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THE WAND

ORGAN OF THE SRI LANKA MAGIC CIRCLE

www.srilankamagic.org

February 2016

The Official Guardian of Magic

Annual General Meeting
on Sunday 28th February 2016
at 'Vishmithapaya'
9.30 a.m.

1922-2016
SRI LANKA MAGIC CIRCLE CELEBRATES 94TH ANNIVERSARY



**Group photograph
taken at the first Anniversary
in 1923**

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Chandrasena Gamage

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The monthly get together of the SLMC for the month of January 2016 was held at the “Vismithapaya” on 31/01/2016 commencing around 10.00 am. The following Members were present. **Ajith Fernando, Amarasiri Wijesinghe, Asanka K. Pathirana, Chandrasena Gamage, Chrisantha Silva, H. D. N. Gunasekara, Hiran Seneviratne, M. K. Wimalasena, Priyantha Gamage, Rohan Jayasekara, Ronald de Alwis, Sadila Jayasinghe, Shenul Jayasinghe, Sambuddika Rathnayake, Shelton Jayasekera, Sujeewa Hewapathirane, Suranjith De Soysa, Terry Amerasekera, Thusitha Jayasekera, Terwin Hannibal, Wilhelm Perera, Yogitha Anthony.**

There were two visiting magicians Norbert Kolb from Germany and Alan Williams (A.I.M.C.) from UK. Norbert who lives in Spain was on a holiday in down south. He is a sleight of hand magician with a touch of comedy. He got the link to SLMC through the mutual friend Dino Dorado. Allan was visiting his daughter who is attached to the British High Commission. He is a member of the Magic Circle, London; with Associate status of the Inner Magic Circle.



This is the first get together for the New Year 2016. The session started with the lighting of the floating lamps. Thereafter the GS welcomed the members and invited the President Rohan to address the gathering. Rohan started his speech wishing all members a very happy and prosperous new year. He mentioned about the improvements at the “Vismithapaya” and informed that more man power is needed to continue with the work. He further said that plans are under way to construct the first floor of the building. He welcomed the two visiting foreign magicians and said that SLMC is planning to get down more foreign magicians in 2016.



After President's speech, the Treasurer Wijesinghe requested all members to settle their dues before the Annual General Meeting.

The highlight for the day was the performance by the German magician Norbert. It was a magic show with various tricks consisting coin magic, Ring and



Ribbon magic, vanishing a ring and a wrist watch through the silk. He further performed several card tricks with the assistance from the audience. At the end of the show Norbert was kind enough to explain of some of the secrets.

The next performer was Trevin, who is the current President of IBM Ring 139. He did several rope tricks with the assistance from Norbert. At the end of his performances he gave a detailed description of “Knight of Illusions Returns” the magic show organized by the IBM Ring 139 on 20th February 2016. This will be staged at Musaeus College Auditorium featuring 3 world Champion Magicians. He mentioned that SLMC members are entitled for a special discount.

The next performer was Priyantha Gamage with card magic and this was followed by Terry Amerasekera performing ball tricks. Thereafter Chandrasena Gamage displayed card tricks.

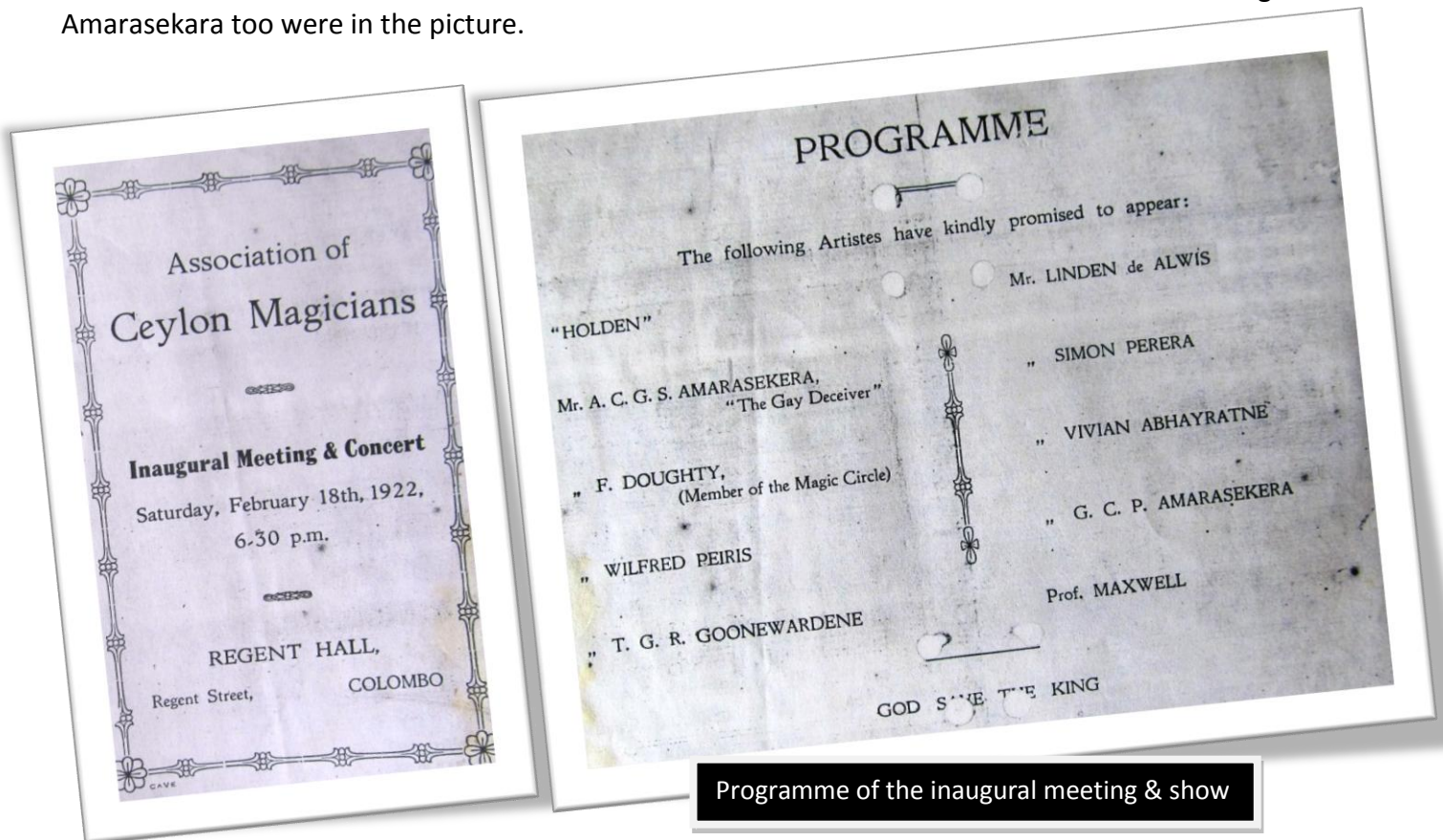
The treat for the day was sponsored by Thusitha Jayasekera who celebrated her birthday in January. The proceedings of another interesting day came to an end around 12.30 pm.

-Crishantha-

94th Anniversary of the Sri Lanka Magic Circle

The inaugural meeting and the public show of the Association of Ceylon Magicians – ACM- (The predecessor to the SLMC) was held on 18th February 1922 at the Regent Hall, Colombo. This was considered the official birth of the magical society in Ceylon. Mr.A.C.G.S.Amarasekara was elected as the President of the Association. Mr. Harold Holden (Vice President), Messrs. T.G.R.Gunawardane & Simon Perera (Joint Secretaries), Mr. F.H.Doughty (Hony.Treasurer) were the other office bearers. Records say a group of few enthusiastic amateur magicians met informally prior to this event and exchanged ideas and demonstrated new findings among themselves. Mr. Harold Holden who was then the manager of the Toy Department of the H.W.Cave & Company and an amateur magician himself got them together to form the Association of Ceylon Magicians.

The cover photo of this issue was taken at the first anniversary meeting held on 2nd April 1923. Members at the end of first year were in the picture. Messrs. Herbert Gonzal, Vivien Abeyratne, Linden De Alwis, Wilfred Perera, G.C.P.Amarasekara, St.E.Van Langenberg, Rienzie Arnold, Shelton Wallace, J.P.Holden, E.D.Andriez, J.G.Ballentine and R.C.P.Beck were the others. Mrs. A.C.G.S.Amarasekara and Master Douglas Amarasekara too were in the picture.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING-2016

The Annual General Meeting of the Sri Lanka Magic Circle will be held on Sunday 28th February 2016.
Venue: Vishmithapaya, 156, Templers Road, Mt. Lavinia
Time : 9.30 a.m.

Official notice, agenda, annual accounts & resolutions are posted under a separate cover.

Lunch will be provided at the end of the A.G.M.

(Please confirm your participation to Chrisantha (0777726652) or Suranjith (0777208660). Please let them know, if you prefer vegetarian meals.

BLACK WIZARD OF THE WHITE MAGIC

Senior Magician Kalaboodhana Chandrasena Gamage elevated to the Honorary Life Membership of the Sri Lanka Magic Circle in recognition of his unbroken membership for over four decades and the outstanding contribution to the 'Magic in Sri Lanka'. He will receive the insignia to the effect at the AGM on 28th February.

Late 1970s there were only few top level magicians, who had won the most prestigious title of Magic in Sri Lanka, the "Open National Championship". Chandrasena Gamage was one of them. Chandra, if I may call him for easy reference was a Police Constable by profession. On stage he was a performer with his own style.



Constable Gamage



Magician 'Black Wizard'



Today Senior Citizen Gamage with Sheela

Chandra had his first experience with magic under the "Pacha Gaha" (the tree of hoaxers) of Matara where he witnessed an itinerant magician at the age of 12. Born in 1932, at Uhurugama, a rural village near Matara, Chandra joined Ceylon Police in 1957. In 1961 he tied the nuptial knot with Miss Sheela Ambepitiya and settled down in Matara.

One day, PC Gamage was on night petrol with a fellow cop and nabbed a suspicious person with a peculiar wooden box, at Matara Railway Station. When inquiring he came to know that the person was an itinerant magician, spending the night at the station. The dormant 'magic bug' in Chandrasena, itched him within. He released the suspect with the promise of reporting at his billet the next day. He never expected to see the suspect again, but Mr. Soyza the itinerant magician kept his promise and came to see him the next evening. Soyza performed the egg bag under his nose and divulged the secret. This was the beginning of 'Magician Chandrasena Gamage' who was destined to become an exceptional wizard in Sri Lanka. Chandra learnt the basics and classics of the art from his 'Guru' the magician Soyza, and started improving his own skills and knowledge. Gradually he became popular among the police force as the 'Magic Cop' and an imperative officer to entertain crowds at the public-relations events.

Later on the family had to move to Ratmalana for the education of their son Priyantha, who was found defective in hearing at birth. Chandra continued with his magic whenever he was called for. One day in mid 1970s, the magician 'Professor Akbar' (Mr. Wickramapala Alwis) saw this officer performs at a Police event. Prof. Akbar noted, the skills of this officer was in par with the best performers of the magic circle and introduced him to the SLMC in January 1975. Prof. Akbar advised Chandra on little shortcomings and additional tips and bits to improve his performances and baptized him as "Black Wizard". In his first attempt, competing with the seasoned performers of the circle, Chandra emerged as the "Magician of the Year-1975". He still remembers, while congratulating and awarding the shield on the stage Mudaliyar Amarasekara commented on Chandra's European dress which was not up to the standards expected by the circle. Two years later in 1977 he won the Sri Lanka Magicians' Open National contest. There after 'Black Wizard' was always among the top four or five magicians of the circle. He won the Open National Contest again in 1979 and 1981.

Being a regular performer his entire family was with him. Wife Sheela, son and two daughters were his assistants on stage. 1982 Chandra stepped down and put forward his son 'Top Wizard' for the Open National Contest. 'Top Wizard',

Priyantha won the championship as the youngest to win the title and he kept the title for himself for the next five years. Then it was the daughters' opportunity. Deepani and Priyanka too won the 'Magician of the Year', 'Master Magician' and 'Open National Champion' titles in 1990s. Sheela the proud wife and mother was always behind, and on stage assisting them throughout these successes. When asked about the secret of success, Chandra says that he took 'Magic' as a serious art and he kept on improving his skills throughout. He took trouble to learn new tricks; kept on practicing; spent substantial amount of money to get down new items and blue prints. Tried on new tricks and illusions. I remember during those winning years he made it a point to introduce a novel illusion at each and every contest they took part.



Young Priyantha with Dad. 1970



At a SLMC Contest



Dad & the kids... All are champions

'Black Wizard' never promoted the 'Black Magic'. With his expertise in 'White Magic' Chandra assisted Dr. Abraham T. Koovur and Dr. Carlo Fonseka at the Rationalists' Association to demonstrate so called miracles performed by 'God-men' and 'Spiritual Leaders'. He accomplished the 'miracles' merely by a magician's skills.

After retiring from the Police Department in 1984, Chandra devoted his fulltime for Magic. He excelled in another branch of magic, Ventriloquism; which needed thorough commitment and painstaking practices. Today Chandra is the proud possessor of both 'Somapala' & 'Willie', never ageing talking dolls owned by the two foremost Ventriloquists in the history of SLMC, Mudaliyar Amarasekara and Sepala Weerasinghe respectively. In 1992 Chandra & Priyantha performed at the Ramada Renaissance Hotel, Doha, Qatar; on a professional assignment.



Different faces of 'Black Wizard'



Decorated with 'Kalabooshana'

Chandrasena Gamage has been a loyal and active member of the SLMC. He joined the SLMC on 1st January 1975. Served in the Council since 1980 in many capacities; such as librarian, Vice President -Training/Welfare etc. State recognized the contribution made by this performing artist by conferring the coveted title "Kalabooshana" in 2004.

Today he belongs to the handful of veterans in the elite group of 'Honorary Life Members' of the Sri Lanka Magic Circle.

FROM THE EDITOR

This is the last issue of 'The Wand' for the current administrative year. I'm personally happy that I could be a part to give new look to 'The Wand'. I must thank the membership for giving me the opportunity and the board of management for the support and assistance extended. Special thank should go to the Assistant Secretary Gayan, whose professional touch had really given the rich look 'The Wand' had. Thank you members who sent messages of appreciation and articles to be published.

Hope the members would extend their cooperation to the new editor, to be elected at the AGM. I'm too glad to extend my assistance by continuing the monthly column 'Down the memory lane....', if the membership wishes.

I would like to devote this year to finalize and publish the manuscript on 'History of Sri Lanka Magic Circle' which was submitted at the last AGM. Thank all those who expressed positive comments and suggestions for this project.

HDN Gunasekara.

February Birthdays

- 2nd K.W.Silva
- 4th Nelson Jayawardane
- 5th Terry Amarasekera & Ajith Jayasinghe
- 6th H. D. N. Gunasekara
- 7th Shelton Jayasekera
- 12th Nihal Weerasinghe
- 16th M.K.Wimalasena
- 23rd Ajith Fernando
- 27th Lester De Silva



Magic Therapy

Popular singer Keerthi Pasquel was recently seen on social media, singing a song to a young woman in her sick bed. The gesture was respected by many.

Few days prior to this incident, I came across in facebook, a thoughtful act done by our President Rohan. Rohan, obliged a similar request from the parents of one of his young fans, who was hospitalized. The child with his brother enjoyed the Magic.

Cheering up the sick is something special that any artist could do.

Charity shows done by our members at charitable institutions are testimony to kind heartedness of magicians.



A landmark in Sri Lankan Magic



"Knight of Illusions Returns" featuring the world champions Shawn Farquhar and Tommy Ten & Amelie Van Tass, was held at the Museums College Auditorium on Saturday 20th February at 7.00 p.m.

Yasas Gunaratne, the IBM Territorial Vice President for Sri Lanka & man behind everything; Trevin Hannibal, the President, IBM Ring-139; and Sumangala Silva, the winner of the 'Knight of Illusions Challenge Trophy' too presented their acts at the show. Proceeds of the show go for a good cause; in aid of the proposed Cancer Treatment Centre, Kandy.

As expected the show was a spectacular event; a deviation from the hitherto familiar 'Magic Shows'. Large and modern auditorium was almost full with the enthusiasts. The Chief Guest was Hon. Speaker Karu Jayasooriya accompanied by our own President Emeritus Ronald De Alwis.

Yasas presented his illusions of empty carton, production of lady and crystal box escape in his unique dramatic way. Kevin, came out with his serious comedy act something new to the local arena. Sumangala presented the award winning act of him in Sri Lankan style.



Tommy & Amelie's act

It was a rare opportunity for the local audience to see the world champions. IBM immediate past President and two times world champion, Shawn performed his signature card trick by which he fooled Penn and Teller and "shape of my heart" routine. The amazing feature was how he kept the crowd spell bound with just a few straightforward tricks. Relaxed manner he moved with the audience was something we have to learn from the world champions.

Tommy and Amelie the current world champion Clairvoyant artists impressed the entire audience with Amelie's ability to identify objects while blindfolded. Amelie was on stage and Tommy came into the audience. Spectators offered

him different objects that she identified correctly. Tommy asked for a currency note from a lady in the audience and Amelie was able to tell not only the value of the note but also the serial number as well.

In 1913 a young Ceylonese in his 30s, Gregory Amarasekara aka 'Gay Deceiver' took a bold step to elevate 'Ceylon Magic' from street to the theatre level. His one man show 'Gay Deceptions', was a variety show consisting Magic, Ventriloquism, Hiptonism, Mentalism, Jugglery, Lighting Sketches and what not. He had this show at the Public Hall, Colombo with the distinguish patronage of the Governor Sir Robert Chalmers. This event changed the course of 'Ceylon Magic' and directed it to where we are today.

103 years later today, another young Sri Lankan in his 30s, Yasas Gunaratne aka 'Knight of Illusions', has taken a similar courageous step, to elevate 'Sri Lankan Magic' to another level, by launching this grand show with international artists of the caliber of Shawn and Tommy & Amelie.

No doubt we are witnessing the beginning of another era in the annals of Sri Lankan Magic....!

CONGRATULATIONS YASAS! GOOD LUCK SRI LANKAN MAGIC!



"Knight of Illusions Returns" media



Mr. Mohan Samarakoon, The Chairman of the "Cancer Treatment Centre, Kandy", brief the visitors about the project.

SUMANGALA EMERGED, THE BEST OF THE CHAMPIONS !



With the tight schedule of the world champions' tour, Yasas was able to fit in another significant event. He organized an invitation contest among the winners of the SLMC titles. It was named as the "Knight of Illusions Trophy Championship" having *Shawn, Tommy & Amelie* as judges; unquestionably a well-informed, professional and unbiased panel of judges. Mark Kross from E-FM was in the panel as a non-magician judge to assess the entertainment value of the acts.

The contest was held at the Auditorium of the UNIVOTECH, Ratmalana on 19th February 2016. Though it was not a public or pre-advertised event, entire magical community sans few, were there to witness one of the best competitions in recent times.

This competition served dual purpose. Main objective of the contest was to select the best of the talent to represent Sri Lanka at the FISM Asia contest. As the cream of performing-magicians of SLMC was there as contestants it gave an opportunity for the visitors to get an idea of the level of the art in Sri Lanka.

Five past winners; Priyantha Gamage, Roshini Jayasekara, Asanka Pathitrana, Thusitha Jayasekara and Sumangala Silva were the contestants. We know that they are top performers among us, and it was a rare opportunity to see them on one stage. In spite of short notice and the lack of facilities at the venue the contestants did a great job to fly the SLMC flag in front of the visitors.

Ultimately Sumangala Silva was proclaimed as the winner of the tightly contested event. Priyantha Gamage was the first runner-up and Roshini Jayasekara was the second runner-up. World champions commended the performances by our members.

One point they raised was that our acts were crowded with many tricks and we were trying to rush through them without considering the audience interaction, a voluble advice in good intention.

We congratulate Sumangala for winning the "Knight of Illusions Challenge Trophy" which he received from the Hon. Speaker, Karu Jayasooriya at the main Show on 20th February.



THE SRI LANKA MAGIC CIRCLE

Dear members, this is your *Professional Organization!*
Please help us to improve and offer you a better service!
Kindly send us your honest critiques and suggestions for improvements.

Talk to us or write to:

The President

The Sri Lanka Magic Circle

***"Vismithapaya" 156 Templars Road,
Mt. Lavinia,
Sri Lanka.***

