



News Bulletin

**Back to
Hantana
2018**

The Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya (GTA and Suburbs)
January 2018



News Bulletin

The Alumni Association of the University of
Peradeniya (GTA & Suburbs)

ISSUE 1 - JANUARY 2018



**New Board of Management (2017 – 2019)
AAUP (GTA & Suburbs)**

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Message from the Board of Management

Greetings for 2018 in the freezing time!

Hope everyone had good holidays and ready for the New Year.

We have already begun planning of 2018 activities, especially 'Back to Hantana - 2018' scheduled for Saturday April 7. This will be the 3rd episode, after 'Back to Hantana' 2013 and 2016. Led by two of the top Sri Lankan artists **Madani Malwattage** and **Dr. Jayalath Manorathna**, supported by our own talents with the theme 'Sri Lankan Past Drama Acts', you will be treated with a unique experience of entertainment and engagement.

We hope to meet some of you in person at one or two Town Hall meetings prior to April.

In the mean time, the sudden demise of our dear colleague Padmini Bandara came as a shock and left a huge void in the team

AGM 2017 in October was a great success. We will gain strength from the multiple facets of diversity in the new Board of Management.

We urge everyone to pay the membership fees for 2018 early and take an active role in enrolling those who are still wondering. One of our core tasks will be to strengthen the association membership and look forward for your active support. Following the AGM endorsement, we have progressed in the process of incorporation of the Association as a Not for Profit organization, and hopefully should see the final decision in January.

Though we volunteered to deliver the children's arts quickly following the Exhibition in June, we were late due to unavoidable circumstances. We have planned delivering them in February and regret very much for the inconvenience caused.

Mark **April 7, 2018** in your diary in big bold letters and await more details. We are excited to organize the event.

Enjoy and live by Peradeniya spirit!

The Annual General meeting of the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya Greater Toronto Area and Suburbs (AAUPGTAS) was held at the Mother Cabrini Catholic School auditorium on October 21st, 2017.

Following the welcome address by Kamal Munasinghe, master of ceremonies, as per pre-notified agenda Pubudu Edirisinghe, the outgoing Secretary presented the annual report and the outgoing Treasurer Medil Gamage read the audited financial reports for both 2015 and 2016, and the interim financial report for 2017. The minutes of 2015 Annual General Meeting and the financial report was unanimously approved.

Dhammika Premarathna, the outgoing President, in his address stressed the importance and obligation of the alumni to exhibit interest in the progress of the University of Peradeniya. He added that most of the alumni in Sri Lanka and away show little or no interest in the university affairs and it has negatively impacted the quality of the university in the long run. He urged current members to reach out to the rest and strengthen the association, enabling the association to become a powerful voice to serve the alma mater and the university education system of the country.

On behalf of the outgoing Board of Management (BOM), Upul Herath and Dhammika Premarathna, respectively, presented a few amendments to the existing constitution and the need to revisit the past decision of not registering the association and the sequence of steps that needs to follow. Both proposals were unanimously approved by the forum.

Sarath Chandrasekara officiated the election of office bearers to the new BOM for the next two years. The following 21 members were elected unanimously by the members.

Jayalath Samarakkody, the new President thanked the outgoing BOM for their painstaking effort to develop the association to its current stage and excellent achievements. He said that the new BOM is rich in diversity in terms of faculties, generations and cultures, and is a great strength for future of the association. He mentioned that the new activity plan of the association would be developed in the coming months and shared with the members. He appealed for solidarity of the members to take active part in all future events of the association.

The new Secretary Upul Herath delivered the vote of thanks and the meeting adjourned.



Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya (GTA & Suburbs)

Board of Management (2017 – 2019)

President: Jayalath Samarakkody (Science)

Past President: Dhammika Premarathna (Science)

Vice Presidents: Kan Chandra (Dental), Pubudu Edirisinghe (Engineering)

Secretary: Upul Herath (Engineering)

Assistant Secretary: Nalaka Ranaweera (Agriculture)

Treasurer: Ranjith Perera (Engineering)

Editors: Kapila Zoysa (Agriculture) Priyantha Kulasekara (Science)

Committee members:

Anusha Wijayarathne (Science) Asanka Jayawardhana (Allied Science) Anil Midellawala (Science), Duminda Randeniya (Engineering) Indika Karunarathna (Science) Kamal Munasinghe (Engineering) Lilika Molligoda (Arts) Nalaka Jayamaha (Engineering) Nayeem Athambawa (Arts) Nimal Liyanage (Science) Padmini Bandara (Arts) Ravi Jayasinghe (Agriculture)

Alumni News: Hantana Night at Ottawa November 2017

Hantana Night, the annual gala evening organized by the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya - Ottawa Chapter was held on 18th November at St. Monika Parish Church Hall, in Ottawa.

The president Jayalath Samarakkody and a few members represented us at the gathering. The evening witnessed a houseful congregation of alumni families and friends. In his welcome address, Ottawa Chapter president Dhammika Herath emphasised that the evening offers opportunity to renew old friendship, meet and socialize with fellow university colleagues, their families and friends. He also said that this is the time for us to re-connect to exchange stories of escapades and to relish cheerful times we experienced as students in our Peradeniya life. In conclusion he, requested participants to contribute to the annual offer of cash scholarships to the university.

The singing and drama pieces presented by several alumni perhaps were the most attractive part of the evening. Members and participants enjoyed a delicious Sri Lankan style dinner with sounds, colours and glamour. The participants responded enthusiastically to a memorable evening.

Congratulation to Ottawa Chapter for the good work!!!



University News: Sir Ivor Jennings' statue unveiled at the University of Peradeniya

The life size statue of Sir Ivor Jennings, founder and the first Vice Chancellor of the University was ceremonially unveiled recently to mark the 75th anniversary of University Education in Sri Lanka.

Rebecca Sarah Caine, a granddaughter of Sir Ivor Jennings graced the occasion as the chief guest. Her husband William Timothy Richards and distinguished university dons of past and present, including Vice Chancellor Professor Upul Dissanayake, were present at the occasion. Prof K.M. de Silva, Chancellor of the university, highlighted the great service rendered by Sir Ivor Jennings to the university education of the country and his contribution in drafting the first independent Constitution and several books on various subjects, including economics.

A coffee table book titled *Garden University of Peradeniya*, compiled by Mohamed Zuhyle (former ambassador to Kuwait) and Dr. R.M.K. Ratnayake (a former ministry secretary), two alumni of the University was also presented on the day. The book presents the rare architectural character, some of the historical monuments of the country, photographs of great personalities who contributed to the formation of the University and brief narrations of the faculties, places of religious worship and other details.

Back to Hantana 2018 and the Artists

The 3rd episode of 'Back to Hantana' engagement and entertainment evening is being planned for Saturday 7th April 2018. As communicated before, our intention is to host this event with different themes and shapes as a unique event every two years in April. This will be our effort to provide a creative and quality event to the audience every time. Besides, 'Back to Hantana-2018' is very special in that it will be our major event to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the University of Peradeniya.

We have secured two of the most talented Sri Lankan artists Madani Malwattage and our very own Dr. Jayalath Manorathna to lead the event with our local talents under the theme 'Sri Lankan Past Drama Acts'. The experience will be novel, and to provide the best benefit of the program the dinner will be served at 10:30pm. **Port Credit Secondary School (70 Mineola Rd East, Mississauga, ON L5G 2E5)** has more space and we hope the alumni will take up most seats. Considering the caliber of the artists and growing demand, we will be opening the evening to the public too.

Whilst Dr. Manorathna is no stranger to everybody, this will be Madani's first visit to Canada. We are glad that she agreed to join us and have been able to provide her first stage appearance in our flagship event. It will be a great opportunity for our local talents to perform along with them. **We kindly request alumni and family members who would like offer their talent and commit sufficient time to contact us on or before February 06th.**

Madani is a self-made top stage/Tele-Drama and of late a movie actress with multiple talents including excellent voice. During her 17 year career, she became the best actress several times at the National Drama Festival in addition to many other accolades over the years. Her performances in over 25 stage plays, including epic Sri Lankan stage plays, 35 Tele-dramas and a few to-be-released movies is no accident. She is a regular contributor to newspapers and entertainment programs in the Sri Lankan television. We are privileged to have perhaps the two of the Sri Lanka's best on our stage.

The Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya – GTA & Suburbs
Proudly presents

BACK TO HANTANA – 2018

Sri Lankan Past Drama Acts
With leading Sri Lankan Artists

Madani Malwattage and Dr. Jayalath Manorathna

Saturday April 7th, 2018
from 6:30 PM to 10:30 PM (Dinner will be served at the end)
Port Credit Secondary School
70 Mineola Road East, Mississauga, ON, L5G 2E5

\$35/- Adults,
\$20/- Children (6 - 12 years)

Contact for Tickets:

- Nalaka - 647-519-5579
- Kapila - 647-700-7302
- Priyantha - 519-994-0286
- Dhammika - 647-924-7592

As a part of the 75th Anniversary celebration of the University

Your presence on April 7th and finding financial sponsors will be the best help you can offer to make 'Back to Hantana-2018' a memorable event.

Mark the evening of Saturday April 7, 2018 in big bold letters in your diary and reserve your tickets early.

Padmini Bandara is no more



Suddenly Sunday January 21 became a doom day for us. The terrible news of sudden demise of our dear friend Padmini Palihawadana Bandara in Sri Lanka started to trickle in. It was only the previous week end we were together at a Committee meeting of our association. None of us thought it would be our last gathering when she bid good bye amidst lot of fan fare before travelling to Sri Lanka with her husband Wijethilaka Bandara.

Padmini earned a bachelor degree (Commerce/Economics) from the University of Peradeniya in the 1980's and joined the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. She then read her Masters degree in the UK. After a few years at the Central Bank of Sri Lanka she migrated to Canada. Since then she built a successful career as a realtor and has been an active member of the Toronto society.

She had been a pioneering member of our Alumni Association and enthusiastic supporter and promoter. She never missed a meeting or an event and took active interest in getting across our values and messages to the membership and the society. She also mustered public support and made generous contribution towards our activities. As you know she was one of our key public faces too

Among many different memories we have of Padmini her love for the family undoubtedly is the strongest of her qualities. Together with our friend and her husband Wijethilaka Bandara who she met during Peradeniya days and two sons Chanaka and Tharanga, they were a very closely knit family

We often say the time of the death cannot be forecast. Her departure yet again proved that reality to us. Her legacy and memories will continue to linger in us forever. Let us hope we can help her husband and the children in the healing process

Thank you very much everybody for all the condolence messages, help and participation at religious services

We will not say good bye to her again

Tribute to Dr. Dharmasena Pathiraja: Revolutionist of our time

Dr. Pathiraja passed away on Saturday 27 January 2018 in Kandy after being ill for a few months.

Born in 1943 in Kandy, following his education at Dharmaraja College, Kandy, he entered the University of Peradeniya, and graduated in 1967 with BA (hons) in Sinhala and Western Classical Culture. Subsequently he obtained his PhD in Bengali cinema from Monash University. He began work as a lecturer in Drama and Performance Arts. His academic career started at the University of Kelaniya as an Assistant lecturer led to serving in the Universities in Jaffna, Ruhuna and Colombo. Finally he became the Chairman of the Sri Lanka Media Training Institute.



Having made his first movie (a short film) whilst at Kelaniya University, his debut big screen movie 'Ahas Gawwa' was a great hit. He learnt the viewpoint of cinema through film society movement which was very popular in Sri Lanka in the early 60s. He has been referred to as a 'rebel with a cause', an '*enfant terrible*' of the '70s', and is widely recognized as the pioneer of Sri Lankan cinema's 'second revolution'.

However, from his speech and writings, one gathers Dr Pathiraja is more interested in re-examining the values that underpin such popular labels than to let his work be framed by mere posturing.

With the social changes in early 70's, Dr. Pathiraja emerged along with the likes of Vasantha Obeysekera, D.B. Nihalsinghe, H.D. Premaratne and Dharmasiri Bandaranayake to become one of Sri Lanka's best-known filmmakers of the time.

After his debut 'Ahas Gawwa' he directed 'Bambaru Evith' that spoke of the clash between old generation and new capitalist younger generations in a fishing hamlet. 'Bambaru Evith' was widely considered Dr. Pathiraja's Masterpiece and able to clinch 5 Awards including Best Director, Best Film and 5 Merit Awards at the first Presidential Film Award Ceremony in Sri Lanka. 'Eya Den Loku Lamayek' (1977), 'Ponmani' (Tamil Film-1977), 'Paara Dige' (1980), 'Soldadu Unnehe' (1981), 'Waasuli'. 'Sira Kandaura' (to be released), 'Shelton Haa Kanthi' (Destroyed during the riots in 1983) and 'In Search of a Road' (2006-Documentary) are among his other cinematic creations. He has directed a short film 'Sathuro', 'Anduren Eliyata' and 'Werala' (documentaries) too. In the last few years he directed Swaroopa and 'Sakkarang'.

He set a new direction to Television Dramas by creating tele dramas such as 'Ella Langa Walawwa', 'Maaya Mandira', 'Gangulen Egodata' and 'Nadunana Putheku'.

We were privileged and honored to have been able to screen his movie 'Sakkarang' in Toronto in 2015 before even it being launched in Sri Lanka. When we first inquired about the movie, we saw firsthand his remarkable qualities. He readily agreed to lend the movie to us without any condition, and when insisted only he suggested us to pay to the producers what we can afford. On reflection we now regret very much we could not introduce him to the Toronto Society in person.

No matter how he presented his work, Dr. Pathiraja compelled us to view the life beyond what meets the eye in a compassionate and humanitarian angle. His messages are more the questions rather than answers. There is still a lot we may not have understood but creating such interest perhaps is his biggest legacy. The generations to come will continue to explore his revolutionary work in Cinema, Television, Education and his own life.

As a small group who was touched by his work, today we say 'Thank you Dr. Pathiraja for showing the way'.

'We will continue to probe' would be the fitting tribute to a revolutionist of our time'

Up Next

Town Hall Meetings

As in the previous years, we are very keen to meet with our Alumni families on a regular basis to create an atmosphere to interact and exchange ideas to progress our alumni association. Such events have given immense opportunities for families to gather in their own areas where they live, yet engage in alumni activities. Since 2013, we have held 7 similar meetings.

Planning for the next round of Town Hall Meetings in 2018 is in the pipeline, and invitations will be emailed to respective members of earmarked areas in due course.

One of our main objectives of these immediate meetings will be to exchange ideas about the upcoming **“Back to Hantana - 2018”** event and to have a Peradeniya style evening with music and delicious food. We also hope to enroll all who may have missed to get the membership. Please set aside your day and participate with your entire family.



Summary of our Objectives

- Renewing university ties and fostering networking representing the University of Peradeniya, and working collaboratively with other Peradeniya alumni chapters, promoting mutually beneficial networking with other Sri Lankan and Canadian university alumni.
- Supporting academic goals of the University of Peradeniya, creating windows for postgraduate education opportunities and enhancement of standards of education, promoting the University of Peradeniya brand.
- Supporting professional and personal development of members, Peradeniya graduate newcomers, collaborating with other similar organizations.
- Recognizing and felicitating outstanding achievements of Peradeniya alumni members and promoting Sri Lankan culture.
- The Association shall not engage or promote or participate in any political or religious activities OR any social activity that can directly or indirectly lead to engagement, promotion or participation of any political or religious activity and/or in conflict of the above objectives. Any exception will be evaluated by the Board of Management based on merits. However, this principle does not aim at restricting individual choices.