

SRI LANKA SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND Inc.

NEWSLETTER



Incorporated 1984

EMAIL: secretary@srilankansqld.org

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

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Notice of Annual General Meeting

Date: Sunday, 11th of February 2018.

Venue: Toowong Community Hall, Josling St, Toowong

Time: 4.30 pm.

- The Membership Form is attached for those wishing to obtain membership for the current year.
Forms will also be available at the AGM for anyone who wishes to obtain membership on the day.
- Only financial members may vote and hold positions in the committee.
- Members may nominate any other member to any position on the committee. Please use the Nomination form attached.
- All positions on the committee will be declared vacant before the election of new office bearers.

Please inform us of your attendance as we need the numbers for catering purposes. Dinner will be available for a nominal price.

RSVP by return email or phone -

Gothami: 3341 0102, Persis: 3398 8352, Neela: 0400 838 386

Sri Lanka Society of Queensland Inc.

Nomination Form

I,, being a financial

member of the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland Inc., do hereby nominate:

.....

to the position of: on the Management Committee.

Signatures of the nominating members –

Proposer: Date:

Seconder: Date:

Signature of nominee: Date:

The Nomination Form may be posted to the following address:

Sri Lanka Society of Queensland

PO Box 15099, CITY EAST, BRISBANE, QLD 4002

Drumming Classes

Classes held on Sunday mornings at Mt Gravatt

For further information call

Gothami – 3341 0102 / Namal – 0433 427 377 / Chamitha – 0430 047 664

Sri Lanka Ridma Ranga Dhara

The power and beauty of the traditional dances of Sri Lanka mesmerised an appreciative audience of over 300 when the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland hosted 'Sri Lanka Ridma Ranga Dhara' by the National Dance Troupe of Sri Lanka. The performance was held on the 23rd of November 2017 at the Moreton Bay College Music Hall and was attended by Councillor Angela Owen, Chairman of Council and Councillor for Calamvale Ward and Anton Swan, Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka in Queensland.



The opening speech given by the Artistic Director, Mr Ravibandhu Vidyapathy, who explained the traditions of Sri Lankan drumming and dancing and their primary purpose of healing people, was illuminating. This was followed by an enthralling performance by the troupe that

made us proud of our rich cultural heritage.

The blessings of the triple gem were invoked to the accompaniment of the Magul Bera (ceremonial drumming). followed by the traditional Puja Dance dedicated to the goddess of music and dance,



Saraswathi. The dances that followed were a mix of the traditional and more modern interpretations of the Vannam dances. Each item was executed with precision and artistic flair that showcased the talent and the dedication of the artists.

After the interval, we were in for more excitement with the drummers displaying their expertise to the delight of the audience. The Ves dancers amazed the

younger generation who had never seen this level of skill with the acrobatic somersaulting and incredible twirls and jumps. The Salu Paliya had the audience in fits of laughter. The final item of drum orchestra was indeed a fitting finale for a memorable performance.

The numerous people who thanked the committee for bringing the troupe to Brisbane was very encouraging. The management committee and the other volunteers who worked so hard to make this show a success, felt that our efforts and sacrifices had been for a very worthy cause.



I would like to mention some of the comments from the audience.

“Brought tears to my eyes when I heard the beloved ‘Bera Pada’ (drum beats) played to perfection and to watch the skill of the dancers” - Amara (dance teacher)

“Took me back to my student days at the Kelaniya University. I am so happy that the traditions are being preserved.” – Ashani (music teacher).

"For me the nicest things were getting to see and understand more of our



culture, its vibrancy, and maintaining and strengthening our connections to it - especially as we live in another country. Also, I never realised how energetic and fun drumming could be!" – Samanthi (Brisbane Youth drumming troupe)

A dance and drumming workshop was held a couple of days later and was led by Mr. Vidyapathy with the help of members of the troupe. This was greatly appreciated by the teachers and youth in Brisbane. The hall was filled to capacity and many of the teachers and parents requested Mr. Vidyapathy to return to Brisbane for another workshop in the future.

We were also very pleased by the high level of the performance by our own Brisbane youth. The Sri Lanka Society Hewisi Band led the dignitaries to the hall and performed to the audience and the Dance Troupe choreographed by Dinesh Epasinghe who did a Welcome dance to welcome the National Dance Troupe to Brisbane. The level of competence achieved while living away from Sri Lanka was commended by the visitors.



On behalf of the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland my heartfelt thanks go to all the volunteers and the hosts who helped us bring this show to Brisbane. We also thank all of you who came to watch and appreciate the National Dance Troupe of Sri Lanka.

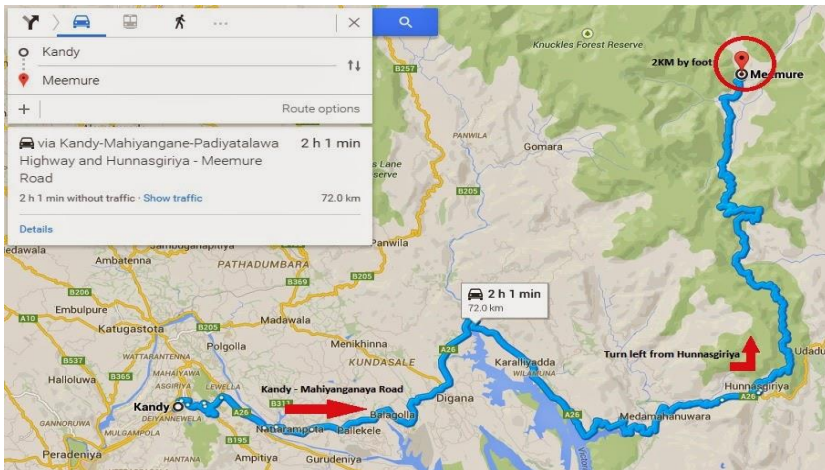
Gothami Meepe

Photos: Swarna Wijesekera & Lekha Suraweera

Meemure - A Hidden Paradise

By Wilmot Senaratne

Meemure is a fascinating and isolated village located on the foot hills nestled in the Knuckles mountain range near the border between Kandy District and Matale District. It is one of the most remote villages in Sri Lanka and came to prominence after the Sinhala film “Sooriya Arana” directed



by Somaratne Dissanayake. On one side of the village is the pyramid shaped granite mountain called Lakegala and west of the village is the Knuckles range consisting of about 34 peaks. There is no cellular service available in the village, although a CDMA telephone service is available. There is no direct mail delivery to the village and a villager journeys each day to Thapal Junction to exchange incoming and outgoing postal mail with a postman. Meemure has a

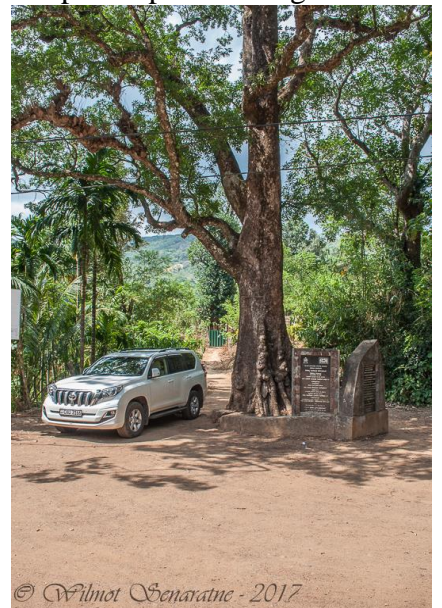
population of about 400 and the residents of the village depend on several staple crops including pepper, cardamom, paddy and ginger.

Meemure is approximately a 7 hour drive from Colombo, in an off road vehicle. The main route is via Kandy city which is 116 km away from Colombo. Then Kandy-Mahiyangana Road (A26) towards Mahiyangana. Turn Left from Hunnasgiriya Junction which is 35 km away from Kandy and go towards the Loolwatte Village which is



Village waterways

15 km away from Hunnasgiriya Junction. From Loolwatte it is about another 15 km to the Meemure Village. The nearest Police station is Teldeniya Police.



© Wilmot Senaratne - 2017

The main Junction in the Village

We approached Meemure from Hunnasgiriya by travelling to Corbet's Gap, a steep uphill stretch of about 17km and then downhill along very steep slopes for another 17km to reach the village. The road was very narrow and in disrepair. At certain sections of the road we had to fill in the potholes with rock to make it safe for the vehicle to drive through. It took us nearly three hours to get to Meemure from Hunnasgiriya, a mere 34 kilometers. Although the route to Meemure was difficult we were rewarded by the rich diversity along the route which was breathtaking. Equally important was the place that we stayed in Hunnasgiriya, a 100 year old cottage called Rajagala



residence (<http://rajagalaresidence.com/>) now operated by a person named Tilak Dissanayake, where the former owner was an English tea planter by the name of Johnston.

On the way to Meemure from Colombo are a number of sites, including Hulu Ganga (River), Victoria Reservoir, Teldeniya New Town (Teldeniya was flooded in filling the Reservoir behind the Victoria Dam, Mahaweli Project), Dothalugala Forest and Botanical Garden, Mini Worlds End and Corbet's Gap (Attala Mottuwa) a very high point in the journey with strong winds. Meemure and Lakegala Mountain is where, according to legend, King Rawana lifted his Air Plane called the "Dhandu Monara".



From Hunnasgiriya to Meemure the road trip takes one through the following villages/towns, Navanagala, Meenagola, Deanstan, Kobonila, Loolwatte, Corbet's gap, Kaikawala. Part of the way is through scenic tea estates and the other through beautiful rainforest. It is only a distance of 30 km but takes about 3hours due to small roads, potholes and disrepair. At Deanstan, one could do a small hike to the mini

World's End with two places to enjoy the wonderful views. The views offer some spectacular sights over the Dumbara valley.

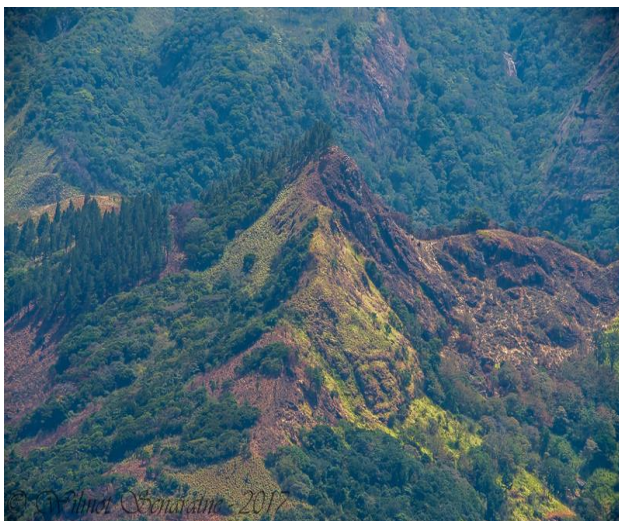


I hope these images of Meemure and the surrounding areas and the opportunity to visit the historic Rajagala residence will stimulate your interest to include a visit to this beautiful area of Sri Lanka on your next visit home.

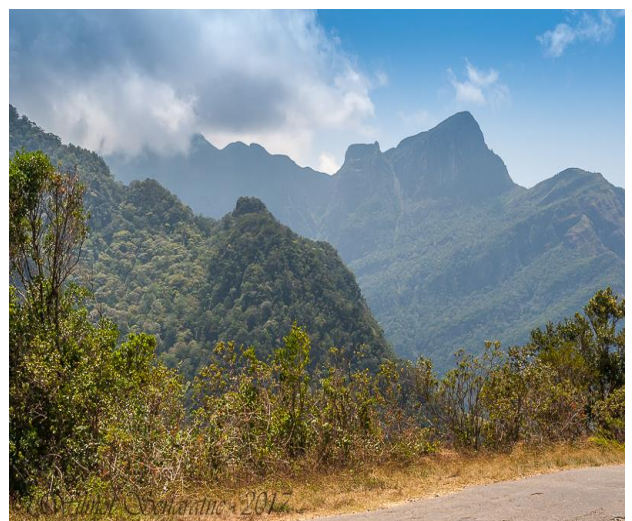
Lakegala



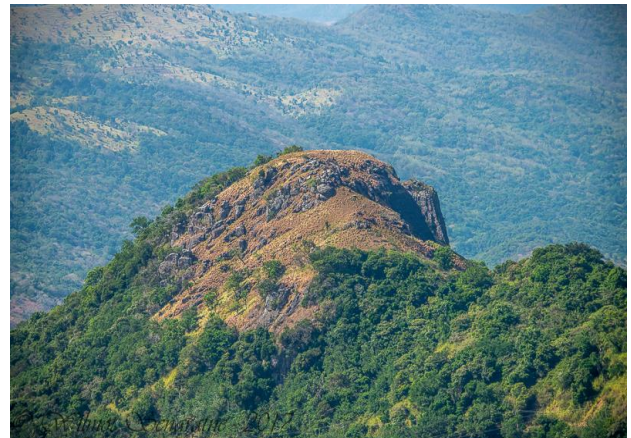
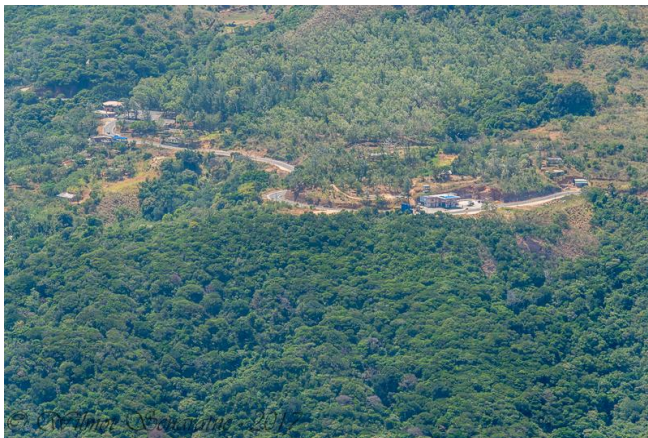
Harvested Paddy Fields (Kamatha)



Knuckles Range



Corbet's Gap



Mini World's End

Photos: Wilmot Senaratne

**Sri Lanka Society Invites you to their 40th
New Year Celebrations**



Saturday 21st April 2018

**Mansfield Tavern, Function Centre
181 Wecker Road, Mansfield**



**Dance till
Midnight!**

Cultural Show

Contact:

Gothami 3341 0102

Namal 0433 427 377

Persis 3398 8352

Chamitha 0430 047 664

***Sri Lankan buffet
&
Rasa Kavili***



More Information to follow

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