



# Peradeniya University

## Alumni Australia - Victoria Chapter



**HANTANE NEWS 2018** **Issue 7**

**Message from President PUAAViC , 2018**  
**Dr Sunil Ratnayake**

Dear Fellow Alumni & Friends  
*Ayubowan, Wanakkam, As-Salaam-  
Alaikum,*

Since the inauguration of the Peradeniya University Alumni Australia Victoria Chapter (PUAAViC) in 2004, we have been involved in supporting our alma mater, the University of Peradeniya in various ways with the generous participation of our current alumni members. As a very active organisation, we (PUAAViC) organise numerous activities focusing on the one hand to provide assistance to the current students at Peradeniya University, while on the other, engaging in the well-being and happiness of our members enabling the alumni here to enjoy each other’s company to share the friendship and values inherited from our common Peradeniya experience.

This year, I am delighted to say that we have enhanced our association activities to a different level by successfully completing a mega project: the staging of “Sakuna Wasanthaya” a musical concert as a fund raiser. This gives us the opportunity to extend our commitments beyond our own membership to include the wider community in Victoria. PUAAViC embarked on this activity to foster and promote

Sri Lankan traditional performing art forms, cultural values (dance, music, knowledge and other areas of human endeavour) in Australia. Thus, PUAAViC promotes and showcase Sri Lanka and its rich and ancient culture within the multicultural society in Australia. We also attempt to protect and preserve traditional art forms by passing on this knowledge to young talented expatriates living and growing up in Australia.

Since the inception of the Peradeniya campus in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, three generations have studied at the University of Peradeniya. We are fortunate to be able to associate with a sample of all three generations living here in Melbourne. Let’s go down memory lane of our legendary Alma Mater. Today, we are in Victoria together under the banner of this prestigious association (PUAAViC) because we are bound together in the great spirit of camaraderie of a unique University. We all belong to one family irrespective of who we are, and where we come from. Back then, we all enjoyed university life without any prejudices or perceived social stratification within our wider community. Our bond with the Peradeniya University is unique and strong and will last within us until our last breath. Today we are all privileged to be members of this alumni association to relive the “Pera spirit” in our lives.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Presentation night- 2018**

*Asoka Athuruliya and Sunil Ratnayake*

The presentation night 2018 was held on 24<sup>th</sup> of March to felicitate the participants in the Australia day-Membership drive events. This event was very successful with nearly 100 participants present at the event encouraging the younger generation which was reflected in the impressive comments received from them. They expressed their willingness to actively take part in future PUAAViC events. We were also

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

<i>President’s message</i>	1
<i>Secretary’s Report</i>	2
<i>Annual General Meeting</i>	2
<i>Scholarship Programme</i>	3
<i>සිංහලයාගේ දිනය!</i>	4
<i>Annual Trip to Neerim East</i>	5
<i>Australia Day 2018</i>	6
<i>Father’s Day 2018</i>	7
<i>New year &amp; Hantane Nite photos</i>	8



able to get few new members on board on the day. This was also a good opportunity to attract young Alumni to the PUAAViC which is one of our major objectives set out at the beginning of the current year.

On this night, when we were celebrating several victories we achieved on the Australia day events and sharing the sportsmanship among us, it was opportune that we were able to invite Manjula Wijesekera (National Record holder in high jump in Sri Lanka in the last 16 years) who was in Victoria at the time to participate in Commonwealth Games 2018. I think this was an appropriate gesture on our part.

.....  
**Report of the Secretarial Subcommittee PUAAViC 2017/18:**

**Rohini Nilaweera, Secretary PUAAViC**

Secretarial subcommittee: Ms Rohini Nilaweera (Secretary)  
Dr Harendra Corea (Assistant Secretary)

In accordance with PUAAViC rules, notifying the Secretary's appointment to CAV was done with the submission of PUAAViC Annual Report and the Financial Report. CAV registration payments were made. The membership registry was maintained while ensuring the financial records were duly updated. Ten (10) life members and one (1) Annual member joined to PUAAViC this year. Also two (2) lapsed memberships were reinstated. A soft copy of membership registry has been updated. In 2016 it was decided that records of PUAAViC documents and correspondence should be maintained electronically.

We coordinated internal and external general correspondence of PUAAViC while saving copies in the secretary's mail folder. Information about various events and notices relevant to PUAAViC alumni were circulated amongst alumni as received in the secretary's inbox.

We organized eight (8) committee meetings including an urgent meeting, as per the criteria specified in PUAAViC rules. Minutes of the committee meetings were duly documented, and records have been stored electronically in Secretary's email folder.

Yearly subscription was paid to Australia Post for securing the PUAAViC PO Box. Public Liability Insurance annual premium was paid for the year valid to January 2019. The AGM 2018 notice was sent to PUAAViC members in accordance with PUAAViC rules.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Annual General Meeting 2018**

**Nirmalal Dias/Coordinator**

'AGM Nite' is the last event of the calendar year. This Sub Committee consisted of Nirmalal Dias (Coordinator), Ranabahu Wickremasinghe, Tikiri Ranaweera, Sunil Ratnayake and subsequently co-opted Harin Corea.

The Vision for the AGM Nite was to make it an evening to foster relationships among Pera families with well-wishers. The Objectives were 1. to support Educational Resource Facilitation Program, 2. Extend PUAAViC gratitude to Pera Alumni in Melbourne 3. Provide an exposure especially to the young Alumni in Melbourne and 4. Encourage 'mass participation' in the evening's activities.

This year's event will consist of a well-arranged program of diverse performances involving Pera Alumni in Melbourne and their children. A special raffle draw will be held to support the Educational Resources Facilitation Program. By inviting quotations, Vindhi Caterers were selected to provide dinner; music will be provided by Mangala and his Troupe. Tickets were priced at \$30.00 per adult and \$20.00 per teen. The AGM Nite will follow the AGM and will be held at **St. Leonard's Church Hall, Glen Waverley, on the 17th November 2018.**

A special feature of the evening's program will be the **launching of the compact disc featuring all the songs sung at the highly successful PUAAViC organised 'Sakuna Wasanthaya'.**



## **The PUAAViC Scholarship Programme - Making a Positive Impact on the Lives of Peradeniya Undergraduates** **Dr Kithsiri Dassanayake**

PUAAViC represents multi-generational graduates of our Alma Mater, the University of Peradeniya that has given us so much. Therefore, we the PUAAViC community not only maintain a strong bond and interaction with Peradeniya, our alumni are strongly motivated to find a sense of balance by giving back to the university, as we believe that it will help instill the same spirit of service in the next generation of Peradeniya graduates.



The Scholarship Programme is the key project of PUAAViC's giving back programmes and its primary purpose is to assist young and talented Peradeniya students who need financial assistance: for whom completion of their studies successfully would otherwise be a real challenge. In addition, it is the desire of PUAAViC to financially assist high achieving students in their respective field of studies as an acknowledgement and encouragement of their achievements. PUAAViC can only fulfil its mission by receiving generous support from our alumni community in Victoria and beyond. The support of our donor community goes a long way in helping PUAAViC to achieve its goals. Therefore, PUAAViC is indebted to all individuals who contributed to the PUAAViC Scholarship Programmes since 2012.



***A picture from the very first gathering at the launch of the Father's Day fund raising for the Scholarship programme in 2012***

Interestingly, the Scholarship Program of PUAAViC was initiated in 2012 originally based on an idea by the sons and daughters of pioneering members of the Alumni, who having observed the dedication and commitment of their parents towards their alma mater, had thought of channeling the money they would



# Peradeniya University

## Alumni Australia - Victoria Chapter



otherwise use for annual Father's Day presents, as a great way of returning their gratitude. The very first fund raising event was held on the Father's Day 2012 (2<sup>nd</sup> September 2012) and it has now become a tradition of the PUAAViC community to gather every Father's Day and contribute to a great cause while enjoying the day with their families and friends.

During the last few years, the scholarship programme has evolved into the largest community project of PUAAViC. Peradeniya Alumni community of Victoria must be very proud about its remarkable achievements in raising funds and contributions towards the University of Peradeniya students; thanks to the bigheartedness of our donors, PUAAViC raised over \$90000 at annual Father's Day Fund raising events and distributed over \$60000 as scholarships/studentships to 493 needy and talented undergraduates in the last six (6) years since the commencement of the Scholarship Fund in 2012, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Total Number of Students awarded with PUAAViC Scholarships from 2013-2017**

Award Type		No of Awards
<b>Faculty-based Awards</b>	Agriculture	39
	Arts	103
	Allied Health Sciences	14
	Dental Science	13
	Engineering	67
	Management	04
	Medicine	75
	Science	83
	Veterinary	09
<b>Students with Special Needs</b>		45
<b>Merit-based Awards</b>		41
<b>Total</b>		<b>493</b>

### Application & Selection Process

PUAAViC scholarship programme is administered through the Alumni Association, University of Peradeniya (AAUP), without whose dedicated support and commitment managing this programme so successfully is impossible.

The entire process of application and selection of potential recipients for PUAAViC scholarships is announced annually by the Scholarship Committees of each academic faculty of the university. Each applicant has to be endorsed by a member of permanent academic staff that he/she is in need and qualifies to apply for a studentship. PUAAViC has the final say on defining selection criteria for the selections. A certificate from the Grama Sewaka (local Village Headman) is required confirming that the household income of the applicant is below a defined standard. Each faculty scholarship committee consisting of members of academic staff and a representative of AAUP evaluates and short-lists the potential awardees. As a general practice, Mahapola Scholarship recipients are not considered in the selection: Selection criteria for the selection of the recipients are based on the

### ස්තුතියි දුටුවේ පුතේ! ශෝභා පීරිස් (වීරසිංහ)

දුටුවේ පුතේ මේ අහන්න  
ඔබේ උදව්වෙන් අද දින  
අගහිඟ ඇති බෝ දෙනෙකුට  
හැකිව ඇතේ නැණ ලබන්න

පියවරුනගේ දිනය කියා  
තෑගි වලට තිතක් තියා  
ඇරඹූ මේ ව්‍යාපෘතිය  
මහ මෙරටත් උසයි මෙදා

ලොකු හෝටල් වලට ගොහින්  
ලොකු ලොකු බිල් ඔබ ගෙව්වම  
එතනින් ඉවරයි ඒවා  
දිගුකල් පවතියි මේවා

සරළ දිවිය අගය කරන  
අප වැනි මේ මා පියනට  
තෑගි වලින් කීමද පලේ  
අමීල තෑග්ගකි මේ දෙය

සරසවියේදී අප සමූහයට  
නොමිලේ ලැබුණ අධ්‍යාපන  
ප්‍රති උපකාරය පුදන්න  
අපගේ යුතුකමක් නොවෙද?

නන්තාඳුනනා දුරු රට  
විසුටත් අප බොහෝ කලක්  
අප ඉපදුණු පුවි රටට  
සහයෝගය දිය යුතුමය

මෙන්න අපෙන් මල් කළඹක්  
අත හිත දෙන දු පුතුනට  
දුන් දේ පමණමයි "සුවද"  
තුනි පුද දෙමු ඔබට තිබද!





# Peradeniya University

## Alumni Australia - Victoria Chapter



household income, number of dependents and number of schooling children in the family. Once the final list of recipients is approved by PUAAViC, AAUP implement the fund disbursement process monthly. Awardees are required to sign a register maintained at AAUP before the payments are authorised by AAUP.

The PUAAViC scholarship programme assisted 21 undergraduates across all faculties during 2017/2018 funding cycle and the monthly allowance was raised Rs.3000.00. A similar number of students will be supported in the coming year.

As PUAAViC always does, it is currently in the process of further improving the scholarship programme through a consultative process with the broader membership, AAUP and the University Administration.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Annual Trip to Neerim East:**

***Tikiri Ranaweera (Coordinator)***

***The organising subcommittee:*** Tikiri Ranaweera, Upali Ileperuma, Sarath Jayasuriya, Ranabahu Wickramasinghe, Chamila Fernando, Nirmalal Dias and Sunil Ratnayake

Our annual trip was held from Friday 27 to Sunday 29 April 2018 at the Forest Edge Christian Youth Camp site in Neerim East, Victoria. The location was in a bush setting with magnificent views where all the facilities for the event were available on site. Beautiful weather embraced two wonderful days and we were the sole occupants of the premises during this period.

This fabulous event resulted from great team work from all our members and it certainly showed the true "Pera Spirit" including the demonstrations of Sri Lankan cultural and traditional values, talents and spirit that remain in our hearts!

While appreciating everyone's contribution in making this event a reality, two statements from post-trip feedback that attracted our attention are reproduced below.

1. "We should keep on record that it was a great trip. All who attended would agree with us that there was nothing to be worried or concerned about during our time at Forest Edge. Magnificent

views, comfortable accommodation, well planned activities, delightful food and the nice weather embraced two wonderful days. We acknowledge all the hard work done by the organisers to keep us very comfortable during those two days. You had organised everything to perfection. Please accept our sincere gratitude to you again"

2. "Hope you are well and deserve a well-earned rest. Let me thank you and the committee in putting together this pleasant and remarkable event. We can't say enough about the location, the atmosphere, the food and the final night. You have really set the bar high for these sorts of events. A phenomenal job well done. Again, thank you for the opportunity given to us to join the fun filled trip. From the arrival night to next morning New Year celebrations to semi-formal reception night and the breakfast before departure had been flawless and impeccable. Excellent programming to the very end. Finally, we wish to show our gratitude to pioneering Alumni for initiating this annual event and sadly but fondly remembering our departed Alumni. See you all next year" (***Photos of trip on page 8***).



**PUAAViC Membership Drive/Australia Day events 2018**

**Ranjan Mendis**

*Coordinator-PUAAViC Membership Drive/Australia Day events subcommittee*

The eighth annual PUAAViC Membership Drive / Family Fun Day was held on the Australia Day - 26<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at Rowville Reserve. Congregating under university banners and a line of Sri Lankan flags we enjoyed a beautiful sunny Australia Day celebration, with a fantastic turn out from our members along with their families and friends.



The day began with a communal breakfast of kiribath, lunumiris and various Sri Lankan sweets before gearing up to enjoy a series of competitive and engaging cricket matches between the alumni of Kelaniya and Peradeniya Universities. In a fantastic sweep, Peradeniya took home the victory in the Under 45s match, the Over 45s match and the Ladies cricket match - marking the first time all three matches had been won by Peradeniya Alumni. It was a wonderful effort by all and a great performance by the Under 45s to bring the "Australia Day Challenge Cricket Trophy" back to Peradeniya University.

**Welcome to PUAAViC Family 2018**

- Asanka Nilath Fonseka
- Eureka Priyadarshani
- Mangalika Munidasa
- Samson Dias
- Upali Jayasekara
- Nilanthi Jayasekara
- Chinthaka Dissanayake
- Muditha Senanayake
- Dilhani Ratnadiwakara
- Sudheera Wanisundera
- Iromi Kodikara
- Kushani Tennakoon,
- Dayani Tennakoon



As the day progressed a free BBQ was enjoyed by all for lunch. All day we were treated to music by DJ Rush and the many children in attendance were very happy to play on the jumping castle in the sunshine. The children then



joined the adults on the oval for a series of relay games. The afternoon also involved a terrific competition between Peradeniya and Kelaniya for the women’s netball match. It was excellent to see so many spectators come down from the stands to watch and support our women’s team.

Overall it was fantastic to see so many members of the alumni community get involved in the day. On behalf of the Australia Day PUAAViC Membership Drive subcommittee - Mangala Jayasinghe, Ranabahau Wickramasinghe, Susil Piyanandana and Prasanna Kalusinghe - it is my pleasure to extend thanks to all members and non-members who participated and came along to make the PUAAViC Membership Drive Day a huge success.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Fathers’ Day Event 2018**

*Ranabahu Wickramasinghe- Coordinator, Fathers’ Day Sub Committee*

Annual Fathers’ Day celebrations of PUAAViC was held on Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2018 at St. Simon Parish Hall, Rowville. This year’s celebration was the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive time that the event has been held since its inception in 2012 by the children of PUAAViC parents living in Melbourne. It was encouraging and inspiring to observe the continuous involvement and support by the children to progress the Scholarship Support Program.

In collaboration with the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya (AAUP) in Sri Lanka, the Scholarship Support Program of the PUAAViC decided to grant scholarships to 21 needy students who were assisted in 2017 to continue in 2018 as well. Apart from granting scholarships and studentships, expanded scope in 2017 to provide educational resource facilities to needy faculties of the University will continue in 2018. An interview was telecasted one week prior to the event via Channel 31 informing the Sri Lankan community of the event as well as describing the objectives and evolution of the Scholarship Program over the past six years.



This year’s event primarily focused on providing opportunities for the young generation to present performances in a family friendly setting. There were two special inclusions this year: one was making arrangements for very young participants to create Fathers’ Day greeting cards by themselves and presenting them at stage to respective fathers. This activity not only kept the young participants pleasantly occupied during the event but also it heightened their creative abilities. The other was a short documentary showcasing genuine appreciation and comments from

scholarship recipients in Sri Lanka. It was great to hear their stories in direct communication with them. In addition, the participants were treated to a number of signing performances mostly by the young generation based on themes related to Fathers’ Day. The participants were treated to a complimentary delicious ‘koththu roti’ lunch. The event also entailed a presentation by coordinator of the subcommittee for Educational Resource Facilitation Program detailing the donation statistics over the past years.

The event assisted in contributing a net sum of approximately \$3,000 to the Scholarship Fund. The total expenditure for the event was approximately \$2,100. It was observed that the attendance at the event has gradually declined over the years. It was further observed there is a trend of declining amounts being contributed by usual donors as well. The post event analysis suggested to rethink of the event format going forward.



# Peradeniya University

## Alumni Australia - Victoria Chapter



The event was very well supported by the subcommittee and the executive committee and of course immensely assisted by respective spouses in numerous ways. The front desk team did a wonderful job in making documentation of donations. Roshan Kurera's one-man band with his quality sound system provided fabulous music throughout the event. Special appreciation should be extended to Dulip Jayakody and Nilushini for undertaking the MC duties for the event.

\*\*\*\*\*

### PUAAViC visit to Neerim East and the Sri Lankan New Year Function (2018) in Pictures





**Hantane Nite 2018 in Pictures**





# Peradeniya University

## Alumni Australia - Victoria Chapter



Vale Dr Basil de Silva



We announce with profound sadness the passing of Dr Basil de Silva, a Peradeniya alumnus and a former executive committee member of PUAAViC, in late September 2018. Basil migrated to Australia and carried out his higher studies at Monash University in Melbourne from 1974 and at the time of retirement was Associate Professor in Mathematics at RMIT University. He was known for his friendly personality, his passion for social justice issues and his interest in local politics. He moved to Sydney after retirement to be with his family. His wife Lalitha is also a life member of PUAAViC. We extend our deepest condolences to Lalitha and the family. May his soul Rest in Peace.

Stop Press: Damayanthi Ranasinghe



As this edition goes to press, we were also informed of the passing of Damayanthi Ranasinghe (Peradeniya-Agriculture 1979) in Melbourne after a brief illness. She also holds a Master's degree from Peradeniya and functioned as a lecturer at the university before moving to the Industrial Development Board. She was an Alumna of PUAAViC and was well known for her participation in the annual Pera vs Kelani cricket event. A friendly and an unassuming person, I quote below from an email received from her guru and mentor from the Faculty of Agriculture, Peradeniya who visited her in palliative care at the Monash hospital. "She had the same smile as always and will be remembered for her humility, calmness and contribution to the agriculture community in Victoria". Her funeral was held on 29 October 2018. May she attain the supreme bliss of Nibbana.

**Editor's note:** Death of a friend or a loved one reminds us of those inevitabilities in life:

*"Sun shines upon a wedding feast or upon a dead body with the cold impartiality of the natural law"*

Contact us:

Email:

[secretary.puaavic@peradeniya.com.au](mailto:secretary.puaavic@peradeniya.com.au)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/PUAAVIC/>

Postal address:

Peradeniya University Alumni Australia,  
Victoria Chapter, P O Box 750, Glen

For new membership applications please visit our website:

<http://www.padeniya.com.au>

send completed forms to:

[secretary.puaavic@peradeniya.com.au](mailto:secretary.puaavic@peradeniya.com.au)

