

# SRI LANKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1987/88

March 1988

Professional Centre 275/75, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7.

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### 1. Introduction

Taking the last Annual Sessions (27th when sequentially counted, and coincidentally, held on 27th March 1987) as the point of departure, the year under review can be considered as one with notable progress. Significant, as they were, two events of that day would occupy an indelible position in the annals of the Sri Lanka Library Association. Conferring Honorary Fellowships on Mr. H.A.I. Goonetilleke, Mr. T.G. Piyadasa and Mrs. Ishvari Corea, three of the senior and distinguished librarians in Sri Lanka, in itself was a "first" for the SLLA apart from being the first significant event of the year under review. The next important item was the seminar on "Some Selected Aspects of Public Libraries in Sri Lanka" at which contributions were made by Mr. Upali Amarasinghe, Mrs. Ishvari Corea and Mrs. Daya Ratnayake. At this seminar the keynote address was delivered by Dr. Paul Wasserman, Professor of Library and Information Science, University of Maryland, USA. It is apposite that a seminar should figure prominently in the SLLA Annual Sessions.

### 2. Membership

At the time of the last AGM, the SLLA membership stood at 118 which has now increased to 156. A moratorium extended by the Council made it possible for several Librarians to regain membership including a few who had been non-members for many years due to one reason or another. However, defaulting continues to be a recurring feature and the only answer to this problem seems to lie in the prospect of more and more members seeking life membership. Mr. J.V. Fernando who had been a member for over 20 years resigned from membership with effect from 1st January 1988.

### 3. Office-Bearers

All Office-bearers elected at the last AGM, as listed hereunder, functioned throughout the period under review:-

President	...	Mr. W.B. Dorakumbure
Vice Presidents	...	Miss C.L.M. Nethsinghe
	...	Mr. Upali Amarasinghe
General Secretary	...	Mr. Wilfred Ranasinghe
Assistant Secretary	...	Mr. E.K. Gunaratne
Education Officer	...	Mr. N.U. Yapa
Asst. Education Officer	...	Mr. P. Vidanapathirana
Treasurer	...	Mr. M.F. Hamid
Publication Officer	...	Miss S.N. Nawana
Hony. Librarian	...	Mrs. S. Jayatilleke

#### 3.1 Council

In addition to these office-bearers, the undermentioned members comprised the Council:-

Mrs. K.S. Pieris	(Representing the Western Region)
Mrs. D. Ratnayake	(Representing the Central Region)
Mr. K. Manickavasagar	(Representing the Northern Region)
Mr. Jayasinghe Lankage	(Representing Academic Libraries)
Mr. M.D.H. Jayawardhana	(Representing Public Libraries)
Mr. M.J.C. Perera	(Representing Special Libraries)
Mrs. N.A.D.A. Diyasena	(Representing Govt. Departmental Libraries)

During the year under review, the Council met on six occasions.

### 3.2 Executive Committee

All office-bearers together with Mrs. D. Ratnayake and Mrs. N.A.D.A. Diyasena comprised the Executive Committee.

During the period under review, six meetings of the Executive Committee were held. No meeting of either the Council or the Executive Committee was abandoned for want of a quorum.

### 3.3 Other Committees

Traditionally several regular and ad hoc committees are appointed by the Council to facilitate the activities of the SLLA. A list of such committees and the members who served on them during 1987/88 is enumerated below:-

#### Education Committee

Mr. N.U. Yapa (Chairman)  
Mr. P. Vidanapathirana (Secretary)  
Miss C.L.M. Neth singhe  
Mr. M.S.U. Amarasiri  
Mr. Harrison Perera  
Mrs. N. Wanasundera  
Mrs. N. Amarasuriya  
Mr. J. Lankage  
Mr. J.V. Fernando  
Mrs. D. Ratnayake

Mr. J.V. Fernando resigned from the Education Committee with effect from November 1987 and Mr. L.A. Jayatissa was appointed to fill the vacancy. More information relating to educational activities is included later in this report.

#### Associateships Committee

Mr. N.U. Yapa  
Mr. M.S.U. Amarasiri  
Mr. Wilfred Ranasinghe

#### Editorial Committee

Miss Swinitha Nawana (Convenor)  
Mr. Harrison Perera  
Mrs. N. Wanasundera  
Mrs. N.A.D.A. Diyasena  
Mr. Wilfred Ranasinghe

#### Fellowship Scheme Committee

Mr. N.U. Yapa (Convenor)  
Miss C.L.M. Neth singhe  
Mrs. S.R. Korale  
Mr. M.S.U. Amarasiri  
Mrs. K.S. Pieris

Hony. Fellowships Committee

Mr. W.B. Dorakumbure  
Mrs. Ishvari Corea  
Mrs. S.R. Korale  
Mr. Harrison Perera  
Mr. N.T.S.A. Senadeera  
Mr. Wilfred Ranasinghe (Secretary)

Finance Committee

Miss C.L.M. Nethsinghe  
Mr. M.F. Hamid  
Mr. Wilfred Ranasinghe

**4. Membership of IFLA and COMLA\**

The SLLA continued membership of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA). Our President, Mr. W.B. Dorakumbure was re-elected as Asian Regional Vice-President and a Councillor of COMLA during the period under reference. He also attended the annual IFLA Conference held in Brighton, UK, in August 1987, with some financial support from the British Council. We wish to record our appreciation of the support received.

**5. Professional Activities**

As in the previous year, a committee consisting of Miss C.L.M. Nethsinghe (Chairperson), Mrs. N.A.D.A. Diyasena and Mr. W. Ranasinghe (General Secretary) drew up a programme of work for the year under review which was accepted by the Council. Although this programme could not be implemented in its totality, several activities emanating therefrom were initiated. The workshop on the CDS/ISIS software package held in the first week of March and the seminar scheduled to take place as part of this year's annual sessions are two such items of activity.

**5.1 Workshop on Computer Applications in Libraries**

Training of librarians including their further education constitutes one of the prime objectives of the SLLA. Accordingly the Association has always endeavoured to provide opportunities to the profession by organizing seminars, workshops etc. The workshop in "Computer Applications in Libraries" held from 3rd to 7th March 1988 is a case in point.

This workshop in which 18 participants took part focussed attention on the micro CDS/ISIS software package. Due to obvious reasons the number of participants had to be restricted although about 35 applications were received. Judging by the magnificent response and the success of our endeavour, it is hoped to repeat this workshop in the near future.

A word of thanks needs to be extended to Mr. N.U. Yapa, our Education Officer, Mr. G.W. Kumarasinghe of NARESA and Miss I.R. de Silva of IIMI who were deeply involved in conducting this workshop. Mr. M.F. Hamid, our Treasurer, functioned as the Coordinator who deserves our thanks.

## 5.2 Manpower Survey

During the year under review, preliminary steps were taken by the Council to conduct a Manpower survey. The main objective of this exercise is to ascertain the number of people engaged in the library profession mainly because of the SLLA courses and examinations. It is also expected to gather a lot of relevant information through this survey.

## 5.3 Associateships

During the period under review, the Council decided to award the Associateship of the SLLA to the undermentioned members. The formal awards, as usual, will be made at the ensuing annual sessions:-

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Mr. A.D. Nallathamby      | 2. Ms. D.M. Thilakarathne  |
| 3. Ms. D.V.R. Dissanayake    | 4. " S.M. Tennakoon        |
| 5. " P.B. Chitra Swarnalatha | 6. " N.H. Serasinghe       |
| 7. " B.P. Perera             | 8. " P.D. Amerasinghe      |
| 9. " R.R. de Silva           | 10. " I.S. Gonasalkorale   |
| 11. " R.N. Doranegama        | 12. " H.N.J. Fernando      |
| 13. " M.I. Abeywardena       | 14. " R.M. Feranando       |
| 15. " S.I. Nanayakkara       | 16. " K.K.P.C. Karunaratne |
| 17. " L.P. Karunawathie      | 18. " C.A. Selvaratnam     |
| 19. " G.M. de Silva          | 20. " R.T.U. Leanage       |
| 21. " S.C. Weerasinghe       |                            |

## 5.4 Fellowships Scheme

The Fellowships Scheme Committee appointed by the Council has formulated a scheme for granting of fellowships by thesis. It is expected that the scheme drawn up by this Committee will be circulated shortly. Hopefully, the scheme will be put into operation in the course of the ensuing year.

## 6. Education

As usual, the education programme and the professional courses of the SLLA came within the purview of the Education Committee. The Education Officer who chaired this Committee received its support and advice at all times. Five meetings of the Education Committee were held during the period under review and Mr. P. Vidanapathirana, Assistant Education Officer, functioned as the Secretary to the Committee. A change in the Education Committee that took place during the year under review is noted elsewhere in this report.

### 6.1 Examination Board

The Examination Board was responsible for setting question papers and issuing of results of examinations. Mr. N.U. Yapa (Chairman), Mr. P. Vidanapathirana (Secretary), Mrs. N. Amarasooriya, Miss C.L.M. Nethsinghe and Mr. J. Lankage comprised the Examination Board.

### 6.2 Coordination

Mrs. D. Ratnayake (Kandy), Mr. E.K. Gunaratne (Galle) and Mr. K. Manickvasagar (Jaffna) served as centre coordinators. Activities relating to the Colombo centre were coordinated by the SLLA office in addition to looking after other educational matters. Our special thanks go to Mr. Manickvasagar who attended to the coordination work in Jaffna amidst the troubled situation there.

### 6.3 Course Centres

Classes were conducted at the undermentioned premises:-

Colombo	:	(1) Institute of Easthetic Studies (2) Sri Lanka Technical College (3) All Ceylon Buddhist Congress (4) YMBA (Borella) (5) OPA Centre
Kandy	:	Dharmaraja Junior College
Galle	:	Polytechnical Institute
Jaffna	:	Polytechnical Institute

The SLLA wishes to thank the managements of these institutions for allowing the use of their premises for conducting classes.

In Colombo there were several changes of venue causing some inconvenience to both lecturers and students. This was unavoidable because certain institutions increased hall charges half way through the year.

### 6.4 First Year Course

The First Year Course 1987 was held in Colombo (Sinhala and English), Kandy (Sinhala), Galle (Sinhala) and Jaffna (Tamil). The course was completed at the end of October 1987 as scheduled in all centres except in Jaffna which had to be stopped due to the disturbances there. It was resumed in March 1988.

The First Year Course 1988 was commenced on 7th February 1988 in Colombo, Kandy and Galle. This year the candidates were required to sit for an aptitude test for the purpose of selection. For the first time a Tamil medium class was started in Colombo in February 1988.

Practical training of two weeks' duration for the first Year students, which forms an essential aspect of their course, was organized in the usual manner. However, due to security reasons, the university libraries were not able to accommodate any students for training. Nevertheless, with the help of other types of libraries, the training programme was satisfactorily concluded.

A seminar for the benefit of the first year students prior to their examination was held on 1st November 1987, at the OPA Centre. About 60 students from Colombo, Kandy and Galle and 10 lecturers attended the seminar which was organized into four sessions of discussion. It was the first seminar of its kind organized in this manner. Another innovative exercise was the introduction of a Cataloguing File which the students were required to prepare, containing sample entries, as part of course work. All Cataloguing Files were evaluated by the respective lecturers and the marks assigned for this exercise were considered for the final tally of marks in respect of the Cataloguing and Classification (Practicals) paper. It is a source of encouragement that the students accepted these innovations with enthusiasm.

### 6.5 Intermediate Course

The 1987/88 Intermediate Course was commenced in Colombo and

Kandy in July 1987. In Galle it commenced in September. The course in Jaffna could not be started according to the schedule due to the disturbances. Arrangements were, however, made to commence it in March this year.

A significant feature in 1987 was the introduction of the new syllabus to the Intermediate course. Lectures were organized into modules and the number of lecture hours was increased from 120 to 144. In the same way the number of lecturers per class was also increased from 4 to 15. The dearth of lecturers at certain centres made it necessary for the available personnel to visit other centres as well for the purpose of lecturing. These new features appear to have improved teacher-student relationships.

The procedure relating to the compilation of bibliographies as a part requirement of the Intermediate Examination was changed in 1987. A panel of supervisors was appointed after inviting applications from members and the names of the panel were made available to the students to enable them to select a supervisor. The supervisor is responsible not only for guiding the student in the compilation of the bibliography, but also for evaluating it. On submission of the evaluated bibliography the student would be required to face a viva.

It was unfortunate that an English medium Intermediate class could not be organized due to the insufficient number of students.

#### 6.6 Final Year Course

A Sinhala medium Final Year class (1987/88) was commenced in Colombo in December 1987. For the third consecutive year, an English medium class could not be organized.

#### 6.7 Examinations

Examinations held during the period under review are as follows:-

First Examination	: June 1987, November 1987
Intermediate Examination	: March 1987, October 1987
Final Examination	: March 1987, October 1987

These examinations were held in Colombo, Kandy, Galle and Jaffna. The October 1987 and November 1987 examinations were not held in Jaffna due to the unsettled situation there.

On a decision taken by the Education Committee, a senior Librarian was appointed as a voluntary observer to pay surprise visits to the examination centres in order to find out how the examinations were being conducted. The purpose of this exercise was to streamline the examination procedure.

As an attempt to maintain uniformity in marking answer scripts and to improve the efficiency of evaluation, a marking centre was held in respect of the First Examination held in November 1987. This marking centre was held at the OPA building on 12th December 1987 and ten lecturers participated in marking answer scripts. It became necessary to use two sets of question papers for the First Year examination as the syllabus had been changed during the previous year. The purpose of this exercise was to cater to both old and new students.

Marks of the two assignments, namely the Library Training Report and the Cataloguing File, of the First Year students were taken into consideration in finalizing their marks. This technique benefitted students who had scored low marks at the examination but who had scored higher marks for the assignments during the course.

Certain problems were experienced in transporting question papers and answer scripts due to postal restrictions arising from security measures. As a result, the SLLA had to face much difficulty in sending packages to Jaffna.

A panel of lecturers numbering about 40 assisted in the teaching programme. Due to certain characteristics of the courses, a lesser number of lecturers were involved in the First and Final Year courses while the Intermediate course had more lecturers taking part. Meetings of lecturers were held to discuss the course contents and also to ensure standard practices and thereby obviate any shortcomings.

#### **6.8 Computer Course**

The regular course "Computers in Libraries" was repeated for another batch of librarians during the period April to August 1987. Already the number of librarians who followed this course exceeds 100. The course provides the participants a fundamental knowledge in computer hardware and software, programming languages and library systems analysis.

#### **6.9 Training**

At the request of the Asia Foundation, the SLLA organized an in-service training programme of two weeks duration for two librarians from the National Library of Maldives. These two trainees were attached to ten libraries from 10th October to 10th December 1987. They were awarded certificates at a ceremony organized by the Asia Foundation on 11th December 1987.

#### **6.10 Library Services Bureau**

With a view to helping the students who seek attachments in libraries in order to gain practical experience and also institutions which look for library personnel to organize their collections, the SLLA started a service bureau. Students who have completed the First Examination could register in this service. Whenever an organization needed the services of library personnel, the Association selected suitable persons to suit the requirements specified by the requesting organizations.

#### **6.11 Awards**

Three types of awards are being made to the students who followed the First Year course during 1987.

##### **(a) Bloc Memorial Scholarship**

On the basis of their performance at the First Examination held in November 1987, the following students were selected for the award of the Bloc Memorial Scholarship:-

Mr. N.G.R. Fernando (English Medium)  
Miss S.H. Wijetunga (Sinhala Medium)



(b) Library Training Report

Miss P.A.D. Chandini (Colombo - English)  
Mr. H.N. Sepala (Colombo - Sinhala)  
Miss P.H. Uluwaduge (Kandy - Sinhala)  
Mrs. N.K. de Silva (Galle - Sinhala)

(c) Cataloguing File

Mr. N.G.R. Fernando (Colombo - English)  
Mrs. T.D.T. Kalyani (Colombo - Sinhala)  
Miss R.D.P.R. Sumanasiri (Kandy - Sinhala)  
Mr. W.H. Dayaratne (Galle - Sinhala)

**6.12 Course Fees etc.**

In view of the increasing cost of implementing the education programme, the Council was compelled to revise the fees charged for the courses and examinations. These will come into effect only when a new course is commenced.

**6.13 Statistics**

Statistics relating to SLLA courses and examinations are given below:-

Admissions	Colombo Sinhala	Colombo Tamil	Colombo English	Kandy Sinhala	Galle Sinhala	Jaffna Tamil
First Year (1988)	85	25	19	47	27	-
Intermediate (1987/88)	41	-	-	22	16	16
Final (1987/88)	27	-	-	-	-	-

Examination	Colombo Sinhala	Colombo English	Kandy Sinhala	Galle Sinhala	Jaffna Tamil
First Year, June 1987	9/29 (31)	2/3 (66)	9/19 (47)	-	7/10 (70)
First Year, Nov. 1987	28/76 (37)	5/16 (31)	7/39 (18)	9/23 (39)	-
Intermediate, March 1987	4/40 (10)	0/5 (0)	0/19 (0)	-	12/23 (52)
Intermediate, Oct. 1987	25/58 (41)	1/3 (33)	-	-	-
Final, March 1987	7/13 (54)	1/5 (20)	2/8 (25)	-	-
Final, Oct. 1987	4/20 (20)	4/6 (67)	0/3 (0)	-	-

A/B (C)      A = No. completed.      B = Not sat.      C = %.

## 7. SLLA Secretariat

A post of Administrative Secretary was created by a decision of the Council and Mr. S. Alvitigala, a former Assistant Commissioner of Labour, was appointed to the post with effect from 4th August 1987. By a decision of the Executive Committee, the Accounts Clerk recruited on a casual basis during the previous year was made permanent. The disciplinary inquiry initiated against the Accounts Clerk interdicted in the previous year, was concluded and he was found guilty. Accordingly his services were terminated. During the year under review on the recommendation of the Executive Committee the Council decided to grant a salary increase to the entire staff with effect from 1st January 1988.

The full complement of staff functioned during the year. It is with deep sorrow that we record the death of Mrs. H.M. Dassanayake, Clerk/Typist, on 12th March 1988.

## 8. Library

The SLLA library housed in the OPA Centre was extensively used both by our students and lecturers. Nearly 200 admission cards were issued to the students to facilitate access. Compilation of a card catalogue was commenced during the year and it is expected to complete the retrospective work shortly.

Since moving the SLLA library to the OPA building in October 1986, it has been our responsibility to manage the collection of books belonging to the OPA, numbering about 800. For this purpose we have not only employed a Library Assistant at our expense, but also adjusted the library hours to suit the convenience of the OPA members. Steps have also been taken to improve the facilities available.

## 9. Publications

During the period under review, the SLLA Newsletter was issued quarterly and without a break. As usual it covered activities and news of the SLLA as well as other libraries. Relevant foreign news was also included. As for the Sri Lanka Library Review, the most recent issue is expected to be ready for the forthcoming annual sessions.

**10. Conclusion**

The SLLA has concluded another year of satisfactory activities, during which period there were several notable features, particularly the substantial increase in membership. This may be construed as a pointer to the fact that the SLLA is moving in the right direction. With the continued participation of the members in the activities of the SLLA, the future will no doubt be better.

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