



THE BLUE BLACK AND BLUE FOREVER



Oh, What a Night!!

Yes, what a night it was – new 5-star venue in the heart of Melbourne City, sell-out crowd of 430 plus, entertained by two popular dance bands in Victoria, exotic decorations, sumptuous three-course meal, attractive entrance gifts and prizes; and, of course, a range of true “Thomian Spirits”!! All the ingredients that were required to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the OBA in Australia. The Thomian Ball held on 4th June 2022 at Sofitel in Melbourne lived up to all expectations, with around 100 Old Thomians, from Victoria and interstate, gracing the occasion.



After being forced to cancel this annual event for the last two years, due to Covid restrictions, lady luck came our way with the easing of social gatherings enabling the planning process to commence in November last year. Amidst a backlog of Sri Lankan Dances, the Committee decided to be the “first off the ranks” to have the dance earlier in order to avoid competing functions in the latter part of the year.

After many years at the Pullman Albert Park, a change in venue was on the cards especially considering the 50th Anniversary. The Sofitel Melbourne with their grand ballroom and other facilities met all the criteria for hosting the event. After much deliberation, *Next Generation* and *Redemption*, were engaged to provide the music. Both bands have played in previous Thomian dances and offered the right blend of music on the night.

The demand for tickets was unprecedented. There has never been a sell-out crowd in recent history; and the demand this year exceeded all expectations. An “Early Bird Special” ending at the end of March 2022 resulted in advance sales of over 75% of the ticket allocation, with the rest sold within a few weeks later. Last minute cancellations enabled those in the waiting list to be accommodated, ensuring no one was disappointed.

The guests were treated to a sumptuous three-course meal, selected by our team of “food tasters” who sampled a variety of dishes beforehand and recommended the menu for the night. The selection of complimentary drinks was extensive ensuring that everyone’s preferences were included. The décor looked stunning with the blue/black theme featuring everywhere. The traditional Dance Souvenir included a feature article titled “50 Glorious Years” capturing the highlights of the OBA’s contribution to the branch schools, members and the community.

All guests received entrance gifts comprising of customised key-tags (commemorating the 50th Anniversary), silk scarves, an array of nick-nacks from various sponsors and the Dance Souvenir placed in gift bags. There were several auctions and a raffle conducted to raise funds for our branch schools. A special auction was also conducted to support Sri Lanka’s current economic situation and the proceeds were channelled to a charity in Australia providing medicines to the Colombo General Hospital.

Corporate sponsorships played an important part in the success of the dance. Our appreciation to Tomorrow Financial Solutions (TFS) and Number 8 Property Group, Azured Consulting and Solar SG Pty Ltd., for their generosity. Support once again from Sri Lankan Airlines in awarding air tickets for the Raffle and the contribution of the numerous advertisers in the Dance Souvenir is greatly appreciated.

A part of the proceeds of the dance was sent to the four branch schools (Mount Lavinia, Colpetty, Gurutalawa and Bandarawala) to support on-going projects; and a donation was also made to an Australian charity (Melbourne Children’s Hospital).

Link for Dance Photos:

<https://bluetulipscreative.smugmug.com/Events/2022-THOMIAN-BALL/n-ZqVnks/i-7m2vcgx/A>



**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 hope that each and every one of you are keeping safe and well. The last 3 months have been extremely busy for the EXCO. We concluded a very successful Thomian Ball at the Sofitel Hotel. The financial performance of the ball allowed the EXCO to make some donations to all the branches in Sri Lanka as well as to the Monash Children's Hospital. We thank you for your support of the event.

In addition to this we also held our annual Transfiguration service. Although the member attendance was down from previous years due to rising numbers of COVID during the winter months the event went off well.

The family of Frankie David organised a well-deserved memorial service which the EXCO assisted on the day. This was well patronised by a lot of his friends and family.

The golden jubilee celebration of the OBA in Melbourne was held at the Springvale RSL. Once again this was well patronised and enjoyed by all that attended. The highlight was hearing some of the stories of some of the pioneers of the OBA here that setup the association and what it is today.

Sadly, we had to postpone the 90's night that was planned for later this month. Once again COVID made selling tickets for the event difficult. We are planning on having this event later this year.

There are 2 other events which we have some of our younger members that are participating, the first event is the indoor cricket tournament on the 25th of September at the Springvale Indoor Centre and then the touch rugby tournament on the 1st of October at the Box Hill Rugby grounds. I encourage all our members to come and support them if time permits.

We encourage our members to support our sponsors by utilising their services at any given opportunity.

Please keep safe and looking forward to being able to catch up with everyone at the next OBA event.

Esto Perpetua!

Peneeth Goonawardena

Editorial



"May good luck be your friend in whatever you do; and may trouble be always a stranger to you."

The last three months have been the busiest period in the OBA Calendar with four events, one in June and three in August. Thankfully, in spite of several challenges, the events were successfully completed. Our Calendar of Events for the rest of the year include an Information Forum assisting recent and pending migrants to Australia. A "Nineties Night" catering for the "younger" Old Boys planned for September was postponed – a new date is yet to be finalised. The year will be wrapped up with the traditional Carol Service in December.

As highlighted in the feature article, the Thomian Ball took the centre stage after having decided to have the dance earlier, in order to beat the rush of Sri Lankan dances scheduled for the latter part of the year. The interest by Old Thomians took us all by surprise with tickets being sold out a month prior to the event. With the exotic venue, we were able to maintain the bragging rights of being the only Sri Lankan dance in Melbourne that is held at a 5-star venue. Our appreciation to the Dance Committee who worked tirelessly to make this event a tremendous success; and enabling the OBA to donate some of the proceeds for much need funds to our branch schools, in addition to a local charity.

In spite of the social unrest prevailing in Sri Lanka since March 2022, the Big Match proceeded as planned in late July with spectators limited to senior boys from each school. After the declaration of state of emergency, a week prior, many "social" events planned by various groups were shelved in anticipation of the match being cancelled. It is hoped that the Match will return to its traditional date of the second week in March.

The Transfiguration Service this year was combined with a normal Sunday service and it was observed that the attendance from the Thomian fraternity was limited. There is some justification for reviewing this activity and consider having a special service on a Saturday, as in the past.

The OBA was proud to organise a memorial service for our former President, Frankie David on the first anniversary of his passing. The service, coordinated with Frankie's family, was a fitting tribute to a person who touched the hearts of many and allowed his family to fulfill his last wishes. The 50th Anniversary Members Luncheon, organised the day after the service, attracted many Old Boys of different age groups. The overall response on the event was very positive in terms of the venue, food and the program.

The membership of the OBA has remained stagnant for several years in spite of concerted "membership drives" from time to time. To address this, many younger members have been included in the Executive Committee, with the expectation that they would be able to attract the more recent arrivals to Australia.

The Executive Committee has been operating with depleted resources with some members having to partially withdraw due to unplanned work commitments. However, all credit to the others who have ensured that the activities have been implemented as planned. Our Assistant Secretary, Niral Fernando resigned in July for personal reasons and wish to express our sincere thanks for his contribution.

The Walk A Mile initiative launched by our parent OBA in Sri Lanka has given all Old Boys a unique opportunity to help our alma mater. We made a commitment to support the Smart Classroom initiative and is pleased to record that sufficient funds were transferred in August 2022 to fund 2 classrooms. This was in addition to donations to the branch schools (Prep School, Gurutalawa and Bandarawala) and a local charity (Monash Children's Hospital) to meet urgent needs.

Finally, we appeal to our readers to send us any interesting articles relating to your college days and beyond that could be considered for publication in the Thomiana.

ESTO PERPETUA

Editorial Team

*Vasikaran Ratnarajah
Upali Gooneratne*

OBA News

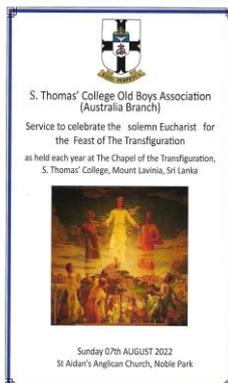
Royal Thomian Live Broadcast – 22nd July 2022



The initial plans of having this event at the Waverley Youth Centre with live music and dinner had to be shelved due to the political turmoil prevailing in Sri Lanka at that time. With the declaration of emergency there were doubts whether the match was going to be played. However, the match proceeded as planned with only senior school boys allowed to attend. At the last minute the OBA decided on an alternate venue to watch the match live without incurring any costs for drinks and food.

Arrangements were made with the 2-Rupees Brewing Company (Clayton) to live stream the event with free entry and food & drinks purchased at the bar. Although this was arranged at short notice there were quite a few Old Royalists and Thomians who turned up throughout the evening. The rain interruptions in the match did not dampen the spirits of those who attended. For the record the match result could be termed as a “Tame Draw”, enabling the Thomians to retain the D.S. Senanayake Trophy.

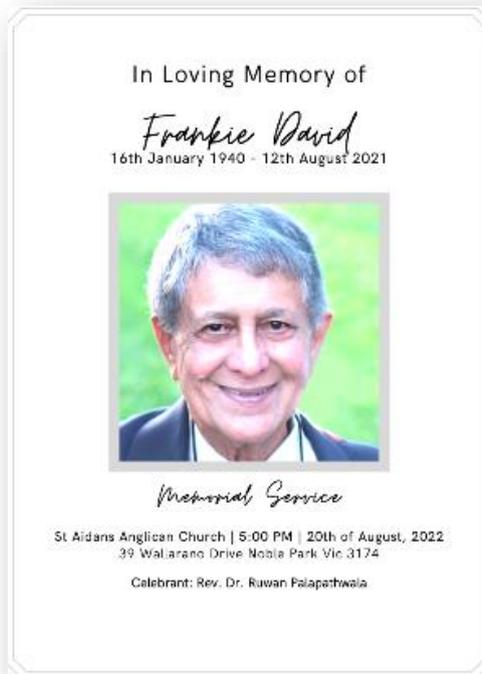
Transfiguration Service – 7th August 2022



After two years of cancellations due to Covid, the Transfiguration Service was held on Sunday 7th August 2022 at St. Aidan's Anglican Church in Noble Park, Victoria. The service was combined with the normal Sunday service and was conducted by Fr. Tony Poole (Locum Priest). The OBA Choir with organist, Ashan De Silva, participated in the service.

The attendees, including the parishioners, were treated to a sumptuous Sri Lankan style breakfast, after the service, including milk rice (“kiri-bath”), chicken curry, fish curry, seeni-sambol and katta sambol cooked by our very own Chef, Chris Varney (Ex-Co member and former President of the OBA).

Frankie David Memorial Service – 20th August 2022



The OBA finally had the opportunity to celebrate the life of Frankie David on the first anniversary of his passing. With Covid restrictions last year there was no opportunity to have a fitting celebration of his life. Frankie's family together with the STC OBA (Australia Branch) coordinated a memorial service to share memories and also fulfill Frankie's wishes.

The service was held at St. Aidan's Church, Noble Park, Victoria on Saturday 20th August 2022 attended by a large gathering of his family, friends from all walks of life and fellow Old Thomians. The service was conducted by an Old Thomian, Rev. Dr. Ruwan Palapathwala with Felix Barthlomeusz (also an Old Thomian) as the organist. There were fitting tributes from Gavin Assauw (Frankie's cousin) and two of his schoolmates – Selva Kanagasabai and Lynwood Stork. The service included two of Frankie's favourite songs – The School by the Sea and the College Song.

The Wake that followed was unique, complying with the instructions provided by Frankie, prior to his passing. The request included serving Vegemite, Pol-Sambol and Hundreds & Thousands sandwiches combined with beer and wine. This was in addition to a wide array of short-eats prepared by his family.

The OBA's formal Appreciation published in the Order of Service was as follows:

On 12th August 2021, we lost our dear friend and colleague, Frankie David, who passed away peacefully. He has actively supported the OBA for over four decades and served as the President from 1992 to 1994. 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 always there to support 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.

He was a true Thomian whose love for his alma mater was reflected in every aspect of his life and was an inspiration to all those fortunate enough to have known him. He was a celebrated Sri Lankan Ruggerite and yet in his life outside the field, he was humble and compassionate, willing to help whenever he could. Quite a remarkable attribute for a champion of a rather aggressive sport!

Frankie's funeral was held on 19 August 2021 at the Good Shepherd Parish Catholic Church, Wheelers Hill, Vic and was live streamed due to the Covid restrictions. The Thomian fraternity was denied the opportunity of a proper send off to this remarkable person and we express our sincere gratitude to Frankie's family for their support in arranging this memorial service commemorating the first anniversary of his passing. It is also an opportunity to fulfill some of Frankie's last wishes that could not be honoured due to Covid restrictions.

We express our sincere thanks to Frankie's family and all those who participated in this service. Special thanks to our celebrant Rev. Dr. Ruwan Palapathwala for leading the service.

"Not even death can break the bond we had. You were an amazing person. May you Rest in Paradise". ESTO PERPETUA

OBA 50th Anniversary Luncheon

– 21st August 2022



The much awaited 50th Anniversary Members Luncheon was held at the RSL Club in Springvale on Sunday 21st August 2022, the same venue where the Seniors Lunch was held last year. The initial reservations exceeded 100, however, there were last minute Covid related cancellations with the final attendance of around 80. Based on the excellent service at last year's function, the RSL Club proved to be the ideal venue to celebrate our 50th Anniversary.



The Sri Lankan Chef at the Club once again provided an excellent array of food, adding a variety of side dishes to compliment the 3-course meal on the menu. We received several very favorable comments from the Members on the standard of food; and in a humorous vein, one commented "The quality of the lunch appeared to have rekindled youthful competition between two of our guests, who engaged in a gastronomic duel, with additional plates of lunch gathered from nearby tables with unoccupied seats!".

This was an occasion to go "down memory lane" with respect to the OBA and the President, Peneeth Goonawardena, after a brief address invited several past Presidents and Executive Members to share their memories over the last 50 years. The invitees included Chris Lawton (Snr), David Varney, Selva Kanagasabai, Rajan Hensman, Arasu Saravanamuttu and Trevor Meares.

There was a raffle conducted after lunch and drawn by Chris Lawton (Snr). The event ended with the signing of the College song. The Ex-Co wishes to thank all members who supported this event.

100 NOT OUT – CONGRATULATIONS!!

Congratulations to Yogendra Yogasundram (Yoga) on reaching this memorable milestone on 10th of June 2022. He studied at STC from 1936-1942 and was a boarder in Copleston house. He was a College Prefect from 1939 and Head Prefect in 1942. In the sporting field, he captained College at Hockey and won colours in Hockey, Athletics and Rifle Shooting. His wife of 70 years, Blossom, sadly passed away a few months before his 100th birthday. He has 3 children (Melanie, Indran and Suresh). The two sons, Indran and Suresh were also products of STC. Attached is a Photograph taken on his Birthday with a certificate he received from the Prime Minister of Canada, Hon Justin Trudeau.



CANISTON GUNARATNAM SELECTED FOR U19 TOUR OF ENGLAND



Thomian 1st XI Cricket Vice Captain, Caniston Gunaratnam, was selected to play for the Sri Lankan U-19 squad in the tour of England which is currently on-going (August – September). Caniston had a fantastic season, including his performance at the Sri Lanka Cricket U19 Provincial Tournament where he was awarded the player of the final U19-Provincial-Cricket. Caniston has been an exceptional figure in Thomian Cricket, we wish him the best of luck!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Information Forum



Information night for new and pending arrivals to Australia on a range of topics is planned for 27th September 2022 at 6.30pm AEST and open to all Thomians in Australia and the branch schools in Sri Lanka. The topics include Immigration, Recruitment, Banking, Borrowing and Financial Planning and presented by a panel of experts in Melbourne. Following the forum, participants will have any opportunity to make direct contact with the experts for advice on any specific issues.

Registration information is given on the flyer.

Indoor Cricket and Touch Rugby Tournaments



The Melbourne OBA has entered teams for the forthcoming Inter Schools Indoor Cricket Championship (organised by the Royal College OBA Australia) and a Touch Rugby Tournament (organised by the Kingswood College OBA Australia).



OBA Fundraising Event – Melbourne Cup Draw 2022

This popular fundraising event which was first organized in 2020 is back in the OBA Calendar of Events. This is the last opportunity this year to raise much needed funds to support our Branch schools and local charities. The Melbourne Cup race will be on Tuesday 1st November 2022 and will follow the same format as previous years.

Participation is open to all Old Boys, families and friends. If you are interested in supporting the event, please contact:



Melbourne Cup Draw – 2022

1 November 2022

Tickets per Draw:	24
Cost of Ticket:	\$ 25

Prizes:

1st Prize:	\$ 150
2nd Prize:	\$ 75
3rd Prize:	\$ 50

Peneeth Goonawardena: Tel: [0404 213 166](tel:0404213166) Email: Peneeth@gmail.com
 Asfan Thajudeen: Tel: [0416 877 788](tel:0416877788) Email: asfant@hotmail.com

DONATIONS FROM THE THOMIAN DANCE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

S. Thomas' College OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION
Mount Lavinia Estb: 1886

18th August 2022

Mr. Franeeeth Goonerwardena
President
S.Thomas' College Old Boys' Association Australia Branch
Melbourne,
Australia.

Dear Mr. Goonerwardena,

We write to place on record our sincere gratitude to the entire Australia Branch (Melbourne) membership for the generous contribution of Rs.800,000/- made on 13th August 2022 to the Walk a Mile Project, towards the purchase of Two (2) SMART BOARDS. We take this opportunity to thank you personally for co-ordinating the effort.

Your act of kindness and interest in your Alma Mater is much appreciated.

Wish best wishes.

Yours faithfully,


 Rev. Marc Billmorita Sanjeev Pallikawadana Richard de Zoysa
 Warden Secretary - STCML OBA Chairman - Walk a Mile Project

S. Thomas' College, Gurutalawa
SRI LANKA

HEADMASTER:
The Ven. Fr. S.P. Nesakumar
B. Theodoropoulos, PG Dip in Ed in Sri Lanka
MA (Hons) M. Ed. (Ed) Dip in Exam (General)

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Web Site : www.stgpr.edu.lk

Mr. Mark Nanayakkara,
Executive Committee of the OBA
Melbourne
Australia

16th August 2022

We would like to express our deepest gratitude for your unselfish contribution of Executive Committee of the OBA in Melbourne Australia to light up college requirement. We were able to build up the fund for our new project with your donation and this would have not been successful without your act of generosity in support of the college.

May this letter serve as an acknowledgement of your donation of Rs.270,000.00 for which you did not receive anything in return but gratitude of colleagues. Receipt (GRB 2947) of your donation is enclosed here for your reference.

We are always very blessed to have you and your members in our family. Thank you once again for your unwavering support.

Sincerely


 Ven. Fr. S.P. Nesakumar
 Headmaster
 S. Thomas' College
 Gurutalawa

Ven. S.P. Nesakumar
 Headmaster
 S. Thomas' College
 Gurutalawa

S. Thomas' College, Bandarawela 15 Aug
Dear Mark, Greetings from Sri Lanka. Thank you for you...

Janaka Dissanayake 16 Aug
Dear Peneeth & Mark, Many thanks for your kind donat...

Christopher Balraj 12:21 pm
to Bandarawela, Mark, me, Janaka

Dear Thomians in Melbourne,

Greetings to all of you from S. Thomas' College, Bandarawela.

We acknowledge the receipt of your generous contribution to the school. This is a great help towards urgent development in the school. As you are aware of the economic crisis in our country, the school is keeping the fee affordable to most of the parents, and yet some of them are finding it difficult to meet it. It is in such a situation, the generosity of all of you is received with much appreciation and gratitude. The money received will certainly be used to purchase musical instruments to the Primary Section and the needed instruments to the newly started oriental Band.

The official receipt is attached here below.

Thanking you once again and our best wishes to all of the Thomians and your families living in Melbourne.

Revd Christopher Balraj
 Headmaster
 S. Thomas' College,
 Bandarawela

S. THOMAS' PREP SCHOOL

From: Secretary <secretary@stps.edu.lk>
 Date: 29 August 2022 at 7:35:24 pm AEST
 To: Mark Nanayakkara <markstcoba@hotmail.com>
 Subject: RE: Donation

Dear Mark

We very much appreciate the donation made by the OBU Melbourne. It will be made good use of for any renovation work in the middle school building.

Attached, please find our receipt for same.

Sorry for the delay in acknowledging receipt of same since I was on a clergy retreat and came back to work on Friday.

Trust all who fell sick are back on their feet.

"The Lord is my Shepherd"

With kind regards

Fr. Nihal Fernando
 HEADMASTER

Monash Health Foundation
 Locked Bag 28
 Clayton South VIC 3168
 Tel: 013 9584 2700
 ABN 61 142 061 328

Tax Receipt

3 August 2022
 Shehan Jayatileke
 STC OBA Australia (Melbourne) Branch
 PO Box 2337
 MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC 3149

Dear Shehan

Donor support is at the heart of our ability to make a positive impact and continue to provide world-class health care, research and education, so our community can ultimately have a better and healthier future.

Monash Health is Victoria's largest public health service. We provide safe, high-quality care to one-quarter of Melbourne's population, across an entire lifespan.

Community support is essential and we are ever grateful for your wonderful generosity of those around us. Every donation makes a meaningful difference.

For further information about the Monash Health Foundation, please visit www.monashhealthfoundation.org. Alternatively, please call us on 03 9584 2700 or send an email to foundation@monashhealth.org.

We look forward to keeping you updated on the impact of your gift and how it is making a difference.

Yours sincerely,


 Ron Fairchild, CFRE, FFIA
 Director
 Monash Health Foundation

Receipt No.	Date	Item	Amount
0000301870	3/8/2022	Donation	1,000.00 AUD

Thank You

WALK A MILE UPDATE



S. Thomas' College **OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION**
Mount Lavinia

Estb : 1886

23rd August 2022

Hony. President,
S. Thomas' College Mt Lavinia, Melbourne Chapter

Dear Fellow Thomian,

We trust that all your members and their families are keeping well.

We sincerely thank you for sponsoring Two Classrooms and making the payment promptly. Your payment has enabled us to make the initial advance payment to the supplier as described in the project status update below.

A member of the WAM committee will be in touch with you to discuss next steps regarding the plaque to be installed in the classroom displaying the details regarding your sponsorship.

Status of the Walk-a-Mile project is as follows:

1. Project fundraising activity is progressing with minimum exposure given on social media due to the prevailing situation in the country. On the budgeted amount of Rs 32 million for the 80 classrooms, the committee has successfully obtained pledges for approximately Rs 27 million, including the pledge made by your class group. We are now approaching the remaining Class Groups and overseas groups who are yet to pledge as well as other potential donors to raise the balance Rs 5.0 million needed. We are confident in raising sufficient funds to complete the Smart Classroom project.
2. Due to the rapid depreciation in the Sri Lankan Rupee (LKR), the cost of Smart Classroom equipment has increased exponentially. However, in the best interest of the project, we decided to confirm the order proactively at the *original price*, since we have already received pledges for over 84% of the cost as mentioned above. An advance payment has already been made and the balance payment is due upon complete installation of Smart Classrooms.
3. In celebration of St. Thomas Day, the Smart Classrooms will be officially handed over to the college on 6th October 2022 at a function graced by the presence of Rt. Revd. Dushantha Rodrigo, the Bishop of Colombo, who will be present for the service of confirmation and his annual pastoral visit to the School. All the Sponsors, Batch Groups, Overseas Chapters and Old Boys who contributed to the project will be acknowledged on this occasion.
4. The Committee has rescheduled the Walk-a-Mile event to the 21st and 22nd of October 2022. The students will walk on the 21st, whilst the Old Boys and other well-wishers will walk on the 22nd.
5. In order to ensure that we do not overburden our fraternity and other donors, we have decided to proceed with the fundraising for the remaining projects of the Walk-a-Mile initiative in phases.

We extend our Thanks and best wishes to your committee and membership.

Esto Perpetua!

Sanjeev Paliawadana
Secretary – STCML OBA

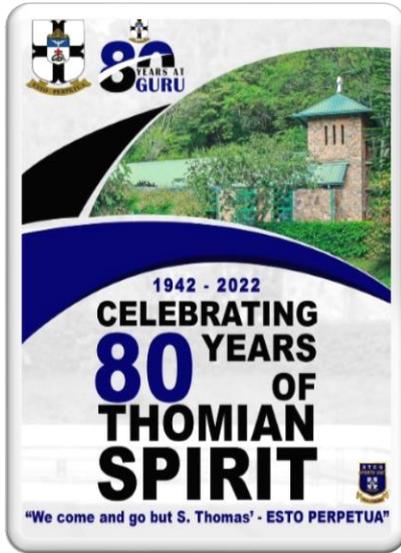
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A Celebration of the 80th Anniversary of the Founding of S. Thomas' College in Gurutalawa

Reflections from the Head Master

On 9th of April 1942, the sub warden at STC Mount Lavinia Dr. R L Hayman was sent to Gurutalawa to prepare a branch of the school. A branch of S Thomas College at Gurutalawa was made possible by a generous gift made to the College by Mr.& Mrs Leslie de Saram. In this period of pessimism and gloom they offered to give Gurutalawa Farm complete with its buildings, equipment, furniture and livestock. This magnificent offer was gratefully accepted and in less than two months the farm began to take an important place in the life of the College. Dr. Hayman describes the arrival at Gurutalawa. On arrival we found at our disposal, a large furnished bungalow, situated in 35 acres of land, which included pastures, forage grass fields, vegetable gardens and Orchards.

The village of Gurutalawa in 1942 was a tiny one largely isolated from the world outside. School reopened for the second term on May 12th 1942 in new surroundings at Gurutalawa Farm with 55 boarders and 2 day boys under the Leadership of Dr. R L Hayman Headmaster.

Now 80 years have passed and we are a private school that comes under the purview of the Ministry of Education and Department of Examinations. Since we come under the purview of the Ministry of Education, the academic offerings and the standard of our school is monitored by the state regulatory mechanism. Being a private school, we also come under the Governing Body of S. Thomas' which too monitor the educational performance of the school. These dual monitoring encourages us to aim at higher standards. Our teachers have been working with much commitment and as a result our students have performed well in the exams conducted and succeeded in their extra-curricular activities.

It is a proven fact that students who play sports perform better in academics, for participation in sports for many students can generally improve self-confidence and their overall enjoyment of life than those who do not. The greater joy for our school is that the good academic performers of our school have also proved their ability to balance their curricular and co-curricular activities.

The school recognizes the contribution of the Parents, Teachers and the coaches in supporting and guiding the students to recognize the value and the importance of maintaining a balance between academics and sports. This balance results in well-integrated persons with right values in life for which our school will continue to be committed.

As I reflect last five years that gone, I feel a sense of Thanksgiving. None of what was possible would have been possible without the support and solidarity I received from our Manager Mr. Senaka Fonseka, our Bishop, a very

supportive Board of Governors, sectional heads, senior Hostel Master, Tutorial, Admin and Supportive Staff, Head Prefect and Prefects, Old Boys Association and individuals who helped the school in so many different ways.

We are mindful of the great inheritance that has been entrusted to us by those who have gone before us who have served this school in so many ways. We in our day owe a great debt to those who have gone before us. But we also have a great responsibility to ensure that we hand on what we have received better than we found it and received it.

Anniversaries provide opportunities to look back but also opportunities for rededication for committing ourselves more fully to carry on our work and to face what is to come in the unknown future with faith and courage, there is so much that still remains to be done. There are so many challenges to be met and mountains to be climbed. But with faith and hope and love in our hearts there is nothing that is impossible. We do what is possible, strive for the impossible and let God handle the rest. It is the basis for everything we do as a school founded upon the Rock of faith.

Esto Perpetua.

Gurotalawa Day at Mount Lavinia

A special morning service was held in the Chapel of the Transfiguration at S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia to celebrate the bond of unity between STC at Mount Lavinia and STC at Gurotalawa and also to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the founding of STC at Gurotalawa on Wednesday the 22nd of June 2022 at 8.00am.

STC at Gurotalawa was founded in 1942 due to the collective vision of Warden Canon R. S. de Saram and Sub Warden Dr. R. L. Hayman. When the school premises at Mount Lavinia was commandeered by the Military during World War II, it was decided to utilize the Gurotalawa Farm that had been donated to the school earlier that year by a kinsman of Warden de Saram, Mr. Leslie de Saram and his wife, to serve as a branch school during the war years and on the 12th of May 1942, the school term commenced at Gurotalawa with 57 students (55 boarders and 2 day boys), Dr Hayman as its first Headmaster and the Rev'd Canon A. J. Foster as first Chaplain. Dr Hayman used the opportunity to set up a unique school modelled on Gordonstoun School in Elgin, Scotland, that included the spartan education and formation. The boys of the school were trained in responsible independence. Even today Guru is reputed for its spartan ethos and remains one of the largest boarding schools in the country.



The Preacher at the service of thanksgiving was the Bishop of Colombo and Visitor to the College, the Rt. Rev'd Dushantha L. Rodrigo, himself a former Chaplain of STC Gurotalawa. The Chaplain of STC Mount Lavinia, the Ven Samuel Ponniah officiated along with the Associate Chaplain, the Rev'd Roshan Mendis. The Headmaster of STC Gurotalawa, the Ven. S. P. Nesakumar led a special Act of Remembrance and Thanksgiving during the Service. The service was attended by some senior students of both schools, members of the Board of Governors, a number of Thomian alumni and also Mr. Jacques Huyghebaert who had helped the Board of Governors to keep the school open in 2007 when it had been on the verge of being closed down and transformed it into a viable school that remains so today

A tribute by Mr. Bradman Weerakoon, one of the pioneering 55 students, who was unable to attend, was read out by the Warden, in which Mr. Weerakoon wrote of some of the unique features of an education at Gurutalawa. Mr. Milinda Hettiarachchi paid a tribute to Dr. R. L. Hayman who had done so much to establish and consolidate the school in Gurutalawa, even using his personal wealth at times. He had already by this time contributed much of his wealth to the school at Mount Lavinia including the donation of the Fives Courts, the Swimming Pool and the Thalassa building.



After the conclusion of the service, the annual U17 Cricket match for the Hayman-De Saram Memorial Trophy was played. STC Mount Lavinia was able to win the match. Gurutalawa Day ended with the awards ceremony of the cricket match at which the Headmaster of STC Gurutalawa presented the trophy to the Captain of the winning team.

Proposed Agribusiness Investment Project.

Mr. and Mrs. Leslie De Seram made the generous donation of their 45-acre farm at Gurutalawa. Mr. Leslie De Seram made one request – that he would appreciate if the School could maintain the Farm. To honour the donors request when we were given this farm land to continue with farming in 1942, we did everything to improve the farm and in the late 70s, we even had a diploma programme to train young Farmers. Currently, the School has 650 Students out of which 350 are Boarders; and also have around 140 Staff working for the School

With the Civil War in the early '80s and the insurgency, our Head Master and his wife were brutally murdered in 1987 within the School Premises by unidentified gunmen. Since then, the School was in a downward trend till about early 2005. The Board of Governors worked tirelessly to bring back the School to its glory days. We had support from our 3 Brother Schools financially namely S. Thomas', Mount Lavinia, Colpetty and Bandarawala and we are happy to state, after many decades, STC Gurutalawa has managed to break even on their finances after about 3 decades. The support from the three Schools will cease at the end of this year and we are determined to stand on our own.

Out of the 45-acre property, we have almost 60% of the land which could be cultivated to bring back the Farm to its glory days. We have already started the work on the Farm and have been successful. While making use of the produce of the Farm to feed our 350 Boarders and a few Staff Members, we now sell our excess vegetables and milk from the dairy to the outside market. Our vision is to improve the Farm as a model Farm with vegetables, fruits, flowers, dairy and poultry. Our plan is also to finally conduct an Agriculture Training School as the School has all the resources to facilitate same. The Old Boys of STC Mount Lavinia, Colpetty, Bandarawala and Gurutalawa have jointly set up a team to improve this Farm and the Project.

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



DR. R. L. HAYMAN (1902-1983)

THE LEGEND LIVES ON FOREVER

As we celebrate the 80th Anniversary of S. Thomas' College in Gurutalawa it is fitting to acknowledge our indebtedness and gratitude to the first Headmaster, Dr. Rollo Hayman, who was also the longest serving Sub Warden at STC Mount Lavinia fulfilling this role for over 20 years. Dr. Hayman was acknowledged as the Founding Father of STC Gurutalawa which was modelled after Gordonstoun School in Elgin, in the north of Scotland that had been founded by Kurt Hahn and attended by Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh as well as Charles, Prince of Wales.

Rollo Lenden Hayman MA, DPhil (Oxon), MBE, was born in London on December 14, 1902. He was the son of William Hayman, a General Practitioner. The family later moved to Bournemouth on the south coast of England. About 1919, Hayman was admitted to the University of Oxford to read Physics. When he graduated, he decided to continue studying in Oxford and obtained DPhil in Physics. He decided on a teaching career and trained as a Teacher for Ministry in the Anglican Church. Dr. Hayman had come to Ceylon initially through the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.



Warden K. C. McPherson (1926 – 1930), visited Keble College, Oxford in 1928 and persuaded Dr Hayman, Rev. A J Foster and W. T. Keble to join the academic staff at S. Thomas' College. In April 1942, during World War II, Warden De Saram was asked to hand over the school premises at Mount Lavinia to the British Armed Services within five days; and Dr. Hayman, who was the Sub-Warden at that time, was sent to Gurutalawa to make provision for a Branch of the School. Fortunately, in February 1942, Mr. and Mrs. Leslie de Saram, relatives of Warden De Saram had offered to give their 45-acre Gurutalawa Farm with its orchard, buildings, equipment, furniture and livestock, to the school. This magnanimous offer was gratefully accepted and in the space of just two months S. Thomas College, Gurutalawa was born with Dr. Hayman, at the helm as the First Headmaster.

The school began as a Boarding School, with initial accommodation for around 50 students. Gurutalawa has outdoor activities not generally found in other schools in Sri Lanka, such as long-distance hiking, horse riding, bird watching, involvement in the farm activities and so on. A typical hike was the day trip to World's End, in Horton Plains. This meant setting off from Gurutalawa at daybreak and returning at dusk after having hiked 50 km (30 miles) in mountainous terrain. Warden Canon R. S. De Saram declared that STC at Gurutalawa and STC Mount Lavinia were one and the same school and not two Colleges. Warden C. H. Davidson remarked quoting the poet William Wordsworth: "TWO Voices are there; one is of the sea, one of the mountains; each a mighty Voice". Dr Hayman had taught the students at Gurutalawa to walk with honour and manifest character and integrity in everything they did. A simple tour of the Hayman-Foster Museum in Gurutalawa would convince any visitor of Dr Hayman's commitment to develop a special brand of Thomians on solid principles and equip them for the real world through formation in tough terrain.

The fruit orchard, the well-equipped farm, horse riding, house building from bricks made in the school, the strict disciplinary proceedings daily from dawn to dusk in the classroom, student Societies, Sports activities, Scouting and the Swimming Pool and much more was unique in the history of S. Thomas College at Gurutalawa. Dr. Hayman is said to have personally coached Allan Smith, the only representative from Ceylon, for the Olympic Diving event in Helsinki. He was also responsible for coaching the Arndt brothers who excelled in the All-Ceylon two-mile swim.

Dr Hayman had donated a great part of his personal wealth to S. Thomas' Mt Lavinia and Gurutalawa. The swimming pools at Mt Lavinia and Gurutalawa, most of the College buildings at Gurutalawa, and some buildings and assets in Mt Lavinia, stand testimony to his generosity. Today we have a portrait of him along with a

commemorative tablet in the Dr. R.L. Hayman Science Laboratory at Gurutalawa. The words inscribed, "To spend and be spent in the service of others" sum up the purposeful life of this sincere, godly man, who did much while playing a leading role in the lives of students from S. Thomas' at Gurutalawa and Mount Lavinia where the Swimming Pool was rededicated to his memory in 2000. As Warden de Saram said "What Dr Hayman has given to the school nobody knows." Dr. Hayman also purchased the house named "Thalassa", on the adjacent beach and gave it to the College for use as an Office.

It is of great significance that S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia now observes a Gurutalawa Day annually, introduced a few years back, with a special Chapel Service, General Assembly and a One Day cricket match for a Challenge Trophy in memory of Dr Hayman and Gurutalawa. The Royal - Thomian Water Polo encounter is played for the coveted Dr R. L. Hayman Memorial Trophy and has come to be simply called 'The Hayman'! Many other awards and prizes at both Mount Lavinia and Gurutalawa are fitting tributes to this legend who was a "The Man for All Seasons". Apart from the help he gave the School, Dr Hayman had also helped the Gurutalawa village and the people generously as well in many ways and some monuments remain to date.

Dr. Hayman's wife, Mary Rudd was a member of the Nursing Staff of the Military Hospital which occupied the Mount Lavinia premises. Towards the end of 1945, Dr Hayman went to England on furlough and he and Mary got married there. He returned to Gurutalawa only at the beginning of 1948, after an absence of two years, and remained there until he retired in 1963.



Dr. Rollo Lenden Hayman with his wife and sister at Buckingham Palace

Dr Hayman was the longest serving Sub Warden at Mount Lavinia and is said to have politely declined the offer to be Warden when Canon De Saram retired in 1958. He opted to be at Gurutalawa till he retired on March 14 1963 and returned to his home in Bournemouth in 1964. Dr Hayman was the first teacher in Ceylon with a PhD from Britain and awarded the prestigious MBE by Her Majesty the Queen for his contribution to broader education in the Commonwealth Ceylon.

In 1970, he visited Gurutalawa to open the new Hayman Science Laboratory, to which he had contributed generously. The plinth in the building states simply "To spend and be spent in the service of others is his greatest privilege". Dr Hayman's final visit to Gurutalawa was in 1983 to open the Keble Dormitory, the cost of which also had been met by him.

Dr Hayman passed away on May 7th 1983 at the age of 80. His final resting place is in the General Cemetery in Bournemouth. The opening sentence of Dr Hayman's Last Will was, "I direct that my funeral shall be of the cheapest kind consistent with decency and no expensive memorial stone should be erected."

The Thomian fraternity must continue to relive the Dr Hayman Spirit, whose stature we will never see again.

Grateful thanks at all times respected Sir ~ we bow in reverence to you eternally.

ESTO PERPETUA



This article was compiled by the Editorial Team from extracts of past articles, especially from Milinda Hettiarachchi (Former Hon'y Secretary of the SIC at Gurutalawa OBA) and Thiru Arumugam



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COVID

Dr. Sanjiva Wijesinha

With COVID still prevalent in Australia (at the end of August the country had suffered over a million cases of COVID infection and nearly 14,000 deaths), I am now accustomed to being accosted by various friends, acquaintances and patients with “What I still can’t understand about this COVID business is.....”

In order to answer what are the commonly asked questions about COVID – or **Coronavirus Number 19** to give the germ its official name - let me summarise the basic facts about this disease:

- a. The Coronaviruses are a type of germ (or Virus) that can infect human beings.
- b. There are many types of Coronavirus. Some viruses of this large family are responsible for causing the common cold (home calling *Hembarissawa* or *Thadiman* in Sri Lanka) and the ‘Flu.
- c. **COVID** refers to a virulent type of virus from this Coronavirus group. It is a germ that can cause very serious illness if it manages to get inside your body and go down into your lungs. This virus spreads easily from an infected person to others – and if the germ goes down your airways into your lungs, it can cause life-threatening damage there.
- d. You can catch COVID if someone who already has these germs in their airways coughs out these germs - or sneezes or breathes them out - into the air that you then breathe. Therefore close contact with someone who has COVID infection makes you vulnerable to catching the germ from them
- e. Taking two or three (or even four) doses of COVID vaccination gives you some form of protection.
- f. **While vaccination cannot completely prevent you catching COVID infection, it will make your body less likely to suffer serious illness from catching COVID**
- g. Vaccination stimulates the WHITE CELLS and ANTIBODIES (whose function is to fight invading germs) within your body to increase in number. They become programmed so that if a COVID germ manages to enter your throat (from the air you breathe), your body’s own “prepared” defences can destroy the germ before it can get inside your body into your lungs and cause harm.
- h. If you are vaccinated and also keep your distance from anybody infected with the COVID germ, then the germ is very unlikely to enter your throat – and even less likely to get inside your body.
- i. If you have been vaccinated, then even if you get infected with COVID (when the germ gets inside your throat), the germ is extremely unlikely to go down from your throat into your lungs and get an opportunity to damage your lungs.
- j. The usual symptoms that a person who gets ill with COVID (when the germ has invaded their lungs) are: *severe body pains and weakness, high temperature, severe cough and breathlessness.*
- k. When they do a test on someone suspected of having COVID infection, they use a swab to take a sample from your throat and test this to check if you have COVID germs in your throat. Testing can be done either by using a **Rapid Antigen Test** (known as a RAT, which gives results almost immediately but cannot be relied on as 100% accurate) or by doing a **PCR Test**, which is more accurate but takes at least six hours, sometimes longer, to give a result.
- l. If your test is reported as NEGATIVE, you can assume for all practical purposes that there are no COVID germs in your throat.
- m. The main thing if you have tested NEGATIVE to COVID but still feel unwell is to rest, eat sensibly and take paracetamol or disprin, particularly if you have a mild fever or feel headachy.

Dr. 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

CHRISTOPHER JEBARATNAM LAWTON

Medal of Order of Australia
Chartered Engineer (Lond.)

*'Chris' to all of us at STC OBA (Aus.) Branch Inc.
Our 'Man for All Seasons', and yes, For Very Many Seasons.*

After the Covid19 induced hiatus of 2 years, our STC OBA (Aus.) held it's Gala Thomian-Dinner Dance on 4th June 2022, at the 'Five Star' venue, The Melbourne Sofitel Hotel. As is the tradition, it was a Grand Event (with 400 Guests) attending. Chris was our 'Guest of Honour' at this event.

Chris became an Executive Committee Member in 1992. Since then, he served the OBA as Honorary Secretary with 15 Presidents and 'retired' this year (2022), after reaching the age of 90 years.

Chris has been a source of great stability for successive generations of STC OBA (Aus.) Branch- Committees. Presidents and Executive Committee Members have been well served by Chris' wise-counsel and his friendly manner and above all his 'Thomian Spirit'.

His CV reveals that Chris is a Chartered Engineer (London) and a recognised Member of other prestigious Academic and Community organisations.

A previous issue of 'Thomiana' (Ref: March 2007), in an article by the then President, Nalin Dassenaiké) recorded much of Chris' long-term contribution to the events and programs of STC OBA (Aus.).

The Australian Governor General's award (to Chris) of OAM (Order of Australia Medal- in 2014 Australia Day Honours List) was in recognition of Chris' efforts in the long and distinguished service to the Sri Lankan Community in Melbourne. This means that in addition to serving the STC OBA, he also served on the management and programs of other Associations.

I explained to Chris that in writing this account, my intention was not to repeat the substance of the earlier article, but to provide us a glimpse of

- a) His early life
- b) The early years of STC OBA (Aus) Branch, and
- c) What makes him proud about the people and programs of the first 50 years of The STC OBA (Aus.) Branch.

Chris agreed to my request. I will record here, in his own words, Chris' responses to my Questions.

Godfrey:

Chris, please tell me about your early days at College.

Chris:

It was the 1940s and World War 2 was raging in Europe and in (SE) Asia. Education, Sports and Administration of S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia, were severely disrupted as the British Defence Forces commandeered the College,



Buildings and Premises- for use as a hospital for their troops. Rising to meet this problem, some parents quickly found other schools which agreed to take their children in temporarily. Fearing that the worst was to come, my mother took me to my family home in Jaffna and I was admitted to the local village school there. However, after a few months, I was brought back to our home in Dehiwala and admitted temporarily to Christ Church college, Dehiwala. Life was quite chaotic and we had no time nor any opportunity for sports.

Back home from school, I had to, almost every day, line-up in the queue for some item or another, or tend to our vegetable garden in my home in Dehiwala (with the Government then urging all land owners to grow more food). We supplemented our staple food of rice with Manioc, sweet yams, Breadfruit, Jak etc. Also, there was the cow and poultry to be cared for. Since I am an only child, it was only myself and the servant-boy to attend to all chores.

I had no time or opportunity to be involved in any sport.

In the meantime, Warden Revd. R.S. De Saram made arrangements for Thomians to attend classes at S. Paul's Milagiriya Girls' School. The girls were to have their classes from 8.00 AM to 12:30 PM and the Boys from 1:00 PM to 5:30 PM.

I joined this 'Afternoon School' . Mr. Hilary Jansz was our Headmaster. He was ever vigilant. However, the Boys circumvented his vigil and maintained their romantic contact with the girls, receiving and leaving love-letters in the desks! The desks then had a large open compartment covered with a wooden flap. We lowered the flap to its resting position and placed our exercise books or paper and wrote our notes. There was a hole at the right hand top corner of the desk for the ink- well.

Our next schooling -venue (before we returned to STC Mount Lavinia), was The Girls' High School (of St. Francis of Assisi), Hotel Road ,Mount Lavinia. The same routine was followed-Girls in the Mornings and Boys in the Afternoons. Same dynamics-love letters etc. Some Boys made it their practise to meet at Egyptian Hotel on Galle Road, Mount Lavinia and also at other boutiques (e.g. there was one up on Hotel Road) to discuss girls and 'complete' their homework and enjoy a cup of tea and share a cigarette. The Egyptian Hotel was also our venue before some week-ends and at end-of-terms for our favourite 'feed' of Godamba and Mutton Curry.

Back at STC Mount Lavinia the Lower School Headmaster was Rev'd J.Y. Barnabas. Among the Teaching Staff were: E.L. Perera, Budd Jansze, Alwis, Miss Di Jong, Miss Anthonisz, Mrs. Barnabas, Stanley Jansz, Arndt et al.

The war- they were difficult days for the country as a whole. Nearly all of life's needs including clothing, were rationed. Even writing paper was rationed. I had to go and stand in a queue at the Bakery in Dehiwala to get my ration of a loaf of bread or at the Cooperative Store to get rice and other rations. 'Blackouts' were imposed and even lights in houses were not allowed to be visible from outside. Car headlamp-lenses were painted black leaving a small clear spot to send out a beam of light. Mock Air-raid practises were conducted (without notice) and there were Air-raid inspectors to ensure that we scrambled into Air-raid shelters .At College , we had to quickly get under our desks and bite on a pencil as part of 'Air-raid practises'.

In the Middle School and Upper School, we did not have to use Exercise Books. Warden De Saram introduced the use of 'File Paper' and Files. These were available from the College Book-Cupboard. Fountain pens were not allowed.

All College Files and MSS books had the College Crest: The outline figure of S.Thomas with the words: 'S.Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia-Esto Perpetua'

Dipping pens were used. The nibs allowed were 'G nibs' or 'Relief Nibs' There were holes to hold an inkwell in each desk. It was much later that we were allowed to use 'Fountain pens'. We were allowed to wear long pants (white) when we entered College Form B.

Godfrey:

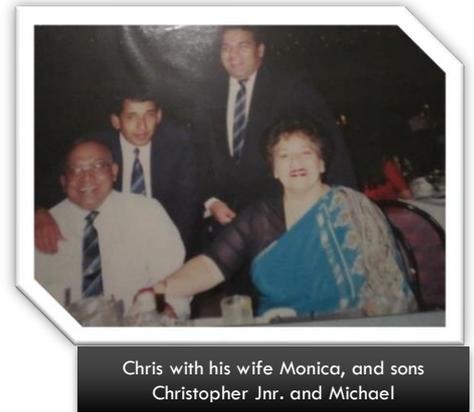
Thank you, Chris. Now please talk to me about your early years in Australia and about the early years of STC OBA (Aus.) Branch.

Chris:

I migrated to Australia in 1976 with my wife Monica and two sons, Christopher and Michael, and settled down in Melbourne. I joined The Port of Melbourne Authority (as a Marine Engineer) and worked there until my retirement in 1992.

Our OBA's 'Service of Honour Record' shows that I joined the Association in 1977. Having Commenced in 1972, the STC OBA (Aus.) was then 5 years in existence.

My College-mate Frank (Morley) Pereira invited me to join the Association. The President Mr. C.R. Wise (who was my Class-Master at College) welcomed me with his big cheerful smile.



Chris with his wife Monica, and sons Christopher Jnr. and Michael

From the records you will see that you and I both took up Executive Committee 'Team' responsibilities in 1992. Since then, I have served the STC OBA as Honorary Secretary with 15 Presidents and I retired in 2022 after reaching the Age of 90 Years. Thomians, who in their never-failing wit and sense of humour often called me "Permanent Secretary" and I 'wore it as a Badge of Honour'.

Godfrey:

Thank you, Chris. Now please tell me, what makes you happy and proud about your journey in this context.

Chris:

It was for me a journey of absolute joy, enjoying the trust and fellowship of Thomians (and indeed their spouses) and their friends.

Our STC OBA (Aus.) is, and has been, blessed with loyal, dedicated, creative Presidents and Committees that any Organisation could have hoped for. It is this true Thomian Spirit that has sustained the OBA through the last fifty years. I pray that the OBA will continue to be similarly blessed in the years ahead.

In the early years, Committee Meetings and other programs were very 'small scale' affairs. As time went by, the OBA Events Calendar became rather crowded: The OBA Royal-Thomian Cricket Match, The 'Transfiguration Day Holy Eucharist' , The Seniors' Lunch, The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, The Christmas Party for Children, Dinner following AGM and The Annual Gala Dinner-Dance. In addition, there are other events held as and when required.

Godfrey:

Thank you. Chris, could you please talk about the Annual Dinner Dance and how it became the 5-Star Event it is today:

Chris:



Thomian Dance 2001
L to R: Frankie David, Marky Flamer-Caldera, Chris Lawton, David Varney and Rev. A.J.C Selvaratnam

The Annual STC OBA (Aus.) Dinner Dance was always patronised to capacity. In the early years, the Venues were Community Halls -mostly Local Government Council Halls.

However, when Darley Ingleton was President, he 'upped the ante' and challenged the Committee to move the Dance to a 5-Star Venue. The very enthusiastic 'Dance Committees' took up the challenge and the STC OBA Ball (like the Thomian OBA Dances in Colombo-which are held in 5 Star Venues) were now held in Venues such as Melbourne 5 Star Hotels or Crown Palladium etc.

This Event now takes 'Top Billing' in Melbourne's Sri Lankan Community Social Calendar. This event produced profits (which included profits from Dance Program Advertising).

I have had the pride and joy of seeing our OBA donate several Thousands of Dollars Cash and other Facilities to STC Mount Lavinia and her Branch Colleges for Sports, Development Projects and Scholarships for under-privileged students.

Also, these profits have helped us to fully-subsidise hospitality that has been offered following other OBA Events.

Godfrey:

Thank you very much Chris.

Chris' generation includes WW2 and The Great Depression. That generation is referred to as THE SILENT GENERATION. (The SILENT GENERATION precedes The BABY BOOMER GENERATION). This Silent Generation is characterised by the following traits:

- Traditional values.
- Cultural and social forces emphasized certain values in the period when the Silent Generation was coming of age.
- Parents, Extended Family, Faith and Religion, and Teachers and School -make up this milieu. *The old African adage 'It takes a Village to raise a child' comes to mind!*
- Other traits include financial prudence, Inter-personal respect, Determination, Resilience, Work Ethic and Community Building.

We have observed all of the above in our friend and colleague-Chris. He has served as Hony. Secretary of STC OBA Australia Inc. for the better part of 4 Decades. A Colleague and Friend for ALL SEASONS,

for MANY SEASONS. A mostly silent yet dependable and approachable Mentor to successive generations of Thomian OBA Committees.

In my experience, no one has contested the veracity of his minutes. At AGM's and Ex-Co Meetings, he will be listening and writing notes. Whenever he contributed to Debate or Discussion, he had a great sense of Timing - which always contributed to a clearer understanding of the issue on at hand.

So, Dear Chris, we all in STC OBA (Aus.) say 'Thank you'

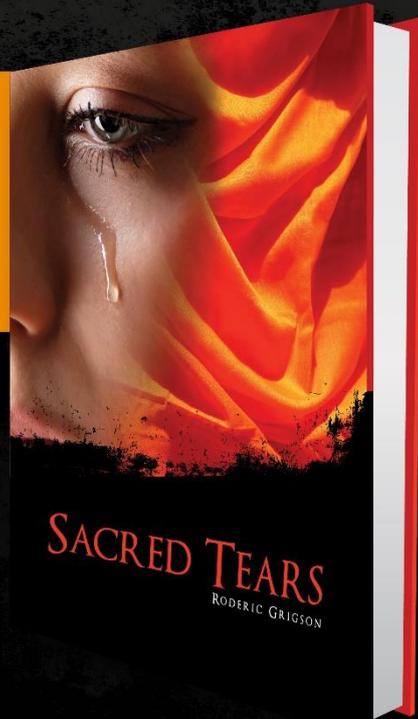
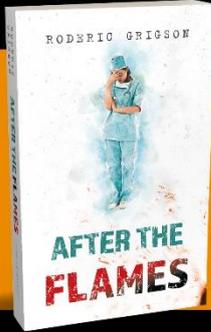
And we and wish you,

AD MULTOS ANNOS - ESTO PERPETUA



Godfrey Senaratne – STC Mount Lavinia (1951-1962), School Prefect and Senior Sacristan. Member of the academic staff (Science and Mathematics) and House Master Miller-Chapman (1965-1974). Active Member (and past-Office Bearer), STC OBA (Aus.) Branch Inc., since 1984. Lecturer, Swinburne University (1984-2012).

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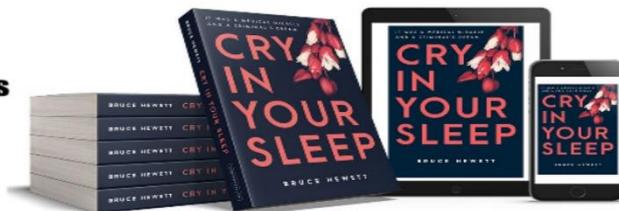
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REFLECTIONS OF A PAST PRESIDENT

Having migrated “down under” in 1986 at year end, the desire to connect with those from our motherland led me to attend a few of the Old Boys Association (OBA) events which included the Annual General meetings. I immediately sensed that it was a gathering of those with the same passion for their beloved alma mater.

It was thrilling to see and recognize faces from years gone by, mere boys at the school by the sea, now men in their own right. The great delight of meeting and standing alongside my childhood heroes in the sporting fields of college and beyond was indeed a privilege and honour. The names that come to mind are the late Darley Ingelton and Frankie David, Selva Kanagasabai, Bandula Molligoda, BWR Thomas, David Varney, Rodney Murray just to mention a few.

The main purpose of the OBA was to foster fellowship amongst Old Thomians in Australia. This was clearly evident from the very first OBA event I attended. I was invited to join the Executive committee in 1990, the second year of Darley’s term of office. Surrounded by those who were much senior to me in College, I was made to feel much at home, even though initially nervous.

I was impressed with the way the late President Darley carried out the business at these meetings. He believed in short, sharp meetings focused on the agenda and if there was to be an extensive discussion on an agenda item, a sub committee was formed to report at the next meeting. This invaluable lesson learnt held me in good stead when I became President a decade later. In 1991 under the leadership of Darley, the OBA broke new ground by being the first Sri Lankan association to have its annual dinner dance in a reputed hotel. It was held at the President’s hotel in Albert Park the current Pullman’s hotel where the OBA has in subsequent years have had their dances.

I had the good fortune of being in the Executive Committee during the tenure of the late President Frankie David in the years 1992 and 1993, serving as Treasurer in 1993. It was during this time that I got to know this consummate nice guy, gentle, thoughtful and

caring, watching him in action and learning much from him. Being an ardent supporter of the Havelocks, I had watched him many a time on the rugby field and the success he achieved leading the club and being a player in Clifford cup glory was special to me. In his quiet, unassuming way he instilled confidence in the younger members of the Executive committee empowering them to take on greater responsibility and training them for higher office in the years to come. This was his rationale when he appointed Wimal Heenetigala as a Chairman of the dance committee in which I too served as being the Treasurer.

The one aspect of his genial character that many may not know that touched me most was that his generosity knew no bounds. Not only with his time, he also supported the OBA financially with his generous heart on more than once occasion. I can never forget sitting across his desk in his office discussing the financial outcomes of events that was held planned to break even, and whenever there was a shortfall, Frankie without any hesitation would immediately pull out his cheque book and hand me a cheque to make good the difference.

I also cherish the memory when he sponsored the tickets which included a medal for the 150th anniversary gala dance at the Grand Hyatt in 2001 when I was the President. It was a substantial contribution and his words ring in my ear, “Rajan you were my Treasurer and this gift is to support you in your Presidency.” This humbling act by a legend of our times will live forever in my memory.

It would be remiss of me not to mention that during those years there was exceptional communication with the membership with three to four copies of the Thomiana being published which was no mean feat, by none other than the literary genius Rod Grigson the Editor of our times.

During those years we were the envy of every other school Association in Melbourne for our very healthy bank balance and the ability to garner support from the wider Sri Lankan community to our annual dinner dance which was the main fundraiser. In this regard

our thanks to David Varney who for many years spearheaded the sale of tickets for the dance with his warm amiable and easy-going personality. On the topic of fundraising it is worthy of mention that due to the initiative of our indefatigable Executive committee member Upali (Pancho) Gooneratne, the OBA ran 2 raffles which netted a substantial sum to the OBA coffers. This enabled the OBA to make significant contributions to the College in Mount Lavinia and its branches in Kollupitiya, Gurutalawa and Bandarawala.

Events such as Children's Christmas parties with Santa making his entrance in novel ways to the delight of the children, were held in halls, Jells Park and one year under Delwyn Lappen's leadership combined it with a dance for the adults while the children were being minded and entertained evokes pleasant memories.

It was during this period that the OBA launched the Members Nite, an event which was initially free including the booze for the first 3 years, until we realised the waste in both the drinks and food and the worse for wear of some of our members at the end of the night on their way home. The other annual events prominent in the Thomian calendar were the Transfiguration service and the Carol service. The choir was directed for many years by Roger Aldons the music maestro and expert.

2001 was a very special year in the life of the school as it celebrated 150 years of its existence. The sesquicentennial celebrations in Melbourne commenced with a service on February 3rd 2001 at St Stephen's Anglican Church in Mount Waverley. Past Warden the late Rev John Selvaratnam was the celebrant and preacher at the Holy Communion service, ably assisted by Old Thomians the late Rev Baldwin Daniel and Rev Ravel Weiman both chaplains at STC.

It was followed by the 150th anniversary gala ball on September 8th 2001, at the Savoy Ballroom, Grand Hyatt in Melbourne where over 600 guests including

old boys from interstate, representations from other schools, and well-wishers joined the Thomians in Melbourne to celebrate and honour this milestone anniversary in the life of our alma mater. The past Warden the late Rev John Selvaratnam was the chief guest and in addition to addressing those present also cut a special 150th anniversary cake in the shape of a book with the crest of St Thomas College. I will fail in my duty if mention is not made of the magnanimous donations by Ralph D' Silva a loyal old Thomian in sponsoring this and other dances.

The monthly Committee meeting was a much anticipated get together by all for in addition to conducting important business of the OBA, it was a time of great enjoyment and the camaraderie and fellowship made richer in imbibing a tippie that loosened the tongues and raised spirits.

Serving on the committee in different capacities alongside past Presidents the late Darley Ingleton, late Frankie David, Delwyn Lappen, Selva Kanagasabai, Jarit De Mel and many other committee members including the evergreen Chris Lawton, that spanned a decade was undoubtedly a rich and satisfying part of my life in Australia.

May I take this opportunity to wish the OBA that celebrates 50 years since its formation a century and more successful years to come.



Rajan Hensman (STCML 1957-1968). Migrated to Australia in 1986 and served in the OBA Executive Committee as a Member, Treasurer, Vice-President and culminating being the President in 2001.

MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO: SOME REFLECTIONS ON SPORT AT S. THOMAS' COLLEGE IN THE 1970s

A healthy mind in a healthy body has always been considered an essential part of a Thomian education. This has been largely achieved through a major emphasis on competitive sport at both house and college level that taught us a lot of life lessons. These reflections are not meant to be comprehensive survey of all sport at STC but simply a collage of my own experiences and memories of my time at college.

Rugby has been a feature sport at STC, and I had the privilege of being coached by the late Quentin Israel who had a formidable record of success. This included coaching STC to 43 consecutive wins spanning several seasons in the mid-late 1970s that is still a Sri Lankan schools record. Quentin was very parsimonious in dishing out praise but quick to criticise, often with choice invectives including his famed "you are bloody useless." I recall in 1973, we were trailing a team that we were expected to beat quite easily. With an embarrassing loss looming and in the last play of the game, one of my teammates, Anandakrishnan, peeled off the front of a lineout, ran 20 metres and scored the match winning try. At the start of the first post-game training session Quentin called out his name and Ana stepped forward beaming anticipating lavish praise. However, Quentin only said "*Anandakrishnan, if I ever see you running with the ball in one arm again, I will break your bloody arm!*"

There are a lot of proud traditions surrounding Thomian rugby. One that comes to mind was that, unless playing a 1st XV school game, only those awarded rugby colours could don the 1st XV jersey at training or in any other setting. This was in stark contrast to other schools and to this day you can see every other boy running around Reid Avenue wearing the Royal jersey. This created an aura around this hallowed jersey, and I still remember feeling 10 feet tall when I wore it for my first school game. Another more recent addition is the annual Quentin Israel rugby dinner that is a fundraiser to support junior rugby at STC. A great feature is that it is organised by prior teams on a rolling basis that started with the team of 1969. The last dinner I attended was in 2018 that was organised by the teams in the 1977-79 era. In a wonderful gesture they also invited their Royal and Trinity counterparts and gave them equal prominence in the evening's activities. I recall telling my dad, a staunch old Trinitian, that I particularly enjoyed the fact that many blokes wearing Royal and

Trinity blazers were helping raise funds to support Thomian Rugby!

In the 1960s and 70s, Royal and STC dominated public schools swimming with the occasional threat from St Joseph's, Ananda, and some of the overseas schools. Royal had been champions for the last few years and, with some "superstars" in the team, were favourites to win again in 1974. However, we were a cohesive unit with a focus on team, rather than individual, outcomes that was quite a contrast to Royal at that time. A major constraint was that swimmers were only permitted a maximum of three individual events hence the coach and I mapped all events and tried to optimize the team outcomes. This would often mean a boy being asked to sacrifice a certain win in an event we were likely to dominate anyway to contest another where they were more likely to be placed lower to optimize team points. All asked did so willingly that made us competitive for the Public Schools Swimming Meet. I recall many training sessions where an exhausted team assumed we were finished when the coach would call out "*five more sprints for Royal*" and off, we went. The coach, the late Commander "Boxer" Dassanayake, was an old boy and knew how to motivate us!

The vice-captain of the swimming team, known to all as "P Bole," (seated on the left of the Warden in the team photo and now sadly passed away) approached me on the penultimate day of the meet and asked me for a contribution towards the purchase of some "liquid refreshments." It was an established tradition, so I contributed but got P Bole's assurances that alcohol would be confined to the older boys, not consumed till the meet was over and they would not be wearing their STC swim team track tops when indulging.



S. Thomas' College Swimming Team-1974

Fast forward to the final event of the meet which was the U18 4x100 metre free style relay. It turned out that Royal was one point ahead of us on the overall points table hence the meet hinged on this relay. Royal had the fastest time in the heats and were the favourites to win the relay. Moreover, it overlapped the Rugby season and P Bole and I were really part time swimmers and the definite weak link in the Thomian team. Much to our delight we won the relay and consequentially the meet thanks to an amazing leg swum by the P Bole who smashed the field including his highly fancied Royal counterpart. The Thomian swim team was celebrating on the pool deck and P Bole approached me for a big bear hug saying "*Mather, machang we fixed the b....*" when the strong smell of alcohol hit me. You must work through acute lactose induced pain during last 30 metres of a swim sprint and my friend had clearly disregarded my instructions and had the benefit of some anesthetic to dull this pain! Yet another swimming tradition was that, whenever we won, the captain and often the coach would be tossed into the pool fully clothed. I came prepared with spare clothes, but "Boxer" had a very wet and uncomfortable bus ride back to Mount Lavinia especially as we passed the word to other passengers that he was a drunk who had fallen into a pond!

Until 1972, STC was the only school that fielded a water polo team hence we honed our skills playing in the main Sri Lankan national leagues. As a result, when an inter school tournament was introduced, we were far too strong for "mere" schoolboys and in that first year, our B team pushed Royal to the limit in a semi-final and only lost by a single goal in extra time. Our A team then thrashed Royal in the tournament final by around 35 goals to nil that was huge in the context of this sport. We learned our lesson and, moving forward, split into more even Blues and Blacks that ensured the two Thomian teams played each other in the tournament final! In my final year at college, we were runners up in the Mens' B league just dropping one game against a very strong Otters team. Water Polo is very physical with plenty of body work including an element of wrestling and some rather "nasty" activity underwater. Being schoolboys, teams would attempt to intimidate us hence we learned to be resilient and sledge back often with language that belied our tender years. I recall playing most of that game against Otters with a profuse nose-bleed courtesy of an opponent's elbow to my face. I was the full-back and my role was to wear the opposition's key forward like a glove, restrict and make his life difficult hence I had got under his skin and probably deserved the blow! It was no mean feat to compete against men but what we lacked in comparative body strength we made up with superior speed, agility, fitness, and unit skills. Looking back, we

can be very proud of the numerous Thomian teams that competed in the national leagues in that era.

This will not be complete without mentioning the Royal Thomian cricket game that used to stop, or at the very least slow down, the nation. My recollections of the actual games are few and far between. The winning runs being scored in 1964, the despair of losing in 1969 and Duleep Mendis breaking the batting record in 1972 come to mind. The real action was off the field, such as the traditional jeep parade on the morning of the game. That was quite an event where we started at Mount and headed to the (now old) parliament with some obligatory stops at some girls' schools along the way. The finale was laying wreaths at the statutes of the old Thomian PMs at the front of parliament and serenading them with the college song! It must be said, however, that the Royal cycle parade on the match eve was far superior to ours. A much bigger school hence they had far bigger numbers participating and great organisation. They would knock off the streetlights and Reid Avenue would be lit up by just the blue and gold lanterns on each bike that was a sight to behold.

Much is made of our legendary rivalry with Royal College, but the reality was that, notwithstanding the intensity in the sporting arena, there was a lot of comradery and mutual respect off it. I could rattle off numerous stories, and I recall getting through to the senior schools basketball finals being held away from Colombo but our coach did not make the trip and a substitute master knew nothing about the game. It was a knockout tournament and, in an early game, an opposition player was shooting baskets from well outside our defensive zone that was killing us. The captain of the Royal team was watching this and, acting like our coach, called a much-needed time out. He then told us to slow the game down and to change our defensive pattern from a zone to at least a half court man on man defence to lock up the sharpshooter. He also remained to call our quota of time outs whenever he felt we needed to slow things further. It worked and we went onto win that game. This was a wonderful gesture especially as we did match up well against Royal and it was probably in their interest to see us knocked out. Perhaps it was karma that, against all odds, Royal did eventually knock us out!

I also recall the 1971 rugby season that was impacted by the insurgency and school closures earlier in the year. Whilst Royal and STC managed to schedule a reasonably full season, Trinity announced they would be only playing four games that did not include us. D R Weerasinghe's team had beaten Trinity in Colombo in 1970 on their way to being school champions and STC were fancied to beat them in Kandy that year. Hence, we were convinced this was a deliberate strategy to avoid us and were quite unhappy! At the

single Bradby Shield game that was played in Colombo, there was a sea of blue and black in the crowd as there were almost as many Thomians supporting the Royal team as Royalists. We found chanting R.O.Y.A.L bizarre but cathartic! Much to our delight, an unfancied Royal team led by Maiya Gunesekera, who went on to captain Sri Lanka and is now a well-known surgeon, beat Trinity by a decent margin. More generally, the Royalists and Thomians always socialised especially at residential sporting events and cadet camps where exchanging “contraband” and a post event drink was the norm. Hence, I add a big shout out to our friends at Royal College who add a lot to our sporting experiences and traditions.

I constantly marvel that a relatively small school could help produce four well respected Heads of State and a multitude of distinguished leaders in the military,

professions, academia, and business. The Duke of Wellington famously said that “the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton.” I have little doubt the leadership skills and life lessons learned on the playing fields of our alma mater made a similar contribution to rounding our education. Long may this continue or very appropriately,

Esto Perpetua.



Paul R. Mather (1963-74) - Captain of Swimming (1974), Co-Captain of Water Polo (1974) and was awarded college colours in Swimming, Water Polo, Rugby, and Basketball.

STC NURSERY

CREATING NEW GENERATIONS OF EXCELLENCE!

About Us

Since 2017, the S. Thomas' College Nursery has strived to provide 2 to 5 year olds with a fun and exciting learning experience through unique and innovative teaching methods.

Our Objective

To establish a Nursery of quality and distinction for the sons and daughters of old boys of S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia, adding further value to College.

The STC Nursery, established in 2017, offers budding Thomians to experience the “school by the sea” at a very young age. The facility, located in the Mount Lavinia campus, is open to 2- to 5-year-olds, and caters to sons and daughters of Old Boy’s from STC Mount Lavinia.

As expected, due to high demand, eligibility criteria for places are quite strict. To comply, Old boys should have been a minimum of 4 years at Mt. Lavinia or a minimum of 2 years at Mt. Lavinia and 2 years in a Branch School to be eligible to apply for their son’s admission. In addition, 5 years membership of the OBA is also a mandatory requirement. Sons of Old Boys admitted in these age groups will be automatically absorbed to the mainstream of the College in the appropriate year. Daughters of Old Boys will be admitted depending on vacancies, and leave at the end of their stay in the Nursery.

“ONE CAN NEVER REPAY”

*Through the lens of a Legendary Thomian Athlete -
M. Balasubramaniam (Bala)*



In the year 1945 I gained admission to this magnificent College temporarily situated at St Paul's Milagiriya, Bambalapitiya as our Mount Lavinia premises was occupied by the British Army. They made it into a makeshift hospital for the soldiers who required medical attention during the Second World War. In 1946 The British Army moved out and College shifted back to its main premises in Mount Lavinia.

My school life until 1950 was like that of any other student with not much interest in activities. Then in 1950, for some unknown reason, I participated in Athletics at the House Meet and was placed second in the Discus throwing event and third place in the High Jump for the under 16 age group. This changed my thinking and gave me enormous confidence to try various other events. Though my big physique suited field events, I always wanted to try track events.

During the school holidays in 1951, I used to visit a public park (Rudra Park) close to my residence. The instructor there noticed me and encouraged me to train hard, and he gave me a few tips. Subsequently I came to know that the instructor was Mr. Duraisingham who was a Public Schools Athlete and a product of Manipay Hindu College, Jaffna. During his year he competed with the likes of H.S.R. Goonawardane of Royal College. He ran barefoot which gave me a lot of confidence as I too ran most events barefoot.

My late father was also a product of College and a classmate of Warden de Saram. Dad used to narrate good old stories typical of a young boy's pranks from his boarding days, and we used to have a hearty laugh.

College had athletics trials at St Peter's, Bambalapitiya, as the school grounds were closed for maintenance. During the August term holidays all the boys interested in Athletics trials were requested to be present at St. Peter's grounds. I also went and told the STC athletics coach Mr. Brookie D' Silva that I was keen in taking part in the school trials. He gave me a good look and advised me not to waste his time and go away as I was only a field athlete. Anyway, I insisted and took part in the 100 yards event and was placed first, beating the would-be champion. I gave the coach no option but to include me in the 100 yards sprint event for the Group meet to be held at the Royal College.

Top schools such as Royal, St. Peter's, St. John's, Christian College, Kotte etc. participated in the Group meet. My events were the 100 yards, 4x110 yards relay and high jump. I ran in the heats and was placed second. This gave me a big boost. As I was preparing for the finals my good friend Chito Rajasingham came to my rescue. He had a brand new pair of Hot Spurs running shoes but could not use them as he was injured. When I asked, he lent them without any hesitation. Being a first-time user, I wore them and ran in the grounds like a stray dog to get used to running with shoes. Without the knowledge of the Coach, I ran the juniors under 16 -100 yards final and was placed first, clocking a public schools record of 10.9 seconds. The borrowed running shoes fitted me perfectly.

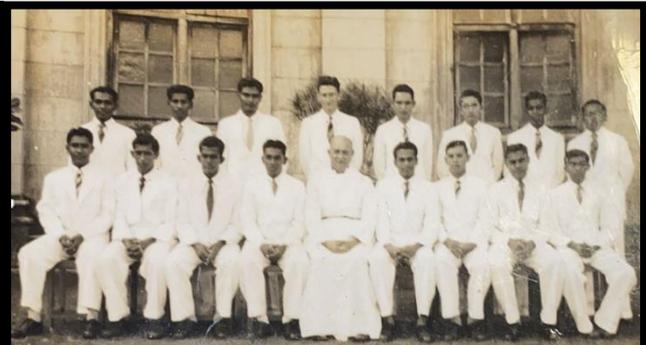
In my second year as a senior (1952) I took part and won the 100 yards, 220 yards and was placed third in the long jump. On seniority I should have been given the post of vice captain. However, there was another boy in the team who was in the final year and my coach Mr. Brookie D'Silva asked me if I had any objection to him appointing the final year boy as vice-captain. Since, I had another year I agreed to step down from the post of vice captain. I agreed because in the olden days we all pulled together. On the next Wednesday the list was

taken to the Warden who was on his way to the assembly. He had a good look and informed Brookie that the list was incorrect and pointed out that I was senior. He asked as to why I was not appointed as vice-captain. Brookie informed him that he had got the permission from me to appoint the final year student as vice-captain, it being his last year. Warden R.S. de Saram refused to allow this stating justice and fair play need to be upheld, and he appointed me as the vice-captain. The Warden's word of justice and fair play became a part of my day to day life ever since.

In another incident during the Public Schools meet trials our captain Ivor Geddes pulled out due to injury. On the morning of the meet, I was summoned to the Warden's Office. I was scared and worried not knowing the reason for being called. When I went to his office he told me that our captain could not participate, and he wanted me to shoulder the team and to win the Tarbat Challenge Trophy. I made the Warden proud in fulfilling his wish. The long jump was the last event after the 4x440 yards relay, and I informed the officials manning the long jump that I would do it after the relay. However, the relay took toll on my legs, and I was thinking of opting out of the long jump. But the College boys rallied behind me and encouraged me by saying that if I could get third place, College would win the Tarbat Trophy. Thankfully my third attempt placed me third and we won the Tarbat Challenge Trophy. I delighted the Warden and the College, and from thereon I became well known as Bala. At the next assembly my name was called, and I was inducted as a College Prefect which was a memorable moment in my life at school. In 1955 I was awarded the Victoria Gold Medal for the Best All-Round Student and was made the Head Prefect.



1953 STC Athletics Team – Winners of the Tarbat, Jefferson, Schokman and D'Silva Challenge Cups and the Victoria Shield

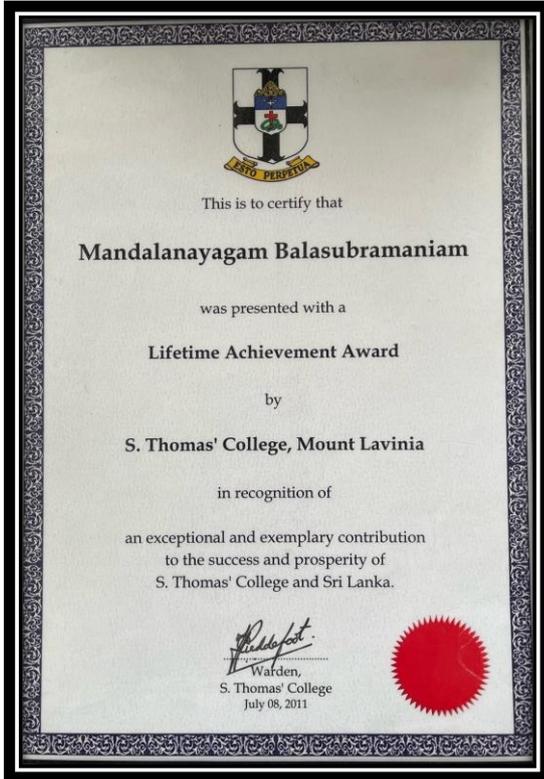


1955 School Prefects

On an interesting note, my House Master, Mr. Bada Perera went out leaving me alone with his dinner to look after the boarding. It was Christmas night, and it was my third dinner for the evening. I ate and I later dozed off on his bed. After a while he came back in the pouring rain and called out to me for quite some time to open the door. Next day a newspaper article read, *"Bada Perera stood in the rain while head cop Bala slept soundly in his bed after eating his dinner."*

From the time I won the Tarbat the Warden took an interest in me and guided me even after I left College. While I was doing my final year of studies many leading commercial firms were offering jobs through the College carriers committee. Warden wanted me to get into a good firm and invited me to the Old Boys' celebrations where he introduced me to Justice E.F.N. Gratien a reputable rugby player. He knew Mr. A.C. Walker through playing rugby and I was given a job at Walker & Sons.

After a few years Warden came back to Sri Lanka from England and enquired after my welfare. He observed that the company had not promoted me. He came in person and met Mr. A.C. Walker and said that he would remove me (Bala) if the company did not promote me. Within a few weeks I was given a promotion. My progress from there onwards blossomed, showering me with wealth and popularity. I was known as "Walker's Bala". I was blessed to have had wonderful parents to give me a good education in a wonderful College where I was given all what a child could ask for. Moreover, the Warden was a pillar of strength and he ensured that I progressed well after College.....May God keep the Blue and Black flag flying high, always.



Editor's Note: This condensed article was produced from an article originally written for the OBA in Sydney in respect for this Thomian legend who passed away in 2015 at the age of 94. Bala was a recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award for his services to College. The award was presented by Warden Puddefoot in in July 2011.

A fitting tribute by a younger Old Boy is given below:

"I got to know this remarkable gentleman here Down Under when he came after retirement to live with his daughter's family. Instantly and without any reservations we both 'clicked' despite our vast age difference! That 'College connection' was evident from day one. Dear Uncle Bala became my friend and Thomian mentor. Visits and the long phone calls were a regular occurrence. I still cherish and carefully preserve college souvenirs from him".

"That emptiness and void I felt of leaving Sri Lankan whilst still a student suddenly disappeared when Uncle Bala was around. He was the embodiment of STC and remained a dedicated, loyal, True Thomian to the very end and who served College, Country, His immediate family and the Thomian fraternity with unwavering loyalty".

Chitran Duraisamy (1974 – 1984 STC Mount)

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

Mr. Sandadas Coperahewa – An Appreciation



In June 2022, we lost another iconic teacher Mr. Sandadas Coperahewa who served in the academic staff at College for thirty-two years (1951-1983) teaching Sinhala, Art and Buddhism. His demise marks the end of the long list of dedicated and loyal teachers at College during this era. Mr. Coperahewa was the only surviving member of the original Hela Hawla movement. He was indeed an institution at St Thomas', enjoying a long and productive teaching career nurturing many Thomians in his inimitable way, which left pleasant memories and experiences among those fortunate enough to be in his charge.

A prominent Old Thomian, Mevan Pieris, delivered the Funeral Oration as follows:

"We are gathered here this evening to pay our final respects to a great teacher. In my days in the School by the sea in the 1950s and 1960s, Mr Sandadas Coperahewa was my revered teacher in art and Sinhala, and I thought I should pay a tribute to him as he is the last of my teachers to depart with all other sacred spirits who taught me having gone ahead.

He was one of my favourite teachers and I believe that I was one of his favourite students as well. I was in the same class as G L Peiris the current Minister of Foreign Affairs. Mr Coperahewa, my dear teacher was exceptionally good at drawing and he was fond of me as I could paint reasonably well.

Having said that, I now wish to share with you a few thoughts of that great Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore. According to Tagore, the greatest visitor is death, who visits everyone. We do not know when and how this visitor would arrive. The great visitor does not come bringing gifts for us but comes to take away; and when he comes has one question for all of us. The visitor would ask what we have to offer him. Tagore was ready to say, "I shall lay at your feet, all the trophies, honours and rewards I had gained in my life and is ready to come with you empty handed". Death the visitor is inescapable. We do not know when and how this visitor will come to us. We have to be always prepared for the journey, and we have to take it by turn. This is not something special that has happened to our great teacher.

Our turn is next. Life is like a game of cricket and Sandadas Coperahewa has played an innings close to a century. A batsman who bats for long, likes to make a century. Some are able to do so and others may get out at 99. There could be, also, many an escape during a long innings and some close calls as well. Sandadas Coperahewa has failed to make the century by just one year. We are proud of his performance and our respect is even more.

As a teacher he was always immaculately clad in coat and tie, and had a pleasant personality. He was one of several teachers who came from the South of Ceylon to teach Sinhalese in the days of Canon RS De Saram. The leader of this group of teachers was Pinto Jayawardena, and others were, Arisen Ahubudu (previously Ariyasena Ashuboda), Sandadas Coperahewa, Jinadasa, Vini Vitharne, and DS Jayasekera. They taught what was then known as Hela Sinhala. The Warden of the school, a classics scholar from Oxford, encouraged Hela Sinhala. Some students found it difficult but I liked it.

The method of teaching adopted by Ahubudu and Coperahewa was unique. They kept relating stories and the students listened with captured attention, and had to learn the language by listening to the well-spoken word. Coperahewa even illustrated what he said with beautiful drawings on the blackboard. When I met his son who is a Professor in Sinhala at the University of Colombo, I told him in lighter vein that I would not speak to him in Sinhalese as my Sinhala was too good as I had learnt it from his father.

In life friends may depart but memories remain. I shall cherish the fond memories I carry of my teacher, and so shall all of us. May God grant unto him eternal rest."

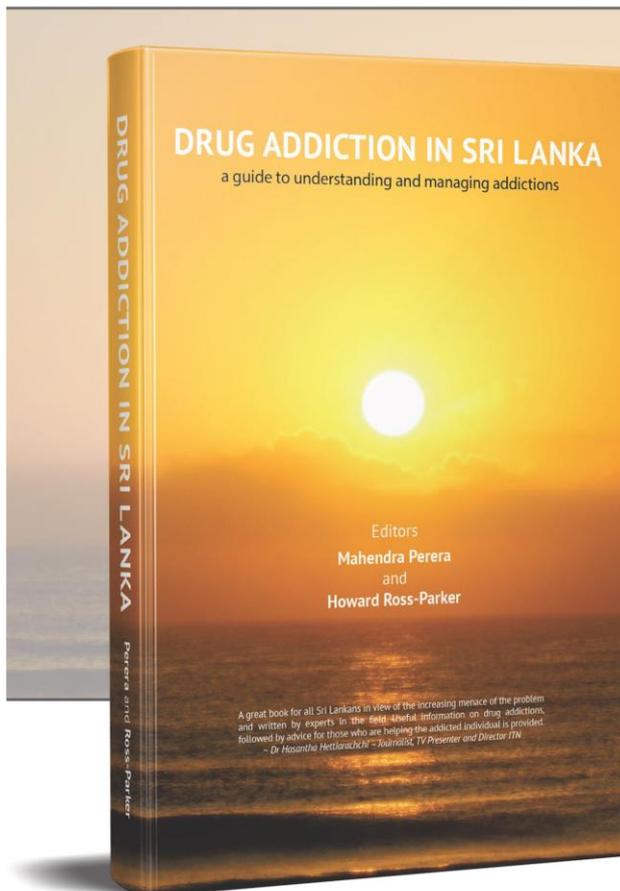
Editor's Note: Our appreciation to Mevan Pieris and Sriyan Jayasekera for their contribution.

DRUG ADDICTION IN SRI LANKA

a guide to understanding and managing addictions

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The devastation caused by drug addiction is having a deep impact on society in Sri Lanka. There is limited reliable information regarding this, as well as misinformation. In *Drug Addiction in Sri Lanka*, the authors present a perspective of the problems related to chemical addictions and a holistic approach to the process of helping not only the individual but also others involved in their care.

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Drug Addiction in Sri Lanka is intended for anyone interested in understanding the problems pertaining to addiction. It is a useful primer for students learning about drug addictions, teachers, and clinicians who work in the field. It is also for those personally battling with addiction, someone dealing with these demons and those who are concerned for the nation's future.

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Immediate Past President			
	Mahes Heenetigala	0418 182 707	maheenet@gmail.com

New Members of the OBA: January – August 2022

Name	Branch	Period
DE SILVA, Lahiru	Mount Lavinia	2004 - 2007
KOSGODAGE, Lakshitha	Mount Lavinia	1990 - 2003
WIJESINGHE, Malinda	Mount Lavinia	1993 - 2006
RAJASINGHAM, Naresh		
NATHANIEL, Elmo	Prep / Mount Lavinia	1969 - 1981
PERERA, Shenal	Prep / Mount Lavinia	2004 - 2018
GUNARATNE, Dulith	Mount Lavinia	2005 - 2019
WEERAKODY, Anoushka	Mount Lavinia	2005 - 2018
KANAGANAYAGAM, John	Prep / Mount Lavinia	1969 - 1981
MUNASINHA, Kishan	Mount Lavinia	2007 - 2021
LIYANAGE, Chamit	Mount Lavinia	1979 - 1993
DUNUWILLE, Sanjaya	Mount Lavinia	1984 - 1997
DE SILVA, Ravi	Mount Lavinia	1985 - 1997
PARANAVITANE, Shehan	Prep / Mount Lavinia	1984 - 1988



 <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 9.30 am</p>  <p>Keeley Park Clayton South, 3169</p>	 <p>THOMIAN BALL 2022</p> <p>Saturday 4th June 2022 6.30 pm</p>  <p>Sofitel Melbourne on Collins 25, Collins Street, Melbourne 3000</p>
 <p>ROYAL THOMIAN LIVE BROADCAST</p> <p>Friday 22nd July 2022 7.00pm</p>  <p>Waverley Youth Centre, Miller Crescent, Mount Waverley, 3149</p>	 <p>TRANSFIGURATION SERVICE</p> <p>Sunday 7th August 2022 Time: 9.30am</p>  <p>St, Aidan's Church Noble Park, Vic</p>	 <p>FRANKIE DAVID – MEMORIAL SERVICE</p> <p>Saturday 20th August 2022 5.00 p.m.</p>  <p>St, Aidan's Church Noble Park, Vic</p>
 <p>50TH ANNIVERSARY MEMBERS LUNCHEON</p> <p>Sunday 21st August 2022 12 noon</p>  <p>RSL Club 23 Osborne Ave, Springvale, Vic</p>	 <p>INFORMATION FORUM</p> <p><i>Information night for new and pending arrivals to Australia on a range of topics</i></p> <p>27 SEPTEMBER 2022 – 6.30PM AEST ON-LINE</p>	 <p>NINETIES NIGHT</p> <p>POSTPONED</p> <p>17th September 2022 7.00 pm</p> <p>Jan Wilson Community Centre Nobel Park, Vic</p>
 <p>MELBOURNE CUP SWEEP</p> <p>Tuesday 1st November 2022 2.00pm</p>	 <p>CAROL SERVICE</p> <p>Saturday 10th December 2022 Time: 6.00 p.m.</p> <p>St, Aidan's Church Noble Park, Vic</p>	 <p>Merry Christmas AND HAPPY NEW YEAR</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



IN MEMORIAM



They remain in our memories forever



Nimalka Wijesooriya – Former student at Mount Lavinia in the 1960s and left school in 1970. He was a School Prefect, and captained the U14 and U16 Cricket Teams, and played in the Big Match, in 1968, '69, and '70. He was the Vice Captain in 1970. He also played Hockey for STC from 1967 to 1970. Nimalka immigrated to the USA in 1972 and worked in the Foreign Service Office (FSO) of USAID, where he served in the Philippines, Jordan, Egypt, Israel, and Washington.



Gunatissa Panduwawela (Tissa) – Fondly known as Pandu, is a product of STC Mount Lavinia. He was a School Prefect in 1973 & 1974, Head Prefect of Copleston House (1974), 1st X1 Hockey captain and represented College in Basketball. He was a landed proprietor, a well-known Desiccated Coconut manufacturer and exporter; and the former Proprietor of Kudirippu D/C Mills in Madampe.



Mr. Sadadas Coperahewa -. He was the Head of the Faculty of Art at STC Mount Lavinia for a very long time, joining in 1951 and known for organising regular Art Exhibitions; and was also the main Sinhala teacher in the Coll Forms. Mr Coperahewa was the only surviving member of the original Hela Hawla movement. Mr. Coperahewa had a long and productive teaching career at College and was very popular amongst the students, which left pleasant memories and experiences among those fortunate enough to be in his charge.



Asoka Jayasekera - He was at Mount Lavinia throughout his schooling and left in 1965 and represented College at 1st XV Rugby (1963/1964) and Rowing. Upon leaving school Asoka embarked on a highly successful career as a planter initially at James Finlay & Co. He volunteered his services and served the Estate Management of the Church of Ceylon for nearly 3 decades. He was also a member of the Army's volunteer corps. He is the brother of Bumpy Jayasekera, member of the STC OBA in Melbourne.



Edward Lekamge (EDB) – Former teacher at STC Mount Lavinia (1960 – 1978). Mr. Lekamge migrated to Australia in 1978 residing in Melbourne and was a member of the STC OBA (Australia Branch). He graduated (Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology) from Deakin University in Melbourne in 1988 and was employed at Australia Post until retirement. He passed away peacefully at home in Brunswick, Melbourne on 4 June 2022, age 93.



B.A Mahipala - Fondly known as 'Mahi' to his friends. He was from the Class of '55 and studied both at Mount Lavinia and Gurutalawa. He was a generous Old Boy and benefactor of both STC Mount Lavinia and Gurutalawa. He sponsored the renovation of the Hayman Senior Dormitory at Gurutalawa and also the first solar power project at Mount Lavinia. He was a Mechanical Engineer and graduated from University of Peradeniya.



Mohan Mendis (PMR) - He received his entire schooling at S. Thomas' College, Mt Lavinia and was a member of Class of 55. He was an accomplished treble and tenor and became Choir Leader. He was a College Prefect and an active member of the OBA and also the Centenary Group, serving both as treasurer. Mohan was a Chartered Accountant by profession and served in many senior positions especially in the tea industry. A dedicated Christian and an active member of the Church of Ceylon.

Esto Perpetua

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**50th Anniversary Commemorative
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\$25.00 (incl. postage)

Contact

Milinda Liyanage
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PHOTO GALLERY

THOMIAN BALL 2022



PHOTO GALLERY

THOMIAN BALL 2022



PHOTO GALLERY

TRANSFIGURATION SERVICE



PHOTO GALLERY

FRANKIE DAVID MEMORIAL SERVICE



PHOTO GALLERY

50TH ANNIVERSARY MEMBERS LUNCHEON

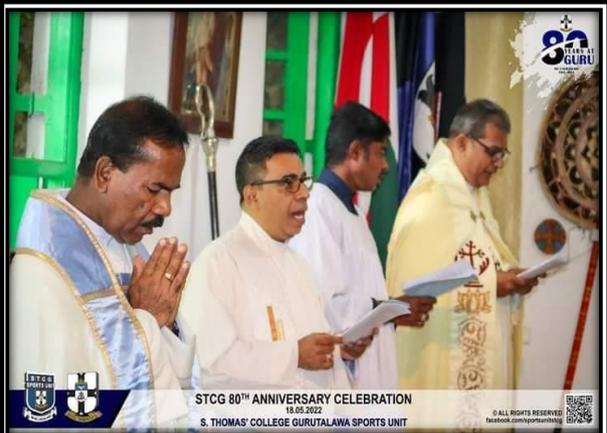


PHOTO GALLERY

80TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AT GURUTALAWA



From left to right, Fr. Nihal Fernando, Headmaster at S. Thomas' prep school, kollupitiya. Fr. Marc Billimoria warden at S. Thomas' college Mount Lavinia. Our Lord Bishop, Rt. Rev. Fr. Dushantha Rodrigo. Fr. Nesakumar our Headmaster and Fr. Balraj Headmaster at S. Thomas' college Bandarawela.



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