



THOMIANA



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PO Box 2337. Mt. Waverley, Victoria 3149, Australia

STC OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION - AUSTRALIA BRANCH INC. Golden Anniversary (1972 - 2022)





**S. Thomas' College Old Boys Association
-Australia Branch (STCOBA)**

STCOBA Australia Branch is based in Melbourne. This was the first Thomian OBA to be formed overseas.

The founders were a group of old Thomians who migrated to Australia after their primary and secondary studies at S. Thomas' College in Sri Lanka in the early 1960s and 1970s.

The main purpose, of the Thomian OBA, is to foster fellowship amongst Old Thomians in Australia and to raise funds that can be channeled to the Thomian fraternity of schools in Sri Lanka (Mount Lavinia, Kollupitiya, Bandarawala and Gurutalawa).



www.stcobaust.org.au



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/STCOBA/>



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You'll always remember, Wherever you may be, The school of your boyhood, The School by the Sea;
And we'll always remember, The friendships fine and free, That we made at S. Thomas', The School by the Sea



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear fellow Thomians,



I presume I'm like most people right now asking, "Where did the year 2021 go?" Here we are in 2022, navigating our personal and professional lives through a global pandemic lasting over two years.

I'm proud of our association's success during the last year, despite some challenging times. Particularly, we were able to provide opportunities for meaningful engagement of our members. This was achieved by introducing new events and re-formatting some of our existing ones within our social calendar. In the year ahead, we will continue these initiatives so we can build up our membership.

2022 is a milestone year for the association, as we celebrate 50 years of being founded in Australia. We have the privilege of being the first overseas OBA to be established. The association has assisted College as well numerous local and overseas charities on projects over the years and will continue to do so in the future. We must thank our founder members for their efforts in establishing the association.

The key event this year to celebrate this milestone would be the Thomian Ball which will be held on the 4th of June at the Sofitel Hotel in Melbourne. I would encourage you to save the date and notify other Thomians and friends.

Sponsorship is a vital aspect for this event to be successful. The organising committee will greatly appreciate if you could kindly source sponsorships within your corporate networks and communities.

The Executive Committee is currently planning the activities for the rest of the year, subject to health and safety guidelines. We will be sending out a calendar of events shortly. The focus of this year is to have several fund-raising events to support the College in a specific project that the committee will decide upon soon.

Membership numbers are increasing but I would like to see this trend improve further. If you have not renewed your membership yet, I would encourage you to do so. There are several Thomians who have made Melbourne their home, but haven't become members yet. If you know of such, please encourage them to sign up.

Finally, I must thank the current Executive Committee for the fantastic job they did last year. The team worked tirelessly to ensure that the association came on top from an engagement point of view as well as a financial perspective, despite not having our main fund-raising events. I also thank those members who helped and provided continuous support throughout the year.

Please stay safe and look after yourselves. I look forward to seeing you at the next event.

Esto Perpetua!

Peneeth Goonawardena

Editorial



"Another year over...a new one just begun...Let's hope it's a good one... without any fear!!".

As we reflect on the pandemic over last couple of years, let's hope and pray that 2022 will bring hope to all of us who had to endure many challenges. In this context, on behalf of the Executive Committee (Ex-Co) of the OBA, we express our best wishes for a great New Year to all our readers in Australia and overseas and send all our love and good wishes for an awesome year.

For the Ex-Co, entrusted to organise many events during the year, it has been very frustrating, with postponements and cancellations of events being the norm. On reflection, we did better in 2021 in terms of events than in 2020 (the first year of the Covid pandemic). We hastily organised four events in-between lockdowns, namely, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in February, Family Night (in lieu of the Royal Thomian live broadcast) in May, the Seniors Lunch in July and the Carol Service in December. Most events planned during the latter half of the year fell victim to the pandemic restrictions. Even the monthly Ex-Co meetings were held on "Zoom" except for one at the beginning of the year. On a lighter note, Victoria became the most locked-down place in the world beating Chile in September with 260 days and counting!! So much so, Victoria which was called the "Garden State" is now referred to as the "Lockdown State"!!

The 2021 AGM, which was planned in compliance with Covid precautions, had to be hurriedly concluded to meet the restrictions that came into force at midnight that day and announced only at 2pm that afternoon. In spite of this, around 50 members attended but had limited time for socialising. The wives and partners of members, many of whom cancelled at the last minute, were surely missed. The Royal-Thomian Live Broadcast planned for 7th May to coincide with the match in Sri Lanka had to be reconfigured when the Match was once again postponed two weeks prior. The new format opened to families included live music and dancing, special activities for kids, live interviews of past cricketers in Sri Lanka and of course, a sumptuous dinner. Ultimately, we had double the number of

attendees than originally planned; and gave some food for thought for a similar event in the future. The Seniors Lunch too was a sell-out with the capacity being limited to 80; and held at a venue (RSL Club) that required little planning; the format which we hope to continue in the future. In August 2021, we were saddened by the sudden demise of one of the former Presidents of the OBA, Frankie David. His contribution to the OBA over many decades is truly valued. A Memorial Service celebrating Frankie's life is planned in the new year. After periods of uncertainty, the Carol Service was finally held on 18th December 2021 with a larger than expected congregation.

The New Year (2022) marks a special milestone in the history of our OBA. Half a century ago, on 28th February 1972, the OBA was inaugurated by a group of Old Boys who migrated to Australia in the late sixties. A venture with humble beginnings is now the oldest OBA outside Sri Lanka and now strengthened with the influx of the younger generation of Old Thomians to Australia. As a saying goes "we lead and others follow", the OBA has led the way in many aspects over the years. The annual Thomian Dance was regarded as "the place to be seen", with tickets being sold out even before the event was announced.

The "Thomiana", which was launched over four decades ago (1980), was initially printed and circulated only to a couple of hundred members of the OBA. Thanks to social media, the current circulation is estimated to be over 25,000 worldwide and we are encouraged with the positive feedback from a wide cross-section of readers both in Australia and overseas. With such a large circulation, the newsletter is subject to more scrutiny and we endeavour to rectify any errors as soon as we are notified, with apologies to any affected party in the true Thomian spirit. We appeal to our readers to send us any interesting articles relating to your college days that could be considered for publication in the Thomiana.

ESTO PERPETUA

Editorial Team

Vasikaran Ratnarajah

Spali Gooneratne

Happy 50th Anniversary



WARDEN'S MESSAGE



It gives me the greatest pleasure to send this message of greeting to the membership of the STC OBA in Melbourne, Victoria on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the oldest branch of the S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia Old Boys' Association outside of Sri Lanka. Heartiest congratulations to you all.

The STC OBA in Melbourne owes its foundation to the late Morley Perera OAM (who I had the distinct honour of meeting when he visited the College at Mount Lavinia in the year he was awarded the Order of Australia Medal and was invited by the then Warden, the late Mr Neville de Alwis to address the senior boys of the College). According to the information available Mr Perera had acted on a suggestion made to him by Warden S. J. Anandanayagam while on a visit to Sri Lanka in 1971. On his return to Melbourne Mr Perera had enlisted the support of Mr C. R. Wise and other senior old boys and former masters of the College domiciled in Australia and convened an initial meeting on the 24th of February 1972 at All Saints' Church Hall, East St Kilda to formally inaugurate the STC OBA Melbourne. The rest is, as they say, history!

Over the years since it's formation the STC OBA in Melbourne has generously supported the College at Mount Lavinia and the three branch schools at Gurotalawa, Kollupitiya and Bandarawela in many ways too numerous to mention here. Most recently in December 2018 the STCML 1st XI Cricket team was generously hosted and felicitated in Melbourne on their way back to Sri Lanka after having taken part in an invitational cricket tournament organized by Prince Alfred College in Adelaide, at which the College boys won all their matches and won the Chappel Brothers Trophy. The solidarity shown to the College over the years is greatly appreciated.

The pioneering lead given by Old Thomians in Victoria inspired the formation of many more OBA branches in Australia, the UK, North America, and even the Middle East.

May the STC OBA Melbourne go from strength to strength and the link with the College and the other three schools of the Thomian Family be as strong as ever before.

Esto Perpetua - For all we have and are!

With peace and blessings to all.

The Rev'd Marc Billimoria
Warden

12 January 2022



S. Thomas' College, Gurutalawa SRI LANKA

HEADMASTER

The Ven. Fr. S.P. Nesakumar

B. Theology, PG Dip in Eds (SL)
MA (India) M.M.A. (UK) Dip in Exem (Ceylon)



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Message from Headmaster Guru

S.Thomas' College Mount Lavinia , Sri Lanka OBA Australian Branch.

Golden Anniversary - 2022

It is with great pleasure that I send this message of greetings to the Old Boys Association of S.Thomas' College Mount Lavinia Australian Branch as they celebrate the 50th Anniversary in 2022.

2021 has been a challenging year, but occasions like this are a wonderful reminder that great things are happening. Although we are not able to celebrate together in person, it is my hope that everyone affiliated with the OBA Australia takes time to reflect and take pride in all of the incredible accomplishments of the past five decades. Thank you to the alumni, for your hard work to make the Association that is both compelling and inspiring that cannot be adequately described in words.

Once again, congratulations on 50 years of history-making. On behalf of S.Thomas' College Gurutalawa, I owe my gratitude to the executive members of the OBA for their commitment and unstinted support in organizing all the meaningful events related to the Golden Jubilee.

With sincere Good Wishes, Peace and Blessings.

The Ven. S Philip Nesakumar,

Headmaster

S.Thomas' College,

Gurutalawa

OBA News

Chris Lawton Snr. – 90th Birthday Celebration



Chris Lawton, Hon. Secretary of the STCOBA, celebrated his 90th birthday on 4th November, 2021. Chris has been a longstanding member of the OBA and has given yeoman service to the Association for over 25 years sharing his knowledge and wisdom and been a role model in guiding the Ex-Co over many years. A special celebration was held after the monthly Ex-Co meeting on 8th November 2021.

The Past Presidents and Ex-Co Members Group of the STCOBA hosted a lunch for Chris, at the Coconut Tree Restaurant, Wantirna on 11th December 2021 to celebrate the occasion, attended by over 25 members. Godfrey Senaratne and Selva Kanagasabai shared some memories of working with Chris in the OBA; and Chris in turn expressed his gratitude to all those who attended. The function ended with the singing of the College Song.

Congratulations Chris on this tremendous milestone and may you continue to be an inspiration to us all.

OBA Carol Service – Saturday 18th December 2021



After postponing last year due to Covid, the Carol Service was held on Saturday December 18th 2021 at St Aidan's Anglican Church, Noble Park with the attendance exceeding all expectations. The organization of this event faced many challenges with the practices beginning in mid-November (although planned in September) due to the lockdown. The Wardens of St Aidan's initially approving 30 attendees for the service and gradually increasing to 75 and finally, after postponing the service from 4th December to 18th December the actual attendance was around 120 people.

The service was conducted by Fr Gerald Loos an Old Thomian and vicar of St Aidan's and it was a privilege to worship at his Church. Fr Gerald was very helpful in supporting the Sub-committee with all the arrangements of the service and his warm welcome and presence at practices.

The festival of nine lessons and Carols was well appreciated by the members with the choir performing under the directions of Herbert Felix Bartholomeus. The STC OBA Carol service was one of a few live carol services held in Melbourne. The fellowship with short eats and presentation to choristers was well appreciated.

A special thanks to Rev. Gerald Loos, Felix Bartholomeusz and the choir for making the event memorable. Also, thanks to the organizing committee comprising of Rayendra Karunaratne, Vasikaran Ratnarajah, Rayesh Gunasekera and Rajindra Bibile for their efforts in coordinating the event.

More Photos in the Photo Gallery – Page 40

Rev. Samuel J Ponniah – New Chaplain at Mount

In January 2022, the Rev. Samuel Ponniah was appointed to serve as the Chaplain at Mount Lavinia. Rev. Ponniah is an old boy (Class of 1995) of College and previously served as the Archdeacon of Jaffna for a period of five years. Rev. Ponniah obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Theology/Theological studies from the Theological College of Lanka, Pilimalawala and was ordained as a deacon in 2003 and as a Priest in 2005.

As a student at Mount Lavinia, he represented the College in Table Tennis and was a member of the Hewisi Band as well as being Secretary of the Classical Association and an Altar Server in the Chapel of the Transfiguration. He was also an active member of the College SCM.

In 1995, on completion of his A-Levels, he served the College as a member of the tutorial staff and taught English and Divinity in the Middle School and was the Master in Charge of the under 15 Cricket team, in addition to having responsibilities in the boarding house where he eventually became the Senior Boarding House Master.

Our congratulations to Rev. Ponniah. May God continue to bless you.



Premalal Fernando – Ex-President OBA Canada



It is with deep regret that we have to inform you of the passing away of Premalal Fernando (also fondly known as KPN, Kappan or Prema) in Toronto, Canada on 5th January 2022. He was a founding member of the STC OBA in Canada and President in 1997. He was actively involved with the Association over many decades and also hosted the then Warden, the late Mr. Neville De Alwis during a visit to Canada in 1996.

Premalal was at Mount Lavinia from 1954 to 1965. A true Thomian, he entered College into Winchester House in Form 1 and continued until Coll Form A. He remained in the boarding Copleston/Claughton House until the last few years in school. He represented College in Swimming, excelling in the backstroke. He joined the junior cadet platoon at the age of thirteen and moved up to the seniors, becoming the sergeant of the platoon in 1965, his final year in school. He was an Accountant by profession and worked for Lever Brothers in Sri Lanka before migrating to Canada in 1974.

Our deepest sympathies to his family. *A good heart has ceased to beat, a good spirit has risen to the stars. In agony, we part with our beloved mate. Esto Perpetua.*




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JUNE 04	SOFITEL MELBOURNE 25 COLLINS STREET MELBOURNE	SATURDAY 6:30
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COMMEMORATIVE LAPEL PINS

Free Gift for OBA Members in celebration of the 50th Anniversary.



All Old Boys renewing their membership and new members in 2022 will receive a special Lapel Pin as a token. Pins will be handed over during OBA events or sent by mail on request.

For more information, please contact the Membership Secretary, Upali Gooneratne – 0449 024 294 or email: fgooneratne@iiec.org



Inaugural Meeting
24th February 1972

Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the St. Thomas' College, Mount
Cervinia Old Boys' Association Overseas Branch held on Monday, 28th
February 1972 in the Parish Hall of All Saints' Church, East St. Ildes.

Present - M/s Ivor Jones, Nimal Wickremaratne, Michael de Jong,
Adrian Hancock, Odith Weerasinghe, Trevor Martens,
Frank Pereira and Reg Sydeman.

Mr. Frank Pereira, Convener of the meeting, informed the members
present of the purpose for which the meeting was summoned and read
out the notice convening the meeting.

Mr. Wickremaratne proposed and Mr. Jones seconded that Mr. Pereira
be elected pro tem Chairman.

Mr. de Jong proposed and Mr. Wickremaratne seconded that Mr. Sydeman
be elected Hon. pro tem Secretary.

Messages of absence were received from M/s G. H. J. Jones, G. H.
Jill, Sore Isipera, Alno Jones, N. Intarnoto, Tony Waller, Ivor
Martens and George Reichardt.

Mr. Wickremaratne proposed and Mr. de Jong seconded that the St.
Thomas' College Old Boys' Association Overseas Branch be formed.

Mr. Weerasinghe proposed and Mr. Jones seconded that an advertisement -
sent be inserted in the A.S. Newsletter that this Branch had now
been formed and requesting any Old Thomians to contact Mr. Pereira.

Proposed by Mr. de Jong and seconded by Mr. Hancock it was decided
that the next meeting be held on Monday the 20th March 1972 at
7.45 pm and that the office bearers be elected. It was further
decided that M/s Rommie de Kretser, Ivor Jones and Nimal Wickrema-
ratne should submit a draft constitution to the next meeting.

Mr. Martens proposed and Mr. Hancock seconded that a Vote of
Thanks to Revd. Dowal for the use of the parish hall.

All decisions were unanimous.

Wickremaratne
pro tem Chairman
20/3/72

Hon. pro tem Secretary.
Reg Sydeman

STC OBA - Australian Branch - An Outline of the Early Days (1972 to 1989)

(By Odath Weerasinghe based on his article in the 1989 STC OBA Melbourne Dance Souvenir)

This is not a definitive history of the STC OBA Australia Branch. It is mainly intended for younger Old Thomians to know something more about the OBA's origin story.

A proper history of the OBA will have to mention the many individuals whose selfless efforts have contributed significantly to get the OBA started and progressed to where it is today. Hence, whilst acknowledging their efforts, the following will simply highlight some of the milestone events and achievements of the OBA in its early days.

In 1972, Mr C.R.Wise, the former Sub Warden of STC, hosted an informal dinner gathering at his Melbourne home for several Old Thomians to discuss the possibility of starting an OBA and it was on this occasion that it was agreed it should be done. And so it was that shortly afterwards a group of Old Boys met at the All Saints Church Hall, East St. Kilda, to form the Melbourne and first overseas branch of the STC OBA.

Initially, the members were not many. However, as increasing migration swelled its ranks, the OBA progressed rapidly. The tangible help reaching the College and its branches increased proportionately and the benefits of such a fellowship was recognized by nearly all Old Thomians in Australia.

The constitution of the OBA enshrined the twin aims of helping the College and its branches and fostering fellowship amongst Old Thomians. From the outset, those charged running the OBA strived to achieve these aims.

The first significant project undertaken by the OBA was to raise \$6,000 to fund the purchase of a used mini bus in Sri Lanka for the College. This task, with the relatively small membership at the time took only one year to accomplish. The money, at the request of the College, was diverted to the College Development Fund instead of being used for the purchase of a bus.

The fund-raising continued and there followed several other gifts of funds to the College for the purchase of various items of necessary equipment such as the following:

- a replacement chlorinator plant for the College swimming pool;
- a video recorder/player and television set;
- an Encyclopedia Britannica; and
- a Jugs cricket bowling machine.

Every year the OBA sent Australian Kookaburra cricket balls to College and occasionally sent collections of new and used books and magazines.

Several direct gifts of cash were also made to the College and its branches.

For that time these were significant gifts greatly appreciated by the College and its branches.

To achieve the second but no less important aim of fostering fellowship among Old Thomians, the OBA organized many social and sporting activities. Some of these were the following:

- an annual cricket match between the Melbourne Old Boys of Royal College and S. Thomas' College, jointly organized by the Australian OBA's of both schools, was inaugurated in 1973;
- a Royal-Thomian match for older players on the same day and venue as the main match was also added. The many spectators with flags and vociferous encouragement along with the traditional "papare" music added something of the excitement of the "real" big match in Sri Lanka;
- occasional cricket matches against the Melbourne old boys of Trinity College Kandy;
- an annual Royal-Thomian golf competition was inaugurated in 1987;

- occasional golf competitions against Trinity College Old Boys;
- a rifle-shoot;
- a car rally;
- teams were entered in the inter Sri Lanka Schools Melbourne OBAs Seven-A-Side Rugby Union Competition from the competition's inception in 1987. This was to cater for the more energetic members or those who believed they were still young in limb as well as at heart;
- where possible, at the conclusion of these sporting events, a bar-be-que was held attended also by families and friends;
- the first "Thomian Night" dinner dance was held at the Clayton Town Hall in 1978. Since then, this event has been held without a break becoming bigger and better, until it is now considered by many to be the best Sri Lankan dance in Melbourne. The dance was the OBA's main fund raiser mainly through the raffle and advertising revenue;
- a smaller "Podi Natuma" (small dance) was organised for the first time in 1987 catering for just under two hundred and this has continued to be a popular annual event;
- a carol service was begun in 1980. This service mirrored the *Festival of Nine Lessons*, the carol service at the College Chapel, and included the prayer for the College;
- a childrens' Christmas Party was inaugurated in 1988;
- The OBA on several occasions organised functions to enable Old Thomians living in Australia to meet and entertain prominent Old Thomians visiting Australia;
- an age-group reunion of some "early fortyish" Old Thomians in Melbourne was organised via the "Thomiana" in 1988. This event in the form of a lunch at a restaurant was well attended and became the precursor of other such reunions; and
- the OBA sponsored a Thomian schoolboy cricketer to Australia to play a season with the University of New South Wales in 1988.

The OBA's Annual General Meetings in February was well attended and the debate friendly and constructive. The social for members and their families, at the conclusion of official AGM business, was an opportunity for fellowship and reminiscing in a friendly atmosphere.

A regular newsletter, "The Thomiana", was started in 1980 and from the outset set a very high editorial standard which has been maintained to the present day.

In keeping with contemporary practice, the OBA became an incorporated body in 1988.

Wherever possible the OBA opened its activities to the families and friends of its members.

The OBA from all accounts was well established by 1989 and going from strength to strength in achieving its two main aims. The College and its branches benefited significantly and the OBA enabled Old Thomians living in Australia and those visiting these shores to meet their school friends and others from across the generations who also had attended the school by the sea.

ESTO PERPETUA

Thomianawe value your opinion

In order to structure the newsletter to meet the preferences of our readers, we invite comments and suggestions on ways to improve the publication. Your feedback on the format, overall content, quality of articles, topics and interest in the newsletter is appreciated. Please send your responses to:

Vasikaran Ratnarajah: vasidaisy15@gmail.com or **Upali Gooneratne:** fgooneratne@iiec.org

THE BIG MATCH



Obviously, I am writing about the Royal –Thomian as that was the first and, in my view- quite likely to be shared by many others of the Royal -Thomian tribe- the only one which merits the title. I do not think it necessary to apologize to our many friends from other schools for this seemingly arrogant assumption. They would be sensible enough to understand accept reality.

A couple of years ago I contributed a short article titled, “ A Hallowed Event”, to the Dilmah, History of Ceylon Tea website. The writing was built around a request for leave from Gamini Salgado, then a young SD (Assistant manager) on Houpe Estate, Kahawatte, trying to obtain his release for the Royal-Thomian weekend. His British PD, Ian Tait, brusquely denied the request and Salgado missed the match for the first time in twelve years. The date of the request was 11th March 1946. The significance of the episode was that Salgado had captained the Royal team to victory in the big match in 1942, just a few days before he left school to start his planting career, as a nineteen year old.

The point of the story was the importance of the match, the spirit as alive seventy-five years ago, as it is now. The event itself would have been much smaller

in scale then, and not the three-day extravaganza that it is today. However, It was still an important item in the calendar of many people then, as evinced by Gamini Salgado’s request for leave, notwithstanding a possible estate visit to coincide with the match weekend, from Francis Henstock, then country manager of Ceylon Tea Plantations’, the owning company of Houpe.

2021 must have been the first instance since the inception of the match, 142 years ago, that it was played without spectators. It may be recalled that the 2020 encounter was the last cricket match in the country to have been played in the presence of spectators, before the Covid pandemic compelled government to impose a ban on all such events. In fact, the ban was imposed the day after the match, leading to much speculation in society that the authorities deliberately withheld the ban, in order to allow the match to be played simply because it was the Royal –Thomian, despite medical specialists’ predictions that the match would prove to be a “super-spreader”!!

I am aware that other schools which had traditional encounters cancelled because of the ban did not take

kindly to the leeway afforded to our match in 2020. Fortunately for the authorities- who may have implicitly colluded in the furtherance of a great tradition- and for the match organizers, there were no recorded cases of Covid infection directly attributable to participation in the event. Quite surprising really, as the conduct of the spectators, as publicized in many social media posts especially, defied all Covid protocols for safe interaction.

As a spectator on all three days, from the security of the “Mustangs”, I must confess that after some initial tentativeness and displays of caution, business amongst the elderly old boys of both schools was, “merriment as usual”, especially after the customary libations loosened inhibitions. Whilst my family has been always indulgent about my affiliations to the old school, they were not impressed by my decision to attend despite many dire predictions. My son Isuru, a member of the “Colts” tent, was quarantined for ten days in a distant part of his home, by his irate family, when he returned to the fold on Sunday morning. My half-Russian daughter-in-law has still not been able to understand the Gunasekera obsession with the Royal-Thomian match. It is also still not clear as to where Isuru spent the Friday and Saturday nights.

The fact that the 2021 match was played, “in camera” as it were, despite the constraints and uncertainties involved, demonstrates the strength and value of the tradition which has fostered it. I am told that notwithstanding the absence of spectators, that the workload was no less than in other years, whilst the uncertainty of it actually taking place, subject as it was to the progress of the pandemic, put more pressure on the organizers than in a normal year. Despite these impediments an abbreviated but very tasteful match souvenir was also published, apparently designed in entirety by the young Thomians responsible for its compilation. I am sure that Royal would also have produced something similar. All those responsible for making the 142nd encounter possible - in spite of seemingly insurmountable obstacles- the respective school authorities, the student officials of both schools and the other organizing and facilitating bodies, are to be congratulated.

The scheduling of the event, preceded by a number of postponements and changes, was governed entirely

by the Covid pandemic which obeys only its own rules. It could not be held in March as the “O Level” examinations, moved from its original date owing to pandemic issues, had been shifted to that month. The Sooriyawewa stadium, Hambantota, was identified as a suitable venue for a May engagement but the event itself was cancelled due to another wave of Covid infections, with twelve of the twenty two Thomian match squad testing positive for Covid, despite being in the bio-secure bubble !! It was rescheduled for September but the rapid escalation of Covid countrywide, with the number of infections and deaths increasing exponentially, again compelled a postponement.

This is the first time that the match was played without a preceding season, in which the engagements with other schools serve as conditioners and preparations for the main event. That in itself was a serious shortcoming as many members of the Thomian team were freshers, in one of the youngest Thomian squads since 1999, according to Dinesh Kumarasinghe, Thomian coach. Apparently, some of the players did not have any previous tournament experience at 1st X1 level, having participated only in Under 15 tournaments and that too in 2019. The absence of pre-conditioning and experience was reflected in the final result, with the Thomian team taking the field as clear underdogs.

The usual pre-match, preparatory celebrations were absent, and there were no displays of the customary “March Madness”, Covid restrictions again ruling out events such as the Cycle Parade and the vehicle rallies. Nor were the usual pre-match gatherings of old boys, “Class of ‘55” and other such events, celebrated.



The actual match itself did not generate the usual excitement as its start was delayed by one and a half

days due to incessant rain. The pitch had been under covers during that period, a situation which has a crucial impact on playing conditions, especially under overcast skies. Royal had been fortunate to win the toss and, predictably, sent the Thomian team in to bat. Under conditions ideal for seamers, opening bowlers Sonal Amarasekera and Kavidnu Pathiratne, assisted by left arm spinner Gihan Balasuriya, had reduced STC to 35 for 8 wickets before Yasiru Rodrigo and Mahith Perera had restored some sanity, with STC eventually finishing at 89 all out, its lowest score since 2000 and probably one of the lowest in the series. Despite the bowling-friendly conditions and the visible inexperience of many of the Thomian side, analysts still consider the bowling outcomes to be rather flattering, attributing many of the dismissals largely to the batsmen's lack of application under demanding conditions.

Royal batting second had been far more comfortable, making a token declaration at 112 for 4, in the face of a clear absence of any possibility of contriving a decision. The Thomian second innings had been a mere formality, ending at 32 for 1 at which point bad light had ruled out any further play.



Thus ended the 142nd encounter in a heraldic series, the second oldest in history, continuing uninterrupted during two global conflicts and other calamities. The Royal –Thomian has successfully defied both warfare and pestilence. The latest event itself produced forgettable statistics but, as a link in an unbroken chain stretching across the ages, three centuries in fact, it signified the richness of a magnificent tradition, sustained by successive generations of the Royal-Thomian tribe, demonstrating the same indomitable spirit.



Anura Gunasekera (STCML 1955 – 1966)
24th Nov 2021

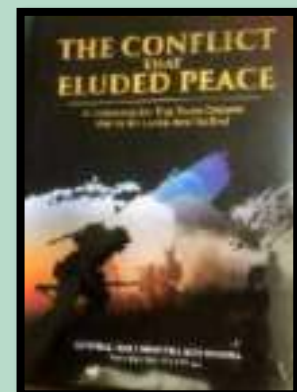
Publication by **General (Retd.) Shantha Kottegoda (STCML 1960 – 1969)**

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142nd Battle of the Blues | Royal Thomian Cricket Encounter 2021

Royal College won the toss and elected to field

First Innings									
S. Thomas' College					Royal College				
Anuk Palihawadana <i>lbw b Dan Poddiewela</i>	7 (37)				Isivara Dissanayake <i>b Rajindu Thilakarathna</i>	47 (65)			
Romesh Mendis <i>lbw b Sonal Amarasekara</i>	0 (4)				Sineth Jayawardena <i>c Thenuka b Nathan</i>	18 (32)			
Shalin De Mel <i>lbw b Sonal Amarasekara</i>	1 (8)				Ahan Wickramasinghe <i>b Yasiru Rodrigo</i>	26 (29)			
Ryan Fernando <i>c Sadisha Rajapakse b Sonal Amarasekara</i>	0 (3)				Sadisha Rajapakse <i>lbw Yasiru Rodrigo</i>	7 (3)			
Shenesh Hettiarachchi <i>lbw b Kavindu Pathirathna</i>	1 (3)				Kavindu Pathirathna not out	3 (5)			
Caniston Gunaratnam <i>c Ahan Wickramasinghe b Gishan Balasuriya</i>	12 (29)				Sonal Amarasekara not out	1 (1)			
Nathan Caldera <i>c Kavindu Pathirathna b Gishan Balasuriya</i>	9 (19)								
Thenuka Liyanagae <i>c Sineth Jayawardena b Gishan Balasuriya</i>	0 (7)								
Yasiru Rodrigo not out	30 (103)								
Mahith Perera <i>b Gishan Balasuriya</i>	22 (64)								
Rajindu Thilakarathna <i>c Dasis Manchanayake b Kavindu Pathirathna</i>	0 (16)								
Extras: 7 (b 4, lb 0, nb 1, w 2)					Extras: 10 (b 2, nb 6, w 2)				
Total: 89					Total: 112/4 dec				
Overs: 48.5					Overs: 21.5				

Fall of Wickets																				
1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	
4	6	8	9	21	31	32	35	73	89		97	105	111							
RC Bowler					O	M	R	W	ECON	STC Bowler					O	M	R	W	ECON	
Kavindu Pathirathna					9.5	1	17	2	1.79	Yasiru Rodrigo					7.5	0	32	2	4.27	
Sonal Amarasekara					10	6	8	3	0.80	Caniston Gunaratnam					6	0	26	0	4.33	
Dan Poddiewela					5	1	12	1	2.40	Anuk Palihawadana					4	0	8	0	2.00	
Gishan Balasuriya					16	4	39	4	2.44	Nathan Caldera					3	0	21	1	7.00	
Prashan Silva					7	2	9	0	1.29	Shalin De Mel					1	0	9	0	9.00	
Dasis Manchanayake					1	1	0	0	0.00	Rajindu Thilakarathna					2	0	14	1	7.00	

Second Innings									
S. Thomas' College					Royal College				
Romesh Mendis <i>b Sonal Amarasekara</i>	0 (6)								
Shalin De Mel not out	20 (24)								
Anuk Palihawadana not out	12 (48)								
Extras: 0					Extras:				
Total: 32/1					Total:				
Overs: 13					Overs:				

Fall of Wickets																				
1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	
0																				
RC Bowler					O	M	R	W	ECON	STC Bowler					O	M	R	W	ECON	
Kavindu Pathirathna					3	2	3	0	1.00											
Sonal Amarasekara					5	1	15	1	3.00											
Dan Poddiewela					1	0	3	0	3.00											
Gishan Balasuriya					4	2	11	0	2.75											

Reflections of a Thomian Legend

During the past 100+ years at Mount, the distinguished 'School by the Sea' produced Prime Ministers, Sri Lankan Cricket Captains, Rugby Champions, Politicians, Businessmen, Professionals, Academics, amongst many other professions. This article, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Australia STC OBA, is in memory of a true Thomian legend whose love for our alma mater is reflected in every aspect of his life.

Frankie David had an outstanding career in Rugby, both as a player and coach. But his exemplary character and inspiration to all those fortunate enough to know him made him a true Thomian Legend.



Early Childhood

Desmond Frank (Frankie) David was born on January 11, 1940, to Deutrom and Tommy and was the oldest of four siblings with sisters Jeanne, Roseanna and Pamela. Some years later, he gained entry to S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia, where his father (Mr D.F David) was a teaching staff member and retiring as the Head Master of the Lower School. The four David siblings shared a special bond growing up, which endures up to today and Frankie, the only boy, was spoilt rotten by the sisters.



The highlight of Frankie's time at College was being appointed the captain of the First XV Rugby team in 1959. Although rugby football was relatively new to STC, they were a formidable opposition to the more established rugby playing schools. Remarkably, several team members, including Frankie himself, represented Ceylon in the 1960s. He was considered an outstanding Rugby player of the mid-fifties. As Ken de Joodt said in his article 'Fabulous Franky, an asset to Rugby. Frankie was 'sporty, skilful and solid'. He played in the scrum, in the vital position of 'hooker,' synchronising ball and foot movements to perfection, understanding the players around him, to win matches

Being a teacher's son didn't prevent Frankie from participating in the

revelries, especially during the Royal-Thomian. Friends recall him being one of the 'leaders of the pack' in the Old Crocks Parade. However, there is no evidence of him being under the influence of any 'spirits' from the Colpetty Tavern!!

On leaving College, Frankie became a PT instructor for a short time before accepting a cadetship as a Junior Executive at a leading engineering firm, Colombo Commercial Co.



Frankie (in white top hat), at the 1957 Royal-Thomian

A Star at 'Havies'!!

On leaving school, Frankie joined the Havelock Sports Club (Havies), where he quickly earned the reputation of being a fast-striking, unrelenting hooker. The Havelock's team of the early sixties had a galaxy of stars. Still, the undisputed glamour boy of the side was former Trinity College flyhalf Nimal Maralande, who kept fans mesmerised with dummies, scissor-passes, and booming kicks to touch. In 1961 Frankie was a member of the Clifford Cup-winning team, including Quinten Israel and Maurice Fairweather.

Nimal and Frankie were very close friends by then and went on to captain the Havelock's teams of 1965 and 1966, respectively, representing Ceylon consistently from 1961 to 1965. Their friendship was cemented for life when they married the Pereira sisters – Cleonie and Yvette.

Frankie and Yvette were a glamorous couple of the sixties, Frankie for his rugby exploits and Yvette for modelling and dancing. Both appeared in the newspapers regularly, with Yvette in the Fashion Editorials and Frankie in the Sports pages.



Rugby Coach at Isipathana College

Frankie took on coaching the fledgling rugby team of Isipathana College from 1968 to 1971. He instilled in the young side the need to play the game the only way he knew -- hard and clean. The Isipathana teams on Frankie's watch for nearly five years had some of the most dreaded tacklers in the game of that era. Hafi Abdeen, Horace Perera, and Thajone Savanghan leap to mind. Nevertheless, these young men never let their coach down, notwithstanding the relentless bone-jarring tackles they meted out to the opposition. Before long, Isipathana was a dominant rugby playing school in Sri Lanka. In 2015, Frankie received a special honour for his services to Isipathana Rugby.



Hafi Abdeen, who now lives in Australia, paid the following tribute: "A short memoir on the gentleman and friend who I was privileged to get to know through the great game of Rugby. Growing up in the suburbs of Havelock Town and schooling at Isipathana, as a youngster, I used to watch Frankie turn up for the Havies as Hooker and

involved with many Champion sides. Although I studied in this great club, the Havelocks neighbourhood, I was an ardent CR&FC fan!! Following Frankie's stardom in the field of Rugby for both St Thomas's and Havelocks Sports Club, I started playing Rugby for that champion school, Pathana, in the mid-'60s, when Frankie took over the reins in 1968 as one of our legendary coaches. I vividly remember him working for Colombo Commercial Company as their Personnel Manager and driving this Yellow TR 2 convertible sports car. Frankie and I hit it off from day one, as he had a lot of faith in me as a rugby player and as a leader. Soon

I was handed over the mantle of physical fitness, and by the time he arrived for training after his busy schedule at work, the team was ready to go into action. Frankie always knew we were a bunch of disciplined guys, full of enthusiasm and rugby skills, which made his job easy. He used to make the team jog from our College grounds to the Havelocks and make us play a 15 minutes game against the Havelocks side, which possessed great players like Glen, Gama, and Gogi, to name a few. The practise sessions against the Havelocks were very fiery, as we had great talent within our ranks to combat the more fancied opponents. Frankie was a great coach who managed us and guided us to many splendid seasons. In 1970 when I skippered the Pathana side, I had the proud distinction of captaining both the Colombo and Combined school sides, which boasted an exodus of Pathanians representing both teams. Frankie will be remembered as a legendary coach of Isipathana due to his immense status in the rugby fraternity and the influence he brought into the game."

New Life Down Under

Frankie, Yvette, and young Dirk migrated to Australia in the seventies, armed with two suitcases and £100 (British Pounds) to start their new lives. Early days were very tough, managing without a car and doing two jobs to make ends meet. After sharing accommodation with relatives, they finally bought their home in Brandon Park, where they spent most of their lives. They accommodated most of the families who migrated in this home, and their generosity was overwhelming. It was also where Frankie and Yvette hosted many friends regularly for drinks, meals and catch up.

After over a decade at multinational Pacific Dunlop, Frankie ventured into his own business (Weatherware), which steadily grew to a successful enterprise. The Marmalade's were regular visitors to Melbourne. To watch the tuxedoed Frankie David and Nimal Maralande and their glamorous wives glide across the dance floor was to witness poetry in motion.

Rugby remained Frankie's passion, and he travelled across the globe to witness World Cup Rugby. Bledisloe Cup games in Sydney in the company of his closest mates, including Noel Brohier, Mohan Shayam and Dilip Kumar, were another regular fixture on his busy schedule.

While running a successful business, family, golf, overseas travel, and hectic social life, Frankie's allegiance to his old school never wavered. He was an active member of the Ex-Co of the Australian Branch of the OBA for over four decades. He got involved in the STCOBA activities and, in 1983, was elected Vice-President, a position he held until 1992 when he was elected as the OBA's 6th President. On a lighter note, Frankie frequently boasted, "*Machan, I must be the only bugger who was sacked from the Ex-Co by Brookie (Ex-President) for not attending meetings and later to be appointed as President*".

Since leaving the Ex-Co, Frankie has been a tremendous supporter of the OBA and one of the major sponsors of the Annual Thomian Dances. He was an inspiration to the younger Old Boys serving in the Ex-Co, who regarded him as the Godfather of the OBA. Frankie was the first member to be awarded the 'President's Award' for his immense contribution to the OBA back in 2001.



Reflections from Friends

Ralph D'Silva

I first crossed paths with Frankie about 1959/60 when he left College, joined the STC staff as a Physical Education teacher, and took our Phys ed. class on the big club grounds. It was customary in those days for credentialed ex schoolboys to be given temporary teaching gigs pending going out into the Mercantile World. So, we addressed Frankie as "Sir" then, in line with tradition.

Frankie joined the famous Colombo Commercial Company as a Junior Executive and would be seen riding his motorcycle on Galle Road all decked out in typical Executive attire, white shorts, shirt and stockings, as the socks were called those days. A group of College boys stood at Abdul Rahim's bus stop in Wellawatte to catch the red double-decker bus to Mt Lavinia each day. A bit of school girl watching or 'capping' took place at the bus stop in the morning. This group at various times comprised of Bumpy Jayasekera, Tony Mallett, Derek D'Silva, Ravi Perera and myself. We used to see Frankie ride past around 7.30am every morning looking every bit like the up-and-coming Executive.

A couple of years later, Frankie graduated from his motorbike to an open-top Sports car. I thought it was a Healey Sprite, but I was told by his good friend Noel Brohier that the vehicle was an MG TF and that he should know because he crashed it.....and on occasion, he always would have a pretty young lady in the front seat.

When I got older and left College, I used to think, "I want to be like Frankie." Fast forward many years, and we find ourselves in Melbourne, Australia. This, of course, was the start of STC OBA Melbourne, of which Frankie was one of the founders. Needless to say, Frankie was the quintessential Thomian Leader. He helped foster and grow the Old Boy movement in Melbourne and gave not only his time but significant amounts of his own money to help further the cause and bring Thomians together. As President, Frankie was the driving force behind the OBA and its many social events. And in those early days, together with the likes of David Varney, Bandulal Molligoda, Delwyn Lappen, we took the Annual Thomian Ball from suburban Town Halls with BYO grog in Eskys to Black Tie Dinner Dances at places like the Hyatt on Collins.

Apart from our Thomian OBA connections and interactions, I enjoyed being with Frankie on several Rugby trips both in Australia and overseas. The Hong Kong 7's and on several World Cup Tours. Frankie was a passionate Wallaby supporter, and his incredible knowledge of the game was insightful. We had many post-game chats, some at his home in Mulgrave (Melbourne Tests) and a great many at the Sydney home of our great friend Sydney Barrister the late 'Sandy' Sandarasagara. Sandy's house was the meeting place for all. Sandy's mates from the Sydney Bar, several ex-Aussie Rugby people and of course, the Who's who of Sri Lankan Rugby. Noel Brohier, Mohan Sahayam, Ivor Brohier, Tony Rankin, Geoff Weinman, Rodney Ingleton, Dilip Kumar, just to name a few, were always present. Needless to say, the wine, beer and scotch flowed freely well into the night, and Rugby story's got more prolonged, and so did the singing.....Frankie was at the forefront of all this, and who will forget his "Brother Sylvester song, a Havies favourite.

Frankie David was an outstanding human being, true Leader and highly respected Thomian. Vale Frankie David.....Esto Perpetua

Maurice Fairweather

Frankie and I were more often than not in the same class through College. One very fond recollection of his 'generosity' was really a very small gesture but clearly demonstrated his thoughtfulness. We sat at adjoining desks in the front of the class in Upper 6 B. I forget who the master was, but I suspect it was the 'formidable' (for want of a better word??) Bada Perera. It was the first period after lunch where I was a boarder (constantly hungry) to share Frankie's lunchtime *treat*. He would buy a 5 ct packet of *Seeni Kaddalay* (for those who remember that *delicacy*??) The 5 ct *gotthay* contained about 15/20 bits...and FD would surreptitiously divide it equally and give me half. Through the 40-min period...we would obviously, without the master who sat right in front seeing us...separate the outer sugar skin from the pod and very slowly eat it..followed by the pod. We were able to drag out this treat right for the whole 40 mins of class. He could easily have eaten it during the lunch interval but chose instead to share

Later on, after we left College, I started to play Rugger (as we called it)...for The Havelocks. In one match, I was tackled from behind by a tough guy of Chinese extraction called *Toopee* (No names, no pack

drill...caaaaaaaaaaaaause he is still with us!). The end result was a popped Clavicle bone. I had never heard of such an injury and, of course, couldn't continue to play. So there was I with a bone under the skin sticking out. I couldn't ride my bike back, so I was taken back to where I was boarded, spending a painful and uncomfortable night. The following day (Sunday), Frankie rides up on his bike...puts me on his pillion and takes me to see Dr Benny Chapman, a *Havies* stalwart. Benny diagnosed the problem and arranged for me to visit the General Hospital OPD (I think we called it)...The department head was another *Havies* member... so the treatment was fast-tracked. Frankie came home and took me to the hospital for treatment on Monday. I can't recollect what excuse he had given for cutting work at CCC to see to my needs. As he rode a bike to work along the Galle Road, he would stop for anyone he recognised and give him a lift.

Chris Lawton Snr.

He was that rare individual, a man of contradictions: quiet and humble in demeanour and yet, made his presence known and felt: diminutive in stature and yet, excelled himself in a sport which demanded brawn: firm and decisive and yet, patient and compassionate. This was the Frankie David I had the great pleasure and joy of being associated with for nearly fifty years.

A Thomian to the very core, I realised within a few days of the start of our friendship that I had the privilege of working with someone whose greatness lay in his humility. He was not a distinguished scholar or sportsman as some of his contemporaries were, but the essence which endeared him to his numerous colleagues was his patience to listen and be heard. He did have his minor faults, but they were harmless and cleared away with the tide of the following day in the main.



The STC. OBA in Melbourne is very fortunate that the Presidents and Executive Committees served in its management with diligence and loyalty from its inception. Frankie was no different, except that there was exceptional Teamwork throughout his time. He took them all in the final analysis, the rare bouquets, and the frequent brickbats! Rest in peace with your loved ones, my friend. ESTO PERPETUA

Bandulal Molligoda

I came to know Frankie in the late 1950s when he captained the STC Rugby team, and I was a member of the under 17 team. After leaving school, Frankie volunteered to coach 1960 under 17 Rugby team under head coach Mr Percy Perera.

I vividly remember my first interaction with Frankie. In July 1960, Tuesday before our big match against Trinity College on following Saturday at Longdon Place. The senior team was fine-tuning their rugby skills at CR & FC. Frankie turned up on his motorbike to take me for senior practice at CR & FC. Frankie briefed me that the regular centre (Nihal Algama) had sustained a shoulder injury and I will be taking his place in the senior team on our way to the grounds. The news came to me as a pleasant surprise, and it dawned on me that my outstanding performances in the U17 team were the catalyst for my inclusion in the senior squad. On our way to the grounds, Frankie continued to drill me on Trinity players, mainly my opposite number Tony Bultjens (RIP), one of the finest rugby players to don the Trinity guernsey. I was advised repeatedly to keep a firm eye on him and not to give any room to display his scintillating rugby skills. Frankie's brief but practical advice calmed me immensely and prepared me to remain steadfast before and during the match.

Come the big day on Saturday, the game unfolded according to our predetermined plans. With five minutes remaining in the match and score locked in at nil-all, unexpectedly, I sustained a collarbone injury. As a precaution, I swapped places with Maurice Fairweather on the right-wing. The swap played a crucial role in our win as Bultjens' punt ahead landed straight into Maurice's safe hands, who sprinted 75 yards to score a spectacular try under the post to register our first ever win against Trinity College. They eventually carried me off the field soon after Cecil Perera added the extra points, followed by the long whistle.

Unfortunately, I could not participate in the post-match celebrations as I was taken to the hospital for medical treatment. Following minor surgery, I was taken home, and the following Sunday, Frankie and our skipper Nihal

(Baila) Samarasinghe (RIP) paid a visit home to check on my injury. Frankie was by my side throughout this ordeal, epitomising the very essence of character, honesty, and sincerity of a true Thomian personality I had the privilege of knowing and associating with for the next 65 years. May he rest in peace

Final Years

Yvette's sudden demise in 2014 was a bitter blow. Frankie's own health was fragile at the time, but being a man with nerves of steel and of equally firm resolve, he soldiered on. Desmond Frank David was fiercely loyal to family and friends. On hearing a couple of years ago that a very dear cousin had been declared terminally ill, Frankie immediately took wing to Colombo to spend time with his cousin, not considering his own deteriorating health and the pain and discomfort of a long flight.

Frankie kept his faith and attended church regularly. A day before his demise, he had wanted to convey to a gravely ill friend that he was in his prayers. This wonderful gentleman, whose generosity knew no bounds and who left an indelible impression on the hundreds of lives he touched, breathed his last on Thursday, August 12 of 2021, aged 81.

On hearing of Frankie's passing in Melbourne, his STC and Havelock's teammate, legendary Thomian sporting icon Maurice Fairweather, sent out a communiqué from Perth. It read thus, "some of you may already know... but heard about an hour or so ago ... Frankie too has gone on to play the game they play in Heaven".

Funeral & Last wishes

Frankie's funeral was held on August 19 2021, at the Good Shepherd Parish Catholic Church, Wheelers Hill, Vic, and was live-streamed due to the Covid restrictions. At Frankie's request, the College Song and the 'School by the Sea' were included in the service.

A memorial service is being organised by the OBA this year to pay tribute to this great man and fulfil some of his last wishes that could not be honoured due to the Covid restrictions. These were serving three types of sandwiches (Hundred & Thousands, Vegemite and Pol Sambol) with beer and wine. So we will drink to that – **Cheers, Frankie!!**



"Those we hold closest to our hearts never truly leave us. They live on in the kindness they have shared and the love they brought into our lives – Esto Perpetua".

Family Album



Editor's Note: This article was compiled by the Editorial Team with contributions from Wimal Heenetigala, Ralph D'Silva, Maurice Fairweather, Chris Lawton Snr., Bandulal Molligoda, Hafi Abdeen, Jayampathy Silva and Rod Grigson. Sincere appreciation to Dirk (Frankie's son) for sharing the family photos.

CAN DIABETES BE REVERSED?

By Dr. Sanjiva Wijesinha



For centuries, Diabetes was considered an incurable disease, the result of the affected person's body not having enough of the vital hormone **Insulin** that is required to utilise the sugars and sugar-containing foods that we eat. Insulin is produced by an organ called the **Pancreas** – and when the pancreas for whatever reason stopped producing enough insulin, it was reasoned that the body could not process ingested food. Gradually the body started breaking down its own muscles to keep itself alive.

Until Canadian scientists Frederick Banting and Charles Best in 1921 discovered how to prepare insulin so that the drug could be injected into diabetic patients, the average life span of someone who developed Diabetes was only about four years.

All that changed with the discovery of artificial insulin. This injected medication and the anti-diabetic tablets discovered subsequently can now help diabetic patients to metabolise the food they eat for energy and growth.

But although all these medications have changed the outlook for diabetics – from a rapidly fatal wasting disease to one that, managed correctly, allows patients to live normal lifespans - Diabetes remained a permanent, progressive disease. Diabetics had to learn to live with a condition that could not be cured.

But all that is changing, thanks to new research. One such ground-breaking study (termed **DIRECT** - for **Diabetes Remission Clinical Trial**) being currently done in the UK commenced at the beginning of 2017. It will regularly monitor the 280 patients in the study over several years.

The findings from this study could completely change the way we treat Type II Diabetes.

We now know that for many patients, Diabetes can actually be reversed – or at least pushed into long term remission - with low calorie diets that induce sustained weight loss of about 15 kilograms.

Many of us – including doctors, nurses and patients – do not yet realise that type II diabetes can be reversed. Currently, our objective in treating Diabetes is to reduce blood sugar levels and minimise the damage caused to the heart, kidneys, eyes and other vital organs. Despite millions of diabetic patients taking tablets and/or injections to control their blood sugar levels, many still develop complications like heart attacks, kidney failure and vision loss. Life expectancy in diabetics remains about six years less than non-diabetics.

As the number of people developing diabetes increases, so too does the cost of managing it – not just for patients themselves but also for the governments that have to fund health care costs. Drug companies earn millions of dollars from marketing medicines for diabetics!

Recent research evidence has consistently demonstrated that weight loss of around 15 kg often produces total remission of type II diabetes - providing extended life expectancy plus a strong sense of personal achievement and empowerment.

Professor Roy Taylor of England's Newcastle University, who has spent almost four decades studying the condition, explains how in those with Type 2 diabetes:

- Excess calories leads to excess liver fat – causing the liver to respond poorly to insulin and so release too much glucose into the blood stream
- Excess fat is also deposited in the pancreas, causing its insulin producing cells to fail
- Losing fat from the pancreas through diet can re-start the normal production of insulin, reversing Type 2 diabetes
- This reversal of diabetes remains possible for at least 10 years after the onset of the condition

Many diabetics believe that once they were diagnosed, they would face an inevitable decline into further medication and further ill health because of their condition.

We now know that in many cases, achieving and maintaining weight loss can reverse diabetes and keep it in remission.



Sanjiva Wijesinha (STCML 1956-1967) is an associate professor at the Faculty of Medicine, Monash University, Melbourne.

More health articles may be found on his webpage at sanjivawijesinha.com

To All Old Thomians – We like to hear from you!!

We are reaching out to all Old Boys in Australia and Overseas - If you do have an interesting anecdote about your days at College or some interesting tidbits about the after-school life of a fellow Thomian (or even a teacher) or just remember the good old days as they used to be, please, send in your articles, photos, letters, poems, stories, etc. to the Editorial Team: **Vasikaran Ratnarajah:** vasidaisy15@gmail.com or **Upali Gooneratne:** fgooneratne@iiec.org.

Membership Register

To all OBA Australia Members - It is vital that you advise us of changes to your contact details in order to ensure that this publication reaches you. Also, in order to maintain the membership records up to date, please contact the Membership Secretary of any changes (telephone number, address, deaths etc.). **Membership Secretary, PO Box 2337, Mt. Waverley, Victoria 3149.** Email: fgooneratne@iiec.org



Lower 4th Form Student receives Silver Award in Commonwealth Essay Competition

We are happy to announce that Muhammed Zayan Zahran of the Lower 4th Form has received a "Silver Award", at the recently concluded "The Queen's - Commonwealth Essay Competition 2021" organised by the "Royal Commonwealth Society". His award-winning essay and certificate are published herein.

The year is 2050 and you've been asked to write about the coronavirus pandemic for a museum. What story would you tell?



A dramatic, unprecedented storm of epidemic wave, that canopied the globe with fear and economic dilemma; devastated communities to drown in poverty and misery. Human lives vanished tremendously into graves. A menacing tragedy that dominated the world and its leaders to bow to its sequence of petrifying consequences.

An eruption of rumors dissembled unity of nations attributing blame to one another, for the creation of this monster. Accuracy of evidence is invisible to judge any perpetrator. Due to a series of out-break since decades, researchers believed, the strains were ignited through natural processes. However, the severity of Covid-19 was extensive comparative to any other viruses that tamed the world.

It was an infectious disease which was air-borne and people experienced severe respiratory ailments. To prevent transmission, mankind had to maintain good hygiene factors such as frequent sanitizing, shielding the external pathways of the respiratory organs and moreover refrain from socializing or entertaining any form of a gathering. Respiratory and personal etiquettes were highly advocated and practiced.

Throughout this global crisis, at least two mutations were detected within a month which caused more concerns for the safety of the public. Some variants were highly transmissible and had potential increase in hospitalizations and deaths. Majority of these innocent victims were habituated in countries with exceptional healthcare systems. Yet, the menace accomplished its strategy of devouring lives. Due to a shortage of oxygen supply, patients with chronic respiratory requirements succumbed to death. The surging waves of cases pushed the healthcare systems around the world to the brink.

Giving birth to an effective vaccine was a task challenged impossible during the early stages of this epidemic. Yet, many organizations strived to the development, to ensure quick measures of public safety. After several

clinical trials for its effect, the vaccines were made available to the public to control the pandemic. It was a winning milestone achieved after a year of prolong crisis. The world was under lock-down to refrain transmission and due to this, employment and business performances were at stake. Economic crisis fell into inflation and the distribution of the vaccines were performed slowly due to the pressure of manufacturing the vaccines and supplying to all corners of the world.

Nevertheless, the pandemic receded to its end, after three years of a painful battle with the sacrifice of millions of lives. If the world had been together to resolve this issue; the virus could have been tamed at a very early stage or even prior to its introduction, that could have enabled many lives to be saved. Nostalgia of thirty years since then, the world is still engraved with the sorrow of this brutal epidemic. "Unity to be real must stand the severest strain without breaking." Mahatma Gandhi.



Ode to Coronavirus – *Pam Ayers*

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s –
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full

But to bury us before we're dead
Is like a red rag to a bull!
So here you find me stuck inside
For four weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me
I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no flaming flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So, let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this awful virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates!

Reminiscences of my Work at S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia (1963 -1980)

It was a Friday, the third week in March in 1963. I was walking back after having completed my Interview with Warden Davidson and the Departmental Heads. The Sub Warden, the late Mr. S. J. Anandanayagam, came behind me and asked me whether I could start work as a teacher on the following Monday. This left me speechless. Now I was both scared and excited.

On Monday morning I was in the staff room when the peon came and handed me my appointment letter and the timetable. Soon teachers trooped in and introduced themselves. The former Warden, the late Mr. Neville de Alwis, also joined the staff on the same date. There was one teacher, who had noticed that I was very nervous, and came and sat beside me and told me that he was also in the same plight just two years ago. He said, "Just get hold of the one who was making the noise, and just humiliate him and everything will fall into place."

The second Period, I walked into Form 5 Tamil medium, where I was supposed to teach science. There was pandemonium— boys were singing and banging on the desks. One boy had the audacity to tell me that they were preparing the Royal Thomian Combo. The Teacher's advice came in handy, and the class soon settled down. Suddenly there was pindrop silence and when I looked up, I noticed the Warden was passing by my classroom doing his rounds. I still do not know whether the warden was checking on me or the boys were trying to protect me.

I must say I was intimidated, not because they would run all over me but because I was now responsible for their learning. Until that moment I had not realized how big a job I had taken on. Two weeks went by and I was quietly settling down when I got a note from the Warden. He wanted me to take charge of Copleston/Claughton as House Master, to be Master in charge of basketball, and to help Mr. Wilson Muttiah as Assistant Scout Master. I had been really pushed into the deep end and I did not know how to swim. It was quite a challenge. The new horizon has widened, I had no option but to venture into it.

During the sixties and seventies, 'Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child' was very much in play. On Report Forms, caning was practiced very sparingly. The challenges these students faced in their personal and academic lives were a sharp contrast to my personal experiences. I was fortunate to work with some incredible teachers who were truly committed and enjoyed what they set out to do.

I taught General science for both English and Tamil medium in the Middle School, and Biology and Chemistry for the Tamil medium in the upper School. On completion of my Post Graduate Diploma in the Teaching of English Language, I was asked to teach Upper 6 English. The most challenging aspects of my job involved students - their passion and indifference, their ego, their very best and very worst. I did not spend much time on the intelligent ones but paid special attention to those unheard. I wanted to give these students a wider voice and a platform. One of the most memorable events was at one of the Year End parties (I think it was the Middle 6 Class), where a student gave me an envelope. Inside it was a poem. It read: The Most Wanted Man - To SIR with Love. I really wanted to have a very significant and lifelong impact on all my students. The impact is not only on my teaching ability but fostering of student's self-esteem. Reinforcing self-esteem in the classroom will increase their motivation to learn better. I felt that I had met the challenge.

I took charge of Copleston/Claughton in May 1963 from Mr. Senaratne, who had decided to retire. I was fortunate to have had as my Head Prefect the Late Mr. Premalal Gunasekera, a

wonderful individual who put my mind at ease when he told me that he would take care of the discipline. In the Hostel, of the 17 years I spent at College, the first 6 years were the best years of my life. My favourite memory was when my boarders started to see me more as a person than as a Teacher. It was also a lesson in the power of respecting students and expecting them to rise to challenges.

Watching these boys moving from Winchester and taking a lot of little steps towards maturity is one of the intangibles of being a Boarder. Seeing them play in little groups, watching them trooping into Chapel after Dinner gave me so much joy and happiness. Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims - they were all on their knees praying. I can proudly say that at STC, religion was never used as a crutch to deny any students their promotion. These students learned to get along with others, learned to be responsible for their actions. This type of activity lays a solid foundation for their adult life. The Inter-House Competitions, The Hall Days, Taking the Boarders for the Royal Thomian Cricket matches were all events well etched in my memory.

As Assistant Scout Master, I was at the bottom of the learning curve, but I was fortunate to have some solid Queen Scouts. They did most of the training of the younger scouts and cubs. Every year I took the Scouts to Pedro for the Scout Camp. Father Baldwin Daniel usually accompanied us. It was so nice to see these boys enjoying themselves. Campfires were such fun, and you could see these boys just having a great time.

As Master in charge of basketball, I was able to get some outside Coaches. We took part in Inter-School Tournaments and travelled to Jaffna and Batticaloa. For two years I served as the Secretary of the Ceylon Schools Basketball Association and took a Combined Schools Team to India.

When I sit back and reflect on a journey I started 60 years ago, I must say that I was fortunate to work with people who had the vision and the humility to run that "School by the Sea". There were the Gauders, the Burders, the Morrels, the Administrative Staff, and the Minor Employees who by their tireless contributions made the College stronger. I must also say that during my time it was the Boarders who dominated every sphere of school activity.

Now, in my retirement, those students have become my friends, and they are my friends for life. Seeing everyone's emails floating around...It certainly builds a network of friends who know you and care about you. I am always grateful for the memories we have given each other, and that has certainly made me richer.

If you were to ask me whether I would do it again, well—Your guess is as good as mine.
Esto Perpetua



G. Thambithurai (was in the teaching staff from 1963-1980 and now resides in Canada)

Memories of the “Battle of the Blues” in Australia

By Claud Reid

Claud reflects on the beginnings of this annual event and few memorable moments in subsequent encounters

The year – 1972. The venue – Albert Park

Morley Pereira proudly holds aloft the Thomian flag, created for the occasion by his Sylvia, and marches to the centre of the ground. Accompanying him is Ernie de Bruin equally proudly carrying the “Blue, Gold and Blue”. The toss of the coin in the first Royal- Thomian cricket match is about to take place.

Over the years, the match moved to the matting wicket at Greythorn Park, then the turf wickets at Oakleigh, Carnegie, Bayswater and Mulgrave.

In the early days the two sides were equally matched. However, with the early “retirement” of Royal players Fitzroy Crozier and Michael Wille the pendulum swung in favour of STC. Following a string of successes by STC, Royal decided to enhance their chances by including Dav Whatmore, then a Sheffield Shield player for Victoria, in their side. The claim was that Dav, who migrated to Australia with his parents I believe, at a pre-school age was nevertheless entitled to play for Royal as he had been enrolled at Thurstan College.



Contests were always very competitive but friendly although there was some blood spilt on one occasion. A short ball from Thomian Colin Kellart found the nose of Royal batsman Rick Van Cuylenberg. Running repairs were carried out by Buddy Reid. Cricket history was created in a match at Greythorn Park. A former cricketer, standing in as an umpire, was so wrapped up in

the game that he appealed for an LBW on behalf of the Thomian fielders and gave the batsman out.

At Carnegie, Royal batsman Chuck La Brooy hit a six and smashed the windscreen of his own car.

The closest finish was in a match where STC needed three runs to win off the last ball. A wicket had fallen in the fifth ball and Allan Smith strode to the wicket. The Royal bowler attempting to bowl a yorker, bowled Allan a full toss waist high on the leg stump. Allan gracefully smashed it to the square leg boundary.

Two notable overseas visitors to the match were Lassie Abeywardene, who had the greatest influence in the development of Thomian cricketers during the mid-20th century and Vernon Prins, Thomian and Sri Lankan captain and arguably the best ever all-rounder in Sri Lankan International cricket.

For many years matches took on a greater stature, with VCA umpires organized by Barney Reid.

Author: Claud Reid played consecutively for 44 years in the Melbourne Royal-Thomian Seniors games and in a number of open games. Claud is a recipient of the President’s Award (2007) for his contribution towards STC OBA cricket.

Editor’s Note: Claud is the eldest of the Reid Brothers, others being Ronnie, Buddy, Barney and late Johann (Tiny), who all played cricket for STC with distinction.



L to R Claud, Ronnie, Buddy, Barney and Tiny



Royal & Thomian Teams at Lord’s Reserve, Carnegie in 1976

"a fascinating gripping read... fast paced...hard to put down..."



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Marooned in the Sinai

PART III

After about 20 minutes of driving through the minefields, we came to an Egyptian checkpoint, which was just a ramshackle wooden hut by the side of the road. A broken wooden pole-sitting on two barrels across the sandy road impeded any further progress. A single bulb hanging from a wooden pole glowed dimly illuminating an Egyptian soldier manning the barrier. The young soldier walked over to where we were stopped. He was unshaven, his uniform crumpled and dirty like he had been sleeping in it. He carried an AK-47 automatic rifle on his shoulder. I noticed that the barrel had been painted in blood red. *Not standard issue*, I thought to myself.

The soldier put out his hand to David, who wound down the car window. The rumble of a generator somewhere out of sight was the only sound that could be heard.

'Pass?' He grunted, peering into the vehicle. He looked irritated and tired; the odour of his unwashed body permeated the jeep, making me gag involuntarily.

David handed our two UN IDs to the soldier. The soldier looked at them briefly and gave them back. 'Pass?' he grunted again, in heavily accented English, wagging his hand.

'Mafeesh,' David said in Arabic, shaking his head. In the short time I had been in Egypt, I had learnt a few words of Arabic, but 'mafeesh' was beyond my comprehension.

The soldier scowled at David, shifted his eyes to me and then straightened his back. He turned towards the hut and shouted something loudly in Arabic. A short, curt answer in the same language was shouted back at him from inside the hut.

The soldier motioned to David to park the vehicle by the side of the road and returned to his post behind the barrier, tiredly leaning against the wooden shack.

'What did you tell him?' I asked David nervously. 'He's not going to let us through.'

David looked at me. 'I told him that I have nothing more to give him.' David turned off the jeep engine. 'Don't worry, I have a plan. We'll get through.'

Picking up the radio handset, David called in our current situation to the duty officer in Ismailia. The duty room was staffed 24 hours a day, and everyone in the field was tracked and monitored at all times of the day and night. After he finished his report, David started rummaging in the seat behind him.

Not confident of David's ability to get us past the border post, I was fully expecting to wait the night out in the jeep. With my fear of overstaying my travel permit somewhat allayed by crossing the border out of Israel, I tried to make myself comfortable by pushing the back of the seat into a reclining position so I could get some sleep.

David turned on the inside light of the vehicle and pulled out a magazine from the bag he dragged out from behind his seat. It was an old, Playboy magazine. He leafed through the tattered magazine, pulling out the centrefold picture, turning it around and looking at it from different angles.

Suddenly, the vehicle shifted as if something was pushing against it. I felt the presence of faces pressing against the windows. Other soldiers at the checkpoint had appeared from nowhere. They had all left their posts and were crowding around the jeep looking in excitedly. David was having a great time, turning the magazine this way and that so that the soldiers would only get tantalising glimpses of the centrefold model.

Soon there was a knock on the window and a Sergeant, identified by the strips on his uniform and clearly, the person in charge of the checkpoint, gestured to David, motioning him to open the window. David shook his head. The Sergeant kept knocking on the glass insistently, so David wound down the car window halfway.

'Whad'ya want?' he asked the Sergeant rudely, closing the magazine as he spoke.

'Want book us,' the Sergeant replied in broken English, pointing at the magazine.

David shook his head, putting the magazine on the floorboard beside him. 'No, I cannot give you the magazine. It's mine.'

'Yes, yes! Please give magazine. We want,' the Sergeant insisted.

David shook his head, emphatically. 'You are not my friend, so I cannot give you the magazine.' David looked across at me and smiled. I sat up straighter in my seat, this was beginning to look fascinating.

The Sergeant was getting agitated. The soldiers were all talking to him at the same time, and he shouted at them until they quietened. He looked impatiently at David. 'Yes! We are your friend. Give magazine.'

David responded calmly. 'No,' he said, shrugging his shoulders, 'you won't let me go home, so you are not my friend.'

The Sergeant shook his head. 'Cannot go home without pass. But I am still your friend. You can stay here until morning. No problem!'

David reached into the bag and pulled out two more Playboy magazines. Loud bursts of Arabic directed at the Sergeant from the other soldiers looking in made him hesitate. He shouted angrily back at them, and a loud argument broke out.

After a lot of shouting and hand waving, the Sergeant looked back at David. 'Okay,' he said resignedly. 'If you give magazine, you can go home.'



David winked at me and let the Sergeant have the magazines through the half-opened window. The Sergeant grabbed the three magazines and walked to the hut surrounded by the soldiers who were trying to seize the magazines from him. Before he went into the building, he shouted at one the soldiers, pointing to the barrier. The soldier ran to the wooden barrier, knocking it over before rushing back to the shack.

Using the radio, David reported to UNEF HQ in Ismailia that we were crossing into Egyptian territory, which was Standard Operating Procedure and was expecting to cross the canal around midnight. He was laughing as we drove over the broken wooden pole. 'We always keep a few girly magazines in the car for the soldiers,' he said. 'You can't get them in Egypt, and they are worth their weight in gold.'

I could not believe what I had just witnessed. We had just crossed the frontlines of a country that was still in an official state of war with its neighbour, using a Playboy magazine to bribe our way through! And without any record of us ever being there. To be perfectly honest, I was petrified that the soldiers would just shoot us and take the magazines. They could quickly have buried us and the jeep in one of the sand dunes, and no one would ever have known where we were.

As we drove further and further away from the border post, I settled myself comfortably into the seat, knowing that we were almost home. David was in good spirits, loudly singing a song in Gaelic as we drove down the road.

I wouldn't have felt so relaxed if I had known that the adventure was not yet over.

We continued down the sandy desert road towards the Suez Canal trying to avoid deep, unfilled shell holes from when the Israelis counterattacked and pushed the Egyptians back during the war.

It was close to midnight when we saw the lights of the canal ahead of us. Large cargo ships brightly lit up for the night were sailing from the right to the left of us. We could not see over the dunes, so it looked like the ships, each framed by thousands of bright stars, were sailing across the desert sands. It was quite a spectacular sight.

When we got closer to the canal, the road dipped into a lower section of the desert. As we drove down the road, we could see that it was completely filled with water. The Egyptians were widening the canal so that ships could pass in both directions at the same time. The water came from three dredging barges that were blasting the side of the narrow waterway with water cannons to widen the waterway. The watery sludge was sucked up and flung hundreds of feet into the air by gigantic hoses pointed into the desert.

'What should we do?' I asked David who stopped the jeep just short of the water.

‘We have to keep going,’ he shrugged. ‘We don’t have a choice. The pontoon bridge will go up in the next half-an-hour or so and we’ll only have an hour to get across the canal before they dismantle it.’ He looked across at me. ‘If we don’t try, we won’t get to Ismailia by morning.’

I nodded my acquiescence and David drove into the water slowly, following the road which we could see emerging from the oily water about 300 metres away. The water was dark and stank of diesel. David sped up as we got close to the other side when suddenly, we drove into a large shell hole concealed by the water. Water splashed up, and the engine coughed and stalled. We were right in the middle of the shell hole; water washing over the floorboards of the jeep was rising rapidly. David swore in his inimitably Scottish way and tried starting the vehicle, but it would not start. The engine kept misfiring and would not catch.

The floodwater was still rising, so we got out of the vehicle into the flooded road, the water coming up to our thighs. With great difficulty, we dragged the jeep out of the shell hole and pushed it slowly onto the road, out of the water.

We were on dry land but just barely out of the flooded portion of the road. We did not have the energy to push the jeep up the incline to the top of the small dune, which I could see was entirely surrounded by water.

We’re marooned on a tiny island in the middle of the Sinai desert! The absurdity of our predicament did not escape me. I wouldn’t have believed it possible even in my wildest dreams.

The pounding of the dredges as they kept pouring the watery sludge into the desert was making it difficult to think straight. I tapped David on his shoulder and pointed to the water levels on the road, which were rising gradually.

‘We better get out of here quickly,’ I said. David opened the bonnet of the jeep and had a look inside, but without proper light, we couldn’t see much. He removed the distributor cap, cleaning it mostly by touch with a dirty rag before reconnecting it.

David tried to start the engine again, but it kept misfiring, water spitting out of the exhaust pipe explosively. He didn’t give up, trying to get the starter motor to turn over but as the engine dried out the sound of the misfires got louder and louder, sounding like gunshots over the pounding of the dredges.

Oh shit, this is not good, I thought to myself. Once the machine gun started firing, I knew we were in trouble. David stopped trying to start the vehicle, and we huddled in the jeep.

I hope they won’t shell the area. I must have said it aloud as David looked across at me. ‘No, they won’t,’ he said. ‘No heavy weapons are allowed into the buffer zone – it’s demilitarised.’ He had served with the British army before joining the UN and didn’t seem to be too concerned about what was happening.

My heart was thudding so loudly that it replaced the sound of the dredges that had suddenly stopped. Various thoughts ran through my mind. We had been instructed to always remain in the vehicle if we got into trouble or if there was a problem. The jeep was painted in white with large UN signs plastered on the rooftop, bonnet, and sides and no one could mistake it for anything else.

The machine-gun fire was not slackening, and flares shot up into the sky every few minutes. Strangely, I was not panicking. I was scared and worried about the situation we were in but seeing how calm David was, I was somehow able to hold it together.

David looked across at me and shook his head in disgust. 'Bloody amateurs,' he muttered irritably. He reached across the dashboard and picked up the jeep radio handset.

'UNEF 97 to UNEF Ismailia ... UNEF 97 to UNEF Ismailia, Come in, please. Urgent assistance required. Over.'

After what seemed like an awfully long minute, 'UNEF Ismailia to UNEF 97, Receiving Loud n Clear. State your situation. Over.'

It was the UNEF HQ duty room in Ismailia. David gave me the thumbs up and advised them that we had got stuck in the water being pumped out of the canal and that the Egyptians, mistaking the engine misfires as gunshots, were panicking, and shooting at us. The Duty Officer told us that he would contact the Egyptian UN liaison officer right away and advise him of the situation. He ordered us to stop what we were doing and wait to hear back from him.

After what seemed like a long time, which I realised later was only about 30 minutes, the Egyptian soldiers settled down. They stopped firing their machine guns, not hearing 'gunshots' anymore but kept shooting flares up every few minutes to make sure that no one was sneaking upon them. We were in constant touch with the Duty Officer at UNEF HQ during this period, and once everything quietened, he advised us to remain in the vehicle. There was nothing they could do to help us given the current disposition of the Egyptian soldiers. He also informed us that he would arrange for a mechanic to be helicoptered to us at daybreak.

We remained in the jeep for the rest of the night, not able to sleep. Our clothes and shoes were soaked with water, and we reeked of diesel oil and other unknown fluids which had been pumped out of the canal. I was worried that an Egyptian patrol would sneak up on us and shoot us while we slept.

Sunrise was around 5:00 am, and not long after, the distinct thumping sound of an Australian-operated UN helicopter heralded the arrival of a mechanic to get our vehicle started. The jeep engine had dried out overnight and given it was daylight, it didn't take him long to get it started.

The next scheduled canal crossing was at midday which was 6-hours away, so we negotiated with the mechanic to drive the vehicle back to Ismailia while we flew back to base by helicopter.

I'd been in the country for only six weeks and had already experienced enough to last me a lifetime. I remember wondering at the time, *what the next few months would bring?*



Rod Grigson is a published author who conducts creative writing classes and helps writers self-publish their stories. For details, see www.rodericgrigson.com

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New Members of the OBA: October 2021 – January 2022

Name	Branch	Period
BULATHSINHALA, Binara	Mount Lavinia	2004 - 2017
FERNANDO, Thilina	Mount Lavinia	2011 - 2017
BANDARATILLEKE, Praveen	Mount Lavinia	2005 – 2019
DEDIGAMA, Gehan	Mount Lavinia	1995 - 1998



 <p>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)</p> <p>Friday 11th February 2022, 6.30pm</p> <p>Waverley Youth Centre, Miller Crescent, Mount Waverley, 3149</p>	 <p>ROYAL – THOMIAN CRICKET MATCHES</p> <p>Saturday – 26th March 2022 10.30 am</p> <p>Dandenong Showgrounds Milnes Cct, Dandenong, 3175</p>	 <p>FRANKIE DAVID – MEMORIAL SERVICE</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>
 <p>ROYAL THOMIAN STAG NIGHT</p> <p>MARCH 2022 To be confirmed</p>	 <p>ROYAL THOMIAN LIVE BROADCAST</p> <p>MAY 2022 To be confirmed</p>	 <p>THOMIAN BALL</p> <p>Saturday 4th June 2022</p> <p>Sofitel Melbourne on Collins 25, Collins Street, Melbourne</p>
 <p>50TH ANNIVERSARY MEMBERS LUNCHEON</p> <p>July 2022 To be confirmed</p>	 <p>TRANSFIGURATION SERVICE</p> <p>August 2022 To be confirmed</p>	 <p>FAMILY NIGHT & ‘WALK-A-MILE’ FUNDRAISER</p> <p>October 2022 To be confirmed</p>
 <p>MELBOURNE CUP SWEEP</p> <p>Tuesday 1st November 2022</p>	 <p>CAROL SERVICE</p> <p>December 2022 To be confirmed</p>	 <p>CHRISTMAS PARTY</p> <p>December 2022 To be confirmed</p>

For more information on any of the above Events, please contact:

- Peneeth Goonawardena : 0404 213 166
- Saman Liyanage : 0407 358 415
- Asfan Thajudeen : 0416 877 788
- Rayendra Karunaratne : 0416 350 244
- Chris Varney : 0407 630 351



They remain in our memories forever



Sanjeeva Corea - Class of 91. Sanjeeva attended S. Thomas' Prep before joining STC Mt. Lavinia, and represented the College in cricket at both the Under 15 and Under 17 levels. After his secondary education, Sanjeeva obtained BSc from the Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania. Sanjeeva was involved in the travel trade for a number of years, most recently as a Director of Go Travel Lanka (PVT) Ltd. He was the son of the former Secretary of the OBA, Sangabo Corea.



Devinda Senanayake: Devinda was the eldest son of Robert Senanayake and the brother of two fellow Thomians, Ranjit and Rukman. He inherited his grandfather's (D.S. Senanayake) love of wildlife and animals; and became an expert rider and a breeder of racehorses. Devinda succeeded his father Robert as Chairman of Freudenberg Ltd., the pioneering agents for Toyota Motor Company in Ceylon (Sri Lanka).



Mohan Vannitamby – Class of 55. Mohan was a Thomian (STCML) for his entire college life. After leaving school, he joined Bonars, the Marine Engineering firm starting off as an apprentice and climbing the internal ladder with skill and experience. He was actively involved in the Car Restoration business and in the Sri Lanka Motor Racing Circuit. He passed on his legacy first to his son Ravin and then grandson Rakhil who both excelled in the Racing environment.



Upekha Fernando: A famous cricketer who played in the College first XI team from 1995-1998 as an opening batsman and captained the team in 1998. He also captained the Sri Lankan Under 19 team against India in 1998-1999. At present Upekha is the highest run getter at the Royal Thomian Match with an aggregate of 394 runs (av 56.28). He was a former Sri Lankan first-class cricketer who played for the Sinhalese Sports Club (SSC) from 1997-98 to 2002-03. Upekha sadly passed away in October 2021 at a young age of 41.

Esto Perpetua

Ceylon Volunteers in World Wars I and II - Request for Pre- Purchase and Donations



Dear Fr. Marc, STC Old Boys and others,

Herewith enclosed is a flyer on a book to be published on the Sri Lankan volunteers in the World Wars I and II, compiled by a retired Tri- Service group. We hope to get it published at the Navy Printing Department as soon as we can get sufficient funds (at least Rs. 100,000/-) through pre purchase orders and donations.

The purpose of the book is to generate a sense of patriotism and pride in the present generation for the volunteer war heroes of generations before who seem to have been forgotten today. Their names are missing in the Cenotaph at Vihara Maha Devi Park and it is our intention to erect an additional plaque beside the present one with the names of those who volunteered from Sri Lanka in WW I & II.

As you can see from the flier, Thomian cadets and staff played a significant role in this war

effort. From the time Lieutenant Horsefall sacrificed his life on the battlefield in WW I and was posthumously decorated for heroism, there is a Thomian tradition of remembering war heroes annually.

May I request that the attached flier be widely distributed to your contacts and former Thomian cadets in this month of remembrance of the heroes of the World Wars. We would also be grateful for your contribution towards the printing costs. This appeal is also being made to the Principals of Royal College, Trinity College and Kingswood College for an initial contribution as these were the schools that first sent volunteers to the war front.

Please contact Mr. Quintus Andradi (retired Navy) whose address is given above and below to make your contributions. Bank details are as follows:

Name: A. F. Q. Andradi
 Bank Account: HNB Maharagama, 009020122822
 Swift Code: HBLILK LX (For foreign)
 Address of acct. holder: 248/3 Arawwala Rd., Pannipitiya

Your assistance is earnestly solicited and appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Narme Wickremesinghe
 Wg. Cdr (Retired SLAF)

ABSTRACT

This abstract is a compilation of records in honour of all Ceylonese who served in the military during the two world wars, based on newspaper articles, historical records and material shared by relatives, military history enthusiasts, and web-based information.

Sri Lanka or Ceylon, as we were known then, played a comparatively important role in the First World War although we were a crown colony of the British Empire. In 1917 the Times of Ceylon estimated that 1,250 volunteers

had enlisted for overseas service. At least 351 Ceylon volunteers signed up while in England and another 438 enlisted on their own account. In addition, the 'Times Fund' facilitated the expenses for 156 Ceylon volunteers to enlist overseas.

From the various available nominal rolls and rolls of honour it appears there were minor concentrations of Ceylon volunteers in the Royal Army Medical Corps (apart from Ceylon Sanitary Company), Kings Royal Rifle Corps

(KRRC), Middlesex Regiment, Coldstream Guards, Royal Fusiliers, Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA) and the Royal Engineers, Inland Water Transport unit.

In terms of the 1,250 Ceylon Volunteers estimated, there were 105 fatalities, 84 were Killed in Action and 21 died of wounds. Of the 114 Wounded in Action, 18 were categorised as either missing or Prisoners of War. It goes on to say that of the 330 volunteers from the four English medium schools (Royal, St Thomas, Kingswood and Trinity) approximately 28% were casualties. Some of the volunteers were either students, past students or staff. The nominal rolls and the state of casualties are recorded as follows.

Royal - 88 enlisted (15 British European / 73 Ceylonese) - 5 KIA, 13 WIA and 3 POWs.

S. Thomas' - 86 enlisted (28 British European / 58 Ceylonese) - 14 KIA.

Kingswood - 84 enlisted (25 British European / 59 Ceylonese) - 13 KIA and 15 WIA.

Trinity - 72 enlisted (27 British European / 45 Ceylonese) - 13 KIA, 18 WIA and 2 POWs.

Total - 330 enlisted - 45 KIA, 46 WIA and 5 POWs.

KIA=Killed in Action, WIA=Wounded in Action, POW=Prisoner of War

These schoolboy enlistments were possible due to the dedication, patriotism and motivation of the British principals and cadet masters of the four schools. Let their example be emulated by the masters and schoolboy cadets of the present schools in Sri Lanka.

The outstanding events of the Second World War in Ceylon were the two Japanese air raids on Trincomalee and Colombo in 1942 which was successfully repelled with the downing of over 70 aircraft by the RAF and the Anti-aircraft batteries, most of whom were Ceylonese volunteers. The 3 experiences of being under enemy fire and its successful defence provided a rare opportunity for the Ceylon Volunteers to show their capabilities in combat very competently.

The association with many British Army and other allied units enabled the CDF troops to gain much needed experience in Jungle warfare training, the performance of numerous duties including guard duties during war and learning valuable lessons from a professional Army that has stood in good stead for the future. However, at the end of the Second World War the CDF was demobilized in 1946 although a cross section of troops attended the Victory parade in London in 1946.

Then in 1947 when the trade union action caused civil disorder certain CDF personnel were mobilized and used to bring back order to the country.

The brief history of the CLIV [Ceylon Light Infantry Volunteers] forms the history of the Infantry arm in Ceylon and the birth of many units of the Ceylon Volunteer Force which later became the Ceylon Defence Force and the Ceylon / Sri Lanka Army later. The above facts also indicate the lack of trust of the Sinhalese in the early part of British colonial rule which impacted very adversely on the local population, the formation of the Army with indigenous personnel and the administration of the country.

This situation changed due to the events that took place in the rest of the world and the need to provide the political, economic and social changes to enable the local population to emancipate themselves from abject poverty, whilst being recognized and provided basic needs thus far neglected. Hence the basic infrastructure for the local population was developed through the plantation economy, where the construction of roads, railways, the irrigation system and with the commencement of primary education in the second half of the 19th century.

Since the administration suffered as a result of the rebellions, the British colonial power was forced to change its strategy of depending only on the European powers and their local elites in Colombo by incorporating the local leaders in the administration of the country over time. They began to understand the Ceylonese way of life and existence which was gradually allowed to be revived although always vary of their own security.

The lessons we learn are the importance of Security of a country. The priority of serving your motherland and doing all you can without asking what it can do for you instead. The collection of material was compiled by Group Captain Kumar Kirinde [retd] SLAF with the support of the team to record it for posterity, honouring the Fallen and remembering those who volunteered to serve the motherland during the World Wars in its hour of need. Let it inspire the youth of the country for FREEDOM HAS A PRICE. –

LEST WE FORGET -

"Please always remember those of whom that helped to save the country from external and internal threat, by extending to them your gratitude in a way that is worthy of their sacrifice. They hardly talk about it, at least not around other people. But if you find yourself near the cenotaph at Vihara Mahadevi Park or pass by any memorial in our motherland, Sri Lanka, kindly offer a silent prayer of thanks to our Veterans. I can tell you from first hand observation that they appreciate hearing that they are remembered for their sacrifice."

Brig Hiran Halangode, SLA (GW), Retd –

PHOTO GALLERY

Carol Service – 18th December 2021



PHOTO GALLERY

Snippets of the OBA Executive Committee - 2021





S Thomas College Mt Lavinia Sri Lanka OBA Australian Branch Inc.

ABN 18 114 799 661
 PO Box 2337, Mount Waverley, Victoria 3149
www.stcobaust.org.au

1 Application for Membership

I desire to become a member of S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia, Sri Lanka O.B.A. Australian Branch Inc. On admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the rules of the Association

Surname			
Given Names			
Date of Birth			
Address			
	State		Postcode
Telephone	Home/Work		Mobile
Email			
College Branch Attended		From	To
Proposer (Name)		Phone or Email	
Secunder (Name)		Phone or Email	

Signature of Applicant: Date:/...../.....

2 Membership Renewal / Change of Address

Membership Renewal		Change of Address		(tick)
Name				
Address				
	State		Postcode	
Telephone	Home/Work		Mobile	
Email				

3 Payment Details

Membership Fees	<i>Members: \$25.00; Full-Time Students & Pensioners Concession: \$10.00</i>			
Cash/cheque/MO	\$..... enclosed (in favour of S Thomas College OBA)			
Bank Transfer	I have credited STCOBA's account online at CBA, Mount Waverley BSB 063-151, Account No. 1002-9468 , in the sum of \$..... having clearly recorded my name as remitter for identification purposes.			
Credit Card	Visa		Mastercard	(tick)
	Name on Card			
	Card Number		Exp/..... CVV
	Cardholder's Signature:			

New Members: Please complete Sections 1 and 3; Existing Members: Please complete Sections 2 and 3

Postal Address and Enquiries	Membership Secretary PO Box 2337, Mount Waverley Vic 3149 Enquiries: Upali (Pancho) Gooneratne Email: fgooneratne@iiec.org Tel: 0449024294	Committee Use Only	
		Application Approved	
		Payment Recorded	
		Member Notified	

Subscriptions for 2022 were due on 1st January. If you have not already joined or renewed your membership, please use the above form.

ALLISON MONKHOUSE FUNERAL DIRECTORS

**FOR PERSONAL ATTENTION TO FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS IN
KEEPING WITH SRI LANKAN AND INDIAN TRADITIONS**

Please Call: Harvey Schuiling

1 300 024 664

or

(03) 97644387 / 0418946468

