



KARUNA SRI LANKA INC

FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER



***HAPPY NEW YEAR, we wish you all a very
happy and healthy 2024.***

***Our Vice-President, John Woods, Secretary Sarah Parry-Jones, with her
husband, Ian and June Foote Treasurer visited Sri Lanka in November 2024***

*(As per our rules, any committee member visiting Sri Lanka pay for their own flights, accommodation and
expences)*

*Sarah and Ian had met most our girls in 2017 when they visited the Yasodara Orphanage. They were,
therefore, very excited to meet up with as many of the girls as possible on this trip.*

The headline photo was taken at the Candapura Orphanage we visited to meet Nilmini, one of our girls
that lived at the Yasadora Orphanage before it closed.

We were very busy every day visiting and spending time with as many girls, families and orphanages as possible. I have therefore decided in this newsletter that I will tell you all our news from the trip by mainly using photos. As Justin says “photos speak louder than words” so I hope you enjoy following us on our journey.

Sarah, Ian from England and June from Australia met up in Colombo and spent a great day with Ageesha and Piyumi, two of our girls from Yasodara Orphanage. Ageesha is our first young lady to attend University and Piyumi has a really good job with Keels, a large supermarket chain where she receives training courses which she has achieved very high results and received an award for excelling in customer service.



Ageesha enjoying lunch Sarah & Ian treated us all to



Ageesha, Sarah, June and Piyumi



Piyumi is hoping to travel overseas with Keels.



We have never seen a confessional that lifts up and down.

The driver Ian and Sarah booked took us all on a tour of Colombo. We visited some very interesting temples.

The following day worked out well because it was time to pick up Dileka from The British Way International School where she had been attending a very intense english course for 55 days which Karuna funded. Dileka was so excited to see Sarah, Ian, June and Ageesha arriving to pick her up.

We were able to meet one of Dileka’s teacher and the matron who looked after the girls in their accommodation. They both said Dileka was a good student and this was acknowledged when she received her Diploma in December as she received a Credit Pass and an additional Diploma. Dileka, has had a very hard life but has

grown into a very confident, caring, intelligent young lady. The photos include Dileka when she received her diploma in December 2023. We are so proud of her achievement



Dileka with one of the Matrons.



Ageesha attended the Diploma Ceremony, it was good support for Dileka.

TIKIRI ORPHANAGE, Kandy

Sarah and Ian travelled to Kandy where they enjoyed a great shopping trip purchasing and delivering goods to Tikiri Orphanage. One of our donors had raised money to fund everything we purchased. David was lucky to be adopted by an Australian couple when he was a baby at this orphanage. The orphanage looks after babies and children up to 5-years-old. It is very a well-run orphanage with only a matron and 2 assistants to look after up to 30 babies and toddlers therefore they do not have time to give hugs and cuddles which is very sad. At least the children are well looked after.



One of the items the orphanage asked for was a blender and of course Sarah purchased a stack of nappies and Ian filled his trolley with other much needed items.

Mission accomplished, Sarah and Ian presenting all their shopping to the orphanage.



THE MANICARE FOUNDATION - Hopes & Dreams Village



June met up with Joy at The Manicare Foundation – Hopes and Dreams Village where she will be volunteering near the end of this trip.

A physiotherapist attends 3 days a week, Karuna funds one of these days. He helps local people suffering from strokes and other disabilities. Joy heard of a man that everyone said would never walk or talk. She asked him to attend sessions with the physiotherapist and he is now able to walk a few steps and hopefully will continue to improve. There is also accommodation for families with disabilities and other disadvantages families.

This Foundation gives work to ladies who live nearby to enable them to be independent and have their own income. June presented a donated laptop to Joy's manager, Raja, who is in charge of the workshop and Ramani, she has been sewing for many years with Manicare. Joy received an embroidery sewing machine but they have not been able to use the embroidery programs because they needed a computer. This will now enable them to add custom embroidery to many of the products they make.



There is also a Montessori Kindergarten school for local children. June gave all the children a small koala to keep after watching them practising a dance for the Christmas concert.





Students working at their english class.

Joy organised for the older children have after school and Saturday education programs.

There is a great english teacher who lives in one of the cottages on the property with her husband and son. She has received good encouragement and support from the parents as the children's progress has been amazing since she commenced teaching.

VISTING ONE OF OUR FAMILIES

Jayani, one of our co-ordinators arranged for June to visit Baghya and her family at their home. Last year, when we visited Baghya had just given birth to their little girl so it was great to be able to celebrate her 1st Birthday. Of course, we took a small gift and we are sure she will enjoy playing with her new doll and pushchair. Karuna assisted Baghya and her husband to purchase tea plants which will give them an income.



Baghya showing June the tea plants.



When the tea is picked merchants visit the villages. The villagers pack the tea into bags which get weighted and the merchant pays them. This tea merchant was very happy to have his photo taken.

John, Sarah, Ian and June all arrived in Galle and it was time to visit Dileka for lunch. Dileka gave us a tour of the fort before lunch so we all had good appetites. The committee members happily share the cost of coffees and meals.



John, Dileka, Sarah and Ian



Dileka introduced us to the boarding house family where she lives. The little girl in the bedroom enjoys spending time with Dileka in her room and was not shy when Dileka and Sarah shared a photo.



We have been assisting the Sukitha Orphanage for special needs children and adults project to build new accommodation for some of their elderly ladies and we were lucky to be able to attend the opening of the new building. This was celebrated with their annual art and craft sale followed by a concert which was amazing. It was a fabulous day,



The young children loved performing.

And the adults put on a great display too.



Sarah and June gave sensory gifts to the ladies which Sarah had brought to Sri Lanka. They were very happy to receive them.



They have done a great job building new bathrooms and sleeping accommodation

We visited the Safe House and the girls cooked us a meal.



The safe house and Dexter the wonder dog who looks after the girls.



Sanduni loves her art



Sarah organises a raffle every year for her charity, the Freetown Trust Fund so she asked the girls to draw the winning numbers this year which was fun.

Our visit to Bhashini and Moravinna Orphanage was another great day.



June, Shashi, Isharai and Dinithi shop for food on the way.



The girls love playing with Manulya, she is growing so quickly.



Bhashini receiving a birthday gift for her baby plus food and a new gas bottle.

MORAVINNA ORPHANAGE

We travelled on to the Moravinna Orphanage where the children were so happy to meet us.

One of the children had their 9th birthday so Sathya and Piyuma had made a lovely birthday cake and we took heaps of balloons to blow up. Something so simple gave all the children a really good fun time. This is a very well-run orphanage and the relationship between the children and matrons was good to see.



Cooking facilities are not quite what we are used to though!!



The matrons were very happy with the food supplies we gave them

We also visited Sachini. Their children are growing quickly. On our last visit we helped them to purchase a washing machine which has made life a lot easier for her. They live in a very small 1 room house so the washing machine has to be outside.

The girls always enjoy being together.



Gintota School visit.

This was an interesting day. The cricket teams gave us a guard of honour to the cricket nets to watch a demonstration of bowling and batting skills. Ian and John could not resist facing a couple of balls. We fund a cricket coach and an assistant coach to give the students the best tuition in their cricket skills.

Sarah enjoyed walking through the guard of honour.



Ian could not resist having a hit in the nets.



Maybe one day we will see one of these students playing for Sri Lanka!!



John, Jayani and Sarah enjoying a school morning tea.

We visited one of our successful projects – Chamodi's shop

Maheesha, Chamodi's sister helps in the shop when not attending school. She wishes to study for her A levels. Karuna is assisting Maheesha to achieve her goal and study in a Management Course



Jayani and her grand-daughter, Miheli visiting the shop



Maheesha and Chamodi

John and Sarah also visited the shop and purchased a few items.



Donated computers

Friends very kindly donated computers to assist the girls

with study. June was very happy to present one to Dileka and one to Sanduni, Sathya, Ishara and Piyuma who live in the safe house



Candapura Orphanage visit

The headline photo was taken after we presented the matron with food supplies we had purchased.

John received a lovely Thank You card Nilmini had made. Shashi and the girls visit Nilmini and on her birthday they take a cake John pays for and a small gift from Karuna. This means so much to this young girl who has lived in an orphanage for such a long time



The tour ended with John, Sarah and Ian heading back to England and June volunteering at Manacare for 10 days. It was a very productive time which could not have been achieved without the help of Dileka and her sister, Dinithi. These are just a few photos of our achievements.



Some of the many tubs of paint Ian and Sarah purchased together with rollers and brushes through their charity, The Freetown Trust Fund.



Soon the men were at work cleaning and painting the wall at Manacare.



The tuktuk arrived laden with plastic tubs we purchased.

Dileka and June sorted all the fabric out in the sewing room and organised everything into the tubs to allow the sewing ladies to view the stock easily.



You can guess what Dileka's next job would be.



Dileka painted all the small tables and chairs in the Montessori Kindergarten. It was a huge effort to paint 6 sets in different colours. The children were very happy to have a nice bright school room again.



Dileka decided it would be fun to cheer up the outside wall of the Montessori Kindergarten for the children.

Dinithi enjoyed helping her sister, Dileka with the painting

UPDATE ON OUR PROGRESS



Dileka is attending a 6-month hospitality course with a view to continuing different courses in the future.



Dinithi and Sathya have also been working at a hospitality course



Ishara, and Sathya completed the British Way English Academy in 2023.

Shashi attended their Diploma Ceremony with pride.



We have settled Dinithi into a good boarding house where she feels safe. She has been through a great deal of hardship during her life and it is good to see her settled and accomplishing a training course. Dinithi would like to attend the British Way International Academy. The course is expensive but worth doing. Hopefully we can fund this with generous donations.

There are different ways we are able to receive much needed donations.

THE PAYPAL GIFT FUND does not deduct fees from any donations therefore all proceeds are received by the charity. We have already had donors raising funds for us and the donations have amounted to over \$3,000 which is amazing.

GIVE NOW has become a very easy and cost-effective way for our *overseas donors* to process either a one-off or a regular monthly donation. We have a Give Now donation button on our website which connects directly to their website.

Please note: Payments from overseas to Give Now can **only** be made through a Credit Card account.

DIRECT TO OUR BANK ACCOUNT:

Our donors in Australia are able to make payments **direct** to our bank account from their own Debit account or Credit Card with no transfer fees attach

OUR COMMITMENT

Our commitment to our Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. donors is that all money donated is used entirely for the support of our organisation in Sri Lanka. We are a volunteer run charity and we do not use any of your donations towards our running costs. These are met by Justin, our President, and other committee members.

A Note from the Committee

Please pass this Newsletter on

If you have friends or relatives that you feel may be interested in reading this newsletter, donating, visiting our website or following us on Facebook please forward this newsletter to them to read about our work.

Website: www.karunasrilanka.com.au (A Donation form is available on this site.)

Facebook: Visit our [Facebook page](#) karuna sri lanka inc.

OR contact Justin on 0423 169 328.

AND ALWAYS REMEMBER:

You help to put smiles on the children's faces and improve their health and education opportunities!

