



AFTER the rains came!

Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

- December 2012 -

The Holiday Season is upon us, or soon will be, and like all good Sri Lankans we look forward to all kinds of celebratory rituals. A note of sadness, though, because none of our progeny will be here to make this the family celebration that distinguished our childhoods.

While the weather in late November is, perhaps, reminiscent of an English summer with the drip-drip-drip (and better!) of rain, after the terrible drought we recently weathered, we'll not complain!

We have begun the preparatory work for cousin George's promised Butterfly Garden and we hope he'll have the planting material ready soon because we certainly have ideal planting weather right now and we don't want to tempt the fates by leaving it for later in the year!



The Common Jezebel (*Delia eucharis*) nectaring on Duranta

The re-development of the garden below our front yard brings back memories of my mother's toil in putting in rock terraces

and formal flower beds more than sixty years ago. We have neither the inclination nor the energy to return to that more formal arrangement but seek to make the lower level of our front yard that much more welcoming to those who want to read or just "vegetate" down there. Already, Arlene has set up a few rustic benches under the Poinciana trees and, to tell the truth, we miss the giant of our garden, the *Tabebuia rosea* that was destroyed by the horrific electric storm of April 4th, less than we thought we would!

The numbers of visitors to HPH is picking up as the year progresses and, most important, the reviews have been good without exception—those who entered our home as "Paying Guests" have ended up becoming our friends. Check Trip Advisor if you think that we might be overstating the case!

Below is the "island" in the lobby of our home which is pretty much as it has been (except for Arlene's decorative touch) since the middle of the last century.



For information or to book your accommodation, contact us at:

Home phone: 94-81-380-8007; Mobile: 94-72-284-9770 or by email at emil@halgollaplantationhome.com

We'll have pictures of the SelvaGamini room that do better justice to this cosy space than the one available right now.



Floating flowers

While we don't have the expert carpenters and masons of yesteryear, Gamini & Selvarajah, under Karunaratne's supervision are picking up tradesmen's skills as they go along and are doing more than enough to keep HPH's "plant & equipment" purring along. We are very dependent on what skills and intelligence we each bring to the operation of HPH and those we are compelled to develop in the absence of tradesmen at the end of a phone line! It sometimes feels like a return to the pioneering times of our fathers and grandfathers, occasionally frustrating but, always providing a sense of satisfaction when the job is done!

December is Christmas Party Month for our staff and their families and those who've read last December's newsletter may recall the scenes of celebration pictured therein. Well, we are well on the way to what I am convinced is the most important event in Arlene's calendar and an opportunity to provide so much pleasure to so many who would not otherwise have that experience. Next month's newsletter will carry a picture or two of what transpires later this month, by way of an update.

Let us close wishing you the compliments of the season and a New Year that brings you all that you desire!

Warm wishes, Arlene and Emil

For the month of December we will continue to provide each visiting group with a complimentary "Surprise Basket" of HPH "goodies!"



TripAdvisor Mobile and Tablet Apps

Did you know that HPH is on Trip Advisor?

www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g304138-d2057765-Reviews-Halgolla_Plantation_Home-Kandy_District_Central_Province.html

Upcoming events in the country

December

December is **National Bird Month** in Sri Lanka. In addition to the resident birds, the migrants have arrived from the Himalayas and will stay until April.

Dec 1 - Unduvap Poya – this religious full-moon holiday marks the arrival of the sapling of the bo-tree into Sri Lanka.

Adam's Peak – climbing Sri Pada is an important pilgrimage for many Sri Lankans. Unduvap Poya day marks the start of the pilgrimage season which continues until May.

Christmas in the tropics! Colombo in particular gets all dolled up for Christmas. Though there's no snow and no cold, Santa, parties, Christmas shopping and cheer abound.

New Year's Eve is celebrated with great enthusiasm around the country.

Hot Air Balloon Rides at Dambulla and Sigiriya

Whale and Dolphin-Watching at Kalpitiya and Mirissa

White-water rafting at Kitulgala

January

Jan 14: Thai Pongal – A Tamil Harvest Festival with various activities to give thanks to the Sun God for a good harvest.



Jan 26–27: Kala pola: an open air art feast in Colombo featuring the art of very talented Sri Lankans



The **HSBC Galle Literary Festival** usually held in January has been cancelled for 2013 but will return in 2014. It features a wide variety of local and international authors and other events.

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