



**Improving the view at Meditation Flat!**  
**HALGOLLA PLANTATION HOME**  
 - ***THE* UNIQUE SRI LANKAN EXPERIENCE** -  
 JULY 2018

A very unusual event at HPH last month was the evergreen Dr. Harold Gunatilleke, a surgeon of Sri Lankan origin with more than one speciality and domiciled in Australia for nearly a half century, choosing to shoot a brief video on HPH and its attractions. The additional good news is that Harold and his delightful wife, Ira, will return to do a more ambitious piece on HPH. And who are we to grumble at such generosity!

In case you are interested, the link is <https://youtu.be/ywcO432O86w>

The so-welcome wet weather has given our enthusiastic band the opportunity of putting in more *Gliricidia maculata* stakes on which to grow our vanilla vines, increasing the planting density significantly in our small field of this most valuable of spice crops. This is a task that is a bit more complicated than one might expect, beginning with clearing a patch of ground to securing the cut length of vanilla vine to the post on which it will grow. One of the challenges is preventing the wild pigs from digging everything up, the moment there is a shower of rain! Speaking of the weather, the recent succession of terrible droughts followed

by extended rains, seem to have heralded a bumper crop of avocados, large enough for us to look for wholesale buyers and two of our Mangosteen trees, bearing that most delectable of tropical fruits, have produced a quite fair crop this year in excess of our household's requirements.



The durian trees, the fruit of which the Macaques sometimes reach first as shown here, and which are

given out on a seasonal lease, seem to be bearing more than usual judging by the steady stream of tuk-tuk- and motorbike-riding consumers looking to indulge in the ritual of consuming fruit under the trees from which they've fallen, fallen fruit being considered infinitely superior to any picked off the branches of the huge trees! The largest mango season in recent memory is drawing to a close, with only the king of mid-country mango varieties – the Parrot Mango – still bearing fruit. Trying to preserve the mango pulp has proven to be a significant task with one of our fridges being delegated as a primary storage unit. A good problem to have!



**Kande Raja Maha Viharaya - across the valley from HPH**

Increasingly, we keep getting requests for what is of interest within easy reach of HPH. This is an interesting

development because, when we first opened our home to guests, we wrongly, as it transpired, depicted it as an ideal jumping off point for such as the Cultural Triangle and the better-known Sri Lankan tourist destinations. As the years went by, we discovered that we were operating a Homestay operation where guests had the opportunity of participating in a truly unique operation which encompassed the cultivation, harvesting and processing of all but one of Sri Lanka's spice crops, where we were a mid-country orchard insofar as fruits were concerned, growing better than 30 varieties on our land, most of

which we process into jams, jellies, drinks etc. "in house."

Something we discovered which we had hitherto taken for granted was the wealth of places of cultural, archaeological and historical interest within a day-trip's reach of our home. We've tried to provide the information relevant to that fact in our



**Bujaslena Raja Maha Viharaya - across the valley from HPH**

newsletters and on our website – [www.halgollaplantationhome.com](http://www.halgollaplantationhome.com) – and hope we've succeeded. Yes, it's been a voyage of discovery for us as well as our guests and our one regret is that we hadn't discovered our bounty earlier!

For July, as in past months, we'll continue our "Surprise Basket" of HPH "goodies," which appears to delight our guests as they take their leave of us!

Some Recognition of HPH

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

**With all good wishes  
Arlene & Emil**

**REMEMBER, WE CAN BE REACHED AT +94 (0) 77 347 0702 and +94 (0) 72 284 9770.**



**OUR WEBSITE IS [www.halgollaplantationhome.com](http://www.halgollaplantationhome.com) and our email is [emil@halgollaplantationhome.com](mailto:emil@halgollaplantationhome.com)**