

Maya Puwath - මායා පුවත්

**Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA)
Volume 16 – Issue 4 – August 2020**



Message from the Editors

Dear Readers

This summer has been quite an extraordinary time for all of us. We have had to change our holiday plans and most of all our lifestyles to suit the present times we live in.

The Board of Directors (BOD) of MACCANA had been continuously organizing virtual events that help keep the members entertained and informed. This newsletter highlights one of the recent events, the “You’ve Got Talent” fundraiser where alumnae families got together to showcase their talents. It was a wonderful evening of music, dance and singing. In addition, the BOD continues to organize its Guest Speaker Webinar series and you will see details on upcoming sessions.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, wearing a mask has become essential. An article on masks in this edition provides practical insights on the use of masks.

An article titled “Kandy Streets of Yesteryear” written by Lokubanda Tillakaratne brings the historical perspective together with a nostalgic feeling of our Kandy town and its landmarks.

A heartfelt appreciation written by Mrs. Sujatha Werake unfolds the life of the late Mrs. Bhadradevi De Silva who made an impact on the lives of many. “She was full of empathy and took pleasure in assisting people.”

In our Recipe Corner, a delicious recipe on how to prepare Pavlova has been sent in by Sureni Ranasinghe. You will also see an update on the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF).

Please continue sending in your articles to us in order to share them in future newsletters!

We hope you enjoy reading this edition.

The Newsletter Committee

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Dhammapadha

*Appamadena maghava
devanam setthatam gato
appamadam pasamanti
pamado garahito sada.*



Through mindfulness (in doing meritorious deeds) Magha became king of the devas.

Mindfulness is always praised, but negligence is always blamed.

[Dhammapada \(30\)](#)

MGCAANA Guest Speaker Webinar Series

We are excited to inform you that the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee have planned to introduce a guest speaker every month to conduct a lecture / talk on topics, which will benefit our member community. A few examples of such topics include: mindfulness; entrepreneurship; leadership; medical advice; advice for international students; COVID-19 and the pandemic season; college admissions; financial and retirement planning; buying a house or a property; balancing family/work/life; social issues; introducing Sri Lankan culture to our children, etc.

We can be proud that we have many MGCAANA members excelling in multitude of fields in the USA and Canada. We cordially invite you to support by contributing toward conducting a session to share your knowledge/expertise with the community. Please also note that we welcome guest speakers outside the MGCAANA community as well.

These sessions will be held virtually via Zoom, like a webinar (with possible live streaming on MGCAANA Facebook page). The duration of each event so far has varied between 45 minutes to one hour. The dates & times will be decided based on the number of speakers & speakers' schedules. The next upcoming events will be:

- **Sugandhi Subhawickrama**
Gratitude & Mental Health - 19th September 2020
- **Dakshika Bandaranayake**
Speech & language pathologist - 17th October 2020

Past events:

JOIN US

GUEST SPEAKER WEBINAR

July 12th Sunday, 2020
7pm EST, 6pm CST, 4pm PST
Zoom details sent via email



MINDFULNESS

&
its impact on excelling
day today life

Ven. Nedagamuwe Samitha Thero
Bachelor of Arts
University of Peradeniya, 2015
Master of Theological Studies
Harvard Divinity School, 2018



JOIN US

GUEST SPEAKER WEBINAR

August 15th Saturday, 2020
7pm EST/ 6pm CST/ 5pm MST/4pm PST
Zoom details via email



Entrepreneurship

"What does it take to start your own business?"

Gaya Samarasingha
Founder/ CEO of Kalaia



JOIN US

GUEST SPEAKER WEBINAR



Mindfulness
Retirement planning
Becoming a Better Leader
Work Life balance
Sri Lankan culture
Entrepreneurship

Financial Planning

Mayan community
p to conduct a session

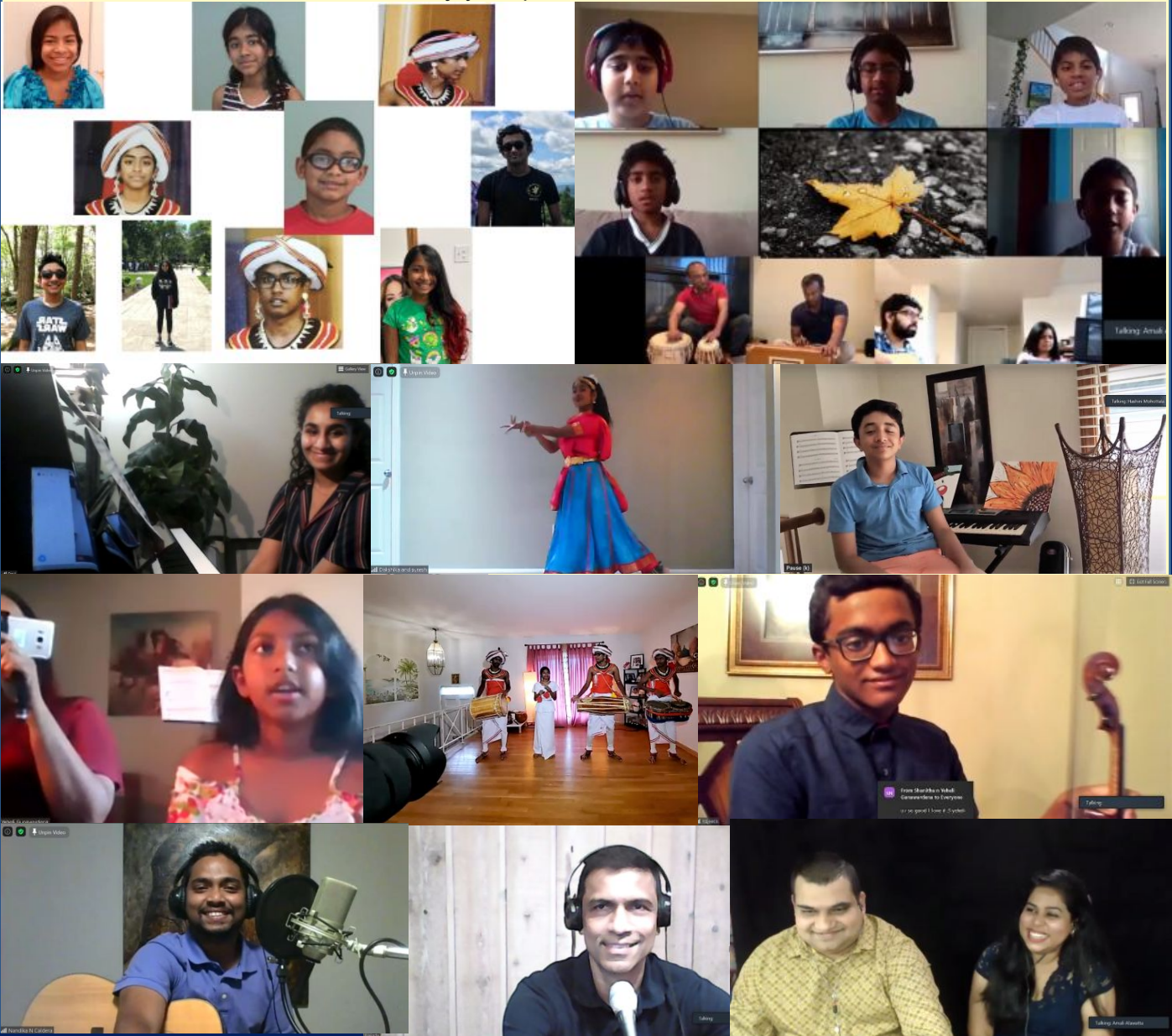
Are **YOU** Ready?





“You’ve Got Talent!” Fundraiser

The MGCAANA virtual talent show fundraiser was successfully held on August 1, 2020, and ended on a glamorous note! Many talented artists, including both children and adults, decorated the evening with their beautiful melodies. It was indeed a great accomplishment to raise \$1259 for MGCAANA, toward investing in the future of MGCAANA. \$600 from the proceeds have already gone toward the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF). Heartfelt gratitude to all the donors who gave generously, the young and adult performers for contributing their time & talents toward a great cause, and to all the attendees present to witness the brilliant talents! It sure took many extra long calls, endless texts, Facebook messages & emails, but it was all worth it! Kudos to Hashini Mohottala & the Board of Directors and Executive Committee for being there helping out to execute the first ever virtual talent show flawlessly! Proud of the MGCAANA team & sisterhood! Many thanks also to our friends in the communities! Enjoy the pictures!



"You've Got Talent!" Fundraiser (Continued)



Changes to the MGCAANA Executive Committee 2020-2021: In the June 2020 newsletter, we announced the MGCAANA Executive Committee for the coming year. In this newsletter, we would like to inform you a slight change within the Executive Committee: moving forward, Hashini Mohottala will be serving as the Treasurer for 2020-2021. Geetha Rajaguru, who was serving as Treasurer will remain a member of MGCAANA, outside the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

MGCAANA UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (2020-2021)

The Selection Committee of the MGCAANA Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program is looking for Mahamaya alumnae who demonstrate outstanding academic achievements, leadership and active participation in extra curricular activities and a significant level of financial need. Intended to cover the cost of textbooks for a semester, a scholarships of 300.00 will be awarded to one (1) candidate this year.

Application Period & Deadline: September 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

Award Notification: By January 31, 2021

Once the application period begins, please visit <http://www.mahamayaalumna.org/scholarship.html> to view and download the scholarship application. If you have any questions about this scholarship program, please contact us at mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com.

We look forward to receiving your applications!

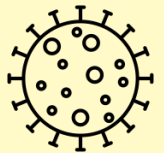
Use of Masks to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19



Your mask may protect them. Their mask may protect you.

Please visit the following links for various important information regarding masks:

- [How to Select Masks](#)
- [How to Wear Masks](#)
- [Considerations for Masks](#)
- [Making Masks](#)
- [Washing Masks](#)



Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

Resources related to talking about race and being anti-racist

1. [Talking about Race](#) (The National Museum of African American History and Culture)
2. [Being Antiracist](#) (The National Museum of African American History and Culture)
3. [The 1619 Project](#) (New York Times)
4. [Institutionalized Racism: A Syllabus](#) (JSTOR)

KANDY STREETS OF YESTERYEAR

Written by Lokubanda Tillakaratne¹

I am taking this small space to describe some of the streets in Kandy which are named depicting its modern history and culture. But they are older, and had appellations befitting the times gone by in Kandyan Kings' reign, and they are the only witnesses to tragedies and serendipities, silent albeit, the city endured in its history. I compiled this information from near contemporary sources which directed me to the correct street where I found myself once having ice cream at Taj Hotel on Ward street with my future wife Niranjala (nee Wickramasinghe, alumna ('74) after getting lost looking for familiar streets. Taj is gone now, but the street (once named after the governor of same name), aptly called now Dalada Vidiya remains the heart of the city. Here is a sample of the places and streets I was looking for.

Bogambara Wewa: This is synonymous with tragedy. Any woman in Kandyan kingdom found by the king fit to be executed was drowned here. Why, it was conveniently located just walking distance from his palace. The King could watch it during his evening walk down the street on the way to Daskara vidiya where his paddies were. Water from Rajapihilla, Ampitiya emptied to this lake. On its north bank are the Kandy City Center, Cargills, Major banks and Devon Café. KCC and Devon is where half of the Kandyan pre-nuptial couples rendezvous to have cool drinks and compare notes. Shoulder to shoulder with this grandiosity is the George E. De Silva park with its phone box-sized shops. The wewa turned north by market parking lot to the Muslim Hotel and depression behind it.

Somewhere here lie buried the remains of women and children who got caught in king's wickedness and thrown into the lake with rocks tied to them. The well-known case is the demise of the wife and children of Ehelepola Adikarama. The king accused Ehelepola of treason and held his wife and children as hostages until he appeared before him. Instead the Adikarama escaped to Colombo seeking protection of the British. He cowardly refused to return knowing full well that his children and wife would be executed by the king. It was a man's world then – with his disgraceful and ignoble act, instead of disapprobation, there were still poets who wrote ballads praising him. Ehelepola Warnanawa hewath Waduga Hatana is one such poem!

Hetti Veediya: The present-day D.S. Senanayake Street (DSS, Trincomalee Street) between Dalada Veediya and Raja Veediya. Chetties who were suppliers of clothes to King resided on this street. There were four manor houses on this street between Dalada Vidiya and Colombo street (Aracapola, Molligoda, Ratwatte, and Dullawe). As was the custom then, they were not tile, not whitewashed per orders of the king. Only the palace and temples were allowed the luxury.

¹ *Writer is retired from UCLA. He is married to Dr. Niranjala Tillakaratne (nee Wickramasinghe '74). A sample of his books are Montaray Viththi (Sinhala translation of Steinbeck's Cannery Row); Echoes of Millstone: An Ethnographic Account of a Village in Sri Lanka (2015) and Rata Sabhawa (in Sinhala) (2020). His most recent feature article Elephant Deaths: Listen to the Villagers' Story appeared in Daily Mirror on Dec. 19, 2019.*

(continued.)

Nagaha Veediya: Part of the DSS street between Vidyarthi college and Raja Vidiya. There was a large Na tree on this street under which a guard house (kadawata). Therefore, it was called Nagaha Murapola.

Borawe Veediya: The last section of the DSS near Mahayyawa rail tunnel (there was no tunnel then). Some incorrectly call this Berawa Veediya. Named after a muddy pool that stood near the turn off to Aruppola and Lewella ferry on Mahaweli river. Since water was not clear because of the run-off from Udawatta kale, it was called Borawe, corrupted version of Borawewa. John D'Oyle, king-breaker, as Gananth Obeysekere called him, makes a note in his diary on March 22, 1815, (p. 244) three weeks after the city was subdued and moving into the deposed king's palace: "Rode early this morning by Kumaruppu vidiya, Gangaramaya (in Buwelikada), round Udawatte kale ... return to Kandy by Borawey Vidiya." Nice victory lap, John!

Daskara Vidiya: Section of street on Yatinuwara vidiya (former Brownrigg Street) between Raja Vidiya and Kande Vidiya. This was a paddy field owned by the King. It looks like the king who owned the whole Kandyan country still wanted a paddy field here. It was named after a village called Daskara in Udunuwara. People from this village were assigned to chase away birds causing crop damage in these fields. Thus, they lived in this area.

Udunuwara Vidiya (Present Wadugodapitiya Vidiya) and Yatinuwara Vidiya:

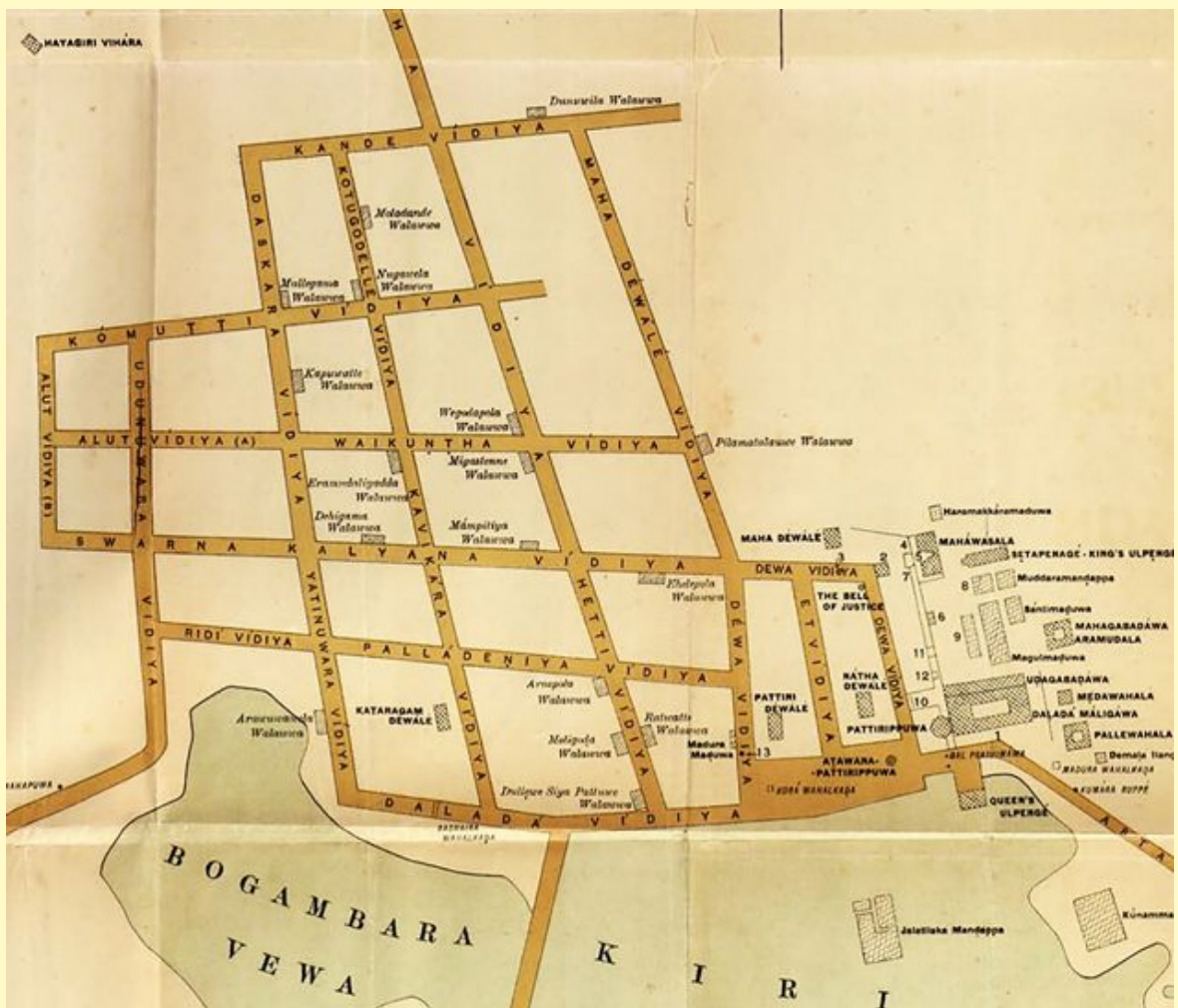
Folklore on these two streets goes like this. When the king died, the process of selecting the next one was supervised and carried out by the Maha Adikarama. He assembled Nayakkaras (eligible relatives of the king) and asked the people from Yatinuwara and Udunuwara to show their choice. If they like one, they pay homage by genuflecting before him. Usually it was formality, for, they always pointed to the candidate that was favored by Maha Adikarama who then declares him as the king. But it is believed they were greatly influenced by the Adikarama and other Chiefs (somethings never change!).

Kavikara Vidiya: Section on present day Kotugodella Vidiya Between Kumara Vidiya and Dalada Vidiya. This was where king's musicians and poets who sang encomiums to him (prasasti, praise poems) lived. There were three manor houses on this street (Nugawela, Moladanda and Eramuduliyadda).

(continued.)

Asthawanka Vidiya: Present day Anagarika Dharmapala Mawata (used to be called Malabar street) at the end of Dalada vidiya from the turn off to the old courthouse and extends towards Buwelikada. This area was where residential quarters of all Malabar princes (Nayakkars – Kings relatives. etc.) located. Therefore, an exclusive neighborhood. Also called Kumaa ruppu vidiya. No Kandyans were allowed to go there.

Source: L. J. B Turner, *Unambuwe Ratemahattaya, Giragama Diyawadana Nilame, T.B. Keppetipola, Kada Im Pot and Heelekam Miti, among others (Ceylon Antiquary 1917-1918)*.



Kandy Town Map About the Year 1815 (T.B. Keppetipola), Photo Ceylon Survey Dept. 1918.

Appreciation - Mrs. Bhadradevi De Silva

Written by Sujatha Werake

Bhadradevi De Silva was a lady who influenced many lives, both in her extended family and beyond it. I had the good fortune of associating Mrs. De Silva and her family many years ago. She was one of the kindest and most loving persons I knew. With her wisdom, patience, generosity, compassion, down-to-earth qualities, and living by the values of the Buddha dhamma, made her a popular figure among friends, family and general public. Whenever and wherever I meet her, before I leave, she did not forget to bless me.



The Sri Lanka Bar Association had made a death announcement about her funeral with the names of ten lawyers in the family (husband, all five children, two in-laws, two grandchildren.) Her daughter Ms. Leisha Chandrasena, AAL, served as the chairperson of Sri Lanka Telecom. She requested young family members to consider studying medicine. As a result, now they have two young medical doctors in her fourth son's family.

She was born in Colombo as the youngest of seven children and was a product of Vishaka Vidyalaya. She was a good daughter who always cared for her mother as she lost her father when she was a child. She was close to her sisters, nieces and nephews as well.

She married a lawyer who launched his practice in Kandy. He was a well-known lawyer and politician in Kandy, Mr. G. B. De Silva. Therefore, after marriage she settled in Kandy in 1950 and gave birth to five children, three girls and two boys. The two boys studied at Trinity College, Kandy and the three girls entered Mahamaya. The reason Bhadradevi enrolled the daughters at Mahamaya was because the Principal at Mahamaya was her former teacher at Vishaka, Mrs. Soma Poojitha Gunawardena. She also contributed to the scholarships of two Mayans.

Bhadradevi was a good pianist and was a very popular figure amongst the lawyers as she was always called upon to play the piano at lawyers' parties. She had a very good ear for music and sang most of the old Sinhala songs, with her favorite being "Olu Pipeela" sung by Sunil Shantha. In addition to singing and playing the piano, she was also one of the first pupils of the legendary dancer Chitrasena. Some of you already know her daughter Deepthi Weerappuli who hosted MGCAANA AGM in Detroit many years ago. Deepthi and her son being chips of the old block, entertained the large gathering with excellent performance of piano, other instruments and Sinhala songs. (Continued on next page...)

Appreciation - Mrs. Bhadradevi De Silva (continued.)



When her husband entered politics, she gave her unstinted support to him and when he won, she was constantly supporting him to carry out many projects for the benefit of the people of the electorate. She was a shadow to her husband till he died and never showed arrogance even when he held power. She was never envious of other people either, and took pleasure in the success of others. These are the qualities which made the people of Kandy remember her as a truly humble and kind person.

She was always focused on helping the less fortunate and some of the projects introduced by her were a free medical dispensary, a creche to look after little children, a library and the Sunday school. In addition, she conducted English language classes at home which benefited many who wanted to pursue employment in the Middle East. She went out of her way to help people, even if she didn't know them, in times of distress. She prayed for those suffering from various illnesses and looked after the welfare of anyone who came in contact with her. She was full of empathy and took pleasure in assisting people. She also loved dogs.

She imparted great values in her children and whatever they have achieved in life was due to her great influence. She had always emphasized that they should look at the people who were less fortunate and not look up at the people who were fortunate. She always took care to visit her children's' schools and attend the parent-teacher meetings to identify the weak areas of the child and took great pains to empower the children to study well while retaining good values. She even looked after her grandchildren as all studied in Kandy and monitored their progress very closely.

She was a devout Buddhist who regularly attended and gave alms to many temples in Kandy. May she attain the supreme bliss of Nibbana!

Pavlova

by Sureni Ranasinghe

Pavlova is a meringue based dessert named after the Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova. It has a crispy crust and a soft marshmallow inside. This is a great light dessert to have during summer time with any fruit of your choice.

Ingredients:

For the pavlova

- ☐ 3 large egg whites, room temperature
- ☐ 150g (¾ cups) Sugar
- ☐ 1 tsp white vinegar
- ☐ 1 tsp cornstarch
- ☐ 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

For the cream

- ☐ 125 ml (1/2 cup) Heavy cream (with 30% or more fat content)
- ☐ You can also double the cream recipe to have more cream in the pavlova

Fruits of your choice

- ☐ I am using Strawberries and blueberries
- ☐ You can Substitute with Kiwi, mango, passion fruit, raspberries etc.

Baking tips

- ☐ 260F degrees (125C) for 1 hour and 5 minutes

How to:

- ☐ Take parchment paper and draw a 8 inch circle as a guide for the meringue. Turn it over so you can see the circle through.
- ☐ To a mixing bowl add the egg whites and beat till its frothy.
- ☐ When the mixture becomes frothy start adding sugar tablespoon at a time while beating the eggs
- ☐ When the mixture comes to a stiff peaks (when the beater is lifted you should get a nice peak that holds its shape) add corn starch, vinegar & vanilla and beat for another minute until combined.
- ☐ Use little meringue to stick the parchment to the tray.



- ☐ Transfer all the meringue to the parchment paper, keep meringue within the circle and shape the meringue to a disk using a spoon or a small spatula.. If you prefer you can transfer meringue to a piping bag and pipe a circle using the guid.
- ☐ Use the circle as a guidance to shape the meringue. Make a disk with a little well in the center so you can add your cream & fruits
- ☐ Bake the meringue for about an hour and five minutes. (Baking in lower temperature is very important) After its bakes switch off the oven and leave the meringue inside the oven until its completely cooled.
- ☐ I usually keep for about 3-4 hours, you can leave it overnight as well. Don't open the oven until it's cooled.
- ☐ After it's completely cooled, take it out of the oven and carefully transfer to a serving plate. Meringue is very delicate so be very gentle, it should easily come off from the parchment.
- ☐ Beat the heavy cream until whipped consistency.
- ☐ Top the meringue with whipped cream
- ☐ Place fruits on top, I am using strawberries & blueberries but you can use any fruit you like.
- ☐ Serve promptly so the meringue doesn't get soggy from the cream.

Video Link:

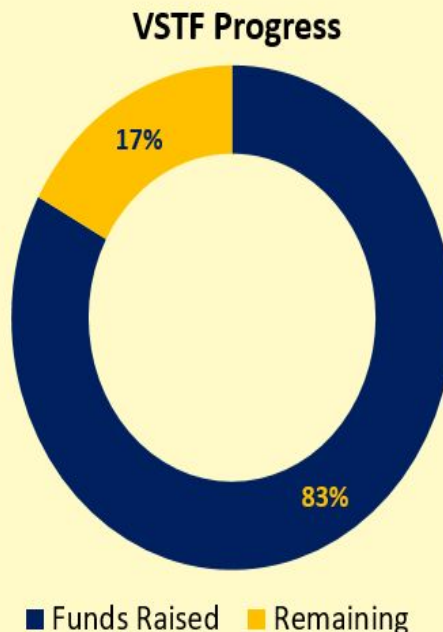
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUV1X6vD1i4>

Reaching the New Goal Set for Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF)

The Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF) set up by MGCAANA provides financial aid to financially-disadvantaged students at Mahamaya Girls' College. Scholarships from VSTF pay for educational expenses and/or boarding fees of students attending Mahamaya. "Vidya," a Sanskrit word, means knowledge or wisdom. Our initial goal was to raise at least \$20,000. We reached this goal last year. By September 2019, we reached that goal, having raised over \$ 20,700.00, the interest from which has been going toward awarding around 14 scholarships per year.

To continue this noble cause, a new goal was set to **\$30,000**, and as of August 2020, \$24,880 has been raised. To donate online or by cheque, please visit:

<http://mahamayaalumna.org/vstf.php>



Want to know what your Board of Directors (BOD) is up to?

Please read the minutes of the BOD's monthly meetings posted on MGCAANA website:

<http://www.mahamayaalumna.org/minutes.php>

If you have new ideas, concerns, or suggestions to improve how MGCAANA operates etc. please feel free to connect with the BOD through e-mail: Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Newsletter Committee:

Vihara Dharmaratne, Vajeera Dorabawila, Lilika Molligoda, Berlini Narampanawe

Some Upcoming MGCAANA Activities

- Board Meetings (September, October, November)
- Launch of 2020-2021 MGCAANA Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarship (September 1)
- Guest Speaker Webinars (September, October)
- Next Newsletter (October)