



The “birthday girl” contemplating the candles to be extinguished!

HALGOLLA PLANTATION HOME

- ***THE*** UNIQUE SRI LANKAN EXPERIENCE -

MARCH 2018

With the topsy-turvy weather we (and all the world’s citizenry) have been experiencing, we don’t know what to expect from day to day and by the time the end of this newsletter is reached, what has been said in the present tense in the beginning could end up in the past as we leave you!

For March, as in months’ past, we’ll continue our “Surprise Basket” of HPH “goodies” for visitors as they take their leave of HPH and which appears to delight them.

- Certificate of Excellence 2015 from Trip Advisor
 - rated as [Best Home Stay](#) in Sri Lanka
 - recommended by [Bradt Travel Guide for Sri Lanka](#)

could also “talk,” they had to be caged if they were not to fly away at the first opportunity. No feral existence for these beauties! Ranjith Pushpakumara who provides occasional chauffeuring in our trusty “Half-loaf” Mitsubishi and the services of his own tuk-tuk when required and Susil who is our chosen provider of three-wheeler services, are

back in commission, the former having the stitches that were required to his face and head removed and the latter having obtained, on a temporary basis at least, another tuk-tuk with which to make ends meet. As readers might recall, they were among 50+ victims of a runaway container truck on the A10 Highway.



A small example of the mango blossoms on our trees!

As I type this, I hear one of my anchors to HPH, the Hill Mynah or Grackle with the unique, golden wattles on the top of its head. Although I had a variety of “pet” wild creatures in a Sri Lankan childhood, I never had one of these unique birds in captivity despite the fact that it was reputed to be, by far, the finest mimic of human voice, far surpassing parrots, cockatoos etc. The reason for its absence from among my pets? Unlike the Red-vented Bulbuls (great imitative whistlers!) and Common Mynahs who



A morning’s trip from HPH - a medicine bath in the Arankelle Forest Monastery and Hospital



Birch-like bark of "Karaw" tree



**A termite hill, in our Vanilla field,
with openings created by
Pangolins in search of larvae.**

We are in the process of harvesting a nutmeg crop which promises to be one of the largest on record, spread over several months, and Senevi, Selvarajah, Podimenika and Biso are picking the fruit as they mature and proceeding to process them, using our new firewood-fuelled dryer in the process.

We celebrated a major milestone at HPH with one of the prime residents crossing over the four-score marker. A picture at the top of this newsletter taken on February 18th will provide proof! A note with regard to the birthday pic: the cumulative age of those in attendance was in excess of the proverbial millennium!

Another major spring water conservation project is nearing completion and we expect to be able to provide you with photographic proof of what we've achieved in our next Newsletter

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**With all good wishes.
Arlene & Emil**