



EMAIL: secretary@srilankansqld.org
WEBPAGE: <http://www.srilankansqld.org>

Incorporated 1984
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Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on the 1st of March at the Toowong Community Centre, Josling Street, Toowong. The Management Committee Report for 2019 was presented by the president Gothami Meepe and accepted by the members. Gothami extended her sympathies to the family of Dr. Victor Gunesekera, founder member of the Society, on behalf of SLSQ and Anton Swan called for a minute's silence to be observed.

The audited financial statement was tabled and accepted. All the management committee positions were declared vacant and The Honorary Consul Anton Swan was invited to chair the meeting.

Anton thanked the committee for inviting him to chair the meeting. He thanked Gothami for being the President for the past 3 years as it is not an easy position to handle and the Committee members for being supportive. Anton thanked the society for the support extended to him over the years.

The new committee was appointed and the President Namal Wijeratne thanked everyone present for attending and the past president Gothami for steering the society for the last 3 years. Namal explained her long-standing connection with the society and requested support from everyone for the new committee.

Management Committee for 2020

Position	Name	Email
President	Namal Wijeratne	namalwijeratne@hotmail.com
Vice President	Sandhya Abeysekera	vabeysekera@hotmail.com
Secretary	Champika de Silva	iranjalie@gmail.com
Treasurer	Shyamali Sriwardene	shysri@gmail.com
Social Secretary	Chamitha Weerasinghe	chamitha.weerasinghe@gmail.com
Cultural Secretary	Praba Harvie	prabaharvie@gmail.com
Committee Members	Ronnie Anandappa	
	Gothami Meepe	gothami08@gmail.com
	Kumari Perera	lkperera308@gmail.com
<i>Honorary Auditor</i>	<i>David Adams</i>	
<i>Honorary Solicitor</i>	<i>Mathew Jones</i>	
<i>Honorary Web Coordinator</i>	<i>Chamila Ellewela</i>	

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I was elected as the President at the Sri Lanka Society of Queensland AGM in March this year. I am honored and humbled of the trust given to me to steer the society this year. The newly elected committee and I are sincerely looking forward to working with the members and community to organise events and to expand our membership.

I would like to thank Gothami Meepe for her leadership and tremendous work as the President for the past three years. Gothami has agreed to work in the committee as the Publication Secretary this year too.

My involvement with the society started when my children was invited to participate in the April New Year celebrations in 1998. Since then I have seen the Society grow from strength to strength from being a parent backstage helping the kids get ready for the performances, a committee member, as the cultural secretary and the past Vice President.

At the AGM I mentioned the new committee is planning many events for this year. Due to CORONA virus all these plans are now on hold. We have already informed the members that our Sri Lankan New Year event is cancelled which was to be held on April 26th.

We were also planning to start drumming and dancing classes this year. We are unable to start this initiative due to the current pandemic

situation. Once the situation returns back to normal we will organise these classes for the children and youth to learn our beautiful culture through dance and drumming.

I would like to thank the last year management committee for their contribution, work and leadership. Ranjika Herat, Neela Matthews, Deepal Perera, Chamila Ellawala and Prashanthi De Siva for their contribution and service for the past years as committee members. This year I welcome new members to the society and committee, Champika De Silva and Kumari Perera. We are looking forward to embracing your new ideas and visions from the both of you.

I take this time to mention that the world is facing an unprecedented health and economic crisis due to CORONA virus. It's a challenge to engage the community in a such environment. Our March committee meeting was held via teleconferencing due to the social distancing regulation and government banning non-essential gatherings. I urge members to heed the government warning - no social gathering and keep social distancing. If a member needs any assistance, please contact a committee member and we will do our best to assist you. Please stay safe and look after each other.

Mrs. Namal Wijeratne

Network Meeting with the Consul General

The Hon. Consul Anton Swan hosted a networking meeting for the business and community leaders to meet The Sri Lankan Consul General for NSW and Queensland, Mr M.H.M.N. Bandara. This meeting was held on 4th March at Jindalee Bowls Club.

It was also an opportunity for the Consul (Commercial), Mr. M.M. Raheem to make a presentation to the community in Brisbane regarding business and investment opportunities in rural Sri Lanka. The presentation given on the day has been emailed to all our members.



There has been interest shown by some of our members to take advantage of this opportunity. We were looking at organising further discussions to get further details, but due to the current health situation, this will need to be reassessed at a later date.

Corona Virus - COVID 19 Information

With so much of misinformation being circulated around via electronic media, it is good to check the sites recommended by the government as sent by the Australian Government, Dept of Home Affairs -

“We have compiled a list of relevant sources to provide further information, which we hope will assist you manage the response within your own community. We encourage you to regularly check these pages to ensure you have the most up-to-date information.

Federal Government health advice - Department of Health

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

Information on social distancing – Department of Health

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-on-social-distancing>

Information on limiting public gatherings and visits to vulnerable groups – Department of Health

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-public-gatherings-and-visits-to-vulnerable-groups>

Incoming travel advice – Department of Home Affairs *(also available in some languages other than English)*

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/news-media/current-alerts/novel-coronavirus> - please be aware there may be significant financial penalties for anyone failing to self-quarantine upon return to Australia.

Outgoing travel advice - DFAT Smartraveller

<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/news-and-updates/coronavirus-covid-19>

QLD State Government response

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19>

Coronavirus Health Information Line

Telephone: 1800 020 080 - Call this line if you are seeking information on coronavirus (COVID-19). The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

SBS website Coronavirus information in 63 languages including Sinhala and Tamil -

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/coronavirus>

Please note: click on the first article and COVID -19 facts will appear in selected language. (Please continue to be informed from official sources).

Student Hub network from the Study Queensland website

<https://www.studyqueensland.qld.gov.au/Live/Student-Support>

Advise from the Department of Health as of 29 March

Non-essential gatherings

On 29 March the National Cabinet agreed to further limit most indoor and outdoor non-essential gathering to 2 people.

Stay at home unless you are:

- going to work or education (if you are unable to do so at home)
- shopping for essential supplies such as groceries, return home without delay
- going out for personal exercise in the neighbourhood, on your own or with one other
- attending medical appointments or compassionate visits

If any member is in need of help during this period, please contact any of the committee members and we will try our best to assist you. Senior members or those living alone, please do not hesitate to contact us if you are in need.

We need to be there for each other!

Contact: Namal - 0433 427 377, Sandhya - 0422 932 366, Gothami - 0421 635 353

Sri Pada Legends

The Sri Pada season begins on the full moon day in December (Unduwap Poya), and ends on the full moon day in April (Bak Poya). It is interesting to hear the legends around this sacred mountain. The following legend is about the re-discovery of the mountain after many years of neglect. This legend is about the Kuruwita-Erathna road leading to Sri Pada which even to this day, is colloquially known as the 'Kora giya para' or the 'road taken by the crippled man.'



This is a Buddhist legend but those of other religions also treat the mountain as sacred with the sacred footprint being held as that of Adam in the Christian tradition and some Islamic traditions and that of Lord Shiva in the Hindu tradition.

Sri Pada, owing to its diverse flora and fauna, as well as its cultural significance, has been declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

The Legend of The Butterfly Mountain

A Long, long time ago, there was a king of Lanka by the name of Sangha Bodhi. His palace was surrounded by beautiful gardens, filled with fragrant flowers. Then a strange happening began to take place in these gardens; the flowers began to disappear.

Every morning, when the king went for his morning stroll in his garden, he found all the beautiful flowers, had been picked. His guards could find no explanation and they swore that no one had entered the gardens in the night.

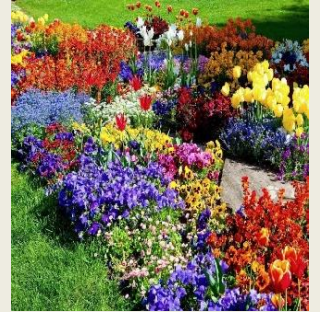
The king sent his messengers into the villages. They beat their drums and made an announcement: "The flowers from the king's royal gardens are being stolen by night. Anyone who can find the thieves will be richly rewarded."

In one of the villages, there lived a man who had no hands or feet. He was a kind man who was well known for his beautiful singing voice. His relatives had been jealous of him and cut off his hands and feet during a fight. When he heard the message from the king, he felt that he would be able to find the thieves. His wicked relatives encouraged him to volunteer as they knew that if he failed, the king was likely to punish him harshly.

The man was confident and relayed his willingness to the king's men. The messengers took him to the king who was surprised to see the disabled man who had come forward while stronger men were afraid. However, he decided to give the man a chance and ordered his soldiers to show the man the gardens.

After surveying the gardens, he requested that a hut be set up for him near the most fragrant bushes. The king asked his men to build the hut next to a beautiful star jasmine bush and provide him with food for seven days and nights.

The man stayed awake all night watching out for the thieves but couldn't see anyone at all. However, the flowers were gone! He tried again the next night with no luck. He then began to pray. Being a devout man who had learned the Buddhist sutras, he began to recite them in his melodious voice. He slept through the day and in the night, he recited them out loud to keep himself awake.



Meanwhile, in the garden there were beautiful angels from the heavenly worlds who had come to pick the flowers. Mere mortals couldn't see them as they floated about in their heavenly garments choosing the best flowers. When they heard the chanting of a beautiful voice, they paused and whispered to each other, wondering who this could be. The man heard what he thought was a twinkle of bells outside and paused his chanting. Then an angelic voice asked "who are you and why are you chanting the words of the Buddha at this time of the night?" The man explained that he was trying to find out who had been picking the flowers from the king's garden. He also told them that if he couldn't find the person, he was afraid of being punished and was preparing himself to bear the king's anger.

The angels were very sad to hear his story and the punishment he would face because of them. One angel told him, "We are the ones who pick the flowers from the garden. The flowers we bring from heaven fade when we come down to earth." The man wanted to know why they needed so many flowers. "The foot print of the Buddha is on the top of the Samanala Kanda and we go up there to worship and offer flowers there" she replied. The man was astounded as no one had heard the foot print of the Buddha was on top of the mountain. He said sadly, I will never be able to go up there as I have no hands or feet.



The angels were even more sad on hearing his plight. One of the angels came to the window and said to him, "come closer and touch the edge of my robe, you can't see it but you will hear it flutter near you". The man touched the garment with his limb and felt a shiver go through him. With that his hands and feet grew back! He held on to the robe of the angel and said "Please take me with you. I wish to see the footprint of the Buddha and the king will not believe me as I won't be able to find it."

"When the soldiers come in the morning, tell them to follow the path of the petals that we will leave strewn on the ground to find the path to the footprint of the Buddha." They then left and he heard the twinkling of laughter fading into the distance.

The next morning, the soldiers were amazed to find that the man had grown hands and feet. They took him to the king and the man told his story of seeing the angels. The king immediately went to the gardens and found the trail of flowers.

They got ready to follow the trail which they knew was a very difficult climb through the dense jungles and was home to bears, leopards and snakes. The man begged to be taken up and the king requested the soldiers to help him. The climb was difficult and at times they feared that they would be lost and eaten alive by the wild animals. However, they always seemed to find a divine light or a sign to lead them and keep them safe. As night fell, they lit torches to find their way and to keep the animals at bay. They felt the angels protecting them all the way up the steep slope.

When they finally came to the top of the mountain, they found the footprint of the Buddha which seemed to emit a divine light. They fell to their knees and worshiped the foot print which had been covered by a crystal to protect it. That was a sign for them that the gods were protecting the sacred foot print. In the morning, when the sun rose they also saw the strange phenomena where the sun seemingly dipped down to worship the foot print. The king was very moved and made a vow to clear a path for pilgrims to come here to worship the foot print of the Buddha. He also bestowed the man with many gifts of gratitude. Thus began the pilgrimage to the Samanala Kanda!

Gothami Meepe



Butterflies in Sri Lanka

Featured snippet from the web

Sri Lanka has 242 butterfly species, including 42 endemics

Special species such as Red Helen, Common Birdwing, Leopard, Banded Peacock, Tawny Rajah, Nawab, and a fine selection of Peacock, Yellow, Blue & Grey Pansies.

Australian butterflies

Featured snippet from the web

Australia has more than 400 species of butterfly, the majority of which are continental species, and more than a dozen endemic species from remote islands administered by various Australian territorial governments. The largest butterflies in the world are endemic to the Australasian ecozone.

Ayurvedic tips to build your immune system

Ayurveda and Sri Lankan indigenous medicine systems have many medicines and simple methods to prevent various viruses and diseases. These medicines and methods have been tested and used for over 5000 years in countries where Ayurvedic medicine system is practiced; such as India and Sri Lanka.

The purpose of this article is to introduce you to simple methods that you are able to do at home to build up your immune system and help to ward off the current pandemic of COVID19, Coronavirus.

Drinking herbal tea instead of tea or coffee

You can easily prepare a herbal tea at home by using ingredients such as ginger (Zingiber Officinale)/ (ඉඟුරු), coriander (coriandrum sativum)/(කොත්තමල්ලි), Daruharidra/Indian barberry(Berberis ceylinica)/ (වෙනිවැල්ගැට). The herbal tea prepared by using one of these ingredients can be had morning and evening which will help boost your immune system.

Steaming

Steam using a handful of lime leaves, handful of thulsi leaves, handful of Bilva leaves(Aegle narmelos) බෙලි morning and evening.

Drinking herbal congee (කැඳ)

You can easily prepare healthy homemade congee (කැඳ) by using eggplant leaves(bhantaki)/(solanum melongena)/එළබටු, munurakudimbiya/little ironweed plants (Vernonia cinerea)මොණරකුඩුමිඛිය, Heen Bovitiya (osbeckia octandra).As a habit if you can drink congee regularly, as it will improve your immune system.

Ayurvedic Medicine

The Ayurvedic medicine such as sudarshana vati (tablet), Guluchyadi (tablet) and Chywanpra Shawa Leha are used to build up the immunity, strength in lungs and the respiratory system .

The decoction prepared by using herbs like Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia)/රසකිද, Amla (Embilika Officinalis)/නෙල්ලි, Neem (Azadirachta Indika)/කොහොම්, can be used to strengthen the immune system. **Please note that, any Ayurvedic medicine must be taken only after consulting an Ayurvedic professional.**

Nasya (nasal therapeutic treatment)

Use two or three drops of Sesame Oil or Anu Oil or Sadbindu Oil or Kolashleshma Oil in each nostril and sniff. This lubricates the nasal passage and strengthens the inner mucus membranes to remove any foreign bodies.

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Increase Immune Power You Will Not Be Sick

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Hing (Asafoetida)/පෙරුමිකායම්

Hing is an anti microbial agent and in Sinhala indigenous medicine, a bracelet prepared with hing is worn to avoid seasonal viral diseases. A pinch of Hing powder can be mixed when preparing food. Hing is also a natural cure for asthma and bronchitis.

If you get a sore throat

Gargle morning and evening by using warm water mixed with salt. Also another treatment you can do is to get a handful of Holy basil (ocimum tenuiflorum) / Thulsi/හිංමුදුරකලා and five seeds of black pepper (piper nigrum) Maricha / මම්මිරිස් and boil in water. Then gargle the throat with the warm herbal water.

Dr Ashoka Suraweera

Ayurvedic physician (BAMS)

Arogya Ayurvedic Wellness Centre, Mansfield



Coriander (කොත්තමල්ලි)

Support services

Home isolation or quarantine periods can be stressful and may leave you feeling concerned. There are a range of support services available, including talking to a councillor or other mental health professional.

Head to Health – www.headtohealth.gov.au Head to Health provides links to trusted Australian mental health online and phone supports, resources and treatment options.

Some of the support services available are listed below:-

Lifeline	13 11 14	lifeline.org.au
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636	beyondblue.org.au/forums
Mens Line	1300 789 978	mensline.org.au
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800	kidshelpline.com.au
headspace	1800 650 890	headspace.org.au
ReachOut	au.reachout.com	
Life in Mind	lifeinmindaustralia.com.au	
SANE forums	saneforums.org	

Local Ventilation Machines go into production In Sri Lanka

Written by Zulfick Farzan 01 Apr, 2020 | 3:28 PM

Locally manufactured Ventilation Machines were introduced for the first time in Sri Lanka today (1st April).

200 Ventilation Machines will be manufactured locally and be handed over to hospitals across the country.

Notably, three Sri Lankan inventors had produced the devices without any financial sponsorship and it only cost them between 15,000 to 18,000 Sri Lankan Rupees to build.

The Prime Ministers Media Division said around 10 to 15 such Ventilation Machines will be produced daily.

The inventors are Consumer Affairs Authority Directors Thushan Gunawardena and Viraj Perera and Chamika Gamage, a Graduate in Electronic sciences at the Moratuwa University.

“If you restore balance in your own self, you will be contributing immensely to the healing of the world.” - Deepak Chopra