



# NewZ Lanka

**Newsletter of the New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation Incorporated**

Volume 20 Winter 2003

## **From the President....**

### **Working together for the betterment of our Community...**

The New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation will be celebrating its fifth anniversary at the end of July 2003. It was formed five years ago by a small group of Sri Lankans who felt the need for an organisation, which promotes harmony and goodwill amongst all Sri Lankans in New Zealand, irrespective of their race and creed. Although our group was small in numbers we were rich in ideas, skills and experience. We all had only one vision in mind, to assist the fellow Sri Lankans to settle in to the New Zealand society and preserve and nurture our rich cultural heritage amongst the next generation of Sri Lankans living in this far distance land.

After five years of existence and as a leading Sri Lankan community organisation serving in New Zealand, we can look back with pride that our continued effort to built fellowship with other Sri Lankan organisations has been fruitful in many ways. While most of these organisations have different objectives and are based on different aspects such as sports, religion, profession etc the common goal has been to serve the needs of our community. We always had the strong belief that working together harmoniously with these different groups would bring the much-needed improvement in our community activities. Most importantly we are encouraged from the fact that the activities of *the Foundation* during the past five years have fulfilled the needs of fellow Sri Lankans living in this country.

Another very successful year of *the Foundation's* activities is coming to an end with this newsletter. I was very fortunate to lead a committee with collective strengths and a multitude of talents, experience and ideas. I am deeply grateful for the support that I have received from the committee during my term as the President of *the Foundation*. However our success should also to be attributed to all our friends, supporters, sponsors and the community who have given us tremendous support and encouragement in all our activities.

vision a success. Finally I wish the incoming committee a successful year ahead and request your participation and continued support in all their activities.

**Sarath Pannila**



Auckland singer Kushali Fernando joined T M Jayaratne to sing two duets at the 'TM Gee Saraniva' musical evening held at the Dorothy Winston centre on Saturday 3 May 2003

## **The Committee**

### **President:**

Sarath Pannila (09) 627 2120

### **Vice President:**

Jayasiri Basnayake (09) 579 8977

### **Secretary:**

Dharmasena Maddugoda (09) 526 5202

### **Treasurer:**

Gamini Wanniarachchi (09) 580 1169

### **Committee Members:**

Lionel De Silva (09) 524 0665

Omar Fahmy (09) 846 9427

Guhan Durainayagam (09) 629 2074

Gamini Wanniarachchi (09) 580 1169

### **Auditor:**

Nihal Jayawickrema (09) 579 1807

## **Employment Work Shop**

Our last employment work shop for the financial year 2003 was held at the Ferndale House, New North Road, Mt Albert on Saturday 5 July 2003 in association with the Association of Sri Lankan Engineers. Several employment consultants and specialists addressed this highly successful and well attended work shop.

### **Next Event:**

#### **Annual General Meeting**

Fifth Annual General Meeting of *the New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation* will be held on Saturday 19 July 2003 at 6.00pm at Senior Citizen Hall, Mt Albert. Main business of the AGM will be the election of office bearers for the year 2003/2004. All members are cordially invited for this important event.

### **Calendar of Events:**

05 July 03: Employment workshop

19 July 03: AGM

20 Sept 03: Food Fiesta

31 Dec 03: Lanka Nite 2003 Lanka

### ***Fifth Anniversary Messages...***

#### ***From Anne Perera, Founder President....***

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I say 'Congratulations' to the New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation on this special occasion marking its fifth anniversary.

Over the five years the Foundation has grown from strength to strength, thanks to the many dedicated members and supporters. The diverse activities of the Foundation have contributed in many ways to the enjoyment, education and the uplifting of the Sri Lankan Community in New Zealand.

The Foundation has also provided an opportunity for the committed members to serve our fellow Sri Lankans in New Zealand. I was fortunate to have served the Foundation for two years. Even though I have been in Singapore for the past three years, I don't think my spirit ever left the Foundation.

I wish the New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation every success in the years ahead!

#### ***From Upali Mahaliyana, Ex President We Had a Dream.....***

Martin Luther King Jr. had his dream in the sixties. We had ours in the nineties.

We had a dream that one day all Sri Lankans in New Zealand will stand together as equals and as friends irrespective of race, religion, profession, social status or seniority.

It was an epoch where mutual suspicion reigned. People were divided along ethnic lines, religious lines and intra-community political lines. An association encompassing all diverse groups, where people were comfortable with one another and where personal glory was something one never thought about was sorely needed. Time was nigh for the advent of *the Foundation*.

Some people had had this dream for a long time but didn't have the necessary climate, opportunity wherewithal, or the support. Came the time and came this group of dreamers. We were a small but a diverse group. No two were alike in background, but all were one in one shared dream. We had different personalities, different skills. When one worked with the heart the other used the brain. When one had ideas the other had pragmatism. One was a project manager and the other was a bean counter. One was an artist and the other was a computer whiz. As individuals we might not have amounted to much. Collectively though, we had enormous strength. In short, We were the DREAMTEAM!

We had differences of opinion, we discussed them openly and our decisions in the end were always unanimous. When we needed a leader, one was just there. When we needed a job done the most able person was the first to volunteer. That was natural for a group with such mutual understanding.

What started as a small group snowballed in double quick time. Similar dreamers flocked to become members. There were doubts at the outset in some quarters about our motives. They soon vanished when we showed the way we operated. Mutual respect was our motto. Serving the community was our aim.

King didn't live to see the realization of his dream. We did to achieve ours. It feels like yesterday, the day *the Foundation* was born. But it was five years, five glorious years, since our dream came true.

Our greatest asset was always our enthusiastic membership. Their trust in us was our inspiration. The community's participation, in large numbers, in all our events was our motivation and their appreciation was our supreme satisfaction.

Some of us have moved on since then; some to the sub-arctic, others to the tropics; some to the land of the Dreamtime. But our collective dream lives on, for, while old dreamers are withdrawing to the background, new dreamers are stepping on to the stage.

#### ***From Jayasena Widanagamage, Ex President***

I still remember when Upali Mahaliyana convened a meeting of like minded people to form The Foundation. By then the informal gathering of Sri Lankans called New Zealand Sri Lankans who were meeting with the objective of bringing in ethnic harmony has proceeded for a few months. We did not want to formalize the organization as we wanted to keep away from petty politicking. But when forming the Foundation Upali said a formal structure would be required as he has brought in several groups of like minded people including Sri Lankan Friends

I was the treasurer of the Foundation for the first two years. We faced many financial challenges and I took the devil's advocate position most of the time. We wanted to have the organization run on a professional basis and to maintain a certain standard befitting New Zealand Sri Lankans.

I think the next milestone came when the most of the Founder Committee members left New Zealand permanently. We were at a loss to fill the vacuum but the other members rose to the occasion and the Foundation is flourishing today.

When I became the president in July 2001 the main challenge was to build the finances of the Foundation. The committee was able to do this with the Dinner Dance and the Annesly Malawana show. We handed over at the end of the year with a pretty good coffer.

Not only to survive but to run a well performing organization for five years is no easy task. The credit goes to all the past committee members and general members who contributed their time and effort.

#### ***From Dr. Vasantha Abeysekera – President of the Association of Sri Lankan Engineers***

Many, including you and me, have invested our time and effort, for the survival and growth of the New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation. Many have enjoyed, and many have benefited from their activities. Some have marveled at the commitment of the people who have made all this possible. Many thanks for the hours of joy, and grateful for the services rendered, and will render to all of us - to the people of Sri Lanka and New Zealand. Let us re-invest our goodwill on the Fifth Anniversary of the Foundation, and encourage and support them to continue their wonderful work. Best wishes.

### **From Rudra de Zoysa – Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka in New Zealand**

It is with pleasure that I send this congratulatory message to the New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation.

I am personally aware that your organisation has over the past five years put in a lot of energy and resources to be of service to the Sri Lankan community in Auckland. From its inception your organisation has set out to help new Sri Lankan immigrants to quickly settle in this country, stage shows for the Sinhala New Year and for Christmas, organising cricket matches and bring popular artists and performers from Sri Lanka. The Channa-Upuli Group, the Sate Dance Ensemble, Dr. Amaradeva, Visharadha Nanda Malini, Annesley Malawena and T. M. Jayaratne are some of the groups and artists your organisation has brought over to New Zealand.

The New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation has worked tirelessly to serve the Sri Lankan community in Auckland. May I take this opportunity to wish the New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation all the very best for the future.

### **Milestones of the past five years of the “Foundation”**

The New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation was inaugurated on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1998 in a church hall in Remuera as a result of a handful of like minded people who has this dream of having an organization which all New Zealand Sri Lankans could join and work together harmoniously irrespective of race or creed; religions; language spoken or any other barrier. The handful of pioneer members led by the “Dream team” as Upali Mahaliyana very aptly refers, worked hard to establish the foundation identity which was hallmarked with quality. Dr Anne Perera led this dream team and even after leaving the shores of Aotearoa, she still remains with us in spirit.

A few events were planned for the first year to bring our values and vision to Sri Lankan New Zealanders. *NewzLanka*, our newsletter was born to as the *waka* which took the message of the Foundation to the public. Anne Perera, the founder president was the pillar behind the planning of the newsletter which still strives to maintain its original high quality.

In October 98, A Musical Miscellany, an evening of music was held to bring people together at the Balmoral School hall. Some of our musicians played and visitors were treated to a variety of Sri Lankan songs and I remember us having a shared meal which ended a lovely evening. This event was followed by the first of our summer outings and barbecue held at Omana Beach. A New Years Eve dance was held for the first time for a large gathering of Sri Lankans.

In February 1999, we held our first public performance, The Channa-Upuli dance performance with an overwhelming success at the Dorothy Winston Centre. The show received much publicity and this was a memorable occasion for many Sri Lankans and non Sri Lankans who were in the audience.

One of the issues *the Foundation* wanted to address was the employment barriers that most migrants faced and our first free career planning and personal development workshop was held in February 1999 in a church hall in Remuera. This event received much interest and this has become a regular event now and after securing funding from the Lotteries Grants

Commission, these workshops continue to be held and were used as a model for establishing similar workshops for the greater migrant community in Auckland later.

The *Cricketfest*, now a much looked forward annual event was commenced in March, 1999 with a friendly cricket match between Auckland and Hamilton and a get together held in Hamilton and Auckland every alternate year.

From its inception, *the Foundation* strived to work across other ethnic communities in Auckland, and in March 1999, we represented Sri Lanka at the Festival of Asia 99, held in downtown Auckland. We had Lankan food stalls, a cultural stall and a bevy of girls trained by Manisha Arambawela participated in the cultural performance. This was followed by the Sinhala and Tamil New Year celebration in April. In July 1999, our next attempt at fundraising, a food fiesta was held at the Freeman’s Bay Community Centre which was another success. It was amazing to note that all these were held during the short course of one year and *the Foundation* has completed its first year only by then.

Due to popular request Anne continued to be the president during the second year and the new committee conducted a reader survey to evaluate the performance of the first year and also to use the results as a planning tool for the future. The responses showed that our readership rated us very good on quality of service and friendliness, punctuality, honesty and accountability, dedication and efficiency and good on openness.

The very first event held during the second year was ‘*Pranama –Amara Gee Sara*’ by Pandith W D Amaradeva. Pandith Amaradeva, who has lulled generations of us with his exquisite music, gave a memorable performance in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. The usual annual events such as the *Cricketfest*, summer outing etc. continued. We had a wonderful Millennium’s Dawn party on 31<sup>st</sup> December to welcome the new Millennium and some of our dancers also represented *the Foundation* at Auckland Millennium celebrations. In March 2000, *the Foundation* hosted the Sri Lankan State Dance Troupe which was another successful event held in Auckland and Wellington. This troupe of 13 was led by Ravibandu Vidyapathy.

The founder president, Anne left New Zealand around this time and Upali Mahaliyana took over the reins. During the same period our former vice-president Vinod Perera also left the country.

Our next event was the ‘*Nanda Malani Geethavali*’ musical show held in Auckland and Wellington in August 2000. This was followed by our next career development workshop which was held in October prior to the elections and we also combined this with a political forum with representations by all major political parties – Labour, National, ACT and Alliance where representatives answered questions by the audience. The Labour party was represented by Hon Phil Goff, the current Minister of Foreign Affairs. Year 2000 ended with Youth Nite, the year end dinner dance organized by the youth group.

*The Foundation* participated in the Taranaki Multi Ethnic festival held in New Plymouth and a dance troupe trained and led by Thesara Jayawardena helped fly the Lion flag high in Taranaki. Meanwhile our second president Upali Mahaliyana

and the secretary Udaya Annakage left the shores for greener pastures.

One of the biggest highlights of this era was holding the first ever Sri Lankan Arts and Crafts Festival in Auckland in June 2001 to promote and familiarize Aucklanders with our Sri Lankan arts and crafts. This event was held with funding from Auckland City and the chief guest was the Hon Prime Minister Helen Clark. Two other ministers, Minister George Hawkins, Minister Matt Robson and representatives from several ethnic communities also attended this event. The show combined an art exhibition – Memories of Sri Lanka; a cultural performance, display of arts and crafts; stalls by Sri Lankans who wished to be self employed and food stalls.

Jayasena Widanagamage was elected as president for the year 2001. Regular events such as career planning workshop, summer barbecue etc. continued. 'Lanka Nite 2001', year end dinner dance was a big attraction this year for which the music provided by Keerthi Pasquel and the Ceylonians. This was followed by Annesley Malewana show which was held to a packed audience in Auckland Normal Intermediate School with Minister Hon. Judith Tizard as the chief guest. The AGM was combined with a political forum percolated by major political parties.

Sarath Pannila was elected as the next president for the fourth year of the *Foundation*. In September, the second Arts and Crafts festival 'Artfest 2002' was held at the Mt Eden War Memorial Hall with the newly elected NZ's first Muslim MP, Dr Ashraff Choudhary gracing the occasion. The children's art exhibition, food stalls, display of Sri Lankan Entrepreneurs promoting their business, a short cultural show and craft stalls were held. The stalls as well as entry were free to encourage self employment. Another highlight of this event was the exhibition of paintings, sculptures and photographs of the late Dr Norman Amarasinghe very generously offered by his wife Mrs. Visaka Amarasinghe.

'Lanka Nite 2002', year end dinner dance was held at the Commerce Club of Auckland to the music of Keerthi Pasquel and his group. The career development workshops continued to be held to the highest professional standard with a grant obtained from the Lotteries Grants Commission.

'TM Gee Saraniya', a musical show by veteran Sri Lankan musician T M Jayaratne was held in May 2003. TM was accompanied by two other talented young musicians Kapila Poogalarachchi and Jananath Warakagoda. Year 2003 was another successful year for fundraising, *the Foundation* having secured COGS funding for a project on dissemination of information.

Looking back on the past 5 years, all of us who have been associated with *the Foundation*, can look back with pride on our achievements and success, which would not have been possible with the contribution of all past presidents, their teams, all our members and well wishers and all those Sri Lankans and non Sri Lankans who have assisted us in our journey. Lets hope and pray that our future journey is even more successful!

**Foundation**

## **Making New Zealand Home-A better life for our Kids with Childcare Challenges.**

In the 2001-2002 financial year, about 53,000 overseas nationals were granted residence in New Zealand, according to New Zealand Immigration service statistics.

Most of these face difficulties in settling down, the pressure of finding employment learning a new language for some, setting up a home, organising schools for the children & the list goes on. Having access to current information & the right support, these migrant families can thrive & contribute in their new country.

One of the biggest hurdles families face is that of childcare. Having affordable and reliable and safe childcare are absolute necessities for them.

There are countless options for working parents: Crèche, kohanga Reo, day-care centres, nannies, friends & relatives (less in number if you are a migrant!) after-school care & home-based careers. It depends on your job & hours of work, income level and the age of your children.

Some important points to consider for the Principal care giver before entering the workforce are:

What will be the consequences of putting my child or baby into childcare? The younger they are, the more traumatic it may be for both you & baby. Consider their emotional needs and practical issues like breastfeeding. Investigate the options thoroughly. Do they have qualified staff? Are the premises safe? Are there discounts for more than one child, could you use WINZ subsidies if you are entitled to it? Ask for references & proof of qualifications.

### **Childcare centre, crèches**

Childcare centres & Crèches for young children offer full day or session care (i.e. up to four hours a day) and are open for up to eight or nine hours (between 7.30 am & 6.00pm). Some centres may offer casual care in morning or afternoon sessions. Childcare centres will charge a weekly or daily fee, and an hourly fee for casual care.

Childcare centres are either licensed to take either two-year-olds or over two-year olds. Some childcare centres are based in a Churches or workplaces & others, such as Montessori or Rudolph Steiner centres, have their own aims & philosophy.

### **Home-based care services**

Home-based care services provide a caregiver for very small groups of children in supervised homes in the community. The main organizations that provide family day-care are Barnardo's. Many new home based care services that are available are:

Jemma's home based childcare & Education services

Tel: 4146204, Fax: 4146205

Amanda's

Tel: 360 7514

Barnardos Family day care-home-based educational childcare

Tel: 0800 4 daycare (0800 432 922)

They charge an hourly rate and the times are flexible-could include evenings and weekends to help parents who do shift work.

### **Nanny networks**

Nannies throughout New Zealand are registered with these networks along with their families & they can enjoy a free support service. Nannies are no longer just for the rich & famous and are employed by student Mum's & Dad's, working families, single parent families, Farmers, families registered with WINZ and parents of twins & triplets. The Nannies cover full time and part time hours. Some work long-term and others are called in for temporary assignments. One can hire a nanny using an agency or can advertise and employ their own.

Once you have your Nanny, simply register with the agencies free service & enjoy the following benefits:

Monthly visits to your home by our qualified coordinator; A free toy library service; Regular Nanny & child outings; Access to playgroups; Training for Nannies; Monthly newsletters; Employment advice; Wage administration for a small fee.

### **Contacts of Nanny Network agencies**

PORSE Nanny Childcare Network (NZ) Ltd

Free phone: 0800 2 prose Tel: 06 873 0033 Fax: 06 870 6293

Email: [childcare@porsenz.com](mailto:childcare@porsenz.com) [www.porsenz.com](http://www.porsenz.com)

New Zealand Nanny Support Service

Free phone: 0800 4 nanny (0800 4 62669) Fax: 07 571 5141

Email: [info@nanny.co.nz](mailto:info@nanny.co.nz) [www.nanny.co.nz](http://www.nanny.co.nz)

### **Department of work & income childcare subsidies**

You may qualify for a childcare subsidy for a childcare subsidy to assist in the cost of a Nanny if: Your child is under 5 years, or under 6 years if you get a child Disability allowance; Your family income is under a certain level; You employ a Nanny; You are a legal resident of New Zealand.

The number of hours qualified for depends on your individual situation. The minimum number of hours for an application is three.

### **Rebates/Resource allowance**

Rebates are available to assist you with your Nanny costs. However, a nanny must be employed for a minimum number of hours to qualify: At least 6-hour days to begin to qualify or 12 hours if you have twins or triplets under five. (This is only a guide so please ring the network agencies for full details).

ACC Assistance, Domestic Emergency & Multiple Births

A subsidy may be available to assist with childcare and home help while a parent recovers from an inquiry or an operation; to support a family with multiple births; or for parents experiencing emotional difficulty after the birth of a child. There are some other special circumstances that may make you eligible for assistance. Please call network agency for full details.

Being a mother of 4 children, three of which are 3 & ½ year old triplet daughters I have opened my eyes to the real problems we migrant families face when it comes to childcare options. The most common factor being accurate information not reaching families that are facing these difficulties. I hope Families experiencing difficulties in childcare will find this information timely & help to some degree in solving the problem.

**Jacqueline Samaratunga**

Student Childbirth Educator & Mother of 4 children  
Glendene, Auckland Tel: 8189933

### **A gentleman with a thirst for learning..**

Some of us feel that we are too old to learn something new when we are in our thirties or forties. I have been made fun of by acquaintances for my own thirst of learning asking, "What art classes/language classes/craft classes at your age?" I personally believe that learning does not end during the course of a lifetime. Therefore, it was very refreshing to meet and have a long conversation with a 92 year old Sri Lankan gentleman living in Auckland who has an unquenchable thirst for learning.

Mr. O V Goonethilake is no stranger to readers of the NZSLF newsletter as he has been a regular contributor to this publication from its inception five years ago. I have read and remembered some of the articles he has written so it is quite timely that we tell our readers about this unique person in our fifth anniversary issue.

I met Mr. Goonethilake at his son's house in Hillsborough, Auckland. His son, Sunitha and daughter-in-law Felecia are no strangers to the Sri Lankan community in Auckland. Sunitha is an active member of the Sri Lankan cricket club and Felicia has held numerous stalls at our functions over the years and fed many of us with her delicious cooking. Mr. Goonethilake is surrounded by such enviable love and care by his entire family including teenage grandchildren, Nissanka and Shenali and I thought of him as one very lucky person compared to the thousands of people who live in aged care homes.

Mr. Goonethilake was born in Sri Lanka in 1912 on a very unique day, February 29<sup>th</sup>. He told me with a wicked glint in his eyes and an infectious chuckle that he has only celebrated 23 birthdays as his birthday comes only once in 4 years. Maybe this is the secret to his long activity and when I asked him about it, he gave a loud chuckle and said that it would be because he minded his own business. He certainly did not have any restrictions with his diet as he was enjoying the same food that we had for the scrumptious dinner of *pittu* and accompaniments his daughter in law served us while I talked to him!

Having had his early education in St John's College, Panadura, the young O V Goonethilake continued his education at St Joseph's College, Colombo until he passed his Matriculation exam. He said he studied literature, history – English and Roman and Latin. He started learning Greek at the age of 22 and it was mostly self taught. He has been keeping up the passion for the Greek language for almost 70 years as he still goes for Greek Bible classes in Auckland once a week.

After leaving school, he joined the government service and worked as an accountant until he retired from service in 1968. Then he worked at the Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation and retired as its financial controller in 1971. In addition to his career, he told me that he has always been writing freelance and has written to the Daily News and Island newspapers regularly on various topics.

Mr. Goonethilake must have inherited his talent in writing and his love of languages from his late father who was a journalist with the Ceylon Morning Leader, a newspaper that is no longer in print. He told me that his father worked for an eminent editor, Armand De Souza who is the father of Derrick De Souza who is well known to most of our generation.

Mr. Goonethilake was married to his beautiful wife who passed away just before he came to live permanently in New Zealand. He has been living with his son in Auckland for 10 years. He also has another daughter living in Auckland; a daughter and a son who lives in England and one son in Sri Lanka. His children visit him and his daughter ... has just been over to visit him from England.

Despite some restrictions brought about by advancing age such as not being able to go for his daily walk which he did until a few weeks ago, Mr. Goonethilake is keeping his mind very active still. He reads and writes extensively and attends a Greek Bible study classes in Royal Oak which he enjoys immensely from the way he talked about it. He says that he is the oldest in his class which is attended by many intellectuals from all over Auckland. He joined the class after talking to the organizer, Mr. Prebble who is the father of ACT leader, Hon. Richard Prebble. He also attends church regularly with his family.

It was very refreshing to find and have a conversation with a person of Mr. Goonethilake's age who was so very alert mentally and who has a zest for life which many a younger person does not possess. Obviously, he is one of those people who read and grasp information readily. He and I talked about employment issues among migrants in New Zealand and he was well informed of the barriers most migrants face about not having NZ experience. He was also concerned about migrant youth growing up in other countries not being aware of the Sri Lankan heritage and not being aware of the culture and history of the motherland many of us left behind for various reasons. He would like to see parents taking our NZ brought up children to Sri Lanka at least whenever we can for them to get to know and absorb the stories of our country.

I left the Goonethilake household with the blessings of this delightful gentleman and our brief meeting making my own life a little bit richer. Maybe old age is not as frightening as it looms in front of me as he taught me many things during that meeting. His parting words, kept lingering in my brain, "I may not live for long, who knows whether I will get up from my bed tomorrow". Still, I am sure that he will live the rest of his days in full and drink in as much knowledge as possible to quench his thirst for learning. Dear Pappa, Mr. Goonethilake,

may you live long and enjoy life to the maximum as you have always done and let me take this opportunity to thank you for all your contributions to our publication. We also would like to wish you a long and healthy life on behalf of our organization.

*Asoka Basnayake*

### **Opening of a new Migrant Resources Centre in Auckland...**

New Zealand Immigration Services together with Auckland and Manukau City Councils have sponsored the opening of a new Migrant Resources Centre in Three Kings Plaza to provide services for new migrants. This centre fulfils a long felt need to provide information in a one-stop-shop and is a result of long time lobbying by migrant groups. Preparation is already underway to establish a satellite centre to be opened shortly in Manukau city.

The MRC has a multi lingual information centre where clients can access information and staff who speaks more than 17 languages and dialects will be able to assist them. The centre has contracted the Ministry of Social Development to establish an employment service and two employment workshops are being conducted on Tuesdays and Fridays from 9.30 am – 2 pm. These workshops are conducted in collaboration with the Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce New Kiwis project. An ESOL and settlement service is other services provided for new migrants and all services are free.

Contact Details: Information Service Tel: 09 625 3900;  
Migrant Resource Centre – Tel 09 625 2440  
[www. Arms-mrc.org.nz](http://www.Arms-mrc.org.nz)

### **A generous donation from the Foundation to the flood victims in Sri Lanka....**

The worsening flood situation in the districts of Ratnapura, Matara, Galle, Hambantota and Kalutara has caused severe havoc in the southern region of Sri Lanka. A Disaster Management Committee has been established by the Ministry of Social Welfare to handle emergency relief operations in these areas. Following an appeal for assistance from the High Commission for Sri Lanka in Australia, *the Foundation* has donated \$500.00 to the emergency flood relief fund.

Views expressed in articles are those of the contributing authors and may not necessarily reflect the views of the NZSLF

### **Contributions**

This newsletter is published quarterly. We thank everybody who sent contributions to this newsletter and apologize for not being able to publish all contributions due to the limitation of the available space. Please send your contributions to the Spring Issue by the end of August 2003 to the correspondence address below, Attn: Editorial Committee or by email to: **omarf12@hotmail.com**

**Correspondence Address: Editorial Committee, NZSLF, P.O. Box 41191, St. Lukes, Auckland, New Zealand.**



# *NewZ Lanka*

***Newsletter of the New Zealand Sri Lanka Foundation Incorporated***