

# QACA Newsletter

Put your heart, mind and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success ~ Swami Sivananda



**QACA President**  
Dr Rashid Mohmood

The Queensland Afghan Community Association (QACA) management team continuously endeavour to identify and deliver the services needed by our community. Our fathers brought civilisation, peace to our nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that tranquility among all ethnic groups was the priority. We must follow their footsteps to be able to deliver our aim of unity.

The QACA management team is now engaged and dedicated to spread the message of unity and peace by organising social events in collaboration with other community groups and through the fulfilment of our legal procession of building the community centre. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate – we can not consecrate – we can not hallow – this ground unless we all work together and proceed the success of this project through unity. No doubt our next generation will remember us as we appreciate the good work of our previous generations. Righteous people can never forget what have been delivered here. It is our job to achieve the unfinished work which we have started.

## What's Inside

- p.2 QACA Project Updates - Mashal- e Irfan and Afghan House
- p.3,4 Previous Events and Pictures - Nawroz Party and Women's Day Celebration
- p.5 Article: First Female Afghan Orchestra by Naveed Kureshi
- p.6 Inspiration: quote and Afghan role model

## Upcoming Events

### June 2017: Eid -al Fitr

This marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan where people fast and thank Allah for the help and strength that he gave them throughout the previous month, to help practise self-control.

### September 2017: Eid -al Adha Celebration

QACA will be celebrating this event with the whole afghan community! More details will be posted closer to the event date. If there are any events you would like us to create or any suggestions for this association, please don't hesitate to contact us!



## Want to become a member?

For only \$12, you can become a member of the Queensland Afghan Community Association (QACA)! By becoming a member you receive discounts to future QACA events. To become part of the QACA family, you must follow these steps:

1. **PRINT** the last page of this newsletter for your convenience.
2. **FILL IN** the required details on the membership form.
3. **SEND** the completed form by scanning and emailing to [qldafghancommunity@gmail.com](mailto:qldafghancommunity@gmail.com) **OR** post to 7 Fleay Street, Redland Bay QLD 4165.
4. **PAY** \$12.00 member fee for each family member, to the QACA account (details on form).
5. **DONE!** You are now a QACA family member.

The last page of this newsletter is the membership form which you can fill in and send to us!

PROJECTS

# QACA Project Updates

Editor Aryana Mohmood



The QACA executive team are working on big projects to address the issues facing Afghans in the community. The main projects being focused on currently, are the Mashal-e Irfan Dari School and the building of the Afghan House. Through such projects the team will fulfil their aims and objectives of: social cohesion of all ethnicities; support of new arrivals; addressing afghan community mental and physical health; preserving the rich cultural heritage and traditions of Afghanistan; linguistic and cultural support, inclusion of young generation through social activities.

This association also provides a platform to showcase afghan art, music and culture to the wider Australian community. A board meeting is held every month to discuss advancements and plans for the future.

QACA Executive Team Board Meeting

## Masha-e Irfan Dari School

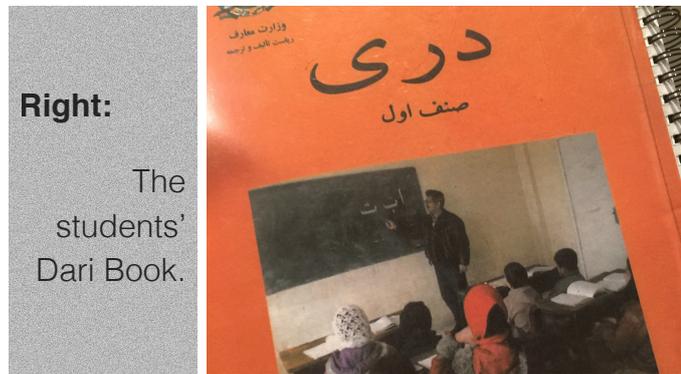
The Mashal - e Irfan Dari Language School is back! The holidays are now over and students are getting ready for another successful term of learning Dari. The teachers and organisers of this school are volunteers, giving up their time to teach and maintain the culture, language and heritage of Afghanistan. There has been a great improvement in children's ability to read, write and speak Dari. The Dari school program was on holiday from the 2nd of April and will resume this Sunday on the 23rd of April. Held at the Holland Park State High School, classes go from 9am-1pm every Sunday. If you would like to include your child in this program, this would be a good time because as the term progresses, the level of Dari increases in difficulty.

If you would like to register your child, please contact: [rmohmood@gmail.com](mailto:rmohmood@gmail.com) or call the President of QACA on: 0457599731.



Left:

The Dari School is held at Holland Park State School.



Right:

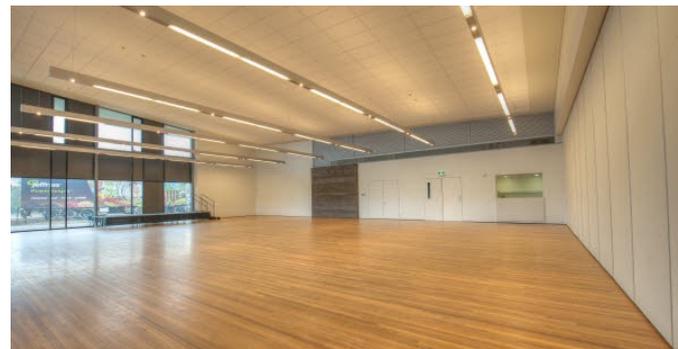
The students' Dari Book.

## Afghan House

This is a long term project that requires much planning and support from the community. Aiming to be built in the next 5 years, this hall will bring many benefits to the Afghan community. These benefits include:

- funeral support
- educational events for the community
- recreational and social activities
- sports activities
- space for art exhibition and space to hold small concerts within the Afghan community

**There will be fundraising for this community hall to be built!**



QACA plans to build a community hall

## EVENTS



## Nawruz Party

This year's Nawruz celebration was organised by QACA on the 1st of April at the McGregor State School, in collaboration with the Afghan Students Association (AfSA). The blessed night began with a Surah from the Quran recited by 12yr-old Toofan Pardes.

Throughout the event, the management team of QACA recognised the people who voluntarily helped and supported QACA for the past year. These people include; active members of the executive team of QACA and AfSA. AfSA was awarded a trophy in recognition of their dedication to serve the Afghan community.

Adding to this, the Mashal-e-Irfan school teachers were all given certificates on their exemplary work for teaching Afghan culture and Dari language to children of the Afghan community.



Awards presented to people for the help and support to the Afghan community association.



Mashal- e Irfan Dari School Performance - Motherland

Finally, members within QACA who supported the nawroz event by preparing food and drinks for the guests were also appreciated.

The night was filled with entertainment featuring classical music by a group of Afghan traditional singers and band members. The music on the night was a unique style that many people enjoyed.

A small play was also organised by Mrs Modebera Popal, with her students from the Mashal-e-Irfan Dari School. The play was about our motherland Afghanistan and how to preserve our culture and the student's involved enjoyed speaking Dari. Furthermore, there was also an attan performance by the Afghan Student's Association (AfSA). **QACA appreciates everyones ongoing support and love!**

# QACA Women's Day Celebration

The Queensland Afghan Community Association (QACA) and the Mashal -e Irfan Dari School held a special women's day celebration for the women in the Afghan community.

Dr Rashid Mohmood, president of QACA, commended Mrs Modabera Popal as the Queensland Afghan Community Woman of the year. Mrs Modaberah is the principle of the Dari School (*for more information about the Dari School, visit page 2 of this newsletter*). The hard work of a young mother, Shokria Mutahar Siddiqui was also recognised.

Omeed Farani did a great performance on the night with Afghan songs and his own, making the evening even more special.

**QACA congratulates all the hardworking women in the Afghan community.**



# Afghan All Girl Orchestra Enthrals World Leaders at Davos Summit



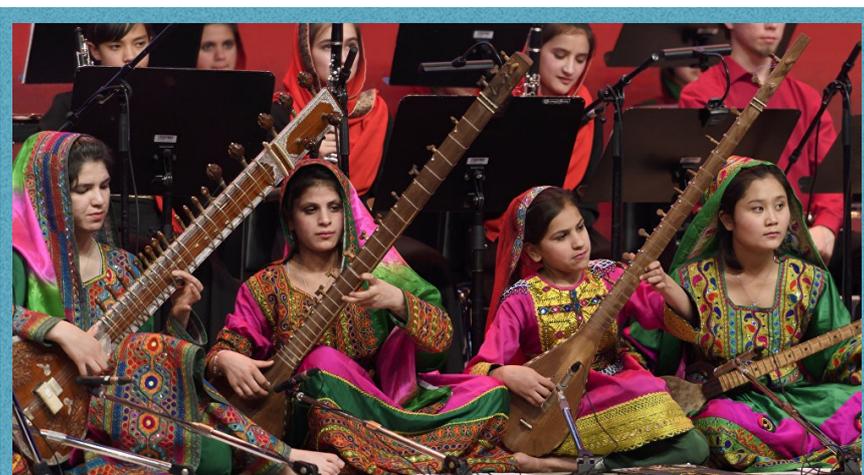
Zarifa Adiba conducting the Afghan All-Girl Orchestra at Davos

Afghanistan's first all-girl orchestra held world leaders spellbound at a concert at the closing of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on January 20, 2017. The audience included over 3,000 CEOs, heads of state, politicians, businessmen and experts. Conducted by Negina Khpalwak and Zarifa Adiba, the repertoire included parts of Beethoven's 9th Symphony as well as popular Afghan pieces like "Watan Jan".

The orchestra, aptly named "Zohra" is the brainchild of 19-year old Negina Khpalwak a student at the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM). She approached the Institute's director, Dr. Ahmad Sarmast, in late 2014 who wholeheartedly welcomed the idea. From a modest beginning with about 5 students, the group has grown to almost 35 talented young musicians. For Dr. Sarmast, who wants to promote a better side of the country, these girls are Afghanistan's best ambassadors. "We hope to change the perception of Afghanistan abroad," he said.



Negina Khpalwak



Bedecked in traditional embroidered costumes and brightly coloured headscarves, many of them in the green, red and black of the Afghan flag, Zohra members displayed their skill on traditional instruments like the sitar, rubarb and tabla as well as European instruments like the piano, violin and oboe.

The European tour was the debut of the orchestra on the international arena. It was an artistic challenge and the performance in Davos had a special value. After playing at the Davos summit, the group has gone on to perform in Zurich, Geneva, Berlin, and Weimar in Germany.

"Afghanistan, striving towards peace and creativity, has been unfairly hidden from the international community by all-absorbing negativity. Zohra has tried to disseminate that negativity. I hope we succeeded."

**Negina Khpalwak**

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has.  
~ Margaret Mead

## Community Work



**Dr Rashid Mohmood**, the president of the Queensland Afghan Community Association was invited to speak at the Soroptimist International (SI) Women's Conference where people from all states of Australia attended; to discuss and find solutions to community problems. Dr Mohmood stated the importance of women in politics and decision making. He also spoke about the misinterpretation of Islam through mainstream media and the popular belief of terrorism being associated with Islam and muslims, highlighting that Islam is completely separate from extremist people and incidents. He further discussed the importance of climate change awareness.

## Women Role Model

Suraya Pakzad, born in Herat, is a committed advocate for women's rights in Afghanistan. She founded Voice of Women Organisation in 1998 with the aim of providing women with shelter, counselling and job training. These shelters became a safe haven for women who were victims of abuse, providing them with legal services and long-term protection. However the organisation had to work in secret until 2001 due to the threat of the Taliban. Since then Pakzad has worked tirelessly to raise awareness about violence against women.

Pakzad is the first woman in Afghanistan to have trained female entrepreneurs to run a restaurant and latrine production centre in Herat. Ms Pakzad's work also focuses on the paralegal and psychosocial aspects of the community to support those who are most marginalised.

She has received numerous awards such as the International Women of Courage Award (2008), Female Leader of the Year Award (2012) and she was also given honorary doctorate degree from the University of Pennsylvania and an honorary Associate of Arts degree from Burlington Country College. She continues to fight for the development of the nation through her valued work in Afghanistan.



Soraya Pakzad

