



AAUP Newsletter

News update of the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya

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March 2013/2014

Message from the President of the AAUP - Prof. Savitri Kumar



I am happy to write this message for the AAUP Newsletter 2014. The past few years have seen a significant upsurge in the involvement of Peradeniya alumni in activities to assist the University of Peradeniya. Several generations of Peradeniya alumni, who are enjoying a high standard of living and

rewarding careers, ascribe their success in life to the high quality state-sponsored education they received as undergraduates at the University of Peradeniya (UOP). The desire to "give back" to their alma mater, has taken the form of financial assistance to the current generation of undergraduates as Studentships and Scholarships, and other projects to help the University community. The AAUP Colombo Chapter, AAUP New South Wales Chapter, AAUP Victoria Chapter, AAUP Ottawa Chapter and alumni of the 1975 Science batch, donated many Studentships and Scholarships, while the AAUP Western Australia Chapter donated much needed equipment to the Special Needs Resource Center at the Faculty of Arts, the University Health Centre and the Mahalluppalama campus of the Faculty of Agriculture. All these projects have coordinated by the parent body of the AAUP.

The message is clear – alumni of UOP wish to help the UOP maintain its reputation as a centre of high quality education, accessible and affordable to a cross section of Sri Lankan society. The interaction with AAUP Chapters has been a rewarding experience for the parent body of the AAUP. I think that the time is opportune for the AAUP to request the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Atula Senaratne and his staff to identify some more ambitious projects at the UOP that can be handled independently by the AAUP.

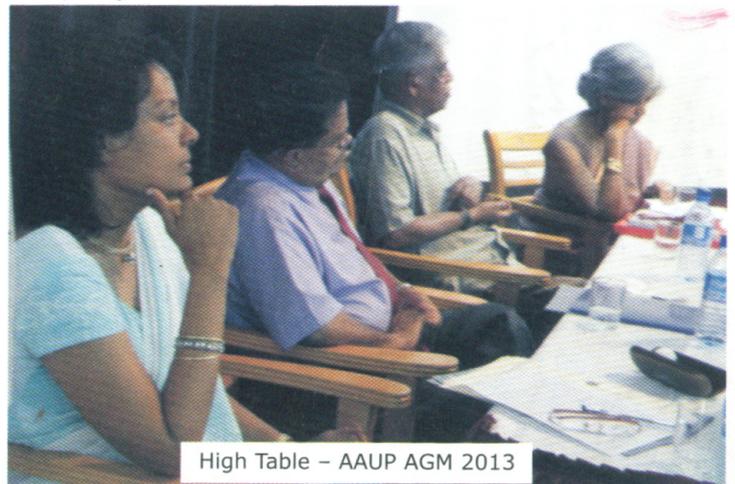
Alumni who donated funds to the Art Gallery and Museum Project sometime ago, would like to know that the funds collected by the AAUP were transferred to the University of Peradeniya several years ago. This project is now handled by the University of Peradeniya and the funds are no longer with the AAUP. The AAUP hopes that this project will be completed as early as possible so that the invaluable Art Collection can be viewed and admired by the University community and the general public.

EXCO of the AAUP- 2012/13

PRESIDENT: Prof. N. Savitri Kumar, **GENERAL SECRETARY:** Dr. Chantha Jayawardena, **TREASURER:** Mrs. Asoka Dissanayaka, **VICE PRESIDENTS:** Prof. S.A. Kulaooriya, Prof. Chandani Perera, Mr. Ravi Mulleriyawa, Dr. Jayalath Edirisinghe, Dr. Jagath Gunathilaka, **EDITOR:** Mrs. Lalitha Gunwardena, **ASSISTANT EDITOR:** Dr. Pradeepa Bandaranayaka, **ASST. SECRETARIES:** Dr. Renuka Rathnayake, Mrs. Darshini Hulugalla, **ASST. TREASURER:** Prof. Swarna Wimalasiri

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FROM REGIONAL CHAPTERS : Mr. C. Sooriyarachchi (Colombo Chapter), Mrs. Fareeza Ghazzali, Mrs. Nalini De Silva, Dr. D.M.D.V. Jayampathy, Dr. C.W. Jayasekara, Mr. T.L. Chandrasiri (Ruhuna Chapter), Mr. Sahabnadu, Mr. Kamal Nissanka (Wayamba Chapter)



High Table – AAUP AGM 2013



AAUP AGM 2013

Address by the Chief Guest AGM 2013 Dr. Uswaata Arachchi



The Chief Guest, the eminent Alumnus, Dr. G. Usvatte Arachchi, addressed the assembly on -**"In Celebration of Universities"**- a theme that he felt was appropriate for the occasion as well as the audience. Dr. G. Usvatte Arachchi said that the University system dates back about eight hundred years and is a legacy inherited from medieval Europe. Although "Universities" are known to have existed in other places - Nalanda and Thakshila in India - there is no recorded evidence that modern Universities were modeled on these patterns

He said that the early Universities, referred to by the customary name "*Stadium Generale*" were established by a mandate of a ruler: the Pope, the Emperor, or the King.

Some of these institutions were commenced by students and were referred to as Students' Universities; others commenced by teachers were called Masters' Universities. The *Stadium Generale* was an autonomous institution administered by its own committees with no financial support from the authorities. In the early Universities, Latin was the language of learning and Theology, Arts, Medicine and Law (both canon and civil) figured on the curriculum. The "lucrative arts" were Law and Medicine and have remained so, unchanged to date.

The University system spread gradually throughout Europe and with colonization, to South America and the rest of the world as well. Thus, according to Dr. Usvatte, the structure, the nomenclature, the ceremonies, even the ceremonial gowns worn by academics, are basically European in origin and have remained unchanged. The character of Universities, however, has changed enormously since medieval times.

The early Universities, Dr. Usvatte said, have been great civilizing influences in teaching Literature, History, Philosophy and Political Science. However, what the Universities taught had little to do with industry and commerce. For instance, none of the great inventions that brought about the Industrial Revolution in England owe anything to Universities. Until the Nineteenth century, Universities in Europe stood aloof from industrial life. Similarly, the Universities in our own country have not contributed to Economic development. Industries do not make use of university teaching and research. The most telling example is the poor use of the Faculty of Agriculture in agricultural enterprises.

Dr. Usvatte Arachchi said, that a striking feature of our universities is that they have not produced political leaders for the governance of the country. He concluded his address with the poignant question, "Does this explain to some degree the neglect of university education and the parlous state into which this country has fallen?"

Activities of the AAUP 2012/13

The Year 2013/2014 has been an eventful one for the Alumni Association, University of Peradeniya. The AAUP successfully completed several activities intended to promote the wellbeing of the undergraduate students, the University and its Alumni. These activities would not have been possible without the passion and dedication of the members of the parent body as well as its Chapters. The parent body would like to take this opportunity to convey its gratitude to three Australian Chapters (the New South Wales Chapter, the Western Australia Chapter and the Victoria Chapter), the AAUP Ottawa Chapter in Canada, Alumni in the USA and in Sri Lanka whose generous contributions have helped to make these activities financially viable.

Student welfare Programme

Studentships and scholarships 2013

This year AAUP awarded 150 studentships to undergraduate students in all 8 Faculties as well as the Special Needs Resource Center at the University of Peradeniya. The award ceremony was held on 30th July at the Chemistry Upper Lecture Theater with the participation of many students, EXCO members, Mrs. Pat Jayathilaka, Mrs. Anjani Karunaratnae, Mrs.

Sriyani Perera (representing the 1975 batch) and Dr. Dayawansa representing the Victoria Chapter, Australia. The value of a studentship awarded was Rs.12000; the money was given in two installments. The studentships were as follows.

75 batch	55
Peradeniya University Alumni Australia, Victoria Chapter in Australia (PUAAViC)	45
Alumni Association of Peradeniya University - Ottawa chapter, Canada	14
Peradeniya University Alumni Association New South Wales Australia (PUAAN)	08
AAUP studentships	28





Fourteen Memorial Awards and Scholarships will be awarded at the AGM to be held on 23rd March 2014.

Prof. B.L.T. De Silva Memorial Scholarship
Scholarship for Excellence in Biology 2013
Ms. D. U. M. Gunasekera (S/10/048)

Prof. Ashly Halpe Scholarship 01 English Faculty of Arts
Scholarship for Excellence in English 2013
Ms. T. Hamead (A/10/AI/695)

New South Wales (PUAAN) Chapter of AAUP 02 Faculty of Arts
Scholarship for Excellence 2013
Ms. H.R.A.C. Thilanka (A/10/595)
Ms. W.A.K.I. Madhushani (A/10/304)

Mr. Y.W. Gunawardena Memorial Scholarship
Scholarship for Excellence in Geography 2013
Ms. S. Gawshika (A/10/145)

Prof. H.W. Dias Scholarship
Scholarship for Excellence in Chemistry 2013
Ms. R.K. Ahinsa (S/08/900)

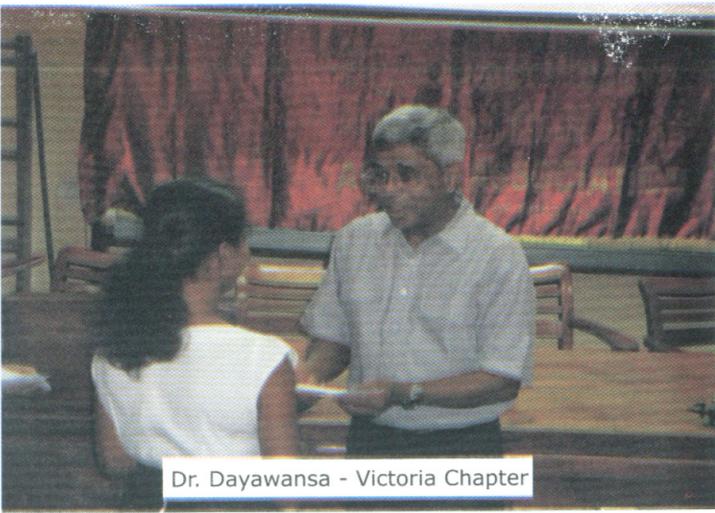
Peradeniya University Alumni Australia Victoria Chapter
Scholarship for Excellence in Electrical & Electronic Engineering 2013
Mr. Chamika Niranjana (E/08/220)

Peradeniya University Alumni Australia Victoria Chapter
Scholarship for Excellence in Statistics & Computer Science 2013
H.M.T.R. Herath (S/09/909)
G.S.R. De Silva (S/10/806)
M.G.G.C.R. Salgado (S/08/813)

Peradeniya University Alumni Australia Victoria Chapter
Scholarship for Excellence in Geology 2013
K.M.P.C. Karunaratna (S/09/426)

Peradeniya University Alumni Australia Victoria Chapter
Professor Shelton Kodikara Memorial
Scholarship in Political Science 2013
S.H.H. Ruwani (A/09/497)
A.L. Yasmin (A/09/655)





Dr. Dayawansa - Victoria Chapter



Studentship Award Ceremony



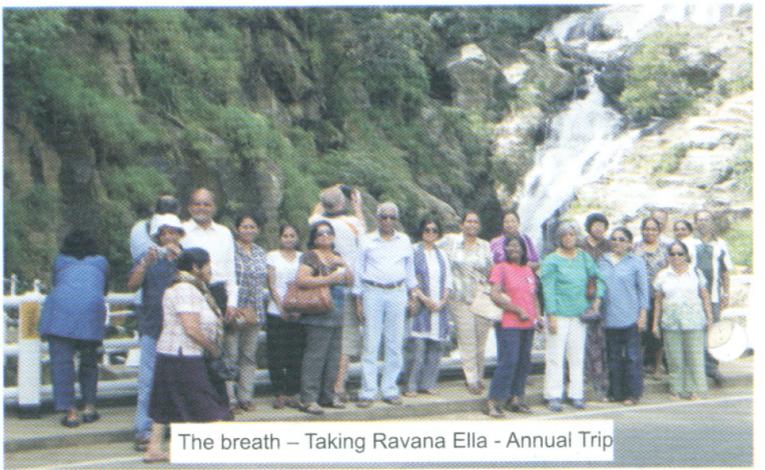
Annual Trip



Studentship Award Ceremony



Inauguration of Toast Master Programme



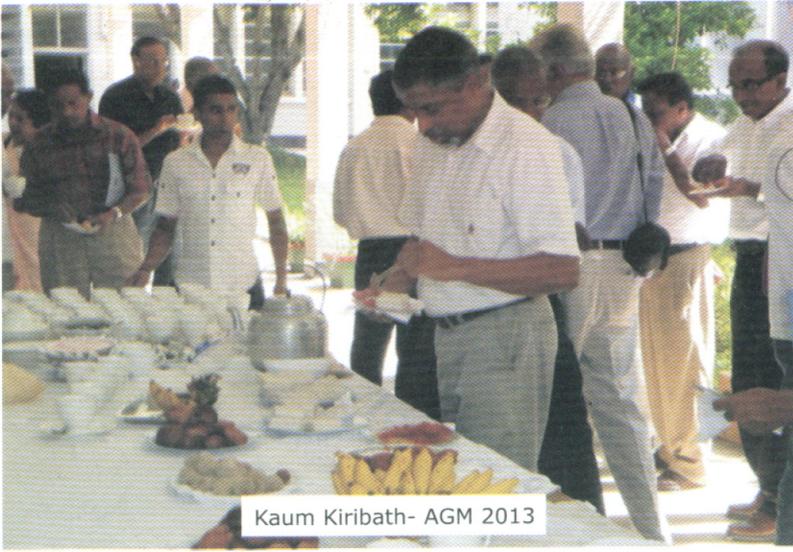
The breath - Taking Ravana Ella - Annual Trip



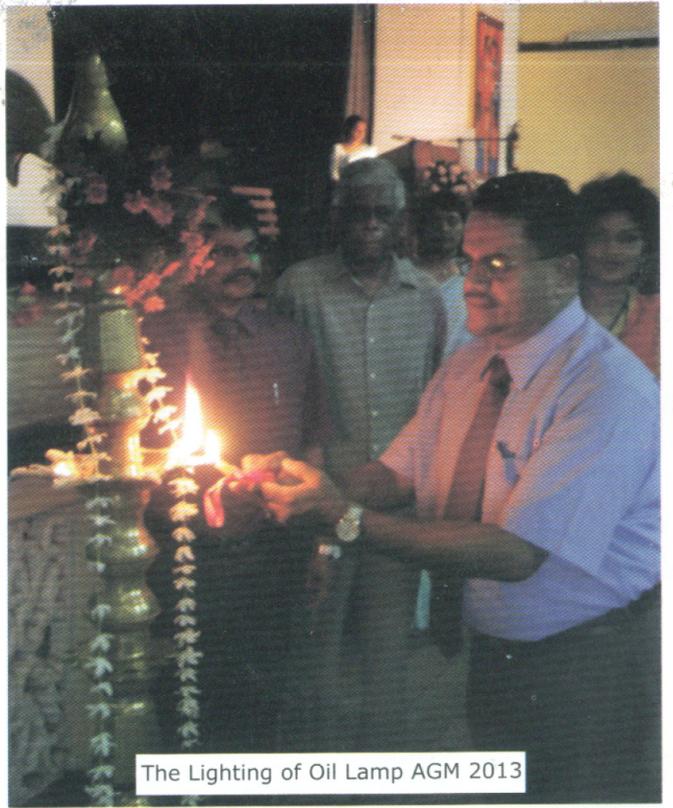
Inauguration of Toast Master Programme



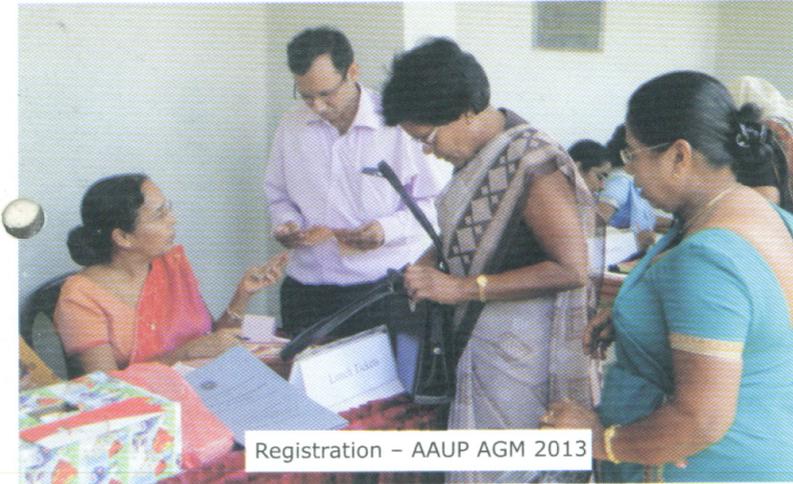
Intrepid Explorers - Annual Trip



Kaum Kiribath- AGM 2013



The Lighting of Oil Lamp AGM 2013



Registration - AAUP AGM 2013



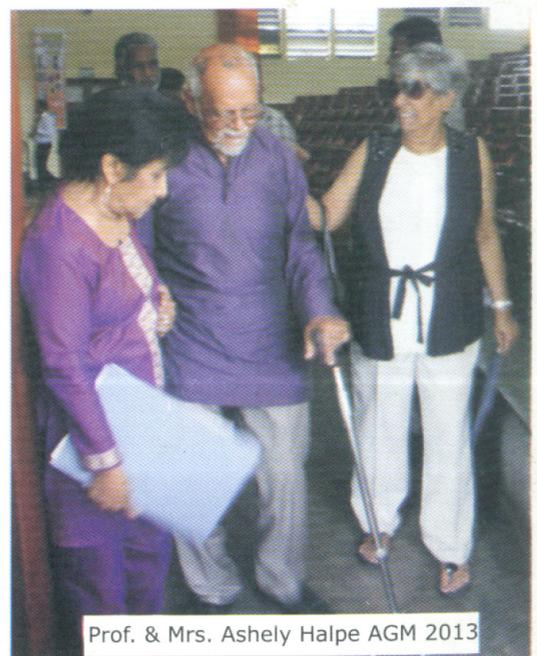
AAUP AGM 2013



AAUP AGM 2013



Annual Trip



Prof. & Mrs. Ashely Halpe AGM 2013

Textbooks for Management students of the Faculty of Arts

Complying with a students' request, AAUP donated a few textbooks to the newly opened reading room at the Department of Management.

A prosthetic limb for a student

AAUP provided financial assistance to a student to obtain a prosthetic limb. This activity was financed with generous donations from Mrs. Pat Jayathilaka, (K.N. Jayathilaka fund) the New South Wales Australia (PUAAN) chapter and Dr. Dimuthu Jayawickrama and other US Alumni.



Support for a Book launch

AAUP donated Rs. 5000 to Mr. Gayan Buddika Siriwardena, a student of the Faculty of Arts to launch his book "Hanthana Pāmula".

English Language Programme

Mrs. Lalitha Gunawardana conducted classes every Monday morning for the benefit of students who requested remedial classes in English. About 25 students participated in this programme.

University Development

Support to Health Center

AAUP Western Australia Chapter donated A\$ 2500 for the Health Center project to purchase urgently needed medical equipment including an ECG machine, two sphygmometers and two otoscopes as well as furniture for the waiting room. Dr. Asoka Wickramasinghe coordinated this project.



Public Relations and Alumni Welfare

Seminar on Positive Thinking

AAUP invited, eminent educationalist, Prof. Daya Rohana Athukorala to give a talk on "Positive thinking". At the talk held at 5.30 pm on 28th August at the Arts Theatre, Prof. Athukorala drew on his experience and expertise to explain that what we are today is, infact, the result of a life-time of thinking. Undergraduates



who are on the threshold of professional careers, he said, should focus on positive rather than negative thoughts so that may be better equipped to face the challenges of the future.

THE OATH Positive Thinking

This is the oath I daily take for prosperity of mine and my country, In order to draw out all Strengths within me and to bloom. I know I possess immense static energy and I will strive every moment of every day to draw out these potential strengths in me. I will strive to make my life successful every day. Day by day I walk towards victory and popularity. My responsibility is to develop my studies. I will use my strengths to fulfill this responsibility. My present is the fruit of my past deeds, and my future will be the result of my present thoughts and deeds. Knowing this, I have a steadfast focus on a higher goal. I promise myself to be steadfast on my goal and I will strive to make it a reality. I have no problems but challenges. I will face these challenges successfully and be victorious one day.

Yes! I Can

IELTS programme

Mrs. Lalitha Gunawardhana continued to offer voluntary assistance to students and staff, preparing for the IELTS examination. Classes were held, from 12 noon to 2 pm on Mondays and 4-6 pm on Wednesdays.

A nominal fee - Rs: 4000 from members and Rs: 5000 from non members - was charged to cover the running costs. In addition to providing a service to members, the program also benefited the association- new members and a profit of Rs 129,500 A collection of materials including text books and CD's, is available at the AAUP office to be borrowed by alumni members and academics in the University.



Innovations

This year, in addition to the usual programmes implemented to promote the well being of the University and its inmates, the AAUP innovated two new programmes:

- (I) Toastmaster (speech craft) programme.
- (ii) Visits to undergraduate Halls of Residence.

Toastmaster (speech craft) programme.

The Toastmaster programme which was, in effect, the brain child of vice President/AAUP and chairman Continuing Education, Dr. Jayalath Edirisinghe was implemented very successfully by Dr. Chandra Herath, the course coordinator, who worked in close collaboration with the Kandy Toastmaster club.

The sessions, spread over 10 weekends, provided the participants with an opportunity of achieving the skills and strategies essential for successful public speaking. The focus was on practical demonstration rather than theoretical know how. Participants played an active role in oral presentations- impromptu and prepared - and listened to and learnt from speeches delivered by novices as well as veterans. The feedback provided by evaluators proved invaluable in fine tuning the skills and techniques of individual participants.



The programme undoubtedly achieved its purpose i.e. inculcating in the participant the skills required for effective public speaking. More importantly, it appears to have fostered in the participants a sense of confidence in their ability to communicate fluently and enjoy doing so! The AAUP owes a debt of gratitude to the organizers.

Visits to undergraduate Halls of Residence.

The AAUP has, from its inception, implemented numerous programmes intended to promote the well being of the University and its inmates. Most of these programmes have generally been based on the perceptions of the members of the AAUP - what they felt were the needs of the average undergraduate. This year, however, the AAUP inaugurated a programme where members of the ex: co: visited the Halls of Residence, spoke to the inmates and tried to identify student needs and more importantly tried to establish a rapport with the student population.

Already, three Halls of Residence have been visited, a priority list of student needs / requirements drawn up and circulated to prospective donors. A major component of the needs list was computers. In accordance with the request made by the parent body, the Ottawa chapter of the AAUP has already donated two computers. These will be handed over to the wardens of Sangamitta and Hilda Obesekara Halls at the AGM.



Alumni Clubs and Reunions

AAUP annual trip 2013

Around 40 members of the AAUP embarked on their annual trip to Hambantota on the 30th November 2013. - two days of discovery, fun and camaraderie!

We got off to a good start along the Nuwara Eliya road with the customary stop for tea at the Labookelle estate sponsored by Prof. Indrajee Amarasinghe. Then, it was a long drive to Ella through the breathtaking Ella gap with a stop at the Ravana Ella Falls.

After lunch at Wellawaya, we visited an ancient religious site, Buduruwagala. As the name implies, Buduruwagala, is a large rock with the image of the Buddha and six other figures carved in high relief on the face of the rock.

We proceeded along the Wellawaya-Thissamaharama highway upto the Mattala airport turn off and were welcomed by the Ruhuna chapter president Mr. Chandrasiri Liyanage who took over the entire proceedings from then onwards. We were taken to the Lunugamvehera bund to see the great extent of the Tank and then to the Mattala airport. There were no scheduled flights but the place was full of sightseers who had come in their hundreds to get a firsthand view of the new project.

Our next stop was the very impressive MRICC (Mahinda Rajapakse International convention Centre) situated at a vantage point overlooking the entire proposed development area of Hambantota. From there we had a birds' eye view of the Harbour, the wind power towers and the newly constructed buildings in the area.

The day ended with us being taken to our residence for the night, Samren Guest House, where we enjoyed the proverbial southern hospitality for which the Ruhuna District.

Next morning we set off to the new Botanical Gardens planned and executed by no other than Dr. Siril Wijesundera, a son of the south and a Peradeniya Alumnus. He got us into the gardens even though it was supposed to be closed on Sundays. When completed the Hambantota Gardens will be almost three times the size of its Peradeniya counterpart!

We then moved on to the Magampura Mahinda Rajapakse Harbour for the conducted tour and seminar presentation arranged for us. The power-point presentation gave us an insight into the problems encountered and the procedure involved in the construction of the Hambantota Harbour.

After a look at the International Cricket Stadium at Sooriyawewa and a dip in the Mudunagala hot springs, we proceeded on our journey back to Peradeniya.

Thanks to the organizers, Dr. Anura Danthanarayana, Mr. Chandrasiri of the Ruhuna chapter and Prof. Indrajee Amarasinghe, the members of the AAUP were able to participate in yet another enjoyable and informative annual trip.

Professor Nedra Karunaratne



State Literary award 2013

It is with great pride that the AAUP records the achievements of dedicated scholar, prolific writer and eminent alumnus, Prof. Piyaseeli Wijemanna. Prof. Wijemanna received the state literary award (2013) for her collection of short stories "Miththaniyo" first published in 2012. In addition, Prof. Wijemanna has been appointed the Sri Lankan editor of the SAARC Anthology of contemporary short stories - a truly remarkable achievement!



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