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## Sri Lankan Public Health Professionals in Brisbane

The third group of Sri Lankan Public Health Professionals, hosted by the AMAQ Foundation completed their training program on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> August and headed back home.



**Public Health Professionals at the graduation ceremony with Dr Rob Sinclair (President AMAQ) and Sharmayne Mullins (Training Manager, AMAQ)**

The team of five comprised of two Epidemiologists and three Public Health Inspectors, all from rural areas of Sri

Lanka, spent a very useful two weeks in Brisbane.

The training program organised by the training arm of the Australian Medical Association, covers all aspects of public health management. The participants were given classroom type of training followed by exposure to meat processing facilities, management of waste including waste collection methods and processing, milk processing, disaster preparedness, emergency procedures and first aid training. At the end of the training, they were offered two full size mannequins to be taken to Sri Lanka to help first aid training programs in schools.

Asked about important lessons from the training, they all mentioned planning, preparedness and the written procedures as key elements. Each and every member of the team demonstrated enthusiasm to learn and motivation to implement their learning back in Sri Lanka. They all developed excellent rapport with the staff members of AMAQ.

While AMAQ provided a comprehensive training program, the Sri Lankan community in Brisbane hosted the visitors to a wonderful social program including visits to the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast and hosted them to meals.

As a member of the Sri Lankan community, I convey our thanks to AMAQ Foundation for their generosity.

[Wimal Kannangara](#)

## Sri Lankan Group of Radio 4EB is expanding the horizons for a wider reach

to publish articles on rare places of interest in Sri Lanka. You could tell us your story of visiting exotic places in Sri Lanka with pictures and road maps.

Historical value - Environmental value - Tourism interest

The aim is to help our readers gain an interest, enhance knowledge and add value to their holiday in Sri Lanka in gaining a unique experience

Please see article in Page 2. Editorial committee reserves the right to decide on all matters related to publishing such articles

Contact us on email  
[brisbaneradio@yahoo.com.au](mailto:brisbaneradio@yahoo.com.au)

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## Maduwanwela Walauwa

**By Christina Bjomstrom and Jeevani Pereira**

One kilometre from the Maduwanwela Town by the main road, in the Ratnapura District, lies a hidden treasure called Maduwanwela Walauwa, a mansion, now turned into a museum. The 85,000 hectares of land which houses the mansion which was originally built and was home to five generations of the Maduwanwela family. Maduwanwela Mahadisawe completed it with 121 rooms and 21 courtyards, of which 42 rooms and 7 courtyards still exist today. Taken through the complex by a hospitable guide, the visitor can take a glimpse into the amazing lifestyle the Disawa led. Going through each hall, the antiquity of the place penetrates the senses- as we entered the halls with smells of ebony dating back to 1877. The complex was not built to completion until 1 January 1905.

The Maduwanwela clan had been coming down since the 16th Century according to area history. It is said that the initial bit of land was given by King Wimaladhamasooriya 11.

The Walauwa was initially a small clay structure before the advent of the Mahadisawe who was also called the Maduwanwela Kalu Kumara (Black Prince).

On entering the main archway, which has similarities to the 'Vahalkada' of Anuradhapura, period we

could not but help noticing the low height of it, as with all the doorways in the house. Apparently, the Mahadisawe was only four feet tall and

made all entryways to fit his own height and to bring down the level of the colonials who came to his house. A foreigner had to walk from the gate bent in two when he walked into the house.

This man understood social status clearly and placed emphasis on symbolism by resorting to customizing a complex to perpetuate the idea that no local bowed down to colonisation.

The Mahadisawe was furthermore a man who required an excess of rooms by constructing separate rooms for sweets, sewing, a shrine, betel, pantry, meat, fish and even labour among a multitude of others. Throughout the complex, influences from around the world are felt with architectural designs influenced by the West, pottery from Holland, China and England, as well as mosaic designs in an artistic style acquired from the Dutch ages. The mosaic designs are truly beautiful reflecting



**Mahadisawe**

pictures of elephants, horseshoes, birds and flowers among others. Elephants are symbolically very Asian while horseshoes are more indicative of the European influence. Previously, gems and coins

were embossed into the designs, but these were later looted.



**Walauwa**

No room highlighted his status more than the main living room,

titled 'Relic Chamber Room of Seevali Thera,' complete with a wooden chair, bottle, a Dolawa, tools and most importantly, a large photograph of the man himself adorned in jewellery galore. Indeed he was a man of small frame, but powerfully exuded confidence with a long paper-white beard, piercing eyes, luxurious clothes and although the photograph was black and white, every piece of jewellery was delicately brushed on with gold paint. The complex created work for thousands of servants including a courthouse where court cases were heard and judgments delivered. At the time of use, outside the courthouse, contraptions used to punish offenders were displayed.

Despite signs of prominence and keeping with the times, Maduwanwela Walauwa's complex was not one built with ease. Every detail was intricately designed with clay walls trampled on by elephants in order to flatten the surface. However, his attention to detail is not the only thing that makes the Walauwa leave an imprint on your mind.

With as much energy as the Mahadisawe had, it is not surprising that stories suggesting the complex being haunted arose as well. Those who had come to do reconstruction could not sleep in the sleeping quarters downstairs because they complained of spirits pulling them forcefully while they did so. Thus the caretakers resort to sleeping upstairs to thwart the eminent spirits.

What was evident to us finally was this museum displayed signs of neglect and a lack of proper maintenance. In the 1970's the Department of Archaeology focused on the reconstruction of inner and outer boundary walls as well as the courts and still continue to carry out reconstruction work. However lack of funds may have resulted in this neglect, for it is obvious that such a archaeological treasures deserve better respect.



*We welcome contributions from children of any age. Send us your letters, stories, poems, drawings etc. We will make every effort to publish them in future issues.*

*The above article is adapted from the Ceylon Daily Mirror 10/8/07*

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

**Dreaming of Paradise**

I gazed at the long stretch of land covered with lime green grass. There were trees with different colours and sizes of leaves and fruits which I couldn't even recognize. Roses, Daffodils, Marigolds, Morning-glories and Orchids grew everywhere brightening this magical land. I walked a few steps ahead and saw a magnificent castle made of colour crystal. As I went a little closer, I saw little rainbow coloured, glittering spots like sunbeams moving here and there around the palace. 'What are those little things, maybe they are fireflies' I said to myself, making up my mind to explore this lovely place. I walked faster looking around, admiring the environment, as I got nearer towards the palace. Before me I saw rock pools filled with fresh, crystal clear water, with bronze and copper rocks surrounding the pools, which produced a gleaming effect upon the water. The tide was low and as I began to wade around in the rock pools, I saw something shining amidst the clear water.

**Ravini Abeywickrama**

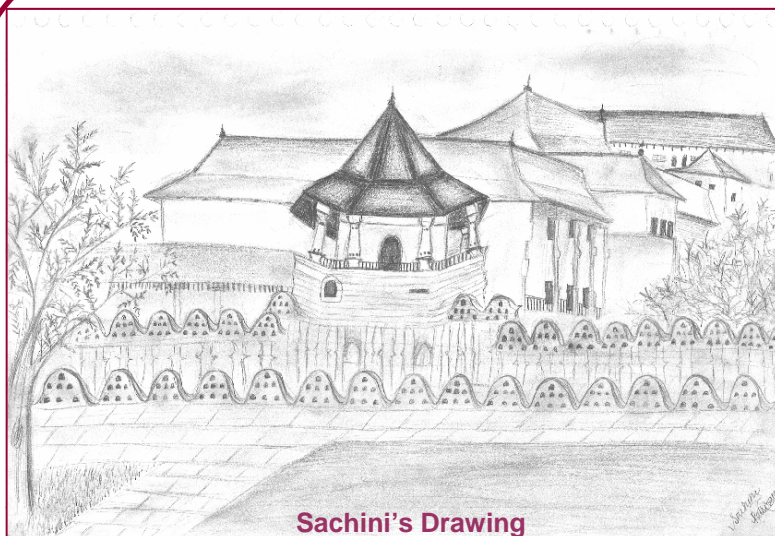
It was.....a gem! There were rubies, diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, amethysts etc ready to be picked up. I spotted a beautiful ruby with two stars in its heart and stuffed it into my pocket. The crystal palace was just ahead of me and I ran to its entrance. 'Wow!' I cried. The little coloured sunbeams I had seen were fairies! They were busily carrying baskets of food, bottles of drink and flower decorations into the palace.

The door magically opened and I walked in. My jaw dropped down. The palace was tiled with pink glass slabs and the walls were made of smooth purple quartz. Fairy Lanterns and light bulbs lit up the whole palace. The long table filled with delicious goodies and treats were on silver and glass tableware. In the middle of the room on a diamond throne sat the fairy queen of this magical land. She wore a multi coloured dress with a matching pair of wings and a butterfly charm necklace. 'Hello darling, I'm Wenilia and welcome to FAIROMANIA!' she said. 'I'm.....Ravini' I said in a shaky voice. I suddenly remembered the ruby and presented it to her as a gift. 'Oh! Thank you so much! This is the rarest gem of all. I shall give you a wonderful reward in return' she said. In a flash, she turned me into a fairy! I had soft skin, rosy cheeks and silky black hair, a rose pink dress and wings plus a matching butterfly charm necklace. I flew around with joy introducing myself to all the fairy folk. We had an enormous feast, played games, sang songs and collected gems. I discovered that the fruits of trees when eaten, made your wish come true. I just bit into a 'Wishing wonder' peach when.....

Rrrrrrrring! Rang the alarm clock. 'Get up! You're late!' shouted my mother. Startled, I woke up, rubbed my eyes and sighed. 'So it was only a dream after all' I thought. 'Or was it.....'

**Ravini Abeywickrama**

**Ravini Abeywickrama is currently a year 7 student studying at Ironside State School, St. Lucia.**

**Sachini's Drawing****Sachini Pathirana****Year 10****Brisbane State High School****DALADA MALIGAWA**

I have vivid and colourful memories of the Dalanda Maligawa from the times when I used to go to school beside the lake. It houses the Buddha's only tooth in existence for centuries and possibly the most sacred of Buddhist shrines in the world. So it is fair to say this place is special. Tales full of miracles have been woven around this place. At the time, I always thought of it as the most beautiful place on the way to school.



## Youth Corner

### CHOICES

#### Education or Happiness?

By Uditha de Silva

Young people from Sri Lanka, similar to young people from other ethnic backgrounds, are no strangers to the importance of education. Parents and family friends seem to do a great job of making them aware of this throughout their lives. The logic behind this is that with an abundance of knowledge and qualifications, young people will be able find good jobs (where good tends to mean highly paid) and mould themselves into this ideal existence that the parents plan for them. This is not a school of thought that has been founded within our parents' generation, it in fact very likely goes back much further. My grandfather who is 84 and still lives in Sri Lanka occasionally calls my dad and will ask to speak to me for a moment. The short conversation goes a little something like this:

"Putha (son) you must study well, study well and get a good job"

In my whole life I don't think he has given me any other advice or talked to me about anything else, and every time I put the phone down it's with a sigh of sadness. But what's sadder is that this attitude has been passed down to our parents, who seem eager to pass it onto us. From getting the highest OP after senior school, to doing medicine in university, parents and even family friends are constantly driving young people to learn.

People with this particular way of thinking have even taken to frowning upon young people who haven't achieved ideal results by their standards. Friends of mine have had other friends' parents ignore them at their own houses after discovering their marks at school. This obviously doesn't apply to everyone, but in general - are these the values you want to teach your kids? Is this the direction in which you want the next generation to head?

Personally I think it's important for young people to make the most of the best years of their lives (which, might I remind you, don't come twice!) and be happy. Being happy means different things to different people, and I



Uditha de Silva

would imagine that for at least some, this isn't graduating with an OP1 and spending the next 8 years of their life studying to become a neurosurgeon. Sure, that might mean a healthy salary package, but by the time you graduate you're also nearly thirty years old and are about ready to get married, have kids, and start the cycle all over again. The years where you might have enjoyed the monetary benefits are almost over, and before long you're thrown into the challenging and complex world of mortgages and parenthood.

Alternatively, other options could be at least considered. For instance, you could complete a far shorter tertiary course, graduate in your early twenties, and have 7-8 years left before marriage and kids to earn some money while also being at the stage in your life where you can spend and enjoy it. Traveling, enjoying time with friends, playing sports. For me personally the passion is downhill mountain biking (which involves riding a bike off-road down a hill, while negotiating turns, trees, and rocks at high speeds) but it could also be skiing, snowboarding, and no doubt a myriad of other activities. The point here is, there are so many things you can only do (or at least truly enjoy) while you're young.

I think that ultimately, we should be teaching our children to be happy and enjoy their lives to the fullest. A good education is one of the factors that will allow this to happen, but it certainly isn't the only one. Thankfully the majority of the younger generation seem to have realised this, and I believe that the right values may finally be passed on to the next generation. But for current migrant parents, and even some of today's youth, I hope this short article has been an eye opener.

*Uditha entered University from John Paul College, Daisy Hill.*

*He is pursuing undergraduate studies in Multimedia and is in his 2<sup>nd</sup> year at Griffith University. He is working part-time in the IT industry.*

*His hobbies are Down Hill Mountain Biking, Swimming, mechanical work related to mountain bicycles and cars.*

e-mail address: [uditha01@hotmail.com](mailto:uditha01@hotmail.com)



**Radio 4EB Sri Lankan Group actively encourages the youth to participate in programming, panel operating and other activities. Free training is provided for those who wish to get involved in panel operation. Listen to the programme every Tuesday 10pm to 11pm and send in your song requests and birthday/anniversary greetings to be broadcast. Contact the youth coordinator - Sandun [Sandella.youth@hotmail.com](mailto:Sandella.youth@hotmail.com)**



**This is a free newsletter distributed by email every month. If you wish to be included in the mailing list please send us an email: [brisbaneradio@yahoo.com.au](mailto:brisbaneradio@yahoo.com.au)**

### Upcoming Events

## SILVER FAWN CLUB

### 9 September

**Sports Day** (Tennis Tournament and Carrom)

**Redcliffe Tennis Centre,  
Oxley Avenue, Redcliffe  
Ithaca Bowls Club, Red Hill**

For tickets contact  
**Davenal 3878 1667**

### 29 September

**Karaoke Night**

**7.00 P.M.  
at Ithaca Bowls Club, Red Hill**

Members \$16, Guests \$20, Students \$12,  
Kids & Teens \$7.50 (Pizza)

For details contact  
**Sarath Weerasinghe 0402421530**

## Cricket

### Saturday 8th November—12th November

*The first cricket test match between Australia Vs Sri Lanka will be played at the Gabba*

**Join** all other Sri Lankans who would be cheering for the Sri Lankans.

*Please make sure you come to General Admission Area 30 to be with the crowd.*

*You can book tickets now.*

*For tickets and other information, please contact:*

**Kamal Weerasuriya on 3879 2686 (h),  
3137 3069(w)  
0434 603 345 (Mobile)  
Email: [Kamal.m.weerasooriya@mainroads.qld.gov.au](mailto:Kamal.m.weerasooriya@mainroads.qld.gov.au).**

### Radio Programme Schedule

Tuesday-Sandella 10.00 PM	Producer/ Panel Operator
28 August 2007	Jay Wicks (bi-lingual)/Jay Weerasekera
4 September 2007	Youth/Sandun
11 September 2007	Samanmal Guneratne/Ananda
18 September 2007	Udaya Madugalle/Aravinda
25 September 2007	Derrick (bi-lingual)/Sarath Gunetilleka

Sunday Radio 8.30 AM	Producer/ Panel Operator
2 September 2007	Aravinda/Aravinda
9 September 2007	Jay Weerasekera/Jayasiri
16 September 2007	Nishnathi/Sandun
23 September 2007	Jayasiri/Jayasiri
30 September	Ananda/ Ananda

### Upcoming Events

**They were once our front line soldiers.  
Today, they are the amputees,  
and your musicians !!!**

SL Army's Disabled 11 man Band will perform for the first time in Australia and New Zealand. They have toured UK and Europe on several previous occasions.

**Do not miss the opportunity to watch this outstanding instrumental performance, and songs in Sinhala and English.**

## **"Ranaviruvo"**

**Cavendish Road State High School  
Saturday 15 September 07 at 5.00 pm**

All proceeds to SPUR, NSW Charity Fund for rehabilitation of disabled servicemen and for projects at Ranaviru Sevana, Ragama

**They gave their best for Sri Lanka,  
and now it is your turn to  
honour them.**

**Adult \$20/- ,Family \$50/- ,Concession \$15**

**Book your tickets early**

**Nuwan 0433758979 or Sarath 0402421530**

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Editor - Jayantha Ameratunga

Advisory Committee: Vasanthe Vithanage, Jayasiri Weerawardena and Wimal Kannangara

## Upcoming Events

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ORMISTON COLLEGE  
97 DUNDAS ST  
ORMISTON  
CLEVELAND  
UBD 185 / F-11



Queensland  
Government



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Proudly presented by the Sinhala Association of Queensland

### Upcoming Events



## Sri Lanka Society of Queensland

**29<sup>th</sup> Annual Sri Lankan Ball will be held on**  
***Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2007***

*Great prizes to be won*

*Music provided by: MAX 7 & Brislankans*

*Dress: Formal*

*Menu: Buffet Dinner*

*Ticket Prices*

*Members \$55.00*

*Non Members \$65.00*



THE  
**CHIFLEY**  
AT LENNONS

BRISBANE

GRAND BALLROOM  
66-76 Queen Street  
On the Mall, Brisbane.

*For bookings contact*

***Hiran 3843 5950, Swarna 3343 1558, Dhavina 3376 0351,  
Ronnie 3818 3903, Niroshan 3300 9911.***

## Upcoming Events

**To welcome the Sri Lankan Cricket Team to Queensland**

**700...** **8 TO GO...**

**The Sri Lankan Sports Association of Qld**  
is hosting the

**Sri Lankan Cricket Team Dinner Dance**

with artists

**Corrine Almeida & Sohan Weerasinghe of the XPERIMENTS**

flown from Sri Lanka

accompanied by

**Replay-6** from Melbourne

Dinner prepared by Queensland's Executive Sri Lankan Chef

**Bar facilities will be available on the night**

**RNA SHOWGROUND**

**(Sir Walter Burnett Bldg) Gregory Terrace, Brisbane**

**4<sup>th</sup> November 2007 - 6pm till late**

**Dress: Smart Casual**

**Tickets: \$65**

(100 concession tickets allocated for Pensioners & Children U12 @ \$55)

**For tickets or more information phone:**

Jayantha Pathikirikorale	3808 2299
Andy Weerasinghe	044 888 0608
Davenal Flanderka	0419 024 506
Prasad Kodikara	0418995866
Maurice De Silva	3300 3035
Nimal De Silva	5520 8100
Ranjit Rupasinghe	33989117



### New Faces

I had my early education at Seevali Central College, Ratnapura and Dharmapala College, Pannipitiya before I entered the University of Moratuwa. After graduation from the University of Moratuwa, I worked at the Mahaweli Authority for 18 years. I am proud to have been associated with irrigation and other related infrastructure development works under Kalawewa and Udawalawa Projects and System C works in Girandurukotte and Dehiattakandiya areas, which provided much needed facilities to poor people of our country.

In 1981, I married Preethi and settled down in Kiribathgoda, Kelaniya. Preethi studied at Ferguson High School, Ratnapura and then worked in Standard Chartered Bank, Colombo.

After coming to Australia in 2000, I joined the Department of Main Road and worked in Barcaldine, which is a remote township in Central Queensland, for four years before coming on transfer to our Gold Coast office. I have a daughter (Hansika) and two sons (Ruchira and Eranda).

I love reading. I read a lot on world politics, history, Buddhism and sports. To keep myself agile, I play Table Tennis and Cricket. I enjoy listening to Sinhala and Hindi music.

In my opinion Radio 4EB is providing an ideal platform to share our knowledge and meet fellow Sri Lankans and it is a pleasure for me to join the Radio Group.



**Preethi & Sarath Gunatillake**

**Sarath Gunatillake**

*Sarath is already contributing to the Radio by being involved in the Sandella Radio programme.*

### A Word from Sachini Ayendra – The Main Actress of the Sinhala film, “Sankara” On her visit to the Brisbane International Film Festival



Hello,

It was a great pleasure for me to be here in Brisbane, Australia for the Brisbane International Film Festival. I enjoyed every bit of the stay and also meeting the Sri Lankans who live here. Also I want to thank the 4EB Sri Lankan Group for inviting me for a discussion and for an interview on their Radio. I come from the beautiful city Kandy and studied at Hillwood College. I was modelling for school fashion shows from the age of 15 and became a 'best model' at a contest organized in Kandy, in 2002. Soon after I appeared in my first commercial for Elephant House- ride and thereafter appeared in many more commercials.

In 2003 I became miss Sri Lanka, which up to date is one of my most memorable moments. I represented Sri Lanka at the Miss World pageant in China in 2003. Then I went to conquer my next dream of becoming an actress.

My first film "Aadaraneeya Wassanaya" was released in 2004. I was awarded the Best Supporting Actress Award for that role and was nominated for the Best Supporting Actress at the Presidential and Sarsaviya Film Awards. My second film Sankara has won many international awards so far, including the "Best Asian" film and Silver Pyramid at the Cairo international film festival.

My participation here at the Brisbane International Film Festival, representing Sri Lanka had been a great experience for me.

My future assignments include "Heart FM", which is due to be released this year and 2 other productions within the next 6 months and I hope I can talk to Brisbane listeners again with another great film.

Thank you.  
Sachini

The current issue of this newsletter is edited by a guest editor, Jayantha Weerasekera.  
If you are interested in being a guest editor, please contact [brisbaneradio@yahoo.com.au](mailto:brisbaneradio@yahoo.com.au)