

ACTIONS SPEAKS LOUDER THAN WORDS Director Board Report for the Year 2020

Director Board

Malayalee Association of the U.K (hereafter M.A.U.K.) is a Registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. Therefore, the Board of Directors has the responsibility as Charity Trustees and as Company Directors.

Elections

At the last A.G.M. (22/11/2020), the following directors were elected to serve for two consecutive years: Anil Velu, Jayan Pillai, Shiny Benu, Anil Edavana, Aji Velu, Mohandas Madhavanandan, Rajeswari Sadhasivan, Pushkas Vasu, Shola Dilep & Nishar Viswanath.

The following sitting directors will serve until the forthcoming A.G.M. on Sunday, 19 September 2020: Raman Sambasivan, Sreekumar Kunjuraman, Sreejith Sreedharan, Aji Gangadharan, Murali Pillai, Nihars Rawther, Subash Viswanathan and Rohoney Dayanand. In addition, Aloysius Mathew was coopted into the Board and will serve until the forthcoming A.G.M.

As usual, the Annual General Meeting will be electing only the required number of directors to the Board. The first meeting of the Board will then select the officials and decide on the roles and responsibilities of the various directors.

2020 Management Structure

The Board opted for a change in the format used in the previous years where directors were grouped into three generic teams with a Lead to oversee the activities of each team. In 2020, each director was given one or two tasks of their choice and encouraged to build their team consisting of experts and interested volunteers.

Membership

In 2020 we added twelve new family members to our organisation. Membership requests are mainly received through online mediums. We have simplified and made it much easier to obtain membership through our website. We urge all our supporters to promote M.A.U.K. and encourage your friends, family, and colleagues to become part of M.A.U.K. - Our Extended Family.

Visit our membership pages for more info – www.mauk.org/category/membership

Website – www.mauk.org

The website is used mainly to inform members about M.A.U.K. activities and archive our records. Members can also download M.A.U.K. policies, annual reports and accounts, forms, and other publications. Regular updates and maintenance are done by CloudEco Systems Ltd, with whom we have a contract for three years starting in

2021. The site is hosted on a cloud-based server to enhance security, thereby preventing data loss.

Social Media

M.A.U.K. continues to increase its presence on social media, with our Facebook page www.fb.com/mauklondon being our primary means of publicity. This page regularly updates the details of M.A.U.K. events, activities, reports, and photos of main events. Our F.B. page has also become one of the main mediums for people from many parts of the world to communicate with M.A.U.K. We are also present on Twitter - @mauklondon and YouTube – mauklondon

Media Partners

M.A.U.K. maintains a good rapport with various print, online, and visual media targeted at the Malayalee community. On almost all occasions, our press releases and reports have been published unedited by our media partners, and we are grateful for their continued support. We express our gratitude to Anand Media, UKmalayalee.com, Kerala Link, KaumudiEurope, Britishmalayali.com, KeralaVision TV, Europemalayali.com and Manoramaonline.

Administrative Tools

M.A.U.K. have long relied on electronic mediums to ensure efficient and timely communication and promote its activities to the wider community. In 2020, we obtained the 'Microsoft 365 Business' package free of charge as part of Microsoft's commitment to supporting not-for-profit organisations.

M.A.U.K. Mission Statement

To reflect the humanitarian work M.A.U.K. is focused on, the director board had adopted the below Mission Statement. We hope that the statement will capture the true spirit of M.A.U.K.'s current activities and vision for the future.

Collaborate with other organisations in pursuit of community cohesion and social inclusion while promoting an equal, just, and harmonious society based on the ancient Indian philosophy of 'Vasudaiva Kutumbakam' - The World is One Family.

Kerala House

Due to the Pandemic restrictions, the Board has decided to extend the free hire of Kerala House for life members to 30 December 2022. Due to the Pandemic, the use of Kerala House was restricted to our Food Bank operations and meetings.

Arts & Cultural Services

Chenda Troupe

M.A.U.K. Chenda Troupe, founded in 2011 under the training and guidance of Vinod Navadhara, has grown into the leading Chenda Troupe in the country.

In 2020 before the Pandemic struck, our Troupe had the blessing to perform for five days, from 23 to 27 January, for the Vighraha prathistha and Mahakumbhabhishekam at Barnet Temple

DrishyaKala – Live F.B. discussion

Drishyakala, M.A.U.K. Drama Troupe was preparing for their new production when the Pandemic stuck. Hence, we postponed our plans. To keep the M.A.U.K. artists and Malayalam drama enthusiasts engaged, we held twenty-five weekly episodes of Live F.B. discussion by prominent drama artists from Dhrishyakala fraternity as well as Kerala drama field.

Promotion of Traditional Kerala Arts

M.A.U.K. is deeply committed to promoting Kerala arts and culture in the U.K. In 2017 we made an additional commitment to advancing the diverse ritual, folk and ancient art form of Kerala. M.A.U.K. has a moral obligation to preserve these declining art forms as it is an integral part of Kerala heritage. In addition, this commitment also provides opportunities for the community to experience these invaluable art forms. As part of this commitment, we have showcased the ancient Kerala martial artform Kalaripayatt by HindostanKalari Sangam -- and Sopanasangeetham by the leading artist Ngerulath Hari Govindan at our Ponnonam@Home celebrations.

Kattankappium Kavaithaum (Coffee and Poetry)

The Pandemic brought added value to the concept and activities of the literary group Kattankappium Kavithaum (Coffee and Poetry), initiated by M.A.U.K. in 2012. In January, months before COVID gripped the U.K, Kattankappi team launched their activities on the cyber world with the hope of spreading its message wider and attracting global participation. This foresight has given Kattankappi an advantage in bringing people together during the restrictions imposed by the Pandemic.

In 2020, Kattankappi conducted 21 episodes through Facebook Live broadcast, with the aim of keeping people occupied, entertained, and enlightened while they awaited normalcy. Topics covered by Kattankappi episodes included creative writing, storytelling, poetry, travelogue, introduction to books, mental wellbeing, environment, climate change challenges, classes on story-writing and poem writing, etc. Over 100 speakers from the social, art and literary world contributed to 2020 Kattankappi episodes. This included prominent personalities such as K P Ramanunni (Novelist & winner of Kerala State Sahithya Academi Awards), Dr. Punalur Somarajan (Humanitarian & Founder and Managing Trustee of Gandhai Bhavan, Kerala) Girish Menon (CEO Action Aid, U.K), Dr. Hena Vijayan (Child Consultant and Adolescent Psychiatrist), Dr Shafi Muthalif (Consultant Psychiatrist at NHS), Dr Gopakumar Nair (Director at NHS England and NHS Improvement), Dr. S Ramkumar (Dean at Rajiv Gandhai University of Veterinary Education and research), Sister Lucy (Social Activist) Ngeralath Hari Govindan (Musician), Prof. N M Kakkaserry (Orator, Author and Social Activist), Leela Santosh (Film Director and Activist), M Nandakumar (Short story writer), V. T Sebestain (Environmental Activist), Adv. Harish Vasudevan (Green Activist), Prof. Thankam Arun (University of Essex), Unnikrishnan Divakaran Nair (Head of Climate Change at Commonwealth Secretariat), Sreekumar K (Writer and Critic).

M.A.U.K. NiSaRi Niswanam ...a light in the darkness

The ground-breaking fundraising online event organised by NiSaRi - the Music Troupe of M.A.U.K., was held on 19 July 2020 at Trinity Centre. The live musical concert was held to thank the frontline staff and provide solace to those stuck at home due to the Pandemic restrictions. It brought together the top-rated Malayalee singers and musicians from across the U.K. and was viewed by over 23000 people. Niswanam also inspired many organisations and individuals to follow suit and start online events to keep community members engaged and entertained throughout the Pandemic. However, the greatest achievement of Niswanam was that it highlighted the extraordinary talents of budding young singers among the U.K. Malayalee community, whose mesmerising performance captivated the viewers. The show was a testament that although COVID-19 restricted our scope

and forced us to change our practices, it wasn't going to stop M.A.U.K. from fulfilling its core objectives as a social and cultural organisation. We are grateful to Infinity Financial Services and Muthoot for their financial support for this exciting project.

Watch Niswanam on MAUK FB Page - <https://fb.watch/7C9IDDpmxQ/>

Ponnonam@Home - Celebrating Onam with a difference... (Onam – Harvest Festival of Kerala)

The Pandemic was not going to stop M.A.U.K. celebrating Onam either. M.A.U.K. has been celebrating Onam in grand splendour in the U.K. since the mid-1970s. This year, we held our first-ever virtual Onam celebration on 13 September, connecting Malayalees from across the globe, educating and entertaining them while encouraging a sense of normalcy. To enable the community to share the spirit of Onam, we conducted - Ponnonam@Home; a three-hour online show including dance, music, drama and a virtual Athappoo competition. The part live show broadcasted from Kerala House gave U.K. talents an opportunity to showcase their creativity. The show also featured Kelikottu, Kalaripayatu, Sopana Sangeetham and Naadan Pattu as part of our commitment to promote traditional folk and ritual art forms of Kerala. The show was viewed by over 5000 people from across the globe.

Watch Ponnonam@Home: <https://fb.watch/7BPoF-wxss/>

Annual Onasadhya

The COVID restrictions meant that we were unable to hold our much-revered Onasadhya, so on Pooradam day, we delivered special Onam Food Kits to all our Elders Services users who were shielding and distributed further 120 kits from M.A.U.K. Food Bank the following day. We also provided special kits for Eid and Vishu.

Social, Sports and Leisure Services

U.K. Malayalee Cricket League (U.K.M.C.L.)

The U.K.M.C.L. was set up by M.A.U.K., Kerala Catholic Association and Kerala Cultural and Welfare Association in 2004 to cater to the growing needs of Malayalee Cricketers and provide them with specialised services. U.K.M.C.L. matches were suspended due to the Pandemic; however, U.K.M.C.L. volunteers and financial support played a vital role in MAUK COVID relief operations.

M.A.U.K. Women's Forum (W.F.)

Paryaptha #Each for Equal - M.A.U.K. IWD Celebrations

M.A.U.K. celebrated the 2020 International Women's Day in grand splendour on Saturday, 07 March at Trinity Centre in East London. This year's celebrations, aptly named 'Paryaptha' #Each for Equal, highlighted the achievements of the copious, competent and enlightened woman in the local community through various cultural programmes and activities. The free event also raised awareness of more mundane and contemporary issues such as domestic violence, mental health awareness and equality through powerful presentations and sensational speeches by renowned speakers.

Traditional Indian arts Bharathanatyam and Mohiniattam, Bollywood dance performance and workshop, poetry, live music, and audience-interactive sessions were used to convey the theme of 2020 I.W.D. - #EachforEqual and to keep the 200 plus audience entertained during the five-hour show.

The Chief Guest of the event, Newham Mayor Roksana Fiaz, reminisced about her upbringing in the Borough during a culturally and socially challenging time and how she drew courage and inspiration from women of her mum's network to challenge inequality, division, and bias. Newham councillors addressed the audience during the event.

Public Health England's advice on how to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus was promoted during the event through posters, slideshows, and one-to-one advice by medical professionals. Our volunteers took extensive precautions to mitigate any risk of the virus spreading by providing hand gels and deep cleaning the venue.

The staff of East London branches of Barclays bank supported the event.

View photos of I.W.D. 2020 -

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=mauklondon&set=a.4268269469865469>

Online cookery show

To keep the community members engaged and occupied during the lockdown and to introduce the diverse flavours of Kerala cuisine to the wider community MAUK WF organised regular online cookery shows. Sunny Lopez, Ajitha Sajeev, Usha Kumari, Nihars Rawther, Hena Vijayan were among the chefs who have contributed to this show.

Republic Day Fundraising event

MAUK WF organised a fundraising gathering at Kerala House on Indian Republic Day on Sunday, 26 January. Music, Poetry, street food and stalls were the highlights of the day.

Women of Independent India

On 16 August, MAUK WF organised an online discussion to highlight the stature women hold in Indian society and raise awareness of the treatment women are subjected to in some sections of Indian society. Guest speakers and W.F. members contributed to the discussion.

Elders Services

Online activities

As the Pandemic situation dictated, M.A.U.K. shifted most of its services to online platforms. Our dedicated volunteers were adamant to reach out to those affected by the Pandemic and find innovative means to ensure the mental and physical wellbeing of our community members. As part of our COVID relief operations, we have started many online activities, including regular Yoga classes, cookery shows, mental wellbeing seminars, discussion forums, etc. Our volunteers trained and facilitated provisions for many Elders to get online and be confident using this unthought of medium. The testimonials from our service users are evidence that our prompt, thoughtful and bold actions have immensely contributed to their welfare during this very difficult period.

60+ Sisters Club

In 2006, Mrs Girija Nair (late), who was a dedicated M.A.U.K. volunteer, started the Sisters Club with a vision to provide friendship and support for women over the age of 60.

The Club, which takes place on Tuesday from 1 PM to 4 PM, was operational with its regular activities during the first couple of months in 2020, providing its regular activities including singing, poetry, dancing, light exercise sessions, food tasting, training for cultural shows, day trips, etc.

Members of the Club have formed a strong bond and are a support network for each other. Hence, it was inevitable that M.A.U.K. volunteers had to improvise to keep them connected during the shutdown and self-quarantine. This has led to our volunteers going the extra mile to remotely train Elders to take part in online meetups and shows. We have introduced the online platform Zoom to thirty-two Elders who were total novices to the idea before the Pandemic.

M.A.U.K. Lunch Club

M.A.U.K. Lunch Club, which is part of M.A.U.K. Elders Services has been functioning since 1998. This tailor-made service is a unique platform for Elders in our community to meet, chat and share their cultural identity and shared experiences. Participants of the Club enjoy a variety of activities, including card and board games, exercise classes, knitting, arts and crafts, poetry, film, picnics, trips, etc. Kerala lunch is also provided each week. We express our sincere gratitude to Ananthapuri Restaurant, Manor Park, for providing the lunch at a subsidised price.

To ensure the smooth operation of this bespoke and essential service, M.A.U.K. has successfully introduced a sponsorship scheme through which kind-hearted individuals and community-spirited businesses can sponsor the cost of running the Lunch Club for a day. People and businesses were given the opportunity to sponsor a day as part of your celebrations of an auspicious occasion, in memory of someone beloved, as a promotion of your business, or to support this essential service. Despite having sponsors for the entire year, in 2020, the Club only operated for the first two months before the spread of COVID-19 forced us to suspend its services.

The Lunch Club meets every Thursday at Kerala House from 10 AM to 5 PM and is open to all members of the local community. Depending on the COVID situation, we will be restarting the services of the Lunch Club soon. If you wish to sponsor a day at the Lunch Club, please contact us.

See the list of M.A.U.K. Lunch Club sponsors of 2019 at www.mauk.org/elders/

150Club

150Club is an exercise-based prevention programme for members of the local community who are at risk of being Diabetic. The 150Club scheme is an initiative by N.H.S. Newham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Newham Council and the 150Club partnership - made up of the West Ham United Foundation working with the council's leisure trust ActiveNewham and the Staywell Partnership, which includes M.A.U.K.

150Club exercise programme takes place every Tuesday at Kerala House but is currently suspended. Members of the local community who wish to join 150Club activities when it restarts should request their G.P.s to enrol on the programme.

M.A.U.K. Befriending Services

The gravity and value of this outstanding and compassionate service that is run as part of the Elders Service

were highlighted during the Pandemic. In addition to getting the housebound to participate in online activities, M.A.U.K. volunteers regularly checked in on over 60 regular users of M.A.U.K. Elders Service. During the initial chaos and uncertainty of the first national lockdown, M.A.U.K. volunteers have done weekly shopping for those self-isolating or in quarantine. We then arranged shopping slots for many elderly households but continued to deliver Asian groceries for many more months.

If you know of anyone who could improve their wellbeing by this service, please email their details to info@mauk.org or call us on 07961454644, and we will be happy to visit them.

Educational Services

Chenda, Tabala, Keyboard, Guitar and Malayalam Classes were paused at the start of the national lockdown in March. The classes were restarted online from May; however, the number of attendees fell sharply.

M.A.U.K. Thanal - Charitable Endeavors

M.A.U.K., being a strong-rooted organisation, has always been at the forefront of coordinating the response of U.K. Malayalees whenever Kerala needed a helping hand. This tradition continued during the Great Floods of 2018 and now, the Pandemic. We have been able to rise to the challenges the Pandemic has posed to our community here in the U.K. and our brethren in Kerala. In 2021, during the second wave of COVID, we have undertaken over 18 humanitarian projects in Kerala, with the generosity of U.K. Malayalees.

Charitable Projects in Kerala

In 2020, M.A.U.K. contributed towards the Education Fund set up for the children of Mr Unnikannan , Cherthala. The money was initially collected for the treatment of Bindu Unnikannan for her brain surgery, but sadly Bindu passed away, leaving her children aged 15 & 12 in a difficult situation. Hence, it was decided to set up a fund to ensure a brighter future for the children.

M.A.U.K. also supported Amma Charity Trust based in Southampton with their charity endeavours in Kerala among those affected by the Great Floods of 2018.

House Building Project

In 2019, M.A.U.K. also commenced building a house for Nirmala Rajan, a 64-year-old labourer in Kazhakuttam. The £10K project was expected to be completed by March 2020; however, COVID restrictions meant that we are only able to complete the project and handed over the key in October. The key handing over ceremony was held on 19/10/2020 by the Chief Guest, Mr K Sreekumar, honourable Mayor of Thiruvananthapuram City.

Watch videos of Nirmala Rajan House Building project – www.mauk.org/thanal/nirmalarajan

Despite the restrictions of the Pandemic, M.A.U.K. has embarked on building three more houses for deserving families who cannot afford a decent roof over their head due to no fault of their own. Following extensive research and vetting by our volunteers and social workers on the ground, we have prioritised families with young female children to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Sandhya in Alapuzha, Ananthamani in Chengunur and Lekshmi Ramachandran in Seethathood are the beneficiaries of the houses we are currently building.

COVID Relief Operations

The world, as we knew, was turned on its head by COVID-19. We are living through unprecedented times that require an equally thoughtful and responsible response from individuals, governments, and N.G.O.s. It is the deeds of individuals and organisations during such challenging times that justifies their existence. As the Pandemic challenged the survival of humanity, the resolve of the human spirit also strengthened, with compassionate people from all walks joining hands to beat this indiscriminate invisible enemy. Like any other reputable community organisation, M.A.U.K. rose to the challenge posed by the Pandemic.

Realising the gravity of the issue, M.A.U.K. sprang into action, cancelling its regular activities to focus on helping those who are affected by COVID-19. We started by taking care of the wellbeing of the users of our Elders Services. Even before the government declared a national lockdown on 21 March 2020, M.A.U.K. encouraged our elders and vulnerable members of our community to self-isolate for their safety. During the initial days of confusion and disarray, we did their regular shopping and delivered essential items to their doorsteps. We then trained them to do online shopping and arranged delivery slots with local supermarkets and speciality grocery shops. We started checking up on them every week and later remotely trained them to participate in weekly online activities, including mindfulness, yoga, cooking shows, social meetings, etc.

We have teamed up with Loka Kerala Sabha and other prominent organisations to provide nationwide support, including food, advice and reassurance to international students and undocumented migrants who have been severely affected by the crisis but have no recourse to the public fund. We became a referral partner of the British Red Cross Hardship Fund and referred 58 venerable families to receive up to £1080 over three months.

We have been referred to as a key service provider by the High Commission of India's website, and our services have been tweeted and highlighted in the Houses of Parliament by our local MP Stephen Timms.

Working at the grassroots level, we were able to recognise the severe impact of COVID-19 on the local community. Hence, we started a Food Bank as early as the first week of April to support those struggling with food shortages, a situation that was exacerbated by the loss of income caused by the national lockdown. During the height of the lockdown, over 600 people were regularly queuing up to collect food from M.A.U.K. Food Bank, and on 19 May, we served an astonishing 664 people in a single day. Our humble endeavour even caught the attention of B.B.C. news and was featured on 6 PM and 10 PM on 05 May. This news coverage helped us to raise around £40K to continue with our Food Bank operations. M.A.U.K. Food Bank is still functioning from Kerala House every Sunday as part of Newham Food Alliance, a body set up by the London Borough of Newham.

We have been at the forefront of serving the essential and changing needs of the community since the crisis began. In this dynamic and uncertain environment, we have adapted, built on our strengths, and found innovative ways to deliver our services to more significant and diverse beneficiaries.

From the initial chaos to the gradual realisation of the severity of the Pandemic, we were working in an evolving and unpredictable situation that required a responsible common-sense approach and prompt and, at times, bold decision making. As a team, we have strived our best to do everything possible for an organisation of our size and calibre in a fair and dignified manner. We thank the community-spirited individuals and businesses for their valuable time, financial contributions, encouragement, and appreciation. We proudly accept all the approbation

It is only apt that we acknowledge the invaluable contribution of many kind-hearted individuals and the following organisations who have empowered M.A.U.K. to rise to the challenges the Pandemic posed...

Thattukada-East Ham, Law & Lawyers Solicitors, Neil Travels, Kerala Catholic Association, Ananthapuri Restaurant, Manjeet Singh, Woking Malayalee Association, Woking Malayalee Cultural Association, Cherthala

Sangamam, Public Health-London Borough of Newham, Fareshare, The Felix Project, Lathif & M I Thaslivala, Global Study Link, Inked Peps, Udaya Restaurant, London Sports League, Docklands and Carpenters Centre, U.K. Malayalee Cricket League, GreenStop Groceries, Fairlop Lions Club, SyroMalabar Community, Woking, Prathyasha Charitable Trust, Woking, AMMA Charity Trust, Southampton.

Community

Thalamura Club

Members of the Thalamura Club have negotiated a special deal to use Kerala House for their activities every Friday from 1 PM to 7 PM. Thalamura provides a platform for like-minded people to meet up, share their common experiences, take part in social activities, and enjoy delicacies made on the premises by food enthusiasts. If you wish to join Thalamura, please contact Suresh on 07740248993

MAUK / Girija Nair - Volunteer of the Year Award 2019

The Volunteer Award was initiated in 2003 to celebrate, acknowledge and appreciate the instrumental contributions of M.A.U.K. Volunteers. The Award was renamed M.A.U.K. Girija Nair Award in 2014 to honour one of M.A.U.K.'s steadfast and inspirational volunteers.

The 2020 Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Sudharsanan Karunakaran, who is a regular volunteer at M.A.U.K. events.

Read more at <http://mauk.org/girija-nair-volunteer-awards>

Accounts

The 2020 Accounts, which was audited by Haridas Bhaskaran with the support of Aaron Sudershanan, is attached to this report.

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