

## Olivia Newton-John: An Australian Icon makes an Indian connection

Ask anyone what they think of when they hear the name "Olivia Newton-John" and they will probably utter "Lass in Grease" or "Xanadu Girl" or "Physical Girl". Olivia Newton-John had the looks, the grace, the talent, the voice, the magic, the compassion, the girl-next-door image... everything. The amazing fact is that she has all of these attributes even today! And more! She is still an amazingly compassionate, hugely talented, good looking woman with a vibrant voice and a stunning image.

She also has a connection with the Indian Diaspora in Australia... "What is it?" you ask? Read on to find out more...

Almost 30 years since her 1978 role as the young, vibrant girl in "Grease", Olivia Newton-John still retains her youthful zest, vibrancy and mass appeal. Today, ONJ, as she is sometimes referred to, is an Australian Icon.

It is this iconic status that made her an easy choice as entertainer of the masses when the Olympics came to Sydney in 2000! Olivia Newton-John, the face of Australia to many around the world, performed memorably at the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympics. It is estimated that the global viewing audience of her performance at the Sydney Olympics was about 4 billion! Olivia Newton-John herself states that one of her most memorable moments is the honor of carrying the Olympic Torch during the Olympic Torch Relay.

But it was her co-starring role with John Travolta in "Grease" catapulted ONJ into super-stardom. This film had, probably, one of the most successful movie musical soundtracks in history. It featured stunning duets like "You're The One That I Want" and "Summer Nights" with John Travolta, as well as her own hit song, "Hopelessly Devoted To You." The film had a certain innocence and a timelessness to it.

Olivia Newton-John was born in Cambridge, England in 1948. She was the youngest child of Professor Brin Newton-John and Irene (who herself was the daughter of Nobel Prize winning physicist, Max Born). Olivia Newton-John moved to Melbourne, Australia with her family when she was five. She was a born performer. She was singing on stage and on TV shows by the time she was fifteen years old!

She was soon on the top of the pop charts in several countries. Her album "Physical" was a runaway success. Fame, acclaim and fortune continued to pour on this timeless artiste and performer. She was bestowed an OBE. (Order Of The British Empire) by Queen Elizabeth in 1979. In the latter half of her career, Olivia Newton-John turned her sights on charitable, philanthropic and humanitarian causes. She served as Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations

Environment Programme. In 1991, the Colette Chuda Environmental Fund/CHEC (Children's Health Environmental Coalition) was founded after the tragic death of Chloe's best friend from a rare childhood cancer, with Olivia serving as National Spokesperson for ten years.

In the 1990's, Olivia Newton-John successfully overcame her own battle with breast cancer. This experience spurred her to write and produce "GAIA," an intensely personal album. In it, she reflects on her own experiences with cancer; her trials and tribulations. Today, she is a positive inspiration to millions of people battling cancer.

In 2002, Ms Newton-John was inducted into the Australian Music Hall Of Fame. She was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia by the Queen for her "service to the entertainment industry as a singer and actor, and to the community through organizations supporting breast cancer treatment, education and training research, and the environment."

She is still a performer and an artiste. Her 1999 album, "Back With A Heart," got her an Emmy Award for her songwriting. In 2000, she released her only live album, "One Woman's Live Journey," followed by "Magic" a best-of album. In 2005, she released the CD "Stronger Than Before", featuring songs of bravery and hope that relate to the multifariously varying emotions that cancer patients and their loved ones experience. A portion of the CD's proceeds benefit cancer research.

Given her own battle with cancer and her immense philanthropic spirit, Olivia Newton-John formed a strong and lasting partnership with Austin Health. The Olivia Newton-John Cancer Centre (ONJCC) was founded on the Austin Health Campus in Melbourne, her hometown. And it is here that Olivia Newton-John's connections with the Indian Diaspora in Australia have been made. CHARINDAA is promoting its Sensational Nonu Nigaam Tour of Australia, 2008. The three concerts in this tour over the ANZAC Day long weekend will raise funds for The Olivia Newton-John Cancer Centre Appeal. In a recent letter to CHARINDAA, Olivia Newton-John said, "*On behalf of my appeal's executive committee, we are delighted to be associated with CHARINDAA who provide a valuable vehicle for exposing Australian audiences to the richness of Indian culture while raising much needed funds for charity.*" The CHARINDAA concerts as part of The Sensational Sonu Nigaam Tour of Australia, 2008 will be held in Sydney (Friday 25 April 2008), Melbourne (Saturday 26 April 26) and Adelaide (Sunday 27 April 2008). Attend a concert near you, be entertained by a master of Bollywood music and help an Australian icon build a better cancer centre. More information on this tour at [www.charindaa.org](http://www.charindaa.org)