

Quarterly Tours



Jayatissa Herath

NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA

30 & 31 August 2014

Route and Places

First day

Commencing from
PGIAR

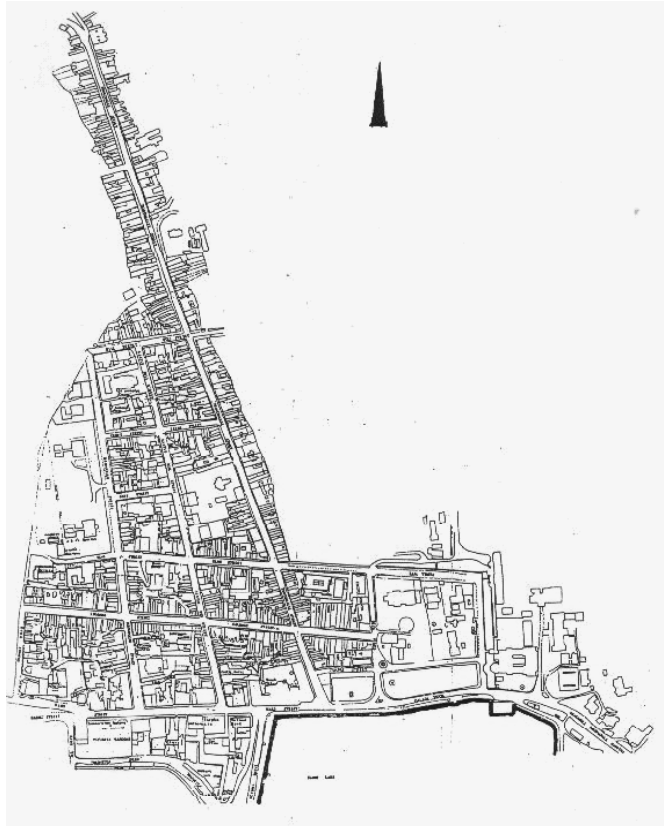
Kandy

night at Kandy
(Devon Hotel)

Second Day

Hanguranketha

and back to
Colombo - PGIAR



The Tour

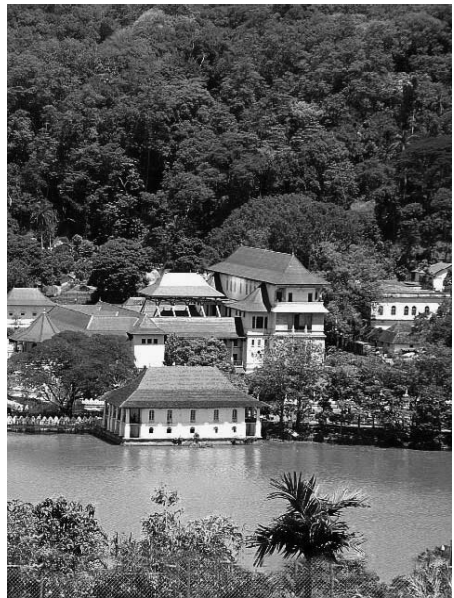
The third quarterly tour of year 2014 is aimed to give an over view of Heritage of Kandyan period. It is intended to visit the city of Kandy and selected temples in the vicinity and also Hanguranketha by spending the night in Kandy. This is the first two day tour organized by the NTSL.

Kandy

Kandy is the last capital of Sri Lanka and cradled the last of illustrious and long lineage of kingship in the Island until the British captured it in 1815. Art, Architecture, traditions, skills, customs, manners etc., continued without a radical change until that turning point. The City is blessed with housing the Sacred Tooth Relic and this singularly has secured the rituals, traditions and even traditional arts and crafts for a long time.

The city of Kandy, originally known as '*Senkadagalapura*' was established by King Senasammatha Vikramabahu (1357-1374) who ruled from Gampola and later it became the capital of Kandyan Kingdom in A.D. 1592 during King Wimaladharmasuriya I and so remained up to A.D. 1815.

The city is located in a narrow triangular plateau surrounded by circle of high mountains and the Great River Mahaveli encircles this cultural treasure.



It is King Wimaladharmasuriya who developed the city to a greater extent. The place was converted to a celestial city by adding the Palace complex, lake (*Kirimuhuda*) and cloud walls (*Walakulu bemma*) with Udawattakele forest as a backdrop. The natural features like Udawattakele, the paddy fields in front of the temple of the tooth and surrounding mountains were enough to justify the selection of the site for a palace of the king.



Kandyan architecture is unique and simple in plan form but highly decorative in most aspects like carvings, moldings, detailing and also wall paintings.



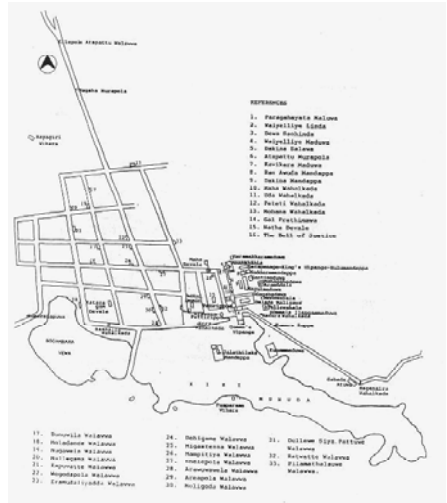
The temple of the tooth Relic (Sri Daladamaligawa), Old Palace Complex consisting of various buildings erected for different utility purposes, temples dedicated for deities, are the most popular tourist and pilgrim sites within the city. It has various other attractions like trekking at Udawattakele, boat rides and recently added modern shopping complexes but the Temple of the Tooth is still the unprecedented choice of the visitors both local and foreign.

Demure buildings and narrow network of road layout which ooze a dreamy medieval atmosphere also attract the tourists. It is this grid layout where the chieftains of the king were resided having their dwellings in different quarters. Some of those places are recognizable and remains of few buildings are



still there with adaptations or modifications. Being the second capital of the island Kandy also plays a vital role in the economic and administrative spheres.

The arrival British resulted in gradual development of the grid city area to a commercial business district of the city. Some of those early buildings rich with the features depicting the early and transformation periods are still exist despite haphazard conversions in later periods.

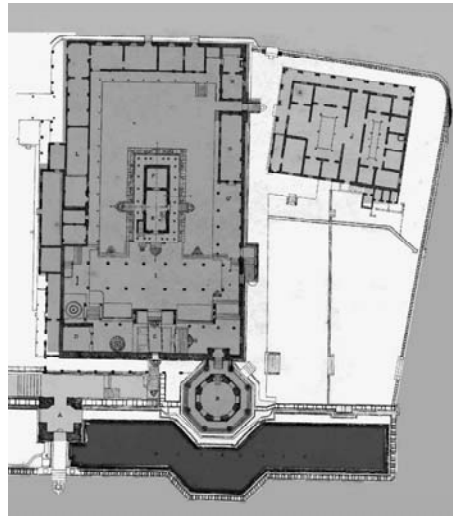


Dalada Maligawa

(Temple of the Tooth Relic)

The present two storied temple which houses the Tooth Relic of Lord Buddha is constructed by King Wimaladharmasuriya. The evidence to prove the story saying that he has used the timber from the building what was there before that constructed by King Kirthi Sri Rajasinghe, was evidenced by accidental opening of the plaster layers due to the bomb blast which took place in front of the temple in 1996.

The octagon was added later during the reign of the last King and the two storied structures around the temple proper (*Wedasitina Maligawa*) are additions made during 1930's replacing the single storied monks quarters and ancillary buildings around the temple proper.



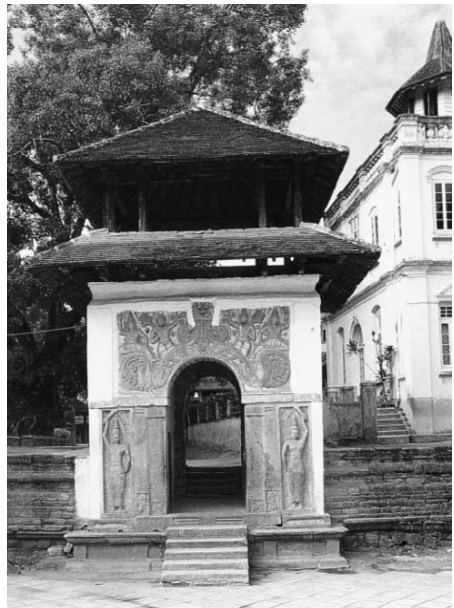
Four Devalas

It is believed that Kandy is protected by four Gods or deities namely, Natha, Vishnu, Katharagama and Paththini. There are four main temples dedicated to these deities in the city itself. The cult of veneration of deities may have arrived together with customs and practices of Hindu rituals as a result of bringing South Indian consorts for Kandyan kings during early days.

Presently the four Devalas play very important and significant roles in the main annual event of Kandy popularly known as *Dalada Perahera* which held in Esala [July / August] month of each year which was just concluded last month.

Natha Devale

Natha Devale is said to be the oldest in the palace complex area and located in front of the temple of the Tooth Relic. It is surrounded by a dressed stone molded wall which is unique to Devala complexes. It consists of a temple with all features that require for a Buddhist Temple together with buildings dedicated for deities. The main building, which is known as "*Gedige*" is erected using cut dressed stones in 14th century, following Dravidian architectural character houses the statue of God Natha. God Natha is believed to be a deity who guards Buddhism and a "*Bodhisatva*".



Ancient painting in line-form on the exterior wall that depicts a sailing ship reflects what the people have seen during those days and is worth seeing due to its uniqueness.

Religious and ritualistic activities are being carried out daily to pay homage to the God.

The palanquin and the ornaments of the god which are being taken in *Randoli perahera* are also deposited in the Devale. Excavations carried out in latter part of 1980's exposed remnants of two older structures belonging to earliest periods. One is circular in shape and the other is believed to be a "bo-tree" shrine.

Vishnu Devale

The Vishnu devale is dedicated to God Vishnu who is among the four deities protecting the city of Kandy. The building complex is located in a terraced site and can be identified as the one having most attractive setting of the four.

Kataragama Devale

This is the temple dedicated to God Kataragama, who is venerated by Hindus as well as Buddhists. He is a popular and powerful god and even devotees from South India come to participate in the annual festival usually held in Kataragama in August every year.



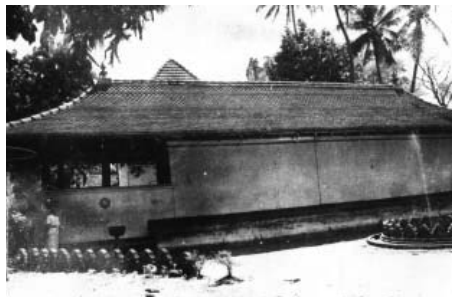
Location of devale is somewhat different to that of others and it is closely knitted into the grid city away from the religious precinct. On the other hand it is more easily accessible to the devotees. Structures within the site has typical layout plan common to Hindu shrines while the walls and columns are painted in bright colours. The carvings and other decorations carry heightened Dravidian style than other three devales. The daily rituals and customs are more or less closer to Hindu religious practices.

Kataragama devale is also one of the main stake holders of the great annual pageant.

Paththini Devale

This a temple dedicated to Goddess Paththini. There is no Buddhist shrine in this complex. The contribution and performances by ladies in the Kandy annual procession is confined only to the procession conducted by Paththini devale.

The site is heavily affected by the constructions during the British period and Old Laksala building, built by the British has taken up a part of it. The ancient boundary wall of the complex is running through the building.

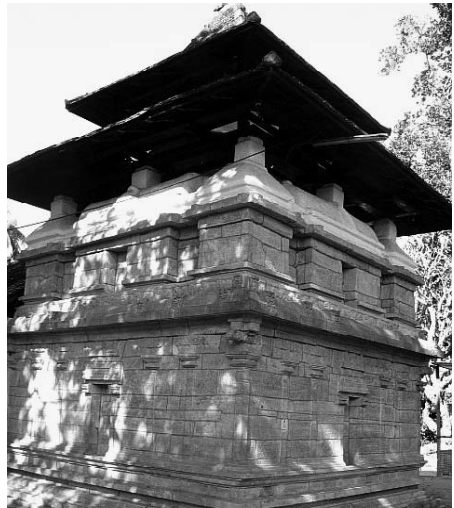


Adahana Maluwa Vihara

Adahana Maluwa Temple which belongs to Asgiriya Chapter is a unique Buddhist Image house built in dressed stones following similar to the characteristics of a Hindu devale. It is more like a Hindu temple than a Buddhist shrine from outer appearance but the interior is enriched with Kandyan period detailing and decorations. The Gedige Vihara was constructed by King Vikramabahu III in memory of his mother and dates back to A. D. 1312

This particular location is said to be the ground of cremation of the early monarchs. The Venerable Upali Thero who brought higher ordination to Sri Lanka was also cremated in this particular location.

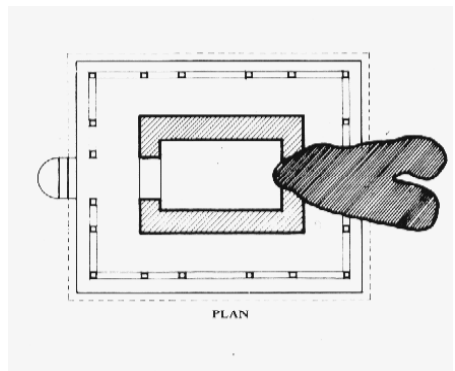
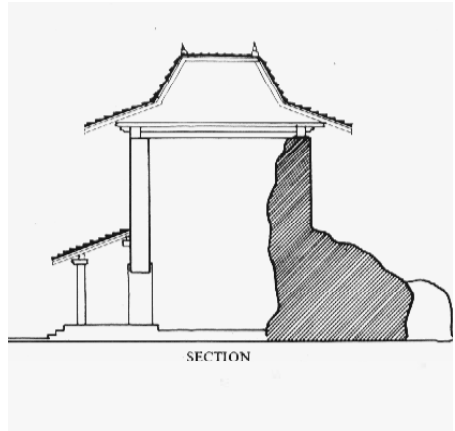
This temple too links with the great pageant as the last day pageant that heading to Gatambe for water cutting ceremony commences from this temple. After the conclusion of Randoli perahera the Sacred Relic Casket is temporarily deposited in this temple following a custom since King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe. The King has begun this custom as a respect to his mother.



Gangarama Temple

The temple is said to be named due to its location near the Great River Mahaweli. The construction of the temple dates back to King Kirthi Sri Rajasinghe (1747 – 1781) to provide protection to the Buddha statue which was there at the time. The Buddha statue was a rock cut standing statue dates to 1762 on the rock boulder in the premises. The rock inscription in the boulder discusses about the erection of the image house.

This had been a place of veneration when Kirthi Sri Rajasinghe has moved. The temple is famous for its wall paintings with characteristics of Kandyan period wall paintings. Stories of previous lives of Buddha were depicted in horizontal strips of paintings on walls. Many Buddha figures are also a unique feature in paintings.



Galmaduwa Temple

Galmaduwa Vihara is an important building erected using dressed stones and bricks. The form suggests that it is a pavilion made out of stones. This can be seen as a mixture of tamil-hindu or Pallava characteristics and made into a Buddhist temple. The lower part is done with stone and the upper vaulted parts were done with brick in mortar. The arches, doorway and windows carry distinct features from other Buddhist temples of Kandyan period.



Degaldoruwa Raja Maha Vihara

Degaldoruwa Temple was built by carving out a cave out of huge mass of gneiss. The main shrine is a cave and the other chambers were added with walls. All the walls are rich with paintings depicting previous life stories of Lord Buddha (*Jathaka katha*)

This cave temple is built by Rajadhi Rajasinghe who was the younger brother of Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe in A.D. 1771 at a foot of a rock which is about 40 feet high.

The Copper plate inscription speaks about the construction of the cave temple.

The decorative paintings on walls of the temple indicates manners of the people, social conditions, clothing, furniture, interior of dwellings of the time and also decorated elephants. Four *Jataka* stories are depicted in these paintings, which are famous and good examples for the Kandyan style.



Kundasale

Kundasale was converted to the Capital of the Kandyan region during A.D. 1707 – 1739 by last Sinhalese king named Sri Viraparakrama Narendrasinghe after the demise of his father King Wimaladharmasuriya II who ruled from Kandy with many disturbances.

King Wimaladharmasuriya II had sent his son to a cave dwelling located in remote area away from Kandy for his protection. But prince Narendrasinghe disguised himself and used to travel to see his father in Kandy. While on his way he used to stay for a while and rest on a rock-slab in Kundasale enjoying the scenic beauty of the place close to the river Mahaweli.

With his experience and liking for the natural setting Prince Narendrasinghe selected Kundasale to have his palace when he became king. One epic says that the place got its name because an ear ornament of astrological god 'Sikuru' had fallen onto this spot during a battle with another God. Another belief is that the place got its name because of the entertainment halls and pleasure gardens built in this location by the monarch.

The close association maintained by the king with Gonsalwes, Jesuvas, Lanarolle and Daskon made the king unpopular among locals and as a result he had to move to Diyatillakepura now known as Hanguranketha.

Hanguranketha

The name is said to be derived from 'Sangaruwan Ketha', a thriving paddy field in ancient days. The place was also known as Diyatillakepura. Diyatillakepura had been a camping site of many kings of Kandy when there were attacks to the city of Kandy.

It is said that King senerath was the first to have had a palace in this location. According to Robert Knox, this city had been surrounded by a white washed protective wall with beautifully carved doorways and panels.

King Rajasighe II had built a hall in Hanguranketha similar to the audience hall of Kandy for resting and recreation activities. This beautiful hall was said to be located in present paddy fields known as "*Wadanapaya*" near the Rest House.



The beautiful city of Hanguranketha was destroyed by invaders from time to time. King Sitavaka Rajasighe was also responsible for some destruction in his search for Konnappubandara.

As result of these destructions, only two ancient buildings can be seen today. They are the Devale building and the Pothgul maha Vihare.

Pothgul Maliga Maha Vihare

During the 1818 Rebellion, British people destroyed the palace that was there in this particular location. Remains of the destroyed palace were used in the construction of the present vihare with a large hall for library during 1831-1880. The stone carved doorframes moonstone slab and stone pillars belonging to the ancient palace building can be seen in the vihare today.



Credits:

Some Information and photos -

www.amazinglanka.com

www.srilankatravelguide.com

www.srilankatravelnotes.com

www.lakdasun.org