

FLOREAT

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May - 2020



INSIDE:

In search of Dambadiva

The Skilful
Entrepreneur

School where our
fathers learnt the way
before us

A reunion - 37 years in
the making

FEATURED:

THE MAGIC OF ANTIQUE
EURO-SINHALESE FURNITURE

DARRELL WALTER LLOYD
LIEVERSZ

The royal college senior
old boys' lunch -
September 2019

PHOTO GALLERY:

Royal-Thomian Cricket
Matches

Floreat Editor

GEORGE FERNANDO



Floreat concept & design

LOCHANA PREMARATHNA



RCOBAA

COVID-19 ASSISTANCE

TOGETHER WE STAND

**RCOBAA has initiated a project to assist
Old Royalists in Victoria
who have been affected by the current situation.**

- × Essential dry ration packs
- × Pool of volunteer doctors and Lawyers
- × Volunteer financial and tax advisory
- x Assistance to access consular services

**If you are facing any hardships feel free
to contact us and
we will do our best to assist you.**

**Email - info@rcobaa.org.au or call
Chinthana - 0430013990
Akvan - 0424609021
Charith -0406761762**

FLOREAT...



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

We are living in troubled times. As most of us remain quarantined in our homes, keeping away from being infected by the coronavirus, it may be a good time to read our newsletter with time to ponder about what is being said.

Lochana Premarathna takes us with him on a pilgrimage to the holy places of Buddhism. He travelled with his parents, who were fulfilling their life-long dream. Lochana visited places where the Buddha himself lived and preached - Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Sarnath and Kushinaga, all located in North Eastern India on the border with Nepal. This article will continue in the next issue.

I thank Hugh Karunanayake for his excellent article about period antique furniture crafted in Sri Lanka. Hugh also reported on the Seniors' Lunch and contributed a class photo of 1927 with information about the distinguished 6th formers in the photo.

An article by Nihal de Run about businessman Shiran De Silva is the first of a series of articles about entrepreneurial old Royalists.

For the cricket fans there are three separate articles about the subject. Mahinda Wijesinghe's article is about Michael Wille's century at the 1957 Royal-Thomian match, which he describes as one of the greatest innings at a Royal-Thomian. I had the pleasure of witnessing this great innings. The Darrell Liversz story is told by Elmo Rodrigopulle. Darrell excelled himself as both a fast bowler and at athletics. Fitzroy Crozier describes all that was good, bad and ugly in 1966, when he represented Ceylon playing cricket against Pakistan. Several matches were played under tough conditions in Pakistan.

Hiran Muttiah was our rugby captain in 1982 and was chief guest at the Rugby Dinner held in Colombo in 2019 at the time of the 175th Bradby Shield match. Hiran's speech at the dinner and a vivid description by Graham Lawrence of the reunion of the 1982 team are recounted here.

I wish you all the best wherever you may be at this difficult time.

George

Cover Page Story



Legends say that the treasure of King Bimbisara was hidden inside this cave by his wife and then sealed with a spell. There was more of that script on the wall, which was the key to the treasure, if it could be deciphered. ... (In search of Dambadiva)



President's Report

Soba Ranasinghe

I hope that you and your loved ones are well and keeping safe during this unprecedented catastrophe facing the human race. As you may be aware, we at RCOBAA are willing to lend a hand and assist those in our membership in any way possible. The committee received requests for assistance and we formed a sub-committee to assist students in need of urgent help due to the loss of employment and income. Our RCOBAA committee members are doing a fantastic job of handling the purchase and delivery of dry rations as the requests keep coming in and we should all thank them for their willingness to help at this time of need.

We also wish to thank those members who have offered to assist us by donating funds and providing free advice on legal, accounting and medical matters.

Due to the prevailing conditions, it is obvious that some of our key events will have to be either cancelled or postponed. The committee has decided that this year's Over 50s Seniors' Luncheon scheduled for 3rd May, will have to be cancelled - bearing in mind the risks involved to all.

The Annual "Royal Gala" Dinner Dance for 2020, which is our flagship event, has also been cancelled. We are thankful to those of you who had already committed to attend and will keep you posted on any changes in the future.

Hopefully, we will all get through this pandemic safely and continue to keep the spirit of fellowship alive into the future. Until then, please keep safe and I hope to catch up with you soon.



In search of Dambadiva

By Lochana Premarathna

In religion and spirituality, a pilgrimage is a long journey or search of great moral significance. Sometimes, it is a journey to a sacred place or to a shrine of importance to a person's beliefs and faith. Members of every major religion participate in pilgrimages. A person who makes such a journey is called a pilgrim. Last year I became a pilgrim to witness the number of historical Buddhist pilgrim sites in India together with my parents with the intention of fulfilling my duty to make their lifetime dream come true.

The most important places of Buddhism are located in the Indo-Gangetic plains of Northern India and Southern Nepal, in the area between New Delhi and Rajgir. This is the area where Gautama Buddha lived and preached Dhamma, and the main sites connected to his life are now important places of pilgrimage for Buddhists all over the world. However, many countries that are or were predominantly Buddhist have shrines and places which can be visited as a pilgrimage.

Buddhism offers four major sites of pilgrimage: Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha, is now in southern Nepal. The site where he attained Enlightenment Bodh Gaya in Bihar, top site in the list of world heritage sites in India. Sarnath, outside Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, the site of the first sermon and where Buddha taught the four noble truths about life and death. Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh the site of the Buddha's parinirvana (end of rebirth) and home of many famous meditation sites in India.



Map of the pilgrimage

We started our journey from Katunayake International Airport on 23rd September 2018 and flew to Varanasi by Indian Flight. Our group consisted of 20 pilgrims including the Sri Lankan guide Mr. Janath Muhandiram who organized the tour for Aitken Spence Travels. He is a pleasing character and handled the tour with utmost care and responsible manner. He briefed us about the tour at the airport.

We arrived at Varanasi Lal Bahadur International Airport where we were welcomed by the Indian tour guide putting garlands made out of fresh yellow flowers on

each of us in the bus which was arranged for our journey. We felt that we were honoured as special guests. We checked-in at a three-star hotel after enjoying our lunch specially prepared for us. Our pilgrimage was organized for 8 days and 7 nights to visit the most important places of Lord Buddha's life.

The Same day after lunch we had a little relax and we proceeded to Sarnath a place located 10 kilometers north-east of Varanasi near the confluence of the Ganges and the Varuna rivers in Uttar Pradesh. Lord Buddha had visited Sarnath after he attained enlightenment at Bodhgaya, looking for his five companions who abandoned him in Rajgir while they deviated from the viewpoint of Lord Buddha on self-mortification. Sarmuka Chaiththiya (Chaukhandi Stupa) was built to mark the place where Lord Buddha met his first disciples as he journeyed from Bodh Gaya to Sarnath. Today, the Sarmuka stupa stands neatly in lush green lawns, well maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India. Draped in the calmness





Listening to the Buddhist history at Sarnath

and mystery of history, the Sammuka Stupa forms a gateway to the Buddhist city of Sarnath. Here in the Deer Park called Isipathana Migadaya, he delivered his first sermon, set in motion the Wheel of Law (Maha-Dharmachakra Pravartana Suthra). We met Yudaganawe Sheelavanse Thero a Sri Lankan monk living in Sarnath and he made us knowledgeable on all the important places there. We were fortunate enough to listen to a valuable Dhamma sermon by him in front of Dhammika stupa at the same place said to be where Lord Buddha preached his first sermon. The Dhammika Stupa is the most remarkable and massive structure at Sarnath.

In the 3rd century BC, Emperor Ashoka erected magnificent stupas and monasteries in this area, as well as an engraved pillar. When Chinese traveler Xuan Zang dropped by in AD 640, Sarnath boasted a 100m-high stupa and 1500 monks living in large monasteries. However, soon after, Buddhism went into decline, and when Muslim invaders destroyed the city in the late 12th century, Sarnath disappeared altogether. It was only 'rediscovered' by British archaeologists in 1835.

We enjoyed feeding deer at the deer park and walked around the places of historical value and proceeded to the museum. Sarnath has yielded a rich collection of sculptures, artifacts and edifices comprising numerous Buddha and Bodhisattva images and other ancient remains. Of other Buddhist remains there is an impressive and amazingly beautiful, life-size standing Bodhisattva and a delicate image of the Bodhisattva with a lotus and yet another bronze sculpture showing the Bodhisattva with multiple arms. The museum at Sarnath also houses an excellent collection of figures and sculptures from the Mauryan, the Kushana and the Gupta periods. Prominent of them is the earliest Buddha image found at Sarnath and many images of Hindu Gods dating from the 9th to 12th centuries.



Lochana with parents at Migadaya



Head of the Ashoka Pillar

The main attraction of the Sarnath Archaeological Museum is the superb Ashokan Pillar. It has four back-to-back lions, which has been adopted as the National symbol of India. Below this are representations of a lion, an elephant, horse and the bull.

There are a number of twentieth century Buddhist temples in Sarnath. Many of these Buddhist temples at Sarnath are built and maintained by monks from Sri Lanka, Tibet, China and Japan but the main Buddhist temple is the Mulagandhakuti Vihar. The main shrine (vihara), called the Mulagandakuti, is said to be located at the place where Buddha used to stay during his visits to Sarnath. Among the most important one of the temples restored by Anagarika Dharmapala was the Mulagandha kuti at Sarnath in 1931. After observing all important places at Sarnath, the holy city of Varanasi the blessed city where more than 2600 years



ago Buddha selected to deliver his first sermon. We came back to the hotel for dinner and stayed there comfortably overnight.

After a wakeup call early in the morning we got into the bus and proceeded through crowded narrow roads to the bank of river Ganges. The boat was waiting for us and we all got on to the boat walking through a muddy, slippery and crowded river-bank for a serene boat ride along the River Ganges - the sacred river of India.

The river Ganges originates from the Gangotri Glacier, which is located in the western Himalayas. It is one of the major rivers of India, which is approximately 1557 miles long. It flows into the eastward directions and empties into the Bay of Bengal.

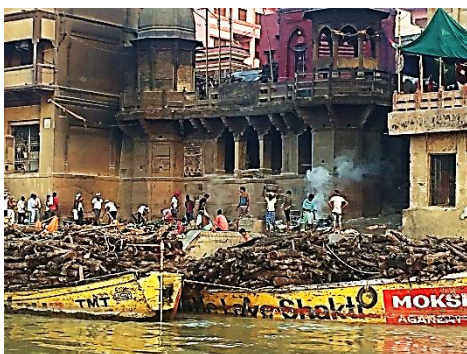
The Ganges is a sacred river to Hindus along every fragment of its length. All along its course, Hindus bathe in its waters, paying homage to their ancestors and to their Gods by cupping the water in their hands, lifting it and letting it fall back into the river; they offer flowers and rose petals and float shallow clay



Scene of the sacred river Ganges at Varanasi

dishes filled with oil and lit with wicks. On the journey back home from the Ganges, they carry small quantities of river water with them for use in rituals (Ganga jal, literally water of the Ganges). Varanasi attracts millions of pilgrims to its waters to take a dip in the Ganges, which is believed to cleanse oneself of sins and help attain salvation.

Even though the width of the river there runs for two to three kilometers and depth is not visible, we felt safe on the boat. We were attracted to the beauty of the morning sun with its red reflections lighting up the river Ganges. Devotees come to the river to pay homage with “Soorya Namaskar” to the rising sun.



Cremations are taken place round the clock at Harishchandra Ghat

The Indian Guide explained that the Ganga Ghats (river fronts) with different names are the most popular pilgrimage spots of Varanasi. There are more than 100 Ghats alongside Ganga in Varanasi.

In Hinduism, it is believed that those who die and are cremated here, get an instant gateway to liberation from the cycle of births and re-births. We saw smoke from cremations taking place at Harishchandra Ghat - one of a many cremation ghats and one of the oldest ghats in Varanasi. Cremations take place round the clock at this place.



This is one of the world's oldest continually inhabited cities, and one of the holiest in Hinduism. Pilgrims come to the Ganges here to wash away sins in the sacred waters, to cremate their loved ones, or simply to die here, hoping for liberation from the cycle of rebirth.



Enjoying the boat ride on the River Ganges

Most visitors agree Varanasi is magical – but not for the faint-hearted. Intimate rituals of life and death take place in public, and the sights, sounds and smells of the mazelike old town – not to mention almost constant attention from touts – can be intense. Still, the so-called City of Light is one of the most colourful and fascinating places on earth. Strolling the ghats or watching the sunrise from a boat on the Ganges are a highlight, and confronting. The reality and ritual of death can be a powerful experience. The Indian guide explained us that from ancient times, Varanasi is known as “The oldest living city on earth”, “The holy city of India”, the spiritual capital of India”, “The city of light”,

“The city of learning” and “The city of temples.” However, we feel that it is more than that: since time immemorial Varanasi is a great center of learning. The holy city has been a symbol of spiritualism, philosophy and mysticism for thousands of years and has produced great saints and personalities like Guatama Buddha, Mahavira, Kabir, Tulsi Das, Shankaracharya, Ramanuja and Patanjali.

After the fascinated boat-ride on the river Ganges we returned to the hotel for breakfast and got ready to move to the next destination being Bihar State for Bodhgaya. The Indian tour guide - a retired person from the Indian Government service, entertained us with singing old Hindi songs to keep us awake. Since it was during the day, we had the opportunity to see the surrounding villages with vegetation. We enjoyed having shared some snacks brought from Sri Lanka from time to time.

We checked-in at a hotel which was located at walking distance to Bodhgaya Temple. In the evening we visited Mahabodhi temple to worship and on the way back we were allowed to go on a shopping spree in the Gaya town where all were busy buying things to be taken home. Comparatively prices were cheaper. Most of us continued shopping until the shops were closed one by one at about 9.30 pm. We had our dinner at the hotel and stayed overnight there thinking of the most important pilgrim activity for the next day.

Everybody in our group had brought ingredients to prepare milk-rice to offer as a symbolic offering to Lord Buddha. All what were needed was to prepare milk rice and given to the chef of the hotel to cook the rice which had to be ready at about 5.00 in the morning. Janath took care of arranging all the needful for us to visit Bodhgaya. Early morning next day all of us dressed with white cloths and walked along the road to Bodhgaya temple carrying offerings to the Lord Buddha.

The temple stands in the East to the Bodhi tree. Its architectural effect is superb. From its basement it rises in the form of slender Pyramid till it reaches its neck, which is cylindrical in shape. On the top of the temple are Chakras which symbolize sovereignty of religion. This sacred edifice is like a grand banner unfurled by time to proclaim to the world the pious efforts of the Lord Buddha to solve the knot of human miseries, to ascend above worldly problems and attain transcendental peace through wisdom, good



conduct and disciplined life. Inside the temple, in the main sanctum, there is a colossal image of the Buddha in sitting posture touching the earth by his right hand. In this posture the Buddha accomplished the supreme enlightenment. The temple is an architectural amalgamation of many centuries, cultures and heritages. While its architecture has a distinct stamp of the Guptha era, it has later ages inscriptions describing visits of pilgrims from Sri Lanka, Myanmar and China between 7th and 10th century AD. It is perhaps still the same temple Hieuen Tsang visited in 7th century, our tour guide explained to us.



Offering of Milk Rice (Puja) taken to Budhgaya temple collectively

Collectively we offered the puja to Lord Buddha and arrangements had been made for our group to observe Sil at the temple premises. Most of the members observed Sil and listened to a Dhamma sermon preached by a Sri Lankan monk. We had enough time to roam around and observe the important places there. Mahabodhi Temple is the center of the town and maintains a strict level of security. Mobile phones are not permitted within the temple premises and visitors are expected to leave them either in their rooms

or at the lockers at the entrance gate. Those who would like to carry their cameras into the premises can only do so for a payment of Rs 100.

Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya is a pertinent pilgrimage site for the Buddhists and for all the followers of Gautam Buddha. The significant events that occurred in 531 BC was Sidhdhartha Gouthama attaining the perfect state of enlightenment while being seated in meditation under a Bodhi tree at the site of Mahabodhi Temple Complex. 260 BC – Emperor Asoka visited the site of Bodhi tree to worship it and made the first temple for honouring Gautama Buddha. Later, it was renovated and expanded by the kings of the Gupta dynasty. Vajrasana is the place where Siddhartha meditated under the Bo tree and attained Buddhahood. Buddha toiled throughout his life to spiritually uplift as many people as he could. The Mahabodhi temple was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2002.



Budhgaya temple premises

Gautama Buddha spent a span of seven weeks after he attained enlightenment across various parts where the Mahabodhi Temple stands today.

The Bodhi Tree is the most illustrious site situated to the west of the main temple and is believed to be the direct descendant of the Bodhi tree underneath which the Buddha stayed for the first week after attaining enlightenment.

Buddha spent his second week at the prayer hall, also known as *Animeshlochana Chaitya*. It can be found

towards the north of the central path on a raised platform.



This jewelled ambulatory is also called *Ruwan Sakmana*. It is famous for being the site where the Buddha spent the third week of his internal journey of meditation walking eighteen steps back and forward. It is located near the north wall of the main temple and stands elevated on a stone platform. The lotuses in this walkthrough are believed to be the places where Buddha had stepped.

Located towards the north-east near the enclosure, *Ratnaghara Chaitya* is the place where the Buddha spent his fourth week. Buddha spent his fourth week of meditation here, reflecting on *Pattana* or the Law of Dependent Origination. According to legend, it is here that colours were emitted out of Buddha's body which now find themselves in Buddhist flags.

During his fifth week, the Buddha was meditating under *Ajapala Nuga* Tree and answered the questions posed by the Brahmins.

The sixth week was spent by Gautam Buddha at the Lotus pond situated outside the enclosure to the south of the temple complex. It is believed that Buddha was protected from the thunderstorm by the king of snakes Muchalinda covering his body during this period.

Buddha was under the Rajayathana tree during his seventh week of meditation. A tree has been planted to mark this site. It is located towards the south-east of the temple.

We had ample time to visit all over the place leisurely and collected a number of Bo leaves fallen from the sacred Bo tree with the intention of gifting them to loved ones and friends in Sri Lanka. Then we went back to the hotel for lunch and proceeded to see the other important sites nearby about 15 Kms away from the hotel.

Pragbodhi Mountain is situated near Gaya district in the state of Bihar. The name Pragbodhi literally means 'Prior to Enlightenment'. Today, the mountain has been renamed as Dhungeswara. As per the legends, Prince Siddhartha before he received enlightenment had spent six years in rigorous practice of asceticism in a small cave half-way up this mountain.

The "Uruvel" Valley which is slightly east of Bodhgaya in Bakhrou (Ancient name "Senani") has become sacred and is an extremely significant place for faithful Buddhists just because of the great alms giving to Sidhartha Gauthama before he attained the great enlightenment. A maiden called Sujata - a daughter of



Sujata temple

who had been meditating without any meals and became skeleton-like and told him that he cannot find truth and the way without a living body to experience that. A truth that imparted the wisdom that guided the Buddha to realize his goal. Such a simple story, but with such profound wisdom and meaning. There he had realized that extreme asceticism was not the correct way to achieve enlightenment. After a few days he attained the great enlightenment under the bodhi tree at the main temple, Bodhgaya. Buddhists who come from countries such as Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, and China visit Bodhgaya and the place where

Sidhartha Gauthama selected the middle path the path of practice that avoids two extremes of sensual indulgence on the one hand, and severe asceticism on the other.



A small temple is built there to remember that historical incident. As we reached the place, we were surrounded by the people in the village who are suffering from absolute poverty and struggled for some money and food. Our Indian tour guide requested us not to give them anything as you would never be able to end giving. However, we were able to manage the situation by offering them some food items such as biscuits, cake etc. Some gave money feeling sympathy for them. They spoke some Sinhala words. We were informed that whole village was depending only on offerings by the pilgrims visiting there.

On the way back from Sujatha temple we were able to see the ruins of the Sujatha Kuti - place of residence of Sujatha. The stupa built during the Gupta period and excavated during 1973-78 and 2003-2008. Excellent brick work. Our tour guide pointed out a white building across the Neranjana River and said that it was the residence of Mahantha a Hindu wealthy man whom Anagarika Dharmapala fought against with claiming the Buddhist's rights of the Bodhgaya temple. Anagarika Dharmapala who underwent extensive hardship during that time he had won the case acquiring the legal rights of Buddhists for Bodhgaya.

On the way, we saw at a distance, the great Buddha statue, one of the major tourist attractions in Bodhgaya. The 80-foot statue of Lord Buddha is really impressive. The statue was built by Japanese Buddhists and unveiled by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1989 - just two months before my birthday. It is made of red granite and sandstone and it is said that it took almost seven years to be completed. The Royal Bhutanese Monastery, and Tibetan Monastery were also observed without getting out of the bus. We returned back to the hotel, had our dinner and relaxed there overnight.



Areal Ropeway at Rajgiri

Next day after breakfast, we were heading towards Rajgir (Ancient Rajagaha Nuwara) about 75 Kms, from Bodhgaya. Rajgir has got the name from Raj Griha - meaning the abode of the king. The city was the capital of the mighty Magadha Empire during the period of Lord Buddha's lifetime. Rajgir is one of the most important tourist places in India. Rajgir has its own very scenic beauty surrounded by five holy hills, the picturesque little town of Rajgir is important for Buddhists as well as Jains. Here the two rock-cut caves Gijjakuta were the favourite retreats of the Buddha and it was on this hill that he preached two of his most famous sermons.

Vishwa Shanthi –World Peace -Stupa was built by a Japanese monk atop Ratnagiri hill near Rajgiri. One can reach it either by trekking or by the cable chair (Areal Ropeway). It cannot be named as cable car. Either way is risky for the very young and the very old alike and those with walking disabilities and heart ailments. We all decided to go by cable chair except two members of our group who paid no interest in the climb up and remained at the entrance until we came back. The cable chairs were the most thrilling part of the journey, but you need to be a bit acrobatic as the chairs don't stop and you need to board while they are running. However, it moves slowly so it should not be an issue. We managed with my mother who is a very sensitive person. She got into a chair and to make her satisfied I traveled in the chair in front of her and my father followed behind. Getting into the chair and getting out of it seemed unsafe even for normal persons. Even after alighting from the chair, a seemingly dangerous journey by a cable chair in which only one person can sit and with an unsafe locking system - 10-15 minutes ride with silence to the top of the hill. It is said that this cable system was built by Japanese to transport building materials



to the top for the construction of the Peace Stupa. However, the view from the top of the peak is worth all the trouble - a panoramic 360 degrees view of the villages supposedly travelled by Lord Buddha.

The stupa is beautifully constructed with idols of Lord Buddha all around. Buddha spent many years in Rajgir and also delivered sermons there. Rajgir is equally important for the Jain as well as Hindu pilgrims, for Lord Mahavira (the founder of Jainism) resided here for some time and the place finds its reference in Hindu epic - Mahabharata. The historic sites of Rajgir associated with Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism attract pilgrims from all over the world.

We spent little time on the top of the hill observing the historical sites over there. The weather was favorable for us as in Sri Lanka. We all had hats and caps to cover up from the sunny conditions. Drinking water bottles were supplied without restrictions throughout the journey. The view when you descend is mind blowing. We all climbed down through the narrow pathway for which safety precautions have not been taken by the authorities. All of a sudden, one elderly lady in our group slipped and rolled down the slope receiving injuries to her forehead and scratches to her legs. Luckily, she leaned against a bush and ceased rolling down further. With the assistance of others, we managed to bring her back to the roadway where she received first aid and Janath plastered her bleeding wounds. Janath who carried a first aid kit took care of her, assisted her down the hill and got her back into the bus.



Scenery from the top of the Gijjakuta hill

Half-way down the hill there was another direction to go to Gijjakuta rock where Lord Buddha often retreated for meditation and delivered many of his sermons. The Buddha converted the Mauryan king Bimbisara, one of his most devoted followers at the Gijjakuta rock. We observed the Ananda Kuti (cave), Sariputtha Kuti and other historical places there and enjoyed impressive scenery visible from the top. The monkeys here appeared domesticated and quite harmless - waiting to be fed with food and drinks. Nevertheless, sometimes your eatables appear on the trees in the hands of monkeys without your knowledge. We saw the place where Devadaththa rolled down a rock to harm the Buddha on his way to Gijjakuta hill.

On either side of the route are small souvenir shops and large group of locals wandering around. Trekking up and down the hill is somewhat similar to visiting Sri Pada in Sri Lanka.

One of the other two ladies who remained at the entrance got sick and needed medical attention immediately. So we hurried to the hotel nearby as planned for our lunch and while we were having our lunch, Janath and Indian guide took the two ladies to a nearby doctor and returned with the news that they were recovering well after treatment. The other lady who had a wound on her forehead had to have four stitches. After resting there for a while, we proceeded to see the ruins of Nalanda University. Nalanda used to be a large revered Buddhist monastery in the ancient kingdom of Magadha in India. Nalanda is located in the eastern Indian state of Bihar. It is well known as the Ancient Centre of Learning and has the



remains of the great Nalanda University. The university was established in the 5th century BC and was one of the oldest Universities of the world. The ruins of the university are spread over an area of 14 hectares with a number of temples and monasteries built by the contemporary kings Gupta, Kushan and the Palva dynasties. *To be Continued in the next issue with Photo Album...*

The Royal College Senior Old Boys' Lunch - September 2019

By Hugh Karunanayake



The Walawwa, Noble Park was the venue for the annual Senior Old Boys lunch held on a beautiful Sunday afternoon last September. There were over a 100 old boys and their wives meeting to chat, reminisce, and renew old bonds formed decades ago in the country then called Ceylon. The luncheon organized by the RCOBBA of Melbourne proved to be a great success and is a tribute to the organizing capabilities of the Committee.

Apart from the afternoon glow of the occasion, our senior old boys were served a delicious buffet lunch which was wolfed down by many an old boy with enthusiasm that belied their actual capacity to do so. With a brief welcome address President Soba Ranasinghe set the tone for a dignified afternoon of rest, relaxation and enjoyment. The music for the afternoon was provided by a very enthusiastic Maxwell Solomon and his band "Summer Breeze" which keeping true to its name provided an excellent programme of music to suit the occasion. One welcome feature was the sing along conducted by Maxwell and his Co -Vocalist featuring many a vintage favourite number. Those of us who had forgotten some of the words, still retained the tunes in our minds, and were helped by the display of lyrics on the big screen. A big thank you to Maxwell for this very thoughtful inclusion. We had the usual Bingo session conducted by impresario Nihal de Run with his impeccable finesse to add to the afternoon's delights.

The success of the event was very evident, and at the closure, many a reluctant senior old boy had to "plod his weary way" home, after a delightful afternoon with old friends. Our grateful thanks to the organizing committee as we look forward eagerly to the next gathering.



[Link to Photo Album: Senior old boys lunch pics](#)



The Magic of Antique Euro - Sinhalese Furniture

Hugh Karunanayake

This article first appeared in the Ceylankan Number 3 August 2019- The Journal of the Ceylon Society of Australia

A fact that is hardly acknowledged by Sri Lankans today, is its rich bio-diversity resources, a mix possibly unmatched by any other country in the world. One of its great renewable natural resources was the diversity of its timbers. Some of the most exotic hard woods in the world like calamander, ebony and satin grew in abundance before the European conquest of the country's maritime area in the 16th century. Calamander the most beautiful and rare timber used in furniture making for instance was almost exclusively grown in Sri Lanka, small parts of the Coromandel Coast, and in some of the islands of the West Indies. A tree that takes over 200 years to reach maturity, it has been axed out of existence and not even farmed because of the age taken for the tree to grow into maturity. The calamander is among endangered near extinct tropical flora, but as in the case of other endangered plants, little or no activism from the conservation lobby has been observed, as fauna appears to be the preferred menu on the conservationist's agenda. The disappearance of forests laden with rich tropical timbers has been largely due to the wholesale felling of forests for plantation agriculture, and in later years what was left was systematically removed for furniture making.

There have been many historians who have referred to the quality of the craft of the Sinhalese furniture maker. Prominent among them was JW Bennett in *Ceylon and its Capabilities*, (1843), and and Henry Charles Sirr in his two volume *Ceylon and the Cingalese* (1850). There was also Ananda Coomaraswamy's *Medieval Sinhalese Art*, (1908), which reflected on the quality, the technical detail, and the efficacy of the tools used by the Sinhalese cabinet maker. Given that there is no recorded tradition of furniture making in Ceylon prior to the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505, the use of timber in earlier days was confined largely to building construction and boat building. RL Brohier who authored the book *Furniture of the Dutch Period in Ceylon* in 1969, based it on a collection of photozincography plates made under the supervision of Dr JD Pearson, the Director of the National Museum in 1933, and thus brought to light the craftsmanship of the Dutch cabinet maker. In recent times there have been some in-depth studies of the furniture making craft in Ceylon reviewed by Robin Jones, Course leader of the Fine Arts Valuation Course at the Southampton Institute, and Amin Jaffer author of the well-researched tome *Furniture from British India and Ceylon* (2001), with particular reference to the collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Peabody Essex museum. Robin Jones collaborated in this production.

To get an idea of the unique value of Ceylonese furniture, it would be most appropriate to quote Robin Jones from his introduction to furniture from Ceylon in Amin Jaffer's book. The British were relative latecomers to Ceylon. The East India Company seized control of the Maritime Provinces of the island from the Dutch in 1796 and placed them under the command of the Madras Presidency. These provinces were made a crown colony in 1802 and with the capture of Kandy in 1815 the entire Island came under British dominion. From their earliest years in Ceylon, European visitors commented on the skills of local craftsmen in working with precious raw materials. Early nineteenth century British chroniclers likewise commented on the proficiency of Ceylonese craftsmen, particularly in working with wood. For example Robert Percival observed in 1803 that the "Cinglese are ingenious and expert artificers and display particular dexterity in gold, silver, and carpenter's work" and JW Bennett writing in 1843, noted that "local woodworkers make very durable and beautiful cabinet furniture of every description."



The principal centres of western style furniture production in Ceylon were all located in precisely in those areas where the longest contact existed between Europeans and the indigenous population, in the island's Maritime Provinces to the South and South West of the island. Important centers of cabinet making included Galle in the South West of the island, and Moratuwa, just South of Colombo.

Prior to the British occupation, there were the Portuguese and the Dutch who occupied the Maritime Provinces from the mid-16th Century until the ousting of the Dutch by the British at the end of the 18th century. The direct Western influence on the island commenced with the Portuguese who were responsible for the introduction of furniture such as benches, tables, chairs, screens, bedsteads and wardrobes. The Sinhalese word "almariya" for wardrobe is derived for instance from the Portuguese "almirah".



King Vimala Dharmasuriya's Regalia

Although basic items of furniture in the country, as are known in the modern world, were introduced by the Portuguese, the artistry, design, and sophistication with which Ceylonese furniture came to be associated with, was due to Dutch influence. There are items still scattered around the world, originating from Ceylon that connoisseurs classify as "Indo-Portuguese". Those works as well as the exquisite items of furniture displayed in museums around the world described as originating from Ceylon during the 17th to the early 20th centuries are a tribute to both Portuguese and Dutch craftsmanship and Sinhalese artistry. The Sinhalese carpenter was able to draw from age old traditions of motifs and design that have evolved from the local environment. That placed the unique stamp of Anglo Sinhalese craftsmanship on these works of consummate skill. According to Brohier, there are records which suggest to there being organisations like the craft guilds of Europe, in Dutch Ceylon. Set up under Dutch master craftsmen, large numbers of Portuguese - Sinhalese and others from the traditional Sinhalese carpentering families found employment in these craft guilds.

Most of the valuable items of furniture which survived from the days of the Portuguese and Dutch in Ceylon, were made of ebony wood, and have been designed with Sinhala motifs stamped by the artistry of the Sinhala wood carver. In 1693 the Dutch Governor van Rhee presented a throne and foot stool to King Vimala Dharmasuriya 2. It bears all the signs of a collaborative effort between Dutch and Sinhalese craftsmen. The overall design appears to be of European origin, and the exquisite gold sheeting covered with precious stones was the work of Sinhalese goldsmiths and silversmiths. When Ceylon was ceded to the British this magnificent chair and stool were part of the "loot" sent to England and placed in Windsor Castle. They were ceremonially returned to Ceylon in September 1934 and are now in the Colombo Museum.

Typical of the early Anglo Sinhalese chair which seemed to have been popular from the 16th century onwards, is the "rush bottomed" ebony chair which is now a rare and much sought after piece of furniture in today's Sri Lanka, but which ubiquitously appears in European and American antique auctions commanding high prices. Characterised by profuse carvings of traditional Sinhalese motifs such as the *pala peti* or lotus flower, or the *hansa* swan or *vaka deka* or double curve sometimes in relief and often highlighted on both sides of the back rest, they usually have Jacobean style twisted legs, stretchers and





19th C Carved Ebony "Ceylon Chair"

rails. The seat usually of rattan, the only aspect that needs attention through wear, as the timber is timeless and lasts through centuries.

Unfortunately not many accumulations of early ebony furniture remain in Sri Lanka, the only known collection which was put together by Sir Thomas Villiers, former



19th C Carved Ebony sofa from Ceylon

Chairman of George Steuart and Co, who kept them in a go down when the company was in possession of the string of properties along Steuart Place in which their Directors resided. Many of the items in the collection are featured in Brohier's book. The Steuart bungalows (*heritage buildings which should have been protected*) were demolished in the 1970s and the Hotel Oberoi built on its lands, and since named the Cinnamon Grand Hotel. The fate of the furniture collection however remains a mystery. Arguably the most handsome and sought-after timber in the world is the exotic calamander, which like exotic fauna is on the brink of extinction due to over exploitation. From the same family as ebony, the calamander is a variegated timber with attractive black striations on a honey coloured background. Some of the recorded specimens of furniture includes the calamander bureau cabinet from Ceylon gifted to the last Governor General of the East Indies, Tjarda van Starkenorgh Stachower, and is now displayed at the Djakarta Museum. It is a large bureau cabinet made entirely of calamander and shown below.

Aesthetically, the western collector preferred items that used both calamander and ebony, a very attractive and exotic combination. A popular item of calamander furniture of the 18th and 19th centuries was the round center table with the top surface in calamander and the pedestal base in ebony.

The table shown here is a beautiful example and carries an inscription - "Presented to Mrs R.B. Tytler by the parents of the Kandy Sunday Scholars with their grateful and affectionate regards. New Year's Day 1936."

This table was sold by Sothebys for an unknown price. Recent sale prices for a similar item reached around US\$100,000. Two master craftsmen from Galle whose signature had appeared among these choice creations are AB Andiris, and Andries de Costa.

The Dutch ruled the maritime provinces of Ceylon for around one and a half centuries, leaving a profound impact on the country's ethnicity, its ethos, and of course on its economy. There are several aspects of the life of today's Sri Lankan which owes its origins to some aspect of Dutch influence. Among these of course is the design of homes, and the nature of household effects such as furniture. Two items of furniture that have the classic hall mark of the Dutch is the Dutch chest or "*pettagama*" used originally to store rice in wealthy homes, and later as a repository for household goods.





a-cabinet of calamander wood. The plinth - shortened somewhat in this example - is typical of Sinhalese furniture made in Galle and Matara. It was a gift by the Bataviaasch Genootschap (The Batavian Society) from a gift presented by the last governor-general of the East Indies, Jhr. A.W.L. Fierdia van Starckenborgh Slachtover (1936-1945) and was registered as no. 24230. See Kruitwijk, Museum Seieran Jakarta.

The Dutch Chest was originally of hardwood, but its style copied and reproduced with elaborate brass fittings, by Sinhalese craftsmen, later came in the softer and cheaper jak, teakwood, and nadun woods.

The rarer Dutch Burgomaster chair which was a relatively expensive item was originally found in the homes of leading Dutch officials, or wealthy merchants. An original burgomaster is extremely rare in Ceylon but can be seen sporadically in wealthy European and American homes.

Apart from furniture *per se*, the Sinhalese cabinet maker of the 19th century developed an expertise in the making of exquisite work boxes and writing slopes of calamander, sometimes using porcupine quills for embellishment. Most of these boxes



Ceylon Calamander/Ebony Center Table



Ceylon Calamander Side table 19th C

made by craftsmen in Galle and Matara were highly sought after in the Victorian era and later when sewing as a feminine skill was highly regarded, boxes made of tortoiseshell were very much in demand. The shell was imported from the Malacca Straits and the Maldiv Islands, and the work was principally executed by craftsmen around Galle. Amin Jaffer who was a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum overseeing its Asian collections, and later consultant for Auction houses Christies and Sothebys and Asian furniture expert on the popular BBC presentation the "Antiques Roadshow" has this to say "At the Paris exhibition of 1900 a sizeable collection of tortoiseshell articles was shown, including boxes mounted in gold and silver. That time the finest stock was carried by Don Theodoris & Co a jeweller in Chatham Street, Colombo." The work box shown below made of calamander, inlaid with ivory, and highlighted by red and black lac with scalloped front was presented to the V&A Museum in 1908 by Mrs Armitage-Ogden.



The Dutch Burgomaster Chair

The craftsmen of Galle/Matara were also skilled in ivory work, of which many exquisite objects were exhibited at the British Empire Exhibitions held in England during the late 19th Century. The industries based on ivory and tortoiseshell are no longer existent due to worldwide bans on these products thus rendering traditionally associated



The Dutch Chest or "Pettagama

craft skills totally obsolete. The reputation for skilled work by craftsmen in Galle made them very much in demand for a variety of skilled tasks, and it was with pride that they claimed their origins from Galle. "Gama Gally" also had its downside when it's



not so skilled denizens were found out and told off scornfully by employers as “Weda bariwunath gama Gallay”!



Calamander/ivory work box



Tortoise shell box



A tilt-down Ceylon breakfast table of specimen woods with Ebony pedestal

The discussion here was confined to some representative albeit unique items of Anglo Sinhalese origin, and does not reflect the wide diversity of furniture and objects that were produced in Ceylon since the 16th century. The most popular and exotic woods that were prominent in the choice pieces under discussion does not do justice to the diversity of timber resources in Sri Lanka and which in its richness and utility could match that of any other country in the world. The main woods that were discussed were calamander (*Diospyros quaesita*), and ebony (*diospyros ebum*) There are however a whole range of exotic timbers in Sri Lanka that have been exploited over the years to produce the marvellous items of furniture the island boasted of. Satinwood (*Chloroxylon swietiana*) Tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*) and nadun (*pericopsis mooniana*) are all hardwoods of exotic appearance and have sustained or supplemented the

furniture industry over the years. Several others such as teak (*tectona grandis*), halmilla (*berrya amryanilla*), suriya (*Thespesia populnoa*), kumbuk (*terminalia glabra*), mara (*albizzia molucamana*) and kohomba (*azadirachta indica*) are also popular woods in the furniture making industry. The role of the Forest Department in the conservation and propagation of trees such as teak, and ebony must be acknowledged although those efforts seem to have declined in recent years.

Some major factors account for the decline of the furniture making skills since the Victorian era in Ceylon. Modernisation and the growth of office related employment, the demand for English as a language and medium of upward social mobility, have contributed in many ways to the decline of craft training. With the influence of the west, the value and significance of the “guru/shisya” relationship lost relevance and its place in the social order. In Western countries these were institutionalised in a guild system where the



Master Craftsmen would train apprentices. The lack of institutionalised training to sustain the quality of expertise within the industry, and to further progress its technical advancement is an aspect which merits attention in Sri Lanka today. The furniture making industry in Sri Lanka of today is largely based in Moratuwa, where standard designs are used for the mass market. The artistry and skill of the 19th Century craftsman, however, is conspicuously absent, and the timbers used are those that are easy to work with. In countries of the West, training in craft skills such as in carpentry, are popular in contemporary Technical Training Schools. These are often supplemented by well-structured apprenticeship schemes which ensure not only high standards of craftsmanship but foster further development. The Department of Small Industries in collaboration with the national crafts marketing organisation, Laksala has done some useful work in this regard, but more attention is necessary at the training and production stages if the furniture industry is to regain its acclaimed status of the past. Large scale farming of exotic trees on a long-term basis is also not impractical given the frequency with which unproductive tea and rubber lands are being abandoned.

Shiran de Silva – The Skillful Entrepreneur

By Nihal de Run



Shiran de Silva of the RC 1960 Group also known as the Olive Group, took a bold step in January 2000. He gave up the security of a salaried job to buy into a business. He bought a third of the equity in a going concern

In 2010, he went one step further and bought out the two other partners in Mahendra's Indian Foods. The firm made 7 to 8 varieties of Murukku, Mixes, Samosas, Garam Masala and Curry Powders. He set out to expand the range and increase his sales. To do this he had to invest in machinery and equipment. It also meant financing and bearing more risk of his assets being given as collateral.

He responded to customer requests for more healthy products for which recipes had to be changed. At the same time, he concentrated on a high level of Australian made raw materials to support local farmers and millers. Today 96% of his raw materials are Australian grown and manufactured.

The Brimbank City Council gave Shiran a 5-star rating for food hygiene. Through hard work and persistence, Shiran has gained distribution with the companies Snax with Attitude, Virgin Domestic and other large buyers including some 5-star hotel groups. Shiran takes pleasure in employing some handicapped people. There are seven Speech and Hearing-impaired people one of whom has been working in his business for over seven years.

In 2014 Mahendra's won a Silver Award in the Serendib Awards Food Manufacturers section.

In 2015, his wife Rani took a redundancy package from her bank employer and joined Shiran in the business. Rani has developed more products including curry powders and pastes.

In 2018 Mahendras were granted the HACCP Certificate which is a food Safety and Risk Assessment Certificate.



Shiran has changed the trading name of the business to Mahendra's Foods to retain the originality of the business and to remind his main customers that he has been in business for over 20 years under that brand name.

Royalists are proud of Shiran's entrepreneurial success. We applaud him for his tenacity in enduring and overcoming the many challenges that small business operators face each day of their business life and use this opportunity to wish him and Rani continued success. Royalists in Melbourne are also cognisant of the numerous times that Shiran and Rani have donated products towards our functions.

School where our fathers learnt the way before us

By Hugh Karunanayake



Standing from left: V.T.Panditha Gunawardene, Alexis Roberts, D.H.de Silva, G.E.Amarasinghe, R.Weerasinghe, A.L.S.Sirimanne

Seated from left: R.L.Rodrigo, H.E.Wijetunge, L.H.W.Sampson (Vice Principal), H.L.Reed(Principal), P.I.Roberts, A.H.Dharmaratne, B.P.Peiris

The photograph above, was a year-end group photo of boys of Royal College in Form 6 in 1927. It was presumably taken as a token of remembrance of the boys who were to bid farewell to their school careers. Just a brief reference to some of the personnel in the photograph may be appropriate here. Standing extreme left is Vinman Panditha Gunawardene - later to be a Supreme Court judge, next to him is Alexis Roberts - poet, author and son of a famous old Royalist physician of his day - Dr Emmanuel Roberts, next



to him is D Hinton de Silva my maternal uncle, father in law, and all-round excellent guy, next to him is G.E. Amerasinghe - later District Judge, next to him R. Weerasinghe - I apologise, I have no information about him. Standing on extreme right is ALS Sirimanne also later to adorn the bench of the Supreme Court. Seated on extreme left is R.L. Rodrigo, lawyer, later Registrar of Companies, next to him is H.E. Wijetunge - Captain of the Royal College cricket team of 1927, and later lawyer. Seated next to him is Vice Principal LHW Sampson, (later to succeed Reed as Principal) and next to him is Principal H.L. Reed. Next to Reed is revered teacher for many years - Percy Ivan Roberts (nicknamed by the boys as Pi Roberts) and cousin of Alexis. Seated next to him is A.H. Dharmaratne - a third generation Royalist who was wicket keeper of the team, and father of Brian who also kept wickets for the school some forty years later! Seated on the extreme right is B.P. Peiris later to be Secretary to the Cabinet of Ministers under various Prime Ministers.

Any observer would note the poise and bearing of the students showing confidence and ability to face the future that awaits them. No surprise therefore that they all excelled as exemplary members of the country's citizenry. Many of the boys featured here, upon completion of their education, saw to it that their own sons would tread the same path to man's estate. To note a few: V.T Panditha Gunawardene - standing on the extreme left was followed by his son Dr Daya Panditha Gunawardene. Standing on the extreme right is ALS Sirimanne whose son the late Srinath also followed suit. Seated second from left is H.E. Wijetunge whose son the late Dr Janaka Wijetunge followed suit. Seated second from right is Hildon Dharmaratne whose son Brian (now living in retirement in Sydney) followed in his father's footsteps, also representing College in cricket like his father. There could be more sons of the paterfamilias in this group who followed their fathers into the school they belong, of whom alas, we have no information, and to whom we apologise for the omission. Royal College has stood up to its name and done more than could be expected of an educational institution. Royal College delivered as expected and continue to do so to this day.

My introduction to Test Cricket – the tour of Pakistan in 1966

By Fitzroy Crozier



I captained Royal College in 1956 and then joined the Nondescripts Cricket Club (NCC). It took me 10 years to be selected to play for Sri Lanka. There are now three formats of cricket played at the international level – Test matches, One-Day Internationals and Twenty20 Internationals. Players are financed, and allocated to a senior coach, batting, bowling and fielding coaches, physiotherapists and support staff. When on tour the players receive first class accommodation. Things were not the same in my time.

In November 1966, I played with a Sri Lankan side that toured Pakistan. Our tour party comprised 14 players, a manager and a masseur. Two of the fourteen players, Stanley Jayasinghe and Clive Inman were playing professional cricket in England, Sarath Wimalaratne was at the University, Dr H I K Fernando was in the Army and the rest were either in the Mercantile or Public Sector.

We toured from 29 Oct to 29 Nov. The first game was a 2-day game in Bhawalpur, followed by a 3-day game in Rawalpindi on 4th-6th Nov. Two days later, a 3-day game in Faisalabad from 8th-10th Nov. Two



days later, 12th -15th was the 1st Test in Lahore. This was my first Test appearance and one I will never forget.

I was an orthodox slow left arm spin bowler and batted at No.7 or 8 for my club side. However, in my first Test, we fielded first and having bowled 64 overs in that inning I had to open the batting as we had only one recognized opening batsman on tour. After the game we flew across India to East Pakistan and played the 2nd Test in Dacca from 18th-21st Nov. We travelled back to Karachi for the 3rd Test from 25th-28th Nov. There was not much rest as there was travel between the venues and also very little time to practice. This caused problems as Norton Frederick, one of our fast bowlers was called upon to play in our final game having only played in one practice game on tour.

We received the princely sum of Rs 15.00 a day as an allowance and 3 pounds 10 as foreign exchange. In venues other than the tests, our accommodation was in dormitories with three in a room. The test pitches were rock-hard and void of grass. I was always fielding at slips and when I was not bowling and had to move from slip to slip at the end of an over I detoured to point and then off the square as my spikes were sitting on the surface. It was agony when bowling even though my run up was only 8 steps as my spikes were sitting on the hard surface. Don Thomas when massaging my legs at the start of the tour told me that my muscles were like jelly but by the end of the second Test, he told me he was earning his money!

The balls for our use on tour were supplied by Pakistan. There was a vast difference between the ones in the Tests and those for practice and the practice matches. Those given to us away from the tests were undersize, oval shaped and rock-hard. When practicing in Karachi prior to the third test, David Heyn attempting to take a high catch broke a finger and was unable to play in the Test match. Complaints were of no avail.



We did not have the luxury of neutral umpires and be able to refer decisions to a third umpire. The Pakistani umpires were a part of the team and we felt we were playing against 13. When we fielded, LBWs and caught-behinds did not come into play. When we batted though, anything that struck the pad or was within a few inches from the bat, would result in a raised finger. It was also common practice that once Pakistan was 200 plus when batting, every attempt was made to either run on the wicket or take a few steps back and forth in front of the wicket to make inroads in the pitch for their bowlers.

Once again complaints to the umpires were ignored. The Pakistan tour was a learning experience. There was the Good, the Bad and the Ugly.

Editor's note:

In his article, Fitzroy Crozier describes the "Test" matches played against Pakistan in 1966. These international four-day matches were referred unofficially as Test matches. Sri Lanka had associate member status of the International Cricket Council from 1965 to 1981 and were awarded full membership on 21 July 1981, becoming the eighth nation to play Test cricket. Sri Lanka played their first Test match against England in Colombo on 17 February 1982. England won that match by 7 wickets. Sri Lanka won the 1996 Cricket World Cup and the 2014 ICC World Twenty20.

What it Feels like Scoring a Century in the Royal-Thomian Cricket Match

By Mahinda Wijesinghe

Sunday Times Sri Lanka 1st March 2020

Standing 6 ft. plus, Michael Wille was captain of the Royal College first XI team in 1956-7. In that era school cricket was of a high order and spectators (including schoolboys who used to 'cut' College) flocked to the various grounds to watch their 'stars' in action.

That year, Royal College, Colombo, did not have too strong a team, and Wille's deputy was Lorenz Pereira – different personalities. The skipper was a thinker on the game (I think he still does!) while his deputy played the many games he participated and excelled in, merely for the joy in the participation. I had the fortune of playing in that side.

Skipper Wille was a very strict disciplinarian. For instance, he 'dropped' the only paceman in the side (a 'coloursman' to boot) Patrick Poulter, since he had not attended sufficient 'practices' for the first game of the season: The reason? Patrick had 'played' as an 'extra' in a Hollywood spectacular (Bridge over the River Kwai) that was being filmed in Ceylon. The story goes, when Wille submitted the team sheet (for the match against Ananda College) to the Principal, and the latter asked why Poulter has been omitted. Wille's reply was: "Sir, I selected cricketers not those who have ambitions of becoming film stars." Or a reply on those lines. However, thanks to Michael Wille's discipline and captaincy skills, Royal went through the season undefeated and - if my memory serves - notched up three wins before the Royal-Thomian. In other words, to cross swords with much stronger teams and come out unscathed that is skill. Wille had loads of it. On the other hand, a couple years later, Royal had a superb season. The contributory factors here were



due to the fact that Royal had a very strong team with 12 'coloursmen' to contend with, and ten of them had notched a half-century to their credit on separate occasions, supported by an all-round bowling attack, including an instance when Brian Pereira, an accomplished batsman who was considered more as a 'net' bowler, captured 4 wickets for 5 runs against St. Benedicts College, Kotahena and helped Royal to an early victory. In short, unlike in the case of Michael Wille who led a comparatively weak team, this team was certainly not short of skillful players.

Coming back to Michael Wille and the 1957 Royal-Thomian encounter: All of us were keyed up since our opponents possessed a very strong batting line-up, and who had enjoyed a good season headed by opening batsman Ronald Reid (who had scored an unbeaten 158 in the previous year, beating Norman Siebel's 20-year old record of 151*.)

S. Thomas's batted first and notched up 259 runs in the first innings (with Reid as usual compiling a beautiful 65 runs in the first innings and followed it up another unbeaten 65 runs in the second innings) and Royal had an uncomfortable half-hour to contend with on Friday. Opening batsman and skipper, Wille did not dodge the issue and opened the batting and with the score at 68/4 on Saturday, he associated himself for the fifth wicket with Deputy Lorenz Pereira (57) in a partnership of 117 runs and saved Royal from possible defeat.

Michael Wille's innings of 121 – almost half the Royal total of 249 – in my opinion, was one of the greatest innings at a Royal-Thomian I had the pleasure of watching (and playing in). The first day he scored an unbeaten 20 odd runs. Those runs, against the Thomian opening bowlers, Denis Ferdinands and J.K.C. Gunasekera indicated big things to come on Saturday. Wille did not disappoint his fans. Let Wille continue from here:”We had an awkward hour or so to survive on Friday evening and the first ball from Denis was delivered at ferocious pace and took me by surprise.....

The ball hit the shoulder of my bat and went down to fine leg and I got a single. The ball could have gone anywhere and I could have been out for a duck off the first ball I received so luck plays a big part in our destiny. I was concentrating so hard that I just played one ball at a time and didn't look at the scoreboard. When the umpire called 'stumps', we were about 45 for 2, which was not good but could have been worse.

The next day was much the same except that I had decided not to try and hook Denis. This was a strategy I had decided on well before the match. The previous year I tried to hook him and he nearly broke my arm so I had decided to duck the two or three bouncers he bowled every over. I saw Dennis as the main threat as he could have gone through us if he got on a roll and I tried to keep him away from the 'freshers'.

THE PARTNERSHIP THAT SAVED US WAS THE 115-RUN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOLLO (Lorenz) FOR THE FIFTH WICKET.

Thomian leg-spinner Idroos was good but he had a tough task bowling to two left handers on a good wicket. When we left the field for the 'milk interval' I looked at the scoreboard and saw that I was 96. I recall that there were a lot of 'old boys' in the dressing room giving me advice on how to make the next four runs but I took no notice of them. I only recall Satha (batting maestro Sathasivam), who was my boyhood cricket hero, when he came into the dressing room to wish me well. In the first over after the 'milk interval' I drove Ronnie Reid through the covers and when turning for the third run I saw the ball cross the ropes and said to myself, " a hundred in the Royal Thomian, how good is that ", meaning that I had never dreamed of achieving this Holy Graille.



The game stopped for a few minutes while the Thomians congratulated me. I looked at the scoreboard and concluded that we had saved the match which was what we needed to do after the Thomians had made 250 plus. I suddenly felt both exhilarated and mentally exhausted and the thought of breaking Ronnie's record didn't cross my mind because I don't think I could have maintained that level of concentration much longer, maybe the responsibility of captaincy played a part. As you know, I then went berserk and was inevitably bowled by Denis for 121.

"Mahinda, I must tell you something else: At the start of my first year ('54), (Mr. Harold Samaraweera, our master-in-charge of cricket) held a team-bonding dinner at his home in Havelock Park. A player – Selvi Perinpanayagam - asked our coach Mr. Barney Gunasekeera "Sir, what does it feel like to score a century in the Royal-Thomian?" (Mr. Gunasekera scored 148 and captured 7/57 in the R-T of 1930).

Barney gave the question some thought and replied with a humorous smile, "Selvi, like many things in life, anticipation is often better than realisation ". I would be telling you a lie if I told you that I am not proud of the fact that I made a century in that match. However, what Barney said in '54 is true: "anticipation is better than realisation" and what gives me the greatest satisfaction is that we had a good season and 'punched above our weight'. The century is not important except in its contribution to the team effort and the outcome of the match.

On reflection, of the 4 years I played for Royal, the '57 side had the best 'Esprit de Corps" and here is my explanation for this phenomenon. When there is a strong side the team divides into two groups, the veterans and the 'freshers'. The veterans are full of themselves and believe that the 'freshers' are beneath their dignity and the freshers band together in self- preservation.

For instance, in '54 I cannot recall Nirma (Nirmalingam) or Ubaya (de Silva) or Freddie Kreltszheim) talking to me and I built up a strong friendship with Selvi who also was a 'fresher'. In '57 there was myself, fourth year player, Captain, God (or 'Hitler' as I was named by Mahinda Wijesinghe) and 4 second year players. The 4 second year players were all tail-enders in '56 and only Pat Poulter had bowled a ball in the '56 R/T and, therefore, were not much better than 'freshers' in reality. In short, there was no 'them and us' in the team, we were all in it together, we swam or we sank and, fortunately, we swam."

Darrell Walter Lloyd Lieversz

By Elmo Rodrigopulle

Daily News Sri Lanka - Friday, February 14, 2020

He was one of the rare excellent sportsmen to come out of school, then excel at club level and earn his national spurs in two sports – cricket and athletics - which any sportsman could well be proud of.

We refer to DARREL WALTER LLOYD LIEVERSZ who first showed his rare talent in cricket and athletics as a right royal Royalist at the Reid Avenue school in the 1960s and who we are proud to feature as our 'SPORTS LEGEND' this Friday. Royal have over the years produced some outstanding sportsmen who have gone on to leave their marks both locally and internationally in their chosen fields of sport.



Sportsmen who come to mind

Names of such sportsmen who come to mind are F.C.de Saram, Dr. C.H. Gunesekera, Ivers Gunesekera, Mahes Rodrigo, Russel Heyn and Lorenz Pereira and to a lesser extent Daya Shabandu. The first six mentioned were par excellence and like good wine needs no bush. De Saram was treated in every way of life the most colourful personalities one could wish to know.

He was an excellent raconteur and I had the good fortune of being in the company when he regaled those around him with his escapades here and abroad, especially his life in the Sri Lanka Army.

Back to our legend and LIEVERSZ was the son of Douglas Lieversz who played for Royal College, Colts CC and Sri Lanka and who was later President of Colts. Father Douglas opened batting for the country against the Australian team led by Jack Ryder in a three-day match at Victoria Park in 1935.

Played for Gymkhana Club

He also played for Indian Gymkhana Club against MCC at Lord's during that time when he was in England. He was one of the finest gentlemen one was lucky to know. When I was Sports Editor of the 'Times of Ceylon' and 'Sunday Times' Douglas served in the committee that picked the 'Schoolboy Cricketer of the Year' and being a keen follower of the game his inputs were well received by that committee that was captained by Lionel Madugalle who was Secretary to the Minister of Sports.

Young LIEVERSZ played for the Reid Avenue School in 1961 and 1962 captaining in the final year. He was a penetrative right arm fast bowler who captured most of his wickets with a well-controlled and cleverly concealed in swing delivery that had batsmen in trouble. At school his wicket taking partner in crime was Chanaka de Silva.

LIEVERSZ after a successful school cricket career joined his father's club Colts CC and played for the club from where he performed exceedingly well to get a call from the Sri Lankan selectors to play for the country in 1964 and 1965.



Good fortune

LIEVERSZ had the good fortune of coming under his coach at Royal College - Elmo de Bruin who licked into shape the fundamentals of swing bowling and athletics to him and later Alban Fernando a former Wesley cricketer who later turned coach and was the cricket correspondent at the 'Times of Ceylon', where the writer learnt the fine art of cricket writing from him as a junior reporter at the 'Times' in the early 1960s. Fernando wrote under the pen name 'Alban'.



The best inter-school cricket encounter that LIEVERSZ remembers was the one against St.Peter's College at Reid Avenue. The Royalists won that game by a massive 160 runs. The game was all the more memorable because the Royalists were not at full strength with four top players sidelined through injury.

The bowler who supported DARRELL in destroying the Peterites was his new ball bowling partner Chanaka de Silva. Chanaka pocketed 4 for 14 and 3 for 13 and DARRELL captured 6 for 7 and 7 for 17 with high class in swing bowling. That inter-school game is still etched in his memory.

DARRELL was also a member of a strong Combined Schools team that toured India under Anandian Yatigama Amaradasa.

Joined Colts Cricket Club

On leaving school DARRELL threw in his lot with Colts CC which had his father Douglas as President of the club. Incidentally Douglas also served on the Selection Committee of the country's cricket as Chairman and with his co selectors did a job satisfying to all because they picked teams purely on merit.



The best club game that DARRELL still remembers is the Sara trophy game against the University led by Carlyle Perera and Colts captained by Wijepala Premaratne in 1962 at the Colts ground which they were unfortunate to lose by 0.02 points. Had they won that game Colts would have been Sara Trophy Champions.

That game has been described as one of the best in the big-time game. DARRELL recalls that his skipper Premaratne who was also a former University player declaring the Colts second innings with three wickets intact which stalled the University of Valuable Bonus points if they bundled out the entire team.

Game went to the wire

This game went to the wire and the Sara Trophy was decided on bonus points. The two Uni batsmen who deprived the Colts of victory were two former Thomian stalwarts Buddy Reid and Nihal Gurusinghe who later passed out as Doctors. With their determined batting they managed to get the 70 runs needed for bonus points for them to emerge victors by 0.02 points. It was a nail-biting finish.

DARRELL first played for the country in the Gopalan Trophy match against Madras at the P. Sara Stadium in 1964 and made his presence felt when he captured 6 for 29 in the second innings and helping the team win by six wickets. He later played against Bob Simpson's Australians in 1964 but failed to make an impression with the Aussie batsmen playing him with ease.

DARRELL also played a big part in Sri Lanka's victory against a Pakistan X1 captained by Imtiaz Ahmed in an Unofficial Test match at the Oval in 1964. He took 5 for 40 in the first innings and 4 for 28 in the second finishing with a match bag of 9 for 68 which helped Michael Tissera's team to win by 41 runs. Darrell was also a member of the Ceylon squad when they beat India for the first time in an Unofficial Test at Ahmedabad in 1965.



Brilliant athlete

DARRELL was also a brilliant athlete and became a double international when he represented the country in athletics at the 4th Asian Games in Djakarta. Running in the final trials to select the team he erased the record that stood in the name of Dr. H.M.P. Perera in the men's 400 metres and when he also qualified to face the starter in 200 metre event won by Lakshman de Alwis with both runners returning the same timing of 22.5 seconds.

Incidentally Lakshman de Alwis who represented the country and served Sri Lanka athletics in many ways as an official and coach was unfortunate to fall victim to a tiger suicide bomb which also snuffed the life



The Ceylon and India teams posing for a picture before the unofficial Test match in Ahmedabad, India in 1965. Ceylon won this Test to create history. Darrell Lieversz who was a member of this team is also in the picture. He opened bowling in this Test with Norton Fredrick. The captains were Michael Tissera (Ceylon) and Nawab of Pataudi (India)..

of politician Jeyraj Fernandopulle. Once his international career was over in cricket and athletics he took to planting and played Donovan Andree and 'Daily News' cricket for Kandy SC and Dimbula. DARRELL a double international was simple and unassuming and was an example to all sportsmen. He is now domiciled with his family in Australia.

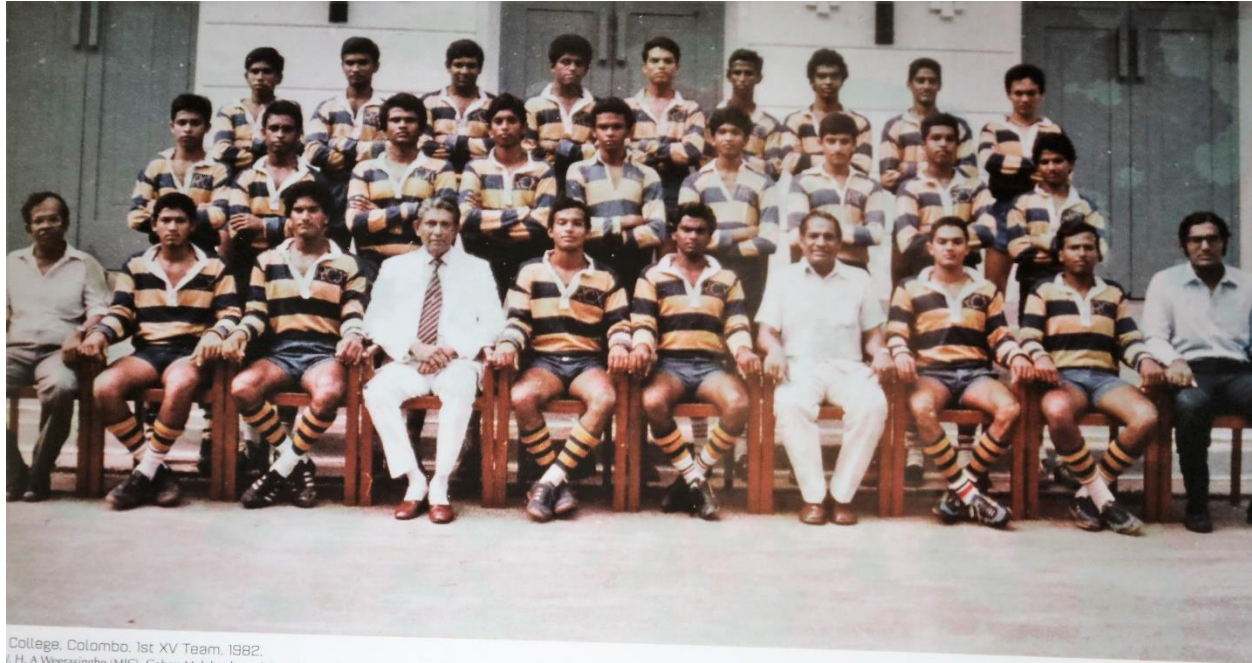
<http://www.dailynews.lk/2020/02/14/tc/211376/leave-it-lieversz>



ROYAL COLLEGE RUGBY DINNER - 75TH BRADBY SHIELD 2ND LEG

HILTON RESIDENCES, COLOMBO 14TH MAY 2019

By Hiran Muttiah



College, Colombo, 1st XV Team, 1982.

F. H. A Weerasinghe (MIC), Gehan Malalasekera, Sriyan Cooray, Mr. C. T. M. Fernando, Hiran Muttiah (Capt.), Amaranath Kandiah, Mr. Summa Navaratnam (Coach), Suraj Gunasekera, Dilshan Perera, Ajith Coomarasamy (Asst. Coach), Harsha Perera, Anil Ekanayake, Ajith Pathirana, Sanjath Agalawatte, Ajith Weeraratne, Senan Nagarajam, Ricardo Newton, Pemraj Peiris, Ajith Gunasekera, Hayb, Hemantha Perera, Mohan Molegoda, Sabry Marikar, Graham Lawrence, Sisila Ratnayake, Royendra Almeida, Suresh Navaratnam and S. Y. Liu.

Principal Royal College, Principal Trinity College, Chairman and members of the rugby dinner committee, distinguished guests, my 1982 teammates and fellow past Royal Ruggerites - good evening!

Today, I have the honourable duty of proposing the toast to Royal College. The game of rugby of course is what brings us together and specifically the Bradby shield. This year marks the 75th year of the Bradby shield encounters.

I have been fortunate to have played in some wonderfully talented and skilled Royal sides. You've already heard my rugby history, so I'd like to acknowledge the coaches who did so voluntarily and taught us much more than just the game of rugby. Rohan Chikera and Michael Muller, Royal captain in 1973. Master strategist Malik Samarawickreme assisted by Dr. Fred Perera captain in 1971. Summa sir, captain of the 1943 team, former Sri Lanka captain Dr. Indrajith Coomarasamy and captain of the 1970 team Jagath Fernando - arguably one of Royal's most talented sportsmen.

As we celebrate 75 years of the Bradby shield, it is useful to reflect on the vision on how and why the Bradby shield came into being in the first place. It is in the magnanimous gesture of Trinity principal Mr. Lionel Fernando who following the insurrection in 1971, aptly resonated the "spirit of the Bradby" by awarding the shield to Royal College on the result of the first leg only.

And in the composure and sportsmanship of Royal captain in 1992, now Dr. Harindhu Wijesinghe whose team respectfully stood aside of the podium and applauded the Himesh Gunathilake led Trinity team, who had successfully retained the shield, when aggregate scores were tied that year.



At this time, I acknowledge my 1982 team and the five teammates who are no longer with us – Pemraj Peiris, Sanath Samarakoon, Sisila Ratnayake, Sabry Marika and Sampath Agalawatte – Captain of the champion unbeaten 1984 team.

In '82 we didn't win any trophies, but we kept the "Royal College fame inviolate" I will share a personal experience that has relevance on many levels to what our beloved Sri Lanka faces today. I was selected to the Sri Lanka national team in 1984 for the 9th Asiad tournament in Japan. My roommate for the 10-day tour was Navaratne, a 30 plus year old, experienced prop forward from the army. A veteran of several SL tours, a battle-hardened soldier and a man of considerable life experience.

For those of you old enough, you would recall the beginnings of the civil conflict in the North and by 1984, army casualties had risen from the dark days in July the previous year. Tension generally between the communities and the forces was palpable. So, you can imagine, as a 21-year old I was somewhat intimidated and apprehensive. For the duration of the tour Navaratne and I would converse – he in Sinhalese and I in English. Despite the many differences between our respective life journeys, here we were, singularly bound by the fact that we were sons of Sri Lanka. We got on quite well. Nevertheless, each night I would sleep with one eye open, in case the burly prop forward wanted to practice "Crouch, touch, pause and engage!"

On my debut for Sri Lanka vs Malaysia, CP Abeygunawardene our scrum half, made a break on the blind side from a scrum 40 meters out. Rohantha Peiris, Royal captain in 1978, created the overlap for me to score by the corner flag. The first man to lift me up and celebrate the try, was my roommate Navaratne, the prop had shadowed in support from the scrum 40 meters out.

Fast forward 20 years and we both happened to be in Sri Lanka on holiday at the same time. As we reminisced that tour, much to my surprise, Navaratne said he had been intimidated by me – the 21-year-old on that tour. When I asked him why, he replied "because you were from Royal College!"

The definition of a Royalist is elusive. To me, it is the blending of all those attributes, universally regarded as decent human behaviour. Behaviour that is appropriate to the situation, compassion, empathy, responsible citizenry, accountability and so on – today experts call this Emotional Intelligence.

The Royal DNA is a rich tapestry of long-standing traditions, collective influence of staff, strong support of loyal old boys and students from diverse backgrounds.

It is said that rugby is the game they play in heaven. So, on a lighter note, I heard that last week God had taken the Trinity Coach Rodney So'Oialo and Royal coach Dushantha Lewke for a walk. He took Rodney to a decent two-bedroom house with faded Trinity flags on the windows and said, "Son if Trinity wins the 75th Bradby shield you may have this house". Rodney seemed happy enough, but then noticed a much bigger house further up on the hill, draped with brand new Royal flags and a 'papare' band playing in the garden. So, Rodney says "God, thanks for this nice house. But how come Lewke gets such a big mansion?" God looks at Rodney rather bewildered and replies "you idiot, that's not Lewke's house. That's my place!" Who you are, is a gift from your parents. Who you become, is your gift to Royal!

Gentlemen of Royal Rugby, please rise and raise a toast to Royal College. - **"TO ROYAL COLLEGE"**





Hiran Muttiah meets the esteemed former Royal rugby captains:

L-R Summa Navaratnam (1943), Dudley Fernando (1958),

Jayantha Samarasekera (1961), U L Kaluarachchi (1962),

Maj. Harin Malwatte (1969)



A reunion - 37 years in the making

By Graham Lawrence

On 26th February 2017, a new WhatsApp group was created. It had a handful of members, but three admins! Not another one, I thought. I was about to leave the group, when I noticed the name: "RCXV 1982 reunion". One of the admins was Hiran Muttiah - Royal's Rugby Captain of 1982. Another was Gobi "Kandos" Kandiah - the Vice-Captain that year. The 3rd admin was larger than life Prop Mohan "Molli" Molligoda - Hiran's "Mr Reliable". Despite the low numbers and inconsistent activity in the early days, I stuck with the group. I'm glad I did not leave. Let me tell you why.

Using the power of Social Media, Hiran had begun to lay the foundation for the Bradby of 2019. What was special about the 2019 Bradby? By tradition, he was in line to be the Chief Guest at the 2nd leg in Colombo and hence, would have the honour of handing over the coveted trophy to the winning captain. As lady luck would have it, 2019 was also going to be the 75th anniversary of the shield. Big plans were being made by both schools to make it an occasion to remember. Hiran had bigger plans, and he had begun 2 1/4 years ahead!

Our forward-thinking skipper was giving notice to the squad via WhatsApp – wherever you are in the world, be in SL for the 2019 Bradby! Our pre-season squad picture had 33 members and he wanted as many of them to attend. Sadly, we had five team members who had passed away: Pemraj Pieris, Sanath Samarakoon, Sabry Marikkar, Sisila Ratnayake and Sampath Agalawatta.

There were challenges in getting the rest together. Hiran had migrated to Australia, two years after captaining Royal. While down under, he began to use Ted as his first name - a shortened version of his Christian name, he confesses! As a team, we had all gone down different paths, with several more seeking greener overseas pastures. Kandos and Gihan Malalasekerawere in the UK, Royendra Roy Almeida and Anil Ekanayake "Eka" were in Canada, Suraj "Devo" Gunasekera, his brother Ajith Gunasekera and Shoua Liu or "Cheena" were in the US, Ricardo Newton was in Australia, Firoze Suhayb was in Bangladesh and Dilshan Perera was in Dubai.

For professional reasons, Hiran had returned to SL in 2014 and despite a short stint in PNG, he had followed his heart and stayed on. Like JRR Tolkien's 3rd volume in The Lord of the Rings trilogy; it was "The Return of the King".

Fast forward to late 2018. The first warm up (in the guise of planning the events for Bradby 2019) is executed on the 8th of Nov. Dilshan is back from Dubai and around 10 are at the CR bar. By end 2018, the WA group is almost complete, with 27 participants.

The early signs for 2019 are good. As soon as the Bradby dates get confirmed, Hiran sends out his plans. The list of events is staggering. Malale has returned from the UK, Suhayb has returned from Bangladesh and are on hand to welcome Royen who visits Colombo in the 3rd week of February with his Kurtley Beale doppelganger son. The 2nd warm up, including Royen is done.

The 3rd warm up is ironically on the 20th of April. The events that occur a few hours after we reach home are catastrophic and shake the whole Bradby 2019 plan. Waiting for new dates to be confirmed is thirsty work, so a 4th warm up is done on the 10th of May.



Finally, the new Bradby dates are confirmed and it's time for the festivities to kick off. Due to the date changes, Royendra and Liu are unable to make it from North America. But Kandos, Anil and Devo have flown in and the first event now becomes the "Boys only" Down South trip on the 18/19 May. Ashan Abeyesundere and Hemantha "1980" Perera make the arrangements at The Blue Water Hotel in Wadduwa. I undertook the task of arranging a 41-seater bus. Yes, it's a big coach for just 15 travelers, but most of the boys now need a double seat to be comfortable!

The journey to Wadduwa begins from the CR (don't worry, even though its 0830, we stick to a "Fab" breakfast/coffee). Skipper Hiran has a lot of luggage, including several large card-board boxes! The previous day was his birthday and the sizable leftover pieces of cake are also carried onto the bus. Suresh Navaratnam - "Nava" has brought his Tennis rackets and is loading a 40kg cargo bag into the hold. This is just a 2-day trip! Devo is sporting a long grey beard reminiscent of an Arab spice dealer. He is promptly nicknamed Aboobucker. He is armed with an eBay package, which he suspiciously keeps to himself. Inside is a Gilbert Vintage Leather Rugby ball. The plan is to get it inflated at a fuel/cycle shed along the way.

As soon as the journey starts, Hiran begins handing out T-shirts to all on board. These are remnants from the Summa Navaratnam Rugby Academy for young kids, which he has been generously backing. I am lucky to get a XL sized one, but disappointed to note that they are kid sizes! Everyone roundly complains that none of them fit. Our journey takes us past the residence of recently departed Sampath Agalawatta and Hiran promptly suggests we pay homage to our lost teammate.

Sriyan Cooray cracks open the esky, Ajith Weeratunga has his ever-present sunglasses on and Manjula Agalawatta is keeping us entertained with his witty one-liners. Along the way, we visit a supermarket, a fuel station and a tyre repair shop in efforts to get the ball inflated. It goes badly wrong; the ball is damaged and the journey to the hotel takes double the time. Nobody noticed.

After a smooth check-in we are summoned to the double (sorry twin) room shared by Molli and Jayantha Sumathipala - "Diga". Hiran consults a sheet of paper, delves into the boxes he brought and starts distributing attire to all present. Sumathi has expertly turned out three different items for the team. He is repeatedly congratulated for covering his Production and Sales targets for the next two years! The two jerseys and shirt are to be worn at the many events planned around the Bradby games. Hiran wants Sumathi to decide on the sizes for each member and the inevitable fights/arguments over which size is for whom and whether some look more like undergarments than jerseys, begin. In all the confusion, Dilshan takes home a 6XL shirt! Suffice it to say, that with so many different pieces for different events, mix-ups were to be expected.

Harsha Perera and Firoze Suhayb join us at the hotel and the weekend turns out to be a lot of fun, reminiscing over the '81/'82 seasons. The '81 trip to Bangkok, constant dropped balls by the backline, the broken nose of a Trinitian who had forcibly "crossed over" to RC, the frequency of washing shorts by a hooker and the lineout skills of a towering 2nd rower, got repeated hits. These were stories from 37/38 years ago and were suitably embellished.

After lunch, Nava finally gets to show off his tennis skills with a floundering Dilshan at the receiving end and then the whole team invade the pool for a game of Tap Rugby. It was loud! I can assure you that there was absolutely "no" cheating but plenty of double counting and the final score line was 35-7 to Hiran's team. Go figure.



The evening was spent enjoying the sounds of a 3-piece band that was specially arranged for the team at the Hotel night club. Nava ruled the dance floor with his Tea-plucker moves!

The following morning, we saw a new “face” at the breakfast table. Aboobucker had been de-bearded! The skipper spun a story that he had stealthily cut one half off whilst his roommate was asleep and that had compelled Devo to complete the job. Devo is now lecturing the rest of us on how we should be presentable at the Bradby games!

The second event was aptly titled “The Spirit of Rugby” and held on the 21st of May at the CR&FC. Hiran was hosting all those who had played Rugby with him from U17 to SL. It was a large gathering of people and our first opportunity to be dressed in our ‘82 team Jersey. It was also the 94th birthday of our coach Summa Navaratnam. Hiran had arranged for a “naughty but nice” birthday cake for him.

‘82 squad members Senan Nagaratnam, Ajith Pathirana, Channa Shiromal De Silva and Palitha Senaratne make their 1st appearance. The vintage Gilbert Rugby ball has been repaired! Devo is now ensuring that all teammates sign the ball with a Silver Gel Ink Pen.

Among those present at this event were Malik Samarawickrama, Senior DIG of Police M.R. Latiff, Cargo Siriwardena, C.P. Abeygunawardena, Jagath Fernando, M.H. Marso, Nihal ‘Viper’ Guneratne, Wimal Epparachchi, Aruna Uduwalgedara, Dilroy Fernando, Ashan Ratwatte and Chula Dharmadasa. Old Royalists like Vipula Dharmadasa, Jehan Canageratne, Iqbal Hassen, Ravi Wijenadan, Leon Fonseka, Sujeewa Cooray, Shanaka “DS” Gunaratne, Dharmasiri “Martiya” Nimalachandra, Dhammika Gunasekera, Rev. Dishan “Michel” Wickramaratne, Naren Chanmugam, Hemal “Java” Jayawardena, Seevali Jayasinghe and Kapila Peiris were also present.

Dilroy Fernando (Issipathana rugby captain ‘82) made quite the stir by getting all Royalists and Trinicians present, to sign his copy of the 75th Bradby Coffee Table book.

Hiran had made it a point to invite Sujith Silva from the Quadrangle magazine and his staff, together with journalists Ranjeeva Seneviratne and Allaam Ousman.

Among the hilarious stories related that night, the highlight was hearing that man mountain Molli was a full back in his junior rugby days! The only collections he does these days, are from the bar.

On the 24th of May, the third event was held at the CR&FC. Hiran had planned to hand over plaques to the families of our deceased teammates. The plaque had a miniature Blue n Gold Jersey with the name of the departed player and an image of the entire team below it. It was a very touching gesture and the families of Sanath Samarakoon, Sampath Agalawatta and Sisila Ratnayake now have a sizable memento to proudly display in their living rooms. In an emotional address, Hiran noted that Sisila’s son was a spitting image of his father.

The Earl’s Court at Cinnamon Lakeside Hotel was the venue for the fourth event on the 25th of May. This was termed the “Captains Run” dinner and the invitees were the ‘82 squads of both RC and TCK, together with their spouses. The 2nd piece of attire – a dark blue linen shirt with the words 75th Bradby and the crests of both RC and TCK (embroidered in gold) – made its 1st appearance. Hiran had made them for both teams!

At the entrance to the hall, Hiran had placed a life size back drop of the RC squad. It was a sight to behold. Some of the spouses were wondering if they could travel back in time to 37 years ago.



Due to the date changes in the Bradby schedule, TCK skipper Byron Fernando had not flown in from Australia, but representing TCK were Roshan Ratwatte, Adrian “Bassa” Basnayake, Amanda Prabhakara Pilapitiya, Ashan “Freddie” Ratwatte, Nalin “Wette” Wettasinghe, Jeevana “Jeeva” Handunge and Solomon “Madu” Jesudason.

Personally, I always felt that my closest mates from other schools were Thomians and Trinicians. This night was ample proof of the relationships we had created almost 40 years ago.

Wette had brought his copy of the 75th Bradby coffee table book to the event and once again it was signature time. Superb music, great food and even better company meant the event went on till the wee hours of the morning, with Manjula Agale taking the opportunity for a “power nap” at dinner time. He insisted that he was not a casualty.

Hiran’s speech in which he thanked all the attendees, especially the TCK players and their spouses, explained how he chose his playing position at Royal. When first turning up for senior Rugby practices, he had mentioned to Devo that his desire was to play at scrum-half. He was immediately told to look at another position, as that was sewn up by Sriyan. When he disappointedly suggested stand-off, he was told that, that too was taken. When he inquired as to who was playing there, Devo replied “me”! That was the start of Hiran playing in the centres.

It was time to finally present the vintage Gilbert Rugby ball to its intended recipient. Devo delivered a three-page speech, in which he attempted to thank Hiran for all that he had done during this period. He called upon VC Kandos to do the honours of presenting the signed ball to Hiran.

After thanking the team for the gift, it was promptly passed around and a short game of Tap ensued. Hiran secretly called for me to go wide on the right wing. As expected, I dropped the ball with no defenders in sight and bombed a certain try. I shouldn’t have tried that (Grey) Goose step!

It’s time for the 1st leg of the Bradby and our opportunity to once again wear the ‘82 Team jersey for the game. One member gets it wrong and wears the fab 2nd leg replica jersey instead. This is our fifth event, and several are slated to make the journey to Kandy. A majority are travelling up by train on Friday morning and all are expected to stay at the Mahaweli Reach hotel. Train and hotel arrangements are expertly handled by Mollie. Sriyan has taken us back to school days by arranging the famous Green Cabin “cheese cakes” on the train journey. To date, I wonder how an almond tart got incorrectly called a cheese cake. Anyway, it’s a SL icon and was much appreciated.

Devo, Nava, Dilshan, Ajith W, Anil and Manjula have travelled to a bungalow in Matale on Thursday and join the rest of the gang on game day. Thanks to a vehicle pass, we escape the stringent security check and most of us (some decide to stay back in the hotel) watch the enthralling game in the Grand Stand. The sixth event is the Bradby Bash after-party arranged at the hotel and the attire is listed as the Linen Shirt. More than one gets it wrong! Even though its 37 years later, skipper Hiran knows his team too well. He has predicted this and brought a few spares! They are relieved and walk away with a 2nd shirt.

Prior to the function, the team assembles in Hiran’s suite. VC Kandos addresses Hiran, delivers a thank you speech and hands over a memento. The wording is ALL THE TALENT IN THE WORLD WON’T TAKE YOU ANYWHERE WITHOUT YOUR TEAMMATES and it was signed off by the RC ‘82 Rugby team with best wishes to our captain Hiran Muttiah.



Hiran was visibly taken aback and humbly suggested that such mementos were not necessary. From the team's perspective, it was a relatively tiny token of appreciation in comparison to the monumental efforts that he had put in for Bradby 2019.

The seventh event is the 44th Old Royalists' Rugby Dinner slated for the 14th of June at the JAIC Hilton. Hopefully, everyone wears their blazer and College tie and not the Linen Shirt! Everyone is looking forward to Hiran's toast.

Unfortunately, VC Kandos and Devo have returned to their homes overseas and will miss a treat. Eka has managed to extend his "family" visa and is ready to party.

The eight event will be the 2nd leg of the Bradby where Hiran will be the Chief Guest in Colombo. The special attire for the '82 team is a replica of the jersey worn 37 years ago. The team is expected to be seated in the Rugby Diner's enclosure. Will Hiran be able to hand over the shield to Thulaib Hassen of Royal?

The ninth and final event will be the after party at the CR&FC. The overworked Linen shirt will get its last run. What a month it has been!



Royal-Thomian Cricket Matches Melbourne

27th January 2020-Mulgrave Reserve, Wheelers Hill

By Shanaka Perera

The annual Royal-Thomian encounter in Melbourne, took place on Australia Day long weekend on Monday 27th January at Mulgrave Reserve. Royal won the toss and decided to bat first. Royal had a solid opening partnership of 41 in 6 overs, with Nimesh Naveen dominating the partnership with Channa Gunawardena. After losing Channa, Royal had another solid partnership of 32 for the 2nd wicket between



Naveen and Hasitha Samarasinghe. Naveen departed for a well-made 46 and Royal struggled to build any significant partnerships after that as they kept losing wickets at regular intervals. Randev Pathirana held the innings together and batted through to the end, making an excellent 42 runs. Royal ended up scoring 165 runs in the allotted 35 overs.

The Thomian's started the chase of 166 runs in brisk fashion scoring 55 runs in the first 7 overs. The Royal bowlers couldn't penetrate the solid Thomian opening pair. Royal managed to break through when the score was 90, impressive left arm spinner Althaf Naseem taking the wicket of Opatha for 32 runs.

Former Sri Lankan player, Kaushal Silva, came in at number 3 for the Thomian's and continued to score runs at a steady pace. After a 42- run partnership for the 2nd wicket, Royal took another quick wicket to get rid of the highest scorer R Kodithuwakku who made an excellent 72 runs. The Thomian's achieved the target without further loss and won the match by 7 wickets.

R Kodithuwakku was named the Man of the Match as well as the Best Batsman and S De Silva was named the Best Bowler with the figures of 5 for 30.

In the over 40's game, Royal batted first and made 132 in the allotted 25 overs with Dilharan Sivaratnam scoring an excellent 50 runs. For the Thomian's, Chanaka Gunawardene took 3 wickets for 23. The Thomian's achieved the target for the loss of 6 wickets in the 21st over.

S Molligoda 30 and S Madonza 28 were the highest scorers for the Thomians. For Royal, skipper Sunny De Silva excelled with the ball taking 3 for 27.

For the first time in Melbourne Royal-Thomian history, there was a game for the over 50s, which gave a chance to the legends of the game, to dust off their boots. The Thomians won the toss, batted first and made 185 in 25 overs. Highest scorers were Leon Lewis 29*, Suren Meerigama 26* and Mahen Sirithunga 25*. Ransi Fernando had the best figures for Royal with 2 for 17. Royal could manage only 108 in the chase and lost by 77 runs. For Royal, Hemantha Cooray 22 and Dinesh Chelvathurai 16, were the chief scorers.

All three matches were played simultaneously at the spacious Mulgrave Reserve grounds with the Thomians winning every game. It was a fun-filled day with lots of nostalgic stories shared between all involved and played in the true Roytho spirit!

Link to Photo Album: [Royal-Thomian Cricket 2020](#)



Membership List as at 1st May 2020

1. Dinesh Perera
2. Lochana Premarathna
3. Shanka Gunawardana
4. Keshan Ranasinghe
5. Ranga Perera
6. Aslam Assen
7. Athula Ratnayaka
8. Chinthana Wijeweera
9. Deepal Perera
10. George Fernando
11. Indrajith Wijegunaratne
12. Pasan Gunasekara
13. Shanaka Perera
14. Shyam Sideek
15. Soba Ranasinghe
16. Dhammika Perera
17. Charith Jayatillake
18. Buddhimith
Wickramasinghe
19. Abdullah Mahmud
20. Channa Perera
21. Chethiya Dissanayake
22. Dhilharan Sivaratnam
23. Damitha De Lanerolle
24. Manoj Aluthwatta
25. Piyal Gunaratne
26. Sonny Pradeep De Silva
27. Umesh Goonawardena
28. Akvan Gajanayake
29. Iqram Mohinadeen
30. Aruna Perera
31. Akila Geethal
Bodiyabaduge
32. Akila Perera
33. Akram Yusuf
34. Alexander Lokuge (Don)
35. Angelo Francis
36. Aubrey VanCuylenburg
37. Almaaz Alavi
38. Banuke Thambawita
39. Bevill Janz
40. Branu Rahim
41. Bryan Wickremeratne
42. Chameera Buddhadasa
43. Chaminda Sunnadeniya
44. Chandula Ratnayake
45. Chathura Liyanagama
46. Chinthaka Wijesuriya
47. Clarence Koch
48. Devindra Weerasooriya
49. Dhilshad Sideek
50. Dick Siebel
51. Dinesh Chelvathurai
52. Dinesh Rahim
53. Dinuka De Zoysa
54. Dr.Asela Wijeratne
55. Dr.Channa Wijesinghe
56. Dr.Kingsley Rajasingham
57. Dr.Janaka Seneviratne
58. Dulip Jayakody
59. Dushan Fernando
60. Dushan Hemachandra
61. Eardley Lieverz
62. Feisul Uduman
63. Fitzroy Crozier
64. Fred Kreltzhaim
65. Hasalaka Edirisinghe
66. Helitha Withanage
67. Heman Abeysinghe
68. Ishan Jinadasa
69. Isuru Jayathilake
70. Isuru Landage
71. Iruka Kumarage
72. Jayantha (Jay) Adihetty
73. Jimmy Billimoria
74. Jumaan Sheriff
75. Kandiah Sivapragasam
76. Kheeran Dharmawardena
77. Lilith De Silva
78. Mahen Ellawala
79. Kapila Epasinghe
80. Malindra Fernando
81. Maliq Deane
82. Michael Kreltzhaim
83. Mohan Pillai
84. Nadun Thellamurege
85. Nigel De Kretser
86. Nihal Kodituwakku
87. Nihal M.D. de Run
88. Pasindu Epa
89. Rumesh Samaraweera
90. Sarasi Herath
91. Sampath Walpola
92. Shamendra Kannagara
93. Shamil Samarasinghe
94. Shanaka Jayarathne
95. Yasantha Kalupahana
96. Tony Anghie
97. Varna Amerasinghe
98. Thanura Keenawinna
99. Thisaru Withanapathirana
100. Anton Suresh Mahadeva
101. Anuradha Kannagara
102. Asad Yusuf
103. Buddhika Isuru
Kumarasingha
104. Chaman Ipalawatta
105. Charith Lankachandra
106. Dilip Gunawardene
107. Dilan Costa
108. Dilip Somaratne
109. Dinesh Epitawela
110. Dinesh Pathirage
111. Duminda Yapa
112. Harris Priya Kumarage
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115. Ishan Sampath
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127. Maxwell Solomons
128. Michael La Brooy
129. Mohan De Run
130. Nilupa Suresh
131. Niroshan Hewakoparage
132. Piloo Rustomjee
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134. Pushpika Gamage
135. Ramesh Nadarajah
136. Ranjan Muttiah
137. Ranjith Gajendra
138. Ransi Fernando
139. Sajith Mendis
140. Sajitha Amerasinghe
141. Sam Lawton
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174. Vishva Somasundaram
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176. Anjara Abeyratne
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