

SRI LANKA SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND Inc

NEWS LETTER



EMAIL: secretary@srilankansqld.org

WEBPAGE: <http://www.srilankansqld.org>

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The Sri Lanka Society Celebrates the Sinhala and Tamil New Year 2008

The Sri Lanka Society of Queensland celebrated the Sinhala and Tamil New Year on the 19th April at the RNA - Coffee Club Auditorium for the 30th consecutive year. This is one of the main activities organised by the society. Senator Clair Moore, Senator for Queensland and His Excellency the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka Mr Balapatabendi were the chief guests at the function. Mr Michael Choi, MP for Capalaba and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations and Multicultural Affairs, Ms Julie Attwood MP for Mt Omaney and Parliamentary Secretary to the Queensland Treasurer and Mr Ron Attwood were among the distinguished guests.

The function commenced with the symbolic lighting of the traditional oil lamp proceeded by the speeches of chief guests. All those attended the celebrations were able to enjoy a treat of traditional 'Rasa Kavili' including 'Kavun' and 'Kokis'. The major attraction of the event was the cultural show which included a variety of traditional dances performed by young artists that undoubtedly showed their talents.

The cultural show was followed by a buffet dinner which was a sumptuous feast of rice and curry.

Music for the evening was provided by the Breakaways from Sydney which was much appreciated by both young and old.

The Sri Lanka Society thanks all the performers, everybody who contributed in numerous ways to make this occasion a success and all who attended this memorable function.



1. New Year April 2008-Opening Ceremony Lighting of the oil lamp by Ms Julie Attwood MP for Mt Omaney and parliamentary secretary to the Queensland Treasurer and Mr Michael Choi MP for Capalaba and parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations and Multicultural Affairs.

2. The cultural secretary delivery her speech to thank all those who helped to celebrate the New Year.

Management Committee

PRESIDENT

Mr Hiran Cooray

3 Kilburn Close

Carindale 4152

Tel(H): 07-3843 5950

Email: HiranCooray@aol.com

VICE-PRESIDENT

Mr Ronnie Anadappa

5 Franklin Street

Camira 4300

Tel(H): 07- 3818 3903

SECRETARY

Mr Kanaji Wijesekera

Tel(H): 07-3488 2669

Mob: 0417 620 758

Email: Kanaji6@msn.com

TREASURER

Mr Prabath Alwis

3 Syma St

Cherm Side West

Brisbane 4032.

Tel(H): 07-3350 3542

Mob: 0432396509

Email: prabathalwis@hotmail.com

SOCIAL SECRETARY

Mrs Swarna Wijesekera

23 Carrington Place

Carindale 4152

Tel(H): 07-3343 1558 (H)

Email: wije@bigpond.net.au

Hon Solicitor

Watling Roche Lawyers Australia

Mr Sanath Weeratne - Principal

Tel. 04047583282

CULTURAL SECRETARY

Mrs Pushpa Jayasekera

1 Sassafras Street

Gap

Tel(H): 3300 9911

Email: Jayasekera@bigpond.com

PUBLICATION SECRETARY

Dr Upali Jayasuriya

16 Woollahra Place

Forrest Lake 4078

Tel(H): 07 3879 2262

Email: ujayasuriya@bigpond.com

WEB PAGE ADMINISTRATOR

Dr Tony Sahama

165 Jubilee Avenue

Forest Lake 4078

Mob: 0412 453 433

Email: t.sahama@qut.edu.au

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mrs Hermin Goonetilleke

Tel(H): 07-3396 9061

Mrs Sama Adikari

Tel(H): 07-3300 2278

Mr Mervyn Thangarajah

Tel(H): 07-3376 3118

Mrs Dhavina Mendis

Tel(H) 07-3376 0351

Mr Lal Wijeratne

Tel(H) 07-3376 5051

Hon Auditor

Mr David Adams CPA

First Immigrants from Sri Lanka

In the late 19th century, the first Sri Lankan immigrants to Australia were recruited to work on the cane plantations of northern Queensland. There are reports of Sri Lankans working in the gold-mining fields in New South Wales and as pearlers in Broome, Western Australia. By 1901, there were 609 Sri Lankan born persons in Australia.

The following advertisement appeared in the Ceylon Observer both in English and Sinhalese to engage people from Sri Lanka to work in plantations in North Queensland.

NOTICE: SINHALESE EMIGRANTS TO QUEENSLAND

Term of service: For a period of 2 ½ or 5 years

Destination: The Eastern Coast of Queensland

Agricultural Employment: Sugar, Coffee, Cinchona, Cocoa etc., etc.

Wages: £20 Sterling per annum, and house and garden 242 square yards per adult free; no food, no clothing. These, latter can be supplied by employer on a corresponding reduction of salary.

Advances. An advance will be given to each adult in Ceylon, electing to go, and will be recoverable during the first two (2) years of his term, in equal payments.

Payments. Will become due quarterly.

Passage and Food. On a five (5) years engagement passage will be paid to and fro. On a two-and-a-half (2 ½) do. passage will be paid to and half from. Employee on renewal of engagement for 5 years after completion of first five (5) years, receive £25 per annum, wages.

Bonus of £6 sterling. On completion of five (5) years' term and employee electing to renew for a further period of five (5) years, he will be entitled for the above bonus of £6 and passage on completion of renewed term.

Bonus of £3 Sterling. On completion of two-and-a-half (2 ½) years term any employee electing to renew for a further period of two-and-a-half (2 ½) years he will be entitled for the above £3 but has then no claim for passage money on expiry of renewed term.

Accommodation. Same as accustomed to on the Ceylon Coffee Estates.

Inducements. 242 square yards for each adult man or woman for garden cultivation, the same not transferable without employer's sanction.

Medical Attendance. Free.

Holidays and Sundays. Sundays, Government holidays and Sinhalese holidays will be allowed.

Illness of employee. During a prolonged or severe illness the employee will be entitled to half salary and food gratis, on doctor's certificate.'

Absence without Leave. To be deducted for per day at £20 per annum on working days.

Size of Gangs. No labourer will be bound to work on any property where there are less than 10 of his own people employed.

Services Transferable. Services are transferable from employer to another for agricultural purposes on a two months' notice from an employer, the new employer undertaking to fulfil all existing agreements made with the old employer.

Wages to Commence. From date of landing at any port of Queensland.

Month of Grace. One (1) month allowed to employer to make arrangements to transport back to Ceylon all time expired labourers.

Many Sri Lankans may have opted to work in plantations and migrated to Queensland. However, the influx of foreign labour was not welcome by majority of the white local workers. A petition was submitted to the Governor by the Mackay constituents on 25th November 1882 demanding that the import of colored races to work in Queensland be immediately stopped. Subsequently a meeting was held with Mackay constituents on Tuesday 28th November. The editor of Mercury in his editorial of Wednesday the 6th December wrote:-

"Mr Black in his address handled the coolie question with considerable adroitness. He avoided the headlong determination of those who would prohibit the importation of Coolies altogether, and the eagerness of those who fancy their earthly means will vanish unless a horde of dusky toilers are tempted across the "black water". It may after all prove that both classes are labouring in vain. The Cingalese (Celonese) who recently arrived do not appear charmed with the vastness of the prospects set before them. They do not consider that twenty pounds a year and find themselves affords much margin for profit. The extravagance of some of these Asiatics is positively appalling. The question to be really solved is whether or not the importation of the Coolies will injure the white inhabitants. The cry for the white men does not seem unreasonable when read by the light of recent events. The Coolie it would seem, is not a simple child of nature. He has received an education. The few that have come in contact with tradesmen of Mackay has rather astonished those worthies... There is a great fluency in the use of English language and a competent knowledge of mental arithmetic. They are dangerous. They will not and cannot be circumscribed in the nature of their employment. The class of Cingalese who have honoured us with their presence have souls above Chinese labour. In fact they appear to be intelligent, well trained artisans whom it is as reasonable to restrict to the shovel and the hoe as it would be to yoke a high bred and spirited horse to a bullock dray. We cannot have that class of men".

The editor of the *Mercury* then cited the fact that the Government of Ceylon had already informed the Government of Queensland that it had every intention of introducing legislation that would regulate emigration under agreement. He foresaw that the Cingalese would receive such protection at the hands of their protectors as would prove embarrassing to those Queenslanders who desired the cheapest form of labour. The editor's confidence in his assessment of the future migration from Ceylon was further expressed in a leading article in the *Mercury* on Sunday, 16 December.

"There is every indication that the Coolie business is working its own cure. The Cingalese are not pleasant or desirable additions to our population. They know too much and work too little. The prompt manner in which they struck work for white wages on their arrival considerably startled the gentlemen who relied on them for support under their tribulations... The question is solved. The real cause of dread has disappeared. Queensland could do in the future as she has done in the past and steadily advance without coolies". (Courtesy: Stanley J Sparkes)

Additional note:

- 1) In the 1880s came Sinhalese labourers from Sri Lanka, most of who were Theravadin Buddhists. Brought here to work in the sugar industry, they constructed Australia's first Buddhist temple (since demolished) on Thursday Island, and planted bodhi trees there. Like the Chinese, most of these Sinhalese Buddhists returned to their homeland by the end of the nineteenth century. Some remained, however, and descendants, recognisable by their Sinhalese names, can be found among the members of some present-day Buddhist societies in Queensland. (Prof. R. S Bucknell, University of Qld)

The National Anthem of Sri Lanka

Do you know the origin of Namo Namo Matha? After Sri Lanka gained independence from the British colonialists in 1948, the people of Sri Lanka awakened to new patriotic feelings. As one of the first steps of a new nation-state, which had freed itself from colonial powers, finding a lyrical expression of its independent status was a priority for the rulers.

A competition was conducted to find a suitable anthem which would befit the island nation. Namo Namo Matha, composed by Ananda Samarakoon, was selected as the national anthem on November 22, 1951.

It was rendered in public for the first time on Independence Day, February 4, 1952, by 500 students from Musaeus collage, Colombo, and was broadcast over the radio.

The national anthem describes the natural beauty and the bounty of Sri Lanka, its rich harvests and many other qualities.

Dear Members / Friends

**The Annual Dinner Dance of the Society will be held on
25th October 2008**

at the

CHIFLEY AT LENNONS BRISBANE

In Aid of Hear and Say Worldwide Queensland-Sri Lanka Project

ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertising in the Newsletter

You can advertise your products or services for a fee of \$50 for a business-card sized display in three consecutive issues of the Newsletter. Please note that the Society does not guarantee or accept responsibility for any product or service so advertised.

Society Webpage

A new webpage for the Society has been set up at the URL: <http://www.srilanakansqld.org>. For any communication regarding the webpage please contact the Webpage Administrator, whose contact details are given on page 2. Please consult the webpage for the latest information about the Society.

GOOD TIMES NETWORK

For Copies of photographs please send in a photocopy of photograph or subject. Also state the date & Venue. Please send in payment with order and your prints will Be posted to you immediately.

Phone/Fax 24 HR ACCESS: 3844 3099

P.O.Box 5212, West end
Brisbane Qld 4101.

Email: goodtimephotos@hotmail.com

Please contact the above for your 2008 April New Year Prints.



AWESOME BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY



MailPost is currently the fastest growing franchise type operation in Australia with over 280 agents in 9 months. MailPost is the 'next generation in postal services' and has 'clear market advantages'.

Postie Agency

Easy to run
No experience necessary
Flexibility to organise your day
Work from a home base
Low investment from \$15k
Great earning potential

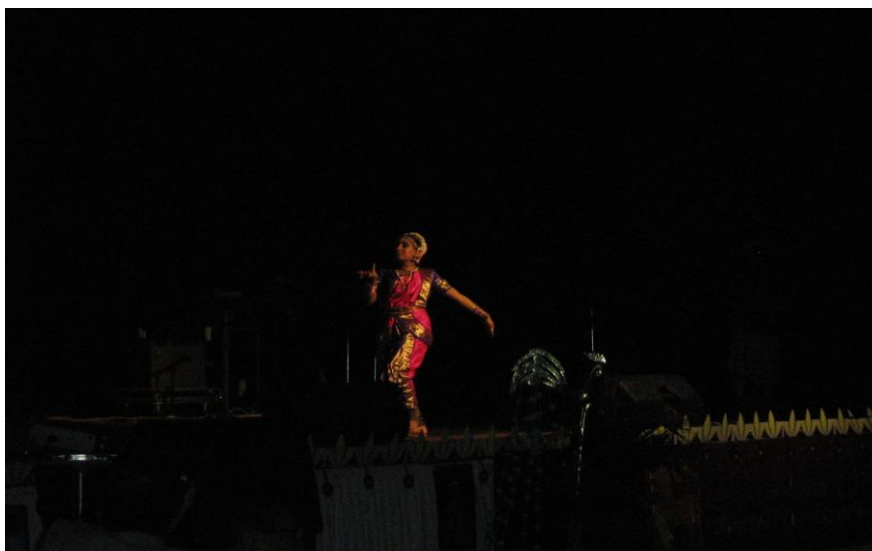
Postie Agent Receives

Dedicated computer & printer
Uniforms including latest walking shoes
Marketing material including service brochures & business cards
GPS tracking & reporting device
Vehicle lease subsidised for 2 years
Allocated shares on entry

**Why wait for someone else to secure your local area?
Contact Regional Agent Darren Batchelor on 0401 561 164**

New Year April 2008





1. The Founder President Mr Pat Abey and the **His excellency The High Commissioner of Sri Lanka Mr Balapatabendi** lighting the traditional oil lamp. 2. The Founder President receives the trophy in recognition of his contribution to the society by the president of the Sri Lanka Society.



The Sri Lankan High Commissioner receives a memento on behalf of all Sri Lankans in Brisbane from the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland. The Chief Guest Senator Clair Moore, Senator for Queensland delivering her speech.



CURRYNIGHT- 19 JULY

at 6.30PM

Cannon Hill Bowls Club

Cnr Princess & Lang Street,
Cannon Hill,



Music by Club DJ

Menu: Yellow Rice, Chicken Curry, Beef Stir Fry, Vegetable Curry, Mango
Chutney & Papadams

Dessert: Fruit Salad & Jelly with Custard

Price of Ticket: \$15 adults, Students(identification required) &
Pensioners \$12.50 Children Under 12 \$7.50, Children Under 5
Free.

Sponsored by

SRI LANKA SOCIETY OF QLD Inc

Tickets from Swarna 3343 1558, Hiran 0411480337, Kanaji 3206
1660, Pushpa 3300 9911, Sama 3300 2278, Hermin 3396 9061,
Ronnie 3818 3903 & Prabath 0423296509



දුරකථන/Telephones
ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික රෝහල } 691111
The National Hospital
අධ්‍යක්ෂ } 698443
Director
ෆැක්ස් අංකය } 698443
Fax No.
විමසීම් } 693510
Inquiries
මගේ අංකය }
My Ref.
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කොළඹ 10.**

**THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL OF SRI LANKA (TEACHING)
COLOMBO 10.**

Mr. Hiran Cooray
President of Sri Lanka Society
No 3, Kilburn Place
Carindale
Qld 4152
Australia

14th May 2008

Donation of Computers

Hereby I wish to convey my sincere thanks to you and your society for organizing and shipping the donation of ten computers to Sri Lanka. We appreciate so much the donation of seven computers to National Hospital and three computers were handed over to Dr. Mrs. Chandra Gunathilake – Director of Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya.

Seven computers we received at National Hospital were distributed as given below.

1. Senior Cardiologist – Dr. Ruwan Ekanayake (MD, MRCP, FRCP, FACC)
Cardiology Unit
2. Consultant Genito Urinary Surgeon – Dr. Neville Perera (MS, FRCS)
Genito Urinary Surgical Unit
3. Consultant Pathologist – Dr. Ruchira Fernando (MD) – Pathology Lab
4. Resident Physician – Dr. Pradeep De Silva (MD) – Resident Physician's Office



දුරකථන/Telephones
ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික රෝහල } 691111
The National Hospital
අධ්‍යක්ෂ } 698443
Director
ෆැක්ස් අංකය } 698443
Fax No.
විමසීම් } 693510
Inquiries
මගේ අංකය }
My Ref.
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Your Ref.

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කොළඹ 10.**

**THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL OF SRI LANKA (TEACHING)
COLOMBO 10.**

5. Medical Officer in charge of Out Patient Department – Dr. Ms. Ama Weeratunga
6. Dr (Mrs.) Chandra Jayasuriya – Consultant ENT Surgeon – Consultants Lounge
7. Dr. S. Anandarajah (MD, MRCP) – Consultant Physician – Ward 49 (General Medical Ward)

We also thank Queensland University of Technology for donating the computers to NHSL and we appreciate so much the effort taken by Dr. Kalidasa Adikari for coordinating this invaluable donation from Australia to Sri Lanka.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Rani Fernando
Deputy Director,
NHSL

Dr. (Mrs) RANI FERNANDO
B. B. B. S. (Cey) DPM Colombo
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL OF SRI LANKA
COLOMBO.

The QUT through the Sri Lanka Society, donated 10 computers to the Sri Lanka Teaching Hospital in Colombo. The computers being accepted by the Minister of Health, Hon Nimal Siripala De Silva.



The QUT together with Dr Tony Sahama will organise further shipments through the Sri Lanka Society to various teaching Hospitals in Sri Lanka. This will be an ongoing project for the society in the near future. We would like to mention that the QUT did a wonderful job of making sure these computers are in good working condition before they were shipped.

The Sri Lanka Society of Queensland hopes to conduct traditional Low country dancing, Ballet, Bharata Natyam and Drumming practices for Sri Lankans of all ages.

Anyone who is interested please contact the Gen Secretary Mr Kanaji Wijesekera on 0430297743 to register your interest.



Sri Lanka Society of Queensland Inc
P.O. Box 15099
City East QLD, 4002

Deliver to:

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Circulation

This Newsletter is sent to all members, libraries, fraternal societies etc. It is also sent to persons who actively support Society activities. **If you receive it and are not in any of the above categories please inform the Society, or return it to the sender.** If you have not received your copy please contact the Publications Secretary.

Objects and Rules of the Society

The **Objects** are:

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

The **Rules** of the Society are those of a non-profit society. If you need to see the Constitution of the Society please contact the Secretary.

Contacting the Society

See above for postal address, masthead for email and Webpage, page 2 for office bearers.

Brief History

Established in 1975 and incorporated a few years later. First Society in Queensland dedicated to serving all Queenslanders of Sri Lankan origin irrespective of ethnic identity, religion or language spoken.

Membership of the Society

Open to anyone subscribing to the objects of the Society (see above). Annual fees are \$15 for family, \$10 single (Pensioners and Students: \$10 family, \$7 single). Application Form is given below, please return with the relevant fee.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Name (with preferred title):

Postal Address:

Telephone: **Email:**

Category (please tick): ☐ Family (\$15), ☐ Single (\$10), ☐ Concession Family (\$10), ☐ and Concession Single (\$7)

Name of Partner (Family category only):

I wish to be involved in or to involve my children in Society cultural activities (dancing etc.) [Please tick]

I apply for membership of the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland Inc. I agree with the objects and the rules of the Society. I enclose the relevant fee.

SIGNATURE: **DATE:**