



The Ceylankam

The Journal of the
CEYLON SOCIETY
of AUSTRALIA

ISSN 1836-8646 Journal 59 Volume XV Number 3 August 2012 Editor: Doug Jones



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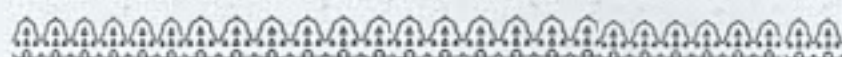
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From the Editor...

Elie House park in Mutwal was a regular haunting ground of mine during schooldays (I lived just a half-mile down the hill on Aluthmawatte Road) playing tennis ball cricket, soccer and other ball games when not participating in some teenage skulduggery. We knew Elie House also for its reservoir.

Now, after six decades of ignorance, The Rambler has opened my eyes to something that I did not know – that Sri Lanka's fourth Prime Minister SWRD Bandaranaike and only sister Anna Florentina lived as children with their parents at Elie House as Sir Solomon's residence was called. This is another of many instances of how contributors to The Ceylankan can shed knowledge of our heritage and motivate others to further undertake research into the hidden treasures of Sri Lanka's culture and history.

While you flip the pages rushing to The Rambler's fascinating The Lost Boy from Ceylon, Vama Vamadevan draws a graphic picture of The Well Sweep in Jaffna; a device that was unique to Jaffna.

On a more serious note we have Earl Forbes delineate the problems faced by the Burghers who attempted to migrate to Australia since WWII. The White Australia Policy, Ceylonese Burghers and Alice Nona is the full text of a talk the author delivered to the Sydney CSA last month. You will enjoy this dissertation to which Earl devoted many years of research.

While Neville Jayaweera concludes his three-part series on the irrepressible, sometimes incorrigible but always humane Sir John Kotalawela, you can delve into Siri Ranawake's brief look at Kataragama and take a trip back to Jaffna and Batticaloa with Samuel Thevabalan Arnold who revisits these much-loved cities after two long decades.

Brian Parker (or Parker-san) will keep you light hearted with his Mr Tatsuguchi keeps his sense of humour. Of course, some of the regular features like Book Reviews, a Synopsis are there.

Your editor is grateful for the way readers responded to his call for articles. We had quite a few readers coming to the fore this time. Keep them coming please. It only shows that we have among you a considerable source of knowledge to share among all our readers.

About the Ceylon Society of Australia

The CSA is a non-profit organisation, incorporated in Australia. Its main objectives are to foster, promote and develop interest in the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka, especially the post-medieval period when this country was first exposed to, what we now call, globalisation. Apart from publishing the journal – **The Ceylankan** which has attracted much international appreciation – the Society holds meetings quarterly in Sydney, Melbourne and Colombo. Most importantly, it is non-political and non-partisan and studiously steers clear of political and similar controversial issues. CSA is not a formal, high profile Society but rather, a gathering of like-minded people, open to receiving and imparting new ideas, who greatly

enjoy a quarterly meeting in reasonably modest and intimate surroundings. While Sydney is home to the parent body and looks after the needs of the society in all of NSW and the ACT, the Melbourne Chapter covers members and others residing in and visitors to Victoria; the Colombo Chapter caters to CSA members in and passing through Sri Lanka, and the Sri Lankan public! Members of the public with an interest in the study of Sri Lankan history, culture and heritage – the young members of the public are especially welcome! – are invited to attend. Admission to these meetings is free, while donations to defray expenses are much appreciated.

Our Readers Write

Interesting!

I read the current issue of the journal with interest. Since my husband passed away I find it difficult to attend meetings but Vama Vamadevan is a close friend and he keeps me informed of developments.

I was wondering whether Stuart De Silva remembers my husband's brother Ariya Ranawake. He and his accomplished classical pianist wife, Chitra Malalasekara were avid participants in the jazz scene in Colombo in the fifties. Both were epicureans who enjoyed the social mix in Colombo at the time! Largely self-taught, Ariya played both the clarinet and piano. Towards the end of her life, Chitra took to playing jazz on the piano with great relish.

On another note, I enjoy Neville Jayaweera's writing very much. At Peradeniya, he briefly lectured us on Philosophy and I never lost the fascination for Soren Kierkegaard's writings whom he introduced to us students. Also with regard to his account of the failed coup in which my husband Manthi, who was then an Army officer, was marginally involved through his friendship with a few coup leaders, evoked many memories.

Thank you for putting together an interesting issue.

SIRI RANAWAKE (*Sydney, NSW*)

A rose by any other name

I recieved The Ceylankan today and read through the excellent articles. However, I was deeply disappointed that you omitted the last and crucial paragraph of my article entitled: **What's in a name**. Further, it was attributed to Lance Fernando; a name that exists on paper but seldom used. What's in a name, indeed.

SRILAL FERNANDO (*Camberwell, VIC*)

The reference to the writer as Lance Fernando was an oversight. Also there are some sensitive souls among our readers, however, who may have found the paragraph referred to as somewhat offensive. It was edited with those readers in mind and in keeping with the journal's policy. (Editor)

Humble appreciation

I am writing in response to Neville Jayaweera's most kind comments to my articles serialised in the last two issues of The Ceylankan.

I am humbled by Mr Jayaweera's statement that my article probably exceeded even Prof. Tennakoon Wimalananda's book on the subject. Anyway, kindly convey my heartfelt thanks to him, for his review and appreciation.

The additional information which I gleaned from his letter on GA Wilson's diaries, Wilson's wife's

death on her way to Badulla and the after effects of the rebellion on the people of Uwa/Wellasa, together with his own experiences when he was GA, was most interesting, and will be filed away for future reference.

Regarding the two Saldin brothers - Tuna and Baba - yes, they are my cousins. Tuna is domiciled in Melbourne and Baba is in Dehiwela. I am more in contact with Baba, who first introduced me to the CSA Colombo Chapter. Baba went to Colombo University, but Tuna and Baba's wife (Sheila Devi Drahaman) studied at Peradeniya University. I understand that Sheila Devi was a good friend of Neville's wife. Baba can be contacted on email.

I am also enjoying Neville's interesting articles on Sri John Kotalawela.

TONY SALDIN (*Colombo, Sri Lanka*)

White Australia policy

I was pleased that I scheduled one of my visits to Sydney to coincide with Earlson Forbes' talk on 29 May which was a well-researched presentation that gave me a much fuller understanding of the process of migration of Burghers to Australia.

I realised, speaking to my Burgher friends here, that many of them may also not have thought through the various stages of social and political developments in both Ceylon/Sri Lanka and Australia spanning a century or more. Earl traced the rise and fall of the status of Burghers in Ceylon/Sri Lanka and the obstacles that they encountered immigrating to Australia.

Physical appearance, cultural and racial characteristics, political, social, psychological and moral aspects of a citizen's identity underpinned the principle of the White Australia policy.

Historically, Australia's immigration policy and process have been through selecting people through exclusion than through a standardised process. The unspoken assumption of the typical Australian of an earlier time - a white, European, English-speaking Christian - still continues in the minds of many Australians. Earl provided an illuminating angle on this issue through his valuable presentation on the Burgher migration process to Australia.

Ceylon/ Sri Lankan Burghers were at the vanguard of this migration.

TIDDY WIJERATNE (*Canberra, ACT*).

Your views are valuable!

Keep those letters coming in dear readers. We value them. Let us know what you think. Please keep them as brief as possible.

Letters may be edited because of length and/or content.

VAMA VAMADEVAN introduces an innovation peculiar to the northern peninsula of Sri Lanka as he reminisces on ...

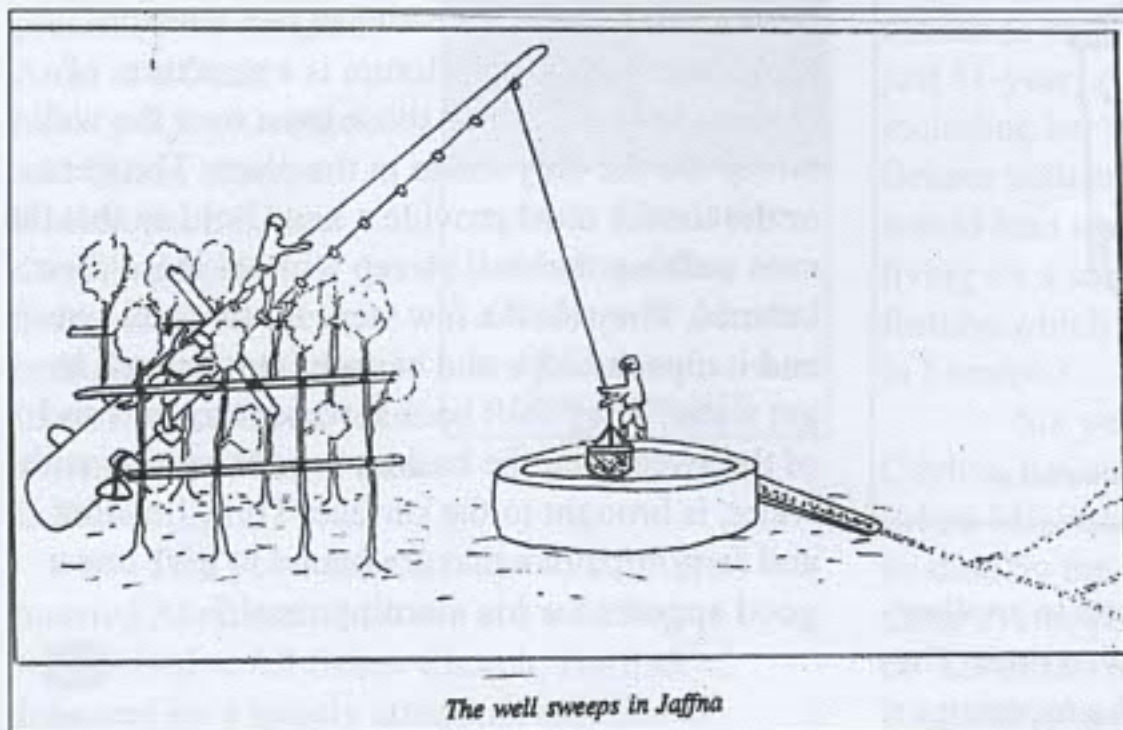
The well sweeps in Jaffna

Very little is on record of the Well Sweep, a device for collecting water by raising buckets from and lowering them into a well, with a long pivoted pole, and the bucket attached to one end by a long rope.

The device is a peculiar innovation in the Jaffna peninsula for use in lift irrigation. The whole concept is to take advantage of geological and hydrographical factors using local flora. Man power is utilised, but kept to a minimal level, taking advantage of the fulcrum to balance the sweep.

Sir Emerson Tennent found the Jaffna well sweep similar to the 'Sakkias' used on the Nile for a similar purpose, but the concept of one or two men walking on the sweep seems to be a novel adaptation peculiar to the Jaffna Peninsula.

The well sweep itself is turned out of palmyrah (*Borassus flabelliformis*) which is a magnificent palm with tall and straight trunks. The palmyrah that grows in profusion in the Jaffna peninsula is strong and durable. It is chipped by craftsman into the shape of a massive spindle. Usually two halves of a palmyrah trunk are joined together to give girth.



At the fulcrum a cross bar (Tamil: *Atchulakai*) of strong wood is driven into it. The top of the sweep is slightly flattened almost the full length of the sweep to admit two or three persons to walk on it. Side pegs are driven to give a ladder effect to enable the men walking the

sweep to hold it if they require.

In the vicinity of the well, six or eight trees are planted in two rows at a distance of about three meters. These trees (referred to in Tamil as *Aadukaal*) take around three years to grow to sufficient girth to have the strength to carry the weight of the sweep. These trees are then tied to three rows of horizontal timber on either side to give more strength and hold them in position. The sweep is then raised with the help of voluntary labour by a make-shift pulley to rest the cross bar on the middle horizontal cross-timber.

Sweep now ready

The sweep is now in position and ready to raise water. From one to three men, depending on the volume of water to be raised, will walk to and fro on the sweep. When the men walk towards the thin end of the sweep it will dip to

the mouth of the well. A man standing at the mouth of the well will guide the rope into the well. The rope is made of fibre taken off the palmyrah stem (Tamil: *Naar*) and woven into the rope. It is very strong and ideally suited for the purpose. The bucket (Tamil: *Pattai*) made of woven palmyrah leaves in an octagonal shape, can hold close to eight or ten gallons of water at a time. When the men on the sweep walk back to the broad end of the sweep, it comes up and the man at the mouth of the well tips the water into a trough

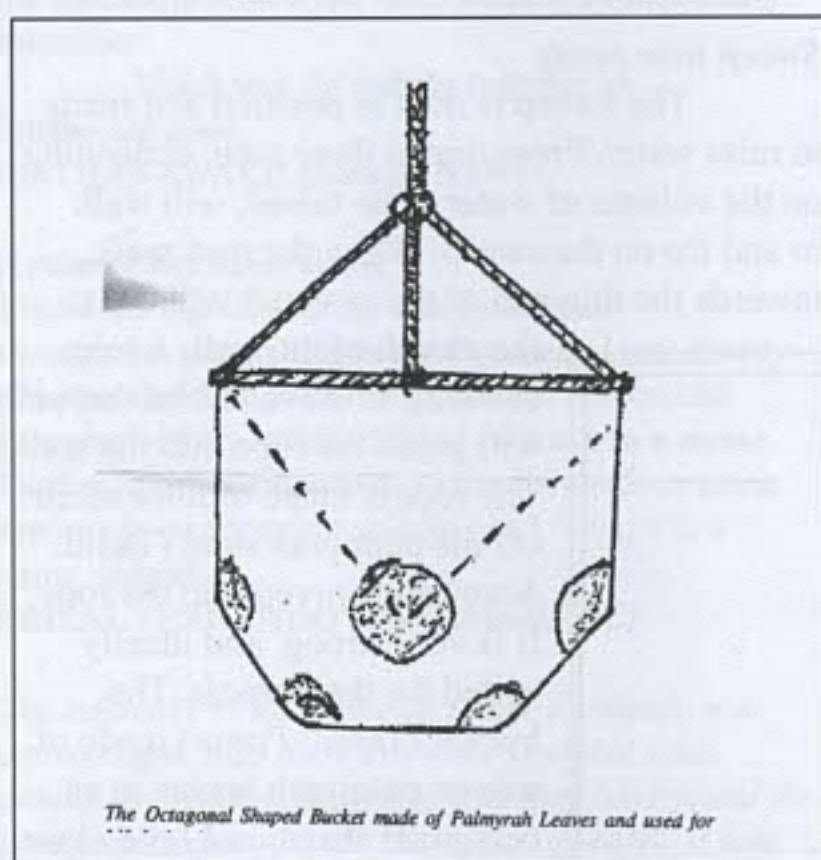
and the water flows down to the garden that needs to be watered. The whole device and process is designed so as to minimise the manpower that is utilised – not only in numbers but in intensity.

The woven palmyrah leaf bucket has the corners guarded and reinforced by leather or

some such material to prevent it from leaking. The water that runs along small man-made channels is directed from plant bed to bed until the water floods it. This process of changing the water flow is called *Thani maathal* in Tamil. The whole process is labour intensive, but the availability of exchange volunteer labour makes it no major hurdle. The harsh sun directly bearing down on the workers is the major hazard and this device makes the job less strenuous.

The sun over the Jaffna peninsula is very harsh and oppressive. The direct rays of the sun and the dry climate make work after 10 A.M. almost impossible. It is therefore not uncommon for farmers to start work at the well at about 3.00 A.M. or 4.00 A.M. in the morning and call it a day by 9.00 A.M. The group working the well are summoned by the leader giving out a Tarzan-like yell which rings out in the small hours of the morning like a Mullah calling the faithful to prayer.

While on the job of lifting the water the men indulge in loud talk and village gossip



interspersed with directions from one to another as to what they should do at any given time. They sing folk songs which ring out in the morning stillness and one has to hear it to appreciate it.

Lift irrigation has been the mainstay of subsistence farming in Jaffna and it boosted intensive commercial farming in no small way. It was a labour intensive method, but the purpose of it is to ensure that there is no excessive exertion. It was environmentally friendly and in total harmony with the ecological cycle.

This is a unique method of lift irrigation not seen in any other cultures and an example of the local ingenuity and wisdom of our forefathers.

To quote Sir Emerson Tennent, writing in 1859: "... The value of these wells is extreme in a country where rivers and even the smallest stream are unknown, and where the cultivators are entirely dependent on the rains of the two monsoons. But such has been the indefatigable industry of the people in providing them, that they may be said to have virtually added a third harvest to the year..."

The use of the well sweep is fast disappearing with the arrival of the oil powered pump. A few are still in use in homesteads but these too will soon disappear. It is surprising that there are hardly any reference in books to this innovation. The one I found by W Robert Holmes in JAFFNA (1980) (page 414) gives a good description: "The well sweeps were picturesque additions to the flat landscape of Jaffna. They raised their heads in considerable numbers in the fertile parts of the Peninsula. Faintly reminiscent of the manner in which a Dutch windmill stands out on the horizon in Holland. The sweep is invariably a palmyrah palm trunk which has been tooled by a carpenter to a nice smoothness and is from 18 feet to 30 feet long. The deeper the well the longer the sweep required. It seesaws from a fulcrum lashed between two trees or sometimes the entire fulcrum is a structure of timber. In some farms, those trees over the well sweep are the only shade in the place. The trees or the timber must provide a hand hold so that the men walking the well sweep will not lose their balance. They shift a few steps up the well sweep and it dips the rope and basket into the well to get water. They shift back towards the butt end of the sweep and the basket, now brimming with water, is brought to the surface. Three hundred and forty trips like that are bound to give one a good appetite for his morning meal."



ONLY SECOND-BEST

There's only one real sin, and that is to persuade oneself that the second best is anything but the second-best.

—Doris Lessing (*Golden Notebook* 1962)

The lost boy from Ceylon by The Rambler

Anna Florentina Dias Bandaranaike was the elder daughter of the wealthy Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike and was born at the turn of the 20th century in June 1900, one and a half years after the birth of her elder brother S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, later to be Prime Minister of the country. Anna's mother Daisy Ezlynne was the daughter of Sir Christoffel Obeyesekera, herself an heiress.

The Bandaranaike children were to inherit extensive wealth in the form of coconut estates and house property in Colombo. Both SWRD and Anna were born in Elie House, Mutwal, a stately home of which Sir Solomon's family were the last occupants, before it was acquired by the Government for building a reservoir on its grounds.

Anna was surrounded by wealth and her early years were spent being cared for and pampered by her parents assisted by two British maids. In October 1919, Anna, together with her maid Miss Church, accompanied Sir Solomon (who always travelled with his valet Sardiel) on a voyage to England. On 24 June 1920, Sir Solomon presented his daughter Anna at a Court held by King George and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace described by Sir Solomon as "a very brilliant function, the like of which is not to be witnessed anywhere else in the world".

Two years later, in June 1922, Anna married Abraham de Livera at a wedding solemnised at All Saints Church, Hulftsdorf, followed by a largely attended reception at Udugaha Walauwa, Silversmith Street, which was then the town residence of Sir Solomon.

Despite the opulent lifestyle of her family, Anna's life as a young woman seemed troubled. Her marriage to Abraham produced a son Christoffel and a daughter May, but the marriage was unhappy and she had increasingly



• *Anna Florentina at her wedding to Abraham de Livera in 1922.* (Photo courtesy Plates Annual 1923).



• *Anna Florentina seated on the right next to Sir Solomon. Elder brother SWRD leaning against his dad.* (Photo courtesy Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon).

turned to the comfort of prayer. It was into this unstable situation that a boy by the name Augustine was adopted by her. She was over 40 years of age and fond of the little boy but constantly feared that her relatives may take him away from her. She would have perceived the threats as real, so much so that when the boy was just 11-years of age, she abandoned her family, including her two young children and fled to Britain with her adopted son. For years the two would lead a strange transient life in Britain, living on a small monthly allowance from Anna's fortune which she collected regularly from a bank in London.

Six years after her departure from Ceylon, her only brother SWRD was elected Prime Minister of Ceylon, and three years later, he died by the hand of an assassin. Neither of these events persuaded her to revisit the land of her birth. She had by then adopted the name Rita and swapped her married name of de Livera for her mother's maiden name of Obeyesekera, apparently in a bid to escape detection by members of her family in Ceylon who she feared would take the boy away. Her daughter May would travel to England to wait outside the bank for hours in the desperate hope of seeing her mother. There were a few fleeting moments in the

1960s when mother and daughter met but Anna refused to reveal where she and Augustine were living. She had, in fact, bought a small caravan where mother and son had been living, moving the caravan around to different locations until finally settling in a field at Cross-in-Hand near Heathfield, where they lived for 12 years.

Augustine lived a claustrophobic life with his adopted mother who was worried about any contact with authorities and did not let him attend school, visit a doctor or make a single friend. She had taught him to read a little and his only contact with the outside world apart from their monthly visits by train to London was listening to the BBC world service. It was possibly those train rides that sparked an interest in him for model trains of which he had a sparse assortment, consisting of bits and pieces of a quality that a frugal life style would afford. Eight years before his mother died, he was finding the situation unbearable and had told his mother: "I am only a child. If you die, who will look after me?"

Augustine was 38-years old when he woke one morning in 1977 to find Anna dead in her bed. "I shook her but she did not wake up, I knew she was dead", Augustine told Charles Glass who had known him. Terrified, he went to a nearby petrol station to get help and suddenly found himself surrounded by police having to explain that he was not responsible for her death. That night a sympathetic social worker found him a bed in an old people's home, his first night's sleep in a bed for years.

Anna was buried at Willingdon Council Cemetery, her funeral attended by her adopted son and her natural son Christoffel, who travelled from Sri Lanka. There would be no further contact between Anna's family and Augustine who eventually moved into a caravan in the grounds of another old people's home and from there he moved into a flat at Chatsworth Road, Brighton, where he lived for many years. Locals in the Seven Dials area may remember his engaging and friendly smile, his eccentric habit

of wearing his socks outside his trousers and his entire collection of badges which he wore on his jacket all at the same time.

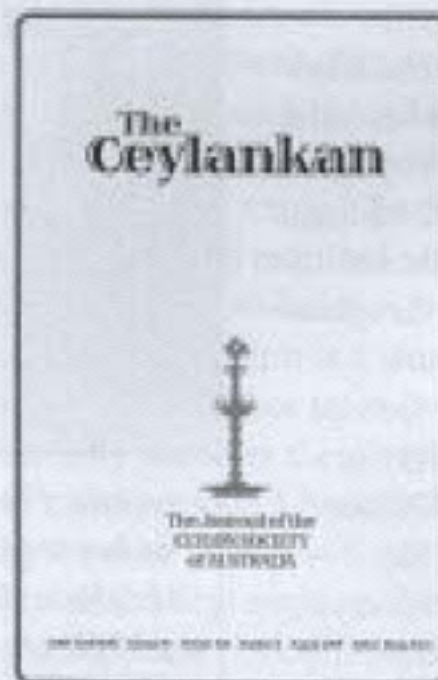
Two years ago the final chapter of an extraordinary life was written when Pandukhabaya Augustine Lankatilleke Obeyesekera, known as Augustine, died aged 71-years in his flat in Brighton, 33 years after the death of his mother. Anna's natural son Solomon Christoffel Obeyesekera de Livera died a year later in July 2011, the daughter May having predeceased him.

(Acknowledgments to Katy Rice and Charles Glass for their valuable contributions which form the basis of this article.)



• **Augustine Obeyesekera.** (Photo courtesy Katy Rice.)

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The White Australia Policy, Ceylonese Burghers and Alice Nona



by EARL FORBES

World War II ended in August 1945. For nearly six years the world was thrown into hitherto unseen turmoil and carnage, culminating in decimation at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The United States of America emerged from the War relatively unscathed. Other than the bombing of Pearl Harbour, the war was not fought in the United States or its Territories. Europe was badly battle scarred and had to redraw its boundaries and reconstruct as a first priority. But more so than anywhere else, the big picture was soon to change radically in Greater Asia. In 1947, India gained Independence from Britain. Very early in the next year, Sri Lanka followed attaining independent status on 4 February 1948. Singapore and Malaysia were now free of Japanese occupation and moving towards greater self-government and independence from Britain. Indonesia unilaterally declared independence after nearly 300 years of Dutch rule; and so history making events occurred, one after another.

Post World War II - Australia's population strategy

Australia had just come out of the War and, despite being on the winning side, there was an air of apprehension about. There was the realisation that a vast country, with a wealth of natural resources and a relatively small population, was an easy target for any predatory power. The Japanese had displayed their imperialistic ambitions during the War. They had been in Papua New Guinea; on Australia's doorstep. Also, home soil, (viz. Darwin) had been under air attack. The Japanese were defeated but other predators in the region were about. The all important question was: "how was Australia to meet such a threat in the long term"?

'Populate or perish', was the cry at the time. But it was not 'populate' at any cost. It was not 'populate' with a baby bonus. In 1947, the Immigration Minister, Arthur Caldwell

said: *"We have 25 years at most to populate the country before the yellow races are upon us. It would be far better for us to have in Australia twenty or thirty million people of 100 per cent white extraction than seven million people who are 98 per cent British"*.

In taking this approach, the Minister at the time was not enunciating radical new policy. He was merely elaborating on what has come to be called 'the White Australia Policy'. The basic elements of this policy had been around from the time of Federation. In 1901, the new Federal Government enacted the 'Immigration Restriction Act' and the next year the 'Pacific Island Labourers Act'. These Acts were directed at ending the employment of Chinese labour (previously in the goldfields) and Pacific Islanders (in Queensland's sugar and cotton plantations). The enactments reflected the widely held view among many at the time that *'there would be no place for Asiatics and coloureds'* in the future of Australia.

Developments in Ceylon.

About the time Australia was reiterating its *'white only'* migration policy, the Burgher community in Ceylon was faced with hitherto unforeseen problems. At any given time in the past four hundred and fifty years of foreign rule in Ceylon, the Burghers made up only 1% or less of the population. However, at the turn of the 20th century (1910 to 1920), 60% of doctors, 100% of surveyors, 61% of Public Works engineers, 20% of lawyers and a high percentage of those in the middle ranks of the Public Service, were drawn from the Burgher community. Furthermore, up to 1889, the Burghers had equal representation in The Ceylon Legislative Council, as did the Singhalese (70% of the population) and Tamils (16% of the population). However, the rapid advance towards self government and eventual independence from Britain saw the fortunes of the Burgher community rapidly change. In 1931 universal suffrage was introduced in Ceylon giving all adult males and females the vote. In a situation where the Burghers made up less than 1% of the country's population there was no prospect of the community ever being able

to secure even one seat in a Parliament elected on the basis of largely territorial electorates. In fact in later years Burgher and European interests were represented only through nominated members to the Parliament.

Running parallel to the movement for self government and independence was the push to replace English with Sinhala as the language of provincial administration, of the lower courts, the medium of instruction in schools and the official language. In 1937 the Sinhala Maha Sabha was formed to promote use of Sinhala in all official forums. Along with the loss of political representation, the proposed switch to Sinhala raised doubt and fears in the mind of many a Burgher. The rapid movement away from English as the medium of school instruction and official communication left many a Burgher with the feeling that not only was his or her future in jeopardy, but more importantly, the futures of their sons and daughters were also seriously compromised. Up to that time, the Burghers had taken for granted that a good English education was their birthright. The good education coupled with a strong work ethic invariably saw the vast majority of Burghers in well paid employment. It now appeared to many that this position would inevitably change in the medium to long term. The writing was on the wall and opportunities beyond the shores of Ceylon were being seriously explored. Besides the United Kingdom, Canada and the USA, the Burghers looked upon the Land Down Under as an attractive place to settle in permanently.

However, Burgher migration to Australia was not an option under the strict letter of the *100% white extraction* migration criteria of the time. The Burghers claimed to be (and are) of European extraction but were certainly not *100% white* (although some did try to claim as such). In the mind of many a Burgher, so unacceptable were developments in Ceylon at the time that they banded together in organisations to strengthen and advance their case for re-settlement outside Ceylon. One such organisation was the Burgher Settlement League. Not to be stifled by the *100% white extraction* requirement the Burgher Settlement League made its play to the Australian authorities in Colombo.

On June 21, 1947, Mr. G. F. Van Der Hoeven, (a member of the Dutch Burgher Union, Secretary of the Burgher Association of Ceylon and President of the Burgher Settlement League)

in a letter to the Chief Secretary, Ceylon stated: "*I am now the President of the "Burgher Settlement League" which aspires to encourage Emigration to Australia of all Burghers - men, women and children - who are desirous of doing so, in order that they may find more suitable opportunities than here, to secure a sound economic future, to obtain a good standard of living and to continue to maintain and preserve their identity in terms of Western culture and outlook of life. There is no scheme available in Ceylon, not even by the United National Party, by which the Burgher can be a Ceylonese without having to absorb the national sentiments, culture, outlook, language, dress and even Religion of the overwhelmingly predominating Sinhalese community. The European or Britisher is an Imperialist and the Burgher, an interloper, a "Yes-man" and therefore unwanted too. Whatever assurances may be given by the Politicians and bureaucrats individually or collectively, there is no doubt that the Burgher has come to the end of his tether....*"¹

In Australia, cracks begin to appear in the 100% white extraction Immigration policy

At this time though Australia did much to attract migration from Britain and Europe the migrant inflow was not the flood that it was expected to be. Australia was finding difficulty in reaching its stated target of an annual immigration intake of 1% of the population. Australian Authorities in Ceylon and India were suggesting that the Burghers and Anglo Indians would, subject to screening, make suitable migrants. In the land of opportunity, the White Australia policy was still intact but showing the faintest signs of weakening. Was Australia to open its doors to those in other British Colonies who claimed to be part-European in ancestry? Would the Burghers of Ceylon, Anglo-Indians and Eurasians elsewhere, make the grade as, 'Good European Aussies'?

Between late 1946 and 1951 migration from Ceylon to Australia was rigidly scrutinized and limited to a comparatively small number of Burghers who met the tests of '*European ancestry, appearance, upbringing and outlook*'. The details of this process are set out below and illustrated in *extracts from confidential and secret communications passing between the Australian High Commission, Colombo and the Department of Immigration, Canberra.*

Migration of Ceylonese Burghers only became possible when the concept of '**Predominantly European**' ancestry was accepted by Australia. But what in practical terms was 'Predominantly European' ancestry? Australian bureaucrats of this period, (as bureaucrats usually do) found a very practical answer to the question.

On 11 November 1948, the Australian High Commissioner's Office, Colombo, in an official dispatch raised the following question: '*Reuters message reports Minister for Immigration statement in the House on immigrants from Ceylon, inter alia, that only persons of at least 75% European origin are admitted into Australia.*

I would appreciate advice on that specific point, which seems to be at variance with my instructions, namely applicants must be predominantly of European origin. I have interpreted predominant as more than 50%' 2

The above query was answered in the following manner: '*The Regulations are that the immigrants must be more than 50% European and in addition must be European in appearance (so that 75% is felt to be necessary to be sure)*'. 3

Predominantly European (over 50% ancestry + European in appearance)

The response to the query of 11th November 1948 was a masterpiece in 'Yes Minister' style bureaucratic jargon; i.e. more than 50% European ancestry was O K but to be sure select only those who are also **European in appearance** so that it works out to about 75% European! In other words both the Minister and the instruction to the High Commission, Colombo are correct, although they appear to contradict each other.

But how was 50% or more European ancestry to be established? In this deadly serious pursuit of the time, the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon, (DBU) took a leading role. The DBU was established in 1908. Among other activities, this organization from the outset, put out a publication aptly titled, '*The Journal of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon*'. Very early into publication the DBU Journal started tracing the genealogy of prominent Burgher families. Not only were genealogies published but these were updated whenever there was an addition to a prominent family. The DBU was fortunate to have as a founder member and President, Mr.

R. Anthonisz. He was an archivist proficient in Dutch. From original government records and such other material as Dutch Reformed Church and School Registers, he was able to preside over the accurate extraction of information about the early history of Dutch settlers and their families. In addition to official records genealogists and archivists had access to 'stamboeks' (family or clan books) which were maintained by the head of the particular family. In these family books were recorded births, deaths, marriages, and other important events relating to family ancestry.

By the time genealogies were being sought by prospective Burgher migrants to Australia, Mr. R. Anthonisz had passed away. He died in 1930. With the assistance of another notable scholar, viz, Mr. D. V. Altendorff, many an applicant for entry to Australia was able to establish '**Predominantly European**' ancestry.

Like the Dutch Burghers, descendants of the British and the Portuguese also sought assistance from archivists to try and establish **Predominantly European** ancestry. The task for British descendants was not too difficult. A large number of British who had settled in Ceylon came out in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. With the help of comparatively good government, church and school records they were able to trace ancestry back to the original settler who came out to Ceylon or India as army officer, evangelist/teacher, civil servant, engineer, or businessman. Where there were gaps in the official paper records it was not uncommon to have affidavits and declarations from prominent or elderly family members attesting to the European lineage of a particular applicant.

At the time the sub group which encountered the greatest difficulty in establishing more than 50% European ancestry was the '**Portuguese Burghers**'. To begin with they had to examine genealogy over a period of over 400 years. Also, the descendants of the Portuguese had intermarried more freely with other Ceylonese communities and ancestry was mixed more so than the Dutch or British. For the descendants of the Portuguese, matters were further complicated as many Sinhalese had adopted Portuguese surnames, (mostly said to be at the time of conversion to Christianity).

If one thought that only the Ceylonese Burghers were deadly serious about the **Predominantly European** ancestry requirement,

it would be incorrect. Australian Immigration bureaucrats were deep into the question of Burgher genealogy too. The genealogies accompanying applications for migration were scrutinised minutely as did any accompanying statutory declarations and affidavits. The level of close scrutiny is reflected in the following communication between Colombo and Canberra. An internal Departmental Dispatch from Colombo to Canberra, dated 3 February 1948, had this to say: *'As an example of Mr. Van der Hoeven's unreliability as it affects us he recently wrote us a letter supported by documentary evidence to the effect that he had made a thorough examination of the genealogy of one of the members and his family and certified that all members of that family were predominantly of European descent. As it happened the people concerned had interviewed us some days previously and we knew beyond doubt on the admission of the people themselves that the father was straight Eurasian (50% European) and that the mother was the daughter of an Eurasian (50% Eurasian) and a pure Sinhalese, the resultant percentage of European blood in the children being 37 1/2%'.⁴*

So much for Predominantly European ancestry. What about 'European Appearance'?

Often, even today, when a crime is committed we hear the police refer to persons as being of European, Middle Eastern or Pacific Islander appearance. We have therefore in our minds a comparatively clear picture of what each type of 'appearance,' ought to be.

Among the Ceylonese Burghers in the post 2nd World War era there was a wide range of 'appearances'. Some were blue eyed and very fair in complexion. Others were dark skinned and often not distinguishable from some of the Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims of Ceylon. These inconsistencies in appearance were the cause of a great deal of confusion in the minds of Aussie officials. A Memorandum from the Office of the High Commissioner for Australia Colombo, to Canberra, noted: *'Many of these Burghers would make suitable immigrants for Australia provided that the ad-mixture of Asiatic blood and consequent dark colour which is characteristic would not be a barrier to their employment in Australia. The degree of darkness of complexion varies remarkably even in the same family'.⁵*

Practical difficulties associated with the over 50% European ancestry and European appearance led to some serious disagreements between Colombo and Canberra. On 4th March 1948, the Department of Immigration Canberra sent a communication to Colombo stating: *'...Customs Boarding Officers who act for Immigration Department on arrival ships Australia have reported in fifty-five cases that persons arriving from Ceylon holding certificates issued your office stating that they are predominantly of European descent are definitely non-European in appearance and do not come within category of persons eligible permanent admission.*

In one case a person named Pereira who called Canberra and was definitely non-European in appearance. He could not produce any evidence of mother's ancestry. Evidence produced regarding father could not be accepted as conclusive proof that father was of pure European descent or even predominantly European. Pereira states that evidence was accepted by your office that he was predominantly European.'⁶

Among the Ceylonese Burghers in the post 2nd World War era ... some were blue eyed and very fair in complexion. Others were dark skinned, often not distinguishable from the Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims of Ceylon.

The matter of persons of non-European appearance coming in as migrants seems to have caused concern among the Australian public at the time. The question of predominantly *European ancestry* could be clinically examined by bureaucrats at their desks, but *European appearance* was a more subjective assessment. In Canberra politicians and bureaucrats were concerned that the *appearance* aspect of the migration test was not being applied as required.

Such was of Canberra's concern on this that an official notification was sent from the Immigration Department, Canberra to the Australian High Commission, Colombo stating: *'Hostile criticism has been aroused this end at appearance of considerable numbers Anglo-Indian or other partly coloured people on ships arriving here'.⁷*

There was subsequent consultation with The United Kingdom and the Shipping Companies to limit the intake of passengers of non-European ancestry and appearance, at Colombo and ports in India.

The Australian preoccupation with *European appearance* persisted long after migrants arrived in Australia.

As is the case today, migrants could apply for 'Naturalisation' a few years after arrival. In the nineteen fifties the typical Naturalisation Application form contained 17 questions. The questions were quite innocuous. Typically, the questions ranged from personal details to such matters as:

Question 3

'Evidence produced as to birthplace and nationality.....?'

Question 11

'Has applicant an adequate knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship?'

Question 15

'Is there any evidence that the applicant and his children are mentally deficient?'

However, after the 17th question there was a blank space on the application form termed 'General'. In the 1950s there is evidence to show that most cases favourably approved for naturalisation carried the hand written notation

authorities seemed to be that with the *mixed races* there was a need to screen carefully before acceptance for migration was given. In October 1950, Canberra sent a Memorandum to Colombo, further clarifying (sic) the requirements for migrant approval. This Memo stated:

'The Minister has decided that eligibility for admission to Australia of persons of mixed race shall depend upon compliance with the following conditions...

(1) a person must be 75% or more European (as regards origin). Documentary evidence of this must be furnished;

(11) he must be fully European in upbringing and outlook;

(111) he tends to be European rather than non European in appearance'.⁹

Now there were, in addition to the *European ancestry* and *European appearance*, further requirements that the applicant must be '*fully European in upbringing and outlook*'.

In spite of all this highly restrictive policy, many a Ceylonese Burgher did migrate to Australia. Canberra kept a close watch over Colombo and required that full lists of applicants '*Approved*' or '*Not Approved*' for entry to Australia be sent in to Canberra. Lists were sent from Colombo to Head Office, Canberra, every six months. The following (see box below) is an example of one such list (abbreviated).

LIST OF APPLICANTS FROM CITIZENS OF CEYLON FOR PERMANENT
ENTRY TO AUSTRALIA
AS FROM OCTOBER 1949 TO MARCH 1950

*Applications of Immigrants
APPROVED*

*Mrs. Daisy Irene Elaine Misso
Mr. George Victor Ebell
Mr Christopher LLewellyn Vanderwall
Miss Rhoda Margaret Bartholomeusz
Mr. George Randolph Staples*

*Applications of Immigrants
NOT APPROVED*

*Mr. Francis Godfrey Wright
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Annesley Moldrich
Mr. Clarence Olwin Wolff
Mr. Leslie Irwin De Jong
Mr Cecil Ladlux de Kretser'.¹⁰*

by the interviewing officer;

'Appearance predominantly European'.⁸

The fact that more and more persons of non-European appearance were being admitted as migrants from Ceylon, India and other locations led in 1950, to a tightening of the migration approval criteria. The problem for the Australian

The right of review in 'not-approved' cases

When approval was refused, the individual or family in question had recourse to a review process. In early 1950, the matter of Mr. Wolff's non-approval (see list above) was referred to in a memorandum sent from the Australian

High Commission Office in Colombo, to Canberra. This communication covered not only the particular case of Mr. Wolff but also the reliability of genealogies in general. On these matters the memo stated: *'Mr. Wolff was able satisfactorily to establish his genealogy. He is a member of the Burgher community but the High Commissioner did not feel able to approve his application for the reason that his colour was darker than we would feel it would be to secure his admission to Australia. This is, according to our understanding of the present interpretation that a migrant should be of predominantly European descent. We would be grateful for advice if any decision is made to modify this requirement.'*

I should add of course that Burgher genealogies present some difficulty since although they are traced for several generations and more than a century through records kept since the Dutch administration of Ceylon, cases are believed to have occurred in which Sinhalese persons assume Dutch or Portuguese names upon Baptism in their respective Churches'. 11

The case of Alice Nona

Probably no individual incident could illustrate the post war Australian preoccupation with restricting non-European migration *or even temporary entry*, than the saga of 'Alice Nona'. The facts go like this: In early 1949, a Mrs. E H Temple (the Australian wife of an Englishman working in Ceylon) planned a holiday to Australia, traveling by sea. Mrs. Temple had a six month old baby and wished to have a Ceylonese servant travel with her. The servant, (Alice Nona, aged 35) was described as a 'nurse'. The Australian High Commission in Colombo was contacted by the Temples and after some delay documents were issued for Alice Nona's travel to Australia as Mrs. Temple's nurse. All arrangements went to plan until the ship on which Mrs. Temple and Alice Nona were traveling, docked at Brisbane. *At Brisbane, Alice Nona was ordered not to leave the ship.*

No doubt this restriction caused great inconvenience to Mrs. Temple. But more importantly, the incident raised outrage in Ceylon and other Asian countries. A Brisbane newspaper carried the headline: *'Cingalese Nurse Can't Land'*.

In Ceylon very strong criticism of the Australian order prohibiting Alice Nona from

disembarking in Brisbane was expressed in the English press; especially in the 'Ceylon Daily News'.

The press in Ceylon went into the matter in detail and highlighted the fact that Alice Nona was granted valid entry documents to Australia by the High Commission in Colombo. At first the Canberra Authorities did not relent. They took the view that Colombo had made a mistake. Canberra maintained that only wives of *Australian officials* could bring servants to Australia!

The situation for the Australian Authorities was not one that could be defended for long. The campaign in support of the Alice Nona gathered momentum and in Ceylon, India and other Asian countries was causing embarrassment to Australia. Britain was said to have exerted diplomatic pressure urging reversal of the prohibition order. Canberra soon relented and the following order was made;

'Mrs. Alice Nona permitted to land under exemption for one month'. 12

1. Extract from letter dated 21 June 1947 from the President the Burgher Settlement League to the Chief Secretary Sir Charles Collins.
2. Extract from Dispatch dated 11 November 1948 from High Commissioner Colombo to Immigration Authorities Canberra.
3. File note made on 15 November 1948 in regard to Dispatch 2.
2. Underlining of the words 'in addition' is present in the original document.
4. Extract from Departmental Dispatch dated 3 February 1948 from the Commissioner for Australia in Ceylon to Canberra.
5. Extract from Memorandum from the Office of the High Commissioner Colombo to the Department of External Affairs Canberra dated 4 August 1947.
6. Extract from Departmental of External Affairs cablegram dated 4 March 1948 to the Australian High Commissioner, Colombo.
7. Extract from cablegram from Department of Immigration, Canberra, to the Australian High Commission, Colombo.
8. Extract from Department of Immigration, Application for Naturalization or Registration: Processing Sheet for Mr..... (This was for a Ceylonese applicant).
9. Extract from Memorandum from Canberra for the Office of the High Commissioner, Colombo.
10. Abbreviated list of Applicants from Citizens of Ceylon for Permanent Entry to Australia.
11. Extract from memorandum for the Secretary, Department of Immigration, Canberra, from the Official Secretary, High Commission, Colombo.
12. Cablegram from Department of External Affairs to Australian High Commission Colombo, dated 30 March 1949. [Underlining by author and not in the original document].

EDITOR'S NOTE: *(Photocopies of all documents mentioned in the article are held by the author).*



A memorable evening with General Sir John Kotalawala PC, KBE, CH, K.StJ

Prime Minister of Ceylon 1951-1956 - Part 3



This is the third and final episode of the Sir John Kotalawela saga where the author NEVILLE JAYAWEERA paints a remarkable portrait of Sri Lanka's most colourful Prime Minister who was humane, fair, cavalier and one who never minced his words.

As the hot summer evening meandered lazily through the night in Sir John Kotalawala's spacious mansion in Brogues Wood, Kent, and as cognac and cheese followed a sumptuous supper, Sir John's tongue, which at the worst of times was cavalier, was wagging even more vigorously. There was no stopping him. He regaled Lorna Wright and me with stories about VIPs and big events from the past and kept us falling off our chairs laughing, till my stomach began to feel cramp. (Lorna, one time the wife of Ceylon Civil Servant Raine Wright, and divorced, was Sir John's housekeeper and hostess in the mid-1970s. In later years the Australian Government conferred on her the Order of Australia. As the evening advanced and the stories got more and more risqué, Lorna excused herself from the dinner table and retired to her quarters saying: "I cannot take this anymore. You two men had better share the stories between yourselves.")

As Sir John's narration galloped along, not a person was spared - Lord Soulbury, Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake, Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, Prime Minister Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, President J.R. Jayawardena, Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake, and not least, himself, all alike, grist to his relentless raconteur mill. However, what was admirable was that most of the stories showed him up as the clown!

However, I must add quickly, hilarious though most of the stories were, not one of them was driven by animosity or rancour. I must also add that though the stories carried Sir John's signature embellishments, I believed them. Though given to love of decorations and ceremony, an extraordinary quality of Sir John's character was also an underlying cynicism about the high and the mighty, and that included him as well.

Not all the stories he related provoked laughter. A few produced a deep shock and sadness, such as the story about why and how his father, John Kotalawala (Snr) took his own life, when Sir John was only seven, and why Sir

'However, I must add quickly, hilarious though most of the stories were, not one of them was driven by animosity or rancour. I must also add that though the stories carried Sir John's signature embellishments, I believed them.'

John had to divorce his wife within a few years of marriage, and why his mother, the redoubtable Alice Kotalawala, converted from Buddhism to Christianity.

Of the many stories Sir John narrated that evening I have chosen two for relating here. One, in a somewhat serious vein, is how he claims to have influenced the Soulbury Commission's recommendations, and the other, in a rather lighter vein, about how he facilitated S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike's marriage to Sirima Ratwatte.

The Soulbury Commission

With a few broad brush strokes, let me first paint the background to the Soulbury Commission story.

For most of my readers born after 1945, this will be like reading an extract from their history books, but for the few veterans from my generation, born between 1930 and 1935, what I relate below will also evoke vivid memories.

Following the Donoughmore Reforms (1927-1930) Ceylon (as Sri Lanka was then known) had experienced universal adult franchise and internal self-government, except for the

“three policemen” as they were called, the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Legal Secretary, all British nominees, who ensured that the natives in the State Council, did not get out of hand!

As the 1930s dragged on, agitation grew within the State Council for a greater measure of self government leading up to Dominion Status and with that end in view, in February 1945, the State Council passed what they called the Free Lanka Bill which provided for an Independent Ceylon, structured on the Westminster model, within the British Commonwealth. What was most significant about that Bill was that bar one vote (and that was the vote of a nominated British member) it was passed unanimously in the Council.

However, the Colonial Office rejected the Bill and announced that a Royal Commission will be appointed, after the end of the war, at some unspecified time, to go into the whole question of constitutional reform for Ceylon. This was not at all acceptable to the Ceylonese leaders, and seeing in the proposal a familiar prevarication, they stepped up their agitation.

Worsening political climate

By this time, the political climate within Ceylon was turning distinctly sour. The rugged “old salt” Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton, Commander-in-Chief, Ceylon, was notoriously racist and insensitive to the subtleties of governance. He had called Oliver Goonatilleke a “bloody black bastard”, and had addressed Sir D. B. Jayatillaka, the much respected Leader of the House, as “a bloody idiot”, and had ruled that the Colombo Club, Colombo’s famous watering hole for the white rulers, should be kept a white preserve.

Contrary to expectations, white supremacist attitudes had hardened during the war years and local resentment was growing. The LSSP (Lanka Sama Samaja Party) though proscribed, was fermenting disaffection throughout the country. To make matters worse, the British business and planting community

were openly hostile to the granting of more power to the local political leaders.

Far out in the Indian Ocean ring of islands called Cocos Islands (close to Australia) the Ceylonese members of the local garrison, drawn from the Ceylon Garrison Artillery, but commanded by a British volunteer officer, had mutinied, and had been executed, despite appeals on their behalf by most of the leading Ceylon’s political leaders, and the news about why the men mutinied, seeping through to Ceylon, was highly inflammatory.

India was in ferment and the Indian National Congress was openly in revolt. Worse, somewhere in the jungles of Malaysia, Subhas Chandra Bose, the charismatic Indian leader, was putting together an Army of Liberation drawn from Sikh and Ghurkha regiments who had been captured by the Japanese and released to join Bose, and a rising young Ceylonese politician named J.R. Jayawardena was suspected to be in liaison with Bose.

Against this background, the Colonial Office’s rebuff to the State Council’s proposals for political reform was like throwing combustible stuff on smouldering embers. By this time, Sir D. B. Jayatillaka had stepped down from the position of Leader of the House, and D. S. Senanayake (D.S.) had taken over his position. Unlike Sir D.B. who was genteel and placid, D.S. was combative, cunning and ambitious.

D. S. now saw his opportunity and he would not stand for prevarication by the Colonial Office. He realised that, with storm clouds gathering over the political horizon in Ceylon and India, the time was opportune to press hard on Whitehall, but keeping strictly within the limits of constitutionality.

Sir John takes over the narration

At this point I will switch over to the dramatic first person mode and let Sir John take over the narrative.

Sir John (S.J.) “So you know what? The old man D. S., cunning “bugger”(sic) that he was, asked me to approach Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Commander-in-Chief, South East Asia Command (SEAC), - later Viceroy of India, and sneak to him racist stories about Admiral Geoffrey Layton, who was under his overall command. Lord Louis was stationed in Kandy, and as a military man myself, holding a Commission as a colonel in the. Ceylon Light



Photograph: www.britain-at-war.org.uk

• **Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton**

Infantry (C.L.I.) the government had nominated me to be its official liaison with the SEAC.

I approached Lord Louis and painted a picture of rising discontent within the country. Taken aback, Mountbatten sent a telegram to Churchill that unless the colonial office responded more positively to the Minister's proposals for reform, Ceylon too will be sucked into the Indian ferment and that as C-in-C SEAC he would like to avoid that at any cost.

Neville Jayaweera (N.J.) You mean Lord Louis was willing to ignore the local C-in-C. Sir Geoffrey Layton?

S.J: Yes, that is the whole point men! (*sic*) We knew that Lord Louis, who was Churchill's personal nominee, could override even the Viceroy in Delhi. When Lord Louis' telegram reached London, the Colonial Office promptly reversed its position, and in 1944 itself nominated a Royal Commission on constitutional reform to come to Ceylon, even before the war ended, with Lord Soulbury heading the commission.

However, the cunning fox D. S. had not finished
N.J: I don't understand. So what more did D. S. want?

S.J: D. S. was of the view that the only way to extract the maximum from the Soulbury Commission was to boycott it! How do you like that!

N.J: I don't follow the logic.

S.J; You see, we wanted to show the Colonial Office that unless they granted us what we had asked for in the Minister's Lanka Freedom Bill, there will be no point in cooperating with the Soulbury Commission and consequently the Marxists will step up their agitation and that a Marxist takeover will be inevitable.

N.J: I don't understand how you could boycott the Commission and yet get them to do you a favour.

S.J: That's the beauty of it men! (*sic*) Again it was D.S' cunning that did it. He put together a small team. Officially, and publicly we were boycotting the Commission, but hidden from view we were sucking up to them. D. S. gave Oliver Goonatilleke and me various assignments. Oliver was virtually the unseen secretary to Lord Soulbury constantly whispering things in his ear, while I arranged all sorts of tamashas for the Commissioners, all over the country, including even an elephant kraal. In the course of all these tamashas I was able to convince the Commissioners that the Marxists will take over

the country very soon.

N.J: But Sir John, how did you counter the powerful arguments being put forward by G. G. Ponnambalam and company. Surely the commissioners were not going to let even an elephant kraal influence their thinking?

S.J: Simply by ignoring them! Jayaweera, you don't seem to see my point. The one thing the Commissioners feared was the Marxist threat, and while we deliberately avoided discussing the minorities' issue, we magnified the Marxist threat, and argued that unless the Ministers' Free Lanka Bill was adopted by the Commission and Dominion Status granted soon, the Marxists will have a platform for agitation and even overthrow the democratic government.

Fortunately around this time a wave of Marxist inspired strikes swept through the country as if to prove our point.

D. S.

also decided not to reply to the charges of discrimination being made by the Tamils, especially by G. G. Ponnambalam, and that caused the communal confrontation to subside. What I want to tell you is that it was not Sir Ivor Jennings or any pundits who persuaded the Soulbury Commission to recommend Dominion Status for Ceylon but D.S's cunning strategy of sucking up to the Commission in private, while publicly boycotting it, and at the same time by blowing up the Marxist threat out of all proportion.

By calling strike after strike, the so called Marxist "golden brains" fell for D.S's trap, thereby proving to the Commissioners that what we were saying about the imminent Marxist threat was indeed true!

N.J: Well Sir, if I am to accept all that you say I will have to relearn my knowledge of Sri Lankan history. What about the roles played by Sir Ivor Jennings, by Sir Oliver, by T. D. Perera of the Civil Service and all those minute negotiations with Whitehall in which they engaged?

S.J: I say Jayaweera! You do not seem to understand the truth about politics and government. What you see and hear on the surface is for public consumption. What you do



• G.G. Ponnambalam

Photograph: www.google.com.au

not hear or see is what really matters. Let me tell you another thing! Do you know what finally clinched the deal?

N.J: No sir, I just cannot imagine. Tell me!

D. S. Senanayake's trump card

S.J: D.S. played his final trump card through me. He asked me to give Lord Soulbury the absolute assurance that if he recommends Dominion Status in his report, the government will ask the Palace that he (Soulbury) be appointed as the new Dominion's first Governor-General. I made that offer to Soulbury at a private dinner I gave him, just he and I only, at my Kandawela home. Soulbury looked me in my face through his monocle and held out his hand. We shook hands and the deal was settled. So, Dominion Status for Ceylon was sealed with a handshake!

N.J: Honestly! So that is how these things are done! What a mockery, what a charade!

S.J: Jayaweera! Let me tell you something. Wearing a monocle and being suited by Savile Row does not make a gentleman! (The aristocratic monocle was Lord Soulbury's distinguishing feature). But let me tell you something more terrible.

The old fox D.S. eventually played me out also! When he fell off his horse and died everyone expected Soulbury to ask me to form the next government. But no! Instead Soulbury asked D.S' son Dudley, who was about number four in the seniority table to form the government, whereas, I was number two. You know what? Unknown to me, D.S. and Soulbury had shaken hands on a separate secret deal! That was Soulbury's pay back to the old fox! That is how gentlemen play politics!

N.J: I have read the Premier Stakes said to have been written by you. So, why did D.S. and Soulbury renege on you?

S.J: Don't be a bloody ass Jayaweera! (*sic*) Self interest! Self interest! That is the first and the last thing in politics. Neither country, nor religion, nor anything else, but simply, self interest!

N.J: I thought it is money and power?

S.J: But isn't that self interest! All this talk about principles and ideology in politics is a lot of balderdash men! (*sic*) What happened to S.W.R.D's principles when he reneged on the Chelva-Banda pact? What happened to Dudley's principles when he reneged on the Dudley-Chelva accord? Whatever happened to the principles of that Father of the Revolution

Philip Gunawardena when he joined the UNP? Most of all, what the hell happened to the Marxist principles when the LSSP and the Communist Party abandoned their great revolutionary ideology and joined hands with Sirima?

N.J: Well Sir John, it has been indeed a memorable evening and I am most grateful to you for your hospitality. It is now almost midnight and I must be going. Will you be so good as to ask your chauffeur to drive me back to London?

S.J: Wait men! (*sic*). Wait! I have not told you even a fraction of what I wanted to tell you. I know that someday you will be writing your memoirs. You are that type! I want you to include in them my story as well. So sit down and listen.

N.J: OK! Just another fifteen minutes then! But, Sir John you have promised me that you will speak to a tape and when I get back to Colombo I shall arrange with the Marga Institute to record your autobiography in greater detail for posterity. Is that OK? (**This was done exactly as promised**)

S.J: Ok! That's fine. But this I must tell you now. Do you know that without me there would have



• **Sir John Kotalawela**



• **Sirima Ratwatte & S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike.**

been no marriage between S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and Sirima Ratwatte?

N.J: No! How was that? You mean you were the broker?

S.J: No! I was the financier! You see! The marriage was an arranged thing. For obvious political reasons, Banda wanted a Kandyan connection, but with loads of money also. Barnes Ratwatte, Dissawe of Mahawalatenne, was my friend and had asked me to look out for a suitable

husband for his daughter Sirima but when Banda was proposed he (Banda) asked for Rs 50,000 in cash. (In 2012 currency that would be around Rs 500 million)

Early one morning one day in 1940 Barnes Ratwatte turned up on my doorstep in Kandawela saying he was in serious trouble. The engagement ceremony of his daughter Sirima to Bandaranaike was only a week away and Banda was insisting on the promised Rs 50,000 in cash on the day of the engagement. Banda had said, "no cash, no engagement" and old Barnes could not raise even a fraction of that amount because he had to sell off land from his vast estate. He asked me to lend him the Rs 50,000 in cash. Who on earth will have that kind of money in cash! So I piled into his car and we drove off to my bank, Grindlays Bank in the Fort and just on my word, without any collateral or security, but just on my signature, the British manager loaned me Rs 50,000 which I in turn handed over to Barnes, without even an I.O.U chit. But Barnes was a thorough gentleman and within three months he had sold off some land and settled the sum in full on me, with unasked for interest, and I settled my loan with my bank.

So there! That's another story for your memoirs!

N.J: Sir John, it has indeed been an unforgettable evening, I shall certainly ensure that someday all your stories will be placed before the public.

S.J: I say Jayaweera! You know I have never spilled the beans to anyone like I have done to you this evening? Remember to come round to Kandawela with your wife and daughter when you return to Colombo.

So saying, Sir John hugged me warmly as if I had been a long cherished friend, which I certainly was not! In fact I was not even an acquaintance, but I felt in his embrace a deep and unspeakable loneliness. Now, shorn of all the pomp and the adulation that surrounded him when he was centre stage, he seemed to lack any inner substance on which he could draw and which could sustain him, as he dragged his life through silent hours and lonely days. Hence, his need to reminisce and recreate those times when his ego had prospered.

As I was being driven back to London very late that night, I reflected on Sir John's

personality and life and felt a great sadness and a deep compassion, for a lonely man who did not seem to have anything to live by, except rapidly fading memories.

(Concluded)



YOUR LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS

THE CEYLANKAN is published quarterly and the editor is on the look-out for your literary contributions. Be assured that your work will be given careful consideration with a view to publication at all times.

While every effort is made to print material that is relevant and correct, we do not take the responsibility for errors. The editor would appreciate any inaccuracies being brought to his attention.

Original, previously unpublished, material is sought, preferably of an anecdotal, historical nature, but any material will be considered provided it contributes to the CSA's ideals of being non-racial, non-political, non-religious and non-controversial.

To facilitate the design/layout, we request that your word processing/typing be unformatted. Where applicable, contributors are also requested to annotate bibliographical references to help further research and study by interested members.

SOME HANDY HINTS

Cure for headaches: Take a lime, cut it in half, and rub it on your forehead. The throbbing will go away.

=====

Don't throw out all that leftover wine: Freeze into ice cubes for future use in casseroles and sauces. Left over wine? What's that?

=====

To get rid of itch from mosquito bites, try applying soap on the area and you will experience instant relief.

=====

Ants, ants, ants everywhere... Well, they are said to never cross a chalk line. So, get your chalk out and draw a line on the floor or wherever ants tend to march. See for yourself.



Meals Ammi Made

MUMMY'S BROWN STEW Sherine Prins (St Clair NSW)

- 500 gm Beef (sliced)
- 3 Carrots (boiled and cut into large pieces)
- Potaotes (boiled and cut into large pieces)
- 4 Bombay Onions (cut into quarters)
- 3 Ripe Tomatoes (cut finely)
- 1/2 lb Cabbage (sliced into large pieces)
- A few red onions
- A piece of cinnamon
- Oil for tempering
- 10 cardomons
- Optional Ingredients:** Green peas, Macaroni, Corned Beef, Bacon, Sausages.

Preparation:

Wash and slice beef. Add salt and pepper powder. Slice a few red onions. Heat cooking

oil in a pan and add the sliced onions. When fried add the beef and leave it to boil stirring occasionally. When the oil is dried add the finely cut tomatoes and cover the beef with salted water and allow to boil. Add the cabbage, bombay onions, cinnamon and cardomons. Now add the carrots and potatoes as well. Optional ingredients may also be added, if desired. Finally dissolve a tablespoon of flour in half a cup of water (double these two ingredients if more gravy is needed) and add to the pan.

Send us your recipes

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

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

Kitchen quotes

- Kitchen closed - - this chick has had it!
- I'm creative; you can't expect me to be neat too!
- So this isn't Home Sweet Home... Adjust!
- Ring Bell for Maid Service... If no answer do it yourself!
- I clean house every other day... Today is the other day!
- I would cook dinner but I can't find the can opener!
- My house was clean last week, too bad you missed it!
- I came, I saw, I decided to order takeaway.
- If you don't like my standards of cooking... lower your standards.
- A messy kitchen is a happy kitchen, and this kitchen is delirious.
- If we are what we eat, then I'm easy, fast and cheap.
- A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.
- Thou shalt not weigh more than thy refrigerator.
- Blessed are they who can laugh at themselves for they shall never cease to be amused.
- A clean house is a sign of a misspent life.
- Help keep the kitchen clean - eat out.
- Countless number of people have eaten in this kitchen and gone on to lead normal lives.
- My next house will have no kitchen ... just vending machines.
- Gardening forever...Housework, never!
- A husband is someone who puts out the garbage and gives the impression he just cleaned the whole house.
- Housework done properly can kill you.
- If you can't have your cake, AND eat it... Then next time make more cakes.
- My partner has a black belt in cooking. One chop and you're dead!



*Congratulations and a
Warm Welcome to our
New Member*

DR MANTHINDA HETTIARARCHCHI,
Cherrybrook, NSW 2126.





Headlines and Deadlines

—Jottings of a Journo—Sydney, 2012 by
E.C.T.Candappa.

Printed by Kwik Kopy Hornsby

NSW Australia.

ISBN 978 098 729 700 6 Introductory Price \$20

Copies can be obtained from the author - phone
(03) 9795 5960 or email: dougjay20@gmail.com

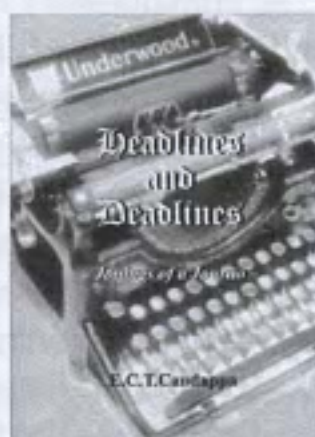
Reviewed by HUGH KARUNANAYAKE

This most aptly titled memoir by one of Sri Lanka's best known and most experienced journalists now living in Melbourne, makes absorbing reading.

Crammed into its 216 pages are a myriad stories, anecdotes, and workplace lore relating to journalism in post independent Sri Lanka; a world almost entirely dominated by the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon or Lake House as it was then commonly known.

The author having spent most of his 50 years as a journalist with Lake House, had a ringside view of the daily drama and frenzied activity that took place behind the production of national newspapers like the Daily News and the Observer. He had worked with or known intimately almost every journalist that plied his trade in that era, and these memoirs are a virtual reference directory on the lives and contributions made by scores of Editors, Sub editors, News editors, Features editors, Sports scribes and others of the journalistic tribe. The author had not only worked with them but seemed to have stepped back momentarily to observe and make mental notes of the habits, traits and personal foibles of his erstwhile colleagues.

Using his extraordinarily gifted powers of recapitulation, recollection and description, the author has brought to life personalities of the press, most of whom have since long departed from the earthly scene. With his crisp and racy style of prose, couched in well crafted language, the author has brought us closer to the lives and personalities of people behind the news in Sri Lanka of that period. Prominent journalists of that era were mere names to most of its thousands of readers, "names to conjure with" as journalists of those times are wont to say; but thanks to the author, after one read of this work, we could almost picture them in our minds eye.



There is little doubt that Lake House founded by D.R.Wijewardene had assigned to itself during its glory days, a key political role in post-independent Ceylon. As observed by the author "Lake House took on the role of power broker and king maker, backing only one dynasty – the Senanayakes" and became a symbol of false, biased reporting, for which it had to pay the ultimate political price by being taken over by political forces arraigned against it. The political overtones under which Lake House papers operated seem also to lay the paradigms within which the so called freedom of expression existed in Lake House. No journalist was allowed to write favourably of political parties opposed to the UNP. One incident related by the author underscores the pervading political philosophy that was covertly driven by Lake House bosses. The author having interviewed a prominent visiting trade unionist had written a factual account of the interview, to be rebuked by his supervisor with the words: "you are not supposed to write anything in favour of communists"! Such restrictions, however, did not deter the quality or the diversity of output from its journalists, most of whom seemed to have worked with tremendous loyalty and utmost diligence in the practice of their craft. It also has to be said that, notwithstanding its plainly discernible political objectives, the institution also provided a working atmosphere which extracted the best from its staff.

Talented stringers often found their way to the top of the ladder and such successes served as a beacon to guide others to the top.

Of much human interest are the many stories the author relates of his colleagues of whom quite a few, if not the great majority, had been drawn to the embracing snare of the soothing but addictive amber liquid which often resulted in chronic alcoholism and premature demise. The book reveals that most of the journalists of that era were either heavy drinkers or smokers or both, which makes one wonder whether such proclivities were a necessary adjunct to successful journalism.

A crowning feature to this work would surely have been the inside story of the role of Lake House in the political coup of 1965 which brought down the Sirima Bandaranaike Government. It had been often alleged that large sums of money were paid to government MPs to crossover to the opposition and that the

transactions took place within the portals of Lake House. Details on this significant event in the political history of Sri Lanka have not emerged either in this book or in the public domain yet, and had the author thrown some light on this incident it certainly would have been a tremendous scoop.

This work as presented, however, is remarkable in many other ways and will be of great interest to students of political and social history. All credit to Manny Candappa for producing this very readable and fascinating memoir, the production of which was the direct result of a presentation made by him at a meeting of the Ceylon Society of Australia in Melbourne.

Three Generation Tale by Srini Peries

A Stamford Lake Publication, 2012.

ISBN 978 955 658 292 5

Price (Introductory only at Sydney launch) \$10.

Thereafter \$20. Available from the author or the Ceylon Society. The Sri Lanka price is Rs 500. Also available from Lake House

Bookshop. For further inquiries and sales contact

Srini at srini.p@bigpond.com.au

Reviewed by HUGH KARUNANAYAKE

Three Generation Tale is Srini Peries' autobiography, and is also partly that of her life's partner Tony. It is related through perceptive descriptions of the lives of her maternal grandmother and mother and thereafter by some vivid recapitulations of her own life and that of her immediate family. We already have come



to know a part of Srini's life story through her previous publication *A Gaggles of Aunts: Stories of my Childhood* (Wasala Publications, Colombo November

2004), which indeed set the tone and the tenor for this memoir which makes fascinating reading. We have also had some previous glimpses into the lives of Tony and Srini Peries through that other well told story *Geo Steuart & Co Ltd - 1952-1973 A Personal Odyssey*, (Wasala Publications Colombo August 2003) which although focussing on Tony's engagement with the Company of which he rose to be the first Ceylonese Chairman, also provided some interesting insights into his and Srini's own personal lives away from

the workplace. The life of the author's paternal grandfather Sir Marcus Fernando, legislator, social reformer, and physician is already well documented and in the public domain. This work now therefore gives almost the finishing touches to the remarkable stories of the lives of both Srini and Tony - a story well told and most definitely well worth reading. I have used the word "almost" quite advisedly as I have good reason to believe Tony has 'more gas in the tank' to describe more aspects of his well lived life yet to be told!

This work encompasses over one and a half centuries of the saga of the Fernando-Gunawardene-Peries family - a family prominent in the social life of the country which was, of course, during most of that period under British rule. The author's maternal great grandfather was Mudaliyar Simon Sri Chandrasekera, a land owner and philanthropist of repute who laid the foundation for succeeding generations of his family to make the best of the opportunities provided by the economic environment of the time then dominated by British colonial rule and policies. The legacy of British rule was not merely in the transformation of a peasant economy to a productive one through the creation of plantations, the roads, the railways and the ports, but also through a complex of social institutions and practices eg the club, dress codes, table fare and manners etc which seemed to have overwhelmed the awestruck local elites eager to assimilate and replicate them. The story of three generations of Srini's family mirrors to some extent some of the many societal changes that emerged as a result of British rule; a sort of post colonial hangover endured by the emerging ruling class which was left with a shared language, partly shared faith, shared sports like cricket, rugby, and golf, and a shared outlook on life in general. This memoir therefore serves in some respects as a virtual case study of the way in which social transformation occurred during a significant period of Sri Lanka's recent history.

The author gifted with a facile and candid style of expression chronicles the story of her family in a manner that sustains the interest of the reader right through from beginning to end. It is told in an intimate 'by the fireside' style of writing that engages the interest of the reader instantaneously. The fact that the names of the *dramatis personae* are well known to most of the present and immediately past generations

BOOK REVIEWS (Continued)

of Sri Lankans makes the narrative all the more interesting. Sri Lankans who have experienced almost a generation of trauma through violent political action and social upheavals over the past four decades will be delighted to be transported through this work to the halcyon days of the 1950s and 1960s, a time when "every prospect pleased and no man was vile"—to quote a corrupted version of Bishop Heber's observation. While one is tempted to describe the journey of the Fernando – Gunawardene - Peries family as a roller coaster ride through the past one and a half centuries of Sri Lankan history, it is difficult not to conclude that most of their journey was on the crest of a wave crested with extraordinary success. I found particularly interesting the descriptions of their international travel as well as the impact of political decisions on their lifestyle while living in Sri Lanka. Srimi recounts her days as a leading woman golfer in Ceylon, as a keen tennis fan—keen enough to watch the finals at the

centre court in Wimbledon, and as a participant observer in the many functions hosted by herself and husband who was a leading light of the commercial world of Sri Lanka, prior to their emigration. Tony and Srimi Peries having decided to seek new pastures at a time when they were at the zenith of their professional and social careers have made a great success of their lives in their adopted homeland. Pursuing a successful tertiary education in Sydney she was able to complement an absorbent exposure to life in general with the mental discipline that goes with a tertiary education including a sound training in the art of writing.

This well recounted memoir relates this saga in an exceptionally candid and very readable manner and the 162-page book is highly recommended reading to anyone interested in the political and social history of 20th century Sri Lanka.

One Liners anyone?

Sometimes, when I look at my children, I say to myself, 'Lillian, you should have remained a virgin.'

- *Lillian Carter (mother of Jimmy Carter)*

I had a rose named after me and I was very flattered. But I was not pleased to read the description in the catalogue: - 'No good in a bed, but fine against a wall.'

- *Eleanor Roosevelt*

Last week, I stated this woman was the ugliest woman I had ever seen. I have since been visited by her sister, and now wish to withdraw that statement..

- *Mark Twain*

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible

- *George Burns*

Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people

only once a year.

- *Victor Borge*

Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.

- *Mark Twain*

By all means, marry. If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.

- *Socrates*

I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury.

- *Groucho Marx*

My wife has a slight impediment in her speech. Every now and then she stops to breathe.

- *Jimmy Durante*

Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was SHUT UP.

- *Joe Namath*

Appreciations

Dr Trevor St C Anghie

*Elegy for Trevor: doctor, sportsman
and friend*

You, dear friend, were the sportsman supreme
Who loved a contest and played to win
The man who was an ornament to his team.
In rugby, the powerful boot kicking the ball
Right between the goal posts, empowering all,
The triumphant players, the cheering crowd
Urged on to victory time and time again.
Many years later in another time and clime
The golfer, with that intense drive to play
And play again until illness made it hard to strive.

But now the game is ended, the final whistle
blown,
Friends, spectators, loving family members
All feel the silence overpowering all.
No more the rough scrimmages with pain,
The brave fight against the insidious opponent
within

No more the possibility of a resounding win.
The time now is for remembering, not for doing
Because all that needed doing is done, and done
well.

As loving husband, nurturing father, proud
grandfather and much more
The caring doctor who was ever active
Beyond the call and time of duty,
Always ready with healing solace to bestow.
Friends recall the warmth of personal hospitality
The fund of clever, amiable jokes,
The ready smile inviting shared laughter
At the funny side of life.
So many enduring memories for those
Who loved him and those whose links were close
A legacy for all to draw on and continue in their
different ways, of course.

I remember the inimitable teller of family stories
Recalling the antics of endearing, exasperating,
exciting and eccentric characters
Of a host of family members stretching from then
Ceylon to South Africa.
The only member of his own family to spend
time learning Chinese
Exploring the roots of his ancestry
First planted in an elite family of ancient China
during the Tsung dynasty
Going back to the twelfth century after Christ.

For those of us who were young with him
The sunset years are here
And so, one by one, the players leave the field
And go to join the others in God's pavilion to rest
On their richly deserved laurels.
The Greeks, those great athletes
Called their final place of rest the Elysian Field,
But we know better.
Rest in peace, dear friend
Until we will surely meet again.

—SHELAGH GOONEWARDENE

Dr Trevor St C Anghie (II)

Dr Trevor Anghie that gentle, lovable man with
an ever present cheerful countenance passed
away in April after a brief struggle with cancer.
Many in Australia will remember him as a caring
and skilled physician in Melbourne where he had
a busy and popular medical practice for the past
three decades.

Rugby fans in Sri Lanka will remember
him as the best place kicker that Sri Lanka ever
produced, dominating the sport in the fifties
and sixties.

Trevor was a product of Royal College,
Colombo where his elder brother Tony and
younger brother Maurice also schooled. Their
father, the legendary Bernard Anghie, was a
teacher at Royal from the 1930s onward and was
entrusted with the responsibility of establishing
and running the Royal College Hostel after
the school regained its buildings from military
occupation in 1946. The Anghie family lived in
the Hostel Wardens' quarters and were very much
in spirit and presence part of the Royalist culture
of the time, which could be summed up as an
admirable mix of scholarship, sporting prowess
and overall decency.

The Dornhorst Memorial Prize is
the most coveted annual award, made by the
school since 1930, to the most popular student
showing outstanding achievement both in
sports and scholarship. Past winners of the prize
included Col FC de Saram, Pieter Keuneman,
Christie Weeramantry and Bishop Lakshman
Wickremesinghe. The brothers Tony and Trevor
were awarded the prize in successive years and
are the only two brothers to have achieved this
rare distinction.

Trevor was an outstanding athlete and
rugby player for Royal, captaining the side in
1950. He continued to play in the following
year in the unbeaten side led by Humphrey

Wijesinghe. It was at Royal where he fine-tuned his art of place kicking by kicking the ball with the toe cap of his boot. Those amazing kicks were called "flying torpedoes"! He could put them all over the crossbar whether it was from beyond mid field or from the touch lines. An exceptional skill obviously honed by practice and determination. He carried his talents to club rugby where he represented the CR & FC and later the Havelocks Club before representing the national side for several years.

After graduating as a medical doctor, Trevor established a medical practice with his wife Ruth in Bandarawela and also in Diyatalawa where he was assisted by another old Royalist, Dr Ken (Bongo) Rajendra. During the many years he worked there, he represented Uva in the Clifford Cup rugby competition.

Trevor was a member of the Ceylon Society of Australia for nearly ten years until his death and has been a regular attendee at the meetings of the Melbourne Chapter. Noteworthy is the fact that, of his former rugby team mates at Royal, Geoff Weinman, Allan Henricus and Bryan Dharmaratne in Sydney and Dr Gamini Jayasinghe and Dr R Natkunam in Brisbane are all members of the Ceylon Society of Australia.

Dr Trevor Anghie is survived by his wife Ruth, son Jeremy and daughters Sabrina, Michele and Tamara and their families; elder brother Tony in Sri Lanka, and younger brother Maurice in Perth. His only sister Maureen predeceased him. "An exceptionally good man has gone to his rest."

Requiescat in pace – Trevor



Mervyn de Sylva
(A daughter's tribute)

As the eldest in our family, I speak for my sisters, Suzette and Caryl, and for my brother, Roderick. Although Ranil was kindly going to deliver this Eulogy for me, I am hoping to be able to do it myself as my last duty to my father.

Thank you so much for being with our family now as we mourn the loss of Daddy, but more importantly, as we celebrate his long, very full and dynamic 99 years of life. It has indeed been an amazing journey – from being born in

the little sleepy town of Galle as it was in 1913, then moving to busy Colombo when he started his working life as a Public Servant and began married life in 1941, followed by his emigration to Sydney in December 1984 with Mummy and Caryl.

Daddy was very proud to have had his education at St. Aloysius College, Galle, run by the Jesuit priests, developing the potential of a naturally enquiring and gifted mind. He was a treasured only child, since my grandmother had to bring him up on her own from a very young age. So his background made him cautious in what he undertook and he strove always for security and stability.

Living through the hardships of two World Wars, felt even in the relative peace of Sri Lanka, only gave him more reason to believe in providing always for the future. Despite this tendency, he had such a zest for life and enjoyed every aspect of the myriad wonders of the world. His extensive reading led him into diverse fields of knowledge – science, philosophy, comparative religion, astronomy and medicine – and he enjoyed immensely debating the nature of the universe, the continuum of time, and such esoteric matters to which there were no definitive answers. Yet he also loved nothing better than to dance the night away, organising golden oldie sing-a-longs with family friends, going for movies every Saturday in Colombo, listening to his favourite classical and only type of music, and always living life to the fullest.

His long life spanned the beginning of car travel, space travel, communication satellites, the internet and phenomenal advances in medical technology, to name but a few. It all fuelled a sense of childlike wonder in the new marvels developing around him. Even while he was in hospital over the last couple of months, he was avidly interested in the equipment being used by the medical staff to move the patient next to him from bed to chair and kept commenting and peeking curiously around the curtains. He had two heart attacks within 24-hours on the eve of his 99th birthday and only survived thanks to the Medical Emergency Team (MET) calls to the bedside – instead of being worried about his heart, he was completely enthralled by the number of doctors who had responded to the MET call and likened it to a "hive of bees".

As a son, his filial duty was carried out to the absolute maximum of his endeavours – our

grandmother lived out her entire 93 years with us and he devotedly and lovingly cared for her, even personally in the last couple of years of her life when she became bedridden.

As a husband, our mother was his childhood sweetheart, having been his next door playmate and included him in her large and lively family of six siblings. Our parents were well matched in their hard-working and industrious ways and always passionate about our welfare. Nothing was too good for us, however hard it had to be striven for. In a day and age when building and living in your own home was not as common as it is now, he did just that.

Daddy, the father, was all that it epitomises – the provider and protector. Discipline was a hallmark of his character, with diligence and excellence in all undertakings, however small. The parameters of our lives were so well ordered that we never ever worried about the tomorrow – only that we would catch the cane for schoolwork that was not to his standards of effort! He took such pride in all our achievements and was behind us four children, steady and immovable as a rock wall in our childhood, and then throughout our grown-up lives till we married and began families of our own.

It was a charmed life for us all until Caryl fell sick at three-years of age and our parents' sole focus from then on was for her recovery and care. The next blow of fate was when he took his courage in his hands at 71 and he, Mummy and Caryl emigrated to Sydney, but Mummy died of heart failure at 68, just 10 days after they arrived here. He was completely devastated and cried for days because of his loneliness in a strange land without her lifelong support and backing. However, he determinedly picked himself up, got an appointment at the Catholic University as Assistant to the Registrar and proceeded to work full time, as a valued and admired staffer, till he was 85. The encomiums heaped on him by his boss at his 90th birthday celebration were so wonderful for us children to hear, and we were so proud of our Daddy.

We all carry within us the seeds of our upbringing, which develop and flourish as we grow older. Daddy was an idealist and bequeathed to us his belief in the values of integrity and honesty without counting the cost, to never indulge in cosseting oneself, to never speak ill of others or maintain grievances, to

strive for self reliance and to be independent in thought and action. He was our lodestar, the wise guiding light, which led us through all our childhood fears and timidities till we became who we are. As we pass on those same values to our children and grandchildren, he will live on in our hearts and minds as the dearest and best father we could ever have hoped for and dreamed of.

Sleep in peace, beloved Daddy – your labours have ceased and we will carry the lamp that you lit for us, and always treasure your memory as long as we live.

–PAULINE GUNAWARDENE

Haneef Badrudeen OAM

Haneef Badrudeen, Managing Director of Serendib Financial Services passed away on 30 January, 2012. His funeral was on 31 January at the Springvale Cemetery in Victoria.

Haneef's contribution to the community was recognised when he was honoured with the Order of Australia Medal in 1999.

He was a Life Member of the Australian Asian Association of Victoria, a member of the Australia-Sri Lanka Business Council, The Multicultural Society, The Victorian Arts Council, The Royal Overseas League, the Australia-Ceylon Fellowship and many more where his contribution was greatly appreciated. He was also a long-standing member of the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC).

Haneef was a member of the Ceylon Society of Australia (Melbourne Chapter) since 2000.

A Public Accountant for almost 40 years, Haneef was founder member of Serendib Financial Services, Agents in Australia for the Bank of Ceylon since 1995.

Haneef Badrudeen will be greatly missed by his family and his numerous friends and associates.

– GORDON COORAY

Pun-O-Graphics

- When chemists die, they barium.
- Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.
- I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid. He says he can stop any time.
- How does Moses make his tea? Hebrews it.

from Aubrey Koelmeyer (Thailand).

Parker-san (as BRIAN PARKER is fondly known to his Japanese buddies) tosses important evidence into the bin, keeps his cool and gives us all the firm assurance that...



Mr. Tatsuguchi keeps his sense of humour

Mr. Tatsuguchi was now my regular minder and he would present to me with a very full programme of sales calls, for my two-week stay, on my arrival in the office on the first day. He would have scheduled six calls a day to a variety of companies that were all potential advertisers for the Australian Financial Review.

However, on one occasion, he led me into an ambush. I cannot remember the company concerned but their advertising man was a Mr Harada who was famous for chewing up foreign representatives and he made no exception with me. Back at the office, Mr Tatsuguchi told his colleagues who all smiled and nodded, giving me sympathetic looks. I felt that they had hoped that like Lionel Rose I would have put Fighting Harada in his place.

At lunch one day I was able to answer one of Mr Tatsuguchi's queries. "How can you remember that from last year?" he asked.

I took his pad of paper and drew a stylised elephant, telling him that the elephant was my totem and they had very long memories. Thereafter in his New Year's greeting cards he would always draw a little elephant somewhere. On one occasion they were just five or six dots on the horizon with an explanation that the herd was going out of sight!

I did not realise that Mr. Tatsuguchi was quite an accomplished artist who used to submit drawings to various Manga (the large comic books which appeared to be the staple reading of most Japanese men). It was only after he died that his mother sent me a couple of examples of his work.

My memory did not always hold good, however. On one occasion, in the office, Mr Tatsuguchi asked me something about the

newspaper. I told him that I could not say for certain but thought the answer was such and such. He said he needed the information for the next client we were about to see. So I quickly scribbled out a fax to the office in Sydney asking for an answer, which returned half an hour later, confirming my original summation.

"I was right," I said, screwing the fax into a ball and lobbing it into a large waste paper bin.

Suddenly, the office went quiet, nobody was talking and most of them were looking at me. "What? What's wrong?"

"You destroyed information coming into this office, Parker-san."

"But it was just a confirmation of my earlier answer...."

Mr Tatsuguchi was shaking his head. "But you must not destroy information coming into this office."

I sheepishly walked over to the bin, took out the incriminating evidence and pressed the creases out of it, on the nearest desk.

Coming back to the office on one occasion we were stuck in the regular afternoon traffic gridlock, I saw a procession on the other side of the road. There were a number of the 'Rising Sun' flags and placards and the participants were chanting. I later found out that it was some minor right-wing political movement that wanted to return to the days when Japan was marching all over Southeast Asia.

"What are they chanting?" I asked.

Mr Tatsuguchi wound down the window and listened intently for a moment or two then smiled. "They are shouting... Go Home Parker-san!"

© Brian Parker

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KATARAGAMA

by Siri Ranawake

The island of Sri Lanka, situated on the crossroads of ancient sea routes has been home to a veritable rainbow of cultures. It is a unique microcosm of crosscurrents of East and West, tradition and modernity. So Sri Lanka can be seen as a paradigm of the rest of Asia, and one can go even further and say that the legend of Kataragama may be said to encapsulate the story of Sri Lanka.

The noted historian Paul E. Pieris wrote of Kataragama: "Here from remote ages was worshipped the six-headed twelve-armed Kanda Kumaraya, otherwise Mahasena Divyaraja, Adhipati (Lord) of the Ruhunu Rata, the hero god..... Kataragama say the Hindus, is his favourite abode, in this age – the Kali Yuga, his authority extends over the entire world."

From pre-historic times, Kataragama has commanded the utmost respect, even approaching fear, across lines of race and religion, such that even Christians, not to mention Muslims who have a mosque within the temple complex, and Hindus routinely visit Kataragama in large numbers. Their rites of vow fulfilment which are performed *en masse* at festival times, stand in mute testimony to Kataragama's silent influence. The legend of Kataragama adapts itself to a remarkably broad range of interpretations.

Today Kataragama is a pilgrimage town, East South East of Colombo with a fast growing township adjoining the Yala National Park.

On a personal note, the veneration of Kataragama caught the imagination of my husband Manthi when he was a little boy in the 1930s. His father Advocate C.V. Ranawake was the foremost authority on Ecclesiastical (Temple) Law in his time.

In close proximity to Kataragama is a cluster of Buddhist temples dating from the 3rd century BC built mainly by King Mahasena on land donated by the king known as viharagam and devalagam. The famed Kiri Vehera dagoba, the Yatala Menik Vehera and other temples in Tissamaharama were embroiled in legal disputation with the colonial government over the ownership of the land on which these temples stood.

C.V. Ranawake was engaged by the temple authorities to represent them in court. So Manthi used to accompany his father when the land cases came up in the local courts. Listening to locals talk about the Kataragama shrine and the power of the deity, father and son used to venture out into the thick jungle by bullock cart, the only means of transport. They used to encounter leopards and herds of elephants on this perilous journey, listening to the fascinating stories of their guide and carter who kept praying for the god's protection on their journey.

This childhood fascination engendered a life-long veneration of the god in Manthi. When our four children were born they were taken to receive the god's blessings when they were only weeks old. I remember our early visits over 50 years ago when Tissa Resthouse, where we stayed overnight, was only a wattle and daub building with a thatched roof. Now of course it is a three star hotel with all the modern amenities. How times have changed!



Jaffna-Batticaloa revisited after 20 years

SAMUEL THEVABALAN ARNOLD shares the experience

Many living overseas look forward to visit their homeland and cherish fond memories of the past era. Following peace in our beloved nation there was an exodus of people back to Sri Lanka to breathe the air of love and brotherhood which was a thing of the past. My last visit to Colombo was 20 years back and Jaffna – Batticaloa 27 years ago. My wife and I were excited about this trip. Our nine-year old grand daughter was in tears saying “Please don’t go; are you safe there!” Well, we were blessed to have a month visiting family, friends and institutions. My article is confined to Colombo – Jaffna – Batticaloa.

set for the day. It was a poya day and women clad in white were moving to temples. The society has turned religious with statues, shrines, places



• Jaffna College

Photo by Sam Thevabalan Arnold

Colombo

We arrived at the Katunayake International Airport on the 4 February 2011 (Sri Lanka Independence Day) a few minutes after midnight. We were impressed with the well organised layout of the airport and a courteous staff ready to help. The information boards were displayed in all three languages. I was delighted to read the beautiful Tamil language. The Bank counter staff quickly converted our foreign currency. During our entire stay we were delighted with the computerised technology in the banks, offices and other places. Mobile phones were in the hands of people of all walks of life – officers, labourers, drivers, students and seniors. Mobile phone shops were everywhere and one could have their new sim cards connected to phones in minutes anywhere in the country. Mobile phones were cheap and people have grasped the modern technology.

As we drove to Colombo city in the dawn, traffic was building up and people getting

of worship for Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians. It appeared that people turned to to the Divine for help and support!

100th birthday celebrations

In the Christian circle, late Rev. A.C. Thambyrajah and late Sister Elizabeth Baker (Methodist Missionary) are well known for the Rehabilitation Centre called “Navajeevanam” (New life) which they founded in Paranthan in the North in the early 1950s. This centre had a farm, workshop and rehabilitation facility for all. The government and community appreciated the unique services. After the passing away of both Rev. Thambyrajah and Sister Baker, the work continued but had to shut during army occupation. Mrs Thambyrajah was rescued from Wanni after the war and now lives in Colombo. Her 100th Birthday was celebrated in St Paul’s Church, Milagiriya on 11 February attended by about one thousand people. At this function I met more than 200 people known to me while

at schools, churches, the YMCA and in the community. Mrs Thambyrajah was quick to recognise us in the crowd.

Visits to Churches, family and friends

While moving around in three wheelers, cars and taxis, crowds waywardly cross busy roads everywhere and drivers use their skills to avert accidents. New roads were being built while many roads were riddled with pot holes. All the side roads have tall walls surrounding homes and high rise flats. One has a feeling as though the roads have shrunk!

Harsh pollutants

The attire of the public has changed with men wearing trousers instead of sarong and women in skirts and trousers instead of the sari. School children in smart uniforms were escorted by parents and often on motor bicycles. It looked scary with policemen trying to control traffic amid tooting horns and the puff of dangerous pollutants.

On the one hand, the upper middle class live in beautifully walled condominiums guarded by security, while the poor struggled to have basic food, clothing and shelter. The middle class are often supported by foreign dollars from families overseas. There seemed to be an eagerness to learn English from institutes advertised all over the city. School children were rushing from one tutor to the next which involved financial burden on parents. The next generation was set for study and excellence in life!

We had the pleasure to attend services in the Methodist churches in Nugegoda, Moor Road and Colpetty. The churches, YMCAs, NGOs and other community organisations were involved in supporting the people in need, especially in the war-torn areas.

My friend Leo Fonseka who worked in the National YMCA and later overseas as a consultant with the UNESCO invited me to address an audience at the Methodist Headquarters on "The Christian Heritage of Jaffna – Work of the American Missionaries". This talk was based on my book with the same name which was launched in Sydney in March 2006.

Jaffna

Our visit to Jaffna was by the overnight "best" air-conditioned coach called "Balloon" bus, supposed to withstand shocks on the bad roads.

A one way ticket cost Rs 1,130 and one could be bounced up and down during travel. DVDs with loud music kept the passengers happy. The drivers and conductors were courteous and could converse in Sinhala and Tamil. The ride took us through Chilaw, Puttalam and I woke up in the Vavuniya bus station. It was around 1 a.m. and shops were open. We were delighted to buy warm Nescafe coffee prepared in a coffee maker, not heard of in my days!

From Vavuniya, our journey was through Killinochi, Paranthan, Chavakachcheri to Jaffna. One could see the scars left by the war with burned out buildings and unused army posts. The soldiers were everywhere but hardly stopped our bus. I was told that there were 70 buses each night plying between Colombo-Jaffna-Colombo charging different travel rates. It was nice to see free flow of people to Jaffna in our 11-hour journey.

The railway system was once the pride of commuters to Jaffna with express trains. But today the line beyond Omanthai is expected to be completed in 2013 with Indian and Chinese aid. As we looked at the railway lines and stations there were hardly any rails, bridges and buildings. At present the trains commute between Colombo and Omanthai. People anxiously await the completion of 120 km of rail to Jaffna.

Glimpses and visits in Jaffna

We enjoyed the hospitality of my brother Rev Chandran Arnold and family who live in Vaddukoddai. We moved around in a van visiting different places, met, reminisced and enjoyed the fellowship of the people. Young and old were busy moving around in buses, cars, scooters, bicycles and on foot. Women wearing helmets were riding on bicycles. Many have given up the traditional sari. There was heavy traffic as people moved to schools, offices and markets. The young generation of children in smart uniforms go to schools in quest of education. Indeed Education was the industry of Jaffna!

Manipay

My home town of Manipay is transformed with shops inclusive of Cargills food city, modern bakery, Electronic technology etc. On the main road there were six banks operating. When I was in Manipay in 1983 there wasn't a single bank. Schools have put up large buildings with government aid. My old school Manipay

Memorial English School where I taught for 10 years is huge and no one knew me.

Green Memorial Hospital

Manipay was founded by Dr Samuel Green, an American missionary in 1848. This was the first medical school/ hospital in western medicine in Sri Lanka. This hospital has been damaged during the war by aerial shelling. This hospital needs support for rebuilding. I continue to cherish fond memories of the hospital campus where we spent our childhood and youth playing tennis and cricket and worshipped in the church. Specialist doctors from Jaffna teaching hospital come to Manipay to treat patients. One looks with wonder at the glorious past of the hospital which is the focus of the town!

McLeod Hospital Inuvil was a great hospital founded by the missionary sisters Mary and Margaret Leitch in 1880. This hospital catered to maternity, women and child health. This place has been badly damaged and is being rebuilt. Now there is an Elders Home, Dental clinic and OPD with visiting specialists from Jaffna. Inuvil is a big town and this hospital when rebuilt will be back to the former glory.

Jaffna College (formerly Batticotta Seminary)

Batticotta Seminary was founded by Rev. Dr Daniel Poor, an American missionary in 1823 at Vaddukoddai. This was the first university of western learning in Sri Lanka. The seminary is the forerunner of the present Jaffna College. As one drives to Vaddukoddai, the Technical institute and the College campus display tall buildings in a lush green surrounding. This was my alma-mater and grateful for this institution where my great- grandfather Prof J R Arnold (Arnold Sathasivampillai) served as Professor of Tamil Literature.

We spent time with the Principal Noel Vimalendran who is running the place effectively facing many challenges. We were happy to meet the first recipient of the Prof. J R Arnold scholarship. This scholarship fund was installed by our family. Every year, three students from Jaffna College will be awarded university degree scholarships in the field of Humanities/Tamil Literature.

Uduvil Girls College

This college in Uduvil was founded in 1824 by an American missionary Harriet Winslow (wife

of Rev. Miron Winslow). This was the first Girls boarding school in the East of the world. This great school produced outstanding alumni who support the school from different parts of the globe.

Our trip to Jaffna reminded us of the need to help the orphans and displaced youth from Wanni. Alumni from many of the schools in Jaffna have sponsored Wanni students to Jaffna schools for education and welfare. Many orphanages are taking care of children. There is no more so called "casteism" and "classism" which was a slur on the past Jaffna society. There is equal opportunity for everyone to excel in education and aspire for positions in the society.

Batticaloa

It was a joy to be in Batticaloa - a land of scenic lagoons, Singing Fish and the Indian Ocean. My wife comes from Batticaloa and our children enjoyed their childhood days there. I taught for ten years in Batticaloa and adored the hospitable people.

We travelled by a ten-seater van from Colombo on strong two way road constructed by Japanese aid. The journey took us through Kurunagela, Habarana, Polonnaruwa, Valaichenai to Batticaloa. The towns on the way were developed with new business establishments, schools, sports stadiums, bridges and other infrastructure. The countryside was green with trees and coconut palms supplying "tambili" (young coconuts) to quench the thirst of travellers. Manampitiya which gets closed to traffic due to floods earlier has new bridges to span the river water below. This is a great step forward! The trip from Colombo takes seven to eight hours now.

We stopped at Kalkudah, where we used to spend holidays in the Somanader Estate, the home of the Grand Old Man of Batticaloa, Dr S.V.O. Somanader. This was a lovely home on the beach next to the Rest House. During the tsunami the whole bungalow was destroyed and his son-in-law David Samuel died. David was a much loved gentleman in the community who provided hospitality to visitors. We stood on the remnants of this house and looked back at the past glory. People in Kalkudah and Passikudah are once again building the infrastructure to attract tourists.

The last 20 kilometres to Batticaloa showed tremendous change with University

campus, schools and activity everywhere. The Trincomalee Street, the main entry into the town was wide with shops on either side. The new bus stand and a clock tower stand tall in the town centre. The Kachcheri in the Old Dutch Fort, modern Rest House, Municipality, Webber Stadium, Medical faculty, Teaching Hospital and the reputed schools add a touch of glamour to the place. The lagoon fishing and ready supply of fish, prawns and crabs are available and people out on the road late into the night. Tourist accommodations with modern facilities are available for visitors to different beaches with boat rides. A new bridge at Kalladi alongside the old bridge (built in the 1930s; Singing fish is said to be found in the lagoon below) is being constructed with Japanese Aid.

We stayed in the Methodist Women's Centre which is situated between Vincent Girls College and Methodist Central College, the two sister schools. We once again enjoyed the hospitality of the people and attended service at the ancient Puliyantivu Methodist Church. Everywhere we met the new and emerging generation very positive of the future.

Colleges – Pride of Batticaloa

In a radius of two kilometres stand the reputed colleges which imparted quality education to the people. St Michael's, founded by Jesuit missionaries, St Cecilia's, by Catholic nuns, Methodist Central and Vincent Girls by Methodist missionaries, Shivananda by the Ramakrishna Mission and Government College continue to serve the youth along with many other schools upgraded recently. All have new buildings and equipment.

Methodist Central College

This institution is the oldest English School in Sri Lanka founded in 1814 by Rev. William Ault, a Methodist missionary. The first national Principal was Mr S. V. O. Somanader (Posthumously conferred Doctor of Letters recently by the Eastern University of Sri Lanka) was an Educationist, Journalist and Naturalist of repute. I was privileged to be teacher and administrator in the school until we left for Zambia in 1980. The school has new buildings named after former principals. The Library is unique with large paintings depicting the history of the founders.

Batticaloa YMCA

The YMCA is close to my heart since I was the

founding Honorary General Secretary in 1971 with Mr T Balasanthiran (GA) as President and Mr C W S Philippiah as Treasurer. The Y functioned in the Ault Memorial Centre until the Cyclone of October 1978 which destroyed the building. The Y faced many challenges as it served the community. Today after 40 years the organisation has a three-storied building with modern facilities. A school for 70 Hearing Impaired children (victims of war) is conducted in the premises by special teachers trained in India. Some of the students are provided accommodation while others come for the day. Many of the projects are funded by overseas aid through the National YMCA. Dr D D David who is the General Secretary has plans to build a hostel for University students in town who come from remote villages. It was our pleasure to meet the Board of Directors and be acquainted with the community programs for the future.

Quo Vadis - Sri Lanka

We Sri Lankans should be proud of our nation with professionals, skilled workers and cultured people. We have been blessed with English education imparted to us by the unique institutions. We have a young and positive generation of Sri Lankans looking forward to building up a strong nation. After the dark years of war, hatred and division, the leaders of our beloved country should bring love, peace and reconciliation. Those living overseas must rally round!



WE NEED SPEAKERS

The Society welcomes knowledgeable and academic persons to speak at our meetings in Sydney, Melbourne & Colombo. You may have potential candidates for speakers in your families, among friends or relatives who live in or visit Australia or Sri Lanka. Our meetings are held quarterly in February, May, August & November of each year. Dates can be arranged to suit the availability of speakers. Overhead projection and PA facilities are also available.

If you would like to share your knowledge and expertise among a group of like-minded people, please contact our President Harry de Sayrah on (Mob) 0415 402 724 or Shelagh Goonewardene (03) 9808 4962 (Melbourne) or M.D. (Tony) Saldin 2440 769.

SYNOPSIS OF MEETING

Melbourne 20 May 2012

Delivering his talk on **2004 Tsunami in Sri Lanka and good practice in rebuilding communities after the disaster**, Dr. Martin



Dr Martin Mulligan

Mulligan, Senior Lecturer in the Environment and Planning program at RMIT University in Melbourne, stated that he appreciated the opportunity to share fruits of his extensive study on post-tsunami recovery.

Dr. Mulligan and his family visited Sri Lanka in 2004, a few hours after the tsunami struck. Later, he returned to Sri Lanka to explore how short term relief can be made into long term social recovery. Five communities were selected as case studies for the exercise, namely Sinigama (comprising Sinhalese Buddhist), Hambantota (50% Sinhalese, 50% Muslim), Santha Muruththu (100% Muslim), Thirukovil (Hindu) and Ampara. The research team included Dr Mulligan's wife Nelum, who is fluent in Sinhala, Yaso Nadarajah, a colleague of Dr. Mulligan, fluent in Tamil and the speaker himself. They utilised different research methods such as quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and collective profiles of people.

The research ensured that in-depth studies of the affected areas were taken into account. It focused on the rhetoric behind community participation in the recovery effort, whether disaster discovered good strong communities or a potential for opening up divisions in the community. It further examined whether there were efforts implemented to prevent vulnerabilities emerging. There were about 500 international organisations including NGO's working in Sri Lanka during that time. Many mistakes were evident such as lack of co ordination, duplication, inadequate needs assessment, too much haste and inequitable distribution of funding.

Key findings of the study were that deliberate, rather than hasty processes had to be established, needs of the women, children and local knowledge to be taken in to account, recognition of middle-sized rather than micro enterprises, understanding different stages and needs of the recovery effort, for example, relief phase, temporary accommodation and finally, a permanent resettlement phase; further to integrate social, physical and economic planning and

people to be provided with better temporary accommodation. Community must be made aware that more intensive disasters ought to be expected in the future and how best they can be involved in the process. The research found that the people who worked in the relief effort were good community development workers.

The speaker was determined to find good practice and Sinigama and Hambantota were highlighted. He noted Foundation of Goodness (a Buddhist value driven NGO) at Sinigama, Taiwan-based large NGO at Hambantota, Sri Lankan People's Church-built resettlement village at Amparai, work by an Irish NGO at Santha Muruththu and The Civil Society Committee at Hambantota as examples. Two years after the tsunami struck, the community had undergone major traumas and to celebrate the success, the perahera at Sinigama had restarted. Dr. Mulligan mentioned his book titled *"Rebuilding Communities in the Wake of Disaster: Lessons from Sri Lanka and India"*.

The second speaker was Ted Chen, a PhD student at Melbourne University who spoke on **Tsunami Architecture & Post – Conflict Housing in Sri Lanka**.

Mr. Chen visited Sri Lanka in 2007 and went to the East Coast to observe the construction effort after the tsunami. As an architect, he considers that NGOs have hastily built houses without consulting the people. According to him a house is more than a place to live; it is embedded with identity, religion and culture.

Ted and his friends fundraised for the Catholic Sisters at Mannar who worked on post-conflict care and assisted people in camps after the tsunami. Ted explored religious NGO's work and volunteered for 'Habitat for Humanity', a Christian-based organisation, who built houses incrementally in consultation with community.

"After the World Forgets" is a documentary directed by Ted and a friend who are embarking on visiting Sri Lanka every couple of years to see the recovery process of families and the results of working organisations. The full documentary would be available at the end of this year A short version of the documentary was screened at the end of his talk.



• Ted Chen

– Dilhani Kumbukkage



SYDNEY 26 August 2012

The third General Meeting of the Ceylon Society of Australia for 2012 will take place on Sunday 26 August 2012 commencing at 6.30 pm at the Pennant Hills Community Centre, Ramsay Road, Pennant Hills, NSW 2120. Please note the venue. Ramsay Road is off Yarrara Road and the venue is opposite the Pennant Hills Railway Station. Members and their Guests are welcome.

The first speaker will be **Raja Bandaranayake**, a retired Professor of Anatomy and Medical Education. His talk will be on **Roloff Beny, author of *Island Ceylon***. Raja has addressed the CSA once before on his first book *Betwixt Isles: The Story of the Kandyan Prisoners in Mauritius*, and has just published his second book, *The Integrated Medical Curriculum (Radcliffe, London)*. He has lived in Sydney for the past 35-years.

Born in Canada, Roloff Beny showed early inclinations towards the arts and photography while still in school. Although he started his professional life as an artist, and took up photography to capture images for his sketches, he soon became a renowned photographer. Based in Rome, he had a particular liking for the Mediterranean Region. Later he focused his photographic volumes on particular countries, amongst which was Ceylon. He was introduced to Ceylon by Rose Macauley, the famous travel writer, whose book, *Pleasure of Ruins*, took him to many ancient kingdoms, including Ceylon, as he produced one of his earlier photographic volumes by the same name. Greatly enamoured by the country he made a second visit which resulted in the book *Island Ceylon*.

This talk will address Roloff Beny the man, touch briefly on each of his sixteen photographic volumes and focus particularly on his exploits in Sri Lanka while photographing for *Island Ceylon*.

The next item will be the launch of a book titled **A THREE GENERATION TALE** by CSA Member, Srin Peries. It is a memoir

about her mother, her maternal grandmother and herself. The story is a continuation of her first book, *A Gagggle of Aunts*. It will be sold at a special introductory price of \$10 only at the meeting.

This will be followed by a talk by **Dr Don Wijeratne** titled *The lighter side of life and customs in Sri Lanka*. Life in Sri Lanka and the many customs of the Sri Lankans although practised in all seriousness often have their lighter side. Dr Don Wijeratne will draw from his long experience as a medical practitioner, and from his interaction with family and community in Sri Lanka to talk about the lighter side of life in Sri Lanka.

Dr Don Wijeratne is a family medical practitioner who has been treating patients in Sri Lanka and in Sydney, Australia for over fifty years. Everybody knows Dr Don, and there is hardly anyone from Sri Lanka who has not attended his surgery in Balmain. He is a well known and highly respected member of the Sri Lankan community in Sydney where he was the President of the Sri Lanka Association over thirty years ago. Dr Wijeratne was educated at Ananda College Colombo, and the Ceylon Medical School and lives in St Ives, Sydney.

After a brief discussion period, the usual Social will be the next item on the agenda. Those who are able to are please requested to bring a plate of non-sweet savoury finger-food. Please avoid cakes with icing as the general preference is for plain cakes, sandwiches and savoury pastries. To avoid duplication of items, please contact our Social Convener, Chandra Senaratne on (02) 9872 6826. A donation to CSA to help defray meeting costs, which could be made at the meeting, is an alternative.

MELBOURNE CHAPTER

Dr. Channa Wickremesekera will present an illustrated talk on **"Kandy at War – indigenous military resistance to European expansion"**

The Kingdom of Kandy in the highlands of Sri Lanka, presents one of the finest examples of effective military resistance to European expansion by a small country in the Asian region, and perhaps in the world. Kandy, a landlocked state with a subsistence economy, few material resources and a sparse population by regional

standards, has the unique distinction of resisting European expansion for over two centuries. Between 1594 and 1818 Kandy battled against armies of three European powers established in the coast the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British and preserved its independence until the kingdom was betrayed by disgruntled nobles in 1815. (This talk is an opportunity to find out more about this fascinating story)

Dr Wickremasekera obtained his PhD from Monash University. His thesis was published under the title "Best Black Troops in the World: British Perceptions and the making of the Sepoy 1746-1805" in 2002. Channa who is a teacher and lives in Melbourne, published his book "Kandy at War" in 2004 and his latest book "In the Same Boat" in 2010. He is currently working on a military history of the war between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers. Also SHELAGH GUNAWARDENE will launch **Manny Candappa's** latest book, **"Headlines & Deadlines - jottings of a journo-"**

Date: Sunday 26 August 2012
Time: 5:30 p.m. at St Scholastica's Community Centre (behind St Scholastica's Church), 348 Burwood Highway, BURWOOD (Melway 61 D6) (Please park next to Netball court next door and not at the Church car park)
Enquiries contact Hemal 0427 725 740

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The cost of production of this journal is supported by generous donations from the
 • *Lions Club of Bankstown, NSW, Australia, courtesy of our President Lion Harry de Sayrah, OAM JP; and*
 • *Universal Magazines Pty Ltd of North Ryde NSW 2113.*

Guy talk

Two confirmed bachelors were talking when the conversation eventually drifted from politics to cooking. The first guy said, "I got a cookbook once but I could never do anything with it." "Too much fancy stuff in it, eh?", asked the other. "You said it", the first guy replied. "Every one of the recipes began the same way, 'take a clean dish'..."

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SYDNEY

Sunday 26 August - Public Meeting Speakers: Prof. Raja Bandaranayake & Dr. Don Wijeratne

Saturday 25 November -AGM/ DINNER

All above meetings will be at the new venue Pennant Hills Community Centre (Enter via Car Park on Ramsay Road (opp. Pennant Hills Railway Station) Pennant Hills.

MELBOURNE

Sunday 28 October - Public Meeting Speaker: Dr Srilal Fernando will speak on: *Donald Friend: a friend of the Bawas*

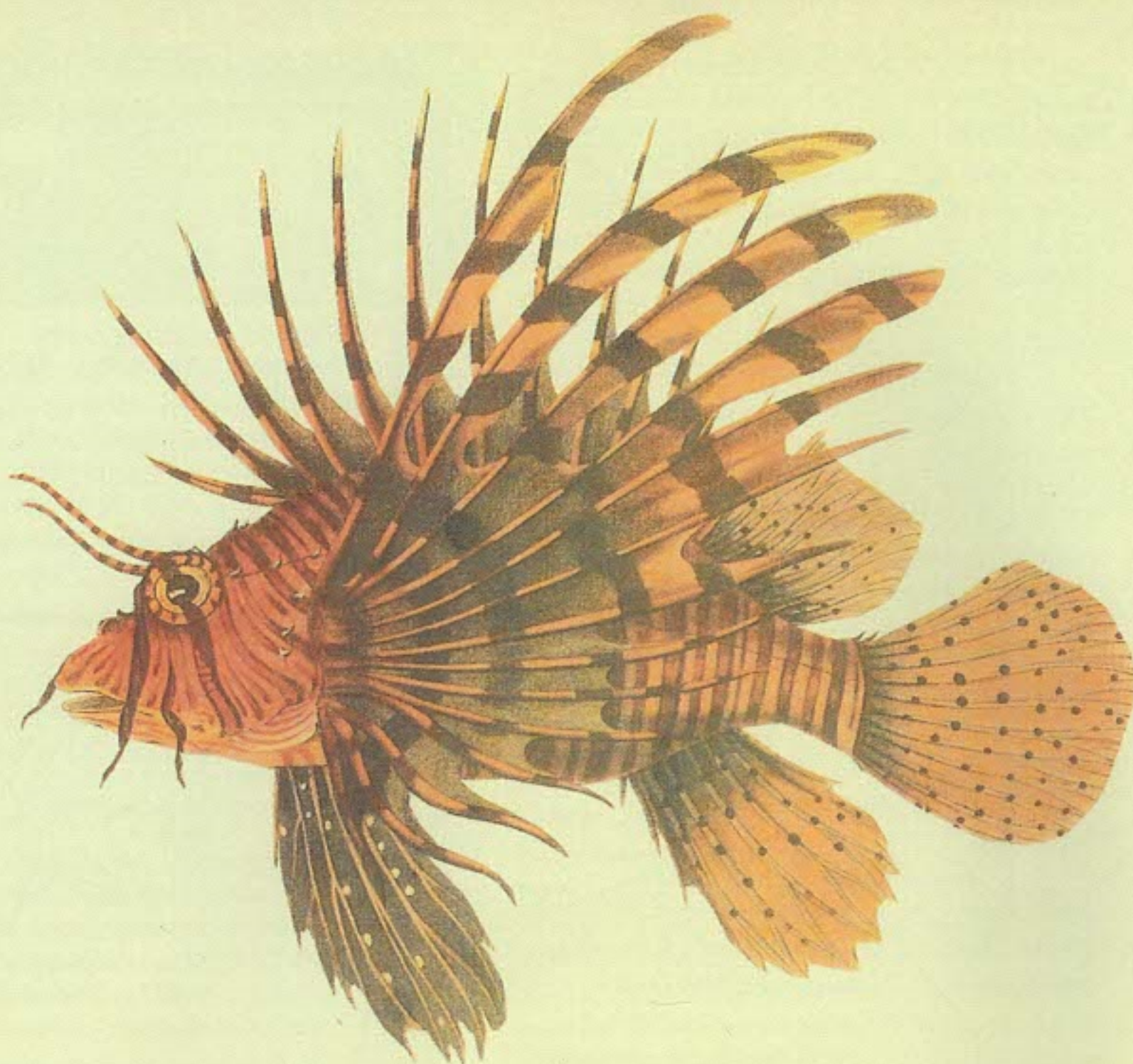
St Scholastica's Community Centre (behind St Scholastica's Church), 348 Burwood Highway, BURWOOD (Melway 61 D6) Please park next to Netball court next door and not at the Church car park

BOOKSHOP & WEB RESOURCES

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

The best and most beautiful things in life cannot be seen, not touched, but are felt in the heart.

— Helen Keller



Pub. by Longman, & Co. London. 1828.

This fiery fish is found predominantly off the southern coast of Sri Lanka, in the waters of Beruwela, Galle, Polhena, Matara and so on, where it aptly known by its Sinhala name **Gini Maha** or Great Fire. This beautiful fish image is from drawings by John Whitchurch Bennett and is in its natural size. According to Bennett "native fishermen attribute to this fish the power of inflicting wounds, for which there is no cure yet known" but it is one of the most sought after fish by aquarists worldwide. Named by Linnaeus as *Scorpaena volitans* (or the scorpion fish) a name that indicates that it has the propensity to fly by virtue of its fan-like fins, Bennett, however, agrees with local fishermen who confirm that volitation is not a possibility because of the separation of the fins at the point where they are attached to the body of the fish, thereby not affording a wind-gathering momentum.

This is from "The most remarkable and interesting fishes found on the coast of Ceylon" by John Whitchurch Bennett. (London 1830). Bennett was also the author of the book "Ceylon and its Capabilities" published in 1843 and was a highly regarded public servant during the early years of Colonial Administration.

— HUGH KARUNANAYAKE



Printed by KwikKopy, Hornsby.