
WESTERN AUSTRALIA - SRI LANKA (CEYLON) ASSOCIATION INC

Member Connect Newsletter

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President

Milindha de Mel

Secretary

Bianca Eriyagama

Treasurer

Shamilal Wirasinha

President's Message

My dear Members,

This is our first communication since the AGM in August and I'm proud and thankful to be nominated as your President for a second term. I'm also extremely pleased that most of the Committee decided to go another round with me. We have three new Committee members this year and they have already proven their worth. A list of the new committee can be found later in this publication. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Francis Wilathgamuwa, Ranjit Ratnayake and Jackie Wright for their unwavering support over the past year.

I know it has been a while since you received our newsletter but we are working through the challenges of this new COVID world! Its incredible to think that when I last wrote to you, WA was in the grip of a COVID wave, which was then heightened with the reopening of borders. Yes, this all happened this year! And now to think we are almost into Christmas...where has this year gone?

In my last note, I mentioned the possibility of WASLA hosting the Sri Lankan band Misty in May. We had just 5 weeks to put this dance together, dealing with the previously mentioned COVID restriction, but with your help and support we managed to pull off an absolutely wonderful night. It was also a great night for WASLA as we managed to raise a healthy amount of funds, thanks in principle to our sponsors. We have had mostly positive feedback from the event and there are always things we can work on and do better. But I'm really proud of my Committee for being able to deliver an event of this nature within the timeframe we had.

We had our AGM in August and I was slightly disappointed with the turnout. We had catered the event this year in the hope of saying thank you to our members so it would have been good to have seen more faces. It was a good meeting where we were able to take those gathered through our activities over the past year as well as discuss the plans going forward. Thank you to those who attended and I hope to see more of you at our next AGM.

We just hosted our Senior's lunch in November which yet another memorable event. This event holds a special place in our events calendar and its wonderful to see the familiar faces attend.

As always, I want to thank our members for your patronage of the events we organise. We are not always going to get every element right but I hope you know its always done with the best of intentions and for the betterment of WASLA.

Hope to see you all at our WASLA Children's Party on the 11th of Dec which is the next event on our calendar.

Thank you as always to our generous sponsors, those who give in cash and kind. None of these events would be possible if not for your generosity.

Thank you to all of you for helping us deliver some truly memorable events over the past year and I look forward to seeing you at our next event.

God bless,

Milindha
President



A note from the Editor

Hello Everyone!

Finally got another Newsletter together. I do apologise for the delay and have no valid excuse!

A great big 'Thank you' to the editors of the previous newsletter, who wish to remain anonymous.

This edition is dedicated to all our seniors, and I hope you can relax enough to enjoy it. As a Senior myself, I think I can take the risk of being a little risqué at our expense!

Special thanks to Kevin Melder for his many contributions including the two nostalgic ones which take us down Memory Lane to the Good Old Days! It's great to remember how WASLA started and developed over the years, and to acknowledge the contribution made by past presidents. And reminiscing about popsicles, Ice Palams and CIAL fountain pens will take you back to the days when two rupees went a long, long way!

We've had an amazingly successful year and this edition showcases the pinnacle of achievement- The Misty Dance. We also carry articles and photos from other past events. You can see more pictures on the WASLA website which will be launched soon.

Diwali was celebrated recently, and we feature a short article on some of the customs and traditions associated with this important festival.

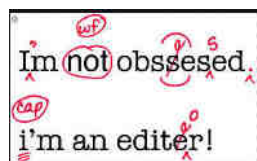
I welcome advertisements for future publications to fund the Newsletter and WASLA administration costs.

Full page	\$ 80.00 per publication
Half page	\$ 50.00
Quarter page	\$ 30.00

We love hearing from you so please do send me anything you feel may be of interest to the Sri Lankan community in WA. Please send your contributions to: Editor, WASLA Newsletter, c/o Australian Asian Association, 275 Stirling Street, Perth WA 6000 or direct to me at radhanikademel@gmail.com.

A very big 'Thank You' to Bianca for formatting and finessing this Newsletter. I hope you enjoy this edition and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Stay Safe! Kind regards



Radha

WASLA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Treasurer's Report

It gives me great pleasure to address you all for the first time as Treasurer of WASLA. There has been some wonderful work done over the last year and as Milindha outlined in his message, it's up to us to now build on this. Since the last newsletter, the main earner for WASLA was the Misty Dance. I thank you for your wonderful patronage of this event, which netted our association a solid profit, mainly due to our generous sponsors, many of whom are featured in this edition.

The proceeds from the raffle from the Misty Dance were donated to Andrea Mia, a charity based in Kwinana. We did explore the option of donating part of these proceeds to Sri Lanka, however the logistics proved to be complicated, and the Committee decided to help a local charity with the full proceeds. I would like to highlight that this is the 3rd donation WASLA has done over the past 18 months, in keeping with our new charity status. We will look to do more in the coming year.

The current funds for WASLA remain in a healthy position as per below:

ACCOUNT	BALANCE AS AT 30th November, 2022
WASLA Transaction Account	\$18,906.38
WASLA Cash Reserve Account and TD	\$140,492.47

A kind reminder to our members to check up on your membership status as our tiered ticket pricing for all WASLA events means, fully paid members enjoy discounted rates. The Annual memberships are to be renewed in July at the beginning of every financial year so that it becomes easier from an administration point of view. This will also help to keep the member database current and up to date.

The Subscription rates for 2022/23

Single Membership	\$15
Family Membership	\$25
Single Pensioner Membership	\$10
Pensioner Family Membership	\$15
Student Membership	\$10

Our preferred form of collection is via an Electronic Bank Transfer

Please make reference as:

Existing membership renewals - "Name, Surname, Mem Renewal - year"

New member - "Name, Surname, New Member - year"

Account Name: The Western Australia Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Association

BSB: 036 - 062

Account No: 518950

Treasurer's Report (cont.)

Alternately, you can hand over cash to a WASLA committee member, and a receipt will be sent across to the email address provided on our contact register.

Please feel free to email WASLA on info@wasla.org.au or reach out to any of the committee members.

Thank you for your continued support in WASLA.

Shamilal

Treasurer

Let's Change with the Times!!!

The WASLA Logo has served us well for five decades, and we are bringing WASLA into its next chapter with a new look and logo that is in keeping with modern times to better reflect our diverse demographic.

The original logo was introduced during the Black and White Communications era, even before the introduction of fax machines! Needless to say, computer graphics were never in the picture!

We spent long hours discussing what the new logo should look like - Focusing on the spirit and mission of WASLA and making best use of the choices available to us in terms of graphics, colour palette, shapes, and typography.

We finally came up with a logo that we think best represents what WASLA is about. Taking a cue from our previous logo, our new logo considers both our origins as Sri Lankans and our current identity as West Australians. Sri Lanka is represented by the Lotus Flower of many hues representing our diverse ethnicities. The Lotus nestles within the bosom of Western Australia, represented by the Black Swan.

We are proud of the new logo, and hope you love it too!

The Committee



Figure 1 Old Logo



Western Australia Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Association Inc.

Figure 2 New Logo



Introducing the New WASLA Website

Building an interactive space for our membership and a front door for people not yet familiar with our great membership and local community

After many months of hard work and dedication from our committee, we are proud to announce that WASLA will be launching our very own website in December 2022.

Our primary goal during the design and development process was to create a valuable, user-centric, and interactive resource for our members across all platforms and devices. We specifically wanted to focus on making it easier for our members to learn about upcoming events and keep abreast of WASLA's activities in the local community.

Some of the features of this website include:

- Articles on WASLA and its 50-year history;
- Newsletters;
- Gallery of images from WASLA's fabulous events;
- Updates and information on upcoming WASLA events;
- Blog posts on Sri Lankan heritage, wildlife, travel tips and other exciting topics; and
- Path to sign up as a new member or renew membership.

We welcome you to make this an interactive space, as the website has been tailor-made with our membership and local community as its primary focus. We hope this website will enable us to be more connected to our membership.

Be sure to stay tuned for more details.

For any suggestions, questions, or comments, please get in touch with us.

Rowena Wijesooriya

Thanks, Ro - You did an awesome job! Ed.

Genesis and Growth - WASLA - Then and Now

The West Australia-Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Association, fondly known as WASLA was founded in 1971 by eminent Sri Lankan Charles Oorloff, a Crown Lawyer in Perth. This was a time when the population of Perth was 745,000 and growing rapidly, fueled by the repeal of the White Australia Policy in 1966, when the population was just 500,000. It was incorporated in 1973.

From humble beginnings, WASLA has grown to a be thriving organisation in 2022, managed by several professionals, business owners, senior company executives and highly skilled and experienced Sri Lankans. The current committee includes Kevin Melder who was in the first Committee over 50 years ago.

Since inception our mission included assisting Sri Lankan migrants and their families settling in Perth. In 2021 WASLA was granted charity status and is now focused on supporting community initiatives in the areas of poverty alleviation, education, and the prevention of Family and Domestic Violence in Western Australia and Sri Lanka.

It's not all work, though! We certainly know how to enjoy ourselves and cater to the social needs of our community through the many events organized throughout the year, such as food fairs, dances, musical evenings, Seniors' Lunch, and the annual Children's Party.

Those at the Helm - Presidents Past and Present

Year	President
1971-1973	Charles Orloff
1974	Gaston Alwines
1975	Wilton White
1976	Gaston Alwines
1977-1978	Douglas Gauder
1979	Wilton White
1980	Aubrey Raymond
1981-1982	Olga Ramasamy
1983	Raj Rajagopalan
1984	Kevin Melder
1985	Vivian Blaze
1986	Kevin Wright
1987	Olga Ramasamy
1988-1989	Kulen Ratnesar
1990-1991	Russell Raymond
1992-1993	Ranjit Ratnayake
1994	Aubrey Raymond
1995-1996	Ranjit Ratnayake
1997	Olga Ramasamy
1998-1999	Vivian Blaze
2000-2001	Russell Raymond
2002-2003	Vicky Sivarajah
2004-2005	Chirs Bramananda
2006	Ron Bulner
2007	Rosanna de Mel
2008	Olga Ramasamy
2009-2010	Shereen Gerreyn
2010-2011	Roshan Burah
2012-2013	Ranjit Ratnayake
2014	Ken Jansen
2015-2016	Ranjan de Silva
2017-2018	Indrani Samarasinghe
2019-2020	Anne Jansen
2021	Ken Jansen/Milindha de Mel
2022	Milindha de Mel

Pictures of then - Can you pick the familiar faces

The Winter Wonderland Dance

Memories are made of these... WINTER WONDERLAND...

Prakash hanging loose

Lady Joyce

The Raymond brothers share a joke with our President Kevin Helder

Suzy is all HIB!!!!!!!

By Golly Chris

Brian 'The God Father'

Vino from New York....

Kevin and his best mate

"BINGO!" eyes Joel and Manjula

Ivor and Sherry summing it up

Olga & Mr Van Cranberg enjoy the night

Cool Dion

The Lovely Beverly Melnic & Jackie

The birthday duo Joel and Beverly.

13

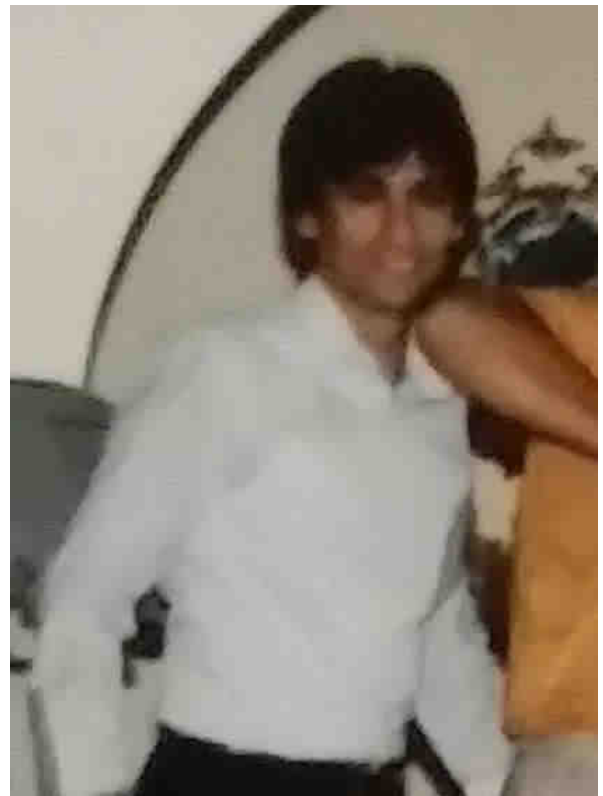
A rare photo of Charles



They always dressed to kill



Celebrated, revelled and partied



A young fella



The Youth Group



Fancy dress party



Past presidents meet in Malaysia for a godamba feed

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WASLA Donation to FDV Refuge



The statistics for family and domestic violence continue to shock - more than one in five women has experienced violence or abuse from a current or previous partner.

The proceeds of the Raffle from the Misty Dance were to be allocated to a 'worthy cause' within WA, and after much discussion the Committee approved *Andrea Mia* as the worthy recipient. Andrea Mia is a domestic violence refuge in Kwinana which caters to all cultures, and offers women and children a safe place to call home during a crisis.

The refuge has been named 'Andrea Mia' in tribute to Andrea Pickett who was killed by her husband in 2009. It is managed and operated by the Lucy Saw Centre Association, which is an established and well-known family and domestic violence service provider that already supports women, children and the community in Perth's south for over forty years.

WASLA is proud to be associated with the Lucy Saw Centre Association, and we look forward to working together to prevent violence against women and their families. Specifically, we would like to support initiatives that aim to shift community attitudes and views that can lead to violence occurring.

If you or a person known to you is impacted by family and domestic violence, please seek immediate assistance. Here are some phone numbers and websites where you could get more information, advice and assistance.

Women's Domestic Violence Helpline - 1800 007 339 or 9223 1188

Men's Domestic Violence Helpline - 1800 000 599

1800 RESPECT is a national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service.

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/family-and-domestic-violence>

<https://www.wa.gov.au/service/community-services/counselling-services/family-and-domestic-violence-support-and-advice>

<https://csws.org.au/services/the-lucy-saw-centre/>

Diwali and Its Traditions



Diwali is the biggest and most important festival in India, and is dedicated to Lord Rama. According to scriptures, after killing Ravana on Kartik Amavasya (No Moon Day), Lord Rama returned to his kingdom in Ayodhya with his wife Sita and brother Laxman after 14 years of exile.

To celebrate the victorious return of their king, the people of Ayodhya lit up the entire kingdom with earthen lamps, lit firecrackers, and decorated their houses. Since then, it has remained a tradition that is still followed by millions of Hindus around the world.

Dhanteras



Dhanteras, also known as *Dhantrayodashi* marks the beginning of five days of Diwali festivities. It falls on the thirteenth day of the Krishna Paksha in the month of Kartik. It is believed that Lord Kubera, Goddess Lakshmi, and Lord Dhanvantri came out of the ocean during *Samudra Manthan* (Churning of the Sea). Hence, all three gods are worshipped on this day.

This day is a very auspicious and important one when people buy gold, silver, utensils, and even various gadgets, to bring good fortune and blessings from Goddess Laxmi.

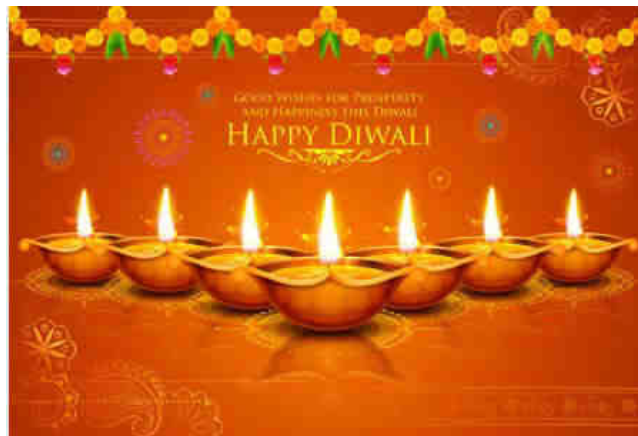
Bhai Dooj

Bhai means brother and *Dooj* means the second day after the new moon when this festival is celebrated. It signifies the unconditional love between brother and sister and is celebrated with great enthusiasm on the very last day of the five-day-long festivities across the country.



On this auspicious day, sisters apply *tilak* or a vermillion mark on the foreheads of their brothers followed by *aarti*- a ritual performed in homes and temples in which incense and light (typically from an oil lamp), is offered to a deity. They feed sweets to each other and exchange gifts. On this day like *rakshabandhan*, sisters pray for the health and wellbeing of their beloved brothers, while the brothers promise to protect them always.

There are several mythological stories behind *Bhai Dooj* celebration. It is believed that after killing the demon Narakasura, Lord Krishna visited his sister Subhadra where he received a warm welcome with sweets and flowers. Subhadra then applied a ceremonial *tilak* on his forehead. This was the origin of the festival *Bhai Dooj*.



We wish all our Hindu Members a Very Happy Diwali!



New Town Toyota

Get the New Town feeling



Nostalgia- *Kevin Melder*

Do you remember?

- ✚ Headlight dipswitches on the floor of the car.
- ✚ Ignition switches on the dashboard.
- ✚ Using hand signals for cars without turn indicators.



- ✚ Wrack denims
- ✚ Trousers leg clips for bicycles without chain guards.

- ✚ Cork Poppuns and Catapults



- ✚ Record Players and HiFi systems
- ✚ 33 and 45 rpm records and the funny repeating grooves on 78 rpm records

- ✚ Kerosene Fridges with metal ice trays with levers

- ✚ Enid Blyton/Hardy Boys books



✚ Bulto Toffees



✚ One pint milk bottles delivered to the door-



- ✚ Skinny-legged Cops in long Khaki shorts and absurd hats (What a sight that was! At big matches kids loved to tease the 'Kossas')
- ✚ A complete meal of wadai at Saraswathie Lodge for a large family for less than two bucks
- ✚ A hundred Rambutans from Alexandra Place for Rs 2.50
- ✚ Food at kids' birthday parties: 'Short Eats' (Cutlets, patties, sandwiches), ribbon cake, marshmallows, cheese and pineapple kebabs in a half pineapple and iced coffee
- ✚ Elephant House Ice Palams in triangular cardboard cases for 15 cents
- ✚ Delicious, imported popsicles from Perera and Sons- also around 15 cents!
- ✚ Clothes laundered by Dhobies who came to the house. (The clothes were heavily starched- so much so that when school kids were 'punished', the cane strokes on their starched shorts sounded like bursting balloons!)
- ✚ Raleigh bicycle from Hunters at Rs 100/-the most common gift for kids who got through the GCE O'Level Exams.)
- ✚ CIAL Pens used by school kids at Rs. 2.50. Kids were allowed only fountain pens to class. 'Fights' among kids spraying 'Washable Royal Blue' ink on others' uniforms.



- ✚ Skinny-legged Cops in long Khaki shorts and absurd hats (What a sight that was!) At big matches kids loved to tease the 'Kossas'
- ✚ 10.30 'shows' at cinemas for 50 cts. (Often frequented by boys wagging school.)



THE WASLA CHILDREN'S PARTY

*Christmas comes but once a year,
join us for some holiday cheer!*

Join us for games, yummy food, carols and a visit from Santa!

Sunday 11 Dec 2022

2pm-6pm

Shirley Strickland Sports and Community Pavillion
Coogee Road, Ardross

Please bring a gift (\$20 or less) for your children
BYO all drinks

Ticket Prices

Members - \$15.00

Members' Children

(under 12) - Free

Non-Members - \$25.00

Non-Members' Children

(under 12) - \$10.00

Bookings essential - no door sales!

Please contact:

Shereen 0428 333 923

Kevin 0403 040 400

Radha 0401 573 248

Anu 0421 387 347

Children's Christmas Party 2021

It certainly was a WASLA Children's Party to remember!

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon, boys and girls were treated to a delightful afternoon of fun, games, prizes, music, food and of course, Santa.

There were many features that made this event extra special.

Our Balloon Twister, for example, was a big hit with the children, and had them entertained for many hours.

The beautifully laid out Candy Cart was a special attraction for the children and adults alike and is certain to be a feature at future events.

The outdoor games were extremely popular and provided our children an opportunity to mix and play together. As always, "Musical Chairs" was an especially popular and raucous affair.

The big moment arrived when Santa made his appearance. Mesmerising the young children with his 'Ho-Ho-Ho!' and clanging bell, Santa had them enthralled as he handed them their Christmas gifts.

Of course, a Christmas Party is not complete without a sing-along and soon the entire room was filled with the wonderful sound of Christmas Carols, sung with great fervour and feeling. I have no doubt that the young ones were moved by the sight and sound of their parents and grandparents sharing the gift of song with one another.

It truly was a WASLA Children's Party like no other with loads of fun, frolic and the spirit of Christmas enjoyed by our members, their children and grandchildren.

A special thank you to the Committee Members who spearheaded this unique event, and to all those who worked tirelessly on the day. It would not have been possible without you.

Kevin Wright



It's a wonderful time of the year



All the way from the North Pole



A special present just for you



Mr Carols



I cannot read Sugarplum Mary's handwriting



Grandchildren are a lot of fun



Santa, don't be distracted



These two elves are booked for next year



The popular Candy Cart



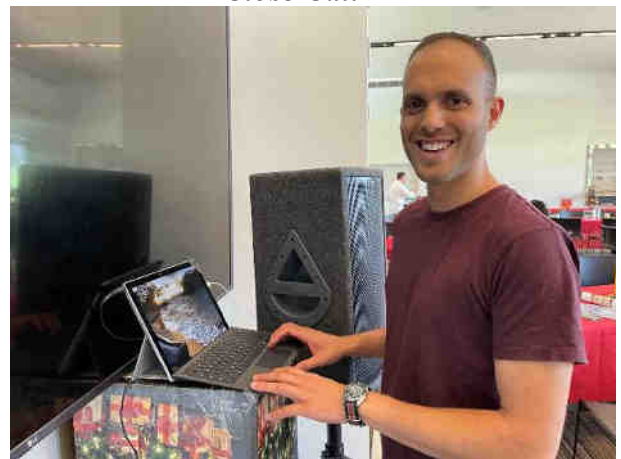
Let the Games Begin



A Close Call



Our Children love the jostling



DJ Muthu-Krishna...JNR

Past-Food vs Fast Food

My grandson asked me the other day, 'What was your favourite 'fast food' when you were growing up?

'We didn't have fast food when I was growing up,' I told him, 'All the food was slow.'

'C'mon, seriously, where did you eat?'" It was a place called *Home*', I explained.

'Our mum cooked every day, and when Dad got home from work, we sat down together at the dining room table.'

'What if you didn't like what she cooked?'

'If I didn't like what she put on my plate, I was allowed to sit there until I did like it.'



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Oh, What a Night!!!

One day in early March 2022, Milindha raised the possibility of bringing the popular Sri Lankan band, *Misty* for a dance in May. At the next meeting, after much debate and discussion, the Committee took the plunge and made a brave decision to go ahead with the proposed event.

Up against us were unprecedented costs. Apart from the fees for performing, the band would also incur costs for travel, transport, accommodation and food as well as special sound and lighting equipment. Of course there were the other costs of staging an event of this nature, which were in addition to this!

However, once the project was approved, it was all hands on deck. We needed to sell at least 350 tickets just to break even- A daunting task!

By this time, we had just under eight weeks to go. In the first two weeks we had confirmed sales of 22 of the 39 tables of 10. This covered the cost for the hire of the hall and the printing of tickets. The Team went into overdrive reaching out to sponsors and friends. Then a wave of COVID struck and we had a number of cancellations. The outlook was grim. There were daily phone hook-ups among us with appeals to notch up another gear with our efforts. Milindha's determination to make this show a success spurred us on. Milindha and I connected long-distance via Teams, and over a couple of G&T's we ironed out a few details and fine-tuned some of the final plans.

Our hard work paid off, and the following email was sent out by an ecstatic and grateful President a few days before the Dance:

In spite of the last minute cancellations we have achieved way beyond our target of 300. We have 349 and potentially still fielding requests.

With some persuasion on Milindha's part, I was inspired to fly over - just to grace this amazing occasion.

By 7.00 p.m. the 14th May the main hall of the Sicilian Club had been transformed into a fantasy ballroom by a fabulous team of balloon-blowers and table-decorators. It was a night to remember. The 350 plus guests were treated to a memorable evening of fun, music and dance which will remain forever etched in their memories. With fabulous music, complimentary bottles of wine, amazing buffet by C K Black, dance souvenir booklet and awesome raffle prizes, guests reiterated that they had seldom had so much fun and such amazing value for money.

We danced to the wee hrs of the morning and banked almost \$8000. Thank you to all the patrons that made this event come alive. I will let the photos below tell the rest of the story.



A night with Misty - 2022



Come in...



We are ready



Misty gave us his best



...and we did the rest



Max & Shereen have never been happier



The lady in Red



The Gingers loved the music



The Baila at last

A night with Misty – 2022



A warm welcome to one and all



Love being here



The Don with the Ladies



The Last Dance



The deco was amazing



Great food service and entertainment



That's all folks...

Just for a laugh!

I grew a beard thinking it would say, "Distinguished Gentleman." Turns out it says, "Senior Discount, Please!"

The older I get, the earlier it gets late.

When someone says I'm ageing gracefully, I know it's a nice way of saying I'm slowly looking worse.

While few women may admit their age, fewer men act it.

My kids are at an age now where they are beginning to understand acute embarrassment. This is my time to shine!

Middle age is when you're faced with two temptations, and you choose the one that will get you home by nine o'clock.

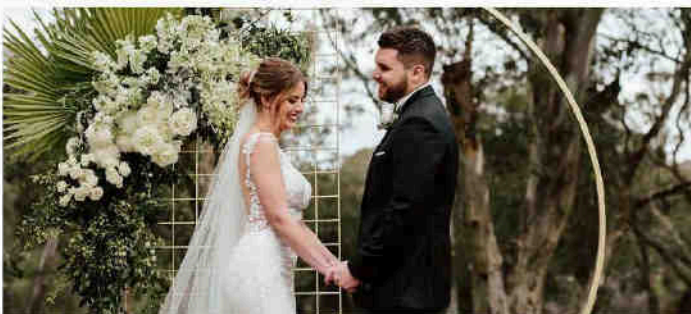




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- ❖ Today I donated my watch, phone and \$500 to a poor guy who stopped me on the way home.
You don't know the happiness I felt as I saw him put his knife back in his pocket.
- ❖ I miss times when I was working at the zoo. My boss fired me just because I left the lion's gate open. I mean who would steal a lion?
- ❖ I was in a cab today and the cab driver said, "I love my job 'cos I'm my own boss. Nobody tells me what to do." Then I said, "That's terrific. Turn left!"

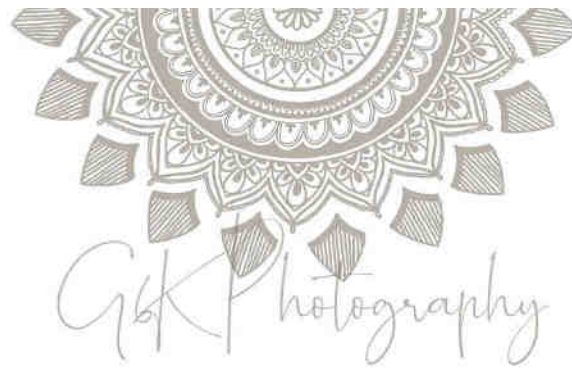
Contributed by Kevin Melder- Thanks Kevin! Ed



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