

SRI LANKA SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND Inc *NEWSLETTER*

Established 1978



Incorporated 1984

EMAIL: secretary@srilankansqld.org

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

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With 2016 coming to an end it is appropriate to reflect on the year the Society had. Our flagship function for the year was the New Year Cultural Concert held in April. This was a success with large attendance. We were honoured by the attendance of High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Australia; Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs; Deputy Mayor, Chair for Public and Active Transport and Councillor for Chandler, representing the Lord Mayor of Brisbane; Consul General for Sri Lanka in NSW and Qld; and Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka in Queensland.

The second function for the year was the *Members & Friends Night* in October. This again was well attended at a new venue at St. James Hall Coorparoo. It was an enjoyable night for all who attended.

This year the Society donated \$1,720 to charitable causes. That is, \$1,220 to Federation of Sri Lankan Organisations in Queensland (FSOQ) to freight beds and other equipment from health institutions in Queensland to Rural Hospitals in Sri Lanka, \$250 each to FSOQ and 4EB Sri Lanka Group for the Sri Lanka Floods.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Society will be on the 5th of February. There is a notice for this included in the Newsletter. I hope you will be able to attend.

The New Year Cultural Concert for 2017 will be held on the 22nd of April. Please keep the date free.

In April next year it will be 70 years since Sri Lanka and Australia established diplomatic relations. At a function in Canberra on 12 November the official logo for the celebration of the anniversary designed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) was unveiled. The Sri Lankan High Commission is coordinating activities in each State to celebrate. The Society New Year Cultural Concert will be a joint function and will include the 70th anniversary celebrations.

Thank you to all the members and friends for attending the functions and continuing support of the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland.

Have a wonderful Christmas and wishing you good health and happiness in the coming year.

Hermin Goonetilleke

FROM THE EDITOR (Stand in)

With the footy season done and dusted post Sharks winning the Rugby League Premiership for the first time in club's half a century history and the Wallabies ending their season losing to England coached by former Wallabies coach Eddie Jones, in a case of somewhat an Aussie beating Aussie team, we are now well into the cricket season. It's pleasing to see Aussies turning the corner in cricket to win the third test versus Proteas finally post losing the first two games and winning all there short form of the game against Kiwis. Not sure about the boxing ring in terms of timing though it certainly seems to have started back in Lanka creating some hot air in the media and raising eye brows.

It's not long to go until the new year, the year 2016 seems to have whisked passed us in double quick time, the time of the year we all should sit back and take a good stock of our objectives versus completing professionally and individually as well as an organisation, set up at the beginning for the current year. Festive season is around the corner where parties galore, tend to brush the health aside a bit though it is quite important to keep fit and healthy irrespective. Happy Reading !

Compliments of the Season !

Chandra Godakanda Arachchi

THE SECRETARY' Patch

Notice of Annual General Meeting Sri Lanka Society of Queensland

Dear Members and Friends

The management committee of the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland would like to invite you to attend our Annual General Meeting

Date: **Sunday, 5th of February 2017**
Venue: Toowong Community Hall, Josling Street, Toowong
Time: 4.00 p.m.

The Agenda for the evening is attached

- 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 that 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 catered by Thilani and will be available for a nominal price.

RSVP by return email or phone:

Hermin - 3396 9061
Gothami - 3341 0102
Persis - 3398 8352

Persis Ranasinghe
Secretary

Note: Nomination Form and Membership Form included in the Newsletter

NEWS & VIEWS

Short History – Kandyan Dancing

Kandyan dancing has been popular, being performed by a large number in Sri Lanka and all over the world by the migrants from Sri Lanka. It's no secret that lot of girls from Brisbane too do perform Kandyan dance at various functions. Sri Lanka Society of Queensland has been in forefront for a long time since the inception of the society from 1978 to promote Kandyan dancing among children here in Brisbane. Therefore, it may be worthwhile and appropriate to write a bit about the history of Kandyan dancing in Sri Lanka.

The Origin of Kohomba Kankariya is said to be connected to tribal queen Kuveni and Prince Vijaya, who became Sri Lanka's first king. Kohomba Kankariya a complex form of dance, originally performed to invoke blessing of twelve deities including Kohomba Yaka. It was also used to be a method of healing, performed overnight until early hours in the morning. Looking back over a century ago in early part of the 20th century, Kandyan dancing including Kohomba Kankariya was performed exclusively by the males belonging to dancing caste living in rural areas. However a certain section of Ceylonese, particularly those brought up with Western culture influence of elite families took interest in Kandyan dancing. George E De Silva a prominent lawyer (*later became a minister in State Council of Ceylon in 1931*) who practiced in Kandy too took interest in Kandyan dancing and got his two daughters Minette and Anil to learn Kandyan dancing from Nittawela Ukkuwa, a popular dancer at the time way back in 1920s. George was married to a burgher lady from an elite burgher family, however he was instrumental in breaking the tradition of treating Kandyan dancers poorly when he made Kandyan dancers sit around the dinning table to enjoy the meal together with his family. That was the first step taken in introducing Kandyan dancing to upper class women of Ceylon by breaking the gender restriction and to treat Kandyan dancers with due respect. However there is no evidence to suggest that George's daughters continuing with Kandyan dancing but Minette seems to have dropped Kandyan dancing and read to become the first Sri Lankan woman architect.

Miriam Peiris born in 1908, daughter of Paul E Peiris, a civil servant and a scholar, had studied dance and music in England and India was the first woman to perform Kandyan dancing in public. She also had appeared as an "Exotic Dancer" in the film "The Drum" in 1938. Miriam learnt the art of Kandyan dancing from Nittawela Gunaya (younger brother of Nittawela Ukkuwa) in early 1930s, probably influenced by her close relatives Justin Deraniyagala and Arthur Molamue who were keen to preserve Kanyan dancing. Miriam having mastered Kandyan dancing did a public performance on stage in Colombo sponsored by Lionel Wendt. The performance was a main news item on the day in Times of Ceylon which was somewhat scandalous at the time. Miriam published an article in "Dancing Times" in London about Dances in Ceylon with a photo of her wearing full traditional Kandyan costume. Miriam didn't progressed to become a professional dancer though her contribution was very significant to break the gender and caste barriers.

Breen Hilda Karunathilake, known to the audience as Chandralekha, encouraged by her husband initially learnt Udarata dancing around 1935 from Rangama Gunamala and Muruthawe Liminduwa then from Algama Kariganitha. Chitrasena too had been there to learn the art from Kariganitha, however Chandralekha was a bit disappointed due to the fact that she has not been taught the dance in full being a woman but Chitrasena. As Chandralekha wanted to perform on stage, it is said that Kanakariya was modified, new dance steps and drum beats were created for her by Kariganitha and his drummer Panis (Pani Bharatha). Chandralekha post above episode went to India to learn Kathakali dance from Chitrodaya school. It is said that Chitrasena too was trained at Chitrodaya School.

Chandralekha and Chitrasena did a few duo dance performances in India during 1940 and 1941 also in Kaluthara back in Sri Lanka where the center stage belonged to Chandralekha being a female dancer though Chitrasena was a better dancer. Chandralekha and Chitrasena did another performance at Regal Theatre in Colombo in the audience of then Governor Sir Andrew Caldecott in 1941. Chandralekha did a few solo dances with full costume (Ves costume and tattuwa). Traditional dancers were not really happy when Chandralekha danced with full costume. Sadly Chandralekha passed away still young in 1941 post suffering from Tuberculosis. No doubt she would had

a lot more to offer to the nation particularly to females in terms of dancing.

It was said that that Vajira's mother too was very interested in dancing, wanted to become a dancer and the mother wasted no time in sending Vajira to Chitrasena for dance training. Chitrasena later teamed up with Vajira to create the well known history in dancing. Kala Suri Vajira's first public performance was on the independence day in 1948 where she made an immediate impact on the audience with her exceptional performance. Chitrasena married Vajira in 1950, the duo performed not only in Sri Lanka but all over the world for a long time entertaining different audience of many cultures. Female costume including a headdress and an armlet for female dancers was originally designed (not by Vajira) in 1949 for Vajira's Pooja Dance in Ravana ballet which now is the standard costume for Kandyan dancers. Vajira performed for fifty eight years from 1948 to 2006, the contribution to dance arena is very significant and valuable. Vajira taught at Chitrasena Dance School where she was responsible for the syllabus as well. It seems that one reason for their long time success in dancing appears to be changing the dances to suit the time and audience. We Sri Lankans should be truly proud of what the duo has achieved and contributed to Sri Lankan dance stage over a long period of time.

Source Internet – The Island

Members & Friends Night 2016

The Sri Lanka Society of Queensland held their annual Members and Friends Night on the 22nd of October at St James Hall at Coorparoo. It was an occasion for members of the Society and their friends to meet, and enjoy a tasty Sri Lankan meal with good music. The function was held as a special thank you to our members and guests, wrapping up the societies' activities for the year. Throughout the evening, many old friends were able to catch up and new friendships were formed. There were also several new settlers and visitors to Brisbane present. Many of them were fortunate to meet several friends after a long absence.

The dinner consisted of Hoppers by Roshna, Stringhoppers by Sumudu and Curries and Watalappam by Thilani. The sumptuous meal was enjoyed by all. A wide variety of music such as English oldies, dance melodies and Sri

Lankan songs including bails were played by SOLOZ consisting of Manoj Silva, Nalin Silva, Susantha and Mark Perera. This provided the incentive for dancing after the dinner.

It was an enjoyable night with good feedback from many participants !

Sri Lanka Society of Queensland appreciate and value your participation !!

Ananda Samarakoon – Forgotten Artist



Nation has lost the Mastero, Pandith Amaradeva in the recent past. He was a musician extremely skillful and talented, produced the best of our own music without copying North Indian music. There was a pin drop silent wherever he performed. His disarming smile, gentle speech and flawless expression in music combined with honeyed voice mesmerized the audience, yet he enjoyed a bit of humor as well. He won the hearts and minds of all he associated with, all musicians young and not so young looking forward to be on stage with him, all prominent powers calling the shots wanted to be seen with him. That's the level any young musician would aspire to be. It is timely to explore the contribution by one of Pandit Amaradeva's predecessors Ananda Samarakoon who in fact created the genre of original Sinhala music prior to Amaradeva, thereafter Amaradeva advanced and mastered on what Ananda Samarakoon created.

It is known that Ananda Samarakoon was the creator of our national anthem. Egodahage George Wilfred Alwis Samarakoon was born in 1911 in Liyanwela, Padukka. As a very young student, he was caught by the teacher writing a song during an Arithmetic class. Teacher asked him to sing a song as the punishment. Ananda sang the song with instantly created tune, on completion of singing Ananda received a big applause from his classmates and the teacher was dumbfounded. He had his secondary education at Christian College in Kotte. Ananda was appointed as a teacher in music and art a few years post completion of studies.

Twentieth century cultural icon Rabindranath Tagore on his last overseas tour arrived in Ceylon in 1934 accompanied by his daughter in law Pratima Tagore, Nandalal Bose a renowned artist and twenty three students from Santiniketan, performed in Colombo and Jaffna. Inspired by the performances and creativity of Rabindarnath Tagore and the group, Samarakoon joined Tagore's Cultural University, Visva-Bharati in Santiniketan in 1936 and returned after six months completely transformed with the adopted name Ananda.

How beautiful is our motherland, the beauty we can witness from air when fly back to Sri Lanka landing in Katunayake during a day with good visibility. It could have been much more prettier way back in 1940 what Samarakoon may have seen from air landing at Katunayake. He was really fascinated by the beauty of Sri Lanka. Ananda Samarakoon was appointed as the music teacher of Mahinda College, Galle at the time. He wasted no time putting his thoughts (the beauty of Sri Lanka) into verse, completed the lyrics one evening. The song is "Namo Namo Matha" It is known that on completion of lyrics he was so excited he couldn't fall asleep that night, waiting to attend school in the morning so that he can get the students to sing his new song. Samarakoon in fact got the students to sing "Namo Namo matha" next morning in Olcott Hall, Mahinda College.

On the eve of independence in 1948, a competition was organized to select the National Anthem of Sri Lanka. Selection committee appointed for this purpose selected "Sri Lanka Matha, Pala Yasa Mahima". However the public refused to accept "Sri Lanka Matha" due to a conflict of interest (*the lyricist and the composer were in the selection committee*) in the selection committee. "Sri Lanka Matha" and "Namo Namo Matha" were played as national songs at the official ceremony on 04th February, 1948 with "God Save the King" as national anthem. J.R. Jayawardena who was the Minister of Finance in 1950 recommended "Namo Namo Matha" to be adopted as the national anthem due to it's ever increasing popularity.

Sri Lanka post receiving independence in 1948, none of the first two Prime Ministers couldn't complete their full term. D.S. Senanayake died in 1952 whilst S.W.R.D was assassinated in 1959. There were discussions by experts looking for a reason why it is happening, finally came up with an unbelievable scapegoat, the national anthem. Syllables in "Na-mo-na" are said to be not the way these should have been written, therefore inauspicious. Despite of strong opposition from Ananda Samarakoon from sidelines, without even an effort to consult Samarakoon by then government, Sri Lanka's national anthem was changed from "Namo Namo Matha" to "Sri Lanka Matha" in 1962.

Unfortunately for the nation, Samarakoon on 02nd April, 1962 reached for the bottle of sleeping pills with the same hand he has written a lot of beautiful melody including our own National anthem, probably heart broken, depressed and unwillingly closed the eyes and silenced the golden voice forever at the young age of 51 years.

No one couldn't have fathom out at the time how much more the genius had in pipeline to offer to the nation in terms of music and art. Extremely talented artist, lyricist, composer and painter lost to the nation, probably in par with any great musician Sri Lanka has ever produced.

Source – Internet – The Island

Captain Kidds 17th Century Looted Treasure found

It is common knowledge that sea piracy has existed as long as people ventured to sea for various reasons fishing, recreational activities or trading in merchant ships, with most of us having read about piracy currently being experienced in South China sea or mostly in East coast of Africa. Some of those poor seaman long ago ventured to sea all in good spirit to make a buck for a living though having to come across and fight with the pirates wielding swords as we have seen in cartoons in our younger days though very true in real life. Those yesteryear seaman were extra tough characters who fought mighty pirates.

Captain Kidd the Scottish born pirate in the 17th century was a tough pirate, lost no time in hiding his loot with orders to his fellow seaman. It is said that venturers have been looking his hidden loot for 300 years. Fifty kilos of silver pirated from a ship was discovered off Madagascar coast by the explorers using modern metal detecting technology, said to be only a tiny bit of what is on the wreck.

Born to a Scottish family in 1645 with Capt William Kidd's father too was Captain himself thought to be lost at sea. Kidd said to be an apprentice on a pirate ship later ventured into merchant boats in the Indian Ocean. Capt Kidd was initially appointed by the Crown to deal with and fight piracy and to capture enemy French ships unfortunately becoming a ruthless pirate himself later was executed in 1701.

Captain Kidd was attempting to loot the Armenian ship Quedagh in 1698 which is said to have valuables such as gold, silver and expensive cloths apparently belonging to British East India Company. However Kidd's attempt was not successful, was caught by the English skipper on Quedagh, Kidd was then taken to London. Kidd was later tried in courts was found guilty of piracy and a murder of one his crew in 1697 was sentenced to death. Kidd attempted to bargain his knowledge of where the looted treasure is hidden but was not successful. That was a plan he had in mind, became unsuccessful. He knew he was wanted for piracy then hiding the loot to be used later as a bargaining tool. Some of the hidden treasure was found used as evidence against him in the trial. William Kidd spent his last days in Newgate Goal until executed on 18th May 1701. Interesting point to note on Kidd's execution is that both first and the second noose ropes snapping during execution but successful in the third attempt. Kidd's body was dipped in bitumen (tar) and hung by the chains by the side of Thames river at Tilbury Point as warning to those would be pirates. Kidd finally spoke to the crowd with a warning to all ship Masters to learn from his fate.



Source Internet

Coal Power Plant (CPP) or Natural Gas Power Plant (LNGPP)

Sri Lanka currently in the process of setting up a 500 MW power plant in Sampur, this is in addition to Norochchlai CPP which is currently in operation. Third power plant of 600 MW also said to be in Trincomalee proposed by Japan. There is a bit of argy bargy in Sri Lanka over CPP or LNGPP.

Sampur initially proposed CPP is said to be of low efficiency, means coal efficiency will be much lower resulting higher residue (bottom ash and slag). Bottom ash is what is collected from the bottom of boilers post combustion process while slag accumulated over a period within the boiler itself, slag binding or attaching to various parts within the boiler. It is imperative to remove slag from time to time in order to maintain the efficiency of boilers. In the best case scenario, it is nearly impossible to get over 40% efficiency from coal therefore one could imagine millions of tonnes of bottom ash, slag being collected post combustion process over the life time of power plant. There will be fly ash in addition. Part of bottom ash can be used in blended cement production whist slag can be used in construction industry (making cement blocks etc). However, Sri Lanka has not yet set up with recycling as aforesaid as such all residue will have to be managed in a different manner. Should there be a lot of land available, properly built lined wet ash dams to prevent heavy metals seeping to water table can be built so that bottom ash can be stored under wet condition to prevent being blown away by wind. However, this is only a temporary solution as millions of tonnes of residue keeps accumulating in wet dams (temporary storage), eventually running out of space. Given the track record of how Sri Lanka has been managing environmental issues such as garbage and water table issues due to excessive use of chemicals etc, it is hard to believe anyone will be serious in coal ash management until the problem itself is getting better of public when public starts to feel the heat by various health issues, might be a bit too late then. Who wants to pollute the water table with heavy metals from coal ash in Sri Lanka? It will be double disaster for water table in Sri Lanka. This is in brief Sri Lanka public will have to deal in future with coal power plants.

Technology too is so advance now, there are so many outfits in the world in the process of drilling oil and gas wells. There is an over supply of crude oil

as such the world would not see crude oil prices as high as seen a few of years ago. As LNG price is tied up to crude oil price indirectly, LNG price should stay reasonably competitive. Also LNG power plants are extremely clean and efficient both in terms of thermal efficiency and operational efficiency. LNG contains over 90 per cent of is Methane, the lightest of Hydrocarbon chain. Natural gas leaves no residue, very clean and environmentally friendly. It is surprising to note at a time developed nations are doing away with CPP, Sri Lanka is planning to expand it's CPP fleet. The theory cheapest option not always the better option very much applies here.

LNG power plant can be started within four hours maximum under normal circumstances, usually within one hour (worst case scenario four hours where there is a lockout starting) oppose to CPP taking much longer for the boilers to come up in temperature as thermal integrity of boilers has to be managed in rate of temperature rise. Then, there is a huge advantage in LNGPP in reducing down time should there be a power outage or blackout. Also LNGPP can be put online in double quick time should CEB anticipate a power consumption peak. It is also important to a have a sensible configuration of different capacity gas generators. Therefore, if the extra demand is 75MW, a generator or two with total capacity of 100MW can be put online rather than running a unit of much higher capacity.

Colombo is the ideal place to have a LNGPP though lack of land availability in port for LNG unloading facility and storage infrastructure closer to berth could be a drawback. In this backdrop, Hambantota or Trincomalee could be more suitable. LNG can be transported in purpose built road tankers for potential future bunkering in Colombo or to any other destination in a motorway within a few hours.

Above is the story very much in brief without getting into much details. One should make up his /her own mind which is better for Sri Lanka CPP or LNGPP. Most importantly we need to look after the environment for the next generation and beyond.

Chandra Godakanda Arachchi

Master Mariner

Former Marine Pilot Ports of Colombo, Trincomalee and Galle



When Dudley Senanayake returned to Ceylon after his studies at Cambridge in 1930s, his parents were keen that they should get their son 'settled' in marriage. Dudley was certainly the most eligible bachelor at the time, hailing from one of the elite families in the island.

Marriage brokers were assigned and the Senanayakes took their son to see several brides. One such visit was to a Walawwa off Balangoda. As expected a full spread of mouth watering dishes were prepared for the occasion by the bride to be family. There had been Watalappan for dessert. Walawwa residents took extra effort in sourcing ingredients for the dessert by sourcing the choice of best jiggery available in the area. Dudley was seen helping himself to several servings of Watalappan.

The pretty bride was dressed in a Kandyan osariya and with pretty traditional jewellery. She was ideally suited and D.S. and Molly were silently praying that their elder son would at least say yes to this proposal.

On the way back to Colombo, the parents posed the question:

"So what do you think?" "Hari shoak! Hari shoak" (excellent! excellent), exclaimed Dudley.

The parents much relieved said, "Oh we must not waste time in bringing Sirima home!"

By the mention of the name, Dudley asked, "Sirima?" The parents responded: "Sirima" is the name of the bride whom you just described as 'hari shoak!'"

"Oh. I was commenting on the Watalappan as being 'hari shoak,' not of the girl!"

The old Senanayake couple didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

One wonders if Dudley had said 'yes' to the girl Sirima instead of to the Watalappan, how the course of history of this country would have changed.

Source – Internet By Charnika Imbulana, DBSjeyaraj.com

Message to young and not so young Queenslanders

Sri Lanka Society of Queensland is now conducting Drumming Lessons on Sunday afternoon. There are a few places left for anyone interested in learning to play Sri Lankan drums.

All ages including seniors are welcome.
The cost is \$5.00 per lesson

Please contact -

Gothami – 3341 0102
Namal – 0433 427 377
Hermin – 3396 9061

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

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

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.

Sri Lanka Society of Queensland
PO Box 15099, CITY EAST, BRISBANE , QLD 4002

Email: secretary@srilankansqld.org