

SRI LANKA SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND Inc.

NEWSLETTER



Incorporated 1984

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Founders Day Celebrations

Sri Lanka Society celebrated its Founders Day on the 19th of October at the Mansfield Function Centre. It was dedicated to the Founder Members and all the other members who have worked tirelessly to not only to begin this society but to keep it going for over 40 years. It was held in October as the society was formally founded in October 1978. The founder members wished to create an organisation which projected the culture of Sri Lanka and represented the Sri Lankan community within the Australian community in Queensland. The chief guest for the occasion was Mrs Corinne McMillan MP, Member for Mansfield, representing Hon Stirling Hinchliffe, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

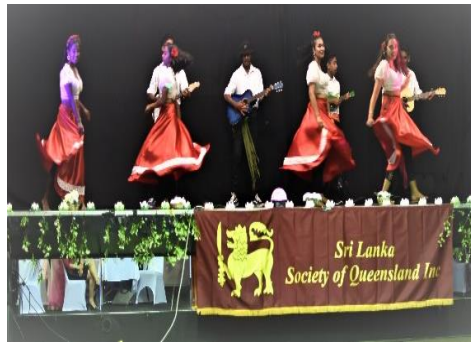


The President of SLSQ welcomed the guests and spoke of the founders who came over 40 years ago and decided to start an association which would showcase the cultural traditions of Sri Lanka in Brisbane. Many of them were from the Colonial era and were not as fluent in Sinhala or Tamil but managed to not only found the Sri Lanka Society but also to start the 4EB Sri Lankan program and managed to proudly represent the Sri Lankan community in Brisbane.



The special guests were escorted to their seats by the "Ape Bera" drumming troupe and the traditional oil lamp was lit by the Founder Members who attended and the first president of the association, late Mr Pat Abey was represented by his widow Maria.

The evening began with a cultural concert with dances of very high calibre showcasing the different dance forms of Sri Lanka. A beautifully presented “Pooja Dance” by the Abhina Dance Academy set the tone for the others to follow. A heartfelt tribute to Sri Lanka was the theme of the next dance by Amara Ratnayake’s dancers. “Narthana Bandana” choreographed by Nipuni Gomes, depicted the divine relationship binding the Bharatha Natyam and Kandyan dance form and showcased the talent and creativity of the younger generation of the Sri Lankan community in Brisbane. The next dance representing the Portugese influence on Sri Lankan culture had everyone tapping their toes. The beautifully choreographed performances and the colourful and vibrant costumes added to the skill of the dancers and were greatly appreciated by the audience.



Two singers then took the stage. The first was Arosha Amarasekera singing an all-time favourite to the delight of the older members. The second singer Pulith Widana Pathirana showcased the talent of the younger generation of singers. The show ended with the ever-popular drumming item performed by the “Ape Bera” troupe. It was a fitting finale and made us proud of the talent within the community. The compering for the show was done by Anuki De Silva.



The Vote of thanks was given by Mrs Sandhya Abeysekera who thanked all the sponsors and volunteers and introduced the management committee to everyone.

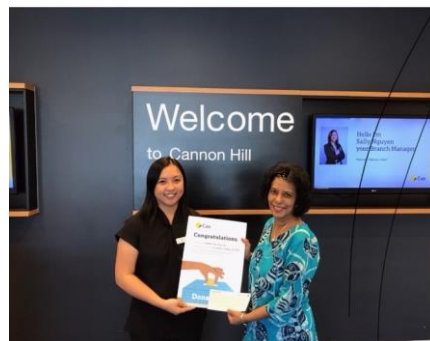
A visit by the Manager and the Observers that accompanied the INAS group of Intellectually Disabled Athletes team from Sri Lanka was specially welcomed. The speech by the Manager regarding the work they do and the announcement that the participants had won 4 medals was received with much appreciation.



The Soloz band followed with music to entertain all ages and had the crowd dancing into the night. It was a memorable occasion with many memories to carry forward for the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland.

The Management Committee would like to thank the generous sponsors and volunteers who made the night a great success.

We are very grateful to our main sponsor, Commonwealth Bank, Cannon Hill for generously supporting our Founders Day with a cheque presented to Sri Lanka Society to help with the cultural performances for the event.



Food for Beds

Sri Lanka Society undertook to run 2 stalls at the Food Fair run by FSOQ to raise money to send hospital beds to Sri Lanka. The hopper stall was ably managed by Sandhya Abeysekera with help from the committee members and other members and volunteers. It was a great success with so many people queuing up for a hopper feed. The Sri Lankan sweets stall was also run by SLSQ with our talented committee members providing most of the delicacies. The cupcakes and the variety of Sri Lankan sweets were very much appreciated specially by the younger customers while many others looked longingly and lamented their doctor's orders to cut down on sugar!



National Flower of Sri Lanka

Manel (Water Lily or *Nymphaea nouchali*)

There are 3 types of water lilies which are native to Sri Lanka. These three flowers, Ohlu, Nelum and Manel are very popular at religious ceremonies and have inspired many songs. In 1986 the National



Flower of Sri Lanka was announced as Nil Manel (*Nymphaea stellate*). However, there was no picture to show what the flower looked like. Subsequently, the picture that was made popular was not the native Nil Manel but that of a Manel variety that was introduced to Sri Lanka. This mistake was uncovered during a study done by a Botany Professor, Deepthi Yakandawala, of the Peradeniya University.

In March 2016, the National Flower was changed to Manel (*Nymphaea nouchali*) with the correct picture. Known as 'Blue Water Lily' and 'Blue Lotus' and 'Neelambal' in Tamil, this flower is indigenous to Sri Lanka. The petals of the local Manel are pale blue and white. The seeds and the tubes of the flower can be eaten and both the flower and the leaves are used in local herbal medicine. In ancient literature it is also known as *Nilupul* and is a symbol of virtue,

The attributes of Manel which make it the most suitable as the national flower are

- It is one of the 108 auspicious symbols in the footprint of the Buddha.
- A sign of purity, discipline and virtue.
- Used in ancient times during Royal Celebrations and now commonly used during cultural festivities.
- Is a symbol of the deity 'Upulvan', a guardian deity of Sri Lanka.
- Both the flower and the leaves are used in local medicine to cure various ailments.

There seems to be many variants of the *Nymphaea Nouchali*. It is also the National Flower of Bangladesh but their variety is a White Water Lily and is called 'Shada Shapla' in Bengali. Another one is the *Nymphaea nouchali* var. *caerulea* which is sky blue in colour and commonly known as the 'Egyptian Lotus'. This flower grows along the Nile and is mentioned in Egyptian mythology. Atum, the Sun deity is said to have arisen in the bud of an Egyptian blue water-lily.

Presidential Elections

The 2019 Sri Lankan presidential election was held on 16 November 2019. This was the first Presidential election in Sri Lanka where no sitting president, prime minister or opposition leader was contesting for President.

The results were released on 17 November 2019 and Gotabaya Rajapakse won the election, polling 52.5% of the votes.

The Sri Lanka Society of Queensland extends Congratulations and best wishes to the 7th Executive President of Sri Lanka His excellency Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa.



Amazing Wall Art in Sri Lanka

A new wave of beautiful wall art is replacing the dirt and unwanted posters on the walls in various places in Sri Lanka. The talent of the younger generation is on display, with all Sri Lankans united by their love of art and beauty.



Photo credits to original owners.

SAVE THE DATE:

**The Annual General Meeting of the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland
will be held on Sunday 1st of March 2020 from 4.30 to 7.30 pm
at Toowong Community Hall, Jocelyn Street, Toowong`**

Advertisement rates in the Newsletter

For SLSQ members - \$5.00 for half page and \$10.00 for a full page.



*May the Christmas season fill your home with joy, your heart
with love and your life with laughter.*

Merry Xmas and Happy New Year!

Sri Lanka Society of Queensland Inc.

Membership Application Form

Objectives of the Society

1. To promote harmonious co-operation and friendship amongst immigrants from Sri Lanka and Australians irrespective of racial, religious, political and other differences.
2. To preserve, promote and project the culture of Sri Lanka.
3. To render assistance to students and immigrants from Sri Lanka.
4. To encourage and foster recreational, sporting and social activities.
5. To publish and circulate news of Sri Lanka and local events.
6. To render assistance to the people of Sri Lanka in times of need, at the discretion of the Management Committee.

Name (with preferred title).....

Postal address:

Telephone:

Email.....

Category (please tick) Family (\$20) ☐ Single (\$10) ☐ Concession Family (\$10) ☐

Concession single (\$5) ☐

I apply for the membership of Sri Lanka Society of Queensland Inc. under the category marked above. I agree with the objectives and the rules of the society.

The relevant fee is enclosed, herewith.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

I need a printed copy of the newsletter ☐ (This option is for those members who have no access to email)

Payments can be made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

Account Name : Sri Lanka Society of Queensland Inc. BSB: 06 4000 Acc: Number: 10725278

Bank: Commonwealth Bank, Queen Street, Brisbane.

Please include your name in reference field and email completed membership form to **Sri Lanka Society of Queensland, PO Box 15099, CITY EAST, BRISBANE, QLD 4002. Email: secretary@srilankansqld.org**