

SRI LANKA SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND Inc.

NEWSLETTER



Incorporated 1984

EMAIL: secretary@srilankansqld.org

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

Volume 42

No:3

September 2019

New Year Raffle

Proceeds from the New Year Lunch was sent to the Mahila Samiti who donated it to the Archbishop of Colombo, Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith's Relief Fund to help the victims of the Easter Bombing. As our event was scheduled before the bombing and was not held as a fund raiser, we still managed to collect some funds through the raffle to send to the victims. We thank everyone for their generosity.



Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith

July 23, 2019

Mrs Thilaka Perera
President - Lanka Mahila Samiti
168, 1/1, New Kandy Road
Welivita
Malabe

Dear Mrs Perera,

It is with sincere thanks that I write to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 8th July 2019 and your kind contribution of two cheques for the amounts of Rs. 42,397/- (From Mrs Gothami Meepe, President Sri Lankan Society of Queensland) and Rs. 7,603/- (From the Lanka Mahila Samiti) sent towards the Relief Fund established to help the families of the deceased and for the rehabilitation of the injured affected by the senseless attack on Easter Sunday. We are indeed moved by your kindness and solidarity.

Kindly convey my sincere gratitude to all those who contributed towards this fund from the Sri Lankan Society of Queensland and the Lanka Mahila Samiti, for their generous contribution. I also wish to express my heartfelt appreciation for this your most generous gesture and solidarity with us. May God bless and reward you all for this generosity.

Wishing you and your families God's blessings on all your endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith
Archbishop of Colombo

Encl: Official Receipt Nos. 80488 - Sri Lankan Society of Queensland
80489 - Lanka Mahila Samiti



Mahila Samiti committee handing over the donation
to the Archbishop of Colombo

SRI LANKA SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND PRESENTS

FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATIONS 2019



Saturday

19th
October

Cultural Show & Sri Lankan Buffet



Dance with Soloz until midnight

*Mansfield Tavern (Function centre)
181 Wecker Road, Mansfield
From 5:30 pm until midnight*

Contact :

Gothami 0421 635 353

Namal 0433 427 377

Sandhya 0422 932 366

Members

Non Members

Students

Children 6-12 yrs

Children under 6 yrs

\$50

\$60

\$35

\$20

\$10

Colombo Mayor visits Brisbane

A few women members from the Sri Lanka Society Management Committee hosted the Mayor of Colombo, Mrs Rosy Senanayake along with other active women members from the community. The idea came from Mrs Sugee Kannangara when the information of the Mayor's arrival for the APCS and Mayor's Forum, held in Brisbane became known to us just a day ahead of the conference.

It was decided to have a women's meeting to give us a chance to discuss issues pertaining to women and children and find out if we could build any networks that would be of mutual benefit. Though it was a hastily organised dinner, it proved to be very productive. There was a good exchange of information and a chance for networking in the future. Ranjika presented the Mayor with brochures containing information on Domestic Violence which Mrs Senanayake was happy to accept and to ensure that it was given to the right sources.

Mr. Anton Swan, the Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka in Queensland presented Mrs Senanayake with the "Book of Condolences" which was opened by the Brisbane Mayor and signed by the people of Brisbane to offer their sympathy for the victims of the Easter Sunday Bombings. This book had been handed over to Mr Anton Swan by the Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner. Mrs Senanayake spoke of her plan to build a memorial for the victims and that this would be very much appreciated in Colombo.



Of Salt and Sand - Tales of old Hambantota Hambantota - My Hometown

by Denis Andrado Sr



Most believe that Hambantota, being in the dry zone, has a hot climate. On the contrary, it has a salubrious climate, being almost entirely surrounded by expanses of water. As one motors towards the town from Matara, a mile from the town, at Rathupasgodella the sea is on your right and stretches round the headland, sweeping into the bay and beyond. Again from Rathupasgodella, on your left, a series of lewayas (saltwater lagoons) — Karagan lewaya, Maha lewaya, and

Koholankala lewaya — ring the other side of the town. Breezes blowing over these expanses of water tend to keep the humidity down.

My early memories of the town evolve around its beaches, lewayas and its scrub jungle with wood-apple, Masan, Palu, tamarind and Margosa trees. During the school holidays it was taken for granted we would go for a swim in the bay every morning, laze on the beach, dive off the old pier, watch the fishing boats return after a night's fishing, skimming the water under full sail, like graceful swans. Sometimes we would give a hand to haul the boats onto the shore safe from the breaking waves and tides, or join in the hauling of the Maha dhalla (net). If the catch was good, we were sometimes rewarded with a small fish for our effort, which we would proudly take home.

Most evenings were spent having long walks along the shores of the lewayas below the little hill on which our house stood. The dogs, a shotgun and a pair of binoculars were a part of the walk, and if we were lucky, we would return home at dusk with a few wildfowl, which ended on the dinner table that night, or would make forays into the scrub jungle around the lewayas to gather 'bush tucker', mostly berries in season like Palu, Veera, Mora, Masan, Erameniya, Kon, tamarind, and even wood-apple or lotus seeds and roots. Some evenings, after my father got back from the Kachcheri office where he worked, he would go for a game of tennis, and we would accompany him acting as ball-pickers, so that when the adults took a break, it was our turn to pick up their racquets and try and get a game ourselves. Sometimes on full-moon

nights, as a family we would pack up a picnic dinner of string-hoppers, etc., and go down to the bay for a swim – the water was always tepid – and end up having dinner off banana leaves on the beach. At one time of the year, when the turtles came ashore to lay their eggs at night on the stretch of beach beyond Rathupasgodella, we would sit on the dunes in the moonlight to watch the process. Sometimes we drew blank, but sometimes we were lucky. I can still picture the flocks of migratory wild ducks and flamingos, in their hundreds, flying overhead, or on the water in the lewayas – especially the flamingos standing on their long stilt-like legs, their equally long necks, and a splash of crimson on their white wings.

They reminded you that Christmas was near, as they visited us to escape the cold Siberian winter and would leave our shores by the end of February or March. Today their numbers are much depleted, mainly through loss of habitat in their native land.

Sometimes we would see wild elephants across the water on the further shore of the lewayas or a few deer; sadly this is no more, for the jungle has been cleared and humans have occupied these shores. But before the locals taking up residence, during the latter part of World War II, battalions of British, Indian and American troops camped out in the area, and used the surrounding jungle, for training in jungle warfare, before making the big push against the Japanese in Burma. Another memory I cherish is of, as we used to call them, the back-door salesmen, who would call as the opportunity arose. There was the jaggery man who would carry his wares in a ‘gunny’ sack over his shoulder, and one had to stock up till his next visit. Sometimes he would, on request bring a patay of kitul honey, which was often hung over the kitchen fireplace till it started to crystallize. There was the caju man, who also carried his cashews in a sack. The cashews were sold by number unhusked, and he would patiently count them out for you. There was the ‘Chinaman’ who carried a huge bundle of cotton fabrics, china silk, etc., all neatly packed on his head. There was the crabman, who also carried the crabs in a gunny sack. As crabs were only bought live, he had a selected clientele. Again, one also had the odd poacher, who sold his venison on the sly. He would take your order and deliver it when it was safe. His clientele consisted of households whom he felt would not report him to the authorities.

In those early days there was no pipe-borne water supply to the town. Water was carted to homes by a cart, which consisted of a simple chassis on which was mounted a two-hundred-gallon drum (lengthwise). It had a large funnel on the top through which it was filled, and bung at the bottom at one end from which it was emptied. Water was collected from a few public wells in the town. The poorer people would carry large pots of water on their hips or head from these wells to their homes.

A pipe-borne water supply from the Walawe Ganga was started about 1934, with a main pipeline laid from a pumping station on the Walawe river to a concrete reservoir overlooking

the town. Initially water was supplied to a few standpipes on certain streets, and as conditions improved, water was supplied to those households who could afford to pay for it.

Even today the supply is somewhat erratic, depending on the volume of water in the river, and periods when the paper mills at Embilipitiya discharged their effluent into the Walawe Ganga. Electricity came in before the water supply, being introduced to light up the streets, and government buildings and the homes of citizens who could afford it. It also provided power for the pumps that became a part of the improvements in the production of salt. Today wind power is being studied to generate electricity with a pilot plant of five-wing turbines at Karagam lewaya on the outskirts of the town, connected to the national grid. This pilot project is expected to produce three megawatts of power [per day?].

One cannot miss the lighthouse and the Martiello Tower, fondly referred to by the locals as the "pestle and mortar". The lighthouse was commissioned in 1926. Most visitors to the Yala Game Sanctuary, or Kataragama, would have taken a break at the rest-house (1910), sipping a cool drink or beer on the veranda, enjoying a view of the bay with the seven hills of Kataragama on the far horizon. Today, to keep up with tourism, additional air-conditioned rooms have been added, while still keeping its old colonial character. No mention of Hambantota can be passed without reference to its famous curd, made of buffalo milk, and of course its trademark sweet kaludodol. One can go reminiscing but it's time to get into present time.

What of the future? Will the wind farm be expanded? There was a proposal to build an oil refinery on the far side of the bay. Development of the port of Hambantota is under consideration. It could become the largest commercial port in the island, considering its position, deep anchorage, and availability of land for container and warehouse expansion; and the fact that ports like Colombo and Galle are already congested and have no room for expansion.

Will national prosperity override the petty politics of the day, and hasten its development? Come what may, to me Hambantota, my hometown, will always be associated with its rural atmosphere, friendly town folk, windswept beaches and lewayas, its variety of wildlife, curd, kaludodol, and the salt of the earth!

(Acknowledgement. I am indebted to various publications, newspaper articles, journals, etc., for information regarding the history of Hambantota as put down in this article) 2002.
Published in the Island Newspaper

First Progress Report on the Queensland Multicultural Policy

On 20 August 2019, the First Progress Report on the Queensland Multicultural Policy was tabled in Parliament.

Following the conclusion of the Multicultural Action Plan 2016-17 to 2018-19, the *Multicultural Recognition Act 2016* requires the Minister for Multicultural Affairs to table a report in Parliament about the Queensland Multicultural Policy and release a further Multicultural Action Plan.

The [First Progress Report on the Queensland Multicultural Policy](#) highlights key outcomes achieved under the Multicultural Action Plan 2016-17 to 2018-19, and discusses future opportunities for action.

The [Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2019-20 to 2020-21](#) and [Queensland Multicultural Policy](#) will continue to drive Queensland Government action under the three priorities of:

- achieving culturally responsive government
- supporting inclusive, harmonious and united communities
- improving economic opportunities.

To find out more information visit www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/action-plan

**The website below has recently been created by a fellow Sri Lankan in Sydney. It is absolutely amazing - and has everything you can think of about our beautiful Sri Lanka. <http://thelankan3000.webnode.com/>
Please also forward this message to your friends**

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**