

Extracts from the souvenir published for TRIBAL CRAFT 2004:

Article: Thusitha

I should have been at home that Saturday, munching away on my choc stick and watching G.I. Joe as I always spend my weekend, but no, this week I find myself in my school uniform (on a Saturday mind u...) at this grubby old room. I was highly taken up by the fact that all the 'big ayyias' I've seen in school clad in shorts sweeping away the dusty room I was asked to wait in. The obvious did occur as to why they would want to spend their weekend sweeping and cleaning when they could have the luxuries of their homes...oh yes and those yummy chocolates ummmm...

I think that question was answered today, eleven years since that first Saturday when I walked into that grubby old room... The Scout Room as I got used to calling it. One of my dear friends had come back on his holiday, and we all decided to meet up. So there we were, talking and making merry, and I couldn't help drift away into the wonderful days where we spent in this room, which was more like a home away from home.

There was one time where the seniors made it their primary objective to go on a camp by themselves, no letters of permission, no approval forms, and mostly no scoutmaster. So when we formally wound up at Horton Plains it was no mystery to anyone that we were going to have a hell of a time. To this day I hold this to be my personal favourite camp, coz so many things happened during these five days, out of which the best will come out in vivid colour in the paragraphs to follow.

Camping outdoors comes up with a few difficulties, the main of which being the fundamental requirement of clearing one's bowels in peace. In the midst of the river was this patch of earth where some bamboo plants had grown with time, where on the side the river would flow at its own pace. This island sort of area was soon to be named the 'bog island' for obvious reasons, as the name would suggest. Now how we got on with the proceeding is a bit intricate to be expressed in an article of this nature, but I wouldn't mind taking the liberty of telling you that the fish didn't mind the additional feeding session at all (let your minds wonder as it may...)

My friend *Puksy* (named after the big behind he was much content about) found it quite frustrating to visit the bog island, ended up getting stitches after falling on to a bamboo. *Malla* on the other hand took matters on to his own hands, why go all the way down stream when you can easily get on with your rituals upstream where no one's around to bother you. Quite a reasonable argument, just that all those who were having their baths downstream had to run for their dear lives when the ungainly sight was spotted by a fellow camper who shouts out "Incoming!!!"

In another instance one obviously too smart for his pants comes up with the suggestion that we should go hiking up world's end. Now did we stop there, no we had to go further up to the estates in search for a measly cup of tea, and after hours of trekking only to come across a shack, which has apparently been closed since the British left Ceylon. So there we were, tired, thirsty and hungry (Since the quartermaster has taken the liberty of cooking *kawupi* for breakfast...like hello! What about those who don't like eating tiny seeds in the morning...). So finally little by little we closed back to

world's end, where we asked this lad for a biscuit, and the good soul offered us the entire pack he was carrying, even though there was only two remaining. Our hunger pangs were such that we almost picked up the crumbs that fell on the ground and put them in our mouths.

That was one crazy camp, but seriously scouting has touched our lives in more ways than we can fathom. At College, Scouting is considered with much respect, and it is understood that a scout is one who should be considered with high regard. This is mainly due to the hard work exerted by scouts past and present. To my fellow scouts I'd say, maintain those high standards, live the life of a scout, gather yourself experiences. Don't be blinded by mere declarations of badges or other means of recognition such as College appointments. It is true being a scout will definitely give you an upper hand in these aspects, but do not go seeking for such credit. Honour will seek you if one deserves it. Life is too short to be always thinking of what next you are going to accomplish.

So go right ahead, climb a mountain, wake up in the freezing morning just to see the sun come up with your Nescafe in your hand, gosh I miss those days, being an undergrad my work load dictates how I spend my leisure time, but then the fun I had ages ago still urges me to have more... Hope you guys will share the same sentiment, and don't forget...Have a story or two to tell to your successors.

Thusitha Abeysekera
Troop Leader 1999

Call of Colombo 7

Ahhh, It's the call of the wild once again. Or is it really? My pal from the Wannu area would know to tell. But it really turned out to be a call from right here in Colombo 7 in the middle of August as usual of course calling the scout community of the Colombo district to come and make camp in this habitat called Vihara Maha Devi Park. In other words it was the 40th Colombo Camporee.

A prologue into the events would bring us in to the highly superficial topic of this inter crew rivalry of the seniors. Kitchen crew and Tower crew to be precise. This actually went on to the length of a carom tournament in which the ego-centric tower crew had the dumb luck to win a few games. Talking about the tower crew it wouldn't be nice of me not to mention about their fetish for coconuts which all the tower crews in the past have had. This year's tower crew in particular though had to struggle for about half an hour before finally succeeding in plucking one coconut. However their decency to share their treasure with the kitchen crew is appreciable.

I shall now get into the details of the camp itself, in which the first day and night is when we set up all the gadgets. However the most memorable incident was my dear old patrol leader's enticing story, which he was ranting on, while swinging a bamboo stick and then all of sudden, Bham! I felt the story hit me with a bang on my right eye. I'm still grateful for my scout leader for dealing with my antics at the hospital and persuading the annoyed doctor to treat my eye. Anyway all the pain was lost when our campsite was named a Model Campsite and the Troop winning pennants at all three inspections held. But most of all was the defeat of the Peterites in the game of rugby

they challenged us to play. The two past scouts having come from England played an important role in the match. The camp ended with a horde of people coming to visit our campsite in the last evening and to top it all a scrumptious seniors' special dinner which the whole Troop enjoyed.

It might have been a call from anywhere in the world but it was the experience we gained and the fun we had that made the answer to that call memorable.

Be Prepared!

Bimal Vithanage

Those Glory Days at 16th Colombo

I remember as it were yesterday, the day that I joined the Scout Troop of this great College way back on the 15th of March 1986.

It was certainly a privilege to have enrolled into the troop, while in my wildest dreams I never anticipated that those years would be such a ball as well as so full of experience and knowledge which would be useful in my future life.

My journey began at the old scout room, which is not in existence at present, under the care of Mr. Daniel Edirisinghe, Mr. A.L. Victor and my dear S.L., Mr. M.N.R. Fernando, who were my masters. Without a shadow of a doubt they were my guiding light, praising me and rewarding me in my success, advising me during my times of trouble, and most of all putting me in my place, when I went astray or deviated from the correct path. Dear sirs, I owe you so much for all what you did for me personally, and as well as my colleagues.

I have a faint memory of the day I was invested, and the day I entered the worldwide brotherhood of scouts, as in the world of my S.L. My investiture took place on the 30th of January 1987. Through I took some time to complete my tenderfoot, that day I registered in my mind that one day I would be a President's Scout, thereby bringing honour to the school as well as the troop.

We always looked forward to the camps, and they were just great. I was certainly privileged to have camped at 7 Camporees and having been to the Pedro Scout camp on two occasions.

The experience received when passing my proficiency badges at junior level and at senior level taught me that I had to be prepared and do things right to the expectations of the examiner, failing which I would end up as a failure and thereby bring disrespect to the school and to the troop. All these training sometimes bitter though they were, certainly were a stepping stone as to how we should perform and gear up to the world in the future.

Scouting taught me that I should treat my colleague as my own brother, respect elders, be kind / considerate, be kind to animals, and to be clean in thought word and deed. Of course the day I completed the requirements for my President's Award, and the day I was presented my badge by the G.S.L. Mr. Edirisinghe was very self satisfying and a proud day for me since I had accomplished my dream and my goal, and that I could

now serve my country, being fully geared to face the challenges and obstacles life would have to offer.

To you, the present members of the Troop, I say consider yourselves fortunate that you are scouts, build for the future, and may your journey though it may be a rough, uneven obstacle course, you would take it in your stride and have a rosy future.

Be Prepared / Esto Perpetua.

Rukshan S.V. Perera
President Scout - 1986/1993

The Thai Venture

Alas! We had arrived in Thailand, and we could hear voices... voices calling out the words "Sawasdee". What in the world were they saying? Well, it is the Thai translation for "greetings". The six lads from the school by the sea Jayanga, Ravindu, Deepada, Eranda, Anushka and I were looking forward for this for a very long time. The first few days at camp were quiet and uneventful. All we had to do was to settle down. As the initial boring days passed by, things were becoming more fun. More joyful than we expected it to be when we saw the dusty and humid campsite.

As we found greener pastures, life at the 20th World Scout Jamboree was beginning to get exciting. The cocktail party (which we call it) was a giant leap taken towards the betterment of our stay in Thailand. One lad of the 16th of cities tried to take the locals for a byte and eventually got some taste of his own medicine. This lad with great pride asked, "*Machang oya mona ratenda?*" and was shocked when the Thai scout replied with the obvious answer "Thailand!".

"Jayanga Putha" as he was fondly known was having a marvellous time not only as P.L. of his patrol, but also with the chicks and of course. The indefatigable "mosquito" (If you know what I mean). Rav on the other hand was beginning to get weary already and was constantly falling asleep during troop meetings only to be woken up by stones which were targeted at him. Our man Kassa (Anushka) was having a torrid time being all alone in another campsite. To add to his woes, a jailer was commanding his troop! Eranda was having the time of his life with fair and short companions of his calibre and was never seen at the campsite during daytime. Deepada was an unfortunate individual to be suffering from a broken toenail. This however didn't down his spirits coz he had the air-conditioned supermarket in which he could get his daily doses of cool drinks!

The New Year was celebrated with much glamour and excitement, from breathtaking performances to spectacular fireworks displays. Then it was time for activities. We took part in off-site activities such as the community service projects, hikes, visits to the zoo and turtle farm etc. The on-site activities were obstacle courses, biking, campfires, workshops and the global development village that offers activities related to global issues, Crossroads of Cultures which was a place that promoted cultural understanding and the City of Science in which people spent time in the world of technology and science. These activities were of immense importance to us.

The days went by and we were slowly but surely adapting to the conditions. We took an average four baths daily to keep us comfortable. On one such visit to the showers, a

German while taking a shower was attacked with an English underwear, which almost resulted in a mini-world war! Another instance, the Lankans were challenged by the English to a game of cricket. We won it by quite a margin.

The food festival brought the whole Sri Lankan contingent into one campsite. We had *kokis*, milk toffee and a whole lot of other traditional delicacies. No wonder the appetite brought together people from every nook and corner of the globe. From the man eating "Piranha" to the coffee drinking "Abiling". They all shared their cultures and world which was the theme of the Jamboree. Even the "mahout" took time off his busy schedule to be present at the festival.

Up next was the on-stage performance. It was time for the world to see the Kandy Perehera. This perehera was of foremost priority to the Sri Lankan Contingent hierarchy. After 3-4 rehearsals back at home, we were ready to display our heritage. As we were lining up, we could hear that ever famous voice calling out for each group to take their places. It was our turn finally. So the six of us were performing to the beats of the traditional drums. It was a grand and crowning show, amidst a sea of spectators.

The visits to the hospital were memorable, simply coz of one thing... the nurses! (not what you think!) but because of their expressions. The Thais had one thing in common, they couldn't pronounce the letter "R". Before being treated we had to go through certain formalities in the hospital. One of them was to fill the admission form. We would slowly fill each column such as Name, Age, Sub-camp etc. As we start to enter the letters S-R-I into the nationality column, loud cries of the nurses would fill in the rest. They would say "Ah! Seeee-Lankaaaa!". We would hear a repetition of this chorus each time we went there.

It was the last few days of the Jamboree. So we made plans for shopping...ahem! The traditional shopping that is! Concentrating on how to carry out the mission was of least importance to us. For we were seasoned campaigners at this kind of endeavour and have mastered the art of espionage, just the way B.P. taught it! It was only a matter of time before we got our hands on the items in our list of souvenirs!

Finally the Jam came to an end and after a few days in Bangkok, we were back here in Colombo. Our venture into Thailand was a great success, for we reaped more than what we sowed. The risks that were taken did pay rich dividends. The Jamboree for me personally, was a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet people from various parts of the globe. The cultures symbolized the rich heritage of many countries. The experience and the international exposure gained through this venture are inexplicable. The risk was worth taking.

The Tribe Eternally Lives!!!

Jitendra Udugama

The Kingdom By The Sea

A long time ago a kingdom did exist on prosperous land,
Surrounded by waves, light breeze and sand,
The kingdom through time an empire did become,
And prevailed with dominance for decades to come.

The kingdom was ruled by the great court of the lords,
And the Knights of honour who helped them stand tall,
Together they were an unstoppable force,
And was named "The Council" as suggested by most.

A Chapter closed and the Kingdom revived...

After an eventful year the council declared: "we need a vacation",
"What Luck! The dark prince of the mountains summons us with anticipation!",
So to "Club Maskeliya" they went and spent quite a while,
As hiking (amongst other things) got them wasted in style...

Another year gone by, the kingdom had to be revived...
So the council was to appoint a new king,
Yet again the obvious choice was a short thing,
But unlike the bygone this one didn't sing (thank God for that!)

Short he might be but he is also fair,
This did help him to make a certain maiden stare,
These days he says he is learning to drive a car
Well we all know why it's to impress his little *k**a...

The Court Congested!!! (An introduction to the new lords of the court)

With a new king (and his able deputy) on top
The kingdom was lacking a new equipment stock
"I'll provide it!" said the ex-stryper of course!
We'll smuggle it out of the "Pubudu Motor Stores..."

Hide the paper or he will eat it all!
A hoofed, homed mammal our A.Q.M. we call
At Camporee on purpose he "bamboosed" an eye...
So he could sleep while the others worked all night

If you hear a peculiar hoarse noise when strolling by the woods...
Don't worry it's the treasurer not an elephant cut loose!
"Education is paramount!" so at tuition he lives
Where, to a certain sisterhood he gives, gives and gives...

The two lords who handled the "medals" have nothing in common,
One plays with an "oval ball" while the other travels on placid,
Polluted waters "Udda" tries his best to joke around in vain,
While **1** rows his boat with his lover of the same name.

The lords who feed the city are an unusual duo,
One with a million-dollar laugh and the other with an unbearable stench,
Then there is D.T. and H.C. in the dark side of the council,
The former, I would say is a very able cricketer...,
The latter, does not play, because he's afraid of getting any blacker!

The new lords from the kingdom's colonies came,
M.O., Sampath, and Milo were their names...
"Well done! Sampath" and M.O. you have fitted in well,
You too Milo (Though you'd fit better in with the dames!?!)

The lords who ascended the council of late,
Are six in number but zero in taste,
There is the aspiring farmer who "buys" his medals in the dozens,
And the "bent over" lord who follows the footsteps of his great cousins (now knights of
the kingdom),
Then there is the sleepy one who grows hair to make a good impression...

The next is a web-designer who's unfortunate accident(s) perplexes us all,
Also the three-quarters of a lord who uses his phone a lot, but never to call,
Wait! I missed someone... well who can you blame,
It's the "daily party animal" Shane!

The Lords' Journey Into The Wilderness and Back

A former lord who claimed to be a knight from the division of armour,
Re-joined the council and to Mirigama they did venture
"Next to Trinco" he said as he went away,
But was never heard of again, even to this day.

The Camporee arrived and the lords with their bigger structures,
Flourished on top and maintained their dominance,
Not only at work but at play also they did rule,
As a neighbouring Kingdom asked for it and got beaten at rugby too!

Enter the Sisterhood!

Last time around it was sculpting clay,
And since hungry the lords grew after all that play,
"We'll have another banquet!" the king did say,
Thus was held the 6th Cooks Day!

So the day dawned and the sister cities were there,
One a bit too early perhaps, as the lords were caught unawares,
A ball they had with the setting of the sun,
But the sounds blew up and made it all the more fun!

It is with great haste I have penned these thoughts,
If you are not included then fame is something to be sought,
The subtlety of my expression may not directly offend,
If it does, then "truth hurts!" Is the advice I would lend...

The local *Johnny English* just left for Staffordshire,
He's at his very best when the food's seen too much fire,

God save the Queen, he's a serial English killer,
And quite uncharacteristically a full 100% religious pillar.

Another key figure though not one of vigour,
Known for 'making a stone fly' Knight Randika,
Sat through many Examinations to finally pass,
Standing at Alert to appreciate the young doctor's task.

If Black was beautiful... the prettiest from the above said,
Made good in Ads what he missed out as a med,
He'll spin and twirl as long as you're a little girl,
And show-off 'Winnie the Pooh' his only prized pearl.

CEO of the only enterprise to profit off all camps,
He deals in used clothes, shoes, watches and troop lamps,
Rocks his gray 4 wheeler challenging the Hum D's thrust.
We suspect his fair maiden is still to see him eat such dust!

A maestro's mouth at work, would paint smiles on many faces,
Fingers played lovingly would guarantee pleasure that truly amazes,
The sad reality is to see some; strum, drum and vocally bore the masses,
Sachi & Bindu... may we suggest a few more classes!
Inevitably we are forced to disclose the queerly connected knights so to say
Two Knights who claim the *best service* are living together in *the future today!*
Two others who wear *slits* are suspected of making regular audible fashion statements!
One mourns for a dead ironmonger & another dreams of becoming the next ironman!
And the last knight leaps over giant walls at the end of the day...

New lords may come and old ones may go,
The knights too would change with age as they show,
But a fact remains... carved in stone... for all to see,
Come what may the prosperous kingdom forever will be!

The wisest with the words have spoken!

Sudesh, Thusitha, Deepada