

NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – YEAR 2011

AGENDA

1. Welcome Address by the President.
2. Presentation of the Annual Report for 2011 by the Secretary General.
3. Presentation of Annual Accounts for 2011 by the Treasurer.
4. Announcement of Office Bearers for the Forthcoming Year 2012-2013.
5. Comments of the General Membership.
6. Any other Business.
7. Vote of Thanks by K. Kanag-Isvaran PC.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL – YEAR 2011

I am indeed very happy and privileged to present this report today to the General Membership of the National Trust–Sri Lanka, a practice fulfilled for seven successive years, since the establishment of the organization in May 2005. As we all know, it had a very modest beginning in 2005, now the organization has grown into a strong and a well recognized non-governmental national body with more than 250 members of heritage conscious citizens. As at December 2011, the National Trust records a total of 182 annual members and 71 life members. The majority of our membership is of high academic standing and they belong to various professions. Being enlightened citizens of the country, some have served the nation for more than four decades, while some are still serving. It is unique to note that each Member has the opportunity to witness the presence of most other Members monthly, at the special lecture gatherings. The National Trust has set an unbroken record by conducting its monthly progress meetings and the monthly special lecture sessions continuously during the year 2011 without any interruption. Today we have just concluded the 68th Trustees Meeting and we are going to enjoy the 38th Monthly Special Lecture. The expansion of other heritage related activities have also been remarkable, during the year under review. As I have been reporting to the general membership every year, the National Trust is gaining its present momentum of progress through the realization of its objectives and continuing its planned activities with the least interruptions. The year 2011 also showed much promise for the National Trust as seen by its achievements and through the successful implementation of a number of heritage related activities which benefited its Members in particular and the public in general. The main reasons for such success have been the team spirit and the dedication of the key Members.

Let me now summarize some of the major activities conducted during the period under review and their achievements to date:

- **Regular Monthly Progress Meetings of the Trustees and the Meetings of the Management Committee:**

Conducting the progress review meetings of the Trustees and of the Management Committee has been a regular practice. These meetings are most healthy as they create an opportunity for the relevant experts to work-out the strategies in relation to the development needs of cultural and natural heritage of the country where government institutions are over burdened and some outside help is essential. At the same time these meetings help to review the progress of regular activities undertaken monthly and to keep the organization active all the time. All twelve meetings of 2011 inclusive of the AGM, as planned for the year were conducted successfully, with more than the required quorum at each meeting. The total number of monthly meetings of the main body held from the inception to date, has been 68 and 12 out of this number were held during the period 2011. One of the main driving forces behind the success of the affairs of the Trust has been the role played by the “**Management Committee**” which met every month, in advance of the Trustees Meetings. The Management Committee worked out every minute detail of the programmes of the Trust and so assisted the main body to enable a smooth functioning of the planned programme implementation by the Trust including Fundraising, Membership drive and the day to day running of the Trust office. On behalf of the general membership, let me take this opportunity to extend our gratitude, to Dr. Roland Silva, Mr. N.G. Wickremeratne,

Mr. U.L. Kadurugamuwa, and Mr. K. Kanag-Isvaran who served as Members of the Management Committee who worked with much dedication throughout the year and to Ms. Devika Anthonisz, the committee coordinator, Ms. Gayathri Ganeshan of the HNB Sustainability Foundation which provides financial support to run the Trust office and to Major General (Rtd) Lohan Goonewardene, all of whom contribute their share to the committee at each meeting.

- **Scientific sub-committees of the National Trust:**

The Scientific Sub-committees which were six in number increased to nine in 2011, namely; Monuments and Sites, Moveable Artefacts, Natural Heritage, Intangible Heritage, Paintings, Sculpture and Visual Arts, Architectural Conservation, Industrial Heritage and Ancient Cultural Routes. During the year, the nine Scientific sub-committees comprised professionals in the relevant areas of heritage studies, conducted regular monthly meetings and discussions to formulate and carryout plans covering the respective specialized subjects and so supported the main body. Each committee was chaired by an Anchor Person who is always a senior professional assisted by a team of other specialists. The professional input of these heritage experts has been of much importance to the Trust activities. Some of the sub-committees have already published their works in the form of research materials and books and have even conducted workshops and seminars. A number of other Heritage preservation projects are being planned by the respective sub-committees. Due appreciation has to be recorded here to Dr. Roland Silva, Prof. Nimal de Silva and the relevant Anchor Persons for keeping the sub-committee interests going and to Mr. Nilan Cooray, the Assistant Secretary General for coordinating the Scientific Sub-committee meetings with much success.

- **Membership Drive and Extension of Trust Activities :**

With a view to expand the activities of the Trust and to make the Trust popular among a wider public, the membership drive was launched, and a 250 membership target was achieved during the year with the regular appeals of Mr. K. Kanag-Isvaran. A fair number of new members joined during the year and the number of life members increased to 71. There are plans underway to expand its activities geographically to other parts of the country. As an initial step there is a plan to make the special monthly lectures available in copy form to the heritage loving people living in out stations such as Kandy, Galle and Jaffna. The National Trust achieved the target of the membership drive even beyond what was expected, thanks to the untiring efforts taken by the Members of the Management Committee.

- **Raising of Funds for the National Trust :**

Programmes to raise sufficient funding resources were implemented to meet the planned activities and the day to day operations of the Trust office during the year 2011. This was possible due to the efforts of the Management Committee which guided the Trust to have a more effective management and control system in its income and expenditure. The Trust received funds from various sources through its campaigns among local and international donors, sponsors, general membership and other well-wishers. The Management Committee was successful in getting a contribution from the HNB to meet the expenditure of its day to day affairs during 2011 as well. Mr N.G. Wickremeratne should be complimented for this generous grant. The Trust also received the final contribution for phase I from the Prince Claus Fund of the Netherlands during the year to complete the Ancient Malwana Fort emergency conservation programme. Funds received from the sponsors such as M/s Central Finance Co. PLC and Sunshine Holdings PLC helped to publish two more important books of heritage. Our Treasurer General will enlighten you more on this subject when presenting the Statement of Accounts for the year 2011.

- **Publication of a series of ten special volumes on Cultural and Natural Heritage :**

Being one of the other main activities, publication of books on heritage subjects continued during the period under review. Out of a total of twelve volumes planned, five books had already been published and two other publications namely, "Coral Reefs of Sri Lanka" and "Flowering Plants commonly encountered in Sri Lankan Habitats" were published during the year. You will be fortunate to witness the launch of the second publication today. There are several other books written by the recommended authors and are ready for the printer once the required funds are raised. On behalf of the Trust and its general members I take this opportunity to extend our due gratitude to the authors, the designer and the copy editor for devoting their valuable time in writing and designing these handsome volumes and so making their contribution to the nation. The National Trust is indebted to the sponsors who extended their generous financial contribution to meet the cost of printing, thus extending their generosity to promote the cultural traditions of our country. Mr.U.L.Kadurugamuwa has been chief coordinator in finding the Sponsors for these books. The special publications project has become one of the sources of funding to the Trust as well.

- **Conducting Special Lectures Monthly by selected scholars on Heritage Subjects:**

This was one of the popular events in the activities of the Trust continued during the year 2011 as well without any interruption. From the inception to date 38 Special Lectures have been presented and out of this number, 11 were during the period under review. The following lectures were presented;

1. "*Lesser known Fortifications of Sri Lanka*" by **Ashley de Vos** and **Archd. D.P. Chandrasekera**,
2. "*The Lion Mountain and the Palace in the Sky – notes on the identity of the royal palace complex at Sigiriya*" by **Prof. Senake Bandaranayake**
3. "*Art of the last decade of the 20th Century*" by **Prof. Jagath Weerasinghe**
4. "*Sri Lanka – Best for Big Game Safari Outside Africa*" by **Mr. Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne**.
5. "*Some Facets of our Legal Heritage*" by **Prof. Savitri Goonesekere**
6. "*The Evolution of Primate Society – the longest research conducted on the subject in Sri Lanka*" by **Dr. Wolfgang Dittus**.
7. "*An Overview of the flowering Plants of Sri Lanka*" by **Dr. Siril Wijesundara**,

Dr. Sriyani Miththapala and Dr. Janaki Galappatti.

8. *"Gateway to Mutual Heritage of Jaffna with Special Reference to the Grid City" following a Presentation made at the IHS Rotterdam.* by **Arch. Jayatissa Herath, Arch. Deepal Wijethilake and Ms. Suganya Vinasithamby**
9. *"Mantai – The Great Emporium of Cosmos Indicopleustes"* by **Dr. Roland Silva.**
10. *"The Twelfth Century Hospital and the Surgical Instruments Found Therein"* by **Prof. P.L.Prematilake and Prof. Arjuna Aluwihare.**
11. *"The Tradition of Ivory Carvings"* by **Archt. Ashley de Vos.**

These lectures attracted a large audience including the interested public and gave an opportunity for the membership to meet each other every month. The programme as a whole was a great success with an attendance of more than 150 to 300 participants at each lecture. In addition to the educational and academic value to the participants, the special monthly lectures brought in much publicity to the National Trust and its activities providing a big boost to the membership drive and its fundraising efforts. The results have been immensely gratifying as shown by the response made by the relevant scholars and in delivering the special lectures in an honorary capacity including the distinguished personalities who chaired the lecture series. It is also planned to preserve and publish the lecture presentations in CD and print form for the use of other interested academics and make this facility available to heritage lovers in outstations. We wish to record our deep appreciation again to the members of the Lecture Committee headed by Mr. U.L. Kadurugamuwa and the Management Committee continuing to assist the coordination of lectures, and the owners of the venues such as the Auditoriums of the PGIAR, the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, Hatton National Bank, Institute of Construction and Development Training (ICTAD) and for providing these facilities. Our special thanks to Major General Lohan Goonewardene and the team of volunteers for their continued support to the Trust during the 2011 lecture sessions as well.

- **Conducting of Quarterly Heritage Tours:**

As was in previous years this activity continued during 2011 with much success. Members, their families and friends were given an opportunity to visit a large number of important cultural and natural sites and other places of common interest. All these tours were guided by eminent personalities with a view to disseminate knowledge among the participants. Four quarterly tours were conducted successfully covering the Heritage sites, namely. Gampaha/Negambo District, Horana Region, Kurunegala/Matale District, and Old Colombo. A series of Tour Guide Books were also published along with the events for the benefit of the participants and in addition, they are available now for the members and the general public. The services extended by some trustees and members voluntarily to guide the participants to various sites, and the Tour Committee and M/s Quickshaws headed by the Trustee Ms. Nirmala de Mel organizing and providing the participants with suitable transport and other facilities and Mr Nilan Cooray by assisting the Tour Committee to prepare the guide book are deeply appreciated.

- **Assisting other institutions dealing with the subject of the preservation of heritage and the promotion of international cooperation on heritage activities.**

As another activity, the National Trust continued to be associated with the extraordinary work of collaboration with National institutions such as The Department of Archaeology, Department National Museums, Urban Development Authority, Colombo Municipality and the National

Physical Planning Department on various national projects and international institutions like the Prince Claus Fund (PCF) of the Netherlands, the International National Trust Organization (INTO) and the Dutch –Sri Lanka Association in the Netherlands during 2011. Two committees of National Trust experts have been appointed to give advisory support to complement the special projects such as the restoration of the Jaffna Medieval Grid City and Environmental Enhancement projects in and around Colombo. The conservation of the Malwana Ancient Fort which was commenced in the previous years continued into 2011 and completed Phase I of the conservation programme in collaboration with the Dept. of Archaeology and the CCF. In this context the National Trust took the initiative to raise funds by assisting the Department of Archaeology in preserving one of the declared monuments owned by a private party. It is hoped to extend this facility to other monuments such as the Hanwella Fort and other Forts in the Kelani River Valley. The National Trust conducted discussions with the Prince Claus Fund regarding further collaborations on emergency conservation of recommended sites and discussions with the Dutch-Sri Lanka Association in Amsterdam regarding assistance to conserve the Dutch Town House at Prince Street, Pettah presently housing the Dutch Period Museum. With regard to INTO the NT-SL has already become a member with a view to having more international and region cooperation with other National Trusts. During 2011 the National Trust was represented at the INTO meeting in Canada and shared its experience with the other Trust organizations.

- **Other Projects being implemented and being planned for the future:**

Preparation of the **WEBSITE of the Trust** which started in 2009 continued to be updated in 2011 by a team of volunteer members guided by Mr. N.G. Wickremeratne and Dr. Kavan Ratnatunga. The scope of the project is being expanded at present.

A new project to publish another series of books titled **“The Seven Arts of Sri Lanka- Outstanding International and National Artists of an Era, at the end of the 20th Century”** was initiated during 2010 and continued to develop to achieve its end objective. This is in addition to the on- going 12 special publications project expected to be launched with a view to honour the outstanding Sri Lankan Artists and Writers who contributed immensely to the country in the fields of Sculpture, Painting, Architecture, Dance, Music, Literature and Drama.

As recorded in my last report the National Trust hopes to continue these programmes and activities in the future along with the introduction of new activities under its projected plan for the year 2012 and onwards. As was in the past, the achievements of National Trust during the year 2011 have been mainly due to the team spirit and the strong commitment and the dedication of the Trustees, members of the sub-committees especially by the Management Committee and the general membership. The commitment and the enthusiasm exhibited by the team of volunteers which has been commendable.

Let us take this opportunity to salute all the Trustees and Volunteers for sparing their valuable time and in making valuable contributions to the Trust.

Hoping to see another successful year of operations let me conclude the report for the year 2011.

H.D.S.Hettipathirana,
Secretary General,
29th March 2012

President's Report – 2011

Present and Proposed Activities of the National Trust – Sri Lanka

The National Trust – Sri Lanka is a young organisation begun only in 2005. The Activities undertaken so far are:

1. The main body is centred in the Capital, namely, Colombo. It proposes to expand its operations to the Provincial Capitals as well, beginning with Kandy and Galle.
2. The main activities at present consist of the following:-

(a) **Regular Monthly Lectures** to its Members on a fixed Day and Time of each Month. The Theme of the Lectures is a subject of Cultural or Nature interest, but in lighter vein. These lectures are included in the Web Page of the National Trust. It is also proposed to publish these on an annual basis. Once the Regional Bodies of the National Trust are established, these lectures given in Colombo will be simultaneously transmitted to the Provincial Capitals until these branch institutions are able to stand on their own feet and have independent subjects discussed.

(b) **Quarterly Day Tours** to sites of Cultural or Nature interest. This may be increased to Bi-monthly Day Tours. These tours have a separate booklet specially written and an authoritative guide travelling with the party covering the subjects visited. The booklets are subsequently printed and sold for individual travellers who use these for week-end tours. A similar set of activities can be initiated at the regional centres once these are established and these could then cover the sites of those regions.

(c) **Publications by the National Trust** are numerous. These are publications on serious themes by Specialist Authors on serious subjects, but are well illustrated and written in simpler language. Parallel studies relevant to the regions can be carried out once these centres are established. Some of the publications handled at present in Colombo are:

- (i) Prestigious Volumes - Birds of Sri Lanka
 - Sri Lankan Painting in the 20th Century.
 - Heritage Buildings of Sri Lanka
 - /Archaeology & Photographs
 - Coral Reefs of Sri Lanka
 - Flowering Plants of Sri Lanka
 - Dances of Sri Lanka
 - Jewellery of Sri Lanka
 - Animals of Sri Lanka
 - Musical Instrumentalists of Sri Lanka
 - Waterfalls of Sri Lanka
 - Singers of Sri Lanka

- Recent Sculptures of Sri Lanka

(ii) Seven Arts of Sri Lanka - Outstanding Creative Personalities at the end of the 20th Century

- Sculpture – Tissa Ranasinghe
- Painting – George Keyt
- Architecture – Geoffrey Bawa
- Dance – Chitrasena
- Music – Amaradeva
- Literature – Michael Ondaatje
- Drama – Sarathchandra

(iii) Publications of the Scientific Committees:

- Moveable Artefacts in Private Collections
- Corpus of Heritage Buildings in the Regions
- Corpus of Heritage Building Types
 - (1) Wayside Rests
 - (2) Temples on Stilts
 - (3) Stupa Houses
 - (4) Cave Image Houses
 - (5) Grain Stores
 - (6) Village Kovils
 - (7) Gateways
 - (8) Village Temples
 - (9) Sub-forts
 - (10) Coastal Churches
 - (11) Courtyard Houses
 - (12) Shop Houses
 - (13) Village Houses
 - (14) Railway Houses
- Intangible Heritage:
 - (1) Ola Books
 - (2) Masks
 - (3) Textile Designs
 - (4) Folk Music

(iv) Publications for School Kids

- A set of five booklet have been prepared for the use of school kids covering five historic sites compiled by the former Archaeological Department Photographer and read by one of the Trustees and each is sold for just US 30 cents (Sri Lanka Rs 30/=) and these are very popular for kids using such photographs and texts for their environmental studies. A second set of such booklets is now being printed.

- (d) **Conservation of Monuments and Museum Projects:** The National Trust would carry out modest conservation of monuments and museum projects that are not within the immediate purview of the Government Departments. For example the Dutch Fortification at Malwana in the Colombo Province was excavated, conserved and laid out to the specifications of the Antiquities Ordinance. Similarly, the National Trust is about to undertake the conservation of an old Dutch Orphanage which is presently the Dutch Period Museum in Colombo. The funding for these two projects has come from various agencies overseas. In fact, there is also some financial benefit to the Trust as a 10% service charge is made on all these activities. These projects also carry a publication component as well, namely, the Conservation Report. We have already estimated for the conservation of the Dutch Hanwella Fort in the Western Province. Similar proposals have been submitted for the conservation of the Dutch Grid City of Jaffna. Island wide activities in this regard can be undertaken more systematically once the Provincial Branches are established.
- (e) **Conservation of the Photograph Albums** of pictures taken between 1867 and 1872 of the Archaeological Monuments in the World Heritage Cities of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Dambulla. These Photographs are in three folio volumes which can hardly be opened. The former Chief Conservator of the Archives Department has been commissioned to undertake this delicate task. It is proposed to train a team of manuscript conservators at the Department of Archaeology along with this effort who will look after the near one hundred year old drawings and other written and printed records now at the department.
- (f) **Visitation of Heritage Buildings.** After the Publication of the records on Heritage Buildings are over it is proposed to place the National Trust Crest on these edifices which will provide the owners some spiritual satisfaction? At the same time it is proposed to urge the owners of such edifices to purchase these publications. Over and above the Trust would request these owners to consider making the premises open for visitation on given days and times. For this purpose a charge may also be made from the visitors and the funds so collected could be used for the maintenance of the edifice. The Government may also be urged to make such collections free of tax. The Trust may commission youth organisations at the Universities studying Architectural History to consider writing a booklet on a selected edifice which the Trust can print and have these sold to visitors.
- (g) **Regional Museums of Modern Art.** This is a subject under review at present. As a first step it is proposed to patronise the Collectors and arrange a month's display of their collection of around fifty items with a suitable catalogue at a hotel or a private gallery once every three or six months per year. This is to encourage the many young artists who for want of suitable facilities and encouragement are forced to display their work in the open air along streets like Ananda Coomaraswamy Mawatha. The end objective of this exercise is to encourage the

Central Government and the Provincial Governments to enable appropriate facilities for such displays in every Provincial Capital.

- (h) **Conservation of the Trees Lining the Roads, the Parks and the Old Reservoirs of the Colombo District as the Lungs of the City Dwellers.** This is a proposal the National Trust has placed before the Minister of the Urban Development Authority. This is a proposal that includes cultural exchanges with countries with traditional Garden Planning experience like Chengde, China and Kew, United Kingdom and the local experts to groom and tender these spaces and even date mark the trees and label these with the botanical names.

Dr. Roland Silva
President, National Trust-Sri Lanka,
29th March 2012.

