



Community Newsletter
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Dear All

The Year 2008/2009 has been a busy year for the Sri Lanka Association with numerous activities that kept the Committee occupied through out the year.

It has been my privilege to serve as the President of the Sri Lanka Association for 2008/2009, with an enthusiastic and hardworking committee who have volunteered their time to organise activities of the Association despite demands on their time due to family and other social commitments.

We very successfully conducted the annual events like the Family Nite, Independence Day celebrations, Senior Citizens day, Sinhala & Tamil New Year Celebrations, and the Winter Ball.

In addition there were activities like the Youth Barbeque, The Victorian Bush fire Appeal, The Healthy and Tasty Eating Challenge competition and a campaign to encourage the Sri Lankans to join the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry.

This year was also a very significant year for Sri Lanka with the end of the conflict. The Association promoted amongst the membership to give generously to the Medicin Sans Frontiers who were assisting with the IDP camps in Sri Lanka.

Closer to home The SLA has encouraged the membership to assist the Young Sri Lankan who was the victim of the Acid Attack. We are very pleased to say that we were able to gift him a laptop computer with the assistance of Friends of the Sri Lanka Association.

It is encouraging to note that whenever there is a need the membership has provided the support and assistance to the organising committee in so many different ways.

The Association has a greater role to play in the coming years, as a community organisation for the well being of the Sri Lankan Australians in Australia.

There would be challenges we face as a community organization, predictable and otherwise, and I wish the very best to the incoming committee for 2009/2010 in meeting them in the coming year.

Dr Ruwan Walpola

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHAINS ON ADAM'S PEAK

Hugh Karunanayake

"Now the Island Sarandib lieth under the equinoctial line it's night and day both numbering twelve hours. It measureth eighty leagues long by a breadth of thirty and its width is bounded by a lofty mountain and a deep valley. The mountain is conspicuous from a distance of three days and it containeth many kinds of rubies and other minerals, and spice trees of all sorts. I ascended that mountain and solaced myself with a view of its marvels which are indescribable, and afterwards I returned to the King"- from the Sixth Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor- Arabian Night (C 9 th century).

Known to Buddhists as Sri Pada, to Hindus as Sivan-oli-padam, and Muslims as Baba Adamalai, the religious association of this mountain in central Sri Lanka is mainly due to an impression on stone at the summit which resembles a footprint. In fact during medieval times, centuries before the new world including the Americas, Africa, and Australia was discovered, there was no mountain in the world of which there was so widespread knowledge as Adams' Peak. It served as a magnet to the great travellers and adventurers who traversed the seas spending years of travel and dissipating personal fortunes in the process. The famed travellers of yore from Venice, China and the Middle East who traversed the oceans long before steam ships and aircraft were invented, all made their way to the famed island variously known as Serendib, Taprobane, and Ceylan. Fa Hien, Marco Polo, and Ibn Batuta visited the island during the course of their travels and the lure of Adam's Peak would have been a major attraction. Although the Maritime Provinces were under the control of the Portuguese and the Dutch for over 270 years from 1522 to 1797, there is no record of any European ascending the mountain during that period, thus confirming the total suzerainty exercised by the Kandyan Kings over their domain. The first Englishman to ascend the mountain was Lieut Malcolm of the 1 st Ceylon Regiment who reached the summit on 27 April 1827. It has been said that the peak could be seen out at sea from a distance of nine days travel by sailing ship from the shores of Ceylon. In fact Adam's Peak is the only mountain in the world from which an uninterrupted vision of the country around it could be seen; in this instance right up to the shores surrounding the island. The peak could be seen on a clear day from the Galle Face Hotel in Colombo and from the Royal College cricket grounds. No other mountain

including the mighty Everest provides such a panoramic view of surrounding country. Little wonder therefore that this mountain attracted the attention of the most renowned travellers and explorers of medieval times.

Adam's Peak which projects skyward out of the wilderness of the land around it, involves a climb of over 7000 feet. Towards the summit where vegetation ceases to exist, the mountain takes a conical shape with a very steep ascent which is almost impossible to climb were it not for the support provided by iron chains and an iron ladder riveted on to the rock. These chains and the ladder are of great antiquity pinioned on to the face of a perpendicular cliff close to the summit. The first international traveller who mentioned the existence of these chains was Marco Polo in 1292, and subsequently Ibn Batuta who ascended the Peak in 1347 also mentioned it. There has been much conjecture on the origin of the iron chains. Henry Cave writing in 1895 states that "the history of these rusty chains with their shapeless links of varying size bearing the unmistakeable impress of antiquity, is involved in myth and mystery. The chain near the top is said to have been made by Adam himself, who is believed by all true followers of the Prophet to have been hurled from the seventh heaven of Paradise upon this Peak, where he remained standing on one foot until years of penitence and suffering had expiated his offence." Asreef a Persian poet of the fifteenth century tells us that we owe the fixing of the chains to Alexander the Great who "voyaged to Ceylon about BC 300 and there devised means whereby he and his friends might ascend the mountain of Serendib, fixing thereto chains with rings and nails and rivets made of iron and brass, so that travellers, by their assistance, may be enabled to climb the mountain, and obtain glory by finding the sepulchre of Adam, on whom be the blessing of Allah".

Ibn Batuta who climbed Adam's Peak about a century before Asreef mentions the "ridge of Alexander" at the entrance to the mountain and of a minaret there named after Alexander. There is however no reference in any other historical chronicle to support the assertion that Alexander the Great ever visited Ceylon. The origin of the chains on Adam's Peak thus remains a mystery to this day and none of our historians or archaeologists has been able to enlighten us on this centuries old mystery.



NSW Health's "Take the Healthy and Tasty Challenge 2009" Campaign get huge support from Sri Lankan Community in NSW

(by Jess Helaratne, Project Officer Multicultural Health Communication Service)

The Sri Lankan Community in NSW took on the Healthy and Tasty Challenge 2009 by the NSW Health Department wholeheartedly making the project a huge success.

The NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service (MHCS) and the Australian Better Health Initiative (ABHI) launched the Health and Tasty Challenge 2009 Sri Lankan Recipe Competitions in partnership with the Sri Lanka Association NSW (SLANSW) in April in an effort to combat high incidence of diabetes in the community. The campaign supports ABHI's National Measure Up campaign which also reaches out to 7 language groups namely Chinese – Cantonese & Mandarin, Italian, Samoan, Sri Lanka – Sinhalese & Tamil and Tongan speaking communities in NSW.

Close to 60 recipes from both Sri Lankan Sinhalese and Tamil speaking communities submitted traditional Sri Lankan recipes using tips from the "healthy food" information pack sent out by MHCS coordinated by SLANSW. Roshani Abeywickrema and Seetha Santiago were declared the Sri Lankan Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamil Healthy and Tasty Master Chefs after they took on the challenge to prove that healthy food can also be delicious as they each competed with other top contestants where their dishes were chosen 29th of June through food tasting activities at the Blue Elephant Restaurant in Pennant Hills by panel of judges led by Dietitian Shamala Ratnesar and Chefs Siva Kumaran, Blue Elephant Restaurant owner and Sunil Ranasinghe of Sunil's Spice Centre together with members of the Sri Lankan community.

In an Ethnic Cook Off last July at the Roselea Community Centre, Sri Lankan Sinhalese Master Chef Roshani Abeywickrema showed off her sumptuous Southern Salad with Chicken and Walnut which was a favourite at the event while Sri Lankan Tamil Master Chef Seetha Santiago prepared her winning Carrot and Cabbage salad which was a huge hit with the audience. Seetha and Roshani joined the other recipe competition winners from the Chinese, Filipino, Italian, Samoan language communities in showcasing their winning dishes judged the best from close to 200 recipe entries for 6 communities through food demonstrations.

Sri Lankans have one of the highest rates of diabetes in the world. The Sri Lankan Health Ministry indicated in 2008 that Sri Lanka's high incidence of diabetes is currently estimated at 7 to 8 percent. In Australia, the 2002-2005 NSW Population Health Survey reported the prevalence of diabetes or high glucose in Australian residents born in Sri Lanka to be 9.1%.

Roshani's Southern Salad with Chicken and Walnut and Seetha's Carrot Cabbage Salad and will be featured together with all the other winning recipes to be published in a cookbook with the top four finalist dishes from each community group to be published in both English and the language of the relevant community. The cookbook will be distributed to the communities in early 2010.

Due to the overwhelming response from the Sri Lankan community, a Healthy Eating and Diabetes Prevention Information Session will be held as part of the new upcoming MHCS project called "Get Healthy Campaign" to address the needs of the Sri Lankan community in NSW. Details will be announced soon on the next edition of *THORATHURU*.

Sri Lankan Sinhalese Winning Recipe	Southern Salad with Chicken and Walnut by Roshani Abeywickrema	Sri Lankan Tamil Winning Recipe	Cabbage and Carrot Salad by Seetha Santiago
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500g eggplant (brinjal) cut into thick batons • 400g bitter melon thinly sliced • 4-5 spring onions • Half a Spanish onion • 1/3 cup walnut (toasted or raw) • 1 chicken breast grilled with soy sauce • Salt & epper • ½ bunch flat leaf parsley • Green chilli finely chopped without seeds • 1 ½ tablespoon balsamic vinegar or red wine vinegar • 1 tbsp lemon or lime • Adjust salt and pepper to taste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprinkle eggplant and bitter melon with salt and set aside for 15-20 minutes • Arrange on a thin layer on an oven tray • Spray or coat with olive oil and grill for 20 – 30 minutes • Mix rest of the ingredients with the chicken and serve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 grams Cabbage • 1 Medium Carrot • 1 Medium Onion (Preferable Red) • 3 Green Chillies • 1/4 Cup chopped Coriander leaves • 1/2 Cup cooked Whole Green Mong Dhal • 2 Teaspoon Mustard powder • Lemon juice • Salt to taste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash thoroughly all ingredients • Finely chop Cabbage and grate Carrot using grater • Add chopped Onion, Green chillies, Coriander leaves, Cooked Mong Dhal and Mustard powder • At last add salt for your taste and lemon juice

The Poruwa Ceremony

By Dr Piyasoma Medis

Setting

The word Poruwa translated to "Wedding stage". It is a raised platform for the couple to stand upon at the time of the nuptial ceremony. Each corner of the Poruwa has a pot filled with coconut flowers and an oil lamp. This is believed necessary to invoke the blessings of the Four Devas who protect the four corners of the world. The senior member of the community chosen to conduct the ceremony prepares the decorated Poruwa with medicinal herbs, spices and coins, covered with white cloth, to bless the couple with good health, wealth and prosperity. Thus the scene is set to perform the rituals surrounding the traditional Sinhala Buddhist Wedding, the Poruwa Ceremony.

Entrance of the Bride & Groom

The beating of drums announces the arrival of the Groom, accompanied by his family members. A young boy from the Bride's family sprinkles a few drops of water on the feet of the Groom, symbolising the old custom of washing the feet of the Groom. The Groom and his party then walk towards the left of the Poruwa and await the arrival of the bridal party. The Bride then enters in on her Father's arm, escorted by drummers and the rest of her family. The bridal party stand on the right side of the Poruwa.

Stepping onto the Poruwa

Ancient Sanskrit lyrics are chanted to invoke the blessings of the triple gem and Devas and the couple is invited to stand on the Poruwa as their Fathers help both the Bride and the Groom onto the Poruwa, right feet first, the four lamps at each corner of the Poruwa are lit in order to illuminate their new step into the future.

Union of the Bride & Groom

The most important aspect of the Poruwa Ceremony follows with the tying of the nuptial knot. The Father of the Bride ties the two little fingers of the right hands of the Bride & Groom And then pours water over the fingers, transferring the rights, obligations and responsibilities to the Groom to take care of and foster their loving daughter. Water and earth being the eternal verities, the water so poured and the earth on which it falls are intended to be the lasting witnesses' to the marriage.

Exchanging of gifts

Once the couple are united, they exchange gifts. The Groom first presents the Bride with a necklace, which he ties around her neck and then her going away saree. The couple then feed each other with Kiribath (Milk Rice) to convey that they will care for and look after one

another with love. The compeer chants ancient stanzas of blessings and announces the couple husband & wife.

Next is the offering of gifts to the parents. The first gift is given to the Mother of the Bride, traditionally 40 yards of material to show the bride's gratitude for carrying her for nine months in the womb and nurturing her to become a responsible woman, while in this manner the Groom pays his respect to his Mother-In-Law and shows his appreciation for the upbringing of the Bride & for Giving her daughter as his Bride. In the same spirit, gifts are given to the Bride's Father and the Groom's parents.

This is followed by the thanksgiving for the elders of both parties, done by offering sheaves of Betel leaves. The first nine sheaves, each with coin on it, is dropped onto the floor of the Poruwa to invoke the blessings of the goddess of Mother Earth, the Sun, the Moon and the Planets. The leaves are then presented to the Mother of the Bride, followed by the Bride's Father, the Groom's Parents and other senior relations of both parties, who in turn give their blessings.

The couple is then congratulated and blessed with the chanting of the Jayamangala Gatha (Buddhist stanzas of well wishing).

The finale

As the couple step down from the Poruwa, a coconut is split with deafening sound to ward off evil. The ceremony is concluded with the Bride & Groom lighting the traditional oil lamp as husband & wife. This signifies the beginning of the new life by expelling darkness of ignorance and sparking the brightness of knowledge and understanding for today and for the rest of their lives.

JAYA MANGLA GATHA

Bahung shassa mabhinim mita sayu dhanthang,
Giri Mekhala udita ghora sasena marang,
Danadi dhamma vidhina jitawa munindo,
Tang tejasa bhavature Jaya Mangalani

Marati reka mabhinim yujjhi sabba ratting,
Ghoram pana lavaka makka mathaddha
yakkhang,
Kanthe sudanta vidina jitawa Munindo
Tang tejasa bhavatu te Jaya Mangalani

Naragiring gajawarang ati matta bhutang
Davaggi sakka masaniva sudarunantang
Mettambhuseka vidhina jitava munindo
Tang tejasa bhavathu te Jaya Mangalani

....Contd/-
Translention in English

Stanzas of Joyous Victory

Mara, the Evil One assuming a fierce form with a thousand arms each brandishing a deadly weapon, stormed forward roaring, accompanied by his formidable hosts and riding on his elephant, Girmkala, Him, together with his army, did the Lord of Sages subdue by means of generosity and other virtues.
By the grace of this, may joyous victory be yours.

Even more violent than Mara was obstinate demon Alavaka, who battled with Buddha throughout the night. Him did the Lord of Sages subdue by means of His patience and self-control.
By the grace of this, may joyous victory be yours.

Provoked to run amok, Nalagiri, the king elephant, highly intoxicated, was raging like a forest fire and murderously assailed all in his path, striking with such terror as would Indra's thunderbolt, the irresistible destroyer. Him did the Lord of Sages tame by sprinkling over him the cooling water of loving-kindness.
By the grace of this, may joyous victory be yours.

Sri Lanka Association helps Acid Attack Victim

Jayasri Watawala was one of the two victims of the much publicised home invasion and acid attack in May this year. He was initially hospitalised at Concord Hospital in the Burns Unit and was in an induced coma.

Jayasri though expected to lose the sight of his eye, has recovered and is continuing with his Masters Degree in Computer Science.

He has won the gold medal for being the best candidate from Sri Lanka and the gold medal for being the top student globally at the British Computer Society exams in 2008.

The Sri Lanka Association has been assisting Jayasri to get back on his feet. The membership was invited to contribute to a fund to help Jayasri with his medical and other expenses.

The SLA President met Mr Kulasiri, Jayasri's father when he was in Sydney after the unfortunate incident. It was pointed out by Mr Kulasiri that Jayasri's computer had been destroyed during the home invasion. The Association undertook to look into whether a computer could be obtained for Jayasri.

The SLA is pleased to say with the generosity of the well wishers & friends of the Association, we have been able to gift a laptop computer to replace the one destroyed in the home invasion. Jayasri's father likened this gift to a gift of sight when he called from Sri Lanka to express his gratitude.

The computer was presented to Jayasri in a gathering of those who contributed.

The SLA wishes Jayasri a speedy recovery and hope he is able to complete his studies with distinction.

The SLA would like to thank Mrs Devika Mohotti for her assistance in the matter.

Jayasri is looking for part time work, preferably in the IT field. If anyone is able to assist Jayasri, please call Ruwan Walpola on 0421 334 370.



Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR)

The Sri Lanka Association in Collaboration with the ABMDR has promoted the message of the importance of increasing the volunteer donor numbers of Sri Lankan origin in the ABMDR.

The promotional material was distributed at most of the functions organised by the SLA. In addition the ABMDR representative Joan Harrington addressed the youth at a "sil programme" at the Lankarama temple.

Ven Dhammagavesi of the Lankarama Temple has been extremely supportive and we thank him for his encouragement and support.

We have given applications to many potential donors and hope they would go ahead with the registration process.

In addressing the groups it has been noted that there is a degree of apprehension in becoming a donor due to misconceptions regarding the process of becoming a donor.

We would be happy to forward the information brochures and application forms to potential donors of this very worthy cause.

Please contact Ruwan on 0421 334 370 or ABDMDR on 13 14 95 for further information.

This article was published in a Sri Lanka newspaper

මගේ පුංචි පුතා බුදු සාදා වැඳෙලා ඉල්ලන්නේ මාව ජීවත්කරවා දෙන කියලයි....!

තවත් අනුවේදනීය සත්‍ය කතාවක්

"මගේ ලොකු පුතාගේ වයස අවුරුදු පහයි. ඒත් එයාට තේරුම් ගිහින් තියෙනවා අම්මා ලොකු අමාරුවකින් ජීවත්වෙන බව. ඒ නිසාම එයා බුදුන්ට වදින හැටි මොහොතකදීම "මගේ අම්මාව සති කපලා දෙන්න" කියලා ඉල්ලනවා.

"ඒ ප්‍රංචි දරුවා කරන ඉල්ලීම දිනා බලාගෙන ඉන්න කොට මගේ ඇස් දෙකටත් කඳුළු උනනවා."

ශ්‍රියානි අප සමඟ කියනවා. හම්බන්තොට, ඕකන්දාය මහා විද්‍යාලයේ ගණිත ගුරුවරියක් විදිනට සේවය කරන ශ්‍රියානි දේදරු මවක්. ඇගේ දෙවන දරුවාගේ වයස අවුරුදු 5 ක් විය හැකියි.

ඇත් මාස කීපයක ඉදල ශ්‍රියානි ඉන්නේ ජීවිතය පිළිබඳව අවිනිශ්චිත බලාපොරොත්තු රැසක් මැදි කරගෙනයි. "මම කවදාවත් හිතුවේ නැහැ මම මේ විදිගේ ඉරණමක් අත්වේවි කියලා. ලියුකේමියා වගේ දරුණු රෝගයකට මම ගොදුරු වෙලා කියන කාරණය ඉදිරියේ තවමත් මම පුදුම වෙනවා."

"ඒත් ඒක ඇත්ත කියලා පිළිගන්න වෙලා තිබෙනවා. මගේ රෝගය වෙනුවෙන් කළ සියලු පරීක්ෂණවලින් පසුව මම ඇතහන්නා ජීවත් වෙන්න වුවමනා නම් අනි-වාර්යයෙන්ම ඇට මිදුළු බද්ධ කිරීමේ ගලාකරමයට මම ලක්විය යුතුයි කියලා. ඒ වෙනුවෙන් මම ඇත් ලැයිත් වෙන්න ඕන. ලක්ෂ 50 ක් හොයාගෙන ඉන්දියාවට යන්න ඕන."

ශ්‍රියානිලා තමන් කරන වෘත්තියෙන් එදා වෙලා සොයා ගන්නා අය. ඔවුන්ට වෙනත් අතුරු ආදායම් මාර්ග නැහැ. මේ වගේ කෙනෙක් රුපියල් ලක්ෂ 50 ක් ඉක්මනින්ම සොයා ගන්නේ කොහොමද...?

"මම ආදරෙන් දරුවන්ට ඉගැන්වීම කළ කෙනෙක්. ඇත් වුණත් මම කැමැතියි දරුවන්ට උගන්වන්න. ඒත් ඇත් මට ඉස්සර වගේ ඇඟට හයිසක් නැහැ."

"ස්වරූපයෙන් මම ඇත් වෙන්න වෙලා මගේ හිස කෙස්

සේරම ගිහින්." පාසලේ ඉන්න දරුවෝ... ගරුවරු පමණක් නෙමෙයි, දේව්විසියෝ පවා මා වෙනුවෙන් මිදුළු සම්මාදම් කරන්න යනවා. එහෙම ගිහින් සොයා ගන්න රුපියල් ලක්ෂ 70ක වර්ග මිදුළුක් ඇත් අපි සතුට තිබෙනවා.

ශ්‍රියානි ඉන්දියාවට ගිහින් ඇට මිදුළු බද්ධ කිරීමේ ගලාකරමයට ඉක්මනින්ම මුහුණ දිය යුතුයි. එහෙම නොවුණොත් ඇගේ ජීවිතය අනතුරුදායක තත්වයකට පත්වෙනවා.

මේ වෙද්දී ඇගේ ගලාකරමයට අවශ්‍ය මිදුළුට තව ලක්ෂ 30ක් පමණ අවුටියි.

ඉතිරි මිදුළු සොයා ගන්න ඇපි මැදමුලන පිහිටි අපේ නිවෙය විකුණන්නත් බලාපොරොත්තුවෙන් ඉන්නවා. ඒක ලක්ෂ 70කට වර්ග දෙන්න



මම කවදාවත් හිතුවේ නැහැ මම මේ විදිගේ ඉරණමක් අත්වේවි කියලා. ලියුකේමියා වගේ දරුණු රෝගයකට මම ගොදුරු වෙලා කියන කාරණය ඉදිරියේ තවමත් මම පුදුම වෙනවා.

පුළුන්. මේව ඇපි අමාරුවෙන් ගොඩනගා ගත් දේවල්... ඒත් මොනවා කරන්නද මහත්තයා.. දරුවෝ දෙන්නා වෙනුවෙන් මම ජීවත් වෙන්න එපායි. දරුවෝ වෙලා අම්මා කෙනෙක් වුවනොමයි. අම්මා කෙනෙක් නැති වුණොත් මගේ දරුවෝ දෙන්නට මොනවා

වේවිද...? "මේ වගේ ලෙඩක් මට තියෙනවා කියලා ඇතහන්න හැටියේ මම නොදැටෝම ඇඩුවා. මගේ දරුවන්ට මොනවා වේවිද කියලා හිතුවා. ඒ ගැන මතක් වෙන හැටි මොහොතකදීම මගේ ඇස් දෙකට කඳුළු උනනවා."

ශ්‍රියානි රෝගී වුණාට පසු ඇගේ හිසකෙස් සේරම ගැලී ගියා කියන එක අපි ඔබට මුලින් කීවා. මේ කාලයේදී ඇගේ පුංචි දරුවාට ඇසව හදනා ගන්න පවා බැරි වුණා.

"පුංචි පුතා මා ළඟට ආවේ නැහැ. එයා අම්මා තාත්තා කිව්වේ මගේ මහත්තයාගේ සහෝදරියටයි. ඇයගේ ස්වාමි පුරුෂයාටයි. ඒ වෙලාවෙන් මගේ ඇස් දෙකට කඳුළු ආවා. ඇත් තමයි එයා වික වික මට පුරුදු වෙලා තියෙන්නේ."

ශ්‍රියානිගේ සැත්කමට ලක්ෂ 50 ක මිදුළුක් අවශ්‍ය බව අපි ඔබට මුලින් කීවා. මේ මිදුළු ඉතාමත් ඉක්මනින් ඔවුන් සොයාගත යුතුයි. එහෙම නොවුණොත් ශ්‍රියානිගේ දරුවන්ට අම්මෙක් නැති වෙයි.

"ඔවුන්ගේ ගිණුම් අංකය ෪෪෪, ශ්‍රියානි 9508654 වරකැවය ලංකා බැංකුව * දුරකථන: 0602471710, 0718035695 0602486662

සමත් මුද්‍රණය කළේ

This article was published in a Sri Lanka newspaper

SERENDIB WINTER BALL 2009

“AFTER THE BALL WAS OVER”

‘Congratulate you and the committee for organising an excellent, enjoyable and well run ball. We thoroughly enjoyed it.’ [Palitha Abeywickrema] Was the comment addressed to Ruwan by a former President an attendee at SLA Winter Balls through the years.

Several other distinguished guests like past President Prinzie Perera and Dinesh de Silva conveyed written comments others expressed verbal comments.

Ruwan acknowledged the presence of several past presidents, Dr Don Wijeratne, Dr Palitha Abeywickreme, Wije Ariyaratne, myself, Prinnie Perera, Ananda Amaranath and Roshan Wickremenayake.

Bouquets were many and brickbats were few. The next committee should neither bask in the glory of the bouquets nor cringe at the stones cast. We need to examine each stone for what it means and not worry about the motives of the stone thrower.

There is not much point describing the event over and above my article carried in the Ozlanka website. Those of you who were at the Ball and those of you who like the fabled princes of Serendib who visualised a lost camel by the tracks it left drew a mental picture from what you were told would have opinions on what could be done to make next year’s Ball even better.

We start with the venue

Over the years we have held the Winter Ball at function centre like the Sydney University, the Round House at the UNSW, the Super Dome Olympic Park, the Rose Hill Turf Club and Hotels five star or less.

As I had said in my article, We Sri Lankans can move from a Friday night hopper feed in community hall, as a family night through an elegant Ball with a sit down fine dinner at a Hotel on Saturday night to a Sunday brunch barbie and cricket in an open park with hardly a pause in our stride.

By hosting the Winter Ball at a Hotel, with guests in formal dress, a sit down dinner and a live band Ruwan and his crew proved that we Sri Lankans can hold our own in any social context in any part of the world. The easy meld of ancient eastern culture with Avanti west was demonstrated by the sylph like figures draped in silken sarees and the more robust shapes in penguin suits moving with equal fluidity to the throb of the baila and the measured beat of the waltz.

Do we want the next committee to hold the Ball in a Grand Ballroom at an upmarket Five Star Hotel or at a function centre?

Obviously the ticket cost would vary with the venue. So would the income.

It is your Ball what do you want?

Next, the Band

Do we hire a Band from Sydney and if so should it be a Sri Lankan Band? or do we get a Band down from Sri Lanka or out of State?

Do we want one Band? A Band with a DJ for the breaks or two Bands to keep the ‘ball rolling’ without a break?

At the Serendib Winter Ball, a seven piece band The Inner Games, and its eye fetching female vocalist had the crowd on the floor with the first few bars of their music. Thanks to a thoughtful computation of space and design, Ruwan provided a dance floor that was not over crowded even when the three hundred plus guests all took the floor at the same time.

Do we do it differently next year?

What about the table décor and settings?

We had the Ballroom set with thirty three tables with a centre piece of a burgundy Anthurium thanks to Lasha.

One year we bought fairy lights for table décor but they were taken as souvenirs and the President had to pay the purchase cost out of his own pocket. Another year the SLA bought candelabra [not the costly type] they now roost I know not where.

Inexpensive décor and let the table heads decide whether to take or leave them?

The menu

A Sri Lankan caterer? Three course menu? Table service or buffet?

This year a prawn and crab entree, a King Fish and lamb loin main spiced with chilli oil and Moroccan spices were followed by a dark chocolate dessert and fresh coffee satisfied the inner being.

What do we want for next year?

What about Raffle draws? What about auctions?

They interrupt the dancing but generate funds.

We were proud to have no less than the global President of the CIMA – Aubrey Joachim wielding

the microphone with his usual verve and vocal skill a performance that lasted the night at the same level of intense and infective energy.

An auction that saw Aubrey generating almost two thousand dollars in less than a thousand seconds and a Raffle draw that had Daphne Christie David win two return tickets and a baila session by Fusive interspersed the otherwise non stop dancing.

Wasn't the benefit worthwhile?

What about speeches and inviting distinguished guests?

Ruwan welcomed His Excellency Senaka Walgampaya PC, our High Commissioner, Gothami Indikadahena the Consul General and Nick Berman the Mayor of Hornsby.

The High Commissioner called on all of us to repair and re establish broken bridges both in our minds on the roads in Sri Lanka. His Excellency saw the mix of the communal meld that we know as Sri Lankans mirrored by the participants at the Ball as a sign that augured well for the return of a harmonious community of Sri Lankans united by the recognition of our common origins.

Do we want this practise to continue?

Some of these issues interact. We should also determine the objective of having a Winter Ball.

The view has been expressed that the Winter Ball should be a high profile event projecting the Sri Lanka community in New South Wales as high achieving migrants in business and the professions On the other hand the Winter Ball has been considered an event that provides the SLA with the funding for activities like the Seniors Day, the Independence Day and Avrudhu Celebrations which are not self financing.

Money has been raised for worthwhile projects like a Retirement Village which unfortunately has not got off the ground yet. Funds have also been channelled for established charities in Sri Lanka

Another view is that the SLA should provide an annual upmarket function for Sri Lankans in New South Wales to socialise and meet and that the event should be self funded to avoid funds earned by the hard work and personal sacrifice of previous committees being fritted away on wining, dining and dancing.

Over to you friends this is your call

Sunil de Silva



YEAR IN FOCUS.....

The SLA Committee has been extremely busy this year, undertaking a multitude of initiatives that not only have benefited the wider Sri Lankan community, but also have been thoroughly enjoyed.

The jam-packed year kicked off in December 2008, when the SLA initiated a Youth BBQ Get-together at Bicentennial Park, Pymble. The BBQ was enjoyed by both young and old and it was great to see everyone participating in a friendly cricket match.

February saw the Independence Day celebrations at Roselea Community Centre. In his speech, Dr Ruwan Walpola emphasised the importance of 'building bridges' amongst the different Sri Lankan communities in Australia. The SLA recognised the high achievers among the Sri Lankan HSC students with a presentation of the Asoka Nanayakkara Memorial Trophy for the best performing HSC student, with others receiving trophies, certificates and prizes.

Next on the agenda was the annual Family Nite, with crowds packing out Cherrybrook Community Centre. The event was a sell out with over 300 people making it truly a family affair.

In February, as well as coming together to celebrate events as Family Nite, the SLA also united with the other Sri Lankan Organisations in displaying their support for those affected by the Victorian Bushfires. The SLA took part in this event by running a buriyani stall. The efforts of the SLA's buriyani stall are to be commended, as we were ranked the second highest money earner at the event.

In March, the SLA hosted the annual luncheon and get-together for the Seniors. With this function now being one of the most popular events in the SLA calendar, it saw the participation of over 120 seniors. A traditional Sri Lankan lunch was savoured by all, with the seniors truly enjoying the afternoon entertainment consisting of activities such as bingo, musical chairs, dancing and a sing song.

In conjunction with other associations, the SLA hosted the New Year celebrations in April. The SLA was responsible for the drinks stall, with popular drinks as falooda and ice coffee consumed by the thirsty.

The SLA has encouraged Sri Lankans to join the Australian Bone Marrow donor registry. This will be an ongoing activity of the Association in collaboration with the Australian Bone Marrow Registry. This project was commenced by the SLA as there is need for donors of Sri Lankan

background to join the ABMDR to increase the probability of finding a matching donor if required. The SLA with the ABDMR had a stand at the New Year Celebrations where potential donors were given application forms to enrol in the programme. In addition in May, the Youth group observing Sil at the Temple was addressed by the ABDMR representative and the SLA. We wish to acknowledge the enthusiasm and the support of the chief incumbent of the Temple Ven Meegahakumbure Dhammagavesi towards this project.

In conjunction with the NSW Multicultural Health Communications Service, the SLA took part in "The Healthy and Tasty Challenge 2009" and a recipe competition to educate the Sri Lankan community about healthy eating to prevent obesity and diabetes. The Sinhala recipe competition was won by Mrs Indra Abeywickrama. The winner of the Tamil recipe competition was Mrs Seetha Santiago.

The SLA elected to support the Médecins Sans Frontières work in the Internally Displaced Persons camps in Sri Lanka by encouraging its membership to make financial contributions.

Closer to home, the SLA helped one of the Sri Lankan students who was injured as a result of a home invasion and acid attack. He was helped financially and was pleased with generosity that was bestowed by some members in contributing to the purchase of a laptop, to replace the computer which was destroyed in the home invasion.

In August The Serendib Winter Ball was held at the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth Hotel in The city. This function was well attended with over three hundred guests on the night. The music was provided by "Inner games" and "Fusive". The crowd was treated to fabulous night of music with Jennifer Trijo of Miss Saigon fame backed by Maestro Jun Javier and Shivani and Dinesh providing the obligatory Baila for the night .

Future events

Champion amateur golfer Mithun Perera from Sri Lanka has been granted an entry to the Australian Open in November on the strength of his win at the China open this year. The SLA has organised with the assistance of keen Sri Lankan golfers in Sydney for Mithun to have much needed practice games in Australian golf courses before the tournament. A Diabetes education seminar targeting Sri Lankans is in the pipeline in association with the Multicultural Health Communication Network.

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

NEWLY JOINED MEMBERS IN YEAR 2009

1. Mr Lal Dassanayake
2. Mr & Mrs Krishan Lye
3. Mr Rajan Wijey & Jalini Wijey
4. Mr & Mrs Shantha Fernando
5. Mr & Mrs Simon Upali Buddhivijaya
6. Mrs Sanja Herath
7. Mr Upul De Silva

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE OF NSW

Following people are appointed as Justice of the Peace in NSW. They are willing to provide their voluntary services to any member of the Australian Community. Please contact the one closest to you and arrange a suitable/convenient time before you visit.

1. Dr Ganewatta, Palitha, Carlingford/Epping – 02 9858 2428; 0425 200 688
2. Dr Medis, Piyasoma, Glenwood – 02 8824 8105; 0402 671 507
3. Dr Peiris, Shelton, Kingsgrove – 02 9502 4998; 0431 521 707
4. Dr Wickrama, Don, North Rocks – 02 9871 8438
5. Mr Wickramasena, Udage, Quakers Hill – 02 9837 0271; 0419 608 511
6. Mr Weerakoon, Cecil, Wahroonga – 02 9487 1535; 0422 802 204
7. Dr Windsor, Dulcy, Ryde – 02 9808 0738
8. Ven Dhammagavesi Tero, Lankarama Temple – 02 9627 2594
9. De Sayrah, Harold L OAM, Thornleigh – 0415 402 724

If you are a JP or know of any other JP from Sri Lankan background, please let us know. We are willing to update this list regularly to help our community.

Baulkham Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre **Settlement Services for South Asian Migrants**

Free..... Confidential..... & Culturally Sensitive!!!!!!

Communities covered: *India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan.*

Areas covered: *Central Western Sydney- Parramatta, Baulkham Hills through Blacktown*

Services covered:

- Individual casework
- Assistance in accessing and negotiating with government & other agencies
- Education/Employment Support
- Links with community services/networks
- Support groups with a focus on living skills and personal development

For more information, please contact Shantha Viswanathan:

Between 9.00AM – 4.00PM

At: Baulkham Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre (Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday)

Level 4, 1 Horwood Place, Parramatta

(02) 9687 9901

Castle Glen Community Centre (Wednesday)

157 Ridge Crop Drive, Castle Hill

(02)9899 5163

Contributions to 'Thorathuru'

The Editor of the 'Thorathuru' invites members of the community to send in literary contributions for publication. Material for publication must be deemed suitable to the readership and is at the discretion of the Editor. The Editor also reserves the right to appropriately edit material to meet acceptability or space availability.

The following TYPES OF MATERIAL are welcome:

<u>Description of Material</u>	<u>Max word count</u>	<u>Price</u>
Full Page Advertisement	N/A	\$100
Half Page Advertisement	N/A	\$50
Quarter Page Advertisement	N/A	\$25
Letters	60	free
Articles or essays	250	free
Short Stories / Features	450 - 500	free
Poetry	150	free
Reviews -non commercial (books/film/theatre/art)	150	free

A discount of 25% will be offered to advertisers on all issues for the year.

All material must contain the name and contact details of the author.

It would be appreciated if material is word processed (Word 97 or above) and sent via email to lanchanigamage@gmail.com or mailed on floppy disc or hard copy to:
Editor Thorathuru, GPO BOX 3120, Sydney 2001

Please note that the quality of photographs reproduced in this publication is very much dependant on the originals supplied. While digital images are preferred, even the qualities of output of these are subject to background lighting, focus etc.

Also please visit our web site <http://www.slansw.org.au>

APOLOGIES FROM THE EDITOR

Mr Harold De Sayrah OAM for misspelt name in the previous edition of Thorathuru.

Not publishing Ms Perera's appreciation in this issue of Thorathuru, but I have forwarded the article to the New Editor Mr Sunil De Silva to be published in the next issue.

Thank you all for your support given to myself and the association in the past year and hope you will continue your support in the coming years.

*Lanchani Gamage
Outgoing Editor of Thorathuru*

Use this form to apply for new membership or to renew existing membership

**Rule 15 (a), (b) & 16 (a) APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OF
THE SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION OF NSW INCORPORATED**

(Incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1984)

I (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr)

(Full name of Applicant)

Of:.....

(Address)

Email: Tel No.

Do hereby apply to become a member of the above named incorporated association. In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the Rules of the Association for the time being in force.

.....
Signature of Applicant

.....
Date

I, being a member of the Association, nominate the above named applicant, who is personally known to me, for membership of the Association.

.....
Signature of Proposer

.....
Date

I have enclosed a cheque for the sum of \$ being my membership contribution.

Membership Contribution: Annual Singles \$10.00, Annual Student \$ 7.50, Annual Family \$20.00, Annual Student Family \$10.00, Life \$ 150 per person, Seniors Free

Cheques payable to: 'The Sri Lanka Association of NSW Inc.' Mail to: The Secretary, GPO Box 3120, Sydnev 2001.

If undelivered please return to:

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GPO BOX 3120
Sydney 2001**

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