



EDITORIAL **DAMMAPADA**

It is indeed an honor for me to write this editorial. Thank you for your encouraging feedback we received in our survey regarding the newsletter "Maya Puwath." It gives us strength to work as your editors with courage and enthusiasm.

By oneself, indeed, is evil done; by oneself is one defiled. By oneself is evil left unpurged; by oneself, indeed, is one purified. Purity and impurity depend on oneself. No one purifies another.

The second annual General Meeting of the MGCAANA is scheduled to be held on the 27th of May 2006 in Maryland. This would be a great occasion for all members to meet their fellow Mahamayans.

HELLO

I would like to take this opportunity to remind our members of an important milestone in the history of our elite Alma Mater. Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy will be celebrating her seventy-fifth anniversary in January 2007.



This is indeed a momentous occasion for all Mahamayans. In celebration of the 75th anniversary, the MGCAANA has decided to publish a commemorative volume in January 2007. The Commemorative Volume Publication Committee is inviting each and every member of MGCAANA to write articles, poems, or any other creative work of your choice to publish in this volume. This volume will be mainly for the members, by the members. Participation of all our members in this wonderful publication is very important to us. You have the opportunity to participate by contributing an article, being an editor, or becoming a member of the Publication Committee. You may write in English or Sinhalese; share your memories, or some special incident that you would like to share; give us some new ideas to add to the volume; share your research in your particular subject areas; send a copy of your "ancient" photographs taken during your school years; write a poem, a short story or a crossword puzzle; draw a picture; let us all enjoy your creativity by contributing to our commemorative volume.

Hi, I am Nazrana Caffoor, the Editor of this newsletter. I was at Mahamaya Girls College, in the years 1989-1991.

Please send us your writings to mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com during the months of April and May. The Commemorative Volume Publication Committee is waiting for your mail. For more information please go to our website www.mahamayaalumna.org. Thank you.

I obtained an Arts degree from the University of Peradeniya. And I am presently residing in Vancouver, Canada with my husband Effam.

Nazrana Caffoor

**MGCAANA IS BECOMING
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, MGCAANA, SUJATHA WERAKE**

The first year has almost ended. We as members bound by the strong sense of fellowship will continue to commit ourselves to the mission of our Organization. It is my fervent hope that this great organization will grow in strength and vitality in the years ahead to make it possible for us to look back in later years, on its achievements with pride and sense of accomplishment. We are proud of our growth, our strength, and our commitment. We can envision that the benefits deriving from our organization are not only to the members of today, but for the children of tomorrow as well. MGCAANA is here to serve our alumnae and students, some of whom we will never meet and may not be born yet.

I consider it as a great honor and a privilege to have had the opportunity to serve you as your president in this delicate and decisive first year. Thank you for giving me that opportunity. I must congratulate the members of committees, Executive Committee, and the Board of Directors for coming together in giving life to this organization to become solid as a rock within these nine months. How did we do this! Because of the love and respect for each other, and the deep understanding among ourselves, we never had any place for negative thoughts. We debate and come out with best possible solutions to issues with the majority's vote, to reach our goals. It is the excellent teamwork that helps us to do our job so well. I sincerely hope that this healthy MGCAANA culture will prevail for years to come.

I am extremely thankful to the members in US and Canada who renewed their membership and new members who joined us this year. I am indebted to families of our office bearers that serve in different capacities, who stood by us in the making of MGCAANA, and now in our journey, sacrifice their family time, gave us their input and innovative ideas, moral support, and encouragement in our endeavor.

We have inspirational stories to tell, locally and internationally. Some of our alumnae who live in other countries visit our website, read Maya Puwath, watch our path with pride and curiosity. Some of them write to us and tell us how appreciative they are of what we are doing in MGCAANA. I am thrilled when MGCAANA receives recognition for its performance. I am certain some of them dream of having an alumnae organization like ours in their countries of residence. What I would say to them is, "If we could do it, you can do it too. Start your own organization right now. The secret to success is undoubtedly having committed members."

As president of this remarkable organization, I treasure your friendship, your love, commitment and encouragement. My fellow MGCAANA members, members of the committees, Executive Committee, Board of Directors, families of members, honorary members, Colombo Branch of the Mahamaya Old Girls' Association, parent organization of the OGA, and our Alma Mater, with your support nothing is impossible. *Thank you!*

THANK YOU! **YOU CAN HELP**

As we celebrate our first birthday let us also not forget to thank the people who initiated MGCAANA. It is indeed no mean feat to collectively gather so many people on diverse missions in life, whose first steps in Society began at Mahamaya, living in the vast continent of North America, under the blue and gold banner of Mahamaya.

It is nothing but appropriate to give credit to those who deserve it. Therefore, let us express our gratitude and thanks to Mrs. Werake, our President, and the members of the Board of Directors, members of the executive committee, Newsletter Committee, Fund Raising Committee, Membership Drive Committee, Scholarship Committee, Travel and Host Club Committee, Web site Organizing Committee, and members who are supportive in many ways for all the painstaking hard work to sustain this great initiative. We salute your tenacity, patience, guidance, leadership, approachability and much more. We appreciate your willingness to give so ungrudgingly of your precious time, energy, resources and finances to sustain this endeavor.

Thank you all for a wonderful year. We got to know many people through the association, had the opportunity to contribute positively to our alma mater and loved the opportunity to network, none of which would have been possible without your initiative. Although we are different people with diverse missions in life you have managed to bring us together as one family. Vive La Mahamaya! Vive La MGCAANA! THANK YOU!

*Written by Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe
on behalf of the Editorial Committee*

**A Message from Nadeeka Gunasekera
Chair Person of the fundraising Committee**

On behalf of the
Fund Raising Committee of Mahamaya Girls College Alumnae Association of
North America (MGCAANA) we would like to announce that we have
organized a raffle to raise funds for MGCAANA's planned activities where
money is needed. Our Association has planned to support our alumnae who are
studying in Universities here, by granting scholarships and also to support our
alma mater in their technology education.

Information on Raffle:
10 tickets in each book. Each ticket is \$2.00.

Fundraising Committee is in charge of distributing ticket books and collecting funds. If
you can help us sell tickets please contact me at the following address or phone number:
After the tickets are sold, cash and counterfoils to be returned to:

**Nadeeka Ranasinghe
The Chairperson, Fundraising Committee
80-20 208th Street
Hollis Hills, N.Y. 11427
USA
Tel: 718-464-0502**

**The draw will take place at the Annual General Meeting in Maryland on
Saturday, May 27, 06.**

KANDY MAHAMAYA GIRLS' COLLEGE O.G.A. COLOMBO BRANCH

Kandy Mahamaya Girls' College O.G.A. Colombo Branch is the "Brain Child" of Mrs. Nita Pilapitiya, who was the Principal from 1981 to 1990. We are grateful to her for her foresight and enthusiasm in setting up our branch. We have now grown into a balanced mature adult and celebrated our 21st birthday in March 2005. Responsibility, spirituality, gratitude, warm supportive solidarity with an over dose of fun have been woven into the beautiful fabric that our O.G.A. is today.

Each year we inaugurate our year's programme with a religious activity such as sil campaigns, day of meditation, almsgivings, dhamma discussions; our guiding principles at all times are those laid down by Lord Buddha. We try our utmost to be of service to our tortured paradise isle. Be it floods, droughts, land slides, tsunamis or deadly war, our branch had always worked with dedication and hope.

Mahamaya, our Alma Mater is assured of a helping hand. Four scholarships awarded for financially handicapped post 'O' Level Students, are carefully administered by our Branch. The blue velvet stage curtain for the Auditorium, lab equipment, curtains for the Computer Room and re-decorating the entire Auditorium are just a few examples of our support for Mahamaya.

We helped the parent body of the O.G.A. to set up the Archives too. However, our greatest achievement was writing and publishing the history of Mahamaya titled "With a Fistful of Rice" by Indrani Meegama, an alumna of Mahamaya. In Prof. Leelananda De Silva's words, "Histories of elite schools are now becoming common place. Most of them are largely descriptive, focusing on principals and old boys and old girls who have distinguished themselves in later life. They are of little use to a wider audience. Indrani Meegama's 'With a Fistful of Rice: Buddhist Women and the making of Mahamaya' is a notable exception. It describes less and analyses more. She addresses the key issues and policies that concerned the school authorities over the years and shaped the evolution of the school".

The political, social and cultural milieu, in which Mahamaya struggled to be born and to grow, is well described." On 30th August 2003, we launched this much researched book at the Mahamaya Auditorium. Dr. Lorna Devaraja, a leading historian, was the Chief Guest while Mr. J.R.P. Suriyapperuma was the Guest of Honour. It was a well organized, well attended vent.

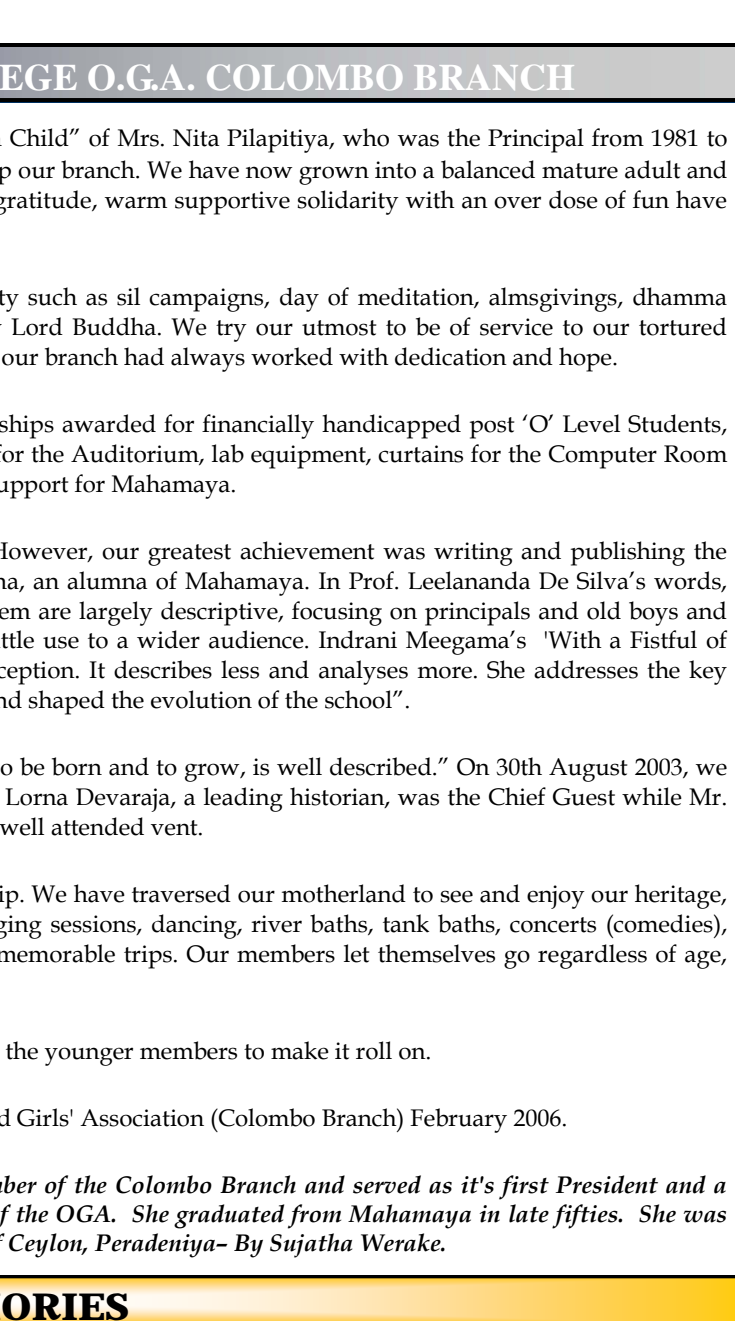
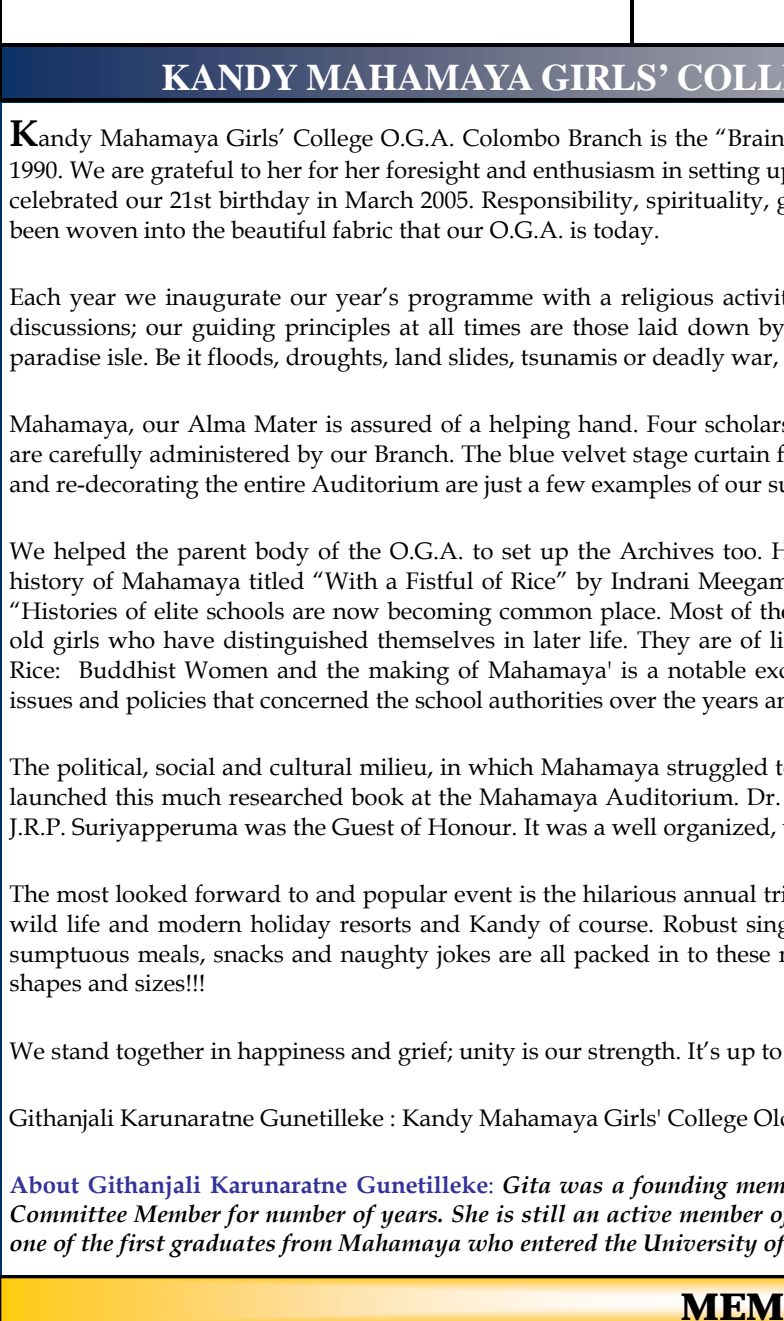
The most looked forward to and popular event is the hilarious annual trip. We have traversed our motherland to see and enjoy our heritage, wild life and modern holiday resorts and Kandy of course. Robust singing sessions, dancing, river baths, tank baths, concerts (comedies), sumptuous meals, snacks and naughty jokes are all packed in to these memorable trips. Our members let themselves go regardless of age, shapes and sizes!!!

We stand together in happiness and grief; unity is our strength. It's up to the younger members to make it roll on.

Githanjali Karunaratne Gunetilleke : Kandy Mahamaya Girls' College Old Girls' Association (Colombo Branch) February 2006.

About Githanjali Karunaratne Gunetilleke: *Gita was a founding member of the Colombo Branch and served as it's first President and a Committee Member for number of years. She is still an active member of the OGA. She graduated from Mahamaya in late fifties. She was one of the first graduates from Mahamaya who entered the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya- By Sujatha Werake.*

MEMORIES



FACTS ON AVIAN FLU FROM WHO **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Chicken and other poultry are safe to eat if cooked properly. Cooking of poultry (e.g. chicken, ducks, geese, turkeys and guinea-fowl) at or above 70° Celsius throughout the product, so that absolutely no meat remains raw and red, is a safe measure to kill the H5N1 virus in areas with outbreaks in poultry. Proper cooking inactivates the virus present inside the eggs. Pasteurization used by industry for liquid egg products is also effective in inactivating the virus.

Recommended good hygienic practices to reduce exposure:

- No birds from flocks with disease should enter the food chain.
- Do not eat raw poultry parts, including raw blood, or raw eggs in or from areas with outbreaks in poultry.
- Separate raw meat from cooked or ready-to-eat foods to avoid contamination. Do not use the same chopping board or the same knife. Do not handle both raw and cooked foods without washing your hands in between and do not place cooked meat back on the same plate or surface it was on prior to being cooked.
- Keep clean and wash your hands. After handling frozen and thawed raw poultry or eggs, wash your hands thoroughly with soap. Wash and disinfect all surfaces and utensils that have been in contact with the raw meat.
- Cook thoroughly: Thorough cooking of poultry meat will inactivate the virus. Either ensure that the poultry meat reaches 70°C at the centre of the product ("piping" hot) or that the meat is not pink in any part. Egg yolks should not be runny or liquid.
- **Extracted from :** <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2005/pr66/en/index.html>. Please visit this web site for further information.

Compiled by Chathuri Nugawela Munasinghe

- The 2nd AGM of MGCAANA will be held on May 27, 2006 at the Davis Community Library, 6400, Democracy Boulevard, Bethesda, Maryland.
- Followed by the meeting a dinner will be hosted by Ms. Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe and her husband Jeeva, at their residence for all the attendees.
- MGCAANA is currently sponsoring a fund raising raffle to benefit future activities planned by the alumnae. The draw will take place on May 27th in Maryland.
- Mahamaya Girl's College Kandy is celebrating her 75th Anniversary in January '07. A commemorative magazine will be published by the MGCAANA 75th Anniversary Publication Committee. Articles to the magazine should be received no later than May 16, 1006.
- **If you need assistance in finding accommodation and transportation during the AGM please visit our host and Travel club at:** http://www.mahamayaalumna.org/News_Events.html

Compiled by Priyanka Jayakody

LETTING GO **KIDS CORNER**

It was time for my three and a half year old to go to school. It was indeed a tear jerking moment in my life. This child for whom I had given up a career for, who is a part of me, whom I brought on to this earth, whom I had fed and nurtured was taking his first step away from me. It was my first moment to let go. Holding back my tears, I took him to Pre School. My husband took the day off and stayed with our eight month old daughter. I was thankful that she was there for me, needing me.

BOOLA
My dog is six
and he is big
He is chocolate brown
and has curly hair
He is a labradoodle!
Submitted by: Vihan Gunaratne. 6 yrs

WALKING MATH

I walked Meth, our son, into class, handed him over to the teacher, gave him a hug and waited for him to open the flood gates. Instead Meth came and said, "Amma, you can go home now". I didn't know what to do or to say. He had never been away from me for the entirety of his life and yet he felt so comfortable with his new surroundings, he didn't need me. So I left him in the care of total strangers. Also, with many more children of his age who I hoped would be nice and kind to Meth. Most of these kids were howling, but not our Meth. They had started schooling before Meth and were older than Meth.

PRAWN VADAI

Ingredients:

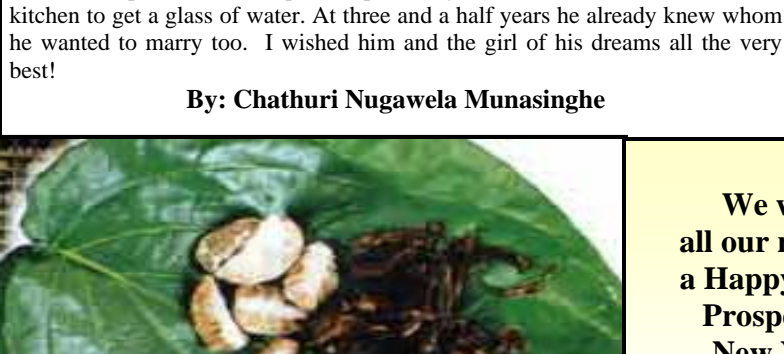
- 1 cup ulunthu
- 6 oz red Onions (chopped)
- 2oz green chilies (chopped)
- 50 prawns cut up small
- 1/8 tsp cumin & 1/8 tsp peppercorn (ground together)
- few curry leaves
- coconut oil for frying
- salt to taste

Method:
Soak the ulunthu overnight. Wash it well until the black skin comes away & grind to a paste not too smooth. Add the onions, chilies, curry-leaves, all chopped fine and the prawns. Mix in the cumin & pepper powder with salt to taste. Mix well, shape & deep fry.

From the Ceylon Daily News cookery Book.
submitted by Nazrana Caffoor

Well, that moment never came and I was happy when it was finally noon. I went into the class to get him and as the door opened, Meth came running out and hugged me and said, "So nice to see you Amma, I missed you so much". So after all I am still in his life. I sighed a sigh of relief! But that was not it. That evening Meth came and confided in me. "Amma I think I need to get married". I was convinced I heard him wrong. "What did you say darling? I questioned. "Why are you not listening to me Amma?" Meth asked and he repeated, "I said I need to get married". Why? Did not enter my head, I asked "to whom?" "To Dora the Explorer" he said quite emphatically. "O.K.", I said and walked to the kitchen to get a glass of water. At three and a half years he already knew whom he wanted to marry too. I wished him and the girl of his dreams all the very best!

By: Chathuri Nugawela Munasinghe



We wish all our readers a Happy and a Prosperous New Year and a Peaceful Vesak!

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE **MAYA PUWATH NEXT VOLUME**

Nazrana Caffoor (Editor of this Volume)
Priyanka Jayakody
Dr. Devi Gunasekera, and
Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe

Next Volume of Maya Puwath will come to you in June 06. Please submit your submissions for Maya Puwath and comments to : namahamayans@yahoo.com by June 1, 2006