



**2017-18**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**SRI LANKA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY WAIKATO**



## OUR VISION

Our vision is to promote and uphold the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka in the Waikato Region, as well as to contribute to other ethnic cultures of New Zealand. The organisation also aims to help the process of settling into NZ as easy as possible for new immigrants, as well as to work with similar organisations to enrich cultural diversity of New Zealand.

## OUR MISSION

To achieve our mission this year, our focus was to strengthen the organisational structure to keep our society together in the future. With this in mind, we have worked on ***'adding value to the organisation'*** for the benefit of our community and also to the wider New Zealand community. Also ***'looking after our community by ourselves'*** should be an example to other communities as well.

## OUR HISTORY

The origins of the Sri Lanka Friendship Society Waikato (SLFSW) goes way back to 1971 when three Sri Lankan families who had just emigrated to Hamilton from Ceylon (as it was known then) used to have casual meetings at each other's houses. Eventually, with the arrival of more Sri Lankan families, the meetings grew and became the basis of a close-knit group of Hamilton-Sri Lankan families.

At this point, Malcolm Martinez, the founding President of the Society, decided that the society has grown to a size where formality had to be given up to the informal meetings. Thus, in 1994 the SLFSW was born and formally incorporated, with the first meeting being held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1994.

Bennett Lecamwasam chaired the inaugural meeting as a chief promoter of the concept, who emphasised the importance of fostering the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka and to maintain an amicable relationship among all Sri Lankans living in the Waikato region.

In January 2010, the SLFSW was registered as a charitable organisation by the Charities Commission as a recognition of its charitable work throughout the years.

Since 1994, the society has grown in strength and numbers into a vibrant society which now continues to grow, with around 500 members from about 200 families spread across the Waikato region.

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## ABOUT US

Sri Lankan Friendship Society Waikato (SLFSW) is a charitable community organisation. It was officially established in 1994 but has a history going back to the early 70s. Our mission is to promote and uphold the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka in the Waikato region, and in doing so contribute to other ethnic cultures of New Zealand.

We organize and participate in various cultural, sporting, and social events to promote the unity and well-being of the Sri Lankan community in Waikato. The SLFS is also involved in the many multicultural functions being held throughout NZ which aim to encourage goodwill and social harmony among the New Zealand Community.

This year we have focused on developing more long-term projects than traditional events to enhance our children's social interactions while reducing their involvement with electronic devices. We have also paid attention to develop projects to increase the welfare of our senior members.

## OUR PEOPLE

**Honorable Auditor:** Nihal Jayawickrama

**Honorable Member:** Malcom Martinus

**Executive Committee: 2017-18**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Dates acted (if not for a whole year)</b>
Ruchira Silva	President	
Sameera Kuruppuge	Vice President	
Neomal Perera	Secretary	From March 18
Thilanga Fonseka	Secretary	Until March 18
Achala Peiris	Treasurer	Until 01 <sup>st</sup> Aug 18
Chandani Jinadasa	Immediate Past President	
Dhammika Ranasinghe	Committee Member	
Kamal Arunashantha	Committee Member	
Gayani Weralupitiya	Committee Member	
Thusitha Dissasekera	Committee Member	From January 18
Mano Manoharan	Committee Member	
Upul Herath	Committee Member	



**Chandani Jinadasa**



**Thilanga Fonseka**



**Sameera Kuruppuge**



**Neomal Perera**



**Ruchira Silva**



**Achala Peiris**



**Upul Herath**



**Gayani Weralupitiyage**



**Mano Manoharan**



**Thushara Dissasekera**



**Dammika Ranasinghe**



**Kamal Arunashantha**

## OUR SUPPORTERS







## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been 24 years since SLFSW was officially established and now our society has developed into an active community organisation in Hamilton. We have been conducting some useful community projects, and 'collaboration' is our biggest strength. We have come a long way so far, but we have a long way to go.

The various task committees have put their best efforts to conduct our traditional yearly functions and have tried their best endeavors to create new events and add value to the organisation. To maintain continuity, and to expand our capacity, this committee has focused on learning from other established community organisations. What we realised was, the opportunities are endless, and the progress of the organisation entirely depends on **'how we think of our organisation'** and **'how we want to position our organisation in the future.'**

Therefore, the vision of the committee this year was to **'strengthen our organisation structure'** to keep our society together in the future. To achieve this vision, we have focused on **'adding value to the organisation'** for the benefit of our community and also to the wider New Zealand community. Also **'looking after our community by ourselves'** should be an example to other communities as well.

With this mission in mind, we have initiated the following new projects, and we have also facilitated the traditional calendar events during the year.

### **Amendments to the SLFSW Constitution:**

The committee decided to revise our constitution to fulfill the following objectives:

- Enhance the transparency of our financial transactions
- Widen our chances to apply for various project-based funding opportunities
- Formalise our communication channels

We have had a number of discussions with the committee members as well and had appointed a subcommittee along with an expert panel, to advise us on the necessary changes to achieve these purposes. We have also discussed the proposed changes at a special general meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2018 and collated the feedback from the expert panel. We have now finalised the amendments to the constitution, and it is ready to get the general membership approval shortly.

### **Website and Other Social Media:**

We launched our website on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January this year. The site is an excellent medium to publish our activities, preserve our history, and to provide information to new settlers. With the online subscription payment option in the webpage, the number of members joining the society has increased. Also, we can use the website as a primary fundraising tool in the future. Furthermore, the site along with the Facebook page and YouTube channel provided us a platform to initiate new projects.

### **Holiday Program for Kids:**

We have initiated a holiday programme to keep our children away from excessive use of electronic devices and to encourage them to engage more in social interactions. The program also intended to help working family parents by providing an option to look after their children for a reasonable price.

We experimented with a half day pilot programme for two weeks in September this year. Although the initial plan was a success, we had to cancel the subsequent programs due to the lack of facilitators and volunteers. However, the opportunity is still there if a group of parents decided to get together and volunteer to make this program a reality.

**Kids Development Programme:**

We introduced the kid's development project as a substitute for the holiday programme and we identified some projects to trial out such as Sri Lankan Traditional Dancing, Chess, Junior Toastmaster, Speech, Drama, Arts, Music, and Compeering in Sinhala. We have started our first project 'The SLFS Chess Club' thanks to a grant from the Hamilton City Council. With the dedication of four volunteers, over twenty-five school kids have already been participating in this weekly event. Sri Lankan traditional dancing project is also due to start soon.

**Badminton:**

We discussed about a type of sport that we could play all year around, and we were able to initiate the badminton program, thanks to a grant from the Lion Foundation. Starting at the beginning of this year, we now have over 30 regular participants including school children and adults. A few volunteers conduct and lead this weekly event, and they also provide training and guidance to the newcomers of the game.

**Appointment of JPs:**

Having our own Justice of Peace to serve our community has been a point of discussion for many years but finding a fair process to select suitable candidates was the primary concern. This year we introduced a volunteer application system with a backup procedure to choose relevant applicants in case if we received a large number of applications. However, only four members applied and we have forwarded all four requests to be considered by the local Members of Parliament for Hamilton.

**Employment Opportunities through Networking:**

This project was designed mainly to help the new settlers, and already a few members got employment opportunities in the trial phase of an email-based networking. Next step is to incorporate this activity on our website and to encourage already established Sri Lankans in the region to help out the fellow members.

**Physical Address for the SLFSW:**

Finding a storage facility for a reasonable price to store the SLFSW assets and office space for the organisation was discussed, and the requirement was a priority. Currently, our assets have been moving from place to place as the committees change over time and sometimes it is difficult to keep track of assets. We have explored a potential solution to this problem such as long-term renting opportunities and the funding possibilities such as the Lottery Community Facilities grant to build our office space.

**Membership Card:**

Introducing a Membership Card for the members was proposed, and we have already designed the card and will be launching it shortly. We have also researched the possibilities of providing discounted facilities through the membership card to our community

**Standardised Operational Procedures (SOP):**

Each year when a new executive committee is appointed, they have to learn the procedures of the organisation, and it takes time and effort. To make it easy, we have decided to develop SOPs to help and guide the future committees in organising traditional functions and conducting administrative procedures such as financial reporting. Hopefully, this system will reduce the effort and resources we put into coordinating traditional events and will be able to spend that time and resources creating new projects instead. Also, we expect future committees to improve these systems and make them available to the following committees.

Apart from the above new projects, we have also completed traditional events such as Christmas Function, the 31<sup>st</sup> Night, Senior Citizens Programme, Art Exhibition, Independence Day Celebration, New Year Sports Day, Rotorua Cricket Match, Poson Bakthi Gee programme, and the 'Avurudu Asiriya' New Year Cultural Show. Fundraising events such as the distribution of Yellow pages were also successfully conducted, as indicated in our financial report.

I want to thank the Executive Committee and all the Members of our Society for their commitment and support which they have given us throughout the year.

Also, we could not have done much, if not for the generous contributions from our donor organisations; the Waikato Lottery Community, Wel Energy Trust, Lions Foundation, Creative Waikato, COGS, Trust Waikato, and the Hamilton City Council.

Finally, I wish all the best for the new committee, and I am sure that they will continue to do a great job in the coming year. So, thank you all!



Ruchira Silva

President SLFSW: 2017-18

15<sup>th</sup> August 2018

## OUR PROJECTS

### Website and Other Social Media:

Sri Lanka friendship society has been operating for nearly 25 years without a website until the beginning of this year. The current committee has realised the importance of strengthening our communication channels and immediately after taking office we explored different options for professional communication.

We are delighted with the support we received from our IT specialists, and have contracted one of them to lead the web site project. The website development took about two months, and we have launched the website on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January this year.

Our website is interactive and has different options for our members to liaise with. You can even pay your membership fee through the website. There are some other options such as using the site as a portal to share our resources for the benefit of new settlers and also to raise funds for the society. We will continue to include these options in the future.

You can browse our website at <http://www.slfs.org.nz/>

We have also formalised our facebook and U-tube media, and they now have an excellent public domain for our members to interact and liaise with various projects of the society.

### Holiday Program for Kids:

We have trialled a two-week holiday program for children during the spring school holiday last year. Our purpose of initiating this program was to keep away our children from the excessive use of electronic devices and also to enhance their social interactions. We have experimented with a few programs such as Drama, Speech training, Chess, and Arts. The trials were successful but found that it involves significant volunteer time and needs a number of volunteers to sustain the program in the future.



### Kids' Development Project:

From the lessons of the holiday program, we have decided to initiate a few kid's development programs to run throughout the year and not to concentrate on short intensive programs. We found that year around schedules are a lesser burden on volunteer time compared to short-term intensive camps.

Under this program, we have initiated our first chess club in the society in May this year. We now have four dedicated volunteers running the Chess club every Saturday from 4 to 5 pm at Hillcrest High School international center. Over twenty-five school, kids have already been participating in this weekly event and the interest shown by some adults have also arisen. We hope to expand this program over time to accommodate more kids and adults. We want to convey our sincere thanks to Hamilton City Council for providing a grant to run this program.

### Compering:

The style and manner of compering also saw a change from the usual style which has been adopted throughout the years. On a decision by the executive committee, it was decided that all children of high school age would be made to participate in compering at events actively. We have put this program into action at the most important event of the SLFS calendar, The Avurudu Asiriya 2018. Under the guidance of executive committee, all high school-aged children of the society were trained and given the opportunity of demonstrating their talent in compeering in Sinhalese and English at public events. The confidence to get up on stage and comper was further enhanced with the skills instilled in the children at the drama workshop of the holiday programme.



### Indoor Sports Project:

We have been blessed with a grant from the Lion Foundation to initiate a Badminton club for the society. The club is a remarkable achievement for us as we have been planning to establish a sports program for our members to enjoy year-round, including the winter time. We have initiated this project early this year, and now have over 30 regular participants including school children and adults. We would like to thank the experienced members in Badminton who have been helping this program and spending their time to teach the novices.



## OUR EVENTS

### Fund Raising:

A number of volunteers' supported this project, and we would like to convey our sincere thanks to them. Although it was a fun filled event, we have also observed some potential risks members such as dog attacks and accidents. We strongly recommend future committees to be aware of these risks and take the necessary precautions.



### Christmas Program:

We organised our Christmas party at the Salvation Army Hall, 99 London Street Hamilton. Many kids and adults participate in various items and Reverend Father Jobin Joseph graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Venerable Tenzing Chozang attended the program representing the Waikato Compassion Meditation Trust and a number of other guests including Judge Peter Spiller were also present. The occasion was drawn to a conclusion with a Christmas buffet dinner organised by the society. We want to convey our thanks to all volunteers who helped to organise this event and a special thankyou to our Christian community for their support.





### Hamilton vs. Rotorua Cricket Match:

The annual cricket match between the Hamilton Sri Lankan cricket team and the Rotorua team was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at Discovery Park, Hamilton. Prasad Wickramasinghe captained the Hamilton team, and Joel Benjamin captained the Rotorua team. Joel won the toss and decided to bat first. Rotorua team began with an explosive start; however, they were restricted to 234 runs in 40 overs thanks to some splendid balling performance by Susith Fernando taking five wickets. Hamilton openers also batted well chasing target in 34 overs, and losing only three wickets. Joni Nimesh was to top scorer for the Hamilton team, and he also took two wickets to win the man of the match award.

We held the award presentation at a well-attended musical night organised by the Sri Lankan Friendship Society and well-known Sri Lankan ICC elite panel cricket umpire Ruchira Palliyaguru (middle in the photo) graced the occasion.



### Senior Citizens Program:

Our primary goal in this year's program was to appreciate the excellent contribution of our senior citizens to the society since it was established in 1994. We also used this occasion to learn from our senior members of their experience in running the society, especially in difficult times. The first President of the organization Malcolm Martinus graced the event as the Chief Guest and explained the history of the organization in detail. He paid tributes to late Ben Lakemwassam for taking the initiatives to establish the society in the early days.



### Independence Day Celebration:

We celebrated the Sri Lankans seventieth independent anniversary on 10<sup>th</sup> February this year with a community function at Hillcrest Chapel, Hamilton. The chief guest for the event was Hamilton Deputy Mayor Martin Gallagher. The function consisted children's presentations elaborating Sri Lankan history and traditional Sri Lankan dancing items that were organised by the Sutra academy in Hamilton.



### Blood Donation Event:

We would like to thank all who participated in this year's blood donation program. We are delighted to note that among the sixty six people donated thirty nine were new donors. In this year program sixty three units of blood were collected. We wanted to thank Mike Pero for their generous support to the event.



### Art Exhibition:

This year we organised a week-long art exhibition at the Creative Waikato gallery on Allexandra Street in Hamilton. Jovi Abellanosa, the Ethnic Development Officer at the Hamilton City Council graced the occasion as the chief guest. About 50 artworks by both adults and children as well as some photos were at the display. The exhibition attracted considerable public attention due to the location of the display, and we think it is an excellent place for similar events in the future. We would also like to convey our sincere thanks to the creative Waikato staff for their guidance to make it a successful event.



### Avurudu Asiriya:

This year again we put in a lot of effort to organise our most significant cultural event in the calendar the *Avurudu Asiriya* cultural show to celebrate the Sri Lankan New Year. We held the function at the Activate Church at 11, Bisley Road, Hamilton. As usual, the event consisted of traditional dancing, singing, and drumming items performed both by children and adults. The Chief Guest of the occasion was Hardeep Kang the General Manager of Food, and Safety at Fonterra.

We have noticed that the number of people attending this event has considerably increased this year mainly due to the increase number of Sri Lankan emigrants in Hamilton. We have anticipated this increase and changed the venue from the Gallagher Concert Chamber at the university to the Activate Church at the last minute. Finding a place with proper facilities and capacity seems to be a problem in the future mainly due to the closure of the Founders theatre in Hamilton City. Because of venues with proper facilities, costs have increased and for future events, we have to raise more funds for an appropriate function.



Poson Bakti Gee:

This event was the last in our calendar, and we organised this function at the Gallagher Event Centre at Wintec House, Hamilton. We organised this gathering in collaboration with the Waikato Compassion Meditation Trust who took the responsibility of training children to sing. The Venerable Monks from the WCMT were invited and the function was followed by a special general meeting to endorse amendments to the society's constitution.



## OUR FINANCE

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Dedicated to Help Our Community

## SRI LANKA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY WAIKATO INCORPORATED

Charities Commission Reg: CC43368  
P.O.Box: 4286, Hamilton East, Hamilton 3247  
New Zealand  
Email: sec.slfs@gmail.com

Sri-Lanka-Friendship-Society-Waikato-inc



#### Statement of Financial performance For the financial year ended at 30 June 2018

Last FY 2016/2017 Amount \$		Current FY 2017/2018 Amount \$
8,321.31	Cheque account	16,390.21
7.04	Savings account	7.04
580.63	Relief fund account	2,035.00
<u>8,908.98</u>	Opening balance as at 01 July 2017	<u>18,432.25</u>
8,321.31	Operating account opening balance as at 01 July 2017	16,390.21
	<b>Income :-</b>	
5,321.89	Fundraising events	6,704.20
	<b>Grants :-</b>	
-	Lion Foundation	2,000.00
600.00	Mike Pero Sponsorship	600.00
2,000.00	Trust Waikato	2,000.00
4,750.00	Hamilton City Council	3,000.00
-	Creative Waikato	1,000.00
9,000.00	Lottery Board	-
4,500.00	WelEnergy Trust	-
1,662.00	Membership subscriptions and Donations	4,055.00
803.25	Relief fund transfer	-
727.00	Ridma Rayk	-
10.71	Bank Interest	13.54
<u>37,696.16</u>	Total Income	<u>32,762.95</u>
	<b>Expenses :-</b>	
	<b>Expenses relating to last committee :-</b>	
-	Christmas and New Year function-2016/2017	752.76
552.22	Poson Festival -2017	620.00
1,546.24	AGM -2017	1,202.45
915.00	Donations -Relief fund donation	635.00
	<b>Current financial year expenses :-</b>	
372.43	31 night Family fun night	1,163.74
717.27	Christmas function-2017	711.70
-	Annual Cricket Match	323.82
362.20	Independence day celebration	663.27
-	New Year Sports day	459.75
6,824.54	New Year Concert -2018	9,975.47
1,774.02	Yellow Pages and other fund raising events	506.97
2,196.10	Art Exhibition and Kids development project	3,358.88
-	Badminton Programme	710.60
-	Elderly Project	555.00

Web site development	1,276.95
574.50 Blood donation	549.79
3,854.11 Administration and Other expenses	175.00
2,380.92 Ridma Rayk	-
3.00 Bank charges	-
<u>22,072.55</u>	<u>Total Expenses</u>
<u>15,623.61</u>	<u>Closing Balance as at 30 June 2018 as per cash book</u>

	<u>23,641.15</u>
	<u>9,121.80</u>
	Closing Balance as at 30 June 2018 as per cash book
16,390.21 Cheque account	9,121.80
7.04 Savings account	7.04
2,035.00 Relief fund account	2,036.63
<u>18,432.25</u>	<u>Total Account balance</u>
	<u>11,165.47</u>

#### Bank Reconciliation as at 30 June 2018

15,623.61	As per Cash book	9,121.80
766.60	Unpresented Cheques	-
<u>16,390.21</u>	As per Bank statement 30 June 2018	<u>9,121.80</u>

#### Operation Relief fund account

580.63	Opening Balance as at 30 June 2017	2,035.00
1,454.37	Dep and Withdrawals	-
	Bank Interest	1.63
2,035.00	Closing balance as at 30 June 2018	<u>2,036.63</u>

#### Operation Savings Account

7.04	Opening Balance as at 30 June 2017	7.04
7.04	Closing balance as at 30 June 2018	7.04

*M. J. ...*  
7/05/2018

## AUDITORS REPORT

### **SRI LANKA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY WAIKATO INCORPORATED**

#### **Audit Report**

**To the Members of the Sri Lanka Friendship Society Waikato Incorporated**

**Audit of the Sri Lanka Friendship Society Waikato Incorporated for the 2017/2018 financial year ended at 30 June 2018.**

I have audited the financial statements of Sri Lanka Friendship Society Waikato Incorporated, which comprise the Statement of Financial Performance for the Year ended 30 June 2018.

#### ***Executive Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Statements***

The executive committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### ***Auditor's Responsibility***

My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand). Those standards require that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Society's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Society's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Other than in my capacity as auditor I have no relationship with, or interest in, the Society.

#### ***Opinion***

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of the Sri Lanka Friendship Society Waikato Incorporated as at 30 June 2018, its statement of income and expenditure and changes in equity for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand.

  
**Nihal Jayawickrama**

**Honorary Auditor**

**6 August 2018**

## ACKNOWLEDEMENTS AND THANKS

### Grants and funding:

We want to convey our sincere gratitude to our funders, the Lotter Community, Trust Waikato, Well Energy Trust, Hamilton City Council, COGS, and the recent addition to our list the Creative Waikato, and the Lion Foundation.

### Donors:

Some of our members make donations to organise some functions especially the Avurudu Asiriya, our New Year function. We thank them for their generous contributions.

### Volunteers:

We were able to identify some volunteer groups based on their expertise, and would like to convey our sincere gratitude to their contribution. We would like to mention a few of the main contributors as follows:

Daniel Silva for his generous effort in editing and proofreading our important documents such as the constitution and this report, the Annual Review.

Our expert panel (Daniel Silva, Udayangani Samarakkody, Rohan Weerakone, Ranjith Cooray, Mervyn Sumanaratne, Upali Sarathchandra, Ajith Senanayake, Dhammika Subasinghe, and Migara Weeraratne) on the amendments to the constitution who contributed a number of hours to fulfil the aspirations of our society.

Our IT group lead by Roshan Perera and Ranga Kulasooriya, and Sampath Rajakaruna, Thilanka Priyankara for their contribution to solve our IT issues and also Dilan Prasad to his contribution for developing the website

Charmalika Abeywardane, Shamal & Imali family, Devinda Mahavithana, Ushan alahakoon and the music group for their contribution at the Christmas function. Gamini De Silva and Ajith Mutugala for coordinating the activities of our Badminton club and Ranga Kulasooriya and Achala Peiris for training kids.

Coordinators, choreographers and event, stage, media, and technical teams and performers for their contribution to the success of the New Year function. Tharindi Wijesinghe who helped us organising food preparation of the functions. Bakers Delight Bakers, Premadasa Lilian family, and Jayathu Chamari family for providing food for functions.

Ruwan Fernando, Migara Weeraratne up for their support for organising Poson Bakthi Gee programme and Independence Day event. Ruchira Silva and Roshan for their initiative to establish the Chess club and organising the program for our children at weekends on Saturdays. Dhammika Ranasinghe for his valuable contribution to improve the compeering skills of children.

### Members:

Our sincere thanks to all the members who have volunteered their time with us to organise programs and also for encouraging their children to participate.



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

### Become a member:

We made it easier for you to become a member by using our website. We welcome every Sri Lankan in the Waikato Region to join us. We realise the strength in numbers of our members as an asset to our community. Our executive committee has decided to issue a membership card for members shortly. We have already designed a card, and also been looking for ways to connect the membership card for discount options.

### Volunteer your time:

We have initiated some ongoing projects such as Chess Club, Badminton Club, Speech, and Drama Sessions and we have been planning to launch a few more shortly. No need to mention that these programs involve a lot of volunteer time and without your contribution, we would not be able to sustain these programs in the future. So, we urge you to contribute as much as possible for the benefit of the society, and in particular, to look after our children and the senior members of the community.

### Donate:

You can also make donations through our website irrespective of financial donations. We are aiming to establish a portal to our website where you can donate and exchange in-kind contributions such as extra TV's, Beds, etc. We think this avenue would be extremely useful for our newcomers in the early stages of their career in New Zealand.

### Support an event or fundraising activity:

If you wish to sponsor any of our projects or events, we will in return give you the opportunity to promote your business amongst our members. Our most labor-intensive fundraising event is the yellow page distribution which usually happens in the month of October. We would appreciate your time for participating in this event.

### Other ways you can help our cause:

Your most significant contribution to the activities of our society is your expert knowledge in specific subject areas, and also your experience in community work in Sri Lanka. Please do not hesitate to contact the executive committee and share your specific knowledge to the betterment of the society.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The main strength of our society is the social capital or the free access to volunteer labour and express expert opinions in various disciplines at our disposal. In our opinion, we haven't exploited these resources to the full benefit of our society yet. There is a long way to go. The availability of social capital usually depends on the strength of our networks or in other words how well we are connected as a community. We must identify the incentives and programs that would enhance this connectivity.

We have initiated a few programs such as our Chess and Badminton clubs and providing employment opportunities for newcomers through our available networks. We are aware some other programs would also help in developing social capital in our society and will work on them in years to come. We would appreciate your suggestions and opinions in this regard.



*If you think you're in complete control of your destiny or even your actions, you're wrong. Every choice you make, every behavior you exhibit, and yet every desire you have finds its roots in the social universe.*

*Nicholas Christakis (Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology in the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences)*

## CONTACT US

**Postal Address:**

P.O Box 4286  
Hamilton East  
Hamilton, 3247

**Email:**

Sec.slfs@gmail.com

**Website:**

<http://www.slfs.org.nz/>

**Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/SLFSW/posts/>

Dedicated to Help Our Community

## SRI LANKA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY WAIKATO INCORPORATED

Charities Commission Reg: CC43368  
P.O.Box: 4286. Hamilton East, Hamilton 3247  
New Zealand  
Email: [sec.slfs@gmail.com](mailto:sec.slfs@gmail.com)

 [Sri-Lanka-Friendship-Society-Waikato-inc](https://www.facebook.com/Sri-Lanka-Friendship-Society-Waikato-inc)

