

**THE WESTERN AUSTRALIA SRI LANKA (CEYLON) ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED.**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

**FOR 1991/1992**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Hon Consul for Sri Lanka in Western Australia, Founder Members, Life Members, Committee Members and other Members of the Association.*

*Just over twenty years ago, about 40 expatriate Ceylonese - as we were called then, held an inaugural meeting in July 1971, and the First Annual General Meeting in September of the same year, and formed the WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CEYLON ASSOCIATION. Subsequently, this name was changed to what we now affectionately call the WESTERN AUSTRALIA-SRI LANKA (CEYLON) ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED.*

*I am sure this Association would have faced many challenges and changes throughout those years, but the tenacity of dedicated committees and the unity of members has left us an Association with strong foundation and security.*

*One year ago you entrusted to me and my committee the honour of taking the Association through the 1991/92 term.*

*Some Committee Members were new, others had considerable experience, but what no one lacked was true grit and enthusiasm.*

*Having mentioned of the endurance of the Association to this day, I will now go on to mention that group of committee members who carried the torch and moved it forward during their term of office in 1991/92, and say how very thankful I am for all their efforts.*

***Chris Hesse** who as one of the Vice Presidents, brought in a touch of regimental discipline from his World War II experience. He was never one to shirk, and gave till it hurt. It was only when he found the task physically arduous, that he relinquished his post.*

***Chelliah Sivarajah**, the other Vice President, with an eye and ear for business was always on the look out for maximization of profits. As he once said every little bit strengthens our coffers. His financial advice was most invaluable to us.*

***Rohan Bandarage**, who accepted the position of Vice President when Chris left, was full of enthusiasm, drive and ideas. His task of handling the land submissions for our own WASLA Centre, has been acknowledged by the recipients as being very professional. By chairing the Cricketers' Night Sub-committee, he showed how much could be achieved with minimum effort.*

***Rosemary Seneviratne's** secretarial skills were an invaluable asset to your association. With her great sense of duty and a very low tolerance level for inefficiency, it was no wonder that whatever she undertook turned out near perfect.*

**Janaki Chandraratne** filled the role of Treasurer very well indeed. She had her eyes set on eliminating waste and demonstrated her ability to safeguard and increase our savings investment by moving them around.

**Max Gerreyn's** capabilities as an Editor is unquestionable. He maintained and took an impartial stand, gave us a Newsletter that kept alive in our minds those witty cartoon sketches of our beloved Sri Lanka. He was always at hand to draw up signs, table numbers etc. for every social event.

**Dennis Ingram's** ability to organize and run the bar has become a great asset to this Association. Though his responsibilities often extended well beyond the function, he was never one to complain. He always based his operations with an eye for profits.

**Milroy Welsh's** knowledge, willingness to offer advice and go out of his way to give a helping hand were missed when he bid adieu to this committee.

**David D'Souza** is a true Captain even on dry land, full of sobering thoughts and ideas, who always maintained a balanced view. Never was he lacking in his desire to help others.

Smiling **Shantini Ramasamy** and her bubbly self always showed great keenness presented herself constantly to lend a hand, at all functions.

Soft spoken **Sujatha Ehelapola** was always there to undertake and execute most efficiently those mega tasks assigned to her. Her strongest point lay in assisting others.

**Michael Ratnayake** has developed his organizational skills so well that now he could manage single handedly any catering aspects of a function. His willingness to help others drew well-earned admiration.

**Sham de Alvis** is admired for his efforts for organizing functions, for his ever presence to lend a hand and liaising with the students and youngsters of our community.

**Shiran Stanislaus's** illness deprived us of a member with tremendous potential. He demonstrated, exceptional ability in keeping the young cricketers together, and was a Sub-committee member of the Disco/Awards Night function who showed great capabilities.

**Minelli Fernando** portrayed an image of a shy silent member but the Foundation Day Celebration function showed us that she could also be an efficient organizer and a good manager.

**Alex Raymond** came in during the latter part of the term of this committee. He not only contributed with good ideas, he capped it with tremendous hard work.

**Jim Murphy** too entered the ranks of the Committee towards the latter stage. His hard and conscientious work, his ability to execute a task independently was demonstrated during the activities that surrounded the Cricketers' function.

**Russell Raymond** was a tower of strength. All his past experience, his cool, calm and collected attitude made him most approachable. Not only the New Year's Eve dance but his managing of the Seniors' Grant, the functions associated with it has proved he is very professional and responsible.

To **Alan Driberg** - our Auditor, we owe a great debt of gratitude. He kept us constantly informed on taxation matters and have a battle on our hands to get the necessary exemptions. We can now breathe easier with his knowledge and advice. Thank you Alan.

**I would not forget the spouses of our Committee members, members of the past Committees and friends who often worked alongside and behind the scene tirelessly. I thank them all sincerely for without them forming our support group we could not have achieved what we have done throughout the year. To my wife and family, I offer a special bouquet of thanks and appreciation for putting up with me and helping me out.**

It is interesting to note how certain functions and events appealed to only a section of the community, yet all the while your Committee members worked hard at giving you full satisfaction, at the same time kept the Association financially up front.

It is a proud achievement.

If one was to apply any 'performance indicators' to this committee, I request that you go no further than the financial statement and the healthy profit we have left you with.

ASSOCIATION'S FUNCTIONS FOR 1991/92

The Bingo Night heralded the many functions your Committee brought to you during their term of office. The sub-committee comprised of two rookies in **Shiran** and **Michael** assisted by the veterans **Milroy** and **Dennis**. It was a night of fun and tasty dinner.

The Disco/Awards Night was unique. Any one who thought that right there was a bridging of the generation gap, was not far wrong. Tiny tots took to the floor with the seniors giving an impression that those were the signs of time to come. All credit for a well put together Presentation of Awards to our young cricketers and the Disco goes to **Russell, Shiran** and **Sham**.

The Winter Dance on 17th August was the excellent result of a sub-committee that comprised of members from both outside and inside the General Committee, headed by **Chris Hesse**. The Midnight Sun with **Malcolm** provided the rhythmic sounds that went down smoothly with all ages. Another feature of the night was the tasty dinner so painstakingly prepared by the Past Pupils of the Good Shepherd Convent, Kandy. The most heartening aspect of the dance was that we were able to increase our Building Fund considerably. We were not disappointed tagging this function 'the fund raiser'.

The Food Fiesta in September 1991 saw crowds come out in bright sunshine eager to enjoy those specialities that were dished out by a band of equally eager Committee Members and their spouses, headed by **Vicky Sivarajah**. My thanks to all but especially to **Vicky** for the excellent co-ordination.

The Foundation Day presented by **Minali** and **Russell** attained a Bringing Generations Together function type of success, as the Karaoke made possible by **Claude** helped to bring members of all ages together thereby capping a very pleasant evening.

The Christmas Show saw yet again **Rosemary's** organisational skills, with **Michelle Ranasinghe** producing and directing a Nativity pantomime. After putting the children of our community through a few quick rehearsals she produced an excellent Christmas pantomime, which was followed by Father Christmas and Carol singing. My sincere thanks to **Dagma** and **Mel** for their part in this show.

The New Year's Eve Family Get-together assumed proportions of a large family get-together to greet the New Year 1992. Praise goes to **Sujatha** and her sub-committee for making this a truly happy occasion for all Sri Lankans who came together.

The New Years Eve Dinner Dance at the Claremont Showgrounds once again turned out a well attended and enjoyable night. **Russell** deserves the major share of praise for his uncanny ability to put together an excellent show ably assisted by the very hard working sub-committee.



**The National Day on the 4th February** brought together a small crowd. But judging from the enthusiasm of those gathered it seemed as though this function could occupy a main fixture in the future.

**Bringing Generations Together** picnic on Sunday 23rd February 1992 to the Hotham Valley Railway picnic area in Dwellingup, was such a success with about 180 young and old participating. The laurels surely belongs to **Russell** the co-ordinator, **Olga** and **Rosemary** and others of the **Committee**.

They sang all the way down, and back up again in the buses they were travelling, but after lunch, singers of each group who had gathered in different locations came together to culminate in a lengthy 'Baila' session.

**The Sri Lankan Cricketers Dinner** night on Monday 16th March, 1992 saw a large crowd of both members and non-members gathered to honour the Sri Lankan national Cricket Team who had performed very creditably during their six weeks of a hectic schedule. **Rohan's** organisational ability must be commended and the **sub-committee's** efforts lauded.

We should take comfort that we in a small way will be responsible for giving a start to Sri Lanka in her quest for fast bowlers to take her to greater realms in the cricketing world. I refer here to the Secretary **Mr Neil Perera's** promise to establish a fund with the \$500.00 your Association made to the Sri Lankan Cricket Board.

**The Sinhala Tamil New Year Celebrations** on Sunday 12 April 1992 brought together a large cross section of the community. Interspaced by the food, the Concert items presented by both young and old, and the outdoor traditional games which culminated in a Tug-of-War which saw the SOR pulling the NOR to their side, the day was spent in a most friendly and cordial atmosphere. The sub-committee for this event was formed by the members of the Burgher Welfare League, The Sri Lankan Cultural Society and our own Association, which proved that unity within the community was the strongest argument for the success of this event.

To the **sponsors and donors** of prizes and gifts that helped to make the functions throughout the year a success, I say 'Thank you' and may your support continue.

### **WELFARE ACTIVITIES**

**WASLA CENTRE.** The quest for a place of our own has earnestly begun. The sub-committee and three members of the general body met and drew up submissions. These have already been submitted to four Shires. Preliminary discussions have already begun with two City Councils and an individual organisation. Things are looking favourable. **Rohan** will provide details.

**Seniors' Grant**

A grant from the Office of Seniors was applied for by Russell, and granted to us to spend on our seniors. Two successful functions involving active participation by seniors "Bringing Generations Together" programme have already been held. Monies are still available for hosting a lunch for them shortly.

**Grant from Lotteries Commission**

Through **Sujatha**, a grant was applied for last year for the purchase of musical and dance equipment. We have been assured that our Association will receive a grant from the April 1992 allocations.

**Aged Housing**

A meeting between an Official from Homeswest and some seniors of our community, with **Olga** kindly consenting to act as convenor with **Rohan, Russell, Siva and myself**, is scheduled to take place after the Easter break.

**Seniors' Advisory Council**

Three members from our Association will form part of an Advisory Council to advise the Minister for Seniors on matters pertaining to seniors.

**Furniture Bank**

This is the second year of its operation, thanks to **Rohan** for a job well done.

**Inventory of Stocks**

Rosemary, with the help of committee members have taken an inventory of goods belonging to the Association. These will be handed over to the incoming Committee.

**Visiting new migrants from Sri Lanka to Western Australia**

Rosemary and I began visiting new arrivals, but lack of time has temporarily put this programme back. We will not make time an excuse, but endeavour to make these visits an important part of the Association's activities in the future.

## CONCLUSION

*Having mentioned all that we have tried to accomplish, and the goals we have achieved, we must keep progressing.*

*A large number of the Sri Lankan community have been the backbone of this Association. Some took a break from participation in the Association's activities but returned after a while. This is not unique to our Association, but a common phenomena, peculiar to other organizations beside our own.*

*The unity of members throughout these years have provided the foundation of strength and security that we today enjoy.*

*What do we want for the future? We could either rest on our laurels and let the Australian Society keep perceiving the Sri Lankans as a good community and a good cricketing nation, or we could genuinely engage ourselves in activities that would bring us and those after us a high profile, and carve for ourselves too a niche for making a positive contribution to this multicultural nation.*

*We have people who have the ability to forward plan, set the course and guide undertakings till they reach fruition. Those people are 'you'.*

*The future success of this Association is in your hands. Each and every one of you has a role, to advise, mould and guide its future course. I can only appeal for your co-operation.*

*On behalf of the General Committee I wish you all a Happy 21st Year.*

*I present this Report to you for your acceptance.*

*Thank you.*

*Ranjit Ratnayake*

RANJIT RATNAYAKE  
PRESIDENT

26 April 1992





**W.A. SRI LANKA (CEYLON) ASSN.**

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**ANNUAL REPORT**

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