

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - SINHALA AND TAMIL NEW YEAR CELEBRATION 2006

This is to appreciate all the volunteers who helped to make the SLCAO Sinhala Tamil new year celebration a success. This time, the support had some extraordinary character, in that everyone extended their help in most instances even without asking and there was a large volunteer force of over 40 dedicated people. It looked as if every member of the SLCAO had something to do with it and all the assigned responsibilities were carried out with care until completion

We are proud to see such a skilled talented group of members in our community. Once the work was delegated with specifications, all the teams took the responsibility and got their act together to complete it. We have great architects, great idea generating people, dancing teachers, music teachers, costume designers, poets, writers, translators, computer graphics designers, musicians, artists, and interior designers who can make an ordinary hall look like a fantasy world. Whatever the skill you name, the Sri Lankan Community has them all. When the power of talent rightly mixed with the feeling of togetherness and the concept of delegation, such a rich outcome is inevitable.

As the executive committee, we sincerely thank all the members of the organizing committee for providing support and assistance in different ways depending on their strength and availability. All the items, the souvenir, decoration, mocktails, cultural events, music, food etc were of high quality. The record crowd in the event made the event very memorable and we thank all the members of the association who actively campaigned to get their friends to the event and doing many things to make it a success. Special appreciation goes to the children who took part in the performances and to their parents for encouraging them to participate in the events. A special appreciation also goes to the teachers who did a marvelous job in training the children for dancing and other performances.

Since there are a large number of people who supported this event by various means, it is hard to list each and every detail of support received. However, we thought it is still better to identify as many volunteers as possible who undertook the responsibility amidst their personal and office work and, this letter of appreciation is an effort to do just that. Since there are many who supported the organizing committee there is a possibility of omitting some names, therefore please excuse us for any exclusions and notify us to correct them as this document will be kept in the web and we can do changes at any time.

We also apologize for not printing the full names below as we know our community knows you by the names we have provided here.

- SLCAO Executive Committee

Members of the New Year celebration Organizing Committee (OC)

Activity co-ordinators

- Overall Co-ordinator – Damitha Ranawaeera
- MC – Nalaka Gunwardena
- Program Advisor – Mohan Samarasinghe.

- OC Secretary - Kanthi Dias.
- VIPP Invitations and letters – Risini Weeratna. and Mohan Samarasinghe.
- Stage managing – Rohan Basnayake., Pushpa Weerasooriya. and Nalin Imbulgoda
- Ticket design and printing – Gamini Senarath, Deepani Widyaratne.,
- Overall transportation - Sarath Amarakoon and Nimal de Silva.
- Sound ordering and set up – Nimal de Silva and Lakshman Dias assisted by Nalin Imbulgoda
- Hall booking and related issues – Sarath Amarakoon, Gamini Senarath, Susantha Mohottalage.,
- Dinner Ordering, Sarath Amarakoon., Susantha. Mohottalage, Anoma Tisseira,
- Sponsors for door/raffle prizes and draw - Winnie Wijay, Sherene Wickrmanayake, Kumudini Nicholas, Anoma Tisseira
- Overall Raffle responsibility – Malithi Tisseira, Deepani Waidyaratne and Jeewa Samarasooriya
- Publicity– Prema Raddalgoda Mohan Samarasinghe
- Ticket Sales : Sherene Wickrmanayaka, Kanthi Dias, Padmini Hapuarachchi, Tilak Waidyaratna, Winnie Wijay, Carmalene Amarasekara, Devika Gunawardena, Sarath Amarakoon, Mahesh De Silva
- Milk Rice provided by – Suneetha Glalabadarachchi, Dayani Mohottalage, Kanthi Dias, Padmini Hapuarachchi, Chrysani Basnayake, Udula Rathnayake, Hilda Fernando, Pushpa Weerasooriya, Umasha
- Traditional food table for guests – Risini Weratna, Kamalini Weeratne
- Dinner table and associated organization – Prema Raddalgoda.,
- Overall music and sound co-ordination – Nimal De Silva and Lakshman Dias
- Web based song access site – Sri Lankan Canadian Professionals for Techno-Culture (SCaPT)
- Reception and tickets – Sherene Wickramanayake, Chrysani Basnayake, Kanthi Dias and Shani Weerapura
- Volunteer ID cards preparation – Tilak Waidyarathne
- Temporary membership card preparation – Sarath Rathnasooriya

Souvenir Committee Volunteers

For this event, a memorable souvenir was produced as per a suggestion made by Newton Silva. When Shean Goonatilake accepted to do the overall design and came up with various suggestions to make it a real souvenir which people would like to keep with them, we could smell the success. However, the time was a limiting factor and there came this dedicated team who thought that they could achieve any thing despite all the odds and worked day and night to make it a success. The quality of the souvenir add to the richness of the event and in the same time provided the SLCAO a financial as well as a popularity boost. We appreciate very much the team's commitment to the objective and maintaining the high quality so that the SLCAO will obtain many sponsors in the future understanding the opportunity.

Our Souvenir team, made up of Chaminda Perera (Chair), Newton Silva (for the original idea and his drive and zest), Susantha Mohottalage, Gamage Palihapitiya (for kicking off the ad. campaign), Sarath Amarakoon, Gamini Senarath, Deepani Waidyarathne (Cover Page) and last but not least Shean Goonatilake for overall architecture and design.

Articles to Souvenir: Rajendra Alwis (New Year Message in English and Sinhalese), Rohan Basnayake and Mohan Samarasinghe (SLCAO history), Nimal De Silva (history of the Sri lankan musical band), Gamage Palihapitiya (Sinhala Poem to bring back new year memories and to welcome guests), Martin Nicholas (Sudoku puzzle)

Providing us with new year messages – Acting High Commissioner for Sri Lanka, Mr. A. W, Pathiraja, Honourable Senator Mc. Harb, Honourable Member of Parliament Royal Galipaeu

The souvenir was printed in Toronto due to the high cost of printing in Ottawa and we appreciate Newton Silva in transporting the design requirements urgently to Toronto personally. We appreciate Victor Amarasekara for transporting it back to Ottawa after printing.

Cultural Program Organization Volunteers

We appreciate all the children who participated in various events, singing the national anthems, individual songs, group songs and taking part in group performances. Children really were the key to making it a real new year show.

Children's individual songs – Darshani, Nimal Performing children: Melani Ratnayke – “Hinahevi bonikka”, Malindu Danthanarayana, - “Mata mani wage”, Aashly Rifai - “ Kesara sara”, Nethmi Dewapura, “Podi kaale Dangakeruwama” , Thamara Lankagi – “Chinna Chittu Kuruwiye”, Brayan Perera – “Mage podi yalu”

Children's Fancy Dress – Darshani, Devika Children performed: 1. Manoshi Fonseka - Awrudu kumari ; 2. Jelani nanayakkara- Thapasaya; 3. Indumini Nanayakkara - Mal Kumari ; 4. Cineth Marakawatte - Manthreethuma; 5. Amaresh Parameshwaran - Tamil Jothi Shalwar costume; 6. Tharindu Weerakoon - Maalu kath kaaraya; 7. Malindu Danthanarayana - Dosthara mahaththaya; 8. Pathum Danthanarayana- Bera kaaraya; 9. Diline Kurera - saasthara kaari; 10. Sabrina Kurera- tea plucker; 11. Duleeka Gamage- Avuruddu kumari; 12. Melani Ratnayake -Iskole haamine

Children (under 7) songs – Anoma, Darshani, Nimal

A traditional children's song with lyrics based on the famous folk tale “the hare and the tortoise” –

Tirani Weerapura, Milani Weerapura, Anuki Amarakoon, Esandi Amarakoon, Madusha Gamage, Tanisha Amarakoon, Serena Amarakoon, Prasith Wijeweera, Dulini Rathnasooriya, Jelani Nanayakkara, Monoshi Fonseka, Danika Raddalgoda, Inuri Gajanayaka and Indumini Nanayakkara.

Children ((7-12) songs - Nilupuli, Nimal, Deepani

This song is based on a romantic dialogue between a boy of an elite class and a farmer's daughter – Brian Perera, Jason S, Dinujaya Heiyanthuduwa, Shevin Rathnayaka, Ananda Silva, Akil Edirisingha, Sashini Senarath, Rajitha Waidyaratna, Dhanuddara Mohottalage, Medhani Mohottalage, Melani Rathnayaka, Hasini Nanayakkara, Larissa Perera, Malin Wijenayaka, and Gayathra Mudalige

Children (under 7) Chakgudu – Anoma, Malithi, Darshani, Devika,

A popular game played by kids especially during the time of the New Year festivities - Tirani Weerapura, Milani Weerapura, Anuki Amarakoon, Esandi Amarakoon, Madusha Gamage, Tanisha Amarakoon, Serena Amarakoon, Prasith Wijeweera, Dulini Rathnasooriya, Jelani Nanayakkara, Monoshi Fonseka, Danika Raddalgoda, Inuri Gajanayaka and Indumini Nanayakkara

Children (7-12 – Lee Keli - Anoma, Malithi, Devika)

A dance popular in all parts of the country, particularly during festivals such as the New Year. Each dancer has two sticks and the sound of the sticks sticking each other together with those of the accompanying drums, provide the rhythm for the dancers –

Amanda Ranaweera, Brian Perera, Melani Rathnayaka, Jason Silva, Hasini Nanayakkara, Dinujaya Heiyanthuduwa, Shevin Rathnayaka, Dhanuddara Mohottalage, Medhani Mohottalage, Ananda Silva, Akil Edirisingha, Sashini Senarath, Rajitha Waidyaratne and Gayathra Mudalige.

Overall Decorations

Our heartiest thanks go to Patrick Silva, Jeewanthi Samarasooriya and Deepani Waidyaratne assisted by Vajira Samarasooriya, Tilak Waidyaratne, Nandana Gajanayake, Anura Ariyaratne and Achale Ariyaratne, who transformed the reception hall to one of splendor, glamour, elegance and provided the festive mood to the New year celebrations. The decorations, the recorded sound of Koha, Raban also added grandeur to the rest of the activities that took place that evening. All guests were mesmerized by their color, their creativity as they brought nostalgic memories of our homeland during the time of New Year celebrations, to many guests who attended the function.

Paduru Party

Paduru party was a unique event where people's memories of home were brought back by the very popular songs of the past as well as the sitting arrangements on mats which is similar to the way we usually have parties in Sri Lanka.

Pushpa (In Charge), Nimal De Silva overall music, Tansen Edirisinghe (Thabla), Ranjith Wahalawatta (Organ), Mrs. Selvadhas (Violin),

Participants: Nimal Tilak, Hari, Chaminda A, Rashmi, Pushpa, Warunika, Devika, Darshani, Siriya, Anoma, Deepani, Jeewa (Nimal/Pushpa please add names after verifying from them)

Mocktails and soft Drinks served by the Youth Committee

For the first time in SLCAO, history we had our youth organization undertaking a big project. To support a needy child in Sri Lanka they volunteered to sell soft drinks and Mocktails during the event. It was a great success and people were really impressed with their professional way of handling it. This added color to our festival and the ceremony while the collections went to a worthy cause. We will let you know about the collection details later.

This event including all the soft drinks supplies were sponsored by Chandra De Silva – see below under sponsorships.

Special items

Training for Kids songs, and performances training for the SLCAO organized events – Malithi Tisseira, Rangana Wijesingha, Yasangi Tisseira, Nimal de Silva, Nilupuli Heyyanthuduwa, Darshani Amrakoon, Devika Gunawardena, Susantha Mohottalage

Dance Training for SLCAO organized performances: by award winning dancers from Sri Lanka Malithi Tisseira, Rangana Wijesingha and Yasangi Tisseira-

The many dance items choreographed and trained by them produced high quality traditional and contemporary dance items which added color, glamour and class to the evenings performances. Special thanks go to the threesome who spent long hours providing training tirelessly with patience and endurance, sacrificing their valuable leisure time.

Playing of Raban –

Sound of Raban is an essential part of the New year activities in Sri Lanka. The dawn of the New Year is marked by the sound of raban played by village damsels ushering in the spirit of celebration and rejuvenation. On this special occasion , our heartiest thanks go to Mrs. Siriya Hettiarachchi , a talented raban player who volunteered to play for the packed audience without whom we would not have had the privilege of having Raban played, this significant feature of our new year celebrations. Our thanks go to Mrs. Rushmi Parameshwaran and Mrs. ... (Rashmi please provide the name thanks) who joined in the playing of Raban, demonstrating the unity and togetherness of our community.

Musical Band – “Lankan Breeze’ – Nimal de Silva, Lakshman Dias, Aruna Kaluthanthri, Asanga Weerapura, Tilak Waidyaratne, Ranjith Wahalwatta, Sumudu Fonseka , Lanka de Silva

Photography – Aruna Kaluthanthri

Video - Sarath Rathnasorriya

· DJ – Victor Amarasekara

Other performances from special dance/cultural groups

These items were co-ordinated by the cultural committee of the SLCAO (see at the end of this email for names).

· Song in Tamil by Hari and Rashmi Parameshwaran

This song is sung by a loving couple composing their emotions with each other and inviting the full moon to listen to their stories. The song also stresses the importance of a good married life and the ingredients for it.

- Modern Dance (Manusak Kule)

A mixture of traditional and modern dance performed to the beat of a popular contemporary song - Manesha Senarath, Shalini Gunawardhana, Manisha Dias, Ishara Amarasekara and Thakshika Rathnasooriya.

- Kulu Dance

History tells us that the Sri Lankan new year was celebrated hand in hand with the joyous events that celebrated the gathering of the harvest. The Sri Lanka Youth Dance Troupe is here to portray some of the women who are separating the good grains from the bad grains of that harvest are Upeksha Fernando, Natasha Neil and Nethmi Devpura of the Sri Lanka Youth Dance Troupe

- Meedum Uthurana

A modern dance by Araliya group - Erica Usliyanage, Jesica Usliyanage, Melissa Usliyanage. and Shani Jayaratna

- Bharatha Dance

This song is sung by a young woman looking forward to her wedding. She sings of how her heart reacts to the presence of her fiance and then why she dresses as she does for the marriage. Rashmi Parameshwaran is lively singing this song and Bharatha dance will be performed by Rangana Wijesingha, Maneesha Senarath and Yasangi Tissera.

Special Invitees who were present at the new year celebration

We appreciate very much the following guests for accepting the invitation and coming to the event and even staying with us for a longer period.

- Acting high commissioner, Mr. A.W. Pathiraja
- Honorable Senator Mc. Harb
- Honorable Member of Parliament, Pierre Poilivre
- Honorable Member of Parliament,, Royal Galipaeu
- Former parliamentary secretary, Asia Pacific, Mr. David Kilgour
- Advisor Community outreach, David Kushi-apiah
- Members of the Canadian friends of Sri Lanka

We also thank Risini Weeratne (Coordinator), Asoka Wikramanayake, Susantha Mohottalage, Kumudini and Martin Nicholas for ushering the special guests, keeping company with and attending to them.

Media Coverage

· We thank OMNI TV for covering our event and even broadcasting a news clip during Monday 01 May 2006, 8.00pm news bulletin.

· We also thank Ottawa Citizen for coming here and providing coverage.

· Also to Sanhindha paper for their plans to cover the event in the next news paper.

Our Acknowledgement to sponsors

· Overall soft drink supply for Mocktails and other requirements for youth group - Chandra de Silva.

· Items in the traditional food plate: Sarath and Deepa Amarakoon (Hull).

· Lunumiris for Kiribath provided with the compliments of Lanka Food City

· Sound system - sponsored by the Acting high commissioner A. W. Pathiraja.

· Rabana, Sri Lanka and Canada flags, and traditional oil lamp have been provided by the Sri Lanka High Commission in Ottawa.

· Martin Nicholas for providing prize for solving Sudoku puzzle.

· Kumudini Nicholas for contributing toward providing children's gifts.

· To Monterery Inn for providing a very valuable first prize of a weekend for 2 in a hotel and two prizes of brunch for two in a restaurant.

· All the organizations who provided advertisements to the souvenir

· Coffee and tea supply – Batik Tea (Compliments from Mahaweli Trading Inc.)

Cultural Committee (CC)

· Anoma Tissera (Chair), Devika Gunawardena, Pushpa Weerasooriya, Padmini Hapuarachchi, Jeevanthi Samarasooriya, Newton Perera, Patrick Silva, Aruna Kaluthanthri, Nimal de Silva

Executive Committee (EC)

· Gamini Senarath – (613) 823-8606

· Winnie Wijay – (613) 224-9854

· Sarath Amarakoon – (613) 270-8656

· Susantha Mohottalage – (613) 226-4894

· Anoma Tissera – (613) 863-1705

· Sohan Dias -