

Sydney Kannada Sangha Presents

Haasya Raaga Ranjani - June 2005

A Report

The last few years have seen a new vigor & vitality in the activities of the Sydney Kannada Sangha. The annual cultural events have become much-awaited extravaganzas. The bar was raised higher this year when "Karnataka's nightingale" Mrs. B R Chaya and Karnataka's celebrated Humourist Mrs. Sudha Baragur flew down from Bangalore to entertain Sydney Kannadigas. The program, aptly titled " Haasya Raga Ranjani "was conducted on 25 June 2005 at the prestigious Ryde Civic Centre in Sydney. Mrs. Anu Shivaram compered the show.



President Mr. Sam Gopinath

The auditorium reverberated with laughter when Sudha entertained the audience and Chaya's melodious music soothed the souls as the gentle rain outside provided a perfect backdrop in rain- starved Sydney.

A feminine aura seemed to have enveloped the stage as it was predominantly an evening of the fairer sex. The main artists, Mrs. Chaya and Mrs. Sudha were of course two celebrated women from Karnataka.

The program started with the traditional welcome speech by the secretary of Sydney Kannada Sangha, Mr. Jagadish Sury. The MC introduced Ms Chaya and described how within two days of her arrival, Chaya had popularized Kannada in Sydney by singing a Kannada song at the Circular Quay to the accompaniment of the aboriginal instrument, the Didgeridoo. The impromptu audience attracted by the melody, applauded Chaya and demanded an encore! Chaya started the program with an invocation to Lord Ganesha, the remover of obstacles. The next song was her favourite " Hindoostanavu Yendoo Mareyada" the song which established Chaya as a household name in Karnataka.

Sri. H S Venkatesh Murthy's "Huchchu Khodi Manasu" tingled many listeners with memories of their own teen years. "Ibbani Thabbida Ileyalli" the song which won Chaya the State award, left the audience spellbound. Chaya sang "Belli Rathdali Surya Thanda Kirana" with our local artist Srinivas and the popular folk item "Bhagyada Balegara" with another local artist Prakash Rao.



B.R Chaya



Anu Shivaram

The Kannada version of the evergreen Hindi patriotic song " Ye Mere Vathan Ke Logon" soulfully rendered by Chaya made the audience teary-eyed but the mood changed immediately with the rustic notes of "Gili Gili Gili Gilakku" and got them tapping their feet. Chaya's husband Mr. Padmapaani gave a brief introduction to each song spicing it up with wit and humour.



Sudha Baragur

Mrs. Sudha Baragur took over the stage saying a typical teacher never lets go of an opportunity to use the mike, alluding to her own career as a lecturer in economics. Sudha picks up incidents from everyday happenings, garnishes it with her distinct sense of humour and presents it to the audience who lap it up and ask for more.

With her characteristic boldness, Sudha is the first woman in Karnataka to have stepped into the world of stand-up comedy which has always been a male bastion and why not? Laughter is after all a universal language. It transcends all barriers of race, gender and nation. Laughter indeed is a great equalizer and as Sudha says a smile is a precious ornament that can adorn everyone, making them beautiful.

Sudha kept the audience reeling with laughter as she narrated one incident after another. She is blessed with the unique gift of spotting the silver lining behind every cloud, she pointed to the sublime hidden in the mundane, upholding the intrinsic values of our culture and taking the audience back to their roots again and again.

Mr. Sam Gopinath, President of the Sydney Kannada Sangha won a good round of applause for his short and precise presidential address.

The program turned a little formal after dinner intermission as it approached a historical moment. Indeed it was a historical moment as Mr. Onkaraswamy Goppenalli the convener of 'APKO' announced its launch. 'APKO' stands for 'Asia Pacific Kannada Okkuta', a united platform for the



Mr. Padmapaani & Dr. Muddappa Prabhu



Mr. Onkaraswamy Goppenalli, Dr Nagamma Prakash, Mr. Sam Gopinath, Dr.S Orekondy, Mr. Jagadish Sury

Kannada Associations across Asia- Pacific rim. This includes the Sydney Kannada Sangha, Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong Kannada associations.

This ambitious project turned into a reality by the tireless efforts and initiative of the members of Sydney Kannada Sangha. This was formally launched by Dr Orekondy, President of United Indian Association in Sydney. Dr Orekondy also honoured an eminent Kannadiga Dr. Muddappa Prabhu who was instrumental in

starting the SBS Kannada radio program 20 years ago. Dr. Prabhu released Sudha Bargur's CD "Don't Worry Maadkobedi" and also honoured the artists and the major sponsors of the program.

Sudha started her second innings with another roar of laughter as she drew on the humour hidden in stern, professional atmospheres. Underlying Sudha's healthy humour was the concern to recognize, appreciate and cherish all that is beautiful in the world around us.

In her second session, Chaya continued to celebrate the beautiful world with the song "Vishwa Vinootana



Vidhya Chetana" ably supported by popular local artists Mrs. Pushpa Jagadish and Mrs. Geetha Gopinath. Sri. Kedaranath Pagadinnimath joined Chaya for the song "Ninnanthaha Appa Illa". Chaya's ability to modulate her voice to convey the mood of the song was astounding. Her voice conveyed the sweetness and innocence of a child in this song effortlessly just as it conveyed depth and dignity in B M Sri's "Karunaalu Baa Belakae". Chaya ended the program with a touching rendition of " Namma Namskara Nimaga".

Dr. Nagamma Prakash Vice-President, Sydney Kannada Sangha proposed the vote of thanks.

The major sponsors of this program were CityForex, Supreme Engineering Services and Liverpool Diagnostics.

The program was well attended by over 500 Sydney Kannadigas who enjoyed every bit of it. Sydney Kannada Sangha in a community gesture provided food on-the-house that was again tasty and well received by the audience.

Sydney Kannada Sangha Organising Committee thanks all sponsors, supporters and volunteers who helped to make this program a grand success.

Anu Shivaram
Sydney
Australia

