

Extended Family Members share memories of TV Vareed

Philo Thomas Thumpaserry, A niece in Erie, PA

When I was really young, all I remember of Perappan was when he came down to Alleppey once a year during Christmas. I rarely spend any time with him like I did with Rosamma aunty and the boys but I remember being a little intimidated by him.

My chance to really get to know this wonderful person was when I stayed for a couple of months at the HAL house after I graduated from college and before I got married. He was the kind of person who made everyone feel welcome in his house He treated me like I was his own daughter.

Before I knew it I had him eating out of my hand. Anything I wanted he used to do and if Rosamma aunty needed to get something done she used to get me to ask him and he was quite obliging .Of course he gave me the run around and never actually agreed to anything right away but I finally got my way most of the time.

By the end of the stay I had seen 14 movies with him....Can you believe that !!

We had arguments and discussions almost on a daily basis and life was never boring at the HAL house. I was very much at home there and a lot of things I live by today was learned at the HAL house while living with Perappan and Rosamma aunty.Of course Georgie and Jacob kept me entertained and treated me like a favourite sister...

Whenever I called him from the US he never failed to ask about each of my children and was always proud of the fact that all four went to Carnegie Mellon for college. He was the person everyone went to for advice and he freely gave it to everyone who asked and sometimes even when not asked too !!.

I did not get a chance to say goodbye to him before he passed on and I always regret not making a trip to see the person who was like a father to me. Memories of him will always be a source of comfort for me. I missed his presence when I went back in November

He was everyone's Godfather. His home has seen more children pass thru while studying in Bangalore than any other home among our syrian catholic families.

I loved him like I did my own Dad. He was Dad to me after my own passed on. Perappan. We will always love you !!

John Chacko Nereyeth, A nephew in Alleppey, India

I have a lot of great memories of Achen since I spent so many years in Bangalore for my engineering. I remember him the most for his insistence that one has to study long hours to succeed.

Initially when I stayed at his home, he used to wake up every one at 5 am. Tom, Jacob and me were in one room and George in the other. He found out after the first few days that soon after he returned to his room, every one went back to sleep. So he sat on the bed and read his book to make sure every one was at their desk.

Later on, we all used to come over every Sunday for lunch at HAL. He used to always ask Hormis and me about our studies since we were known to be "ozhappans" . Vacken was a responsible student. Johny Joseph was the rebel and never used to come. Once we were 21, he used to offer us a drink. ONE drink and no more. It was a great luxury. Some days we used to drive all the way to Kengeri to visit the farm and RUM and Tender Coconut was the highlight of the day.

He was a true intellect, a very wise investor and an absolute Gentleman. Achen lived by simple principles and served the country with his brilliant engineering capabilities

Beena Belliappa (A niece living in Bangalore)

As for memories of Chittappen, he was the father figure who always told you what is best for you, whether you liked it or not, especially since mine said nothing to us. What I have always admired most about him, after the big noise he made about my inter community wedding, even being the person to do all the questioning and asking Lala' intentions, his total acceptance of the situation, when Johnny decided to marry Meena and how he insisted that I should sign the church register as his witness. His warmth to Rosamma' aunty's family members was so good and how he was gaurdian to so many of us nephews and nieces through our college days.

Elamma Abraham, a niece from Kanjirapally

Kochappen chittappen lived a full life and my memory of my interactions with him are very alive with me. I sill fondly remember how protective he was of women. I remember going to Hyderabad for work via Bangalore and had time to visit and was coming alone from The airport to Koramngala. Chittappen gave me all directions and when I was reaching your home, I saw Chittappen anxiously waking outside and dealt with the taxi fellow effectively. Though I was married and with 4 children, he was very protective!

I fondly remember our get togethers in Aluva veliyanad ezhupunna kootickal and alleppey always, where when all the co brothers (brother-in laws) were playing cards chittappen was organizing the games for kids. I still remember the treasure hunt we had in Aluva where the final clue was planted in the thick hair of Chittappen.

I remember him coming to visit me in the Hostel in Delhi when he came to Delhi for work. Finding the time to come there and spent time talking with me about my plans after

graduation. That was very valuable visit as you know I hardly had any visitors when I studied in Delhi. So many fond memories. He will always be alive with us. I will miss him

Sunil John Nereyeth, a nephew from Alleppey

From childhood days I always had lively interactive conversations with Kochappan Achan . His uniqueness that fascinated me was his authentic analytic approach in solving issues whether small or big. He was like Sherlock Holmes !!

One of my best memories was meeting him last where he was fondly reminiscing about his "Pennukanal" meeting Ammai for the first time. Achan & Ammai's always maintained an open house - always welcoming everyone.

Wesley Thekkethala, A nephew from New Jersey

Velliappen was a patriarch of the Thekkethala family. He was a great man and we in the family were all proud of him and his achievements. I have had conversations with Innocent Uncle and my father and both were inspired by him and respected him greatly.

Innocent Uncle talks about an occasion when he and Velliappen were honored by local elected officials as distinguished citizens of Irinjalakuda. He also recounts a story of visiting Velliappen in Bangalore years ago prior to his film stardom and how Velliappen helped him to get a passport with which he eventually travelled throughout the world.

My father speaks of him as a pioneer and an inspiration for him to pursue academic dreams even as my father grew up in a largely uneducated family. Your father played a part in my father's academic successes which in turn helped form a foundation for the very happiness that I have found in life as well.

I think I shall always remember my father's joy and happiness as he was talking on the phone to your father this past Thanksgiving. Your father's life has touched many--even so many miles away. He was appreciated not just as the father of the Indian Jet Engine but in an even greater role as a father figure. But I hope that you may take solace in knowing that your father's life was by all accounts well lived and inspired many to greater heights and his legacy shall continue to lead us.

Lucy and Josy Tharian, a niece in Alwaye, Kerala

i always had a great deal of admirtion for your father..He was truly a selfmade man... your dad was very proud of his kids and so were you.....He lived a full life and enjoyed it.. and he was so fortunate to see all his boys accomplish so much in life.....

Shoba George, a niece in Madras, India

Perappan was very special to us . He really took care of us while we were studying there and to this day I don't know how amayi managed to feed all of us every Sunday afternoon :-)

Jose Zac, a relative in New Jersey

Vareed uncle was one of those people i always loved to hear about. We heard great stories about his life and all of them were very inspiring. He was an inspiring figure and one of the few people we hear only good things about. We will miss him.

Sonia Millsom, a relative in Rhode Island

I remember many of his stories as well. He was an amazing man and will be missed.

Dr George Joseph, A daughter-in-law's father

He was a man of great distinction and contributed immensely to his country. He will be remembered above all for his love and devotion to his family

Tracy Sislen, a relative in Washington DC

Perappan is a huge part of our family legacy and is a really important person in my mom's life. I'm glad we got to see him when we were last in Bangalore.

Mohan Peter, a relative in Virginia

Achen had a long and illustrious life and career and most importantly lived to see the successes of his sons. You have to be gratified that you were able to spend so much time with him. Yet, none of that makes up for the loss.

Pervez and Vimala Mohammed, extended family members

Uncle Vareed was indeed very special to us.

we had a special affection for him, and we believe it was mutual. We got to witness and enjoy his intelligence, analytical skills and wit during the several opportunities we had to spend with him. He helped us a great deal with his wisdom and advice when we a property deal of ours soured in Bangalore in the Gundu Rao days. We got to know both your parents well during those times and are so happy that through this process became connected with the Thekketala brothers. I recall your father's achievements at the fledging HAL. He was indeed a great man, humble and loving. He will be sorely missed for sure.

Priya Mohanraj, Daughter-in-law's sister

Uncle Vareed was a gentleman of no ordinary stature... He left behind a gaping void not only in the family he considered a beloved part of him but a country like India has also lost their 'Father of Jet Engines'. Pride and Glory in a man who was revered, respected and loved for who he was and what he stood for. His values and integrity of character simply impeccable! He had a 'Dream' and worked with focus and determination to make it take wings and Take India to the Skies!!

Uncle's motto was Service... and his contribution has enriched many a life in different ways. Even special is the fact that he was able to patiently listen...connect with the younger

generation.. get them to ask questions and think and arrive at the answers in time. What was inspiring was also his gift to his friends...

Dilip Keshu (Family Friend in the US)

Truly something very big in our lives has gone – a absolutely wonderful man, great friend of my father and a huge talent India will never see the like of again

Rif Haffar (Family Friend in Europe)

I know that he will leave a void that you will never really be able to completely define, let alone fill. And that's as it should be.

When a man of his scale dies, a man who has touched so many people's lives, the loss is universal. But so is the celebration of a life fully lived,

He was indeed a gentle soul, as is your mother.

I am very happy to have met them and will never forget the look on your dad's face when the floor shook. You recall that we had a small quake while having dinner on the evening of our arrival. I'm not sure whether he was startled or rather indignant that nature would dare to interfere with what was shaping up into a lovely evening.

Richard Rubin (Family Friend in the US)

I met him only twice, but did stay at his house in Bangalore for several days. I saw that not only was he kind and gentle, but also forceful and determined, as he would have to be to accomplish what he did. So I hope that I too can be in remote way counted as part of the extended family

Kishore Seshadri (Family friend in the US)

I remember him well and he was a larger-than-life individual. His possibly poor opinion of me (and the rest of your friends), and all his accomplishments certainly helped motivate me!