person! They stripped the man naked but to no avail. However, before he wrapped himself in his *verti* again, one smart customs official took the man aside and asked him to do some squatting exercises. One, two, one, two, up, down, up, down, the man went on for about ten minutes, and suddenly, out plopped the sapphire from his bottom, rather soiled to be sure, but still valued at Rs 20 million in the money of those days, i.e. more than Rs 400 million today. That was a really big one that did not get away!

Neville Jayaweera was GA Jaffna from 1963 to 1966 Ed.

To be concluded in Journal # 44



A Girl from Jaffna –circa 1895

Odd, the memories that linger, long after a place is gone....

Of Porticoes, Thambi Kades and Romantic Journeys

by Tissa Devendra

Driving through the city as the rain pelts down, my heart bleeds for the pedestrians scurrying desperately for a roof to shelter beneath. The only spots available to them are ramshackle bus halts, skimpy overhangs in front of shop windows or the imposing entrances to up-market shopping malls flanked by glowering security guards. Here they cluster in damp proximity, like bees outside a hive, till the rain ceases and they can escape their unwelcoming shelters. Private residences in the city now lurk unseen behind high walls and locked gates.

The streets of boyhood memory were far friendlier places for pedestrians escaping monsoon downpours. Boutiques had roomy verandahs abutting the pavement and little tea-shops allowed these uninvited 'guests' to cluster at their entrance where the tea-maker clanged by his steaming brass samovar. Nobody was ever shooed off. What we loved most, however, was when the rain caught us as we walked quiet suburban lanes with homes fronted by hospitable porticoes, never seen today except in period teledramas.

The portico was a standard architectural feature of a middle-class home. It was roomy enough to shelter a large car or a buggy-cart and bull. Two or three steps, flanked by potted palms, led up to the verandah proper, furnished with a few cane chairs clustered round a 'tea-poy' decorated with a brass Kandyan bowl perched on three kneeling elephants. A glass-panelled door and lace curtains screened the living room. A little room on the side served either as a *Budu-ge*, (shrine room) and the husband's office-room, or as a refuge for an old bachelor 'uncle'.

The portico fulfilled a function essential to a way of life, now long gone. It served as a sort of 'anteroom' where the lady of the house could interact with those who could not, or

would not, step indoors. Seated on a verandah chair, she bargained with vegetable basket women, fish vendors and Chinese silk traders, dispensed largesse to beggars and screened peasants from the *gama* (village) seeking favours. When rain clouds burst, we pedestrians pushed open the low wooden garden gate and rushed to seek refuge beneath the nearest portico. No amount of maternal arm-twisting could ever make a schoolboy carry an umbrella. These were the trademark of monks, '*iskola*-' and '*veda-mahattayas*'. (school teachers and native physicians). There was a cheery camaraderie among those sheltering under the portico. We were a microcosm of the society of that time – schoolboys, timid schoolgirls, ice-cream vendors, clerks, pingo-carriers, cobblers, postmen, bottle-collectors and oil-vendors. If the rain persisted, a little *Banda* (servant boys) would emerge from the hall and invite those of us 'respectable-looking enough', to sit on a verandah chair, where we perched uneasily and kept peering out at the sheets of rain, hoping for a break in the clouds when we could make a run for it. We never bothered to express our gratitude. Sheltering under other people's porticoes was just the norm in that companionable era abundant in welcoming porticoes, so distant from the high-rises, gated communities, wall-hidden mansions and flashy super-malls of today's conspicuously consumerist age. May this brief memento serve as a requiem to the wonderful, hospitable portico, long buried beneath the twin cravings for modernity and exclusivity.

The Thambi Kade (a shop owned by Muslim trader)

Whenever I stop by the little shop at the top of our lane I am amazed at the variety of stuff on sale. But every single item is "cribbed, cabined and confined" in *sil-sili* (cellophane/plastic) packets, little cartons or sachets. No provisions are ever seen or smelt in unadorned splendour. How different were things way back during my boyhood in the 1940s.

Not far from our home on Kandy's 'Horseshoe' Street, at its junction with Castle Street, was our *thambi kade*, an honest description devoid of ethnic overtones. It was typical of the hundreds of such *kades* in nooks and corners of every town in Ceylon. I was a fairly regular customer, not in my own right but as an

errand boy from home, to buy a few cigarettes for Father or Jaffna cheroots for Seeya. The interior of the *kade* was separated from the pavement by a long wooden counter with a flap top on a side which gave it access. It was a strictly one-man-show run by a cheery grey-stubbled *thamby*, hemmed on two sides by waist-high open-topped wooden trays, each containing a different commodity essential for the kitchen – onions, potatoes, ginger, dry fish, *goraka*, *sooduru*, *maaduru* (various condiments) – all tickling our noses with spicy scents.

These commodities were weighed out on a swinging scale and wrapped in paper cones for the buyer. Frequently this wrapping paper came from old school exercise books with scraps of arithmetic and intriguing compositions. At the back of the *kade* there was a barrel of coconut oil. The oil was drawn from it with a little tin welded to a longish stiff wire and poured through a little funnel into the buyer's bottle. The loose cigarettes I came for, were extracted from a tin kept in a drawer and duly wrapped in paper to keep them dry till I went the few yards home. Inky- black Jaffna cheroots, in damp bundles, were displayed in large-mouthed glass bottles on the front counter, alongside a similar display of slim little *beedies*. Coolies [to use the designation then current for labourers], and rickshaw-pullers lit their *beedies* and cheroots from the smouldering length of thick rope that swung from the eaves. The counter was a magnet for all of us children. An array of wide-mouthed glass bottles held a colourful and tantalising array of sweets. There were rough lumps of *sookiri* (cane sugar), multi-coloured pellets of sweet *mee-beti* (in the shape of rat droppings) with a *sooduru* (cumin seed) grain at their centre, delightfully acid *naarang bik* (mandarine pips), orange and yellow and slathered in icing sugar, pepperminty bullseyes striped in black and white and occasionally, *alpay* incredibly sweet and soft stubby sugar candy sticks, a closely guarded recipe of the legendary Mrs. Sproule of Sproule's Bakery. Such *kades* have long since fallen to the onslaught of multinationals and their globalised brands, of which the corner shop owners of today are but mere salesmen.

Train Journeys

Whenever I am held up at a railway crossing and see the unfortunate passengers clinging precariously to footboards and overflowing from windows, I recall the more spacious days in Dharmaraja's junior school where we learnt that Ceylon, London and Australia had the same popula-

tion of six million. It was no wonder that trains were never crowded and our family, of four children and two adults, never had any difficulty in finding a compartment (Third Class) all to ourselves all the way from Kandy to Colombo. The four of us did not have to squabble for seats as each had his or her own corner from which we watched the world go by. Unseen by disapproving parents, we competed in pelting banana skins at village boys gawking as the train roared past. We rarely scored a hit, being unaware of the laws of physics that governed the trajectory of flying objects from speeding trains. Rambukkana station and its *vadais* (lentil cakes) were the other high-point of our journey. Every window was invaded by Tamil women shouting out their piping wares, finger sculpted round a generous sliver of *um-balakada*. (maldivian fish/sun dried tuna) My taste buds yet tingle at their memory, and my nostrils yet remember the coal dust we inhaled. The wheels of change brought us to school in Ratnapura and a home in Tiriwanaketiya a few miles away. We were now along the Kelani Valley KV Line with its slow narrow-gauge trains. They faced unique problems such as wheels given to slippage on wet rubber leaves when 'wintering' trees dropped their leaves. The family had a 'reserved' buggy cart to travel to school. As it could not find room for my long legs, I had to travel by train – which was good fun. Third class train fare was 10 cents and I whiled away my time at the little spick and span station watching the Station Master (SM) and his minions executing the Victorian rituals of railway culture. The train to town was never crowded and I usually joined the compartment already holding my schoolmates from villages of Dela and Opanaika. As I became more observant, I noticed that the Second Class compartment carried quite a few nice-looking girls in school uniforms headed for the Convent or Ferguson School. The possibility of striking up an acquaintance excited my adolescent imagination. Second Class fare was 15 cents, which I could just afford. I now bought a Second Class ticket from a puzzled SM and hopefully boarded the girl-carrying compartment. I found myself the sole boy amidst a gaggle of girls who carried on chattering, ignoring my presence. My hopes of a cosy tete-a-tete bit the dust, as I slunk out of the girls' compartment. It was back to the Third Class for me.

I had by now joined a school in Colombo while the family remained in Tiriwanaketiya. Holidays brought me home on the KV train which, incredibly, took five hours to travel 60 odd miles. I did not mind. Equipped with a load of novels I

was in no hurry. As we were now entitled to Second Class Holiday Warrants, I travelled in solitary grandeur, as anybody in a hurry went by bus in a couple of hours. Meanwhile the train chugged along in leisurely style picking up short distance passengers and stopping at every little station. Once in a while the train made an 'unscheduled' stop at an Estate beef stall where the Driver and Guard replenished their larder. The timetable was just fiction. School holiday season was on and the daughters of SMs, released from city schools, were having great fun. Their homes were the top floor of the two storied station and, usually, embowered in flowering honeysuckle or Thunbergia. They hung over the balustrades whenever a train chugged in, waving vigorously when it chugged out or, daringly, sending flying kisses to young men at carriage windows. Those golden lasses are now but a blip in memory, the railway stations they once adorned are now abandoned and forlorn – and the KV line no longer runs to Ratnapura and beyond.

'So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more'

Quick & Easy Desserts

by Srin Peries

Wattalappam in the Microwave

6 oz. Jaggery, melted
4 large eggs
1 ¾ cup (300 mls) thick coconut milk
3 cardamoms powdered
Rose essence – ½ tsp (or to taste)

Mix all ingredients together, stir well. Microwave on HIGH, for 4 minutes then, 8 minutes on MEDIUM. If setting is individual containers reduce the cooking time.

Almond Cheese Cakes (as called IN Sri Lanka, but known as Maids of Honor in U.K.)

250 grams short crust pastry
Raspberry or strawberry jam
1 Egg
2 Table spoons ground almonds or almond meal
30 grams sugar
2 Table spoons cake crumbs
Few drops almond essence
Extra egg white
Almonds to decorate
Lay a round of pastry in a greased patty or foil pan. Drop in a little jam into the bottom of each. Beat egg yolk and sugar, add ground almonds, cake crumbs and almond essence. Fold in beaten egg whites. Spoon mixture into cases and decorate with an almond on top. Bake in oven at 190 degrees for 5 minutes and then reduce to 180 until brown. Cool before serving.

From RAF to Plantation Life: A Good year in Sri Lanka

by Jackie Riminton

In 1956 I joined the Royal Air Force in Britain as a nurse expecting to receive some foreign posting to one of the dwindling stations still in British hands and to the amusement of my friends, became a Flying Officer in the process. After a mandatory year, I put in my application and soon after had a phone call to say I had been posted to Negombo. Ah! Africa I thought. Then the senior officer asked me if I was pleased to be going to Ceylon. Delighted, I replied and so I was.



Jackie in tropical uniform

After some delays and five days flying we touched down at the airfield of R.A.F. Negombo, now Katunayake International Airport. From the first sight of coconut plantations, the birds and the feeling of heat, I knew that this posting was all that I had hoped for. I had one year and intended to use it to explore and learn all that could be learnt in that short time before being sent on to Singapore. It was March 1957.

The station itself was well established and the hospital consisted of two wings, one for the families of officers and men and the other for the male personnel. There was one operating theatre and one labour ward, all cared for by four doctors and six nurses under the command of a senior medical officer. We were helped by local orderlies and nannies and from them, in quiet moments, I learned a little of their lives off-station, their concerns and hopes. Once, we were invited to a local village ceremony and saw the women sitting round a large drum called a bench *rabana* and though we did not understand what the ceremony was about,

we knew that it was an important occasion for them. The RAF doctors also had regular meetings with local doctors, shared research and discussed problems. We discovered that simple medications we took for granted were not available to the local doctors because they were simply not imported into the country. There was considerable respect for their work and dedication. The nursing staff dealt with everything on the station - from work in clinics, delivering babies, post-operative work and medical conditions in the wards. We also had to deal with patients who arrived en route to the U.K. There were usually about forty extra patients with every plane load, having various symptoms to be cared for before their transport resumed. The senior nursing officer was keen that we had some idea of life outside the station and arranged for us to go in small groups to see the main hospital in Colombo and also to see the mental hospital in Angoda. In the latter we spoke to the harassed and overworked medical staff, saw and spoke to some of the patients and left feeling saddened by the problems they faced.

Every time we had some leave we took the opportunity to see more of the country and it wasn't long before a colleague and I were able to have a few days in Diyatalawa staying in one of the accommodation houses there. One evening we went to the local cinema, the Regal, as described by Srikantha Nadarajah in *The Ceylankan* of August, 2007. We were told there was only a "box" left, which was confusing until a small group behind us told us to take it and they would share. John Riminton, an assistant superintendent on Pita Ratmalie tea estate was in the group and offered to show us round the tea factory and division, an offer we enthusiastically accepted. I saw John on a couple of occasions after that and even joined him for a dance at the Bow Club in Bandarawela now the site of a Mosque but otherwise we kept in touch with a letter now and then.

There were other travels with other companions to all the ancient centres, staying in rest houses whose generators were switched off at 10 p. m. leaving the fans off and the guests sweltering in the dark. But, on one occasion arriving at Sigiriya rest house feeling ill, I was cosseted by the female rest house keeper with special food. I promised we would return to stay on the way back and arrived to find flowers in the room. She also took us to see a temple that had been recently discovered amidst the surrounding vegetation but I have been unable since to find anyone

who knows anything about this. Her kindness remains with me still. As also the memory of going to Mihintale and climbing the thousand steps. At the top, my companion having gone elsewhere, I sat in the perfect peace seeing the ancient stones, the monkeys and hearing the birds and finding in the quiet an almost spiritual calm. Even more important now that I know, having returned in 1998, to note the calm that is shattered by buses, no steps, guides - the whole catastrophe.

Over Christmas and the New Year of 1957-1958, heavy monsoonal rains resulted in a huge flood that devastated large parts of the country causing havoc and distress. We heard our planes taking off pre-dawn on regular missions taking supplies to the afflicted areas while Colombo turned to us for as many medical supplies as we could spare. One of our medical officers went off into a remote area for days to help treat the sick and injured and returned looking dishevelled and sporting a beard. His normal base was London and he was rather proud of this new image until told in no uncertain terms to get himself cleaned up.

Soon my year was coming to an end and I was preparing to go on to Singapore with some regret. But there was a dramatic change. I received more visits from John and when he proposed I accepted. I had to work off six months notice, the end of which coincided with one of John's long leaves from work and so we were married in the U.K in

October the same year. The next year I returned to Katunayake one more time when our first son was born there in that familiar place. Two or three months later the whole station passed into the hands of the Royal Ceylon Air Force.

Our first home together was on Forres Estate in Maskeliya which I believe, has been inundated by the construction of the dam. It was a singularly happy time though I must confess, I was not the most efficient of wives and made a good few mistakes, some of them comic. I was supported and watched over by the other wives particularly when I was pregnant with our second son and John was away for long periods. I started receiving phone calls from women I had never met checking up on how I was and saying things like "I'm off now but so and so



Inspection of the inaugural parade on Forres estate by John & Jackie

will be taking over”

This arrangement had taken place without my knowledge and possibly resulted from my saying I had fixed with a local *Sinna Dorai* (S D) (term applied to the deputy Superintendent of the estate) to take me to the Hatton Home if need be in his M G sports car.

After the arrival of our second son we moved to Glenlyon Estate in Agrapatna where our friends and connections increased. We saw a good deal of Father Sackett, the Texan head of the Seminary in Kandy and some of his staff. We loved challenging him to debate but his big treat was to have a game of Bridge, being too busy to play much at the college. We visited him in Kandy and I was struck by the amount of art work he had there all commissioned from local artists and artisans. At this time we also met Tony Peries and later Srimi, who became life long friends. Tony is the god-father of our fourth son born in New Zealand.

Our final move was to Tangakelle in Lindula not long after the birth of our third son and at this stage it seems appropriate to mention just how we lived our lives as tea planters over these years. Recently we met “Jay” Swaris, a young man whose family had been in rubber research but who had relocated to USA when he was very young. He was astonished to hear that we did not in fact live in the lap of luxury though it was an understandable perception. Though we lived in comfortable bungalows in beautiful surroundings with servants, in actual fact, with taxation at 80% plus an expenditure tax, we had very little spending money at all. We literally managed on such food as we could grow or raise or barter. We were not in a position to give friends a good meal except in exceptional circumstances and we assembled to celebrate New Year at a party where all the guests brought their own food and drink. We bought second-hand toys for our children to celebrate their birthdays. All the same, as everyone shared the same circumstance, it was not an unhappy situation and friends made then have been friends forever.

By the time we had to leave we had had great times in areas now no longer safe to visit. The Game Reserves, Trincomalee and a journey to Jaffna with Freddie and Rukmani Jacob stopping off to have a curry lunch with their relatives in Vavuniya. Naturally we always hope that these areas will once again be free for everyone to see.

A circle of a kind was repeated over the time of the 2005 Boxing Day tsunami when our second son, born in Hatton, returned to stand on the devastated coast reporting on that tragedy to the world for CNN.



Book Reviews

Mosquito by Roma Tearne

Published by Harper Press, Great Britain 2007

A powerful and compelling debut novel, this book belongs to the increasing number of novels written by expatriates which focus on the war which has now dominated over twenty-five years of Sri Lankan history. These years have witnessed the country's decline from a once peaceful and relatively progressive and prosperous state to one that is featured on the Foreign Policy (FP) Failed States Index in the eyes of the international community.

The expatriate novelist writes from a deep sense of concern for the country and its people and while he or she can maintain a certain detachment from events and the pressures they exert, there is often an involvement with the experiences and feelings of the individuals affected who become characters in their books viewed with both passion and compassion.

In “Mosquito” Theo Samarajeeva, the protagonist is a successful writer with an international reputation who has lived in Europe for many years and led a fulfilling life, until the sudden death of his beloved Italian wife Anna in a shocking and random accident, shatters his life. Unable to cope, he instinctively makes for home, Sri Lanka, the land of his birth and upbringing just as a distressed animal would retreat to the safest haven he remembers in order to tend his wounds. There, he rents an isolated bungalow in an idyllic place on the beach and settles down to a quiet life. His only companion is Sugi, an elderly servant whom he hires to be his cook, housekeeper and general handyman. Sugi is efficient at his duties but, in addition, he is very perceptive of the moods and needs of his ‘Sir’ and develops a close rapport with him which leads to a strong friendship between them.

The third character is Nulani Mendis, a young girl of seventeen who lives close by and has seen her father die in a petrol bomb explosion as he was too outspoken and defended the rights of Tamils. Her mother who is rendered distraught by his death has become totally obsessive in her love for her son Jim, and has nothing left to give Nulani who is mostly treated as an unpaid servant only useful for household duties. She leaves the girl mostly to

her own devices, which include attending a convent school, whereas Jim is given every assistance to win a scholarship and leave for studies in England. Nulani is a naturally gifted artist who spends all her spare time sketching and painting with limited resources. She gradually ventures into Theo's house since their paths often cross outside while walking on the beach and she begins drawing the decorative European objects that are displayed in his sitting room. While he works at his new book at the typewriter on his desk, she finds an unobtrusive spot on the veranda from where she can observe and draw him, eventually turning the sketches into paintings. This is the beginning of their relationship.

In a parallel story, Vickram who also lives in the same small seaside town and goes to the same school as Nulani, is a young Tamil who was a child soldier rescued from the Tigers and placed in an orphanage. A sympathetic unmarried Sinhalese gentleman takes him into his home as his ward and leaves him in the care of his servant woman, Theracy who manages the household, while he leaves the country on an overseas work trip. Vickram is a strange, enigmatic boy who barely speaks after he was found hiding under a bed in his village home while government soldiers raped and then murdered his mother and sister. His father, in despair, had committed suicide not knowing that his son was still alive.

Gerard, a Tiger agent active in the town, gradually recognises that Vickram is an ideal recruit for co-opting and training for special missions executed by the separatists. The stories of Vickram and Nulani touch at various critical points and serve to illustrate aspects of what living in the fog of war means.

Rohan, Theo's closest friend who has also returned home with his Italian wife Giulia at about the same time as Theo, after most of his adult life in Europe, is a painter. Theo introduces Nulani to them so that her talent may be assessed by him. The presence of these two people who best understand both Theo and Dulani and the forces against them are essential to the development and eventual climax of the novel.

The Sri Lankan abroad is subject to subtle changes in personality, character and outlook due to exposure to new cultures and the resulting transference of certain values and behaviors. Theo has no hesitation in placing himself in danger by openly confronting a ruthless man and his equally unscrupulous friends because of his mistaken belief that a reasonable conversation will ensue instead of the violence that is visited on him when he is knocked down, kidnapped and

delivered to government forces. The motive for his kidnapping is their wish to use his ability as a writer who can produce useful propaganda which will whitewash their image and their actions to an international audience. Subsequently Theo is seized by a Tiger patrol in the jungle where the government forces have taken him and the tempo of the narrative becomes one of breathtaking speed, a pace that keeps the reader wholly involved and gripped by the story. The writer's attitude to government forces, Tigers and other paramilitaries, thugs with their own agendas and private armies is exactly the same for all of these exist and are purveyors of violence in various forms. It is this violence that has torn the fabric of society irreparably.

The novel's title conveys a host of meanings in this context. It is both a potent symbol and telling reality. The mosquito breeds in stagnant water and other unhealthy swamp areas. When, as is the situation now, the eradication of the mosquito is neglected or a low priority because of the concentration on the war and all it entails, the general population is very vulnerable. In the novel, we are constantly made aware, indirectly and directly of its nature and habitat. Nulani's mother dies of malaria.

Finally, the novel makes the point that an expatriate never detaches herself or himself entirely from the native land. The connections and the effects sustained are constantly felt in many different ways according to individual or family circumstances. The people of Sri Lanka are always present to us in our thoughts and feelings. As Sugi reflects to himself at one point. 'Underneath the mess they (the people) had created for themselves, the land still had powerful ancient roots. It was still capable of healing. One day it would go back to what it had been before.'

Roma Tearne has written a compelling and powerful novel which also illustrates a remarkable depth and delicacy of sensibility.

Shelagh Goonewardene

The Lost Dog: by Michelle de Kretser

Allen & Unwin, 2007. 342 pp

Winner of the NSW Premier's Prize for \$20,000 at the Sydney Writer's Festival May 2008.

With many accolades for "The Lost Dog" winner of the 2008 Premier's Prize, I was keen to ascertain why the book was selected over many other titles. How was it different? I was lucky enough to hear the author talking about her book at the Sydney Writer's Festival. The answer is not sim-

ple. Having already written two acclaimed books, *The Rose Grower*, set in pre-revolution France and *The Hamilton Case*, winner of the Tasmania Pacific Prize and the Commonwealth Writers Prize the latter set in Sri Lanka. The background to *The Lost Dog*, is contemporary Australia and mid-20th-century India. It brilliantly counterpoints new cityscapes and their inhabitants with the wild ancient bush and its enigmatic connotations. There is an acute sense of mystery throughout, which keeps the suspense alive.

Tom Loxley, the protagonist, loses his dog and sets out to find him in a restricted time-line of ten days, while holed up in a bush shack, ostensibly writing a book about Henry James. In between, the story progresses back and forth to India where he lived with his parents, Arthur Loxley, a somewhat alcoholic Englishman and his mother, Iris de Souza, an Eurasian beauty brought up and inculcated to marry a European.

On each level, there are many unresolved questions in Tom's life. Who finances him and how does he live? What is his relationship to Nelly Zhang, a beautiful artist/photographer who is his landlady? The past too haunts Tom as he fights to adjust to contemporary Melbourne with its plethora of art exhibitions/ galleries, and markets, while Nelly who inhabits this world is quite at home with freeways, multi-storey car parks, supermarkets and fast food outlets. Nellie is also technologically savvy unlike Tom and it is obvious she is the dominant partner.

Nelly has an aura of a sprite/fairy about her, a colorful mixture of Scot, Polish and English antecedents with a vague Asiatic. "She exploited it to the exaggeration, the slant of her eyes with kohl, powdering her face into an expressionless mask. Stilettos and a slit skirt, and she might have stepped from a Shanghai den". She is a mixture of old and new. "Long benches displayed tubes of paint, bottles of medium thinner, jars of brushes.

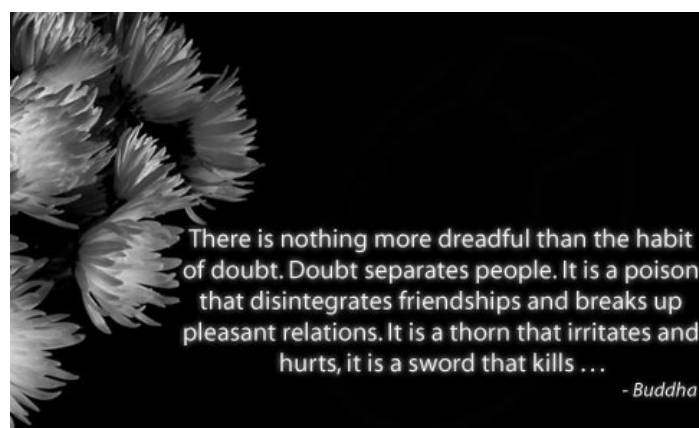
There were shelves stacked with folders and file boxes. Oddments in a milk crate: rags, a hammer, a pair of pliers, empty jars."

There are conflicts on every level. Tom agonises over Nelly's previous life, her story has to be prised out little by little, how did her husband disappear, why did her life go wrong? In between, there is the unfleshed-out life of Iris, the widow living with her sister-in-law and nearing death, stoically resisting attempts to be put into a retirement home.

This is a well-crafted book. It is evident very early that De Kretser is the master of English, her sentences melded with beautiful prose. The minutiae of people's lives are described in vivid hue. Images of India with vivid colour "where bold cannas lilies, red and fierce yellow grew in rusty tins" contrasted with the ordinari-ness of the bush "The bleached bone of a dead eucalypt pointed skywards near the heart of the place where the dog had vanished. Another stumpier, but still taller than the surrounding canopy, rose to Tom's right..... Tom found himself scrambling in and out of gullies. Tree ferns crowded in one. A steeper trench was knitted with fallen logs, the rotting wood treacherous underfoot."

At the conclusion, not every dot is crossed nor detail neatly sorted. Iris and her sister-in-law, Audrey's position remains unchanged; the personality of Iris somewhat flat and not wholly explored. Tom seems unable or not perceptive enough to solve his problems. Mainly *The Lost Dog* is a love story, a tale of faith, a celebration of dogs and the joy they bring us. De Kretser lets us know her intentions from the start. It also highlights the collision of the primal and the civilised, modernity with the past as well as different ways of seeing and comprehending the world.

Srini Peries



Courtesy: www.4MinutesPerDay.com

A Notable Colombo Figure

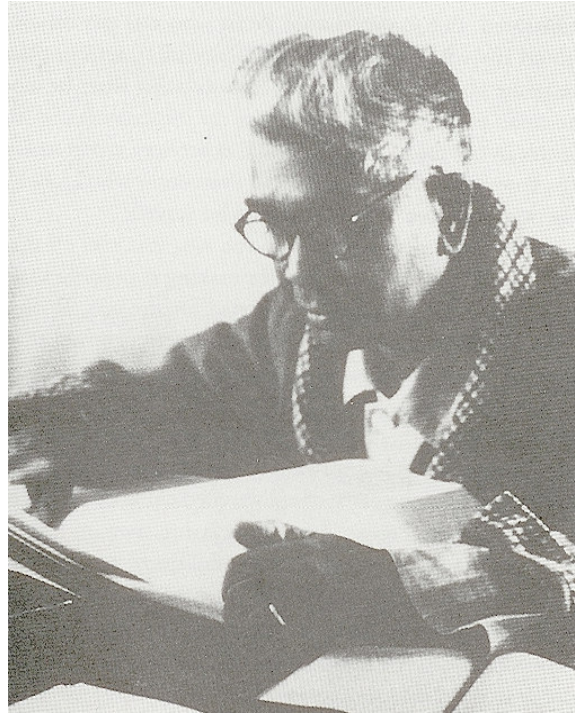
Unsung Hero of the Lionel Wendt Memorial Theatre

by Rubin Mantra

The interesting and informative piece in the August 2007 *The Ceylankan* by the Raconteurs, about the late Richard Pieris, brings to mind another Colombo personality of years gone by. One who shared with Dick Pieris not only his birthday, the 22nd of July, but also a maternal grandfather, the opulent entrepreneur Jacob de Mel. (Other members of this cousinhood who might repay the chronicler's attention were Bishop Lakdasa de Mel and the musician Devar Surya Sena.) Whereas the name of Richard Pieris lives on in the industrial life of Sri Lanka, as the title of a firm employing thousands of individuals, his cousin Harold Peiris is perhaps remembered by few, even in the world of the arts which during his lifetime he so notably enriched.

Shelagh Goonewardene, in her collection of essays entitled "This Total Art", devoted a few affectionate pages to his memory, but a visitor from Australia to the Lionel Wendt Art Centre in 1990, less than a decade after Harold Peiris' death, was surprised to find that many people, apparently frequenters of that institution, did not recognise his name. That Lionel Wendt is commemorated and Harold is not is certainly what the latter would have wished, but justice must acknowledge that though Lionel Wendt, by bequeathing his money and his residence in Guildford Crescent for the cultivation of the arts in Colombo, laid the foundation of a valuable institution, it was the energy, determination and generosity of Harold, as executor, which saw the project through to its completion.

The friendship between the two men was cemented, if not begun, during their student days in England, where Wendt, the son of an eminent judge of the Supreme Court, was studying law at the Inns of Court but devoting much more time and energy to music at the Royal Academy. Harold was the only son of Charles Peiris, a name less well known now than that of his brother Sir James, but one which in his lifetime would probably have evoked more respect



Harold Peiris

in the financial institutions of the Fort. A widower, Charles Peiris took as his second wife Maude, one of the nine redoubtable daughters of Jacob de Mel. The marriage remained childless for many years, and when Harold finally arrived the pious parents decided that he should be encouraged to join the Anglican priesthood as a thank-offering to Providence. So in 1922 Harold arrived at St John's College, Cambridge, where his uncle James' renown still reverberated, with the intention (at least in his parents' minds) of reading for the priesthood. The young man however soon discovered that he had no desire to tread the path pointed out for him by Charles and Maude. As with Lionel Wendt, a compromise was reached whereby Harold read Law, while most of his intellectual energies were devoted to the arts.

When the two young men returned to the sleepy provincial Colombo of the 1920s they immediately attracted a circle of the brightest young people of the time. Lionel Wendt was not a painter himself but he had become familiar with the latest artistic developments in London and Paris, and had brought back with him good reproductions of the works of the then avant-garde. The nucleus of what was later to become the 43 Group of artists came together in this decade and Wendt provided a critical stimulus for them, rather in the way that Diaghileff had stimulated Russian musicians,

painters and dancers before the First World War. Harold too was not artistically creative himself but he delighted in the achievements of his friends, and came forward willingly when Wendt suggested that a wayward young man from Kandy, who had shown a signal lack of interest in equipping himself for the work-force, was talented enough to deserve a small subsidy which would enable him to devote himself to painting full time. For decades every painting brought to completion by George Keyt became Harold's property, until the local community eventually woke up to the presence of this truly individual talent at work in their midst, and a "new Keyt" could find its own market.

By the end of the 1920s Harold had realised that his national origins meant more to him than that, and as his interests at that time seemed concentrated on literature, he returned to Europe to read for a second degree in Indian Studies at the German University of Goettingen. He was there at the time Adolf Hitler came to power. With Harold's innate decency and generosity enriched by his awareness of the enormous contribution German Jews had made to scholarship and the arts, he found the atmosphere of the new Germany intolerable, and returned to Cambridge to complete his studies. Here he made a new circle of friends, this time a few years younger than himself: men like Dudley Senanayake, Pieter Keuneman and Lyn Ludowyk, the last an exquisite personality who has been delightfully evoked in recent issues of *The Ceylankan* by Yasmine Gooneratne. Having taken his second degree Harold returned to Ceylon to begin his most productive period of patronage, collaborating on many translations from the Sanskrit either with Len van Geyzel, a friend from his first Cambridge period, or George Keyt, whose passion for Indian culture was not limited to the visual arts.

At the end of the thirties, too, his long friendship with Keyt brought Harold his greatest reward, his marriage to the painter's sister Peggy. A niece of the legendary Kandy wit, "Cox" Sproule, Peggy brought him great domestic happiness and collaborated with him in creating a ménage it was a constant delight to visit. The present writer was not acquainted with Harold in his youth, but by about 1960, when he was warmly welcomed to Alfred House, Harold had become thoroughly imbued with his wife's sense of humour, and the two of them joined in the creation of many joyous

myths. One of them arose from his membership of a group dedicated to smuggling Jews out of Germany. From Colombo Harold wrote to the group saying that Ceylon offered scope for a good psychiatrist and a good hairdresser. The group sent to Ceylon a Central European psychiatrist of the highest eminence (as a little research on the internet will now prove), who a few years later anchored herself in the heart of Harold's circle by marrying one of his dearest friends. Let us call this lady Brunnhilde. There was no doubting her intellectual and indeed practical gifts, but it would be idle to pretend that she ever cared much for the shallow insincerities underlying harmonious social intercourse. Like most of her husband's friends, Harold and Peggy thought the marriage was not advantageous, and they started the rumour that Brunnhilde had been chosen by her London sponsors as a hairdresser and had decided on arrival in Colombo that she would prefer to operate as a psychiatrist. The present writer's mother, who had also quailed before Brunnhilde's basilisk stare on more than one occasion, was moved by a disinterested passion for truth to say, once she stopped laughing when she first heard the theory announced at Alfred House, "But Harold! Peggy! Have you ever looked at Brunnhilde's hair? Any hairdressing salon she started would have gone bankrupt in a month." Harold and Peggy in their turn laughed merrily at the demolition of their fantasy, but pedantic fidelity to fact was not among their criteria for a good story. The tale received a couple of embellishments later. When a theatre director from the lady's part of the world arrived in Colombo shortly after the war he directed a few plays for which Brunnhilde designed sets and costumes, and it was an understatement to describe as acrimonious the disagreements between director and designer. Harold and Peggy, playing on Brunnhilde's decided seniority to her husband, insisted that the director was her son, and that the abuse that flew around King George's Hall was a repetition of nursery disputes. This fancy found such favour that when a Hungarian pianist performed in Colombo some years later the Peirises recruited audiences for him on the grounds that he was another son of Brunnhilde.

One could allow oneself to revel in these pleasantries without a twinge of conscience because one knew that the Peirises' practical support for their beloved friend always included his wife, and extended to constant hospitality when

the couple arrived from Kandy to stay, often at very short notice. Even Brunnhilde's amiable habit of declaring at breakfast each morning that she had been unable to sleep at night because of the dreadful bed she had (as usual) been given, failed to disturb Harold and Peggy's limitless good nature.

Lionel Wendt, always indifferent to his health, died far too young in 1944. Also Lionel Wendt himself died very suddenly leaving (by a very old will) his entire fortune to his only brother Harry. It was during the year or less of Harry's life after Lionel's death that the L. W. Trust was born and Harold designated as the guardian of the funds. This gave his friend Harold the opportunity to perform his greatest service to Sri Lanka. This was achieved by Harold's bland determination that the thing should be done; constant disagreements with fellow trustees, local government authorities and Cinnamon Gardens neighbours, about what exactly the thing should be, were often reconciled by Harold's acceptance of the best features of all the ideas, at his own considerable expense. Obstacles were gradually surmounted and on the grounds of Lionel Wendt's residence the theatre eventually opened its doors in 1953 with a production of Maxim Gorky's "The Lower Depths". The theatre was crowded for the whole run: not only was there natural curiosity about this new addition to Colombo's amenities, but also two rumours had excited intense interest in this production. Both were accurate, one that the cast of characters included a prostitute; the other that the cast included ladies of the most distinguished ancestry. The suspense as to whether the oldest families would take on the oldest profession was intense. After the performance there were some murmurs about the truly unique air-conditioning system. Harold must have been intrigued by its attempted defiance of the thermodynamic law that hot air rises, and all visitors to the Wendt in those very early years must remember the curious sensation of chilly winds playing around our ankles while our foreheads ran with perspiration. However, the theatre was soon felt to be a desirable place to see and be seen in, and the foyer, with its wide doors open to the breezes wafted from the lawns and tennis courts of the Women's International Club, was a place where the prettiest ladies of Colombo were regularly to be seen, looking their very best. This was a feature that must have given Harold a lot of pleasure, but it

must be admitted that the prevalent theatrical fare was not such as he and Wendt would have been very enthusiastic about. In November 1956, occurred an event which demonstrated Harold's determination that the theatre's main purpose was not the amusement of Colombo in its lighter moments. The Wendt was the scene of the first Colombo performances of Professor Sarathchandra's "Manamé", a landmark of Lankan theatrical history, and Harold overrode the clamorous objections of Anglophile fellow trustees and Guilford Crescent householders to make sure that the event took place. From then on, and especially after a friendship was formed between Ernest Macintyre from the English-language theatre and Henry Jayasena in the mid-1960s, Sinhalese performances were regular features. The more adventurous theatregoers of the city shared Harold's great pleasure at this development. Since then the building has expanded to include an art gallery where regular exhibitions not only of paintings but also photography must delight Lionel Wendt's shade. Of course, financial shortages in the execution of these projects were always covered by Harold.

Another cherished story of Harold's impulsive generosity may be cited here. In about 1957 he was aghast to hear that his friend, the eminent surgeon Noel Bartholomeusz, was considering emigration and planning to spend a year exploring the English-speaking world to find the most suitable place to settle in. Dr Bartholomeusz and his wife departed on their tour, and on their return Harold arrived on their doorstep and cried excitedly, "Noel and Norah! You mustn't leave! I've built a house for you!" He had indeed. During the year of the Bartholomeuszes' absence he had carved out a corner of the large grounds of Alfred House and commissioned his friend Geoffrey Bawa to design a residence for a doctor, with rooms for a surgery and scope for Norah's distinguished talents as a gardener. Once the flabbergasted Bartholomeuszes had grasped that the papers Harold was brandishing were the title deeds to a new house, they informed him as gently as they could that they had in any case decided to end their days in Ceylon but that they intended to purchase their present house, where Norah had already established a beautiful garden. Harold returned home crestfallen, but the unique problem of what to do with a fully equipped new house at the bottom of his garden was solved

when the architect took it over as his own office. This was a great boon to all parties, for Geoffrey soon formed the habit of slipping away whenever he felt like it from disagreeable clients, to enjoy delightful conversation with the Peirises.

The present writer had the great good fortune to be present, together with Geoffrey, one morning when a visitor was announced, an unusual personality who had been acquainted with Harold and Peggy for years. By her own frank admission the best pianist and the best chess player on the island, she had on this occasion come to announce that as her husband had just been promoted to the headship of one of the oldest established firms in the Fort, she would not be able to see much of the assembled company in future: her circle would be restricted to V.I.P.'s. I am happy to report that Harold and Peggy suffered this blow with great equanimity.

Equanimity of a very high order was also displayed by Harold a few years later, when Mrs Bandaranaike's government announced that all landholdings over 50 acres would be nationalised. Harold was one of the largest landowners in the island, but when a lady commiserated with him on the event, he said cheerily, "No, no, my dear, it's wonderful news. I'll never have to see that dreary Mr Kandiah again." Mr Kandiah was the stern accountant who had for decades been trying to keep Harold and his family within the bounds of solvency, only to be regarded as a dreadful spoilsport for his pains. Pressed further, Harold did admit that, considering his youthful cooperation in the Suriya Mal campaign and other socialist enterprises, he did think it somewhat inconsiderate of his old comrade Dr N.M. Perera, now Finance Minister, to let him first hear of the confiscation on the radio news. Harold's parents had indeed rightly augured that their son's attitude to money was very different from theirs.

Perhaps, however, Dr Perera by 1972 had decided to regard Harold as an enemy, for during the 1965 general election he had vigorously intervened in Mr Dudley Senanayake's Dedigama constituency, where his largest estate happened to lie, in a pro-UNP or more precisely anti-Bandaranaike sense. After witnessing Germany's slide into fascism he had become convinced that socialism was the only force that could resist the tide of barbarism, and in Ceylon he had aligned himself with the left parties. (In

a very practical way he served the parties well: overactive union members dismissed from their jobs were often found work at Orange Grove, Harold's main estate. This was a very large property, but productivity declined inexorably as the labour force debated Plekhanov and Gramsci, while rubber trees remained untapped, coconuts unplucked.) Like others, however, he had become disenchanted by the spectacle of Stalinism and, closer to home, the readiness of his former friends to ally themselves with Mrs Bandaranaike, who if she had been returned to power in 1965 intended to nationalise the press. This issue galvanised Harold, and the leftist press delighted in reporting his canvassing trips around his estate on the back of his horse, Reckless Courage. Mr Senanayake, though he represented Dedigama for decades, never enjoyed a large majority, and on this occasion there were reports that he might not have won at all if it were not for Harold's efforts. Two sources equally near and dear to Harold differed in their explanation of this: one held that Harold was so infuriated by those villagers who failed to see the force of his arguments that he persuaded a friendly psychiatrist or two to commit these individuals to the mental hospital at Angoda, thus nullifying many anti-Senanayake votes; the other that on the contrary hundreds if not thousands were longing to end their days in Angoda and Harold persuaded them that Mr Senanayake in office would make Angoda a paradise. Safely elected, Mr Senanayake won Harold's enthusiastic support for his emphasis on raising the standard of English education in Ceylon, and Harold himself, accompanied by such young Colombo friends as he could co-opt, gave Saturday English classes at Ibbagamuwa Central School, very near Orange Grove. This arrangement was once endangered by the delivery to the school of pamphlets on birth control Harold had intended for the Orange Grove labour force, while pages of simple English nursery rhymes and poetry, meant for the school went to the estate.

At his birth the stars gave Harold Peiris great wealth, but also a sense of beauty and a generous soul which wanted to spread the good things of existence among all his fellow-citizens. Future Lankan generations should call down blessings on his name—if only they knew it.

Malvane Peni Rambutan

by Douglas Jones

Rambutan, rambutan, Malvane peni rambutan!

I can still hear vividly the call of the rambutan man who drew us as children out to the doorstep. Even my Aunt Violet (in whose home in Santiago Street, Kotahena, I was a boarder at one time) aroused out of her afternoon siesta, would make her groggy way to the front gate. Stopping here, stopping there, as he trundled his way up the street, it felt like hours. We kids became so impatient and fidgety that we tossed stones across the street and at every passing cat or dog, before the man got to us. He carried the luscious cherry-ripe fruit in his pingo - a flexible pole which he had slinging over one shoulder with baskets hanging on either end.

Rambutan time is here! Year in and year out, from about April to August the streets of Colombo teem with ubiquitous rambutan vendors - with their romantic pingos, on bicycles with larger than life baskets trussed on pillions or in rows upon rows snaking down the pavements of Alexandra Place, Ward Place, Darley Road, Reid Avenue, Braybrooke Place, Union Place - any street and laneway in Colombo for that matter. Long rows of cars pull up by the wayside, foreigners mixing with the locals, picking choice bunches that have been transported that morning straight off the tree.

Come lunchtime, these vendors are mobbed by clamorous schoolboys and girls pushing and shoving to savour the sour-sweet succulence of rambutans - spending their pocket money, lunch money or even bus fares.

The rambutans (or *Nephelium lappaceum*, to use the botanical term for this ever-popular fruit) are so tempting that price is irrelevant. At that time, people were prepared to pay any price

ranging from Rs. 3.50 to Rs.6.00 for a bunch of 100 fruits. (*Note: This was in the mid-1950s*).

And myriads of yellow and red furry shells torn apart in half exposing white insides soon to burn brown in the sun, litter the pavements throughout Colombo and villages and countryside.

As I grew up, the lure of rambutan in season aroused my curiosity no end and I had to see for myself. Why was Malvana the home of the rambutan? Couldn't they thrive as well in any other fertile acreage in Kelaniya, Grandpass or even Mattakkuliya?

I boarded a silver CTB bus from the Central bus depot. The seating capacity of 40 was purely academic. There must have been about 60 men, women and children on board, many hanging precariously on the footboard and every place else where one could find a

perch. Of course, the hood was laden with coir-matting bags bursting at the seams, car and truck tyres and boxes of fruit and other perishables.

The bus jolted and rattled its way through the 13-miles on the Colombo-Biyagama Road to reach the rambutan hinterland in just under an hour. Acreages of rambutan with a sprinkling of coconut trees here, jak or breadfruit there, must be seen to be believed. To the casual observer, it appears as if only rambutans grow in this picturesque hamlet on the banks of the Kelani

Ganga. Malvana at rambutan time is an orchard of glowing colour bathed in scarlet and gold and emerald. Juicy rambutans, bunches vying with succulent bunches, overhanging in flowery profusion by roadside and riverbank. Once in the luxurious plantation, the sweet aroma of ripe rambutan is overpowering.

Carolus greets me with a betel-stained smile as I wander into his plantation. He owns six acres of thriving trees, all in excess of 30 metres tall, laden with green, yellow and red fruit in various stages of maturity. He lives in the only building on the property, a small, clay-brick house with thatched cadjan roof. Meanwhile Carolus' son Martin, was perched high on



Wayside rambutan seller
Colombo - Kandy Road
Pic by the author

a branch plucking bunch after heaving bunch into a coconut palm basket, lowering to three fetching jacket and cloth clad Malvana maidens – one of them his young wife and her two sisters.

A typical villager, Carolis was of slight build, with sinewy arms and legs, bare torso with a soil stained cloth tucked tightly about his loins. A slight, unruly moustache smudged his upper lip and a scanty head of long hair, silver in parts, was tied neatly into a bun about the size of a rambutan.

A soft-spoken man, but the mention rambutans and he would warm up to the subject. “These rambutans are the tastiest fruits in Malvana,” he says matter-of-factly. He offers me a handful of the deepest red specimens to sample. Nectar-sweet juices dripping down my chin, the soft translucent meat slips easily off the seed to fill the mouth with a velvety taste. Not a single of these trees was planted by him, he tells me. They were all there when he came around, almost 55 years ago. His father had planted them, he muses.

Rambutan was probably introduced to Ceylon from Java by the Portuguese conqueror Don Jerome de Azevedo around the 16th century. While there were many other rambutan plantations and nurseries opened in nearby villages such as Mapitigama and Walgama a few miles away, De Azevedo could not have found better land than Malvana, with its black loamy soil and copious supply of water from the Kelani.

Carolis had a grouse with young men of his day. He had three sturdy sons, but two of them had forsaken the land for white collar government jobs in Colombo, he explained in dismay. His lament was justified – for I could see only elderly men, womenfolk and children ambling at a slow rate, helping out with work.

Carolis took no special care on his plantation except take elaborate measures to keep out the pests from attacking the ripening fruit. We were interrupted by a loud clatter from the tree-tops. That, Carolis explained, after the noise subsided, was the *rokadaya*.

As the emerald green fruits slowly turn a golden yellow before ripening into a luscious scarlet, this is the time for Carolis to counteract pests by day and night. Crows and squirrels plunder the rambutans by daylight and bats destroy the fruits by nightfall. The *rokadaya* is a lengthy piece of bamboo secured to the tree.

The split at one end is held open and separate at high tension by rope, which when released renders an ear-splitting whip crack frightening away the destroyers.

Giant scarecrows are also hung from the branches. While these are usually effective, if pests persist, a gunshot or two is resorted to as well.

While Malvana is astir by day, life does not seek slumber come night time. They keep vigil after dusk chanting mantras and singing along under the light of oil lamps and hurricane lanterns.

Even though it is still mid-morning, traders continue to pour in from all parts of the island in their numbers. In bullock carts, in vans and even by CTB bus; all after a bargain. Business is keen. They bid for the best price as they squat beneath the spreading rambutan trees, spurring betel juice as they call out their offers. And back in the city streets, they mark-up more than Rs. 2.00 a hundred, often palming off to the unwary a judicious mix of the juiciest to the in-between.

These traders take rambutans to the remotest parts of the country. The romantic pingo carriers with their green coconut leaf baskets are ubiquitous. Fruit stalls from Jaffna to Galle, Colombo to Batticaloa, Kandy and all of the hill country are teeming with the delicious fruit that hails from lowly Malvana.



It's rambutan time everywhere!



The main source of good music for most of us at this time was the radio as few could afford the cost of records or record players. Our radio had two short-wave bands (SW1 and SW2), a medium wave and a long wave band. Radio Ceylon, our principal source of music, broadcast on the medium wave and was clear, transmission wise. It broadcast in three languages at certain hours of the day. It had a western classical music request programme once or twice a week and tea time music at 5.00 p.m. which was mainly light music. The short wave stations were sandwiched into small sections of the dial on SW1 and SW2, a situation much improved later when radios with “band spread” were introduced. Then the 16m, 25m, 31m, 49m bands were each spread over five or six inches of the dial, cutting down distant station overlap considerably and providing clearer reception, which of course was enhanced if one had an aerial connected to the set that reached halfway up to heaven!

Local performers on piano or violin gave live recitals from time to time on Radio Ceylon, generally for around 30 minutes and usually at around 8.00 p.m. Distinguished foreign musicians did not grace our shores very often. Our own Malinee Jayasinghe Peiris returned fresh from a highly acclaimed recital at the Wigmore Hall, London, for a one-off performance with the Ceylon Symphony Orchestra conducted by the suave Hussein Mohamed. A group of us used to sneak across after our own orchestra practice at Royal to the rear of the Ladies College Hall to watch them rehearse; my first taste of something approaching the big-time. The latter actually presented itself not long after, in the form of an American orchestra, “Symphony of the Air”. It had been the orchestra of legendary American conductor, Arturo Toscanini. He had recently passed away but the orchestra was doing a world tour. In the absence of a proper hall capable of taking 100 + performers, as such an orchestra demanded, performance was in a hangar at the Ratmalana airport. I also have a hazy memory of revisiting this location for a later concert by Sir Malcolm Sargent and his BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Our year of 1946 at Royal was not different

to any other I guess. Most of us battled on year after year – average students – a few got form prizes and other academic accolades and still others achieved sporting glory particularly in cricket. 1953 was my penultimate year at Royal and at year’s end the secretarial positions of the various societies came up for grabs including those of the Music Society. I put up my hand for this and got it (no doubt uncontested, who would want it anyway?). In truth it was something of a Clayton type of position with nothing really going for it. But unknown to me all this was about to change in a most extraordinary way. It began with the appointment of a new Principal to Royal at the start of 1954, Mr Dudley de Silva.

Mr de Silva was very student friendly, and more importantly, a great music lover. He was the organist in his local church in Kollupitiya. Soon after he assumed duties, an old boy of the school, a suave gentleman named Mr Paul Jeyarajan knocked on his door. Mr J was the son of the well known surgeon Dr S. C. Paul and younger brother of the redoubtable Prof Milroy Paul, Professor of Surgery, Colombo and Dr A. T. S. Paul Thoracic Surgeon. He was the Secretary of the Central Bank and highly influential in Colombo circles. He came with a message and an offer as it were. He had been the recipient of a gift of musical instruments including stringed instruments, oboes, clarinets, flutes, trumpets, recorders, tympani, music stands, sheet music



Paul Jeyarajan

and books from the Asia Foundation, an American Aid organisation. He offered these to our music loving Principal and no doubt suggested the setting up of a school orchestra. This must have sounded like music to the Principal’s ears!. The idea was implemented without delay, Mr Bob Edwards that kindly gentleman was appointed master in charge and yours truly as Secretary of the Music Society had to coordinate things at ground level. Mr J, an accomplished violinist would be its conductor, and so was born the Royal College Orchestra.

A number of younger boys turned up for the initial practices with violins, no doubt recruited by Mr Edwards who was Headmaster of the Lower

School at the time. I cannot recall all their names but those that come to mind are Nimal Paranavitane, Sarath Samarasinghe later cricket captain of Royal and brilliant opening batsman, Ranjit Ratnaike (viola) now gastroenterologist, Adelaide. Somewhat older, there was Lal Jayasundera, well known businessman (Hayleys), now deceased, Sirimal Wickremesinghe, microbiologist, MRI sadly also deceased, and Raja Salgado, Geriatrician, St George Hospital, Kogarah (viola). Cellists included young Prathalingam son of Dr Amirthalingam Director of Fisheries and one of the famous “Lingam” brothers, and my good friend, Raghavan Kulanayagam. He was a trained pianist, who used to regale us with dazzling performances at the college piano whenever the opportunity arose. He is now a psychiatrist practising in Colombo. Finally on cello there were Sir Lalitha Rajapakse’s young son and Anand, only child of Mr J, tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident some years later in Africa.

Some of us took up the challenge presented by the wind instruments, most without any previous experience of these instruments. These included Lalith Perera (now Genito-Urinary surgeon, Colombo), brothers Colin (clarinet) and somewhat younger, Patrick Fernando (trumpet). The former is now a GP in Adelaide while the latter practices as a Psychiatrist in Tasmania. I had a go in quick succession at the treble and bass recorders, and a bassoon before finally settling on the delightful sound of the oboe, a difficult instrument to play. Most of us had to develop our own skills on these instruments without any external help using printed tutors. I certainly did. Finally Wadham Dole, worked the drums and the double bass. What has struck me compiling this list is the extraordinary number of boys (as a percentage of the total orchestral numbers) who later ended up in medicine often rising to the peak of their chosen specialties.

Given the relative youth and inexperience of the orchestra Mr J felt a need to bolster numbers and improve the quality of the sound produced, by recruiting older musicians from other sources. Using his considerable influence in Colombo circles he brought along Daya Perera, well known Colombo lawyer, later UN representative of Sri Lanka, on the violin, a group of three girls from Ladies College. Accomplished violinists, the Munasinghe sisters, Carmel de Fonseka, the well known viola player and some others joined the group. Mr Viji Weerasinghe, a master at Royal and later Headmaster also used to help out on the violin.

Practices were held once a week after school. My job was to make sure the boys turned up for these regularly, especially the younger ones, arrange with the help of others, the music stands according

to a floor plan, put up the music on the stands. With time and a patient conductor, we were moulded into a reasonable group, I believe. We thus felt confident enough to participate in a few combined school concerts, without causing an audience walkout, and once were even recorded at Radio Ceylon, arranged no doubt through Mr J’s influence. Later in the year, the school decided that the school song with which the annual end of year prize giving was conducted should be performed by the orchestra and not by a solo pianist as was the custom. There was one problem with this though. No orchestral scores of the school song existed. This was soon sorted out. Luis Moreno the bandleader of the Galle Face Hotel agreed to orchestrate the music from the piano score for us. I remember descending into the bowels of the Galle Face Hotel, where Mr Moreno had his living quarters, on more than one occasion for this purpose.

The prize giving was the last official engagement of the orchestra that year, and marked the end of my position as Secretary of the Music Society and my entry into medicine in 1955. What an extraordinary year 1954 had turned out to be for me. How enjoyable it had been doing what I always liked best: “living” music.

As events turned out, this was not going to be the end of all music making for me. Soon we discovered a few violinists among the medicos, the odd pianist, and even a singer, who I believe, was a Radio Ceylon soloist. Most important of all there were two dons with an abiding interest in music, both highly accomplished pianists. They were Dr Earle de Fonseka, Lecturer in Public Health, later Professor, (brother of Carmel de Fonseka, mentioned earlier) and Dr Valentine Basnayake, Lecturer in Physiology, also Professor later. Above all they were both thorough gentlemen.

Soon, well attended musical evenings were organised after hours in the Common Room, as well as more intimate musical soirees at the home of Dr Basnayake in Lauries Road. Professor Senake Bibile, a music lover also used to attend. An unforgettable memory from all these performances has been the work for four hands and two pianos by Mozart and Schubert particularly, played with such skill and passion by the two dons: performances of a very high standard indeed.

All this came to a definite end in April 1961 for me on qualifying as a doctor. In retrospect, it does seem ironic that of all the many societies functioning in Royal in 1954, the Music Society was perhaps the busiest and most vibrant of the lot: quite a turn around for the Cinderella of them all!!

Lessons in Logic

by *A cynical Wit*

If your father is a poor man,
it is your fate
but if your father-in-law is a poor man,
it's your stupidity.

I was born intelligent, education ruined me.

If it's true that we are here to help others, then what
exactly are the others here for?

Since light travels faster than sound, people appear
bright until you hear them speak .

How come "abbreviated" is such a long word?

Behind every successful man, there is a woman
And behind every unsuccessful man,
there are two.

Work fascinates me
I can look at it for hours

Lesson in Life

by *A non cynical wit*

A guy is driving around Tennessee sees a sign in
front of a house: "Talking Dog For Sale." He rings the bell
and the owner tells him the dog is in the backyard. The guy
goes into the backyard and sees a Labrador sitting there.

"You talk?" he asks.

"Yep," the Lab replies.

"So, what's your story?"

The Lab looks up and says, "Well, I discovered that
I could talk when I was pretty young. I wanted to help the
government, so I told the CIA about my gift, and in no
time at all they had me jetting from country to country,
sitting in rooms with spies and world leaders, because no
one figured a dog would be eavesdropping. I was one of
their most valuable spies for eight years running."

"But the jetting around really tired me out, and I
knew I wasn't getting any younger so I decided to settle
down. I signed up for a job at the airport to do some under-
cover security wandering near suspicious characters and
listening in."

"I uncovered some incredible dealings and was
awarded a batch of medals. I got married, had a mess of
puppies, and now I'm just retired."

The guy is amazed. He goes back in and asks the
owner what he wants for the dog. "Ten dollars," the guy
says. "Ten dollars? This dog is amazing. Why on earth are
you selling him so cheap?"

"Because he's a liar. He never did any of that
stuff."

BOOKSHOP AND WEB RESOURCES BOOKS/MAPS/COLLECTIBLES

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

The Christian Heritage of Jaffna Sri Lanka..work of the American Missionaries

-by Samuel Arnold.
available from Sam Arnold, 33 Elford Crescent,
Merrylands, NSW 2160 - Ph: (02) 9681 4620
email: samvimarnold@ozemail.com.au
A \$10 plus postage.

Every dollar of sale proceeds is sent to Jaffna College
to the fixed deposit a/c "Prof J R Arnold Scholarship
fund". The interest from this is used to award a 3 year
degree scholarship every year for a student to any uni-
versity in Sri Lanka in the field of Tamil Literature /
Humanities. So far the author has sent SL Rs 410,000.

Yesterday is Another Country: A Collection of Leg-
ends of Life by Somasiri Devendra, 160pp softcover Pub-
lished by Sridevi Publications Sri Lanka. Available in Aus-
tralia at \$ 10 + P&H from CSA Librarian Sumane Iyer.
Contact: sumane@pacific.net.au . Other countries contact
Somasiri Devendra—details on page 30.

"Kaleidoscope: An Anthology of Sri Lankan English Literature"

by D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke (ed.), Colombo:
Vijitha Yapa Publications, 2007 pb US \$ 4.95 SL Rs. 495
ISBN 978-955-1266-70-7 Available online
www.vijithayapa.com Postal address: Unity Plaza, 2 Galle
Road, Colombo 4, Sri Lanka. Email: vijiyapa@gmail.com

The Joy of Sharing: Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where do we go from here?

by Charles Boyd, 2007, Published by AuthorHouse, Bloom-
ington IN USA. 184pp, \$ 31.50 Hard cover, available
from Chandra Senaratne ph 02 9872 6826, e-mail: [char-
boyd@iprimus.com.au](mailto:char-
boyd@iprimus.com.au)

Blossoms of Wisdom on Peace and Environment – by

Erika Dias. This is an anthology of 123 poems, illustrated
with 39 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

SYNOPSIS OF MEETINGS

Sydney: 11 May 2008

Following a brief introduction of the speaker Dr Geoffrey Brahm Levey by chairman Tony Peries (deputising for the President Sunil de Silva), Dr Levey commenced his interesting and illuminating discourse on **Australian Multiculturalism – Success or Failure?** The following synopsis was provided by Dr Levey.



Dr Brahm Levey

“Multiculturalism as a public policy has always had its critics. Never before, however, has it faced the chorus of opposition it does today. Calls for its abolition are heard every week. In early 2007, the Howard Government erased the term from the federal government’s lexicon, a change which the new Rudd Government has largely embraced. Multiculturalism and the management of a culturally diverse society was passed over in silence at the recent 2020 Summit on Australia’s future. It is hard to believe that less than a decade ago, multiculturalism looked to be secure and had won the day. How did it come to this? Has multiculturalism really been the abject failure its critics claim it has?

“I will suggest that while these questions are simple, the answers are complex. Part of the problem with the public debate over multiculturalism is the assumption that simple questions must have simple answers. I shall try instead to disentangle some issues central to the question, that are usually run together. In particular, I will address four arguments that are commonly cited against multiculturalism being “good policy”: that it has allowed dangerous groups/ideologies to flourish; that it sanctions moral and cultural relativism; that even if it does not allow these things in principle, it has promoted them in practice; and that it undermines a shared national Australian identity.

“In general, my argument is that multiculturalism, as Australians know it, is a way of integrating a culturally diverse population based on shared liberal democratic values. Insofar as multiculturalism has failed, it is, I think, not so

much because of its commitments as the *failure* to honour them and their underlying liberal democratic values.”

An array of probing questions from the rapt audience followed.

Two books authored by members Somasiri Devendra (*Yesterday is Another Country*) and Martin Pieris (*The Sri Lankan*) were available for sale. Copies can be obtained by contacting Sumane Iyer. The usual social brought proceedings to a close.

Doug Jones

Colombo: 17 May 2008

Welcoming the members and invitees, President Somasiri Devendra introduced the speaker for the evening, Dr Raja C. Bandaranayake, as one who had addressed members of the CSA in Sydney and Melbourne on the same subject. A Sri Lankan, now domiciled in Sydney, he was educated at the Medical College of the University of Colombo and qualified as a medical practitioner. Having gained Post Graduate qualifications in England he held the position of Professor of Anatomy and achieved distinction as an international consultant in Medical Education. However he was here today to talk of the historical detective work he had undertaken regarding Kandyan Prisoners – chief them being Ehelepola Maha Nilame – who had been imprisoned in Mauritius following the rebellion of 1818. This research he made into an award winning work of literature, “Betwixt Isles”, which would be his subject this evening.

Dr. Bandaranayake’s talk was full of interesting material gathered first hand over a period of time. The headings under which he presented it, were,

- Preceding events
- The prisons
- Ehelepola’s abode in Mauritius
- His life and death
- The health of the prisoners
- The fate of the prisoners

shows that it was a very human approach to material evidence. The appealing aspect of his narrative was the description of the different personalities who were cast in this drama, whether they were aristocrats, peasants, ex-priests, jailors or doctors. The content of his speech has been previously published in *The Ceylankan*. (P 27 Journal #39) Yet it must be recorded that it was refreshing to hear of certain aspects of this drama. The intelligent mix of friendliness and firmness with which the Chief Jailor treated his high-ranking prisoner, the good

care taken of him by the last of the medical officers (whose very gender was called into question!) and the debunking of the myth of Ehelepola's palatial villa are among them. The mystery of the flowers placed on his tomb by an unseen hand was put to rest by a member in the audience, Charitha Ratwatte, who had witnessed nearby villagers performing the act but who, when asked, could not explain the reason beyond that they were carrying out a village tradition.

Thanking Dr. Bandaranayake at the end of the talk, the President called for a discussion, leading the way, himself, with questions and comments. Confining himself to the events



Ehelepola's tomb, note a bunch of flowers on it

prior to the fall of Kandy, he commented on three matters: the fact that – contrary to the map shown – Trincomalee was *de jure* part of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815, as described in the “Legislative Enactments of Sri Lanka”; the location of the site of Ehelepola's Walauwa (before its demolition following his treachery) as where the Kandy Remand Prison now stands; and the fact that Ehelepola Kumarihamy's execution was the prescribed punishment for a traitor under Kandyan Law, when the traitor fled the country to save his own life. The execution of his family, was therefore directly attributable to the Maha Nilame himself.

A lively discussion ensued, thereafter and over the fellowship that followed.

Daya Wickramatunga

Melbourne 22 June 2008

The chairman Dr. Srilal Fernando introduced the speaker, Ms. Anoma Pieris who is a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne and no stranger to the audiences of CSA. Her topic for the evening was “*The Messenger Birds of Sri Jayawardenapura*”. Anoma is involved with an extensive research project on this subject. A forthcoming book, titled “*Avian Geographies*” is the result of this research. The University of Melbourne has nominated a grant for the Central Cultural Fund of Sri Lanka to proceed with this research.

The capital of Jayawardenapura shifted the historical interest from Kandy to the alternative symbolic centre in the low country. Sri Jayawardenapura was the capital of Parakramabahu VI during 15th century. The speaker explored the pre-colonial political geography through literary tradition of *Sandesbaya Karyas* or message poems during 15th-19th centuries. These documented the journeys of ‘messenger birds’. Notion of a bird as a messenger is a familiar cultural device. *Sandesbayas* were established in the Sinhala identity in the low country prior to the Kandyan period. A pilgrim's map of a Thai Buddhist monk between 15th-17th centuries by sea depicts a hierarchical template of Lanka which is our first model for a nation. Many royal cities were built on a mythological model based on *mandala* pattern.

Our perception of Sri Jayawardenapura prior to colonisation can be analysed utilising *Sandesbaya Karyas*. There are 15 message poems, each consisting 100-200 verses. *Selalihini*, *Parevi*, *Gira* and *Kokila* were penned during Kotte period. Ven. Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera authored the *Selalihini Sandeshaya*. Though written in Sinhala, these poems incorporate Indian tradition. *Selalihini Sandeshaya* has the distinction of greatest dissemination and being the most beautiful. During Kotte period, lyricism, poetic imagery and literary affluence predominated. *Sandesbayas* are secular poems on local geography. The courier bird departs kingdom's capital and charts through a vast physical geography. The route of *Kokila Sandeshaya*, the longest, is from Devinuwara in the south to Jaffna in the north. Every village along the way has been identified. Cities on the bird route were prominent religious or commercial centres. The goal of this journey was to deliver a message to a god or a monk in a shrine or a temple. The message carries a specific boon or in later *Sandesbayas* a cure for a specific ailment.

Cities were described as bounded by high walls, moat and four gateways. Common characteristics of fortified cities were similar to Sri Jayawardenapura. Idealised descriptions of Sri Lanka's pre-colonial cities and kingdoms present a version of

Buddhist kinship and geographic sovereignty which is utopian and undoubtedly exaggerated in poems. Kings of Lanka were in competition with the south of the sub continent during this time. Written in veneration of kings, *Sandeshayas* convey a particular formula for kinship and territorial expansion. The success of *Sandeshayas* during Kotte period was due to replication and dissemination by monks. During 19th century *Sandeshayas* were constructed eulogising persons. While today Sri Jayawardenapura bears landmarks of a fabled city, environmentalists caution overdevelopment of the area.

**“ In rows of storeyed palaces, so strong
and so lofty
The balconies, lovely with carvings of
gods and sky dwellers,
Are like mansions of gods who come
down to behold
This glorious city which keeps
unending festival”.**

(*Selalihini Sandeshaya/ Verse 12/ Translation :H.C. Jayasingha & L.C. Van Geysel, Tissa Abeysekara ; www.dailynews.lk , 01/05/2006).*

The illustrated presentation was complemented by an energetic question and answer session. Mrs. Rita Hatch won the customary raffle drawn by Ms. Anoma Pieris. The meeting concluded after tea and refreshments.

Dilhani Kumbukkage

Note by Editor: The following translation of bird names was provided by our regular contributor S Pathiravitana.

The Selalihiniya is just like the Mynah, only it is looked upon as the sweeter singer, I am not sure whether they are strictly local birds, may be they belong to the tropics. The Gira is of course the parrot that belongs to the tropics and all these three birds can be trained to repeat our words and short sentences. The Kokilaya is the only common bird we have with the non Sri Lankans including the West where it is known as the Cuckoo which sings loudly just before and after the Sinhala New Year and probably in summertime abroad. You may compare the Mynah and Selalihiniya to the Nightingale which is noted for its singing. Our poets used the first three birds to carry poetic messages to VIPs. Kind of e-mail we have now.

DESTINATION

by Vathani Visvalingam

The rosy dawn breaks through the fleecy clouds
To light the golden glow of a perfect sunny day
Thro' the window, the mist clad terrain below flows
As the Qantas, cleaves thro' the azure blue sky

Land of golden wattle and fragrant eucalyptus
Cooing cockatoos, chattering parakeets and kookaburras
Cuddly koalas, leaping kangaroos, antsy echidnas and platypus
Multicultural, multiethnic, ancient home of the aboriginals

Fantastic monolith Uluru-the sacred red sandstone rock
Surrounded by the scorched sands of desert dunes and gibbers
Cascading high waterfall of Wollombi Wallaman and Tully
Lofty Blue Mountains, cleft gorges, Jenolan caves & three sisters

Fertile verdant fields of wheat, vast rolling downs of sheep
Exotic wineries and colourful horticultural fine blooms
Rich deposits of mineral, coal, oil, silver, gold and opals
Scintillating corals, pearls and spectacular fish of the reefs

Arched Harbour Bridge, tallest Centre Point, harbour cruises
Spectacular, petalled Opera House aerial panoramic monorail
Marine aquarium, world famous sights of exciting Sydney
Gateway to the exotic unique island continent

Australia!

LETTERS:

The question raised by Dilo Pillai in J 42 has had couple of responses... and what a coincidence both respondents rode in the self same car. Ed

Dear Sumane

About the article regarding the 'dickie'. My father had a friend named Vernon Muthumani who boarded with us for some time. He owned a Ford V 8 which had a 'dickie'. It was a seat that opened out at the back of the car. As there was room inside the vehicle for only mum, dad and Mr .Muthumani, I had the dubious privilege of sitting in the 'dickie'. I even knew how to open and shut it on my own. Whenever we drove to church, visited friends, dashed to the tavern somewhere along the coast to buy "cough mixture" as they called it or braved the three hour trip to Colombo, I enjoyed a glorious ride in the 'dickie' with the sun in my face and the wind in my hair. Vernon married Edna Herft. I wonder where their children are? I never met them. The two older children were named Nedra and Johnny. We had a lot of fun when the Muthumanis stayed with us.

Regards

June (Colin- Thomé)

Hi Sumane

Regarding the meaning of the word "dickey" or "dickie" in relation to a car, my understanding is that it is a seating arrangement in a car located at the rear in the space nowadays occupied by what we call the boot. The difference between the "dickey" and the boot is that the boot contains no seats and the lid of a boot opens upward and forward the lid of a "dickey" opens backwards and downwards. Some time in the 1940s I actually rode in a car that had a "dickey" and in the "dickey" itself. The car belonged to a friend named (Vernon?) Muthumani. I am afraid I don't know how the "dickey" came to be so named. I understand that the term applied in the 19th century, before the advent of motor cars, to the seat located in *the front* of a horse drawn carriage to accommodate the person controlling the horses. It is likely that the term "dickey" derives its name from a Richard. Some one else may be able to provide an answer. However we do know that "dickey" and boot are not interchangeable terms.

Yours

Stan Sparkes

...and here's something else on the "dickey"

Courtesy: www.picsearch.com



QUESTION: My father and mother died when I was quite young, and very recently a photo was discovered of my mother sitting in an old car. This would have been in the early 1930's. (I was born in 1927) This is the only photo I have of my mother, so it was quite a find. Would you or your Society consider trying to identify the car - I have tried a lot of searching on the Web but cannot track it down. It isn't a brilliant photo (being 1930ish) but I believe there is enough detail in it to possibly identify it. My son, Nicholas, is constructing our family tree and details like this he said would help him to put some "meat" on the project. Kind regards, John Hunter, Bridgend, Wales

ANSWER: We have now investigated your photo and can advise that it is a Morris. The numberplate registration appears to read UH 4612. Letters UH stand for registrations issued by Cardiff County Borough Council. The UH range of registrations have a complicated history but UH 4612 would appear to have been issued in 1928.

I have now received confirmation from our Morris expert Chas Moody who advises that: "The car in the photo is a 'Flatnose Morris'. The body style is "Two Seater with Dickey". The engine is a four cylinder side valve, 11.9hp, 1548cc, three forward speeds and reverse. The three stud wheels say the model is a

Galle Lit Up: From the Right Flank

by Dr Michael Roberts

As a moderator and panelist participating in the Galle Literary Festival held between the 15th and 20th January 2008, my commentary is biased. It is doubly biased. I was born and nourished within the walls of the Fort in Galle, a site that cast a magic spell on the literary fare all and sundry encountered during these heady days.

The nostalgia of returning home was deepened by the fact that I was housed in a small hostel, Mamas Guest House (La Mamas) on Leynbaan Street, near the lighthouse where I could use the roof top dining room as ‘crow’s nest’ to look across the harbour or back across the Fort. Nor did I rush to event. I paced myself and took the opportunity to meander around the ramparts and swim in some of my spots of old. There I snorkeled and gained nourishment from seeing “my fish.” My fish? Well, the lineage of species ‘children’ spawned by those I was so familiar with in the 1950s.

There is no ‘balm’ and no exciting verbal-encounter-in-conference without sweat. Having organised many a conference myself, let me assure you about that, Geoffrey Dobbs, Libby Southwell, Seetha Chinnappa-Sarwal, Ashok Ferrey, Ameena Hussain and a host of other volunteers - yes unpaid hands – worked their butts off for many days, sometimes 18 hour days, in order to put the show on the Fort so to speak. The brochure guiding participants is a model of its kind and the arrangements were usually impeccable. The only disappointments were stars (e.g. Jung Chang, Shobhaa De) who did not honour their contract and Kumar Sangakkara, who was laid low by fever.

Dobbs has been the original inspiration for the GLF. He is something of an institution in the south as an entrepreneur in boutique hotels and a philanthropist with an island retreat that Robinson Crusoe would die for. Libby Southwell is an Aussie of amiable disposition and organisational virtuosity, almost but not quite Sri Lankan after being ‘tsunamied’ into severe illness. The team they marshaled can rest happy with their achievements.

Among those marshaling forces was a naturalized expatriate hand within the Fort, now

residing opposite my birthplace in Pedlar Street: Ms Juliet Coombe, cameraperson extraordinary with 26 books under her belt. Having married a local Muslim tuk tuk driver who plays cricket in England during the summer, she did not allow her 6-month old baby deter her from marshaling young local men to move chairs etc etcetera as part of the logistics girding the whole affair. In Juliet we have a jewel of an expatriate in our midst who will widen the tourist potential of the Festival in the future with her own brand of expertise. Just drop in at their café and look at the picture of an intrepid lad diving, Acapulco-style, off the Old Lighthouse bastion to marvel at her skills. These skills were on display for those who caught her free exhibition of 80 “Fort Characters” tucked away at a site which many may have missed. Here, Juliet does not only capture the elite in digital resolution and word. Her selections depict fish vendor and doctor, lace-lady vendor and wealthy-expatriate retiree and thus straddle all the classes in the Fort. Those who missed her exhibition need not worry: her work is bound to hit the bookshelves soon.

This was not a festival that focused purely on literature in prose and poem. There was culinary fare from both Sri Lankan and foreign cooks at major feature meals with famous authors, events demanding a goodly sum of Rs 5,000. There was an architectural tour from Galle to Tangalle guided by Channa Daswatte that took in the work of Geoffrey Bawa and Valentine Gunasekera. There were separate architectural and historical elucidations of the Galle Fort and/or its history by such experts as Rajpal de Silva, Ronald Lewcock and Ismeth Raheem.

Lest we forget though, this was a literary festival. I was often reminded of this fact. “Are you a writer?” I was asked on several occasions. Initially this query left me nonplussed. I knew the speaker wanted, even perhaps “desired,” me to be a creative writer. I am not. I create articles and books, yes. But if I had created such works “creatively” I would have lost my job long ago. So, thus challenged, I learnt the appropriate answer: “Yes and No.” That stumped everybody [though I was a batsman not a wicket keeper]. Further explanations had to follow of course. Rather tedious that.

“Are you related to Karen Roberts?” was another question that confronted me [both in Galle and over the years elsewhere]. “No” was

my polite answer. But I had already invested Rs 5000 in booking in for the privilege of a lunch with Karen R at a private house in the Fort. This step provided me with an unexpected boon. The house belonged to Hilal Noordeen, now a spinal surgeon from the top-drawer in England, a man of many talents who had scrummed down for Balliol College in Oxford and become the President of the Oxford Union in his university days. Hilal had flown in that morning and was due to chair a session with William Dalrymple that afternoon – after which he would be driven to Katunayake that night to fly to England on the morrow (and doubtless he would be operating on someone the day after). What energy! What a marvelous range of talent!

But I digress. Karen, it turned out, was not the sort of person who carries airs and stands on dignity. She ate the buriyani with her fingers (so too me) and we got on like a house on fire. Besides the name, we discovered other affinities: she, like me, was often mistaken for a Burgher. She is not. “I am a Sinhalese” she stressed. “Ah, Navandanna Sinhala,” the sociologist and historian in me broke in and said. In surprise, she and her sister, Francine, beamed in delight. “Navandanna Govigama” she corrected, smiling; but, yes, the patrilineal side was Navandanna and went back to Dr. Emmanuel Roberts’s ancestors who changed their name to Roberts from Rabel Ratnaweera something something-*gē*.

In appearance, however, both Karen and Francine could pass for Burgher, so I proceeded to pursue my sociological tastes by asking them about schoolyard banter when they attended St. Lawrence School, Wellawatte, during the 1970s. Their replies are now part of my stock of empirical data. Ever since I researched material for my chapter on “Pejorative Phrases” in the book *People Inbetween* (1989, Sarvodaya Publishers,) let me note that I have been interested in the use of such terms as *kārapotta*, *kārapotu lansiya*, *polkudu suddha* and *tuppahi*.

Because I am of Barbadian patrilineage with Sinhala-Burgher on the mother’s side (patrilineal Sinhala, a *Ratnayakalagē*), I am a person with no ethnic collectivity to attach myself to within the context of the island – for one family does not an ethnic community make. So, I have, ever since the 1983 pogrom and the *People Inbetween* researches activated my political sensibility, tended to define myself as Tuppahi (a disparaging epithet that refers to those low-cum-vile, and can be best translated as “mongrel”; but yet also a term used once as an

ethnic category by Piyadasa Sirisena who was kind of Gunadasa Amarasekera of his time). Indeed, on one occasion I formed a Tuppahi Association and declared myself Tuppahi No. 1. Thiru Kandiah (whose mother is Sinhala) promptly joined me as No. 2. Kumari Jayawardena, whose mother is English, is happy to line up at No. 3. There are no blood tests, codes or fees attached to this grouping. Anyone can join. Even blue-blooded Brits, lion-skinned Sinhalese and tiger-striped Tamils are welcome.

The Mouse Trap: A Tale

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. “What food might this contain?” The mouse wondered – he was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap. Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning: “There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!”

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, “Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is of grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it.”

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, “There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!” The pig sympathized, but said, “I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers.”

The mouse turned to the cow and said “There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!” The cow said, “Wow, Mr. Mouse. I’m sorry for you, but it’s no skin off my nose.”

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer’s mousetrap alone. That very night a sound was heard throughout the house -- like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey. The farmer’s wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail had been caught in the trap.

The snake bit the farmer’s wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with fever. Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup’s main ingredient. But his wife’s sickness continued, so friends and neighbours came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig.

The farmer’s wife did not get well; she died. So, many people came for her funeral, the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness. So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn’t concern you, remember -- when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk. We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.

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*...we welcome following gift subscription recipient of four issues
of **The Ceylankan** awarded by a member:*

Mr Malcolm Kreltszheim, Hallam VIC.

**FORSAKE NOT AN OLD FRIEND;
FOR THE NEW IS NOT COMPARABLE TO HIM;
A NEW FRIEND IS AS NEW WINE;
WHEN IT IS OLD THOU SHALT DRINK IT WITH
PLEASURE**

Ecclesiasticus ch 9, v 10

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NEXT SYDNEY MEETING

Sunday 17th August 2008 at 5.30 PM

Stefan D'Silva

will speak on

**My fascination with the diversity of
Wildlife in Ceylon**

Venue: Thornleigh Community Centre Corner Phyllis &
Central Avenues (off Pennant Hills Road)
Thornleigh NSW 2121

Info: Doug 02 9894 7449—Chandra 9872 6826

NEXT MELBOURNE MEETING

Sunday 31st August 2008 at 6:00 p.m

Neville Turner

A Past President of Melbourne's Australian Cricket So-
ciety and Australian Sports Society

will speak on

**The History, Literature and Culture of Cricket in
Sri Lanka—A Foreigner's Point of View**

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

Info: Shelagh -03 9808 4962 Or Srilal -03 9809 1004

NEXT COLOMBO MEETING

Saturday 30th August 2008 at 5:30 p.m

Tissa Devendra

will speak on

The Kachcheri System in Sri Lanka

Venue: Auditorium of the Organisation of Professional As-
sociations (OPA) Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha, Colombo 7

Info: Somasiri - 2737180 - Mike - 0775412420
Daya - 2786783

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