



# AAUP NEWSLETTER

## CONGRATULATIONS!

We are happy to record that the Wayamba Chapter, the third provincial chapter of the AAUP, was inaugurated at the 'Ranthaliya' Rest House at Kurunegala on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1999.

The inaugural meeting was well attended. Twenty-five Alumni from Kurunegala were joined by 12 members of the executive committee of the parent body.

The following ad-hoc committee was elected:

Pro-tem Chairman

- Mr. Y.B. Dissanayake

Secretary - Dr. H.M.A. Chandrasoma

Treasurer - Mr. S. Balasingham

Convenor - Mr. S. Dematapitiya

Members - Mr. W.D.H. Chandraratna

- Dr. M.S. Rajamanthrie

- Mr. Udeni Sarathchandra

- Mr. Piyathilake

- Mr. Seneviratne

The meeting was followed by dinner.

***Well Done Wayamba!***

## THANK YOU!

We thank Mrs. Patricia Jayatilleke and the family of the late Prof. K.N. Jayatilleke for their generosity in establishing the 'Prof. K.N. Jayatilleke Memorial Fund.' The initial donation of Rs. 100,000 made by Mrs. Patricia Jayatilleke, on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 1998 was deposited in a fixed deposit at the National Savings Bank according to the wishes of the donors.

The AAUP has long felt the need for funds to provide financial aid for "non-academic" purposes to needy students. We are happy that the donors have requested the AAUP to utilise the fund for providing needy students with financial aid for medical and material assistance.

***Thank You Pat!***

## AAUP Activities - Highlights

### Student Welfare:

Studentships

Forty-two undergraduates were awarded studentships for the year 1998; the Colombo chapter sponsored 22 studentships.

Spectacles

A hundred pairs of spectacles were distributed to needy students with the generous assistance of the Colombo Chapter.

Career Guidance

A workshop on Career Guidance will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1999. Five hundred undergraduates from the Faculties of Arts and Science are expected to participate.

Orientation

Programme for 'O/L' and 'A/L' students

The sub-committee on Public Relations and Alumni Welfare has planned an orientation programme for 'O/L' and 'A/L' students in the Kandy district. The programme will be conducted in consultation with the Provincial Director of Education - Central Province.

### Fund-raising Activities:

'The Foreign Expert,' directed by Prof. Ashley Halpe, was staged on 06<sup>th</sup> June, 1998.

A Food Stall was organised at the Medical Exhibition at the Faculty of Medicine. (16-23 August 1998)

A Raffle Draw has been planned for April, 1999.

### Fellowship and Camaraderie:

Thirty members of the AAUP participated in a trip to Sigiriya on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 1999.

## Alice's ADVENTURES IN JOBLAND

Recorded, with apologies to Lewis Carroll, for the AAUP

### EPISODE 1: ADVICE FROM A CATERPILLAR



was tired, very tired. "This is hopeless," thought Alice, "walking up and down endless corridors where the doors are all locked."

Now Alice, in spite of the English Language Teaching Programme at **that place**, always **thought** in Sinhala, and **said** very little, very carefully, in English. Alice's thoughts were often more interesting than her speech. "How am I to get in?" said Alice, looking around her desperately.

"Ask me," said a Caterpillar, a large blue Caterpillar, seated on a table behind a small name board that said 'Career Guidance' in tiny red letters.

The Caterpillar and Alice looked at each other for some time in silence. "Ask me," repeated the Caterpillar, "I'm new, but I'm here, now."

"But not for long," thought Alice who was well aware of the curious habits of birds and bees, not to mention Caterpillars.

"Who are you?" asked the Caterpillar, this time in a more emphatic manner. "Now, that's better, much better," thought Alice, "The creature is certainly strange, but the English teacher has taught me to converse with strangers."

"I'm Alice, Gunaratne Bandaralage Alice, from Gangaudapalata," said Alice with confidence. The Caterpillar said nothing.

"I've got a B.A., second upper, English medium," added Alice. The Caterpillar still said nothing; merely shook his head, as if in disapproval. "Odd," thought Alice, "It's his turn to speak, at least, that's what the English madam told us. Why doesn't he speak?"

"I think you should tell me who you are," said Alice addressing the stranger politely. "Why?" said the Caterpillar and turned the pages of a ring-bound manuscript with the label 'Procedure - Rules and Regulations.'

"So, you are looking for a job," said the Caterpillar, eventually, "You should have come to me earlier, you know." Alice, who **didn't** know and couldn't care less, decided to remain silent.

"Are you ready?" screamed the Caterpillar, suddenly.

"I- I'm not sure," said Alice, "at least, I thought I was sure when I left **that place** but I'm no longer certain.... Sir"

"What do you mean by that? Explain yourself!" said the Caterpillar sternly.

"I'm afraid I can't explain," said Alice "because I'm not sure myself, you see."

"I don't see!" snapped the Caterpillar and went back to his manuscript.

"I'm sorry.... sir," pleaded Alice, almost in tears, "can **you** explain it? It's all very confusing."



"No it isn't," said the Caterpillar "you **are** ready or you **are not**. It's as simple as that. Didn't they teach you anything at **that place**?"

"Oh yes they **did**! lots of things," replied Alice, happy to provide the correct answer to something.

"Things? What things?" asked the Caterpillar.

"Things... er... latitude and longitude... demand and supply and, history -- both ancient and modern"

The Caterpillar studied his manuscript again and remarked, almost to himself... "Not very **useful**... the education in **that place**. They should have taught you something appropriate. **Can you sell yourself?**"

"Whaaat?!" screamed the outraged Alice.

"My.. My.. you do have a nasty mind," said the amused Caterpillar. "I was merely talking about advertising. That's what they do you know.... Selling **on paper**. All good ads start by expressing the product's best feature. What is yours?"

Alice said nothing, she had nothing to say. Nothing she had learnt at **that place** seemed appropriate.

"What **can** you do?" asked the Caterpillar, polishing his glasses on his sleeve. "Can you analyse an advertisement? Write a covering letter and a résumé? Can

you attend an interview and write a follow-up letter? Can you communicate effectively? Do you have energy? drive? ambition? dynamism? honesty? integrity? patience? persuasive ability? innovativeness? entrepreneurial drive? ....."

The list appeared endless. Alice was shattered. She had always thought, she had always been told, that four years at **that place**, plus a good 'class' was sufficient. Was she wrong? Were **they** wrong? Would she have to spend more time learning new things?

"Experience" continued the Caterpillar "what experience do you have?"

"Experience?" asked the outraged Alice, "how can I have experience if no one is ready to give me a chance?"

"Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him – Aldous Huxley" said the Caterpillar, helpfully.

Alice waited for more words of wisdom from the Caterpillar. The Caterpillar, however, removed his spectacles, yawned once, slithered off the table, and crawled away into the grass merely remarking as it went, "**Ask not what the Company can do for you. Ask what you can do for the Company.**"

### Editor's Note

"A joke, is a serious thing." This "joke" is presented with the intention of initiating a serious dialogue on a topic that should be discussed at length by persons concerned about the future of the University.

Please write your comments to:

The Editor - AAUP Newsletter,  
C/O The General Secretary AAUP,  
The Senate Building,  
University of Peradeniya,  
Peradeniya 20400.

## EXPECTATIONS

The AAUP has been working hard to provide graduates with basic skills necessary to seek employment in the open market. This work had been hampered by the absence of an office and a permanent officer to co-ordinate such programmes and the available job opportunities. At a time when unemployed graduates have taken to the streets seeking redress, it is important for the University of Peradeniya to take timely action. Most of the Arts Graduates have not been able to find employment, due to their poor performance in English and Communication as well as the poor combination of degree subjects. At this juncture, a reorganisation of degree subjects and the introduction of new course modules, as has been recommended, time and again, in the University Senate, needs to be seriously considered and implemented. This would not only improve the image of our graduates, but also satisfy some of the expectations of the employers.

In the next millennium, the country needs to strive for quality and excellence in whatever it does, in readiness for the competitive market that is emerging everywhere in the world. We can no longer sit back and be complacent about the present training and education that is available for jobs. Before long, barbers, bakers, taxi drivers, butchers, etc. may be required to have a diploma with basic training in the respective job before recruitment! There is no doubt that the country is going through a 'bad patch' in the economy. There is, however, a real need to produce 'good quality graduates.' Therefore it is important that the University of Peradeniya readily accept the voluntary assistance of the AAUP and give whatever assistance is necessary to make the training programme offered, a success. Let us hope that the University Council and the Vice Chancellor would rise to the occasion and help the AAUP to carryout its expectations by establishing an office and a permanent position.

- OLD HAT

## **The Alumni Association of The University of Peradeniya (AAUP)**

If you are a graduate of The University of Ceylon / The University of Peradeniya,  
*You belong !*

Pay Rs. 500/= and become a life member of the AAUP

- Help the AAUP to work for you and the University.
- Be a member of a Development Committee and contribute to the growth of the University.
- Sponsor a student-ship in your name or in the name of a loved-one and help a student in need of help.
- Participate in AAUP activities; share the fun and camaraderie of the frequent "get-togethers."
- Meet old friends, make new friends and work together for your alma-mater.

For further details, write to:

The General Secretary (AAUP),  
Senate Building,  
University of Peradeniya,  
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