

Volume 11  
NUMBER 01

February 2015

# Maya Puwath

BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF MGCAANA



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As a water bead on a lotus leaf,  
as water on a red lily,  
does not adhere,

so the sage  
does not adhere  
to the seen,  
the heard,  
or the sensed.  
– The Buddha

realbuddhaquotes.com

*“Drop by drop is  
the water pot  
filled. Likewise,  
the wise man,  
gathering it little  
by little, fills  
himself with  
good.”  
The Buddha*

realbuddhaquotes.com



**Mahamaya Girls' College  
Alumnae Association of North  
America**

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Resources: [www. Google.com](http://www.Google.com)

Dear Members,

Once again with great honor and enthusiasm I'm composing the editorial for the first Maya Puwath edition of 2015. Every passing year MGCAANA has showed growth as a committed organization for her alma mater, and Maya Puwath was delivered to our members bimonthly with most updated news happening in the association, personal and professional stories from our members around the globe and sharing your creativity among the members. Having many of you taking the leadership roles in the past and believing in MGCAANA, and continuing to do so is the key to her success. It is my pleasure to welcome Vajeera Dorabawila to Newsletter Committee and looking forward to share her wonderful thoughts, ideas and creativity in the making of Maya Puwath.

Our 11th Annual General Meeting is to be held on 24th of May, in Ottawa, Canada. Each year a fellow Mayan family takes the pride in hosting this memorable event. Many of you who have attended in the past shared their extraordinary heartwarming experiences simplifying itself as East meeting the West. As we have chosen to live in the Western part of the world for our personal or professional preferences we have made our homes in the Western hemisphere, far away from our motherland. Behalf of the Newsletter Committee, I'm cordially inviting my fellow Mayans for our next AGM and my heartfelt gratitude goes to our wonderful hosts.

As proud Mayans we often talk about “sisterhood”. Maya Angelou, one of the greatest poets of our time composed about the sisterhood ; “ I do not believe that the accident of birth makes people sisters and brothers. It makes them siblings. Gives them mutuality of parentage. **Sisterhood and brotherhood are conditions people have to work at. It's a serious matter. You compromise, you give, you take, you stand firm, and you're relentless...And it is an investment”**.

Over the past eleven years, we have believed in creating a “sisterhood” among fellow Mayans; served and continue to serve sisters in need in Sri Lanka and in North America, always takes pride in acknowledging each others' accomplishments, celebrate life events , and being their for each other relentlessly. Among many of the opportunities offered to our community in the past, the most recent Nanda Pussegoda Leula Memorial Scholarship (NPLMS) was established by Ms. Kanthi Leula in honor and memory of our oldest MGCAANA member, Mrs. Nanda Pussegoda Leula proves the strength of Maya Sisterhood. Behalf of the Newsletter Committee, I will take this opportunity to appreciate and thank the members for their support and involvement in MGCAANA.

Priyanka Bandara Jayakody

Dear MGCAANA Readers

As Buddhists we all wanted to understand the Abi Dhamma. The difficulty is it was not written in the simplest language. Here is a series of video clips that guide us to understand this beautiful Dhamma in its simplest form. There are 55 lessons in the first link. Once you finished that you can move on to the second link.

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqESXbJ82aIgu16mtfCXXK6ChqXQLOKLxh>

Ven Thiththagalle Anandasiri Himi





## MGCAANA ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association in North America (MGCAANA)**

Cordially invites you to the

### **11th Annual MGCAANA AGM and Dinner Dance**

Held on Sunday, May 24, 2015

In Ottawa, Canada



#### **AGM**

**Venue: Residence of Dr. Samudrika  
Amarakone**

**Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

#### **Dinner Dance**

**Venue: Residence of Mrs. Deepani  
Waidyaratne**

**Time: 7:00 p.m.**

**RSVP by April 24, 2015 to [mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com)**



**For more information, please contact:**

**USA: 352-872-8809 (cell) / 352-333-7229 (home) (Sriyani)**

**Canada: 613-521-7128 (Samudrika), 613-400-9196 (Vihara), 613-692-2864 (Deepani)**

#### **Membership Renewal**

We are excited about the progress we have made so far with our new President and BOD. However without your continuous support it is difficult to make things work. In this season of giving we would like to remind you to renew your membership for 2014/ 2015. As you know membership fee for students is 15 \$ and 25 \$ for regular members.

Also we appreciate your support in spreading the word about MGCAANA and introducing new members to our sisterhood.

#### **How you can renew your membership:**

By Mail:

You can pay your membership fee via check written in favor of 'MGCAANA' and post to the address below.

Treasurer, MGCAANA

2417 NE 20th,

Renton, WA 98056

OR Online:

Log in to our website (link mentioned below) and pay your membership fee via credit card or paypal account:

<http://www.mahamayaalumna.org/RenewalMembershipForm.html>



# Attractions in Ottawa

## Parliament Hill and Buildings

**Category:** Government buildings; Historic sites

**Description:** Three Gothic Revival-style buildings, located on a 170-foot bluff overlooking the Ottawa River, house the offices of the members of Parliament, the House of Commons and the Senate. Free guided tours delve into Canadian history and explain the workings of the political system.



## Rideau Canal

**Category:** Historic sites; Trails; Bodies of water

**Description:** One of the oldest landmarks in Ottawa, this canal is filled with boats in the summer and becomes the "World's Longest Skating Rink" in the winter



## National War Memorial

**Category:** Monuments & statues

**Description:** Located at the intersection of Wellington St. and Elgin St. just a few steps from Parliament Hill, this large granite and bronze war monument originally was built to commemorate the First World War. It was dedicated by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on the eve of the Second World War in May 1939 during their Canadian tour.



## Canadian War Museum

**Category:** History museums; Military museums

**Description:** The Canadian War Museum is more than a museum that is internationally renowned for its symbolic architecture; it is synonym for inspiring and touching stories. Canada's rich military history is showcased through personal stories, artwork, photographs and interactive presentations.



## Notre Dame Basilica

**Category:** Religious sites

**Description:** This beautiful and ornate gothic-style cathedral is recognized by its twin spires.



## National Gallery of Canada

**Category:** Art museums; History museums

**Description:** Dating back to 1880, this visual arts museum holds in trust a collection of European and Canadian paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings and photos.



## ByWard Market

**Category:** Neighborhoods; Flea & street markets; Specialty shops

**Description:** ByWard Market is one of Canada's oldest and largest public markets. Within an area roughly four blocks square, you'll find museums, cafes, specialty food shops, boutiques, galleries, restaurants, pubs, hair & aesthetics salons and more! Easily accessible on foot, by transit or by car, the ByWard Market offers a unique experience for all.



## Peace Tower

**Category:** Observation decks & towers

**Description:** Tall tower located in the front middle of the Center Block building of the Canadian Parliament. Contains an observation deck, clock, carillon and a war memorial hall. Admission is by admission to the Center Block -- take a tour of parliament and then follow up with a visit here at leisure.



## Ottawa Locks

**Category:** Landmarks & points of interest

**Description:** In use since 1832, these locks link the Ottawa River with the Rideau Canal and are still operated by hand.



## Canadian Museum of Nature

**Category:** Museums; Natural history museums

**Description:** Canada's national natural history museum offers world-class galleries in a handsome heritage "castle." Marvel at dinosaurs and other ancient reptiles in the Talisman Energy Fossil Gallery. See grizzlies and other wild animals up close in beautiful dioramas in the Mammal Gallery, and so much more.





# Accommodations in Ottawa

## Hotels around the airport -MacDonald Cartier airport (YOW) :

1. Southway Hotel, 2431 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1V 8R9

Phone. 613 737 0811 - 2 queen and 2 king rooms are available \$358-398 x 2 nights

2. Holiday Inn Express Hotel and Suites, 2881 Gibford av, Ottawa, ON, K1V2L9

Ph. 613 247 9500

3. Ramada Ottawa on the Rideau, 2059 Price of Wales Drive, Ottawa, ON

613 288 3500

4. Day's Inn, 366 Huntclub Rd. , Ottawa, K1V1C1

Ph. 613 739 7555

5. Residence Inn Ottawa Marriott, 1172 Walkley Road, Ottawa

613 523 9600

6. Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 770 Huntclub Rd. ,Ottawa, K1V 1C3

Ph. 613 738 2020

## To apply for visa:

1. This website gives information<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/apply-how.asp>

2. Also it is best for students to start early and contact the Canadian embassy in the USA and find out the process to apply for visa.

<http://can-am.gc.ca/washington/index.aspx?lang=eng>

## Welcome !!!!!



Twins: Lihini Hansika Walpita; Vihanga Nimsara Walpita; the big brother Sahela Walpita

Proud Parents: Ayanthi Fernando and Kennath H. Walpita



Pavithra Wettasinghe and her new bundle of joy, Gihara Dinali Randunu, born on 21st January 2015



## MAYANS AROUND THE WORLD

### Nanda Pussegoda Leula Memorial Scholarship Ceremony

After we lost our oldest member of MGCAANA, Mrs. Nanda Pussegoda Leula, her daughter Ms. Kanthi Leula made a decision to give 6 full scholarships to economically disadvantaged students at Mahamaya.

We are so happy to announce that the Nanda Pussegoda Leula Memorial Scholarship (NPLMS) was established, and its first scholarship distribution was held in a beautiful ceremony at Mahamya Study Hall on December 16, 2014. The donor Ms. Kanthi Leula and her relatives, the NPLMS Executive Committee consisting of the Principal Mrs. Indra Withanachchi, the Deputy Principal Mrs. Uthpala Seneviratne, President Mrs. Indrani Karaluvinne, Secretary Mrs. Inoka Udapitiya, Treasurer Mrs. Chitra Hulangamuwa, and some other like-minded Mahamaya past pupils were present at the ceremony. (See the pictures.)

After observing 2 minute silence in memory of Mrs. Leula, Mrs. Karaluvinne welcomed Ms. Kanthi Leula and other participants, students and their parents. She thanked Mrs. Kanthi Leula for donating US\$2,500 for the scholarships for the year 2015 and starting the Memorial Fund.

The six most deserving students were picked and each was awarded Rs 4,000 a month for one whole year (Total of Rs.48,000) for their board and lodging. Mrs. Kanthi Leula is planning to continue to support them until they graduate from the school. We very much appreciate her generosity. Ms. Kanthi Leula also distributed Rs.5,000, blankets and towels to each family as presents at the ceremony.

On behalf of the scholarship winners, two students spoke thanking Ms. Kanthi Leula and others involved. It was touching to see a mother of one of a student speaking through her tears, how grateful they were to get a scholarship this big, which she never expected to happen. She spoke about their hardships they were facing in educating a child in a city school, and thanked Ms. Kanthi Leula for her generosity.

"I am very very happy that I was able to give those 6 scholarships on behalf of my mother, and being able to participate in this great event, Ms. Kanthi Leula said, These students really deserve the support. I was so fortunate to get this opportunity. As there are many more deserving students, I hope other people also will think of doing the same."

"What a wonderful event," Mrs. Karaluvinne said, "although a lot of work needed to be done, I felt very happy when I saw these children's faces."

Thank you Ms. Kanthi Leula for the great "Punya Karma." Thank you Mrs. Karaluvinne and the Committee for working so hard to set up the Memorial Fund and doing everything so perfectly. You all are so special! MGCAANA is able to launch this kind of projects in Sri Lanka because of the excellent folks like you.

Last but not least, we think of Mrs. Nanda Leula with much love, appreciation and gratitude. With the merits accrued by this meritorious deed, may she be happy and peaceful, may she attain full wisdom and enlightenment, may she be liberated from all suffering and attain the Bliss of Nibbana!

The NPLMS Committee (MGCAANA)  
Chathuri Nugawela Munasinghe  
Deepa Dharshani Nanayakkara  
Sujatha Werake





## MCK Class of '82 honour the memory of Mrs. N. K. Pilapitiya



Class of '82 girls posing with the late Mrs N. K. Pilapitiya in 1981 at the footsteps near the staff room

Passing away of Mrs N. K. Pilapitiya triggered a range of feelings in the hearts and minds of the Class of '82. Sad - because she became principal of Mahamaya in our senior-most year when we were mature enough to be free of unjustified fear of a principal, and therefore had the opportunity for an open relationship with this strong, no-nonsense, wonderful human being. Shock – because it was not too long before she passed away that we met her in very high spirits and good health. Comfort – because of the thought that we were able to show her our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude at our 'Guru Upahara' event in July 2013, just a year before she left us for good.

We made her a distinguished guest at our event held in Kandy. As she herself stated in her speech at the end of the event, she thoroughly enjoyed the time she spent that day with the Class of '82 and all the teachers that taught the group from Grade 1. She thanked and praised the Class of '82 for living up to the image of Mayans known for their show of gratitude.



The late Mrs N.K. Pilapitiya was welcomed to the 'Guru Upahara' event by the secretary of the group to be surrounded by the Class of '82 gals (6<sup>th</sup> July 2013).

Fully approving of and consolidating her support for our programme to remember and offer merits to our teachers and classmates who have departed, she joined us for the religious event we organised at the school

shrine the following day. Following this event, at a simple morning tea we organised at the school hostel, she reiterated the great pleasure she got out of the two consecutive events, praised the Class of '82 for the efforts, and wished us well for our future activities.



The late Mrs. N. K. Pilapitiya participated in the religious activities organised by Class of '82 at the school shrine (7<sup>th</sup> July 2013)



The late Mrs. Pilapitiya spoke to the Class of '82 and reiterated the significance of continuing the activities to remember the contributors to Mahamaya and gave us her blessings.

We are so solaced by the sweet memories we have of her enjoying the appreciation that we showered upon her and all the other teachers in attendance. After attending her funeral, the committee decided in unanimously that we must respect her in a meaningful way and offer her merits. The Class of '82 donated a fully equipped stainless steel patients trolley to the cardio thoracic Intensive Care Unit at the Kandy General hospital in her memory on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2014. Bought at a cost of Rs.54,000/=, this fully equipped trolley can, along with the patient, carry the oxygen cylinder, ECG monitor, IV lines, urine bag, patient's records etc. between the ward and the theatre. This was a much needed asset which was very thankfully accepted by the medical staff of the ICU unit.



The Class of '82 joins all the present and past Mahamaya students and teachers to say 'May our beloved principal the late Mrs N.K. Pilapitiya attain Nibbana'!



Donation of the trolley in memory of the late Mrs N.K. Pilapitiya at Kandy Hospital (24<sup>th</sup> October 2014)

The class of '82 also had their 2014 AGM on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September at Kandy Lake Club. The meeting was preceded by a Yoga Training Session suitable for working women conducted by Yoga instructor Gayan Bandara. These meetings are never short of food; there was a wonderful morning tea spread and a sumptuous lunch!



The AGM 2014 included a Yoga session for 'busy mums and working women' and as usual delicious food!

On 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014, the group held a Bring & Buy sale at the YMCA Kandy. The hard-working committee and other members collected items from members and other well-wishers for sale. The determination and perseverance of the group was rewarded by a whopping profit of Rs28000/=. This will go a long way into supporting the members and their charitable activities.

*Compiled by Achela Fernando (nee Godigamuwa) on behalf of MCK Class of '82. 20th February 2015.*





## True Love

Darkest clouds slowly moving away  
Storm has subdued  
Yet, Stormy feelings still fighting  
Deep inside my mind  
Taking its own turn one after the other.  
STOP!!!  
I screamed to myself  
As if it yields.  
I let the thoughts come and go  
Helped the mind to acknowledge them  
One by one and piece by piece  
I hear you and I see you  
I told myself.  
What do you want from me I asked?  
I heard a voice from far away  
Faintly said, “ Nothing! ”  
Was it my subconscious?  
Was it my mind answered me back?  
I wonder...  
Then like a feather I realized  
My whole mind is so light  
My whole body is so light  
I felt like floating over the clouds  
To a place where true love lies!

*By Sriyani Dissanayake*



### Baklava Tartlets

#### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 6 green cardamom pods, lightly crushed, or 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom (optional)
- 2 teaspoons brandy or cognac
- 3/4 cup coarsely chopped walnuts, toasted
- 3/4 cup coarsely chopped pecans, toasted
- 2 (1.9-ounce) packages mini phyllo tart shells (30 shells)

#### Preparation:

1. Combine first 5 ingredients and cardamom, if desired, in a heavy saucepan; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook 5 minutes. Remove from heat; strain and discard solids. Stir in brandy and nuts.
2. Arrange tart shells on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Divide nut mixture evenly among shells. Bake at 350° for 8 to 10 minutes or until pastry is golden. Store, uncovered, at room temperature until ready to serve.

Sent By Priyanka Jayakody

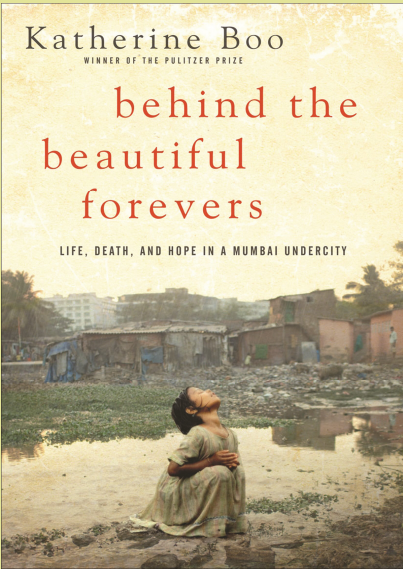


While the distance between rich and poor is growing in the U.S., the gap between the haves and have-nots in India is staggering to behold. Katherine Boo jolts the reader's consciousness with the opposing realities of poverty and wealth in a searing visit to the Annawaldi settlement, a flimflam slum that has recently sprung up in the western suburbs of the gigantic city of Mumbai, perched tentatively along the modern highway leading to the airport and almost within a stone's throw of new, luxurious hotels. From within this "sumpy plug of slum" Boo unearths stories both tragic and poignant--about residents' efforts to raise families, earn a living, or simply survive. These unforgettable characters all nurture far-fetched dreams of a better life.

In spite of their poverty they have learned to be resourceful and struggle along the best they can. Katherine brings to light the extraordinary coping and their remarkable souls.

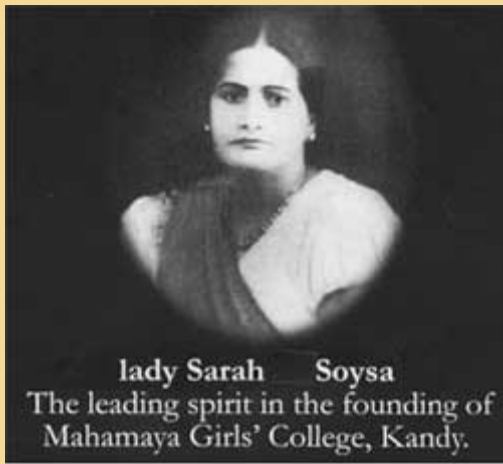
A wonderful read !!

Sent By Priyanka Jayakody





# Courageous Women of Mahamaya



**lady Sarah Soysa**  
The leading spirit in the founding of  
Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy.

In the nineteen twenties, female secondary education with English language was largely confined to three well established large schools in Kandy, managed by Christina missionaries. They were the Girls' High School, the Kandy Convent and Hillwood College. Buddhist girls therefore had to be educated in a Christian atmosphere. It was in that scenario that Mrs. Sarah (Later "Lady") Soysa helped with unstinted support of her friend Chithravo Rathwatte, and guided by the Venerable Karandana Attadassi Thera of the Katukele Temple, established in 1924 The SADACHARA BAUDDHA KULANGANA SAMITIYA,, which task was to found a Buddhist Girls School that would teach students in the English medium of education. At that historic meeting were present Sarah Caroline Soysa, the prime mover as Secretary, Chithravo Katugaha Rathwatte (appointed President) and three other leading figures namely, Isobelle Wijegunawardane, Immie Jayatillake and Henrietta Athukorala, who served as Hon.

Treasurer. Sarah Soysa hailed from a well known family of Panadura. It is known that she often visited a large number of relatives and friends to appeal for donations for the new school, which in 1938 was formally named Mahamaya Girls College. Sarah Soysa was a "Human dynamo" who addressed a large number of public meetings and temple gatherings to introduce the work of the Kulangana Samitiya. With her friends, she organized several charity fairs (salpilas) during the Vesak and Poson festivals.

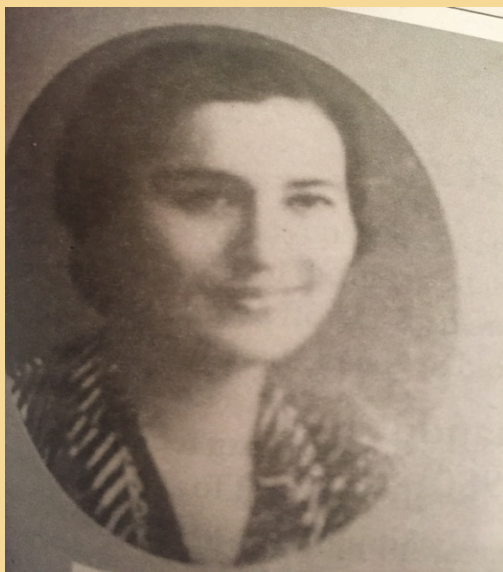
Source: <http://www.island.lk/>



**Lady Chitravo Katugaha Ratwatte (1893-1974)**

Lady Ratwatte and her husband, Sir Cudah Ratwatte were founders of our school. Although the school opened on January 14, 1932, the project was conceived years prior to that. Lady Ratwatte was the President of the "*Sadachara Buddha Kulangana Samithiya*" and Sir Ratwatte was the first manager of the school. They were keen to provide an excellent education for young women and were instrumental in purchasing the first plot of land for the school.

( Source: MCK 75 Years Commemorative Volume)



**Mrs. Bertha Rogers Ratwatte ( Principal 1937-1949)**

Mrs. Bertha Rogers came to Mahamaya from England ad principal of our school. She was 26 years old. She improved the school greatly., transforming it to a premier educational institution and the end of her tenure. She created the library, the House system and started the Brownie and Girl Guide Packs. She encouraged healthy competitions among the Houses and participation in many extracurricular activities.

She recognized the hostel and spent time with the boarders. In 1943 she inaugurated the

Mahamaya College Old Pupils' Association. March 13th, her birthday was a special day for the school and was celebrated with gusto. In 1943, Bertha Rogers married Stanley Ratwatte and their first child was named Maya after our school.

( Source: MCK 75 Years Commemorative Volume)

Dear Members,

Hope you have enjoyed this issue of Maya Puwath. As of now we have three members in our Newsletter Committee and we take pride to bring Maya Puwath to your homes bimonthly. In order for us to continue what we love, we need your support. We would like you to be actively participate in the making of Maya Puwath. Please do not wait till we send out the reminder email to collect your articles and creations, you can submit those to [mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com). Through out the year.

We highly encourage you to share your personal or professional accomplishments with fellow Mayans. Our "Young Talent" page is dedicated to the offspring of Mayans and it's a great opportunity to recognize their talents.

We value your comments and suggestions and most importantly I would like to invite you to join the Newsletter Committee to carry on the legacy of MGCAANA in the future.

Priyanka Bandara Jayakody- Editor of current edition.

**A PUBLICATION OF THE MAHAMAYA GIRLS' COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA**

**NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE**

**Priyanka Jayakody, Sriyani Dissanayake, Vajeera Dorabawila**