



The end of the “front-yard giant!”

(50+ year old *Tabebuia rosea* tree killed by lightning strike on April 4th)

Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

- May 2012 -

This is the first newsletter, since we’ve begun to send them out, that I have had to start on a sad note. On the afternoon of April 4th we had a freak electric storm. Among the casualties was the giant *Tabebuia rosea* which I’d planted about fifty years ago in our front yard. It was the electric storm of a lifetime! The good news is that there were no injuries despite our entire workforce being in and around HPH since it was payday. We were able to restore our power supply by the next day, though the “recuperation process” insofar as replacing electrical and electronic equipment continues! Interestingly enough, the day before the lightning strike, our guests were photographing the evening thunderstorm that we were experiencing. I should have used that hoary old saying then, “You ain’t seen nothing yet!”



Stream below the soaking pool

A blessing that came with the storm, though, was much-needed rain—the vegetation has absolutely exploded with foliage and the birdsong is something else!

We continue to develop short walks of interest to our guests. One of these is to the Look-out Point above the house and the other is to an abortive “dig” for plumbago (graphite) below the house. The latter must be about 125 years old though I have yet to get a detailed history of it.

May is the month of greatest religious significance to a country which contains the reputedly most pristine form of Theravada Buddhism. The Vesak Full Moon Poya festival commemorates the birth, enlightenment and demise of Gautama Buddha. It is a veritable festival of light with huge “pandals” constructed in most of the population centres and temples. Homes are festooned with multi-hued lanterns and oil lamps. Needless to say, this is a time of religious observances in every little town and hamlet, as well as the larger population centres. If you want to see Sri Lanka in its finest after-sunset garb, this is the time to visit!



Vesak lantern

HPH will soon have another (compact) double bedroom with its own bathroom on the main floor, which will allow us to accommodate 7 guests in all. We are also setting up a new bedroom for the driver/guide. Check our website “Tariff” area from time to time so you’ll be the first to know when these new facilities come on-stream.

Warm wishes, Emil & Arlene

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

Upcoming events in the country

May

The surfing season at Arugam Bay begins! Rated as one of the top ten surfing destinations in the world.

Whale and dolphin watching in Trinco begins.

May 5 & 6: Vesak Full Moon Holiday commemorating the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha.

May 10: Cricket - Pakistan tour of Sri Lanka begins and continues into June.



HPH table centrepiece

June

June 4: Poson Full Moon Holiday commemorating the arrival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka over 2,000 years ago. Pandals (large lighted structures that illustrate an aspect of the Buddha's life) are erected across the country.



Pandal

Did you know? Sri Lanka has been rated as a top tourist destination for 2011 and 2012.

Condé Nast Traveller

www.cntraveller.com/news/2011/december/destination-s-to-watch-in-2012/sri-lanka

The New York Times

www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/travel/10places.html

National Geographic

<http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/best-trips-2012/sri-lanka-photos/>



Flamboyant flowers in a vase

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