

The OLD BOY



THE S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, MT. LAVINIA OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION (FOUNDED 1886). Edition - 31.12.2007
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"BE THOU FOREVER" A THOMIAN

When I was asked to write to the OBA newsletter I thought, "what might other Thomians find interesting?" I thought that I should share with other Thomians some of the reasons that make me forever a Thomian.

I believe I belong to that very special group of Thomian families who can lay claim to six generations of Thomians. First my great, great grandfather Jacob De Mel was one of the earliest students of the College when it was inaugurated in Mutuwal; Second my great grandfather Arthur Bulner (my grandmother's father) - also in Mutuwal; Third my grandfather H. A. "Percy" Pieris and grand uncle Cyril Pieris; Fourth my father P. I. Pieris and uncle David Pieris; Fifth my brother Jehan, cousins Johann and Eshan (who is presently in College) and myself; and Sixth my son Riahn A. Pieris. With that kind of tradition it is hard to consider that members of my family are anything but "blue black and blue" and emerged into the world singing "Esto Perpetua."

Early days at the Prep School

My early days were in the Prep school at Kollupitiya and I continued there for the next 9 years till I went on to College. I feel this article will not be complete if I do not give the reader the foundation of my Thomian'ness.' I can still recall clearly those early days from my very first teacher Mrs. Boehm who instilled in us the basics and what a marvellous foundation I believe it was. What wonderful carefree, fun filled days those were.

I was in trouble early on for supposedly poking Nigel Lutersz in the eye. My first caning was when Christopher Hallock and I decided to have a skirmish and make our shirts blue to match our shorts with 'Cial' fountain pens. Alas our posteriors were rendered black and blue too!

Many of those early classmates have now gone overseas and are lost forever to the country. For the record I will try to list some of them with profuse apologies for the many I will undoubtedly miss. I can recollect Jeremy Ferreira, Tony De Livera, Tissa Wimalasekara (died recently tragically), Enrico Da Silva, Winston Jansz, Jeremy Christophelsz, Kevin Boustead, Shane Ferreira, Ifthi Ismail, Fayek Wafa, Kevin Martin, Shibly Jowersha, Anver Jafferjee, Ronnie Redlich, Romesh Fernando, Russel Mclean, Shiran Fernando, Glenn Darius, Diresh Phillips and many others who must forgive me for my fading memory. You will see that many of the names of my classmates are 'burghers' or those of mixed parentage. The late 50's and 60's was a tumultuous time; education was influenced greatly by issues of language. The country was being divided along linguistic lines, leading to a call for geographic division. Woefully neither students nor parents had, or should I say have, a choice over the medium of instruction and this inevitably fuelled the fires of disunity. Later on in this article I will touch on, somewhat superficially, how language policies still haunt us today. It is a question that begs a solution.

As a tribute I would like to remember my teachers by name because I know there are many 'Thomians' who were moulded by these truly dedicated people - "so many of us owe so much to so few." I wonder if the students of today will look back with the respect and gratitude we had for our teachers. The Headmaster was none other than Mr. J. S. L. Fernando (my father's teacher). After year 1 and Mrs. Boehm, we had Ms. Dwight, Weerasinghe, Paramasothy, Peramunna, Carmen de Silva, Dhanna Perera, Basset Perera and Rosemary de Silva followed by the masters Messrs Alwis, Chapman, Bala, Thiagarajah, BRN and GC Mendis, Wilson and the indefatigable Dixon. I can still recall so much about each one of these wonderful people that it would be the work of a whole book to expand on what I learnt from each one of them. I hope that by recognizing them by name I can in some way draw attention to their commitment and dedication on behalf of all of us who had the privilege to be taught by them.

In the words of the existential philosopher Rene Descartes "*cogito ergo sum*" (Latin: "I think therefore I am"). I wish to translate this in this instance to mean, "by thought you are in my memory and more so in my heart." At the time the Prep School had a strong focus on sports, confirmed by the fact that many went on to excel at College and Royal. However, the main difference I found after going on to College, after the National Certificate of General Education (NCGE) in 1976, was that at Prep we were 'boys' while at College we had to fast become 'men' and hopefully 'gentle' too.

From 'Boys to Men' at Mount Lavinia

My early assimilation within Mount was made easier because of prior performances on the cricket field while representing the Prep school against College. I had managed to earn a degree of respect. In addition my brother Jehan and cousin Johann were already firmly entrenched. Here I entered the 'Col forms' to prepare for the Higher National Certificate of Education (HNCE) with some real inspirational characters for teachers. Rev. L. G. B. Fernando, Mrs. Gwendolyn Dias Abeysinghe, Mr. E. F. C. Pereira (50 years of teaching, 20 odd years at Royal and the rest at STC, a legend, he also taught my father), Ms. Indra de Silva, Mr. H. R. (Jothipala) Perera, Ms. Jebamoney, Mr. Selvanayagam, Mr. S. S. Perera and Warden Illangakoon. My second caning in school was at the hands of Mr. Quentin Israel when I was marched off by Mr. Selvanayagam for disrupting his German class. How can I forget the perceived love-hate relationship I had with the Sub-Warden at the time, Dr. Rajiva Wijesinghe! He was not prepared to let sportsmen get by without applying themselves to their studies. Ken and I were the worst offenders, 1st XI Captain and Vice Captain, seemingly invincible, proud, impetuous, youthful and arrogant. But if truth be told I knew Rajiva (today a leader for peace) was right. Sir, I doff my hat in appreciation and respect for what you tried to achieve. I did go on to graduate from university on the 'honours roll' and the 'Dean's list.' As we will see a spokesperson for education so it was not in vain.

My education or should I say learning was influenced greatly by two pillars **Mrs Dias Abeysinghe** and **Mr. E. F. C. Pereira** and in retrospect I can say they were the quintessential teachers. They knew their subjects enough to be considered 'masters.' I challenged them from every possible angle but how wise they were! Each one of these two so special that while I sit here writing I can see them and hear them as if it were just yesterday, overcome by joy intermingled with a sense of sadness while I recollect those halcyon days. The overriding influence they had on my passage through life is something I can treasure. I remember well, sitting there in the reading area of the library, which was our class room, listening to and participating in dialectics with the likes of Chanaka Amaratunga, Richard de Zoysa (both now deceased), Rohan Edirisinha, Chandri Peries, Nigel Hatch, Asitha Perera - seniors who were also doing classics, along with Harsha Athurupane, Naresh Jayalingam, Guy Halpe, Mohan Tissainayagam, Ponnambalana and Louis Siriwardena (light interludes) - great characters all. We had to change midstream to A-levels and I took this opportunity to change my subjects from 'classics' to 'commerce.' Here I lost a year and struck up new friendships with Rohan Matthew, Istafa Hassan, Charith Gunatilake and renewed old ties with two cricketing buddies from 'Prep' and 'SSC juniors,' - Shehan de Silva and Akram Cassim. I guess we epitomize the three musketeers, "all for one and one for all," added to today by Rohan "roti" Fernando a senior like D'Artagnan. I cannot imagine three finer gentlemen to call my friends.

Building Character the Thomian way

The essence of the school is the Anglican faith. For many of us the day began in chapel and the roots of a 'liberal Christian education' were firmly etched in our minds. The teachings of the church are at the very foundation of the school, the Psalm of David defines to me not merely the motto of the Prep school but what it felt like to be at STC: It is important to be reminded by Psalm 23

- 1) The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.
- 2) He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
- 3) He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
- 4) Even though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,

- your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
- 5) You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
- 6) Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD
forever for you are with me;

*"Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever."
- Napoleon Bonaparte (1769 -1821)*

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)



OBA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 2007/2008

HONY. SECRETARY'S REPORT

The initial project of the STCML OBA Ex-Co 2007/2008 was offering the 1st XI cricket team a weekend outing provided they emerge victorious at the annual Royal Thomian cricket encounter. This decision was taken by the Ex-Co on a proposal made by the Hony. Secretary at the Ex-Co meeting held on the 26th of February 2007, which was the first meeting for the new year. The 1st XI cricket team made it a grand double by beating archrivals Royal College not only in the 3-day game but also in the limited overs match and thereby richly deserved the weekend outing. The team enjoyed a weekend at Hotel Blue Water, Wadduwa. Funds for this were collected through voluntary contributions by members of the Ex-Co.

The OBA Secretariat embarked on another maiden project, which was adding value to the OBA membership card. Five such value additions were introduced and many old boys benefited from this exercise.

- (1) The Ceylon Hotels Corporation gave recognition to the OBA membership card by providing a host of special benefits for members of the OBA. Attractive discounts on hotel rates, special discounts on local tour packages, excursions and airport transfers are some of the benefits on offer for the members of the OBA.
- (2) Medi-Calls offered the second value addition to the OBA membership card. Special rates are on offer to members of the OBA. Medi-Calls provides medical facilities through a team of experienced doctors, nursing staff and paramedics trained in intensive care and medical emergencies.
- (3) Dialog Satellite TV offered the third value addition to the OBA membership card. They have offered a package comprising 29 international channels and 6 local channels with a 50% discount on the sale price.
- (4) The fourth value addition was offered by Klevenberg (Pvt) Limited. Klevenberg, a pioneer in the automotive trade, offered members attractive discounts on automotive products and maintenance.
- (5) The fifth value addition was offered by Durdans Hospital. Discounts were offered on OPD, lab investigations, health profiles and X-Ray/ECG.

The OBA Secretariat embarked on a venture of providing career guidance to school leavers. Accordingly school leavers are informed of job opportunities through email whenever such opportunities are available.

The STCML OBA Ex-Co 2007/2008 comprises various Sub-Committees, which take on individual projects and work towards ensuring these projects are a success. Given below is a summary of the work being carried out by these sub-committees.

■ The **Alumni Development Sub-committee** is currently working with Kent on ways and means of utilising the available advertisement hoarding space to obtain maximum revenue from the resources available at College.

■ The **Thomian Dance Committee** is working tirelessly in making preparations for the Thomian Nite - 2007, which is to be held at the Waters Edge on the 9th of November 2007. This year, the Thomian Nite is referred to as "Pulse 2007" and is expected to be a grand and colourful event.

■ The **Education and Faculty Development Committee** is at present engaged in two projects, which are focused on capacity building of both staff and students.

1. Faculty Needs Assessment Programme – This programme got under way at the start of the 3rd term with a diagnostic workshop conducted by Mr. Ranel Wijesinha (a member of the Ex-Co) for the staff of the advanced level classes. This was an interactive session with active participation of all present. The purpose of this workshop was to identify the needs of the staff as a starting point for future development activities. As an outcome of this session the members of the staff were divided into groups and identified as task forces in charge of specific areas in order for them to formulate their own suggestions and recommendations for further improvement and value addition. Some of the areas that will be covered by the task forces are:

- a) Physical infrastructure
- b) Reference material
- c) Continuous professional development
- c) Information technology enhancement
- d) Staff assessment and evaluation

A follow up meeting was facilitated by Mr. Ranel Wijesinha, at which the progress of the task forces were reviewed and guidance offered. It is expected that this project will identify the areas in which the OBA could get involved in the future with regard to faculty development.

2. Leadership Development for Prefects - A one-day workshop for twenty-five prefects was conducted by Mr. Nalin Jayasuriya, an old boy of the school. The boys were exposed to a high quality training session, which covered areas such as personality development, communication, teamwork and leadership. The learning experience of the students came from lectures as well as group work and games. It is the intention of the Sub-Committee to carry out similar programmes that would eventually cover all the school prefects and house prefects. Our thanks go out to Mr. Nalin Jayasuriya for making himself available to us free of charge despite a very busy schedule.

The activities for the future will centre on identifying the needs of the faculty through feedback from the teachers. The task forces will be presenting their final proposals in the last week of October and a comprehensive document will be prepared as a working paper.

■ The **Sports Committee** has set its sights on developing and providing assistance in infrastructure facilities, equipment and material, funding of group and individual requirements regarding the various sports and other extra curricular activities at College. The basketball court upgrading was completed with the assistance of a generous contribution by a well wisher/parent. Swimming and water polo has been assisted with the supply of materials. As part of a long-term plan, the committee is looking at identifying a prioritised list of requirements in order to improve the various sports activities. Poor student participation, unplanned and improperly timed inter-school competitions, and the ever increasing costs of participation, facilities and equipment have been identified as some of the reasons as to why College finds it difficult to implement a comprehensive programme of development in extra curricular activities.

- **Scouting** continued to maintain high standards with our junior troop emerging champions and the senior troop and cub pack as runners-up in the Colombo District.
- **Cricket** basked in the glory of the Royal Thomian victory and certainly does not suffer from a lack of participation. The advisory committee continues to closely monitor and work towards improvement.
- In **Badminton** the Under – 16 team emerged all island champions.
- **Rugby** improved at all age groups and it was heartening to see the junior teams performing so much better than in previous years. The OBA congratulates the steering committee, coaches and all others who contributed towards this achievement.
- **Swimming and water polo** showed similar improvements. Two Thomians were chosen to represent Sri Lanka in the senior national and Under - 15 categories at the SAF games. Three Thomians also represented the country in water polo at the SAF games. The Sri Lankan team won the Silver medal and this is the best ever performance recorded by the country in water polo.
- In the sphere of **athletics** after many years College produced a record breaker at the senior Tarbat athletics meet. This youngster is an extremely talented athlete. We expect athletics to show a marked improvement in the future under the guidance of the new coach, dedicated steering committee and co-ordinator.

The Thomians have performed creditably in most sports this year and the achievements have shown an improvement on the previous year. We must once again remind enthusiastic, supportive and generous old boys that the development of the students is the primary objective of extra curricular activities and not instant achievement in competition.

■ The **Esto Perpetua Economic Forum** in collaboration with Mr Sarath Wickramaratne, Teacher in Charge of the 'current affairs' sessions invites prominent old boys and individuals to conduct lectures to the college form students on topics, which would benefit the development of their young minds. During the 2nd and 3rd term Mr B.R.L. Fernando and Mr Nalin Jayasuriya, both prominent old boys addressed the sessions. Mr B.R.L. Fernando spoke on the topic "A Comparison of Commercial Enterprise Then and Now," while Mr Nalin Jayasuriya spoke on the topic "Possibilities of Career Development and Enhancement." The committee plans to invite a host of such prominent old boys to address the current affairs sessions this term as well.

■ The **Finance Committee** continues to support the financial structure of the OBA. The committee provides financial assistance to students who seek such assistance when selected to represent the country at international sports events. Monthly accounts are submitted to the Ex-Co at the end of each month. The Ex-Co reimbursed Rs.100,000/= towards the bonus payable to the College staff. A special fund raising event to recover recurrent expenditure of the OBA Secretariat, which is around Rs.50,000/- per month, will be held early next year.

❑ The **Membership Development Committee** launched a membership drive targeting the students who were to sit the advanced level exam this year. Membership forms and a special covering letter, which was prepared for this purpose, were distributed among the students of the science, commerce and arts streams. An inter-batch softball cricket tournament, which will be a family event, has been planned for February next year in collaboration with the OTCU. A social event (Dinner or Day Out) is expected to be organised with the support of all batch groups and members to ensure maximum participation to interact and socialize with all age groups.

❑ The **Infrastructure Development Committee** has taken on the restoration of the College hall, especially the windows, as its project this year. Restoration work of the windows on the lower seaside level is complete while the upper levels are being completed. The committee has received financial assistance from the Centenary Group and also from the Australian OBA and expects to complete the hall project by the AGM next year.

❑ The **News Letter Committee** has secured Mobitel, Epsi and Aramex as the sponsors of the Newsletter for 2007. The committee is making preparations to publish a newsletter filled with quality reading material by December. The sudden and extreme increase in the cost of postage has posed serious problems to the committee. A generous donation has been made by a well wisher towards defraying the cost of postage.

❑ The **Web Committee** continues to update photographs, scores of rugby, cricket and results of other sports activities and also keeps the old boy fraternity abreast of the latest developments at College and of the OBA. The web committee is constantly implementing new strategies to improve the web site, which is a vital link in keeping, especially the overseas old boy community informed of any new developments.

❑ The **Corporate Placements Development Committee** is in the process of assisting young Thomians who are looking out for suitable career prospects reach their goal. A web-based directory of these applicants will be prepared and applicants informed of suitable job vacancies.

❑ The **Old Boy Parent Facilitation Committee** conducted a census with regard to old boy/parents by distributing a form amongst students in the lower school, middle school, upper school and college forms in which details had to be filled regarding the old boy/parent. These forms were handed over to Sampath Bank who prepared a database from which the STC OBA affinity credit card was aggressively marketed. As the second project a voluntary contributions of paint was collected from the parents of the lower school. The paint collected was utilised to re-paint the class rooms, doors, windows and passages of the "L" block of the lower school.

❑ The **Special Events Committee** has been given the mammoth task of raising funds to renovate the College Chapel roof. A number of fund raising events have been planned in the coming months. The Chapel Renovation Fund was kicked off with a service after which the fund raising project was officially launched. The Revelations, a group of past choristers staged an evening of music from the days gone by at the Lionel Wendt. This concert was well attended and enjoyed by all. A Sing Along was organized at the BMICH - this was also a grand success. A combined schools choir presentation, aptly titled '400 Voices in Praise' was held at the Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour. Many more events are being planned to make the Chapel roof project a success.

Esto Perpetua.

C. P. Sanjay Mendis

Hony. Secretary - STCML OBA 2007/2008

OBA CELEBRATION EVENTS

All old boys wishing to participate in the following sports should contact the under mentioned coordinators.

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Contact Number</u>
Hockey	Feb 7 th Thursday	5.00 p.m.	Dinesh Wickramasinghe	071-4353160
Basket Ball	Feb 7 th Thursday	6.00 p.m.	Sanjeewa Hewagamage	077-7587548
Water Polo	Feb 7 th Thursday	7.00 p.m.	Jeewaka Perera	077- 3600710
Cricket	Feb 8 th / 9 th Fri/Sat	9.00 a.m.	Gihan Fernando	077-7699892

The OBA - AGM is on Friday 8th February 2008 at 6.30 p.m. at the College Hall. OBA Lunch is on Saturday 9th February at 12.30p.m.

A special service for old boys will be held at the College Chapel on Sunday 10th February at 7.30 a.m.

C. P. Sanjay Mendis

Hony. Secretary - STCML OBA 2007/2008

The sports and extra curricular activities at College, was and is, a part of that which make Thomians 'gentlemen.' Every conceivable sport and society is available to the student and no education is complete without it, you learn to "meet with Triumph and Disaster, and treat those two imposters just the same" - Kipling. One of my most memorable days in that regard was as twelfth man in the Centenary Royal Thomian cricket match witnessing and being a part of Halangode and C.P. Richards great rescue act, it brought to the forefront the legendary 'Thomian grit.' The very next year I played when Charlie Warnakulasuriya and Ajith Devasurendra of Royal broke a Royal Thomian series partnership that had been established in 1953 by Geoff "Konnappu" Wijesinghe and my father P.I. Pieris, ironically on the field with me was Konnappu's son "Ucchi" Wijesinghe. The emotions of these moments are hard to describe. The damper on their feat was that it took so long, they were so cautious. We had a strong side and that partnership which took about 4 sessions took our chances away. I regret that in my three years of playing against Royal we could not conjure up a win. In my last year 1982 we turned a bad situation into a nail biting finish Royal had about 20 odd to make with three wickets in hand but they funked and closed up the game. We had a very talented side captained by Ken de Alwis, I was Vice Captain, we had Stephen Anthonisz, Franz Molamure, LMS Muthuthantri, Kapila Wijegunawardena, Ritchie de Silva, Shantha Jayasekera, Royce Pereira, Sidath Samarakkody and Maxim Keyt. I had the privilege of captaining the first three third term games, while Ken was away in the UK, which we won outright. I tried out some young players with potential in those early games, Kaushik Amalean, Jerome Jayaratne and Asanga Seneviratne all of whom went on to do well later. We won 5 games out of 12 that season. Our team ended runners-up to 'schoolboy team of the year.'

The other sports I was awarded colours for were swimming and water polo. The coach almost did not recommend me for colours because I did not devote adequate time for training but with the sports schedule I had I could see that balancing all the demands on time was another lesson in impossible choices. The days schedule after school, consisted of a boarding house lunch of rice, pol sambol, malung, meat curry and dhal, if lucky, this was followed by 30-40 minutes of water polo, a rush to either badminton, tennis or table tennis for 45 minutes and end with cricket afterwards, then bus back to Colombo fairly exhausted. I was fortunate to have been included on a medley relay team with some of the country's finest swimming talent, including Dilip Viswanathan, Neomal Jasinghe, Jehan Jasinghe and or Maxim Keyt. The competition was for second place. At one of the public school meets we broke a national record and that performance was rewarded with colours. The College water polo side at the time would take on and beat any club side and was ably led by F. Neomal Gunawardena.

I was on the border of the debating team more an onlooker than a participant. Similarly, I was backstage in the Drama Society (Dramsoc) watching and feeling like I was a part of players like Richard de Zoysa, Christopher and Rohan Ponniah, Chandri Peries, Niranjan Abeyratne and the best in my opinion Christopher Raphael.

A Thomian forever, The OBA

After I passed through STC I had the good fortune to go overseas to Miami, Florida, USA for my university education where I was not able to play cricket competitively. Instead I focused on golf. On my return after some years, I was encouraged by Vijitha Fernando, an often-misunderstood Thomian, to join the Ex-Co of the OBA and become involved in College affairs. It was a time when College was going through some testing times. Warden Neville De Alwis who had strode like a colossus for 15 years and made an indelible mark on the history of the school was faced with a classic dilemma of "when to move on?" It divided the institution for a while, as there were those who wanted him to remain and others who felt it was time for him to retire. I saw it as a test of the character of the institution. Vijitha Fernando as Secretary of the OBA was caught up in these events and had to deal with many hurdles at the time. It would be remiss of me not to pen some words about Vijitha, a fearless protagonist, at times confrontational, sometimes brash, other times charming, a no nonsense tireless worker, looking for results. However, I am aware of the many developments he pushed for in trying times.

The OBA Ex-Co appointed me Secretary of the Education and Faculty Development Sub-Committee (EFDC), which was to be chaired by Sunil Dissanaikie, a committee I went on to chair for 2 years. It was a very rewarding experience, Sunil's expertise in human resources and my experience in management helped us to put together a team with plans and many innovative far reaching ideas. Initially we conducted surveys of all the stakeholders' - teachers, parents, students and old boys. We re-examined and recommended a 4 - point selection criteria for new entrants to be put before the Board of Governors; this is still in place today. We introduced the concept of a school social worker/student counselor, and we were lucky to find the 'right man,' a young Thomian, Sanjeeva de Mel, with training to do the job. This helped us to establish credibility. We looked at career guidance but found that only 5% of the student population did not have a plan for their future.

Additionally, the EFDC introduced an audiovisual lab with a large television to provide students with the means to view educational videos and dvd's. We failed at the time in convincing the interim leadership to implement the use of overhead projectors to improve the teaching methods. I still believe it is something the College must rapidly move towards. I am glad to have been informed by Sub Warden Harshana Perera that some classes use modern teaching devices now. We set in motion a process so that College could have on offer London A-level classes to prevent Thomians moving over to international schools, followed closely by what was known as a revival of the English medium. Interestingly, today 90+% of applicants to STC who have basic entrance criteria request for English as the medium of instruction. Today, College refers to what is in place as a bi-lingual medium, a term which finds more acceptance. A more controversial idea introduced by our EFDC was to attract Thomians back on to the teaching staff with the OBA meeting extra emoluments. It was apparent at the time that while proposals to increase fees to attract and pay staff better were debated that first the collection of the school fees itself needed to be better managed. It was at about this point that Warden Dr David Ponniah was appointed.

Our Ethos and a 'lingua franca'

I remember well having to go with Warden Ponniah to the Cathedral to defend a decision made earlier on offering English as a medium of instruction, before Bishop de Chickera and the rest of the Board of Governors. Arguments made in favour of going back to the 'mother tongue' revolved around the premise that S. Thomas' had an 'ethos' of English. But we had to convince the Board that this perception was a thing of the past! Boys were gathering in groups based on ethno-linguistic lines and were a matter that was of some concern. The language spoken on the playing fields was not English. It would be a sad day if College were to reverse progressive steps made to re-ignite the ethos of English. Offering a bi-lingual education with English at the core has encouraged a segment of old Thomians to bring their sons back to College.

I had made the argument nationally that mathematics and sciences should be taught in English while history, geography and the arts can be taught in ones' mother tongue. Lee Kwan Yew affirms this view and in a recent interview given to the International Herald Tribune on the 29th of August, 2007 he reminds us "In 1965, we had 20 years of examples of failed states. So, we knew what to avoid - racial conflict, linguistic strife, and religious conflict. We saw Ceylon. Thereafter, we knew that if we embarked on any of these romantic ideas, to revive a mythical past of greatness and culture, we'd be damned. So, there's no return to nativism." He goes on to claim, "had we chosen Chinese, which was our majority language, we would have perished, economically and politically. We chose - we didn't say it was our national language - we said it was our working language that everybody learns English whatever language medium school you go to. Which means nobody needs interpretation to read English." Interestingly the State is confronted with the vexing issue of demand and supply. It is reported that over 75% of students wish to learn subjects in English; the problem is the lack of capable teachers. The 'State' has opened a window, though not the door, so let us learn from history and not be doomed to repeat mistakes of the past. The challenge for educationists is how to offer and improve what we have. Reviving English for some subjects I believe will help, followed by dramatic changes to the curricula, syllabi and teaching methods. The Japanese believe that if you ask 5 whys you can arrive at the root cause of a problem. I will boldly state that many of our country's problems are prevaricated by the education on offer. My purpose for drawing attention to these issues is that S. Thomas' cannot wait idly by for changes, but we must be the innovator and standard-bearer for others to follow.

Organizing The 'Big Match'

Another aspect of Thomian life had me involved in the Royal Thomian match organizing committee since the 124th encounter, to date. The late Dilrukshan Tillakeratne insisted I get in to the joint organizing committee particularly as we had a big year with the 125th coming up, he said "we need to have cricketers involved." Initially appointed to the security committee for two years where we had a challenging 124th and 125th trying to balance the needs of the spectators with those of the players. We worked on the premise that the play must go on undisturbed while a variety of fun and frolic can take place behind the fences in the blocks. The committee brings together Thomians and Royalists of many ages to jointly manage what must be the most prominent event in the country's sporting calendar. A special joint organising committee was put in place early to handle the events for the 125th Royal Thomian. Our contingent was headed ably by the evergreen "Bala" - Balasubramanium, a Thomian pillar and Dion Jayasuriya. I was co-opted on to the gala charity dinner, which proved to be a roaring success. The Thomians on that committee were Wyvil Scharenguivel, Christopher Dias, Harpo Gunaratne, Kumudu Warnakulasuriya and myself. We had a lot of fun and delivered a memorable evening. The Royalists involved in working with us on the dinner were led by Nimal Dias Jayasinghe and included Faiz ur Rahaman, Janaka Fernando, Edward de Silva and Dhiraj - all fine ambassadors for their *alma mater*. To me that evening epitomized much that was meant to be in being a Thomian. It had - stature, tradition, ambience, brotherhood, memories, fun and dignity and added with good spirit

and healthy rivalry - the Royalists riding our coattails as usual. These events showed me that despite the rivalry that there is a keen sense of respect and fellowship between the Royalists and Thomians. Since then I have been involved with the press and commentary box to help manage that aspect of the Royal Thomian cricket encounter.

Class of 76

My class group the 'class of 76' is a very active and robust group. We meet twice or thrice a year and have amongst us three 1st XI cricket captains - Johann Pieris, Mahinda Halangode and Ken de Alwis. Many other leading personalities like Dr. Harsha Athurupane (economist), Jeevan Thiagarajah (human rights), Neomal Gunawardena (Attorney-at-Law), Romesh David (shipping), Rajpal Abeynaike (journalist), Shirendra Lawrence (garments), Yshan Fernando (tea broking), Indrajith Fernando (finance), Johann Pieris (Pilot - Captain), Louis Siriwardena (travel), Harpo Gunaratne (entertainment and restaurateur), Kolitha Sri Nissanka (former fire), Pulasthi Jayasinghe (communications and HR), Walpitagama (IT), Tikiri Meedeniya (engineering), Dr. Ravi Samarasighe (medicine, naturalist, photographer), Asanga Gunawardena (print) and Upali Elapatha (banking) come to mind. I know I have missed out many other extraordinary contributors of our class group, please forgive me.

Our group, which has been an active class group, did a tree project spearheaded by Ravi Kalpage and organise a 6-a-side softball cricket match, which is held annually. The match got swept aside after the tsunami and ought to be revived. The softball cricket matches were organized by a combination of Ken De Alwis, Ruwan Sirisena, Pulasthi Jayasinghe, Ravi K, Walpitagama and yours truly.

In Conclusion

This is a mere snap shot of one individuals association with STC. My appeal to you all is get involved it is important that "Thomians young and Thomians old" rally round the College flag and participate to keep your *alma mater* at the forefront of sport, education and society. STC was not and I will stretch my neck out by saying is not excellent in any one aspect of 'education,' but taken as a whole we can proudly say, we have a fine school. We have had our share of misfits but overall the school has produced fine men, gentlemen and leaders in our society. In paraphrasing Martin Luther King Jr.:

I have a dream that one day we will be an institution of excellence in all aspects of education, teaching not just for knowledge, but in learning skills, developing wisdom, imparting culture, where boys will mix together once again not because of their beliefs, nor because of their mother tongue, but because they are Thomians and Sri Lankans well educated.

I have a dream that one day a Thomian will rise up and lead the nation to show the way that we can be one nation, where all people are treated equal, free to practice a religion of their choice, free to choose a language, free from poverty and from hatred and injustice.

I have a dream that our unity will be in diversity, that no one will be judged by their caste or their creed, but by the strength of their character where merit hard work and dedication will determine our destiny.

I have a dream that we will want to protect that which God has given us, the animals and the trees leaving to future generations a nation that is wise in understanding conservation and the ways of nurture. I see a nation that will wise up to preserve the air that we breathe and the water that we drink.

I have a dream that we will become then 'a land like no other.' A land of brothers and sisters, a land free of fear, all brothers and sisters struggling to be happy at last. I have these hopes and dreams.

On a personal note I hope that my nephew and godson Armand D. Flamer Caldera will have a stint at the "College by the sea," like his father Dirk and uncles' Wendel and Maxim who were preceded by his grand father Dr. Douglas Flamer Caldera and all his grand uncles. I am glad to hear that my other godson Ranoukh Wijesinha, son of Rohan and grandson of R. Bertie Wijesinha will be entering KG in 2008. I wish him, my son and other young Thomians all the best and hope they rise up to take on the leadership of our troubled nation. "Esto Perpetua" and let the flame of S. Thomas' continue to give light and inspiration to a people striving to become truly a nation.

Ranil Pieris

"In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."
- Martin Luther King Jr. (1929 -1968)



K. C. KAMALASABAYSON P.C.(1949-2007)

Parting from a friend with whom you have associated for close upon 40 years is indeed sorrow. K.C. Kamalabayson is one such person. My earliest memories of Kamalabayson – ‘Kamale’ to his schoolmates and ‘Saba’ to his colleagues at the Bar – was in the Middle School in the early 1960’s. I remember him as a young boy of tremendous enthusiasm and spirit. A deep friendship was yet to develop between us. The compartmentalisation of students into arts and science streams tended to retard the growth of such bonds of friendship.

The dawn of the 1970’s saw our different paths converging. Saba, the science student had taken to law and I, the arts student had chosen to tread the same path. Saba had taken his oaths on the 23rd of June 1972 and was practicing under senior lawyer Bala Nadaraja, hailing from a leading family of lawyers from Badulla. I had taken my oaths one year later, on the 22nd of June 1973 and was practicing under Nimal Senanayake P.C., a leading civil lawyer of the day. Nimal and Bala had rented out spacious premises at 58/2, Ward Place, where they housed their respective chambers. This gave Saba and me the opportunity of working closely together and understanding each other’s perspectives on issues at hand and in this process forging strong bonds of friendship. On occasion Saba and I had to stand in for our seniors, when they were tied up elsewhere. On one such occasion, I remember Saba stoutly defending the Respondent in a maintenance appeal before the Supreme Court. With me appearing with him, he was facing a battery of eminent lawyers, led by the renowned late E.R.S.R. Coomaraswamy Q.C. The Supreme Court bench, perhaps wanting to test the junior lawyer appearing before it, called upon the Respondent to reply. Saba, rose to the occasion, displaying the professional skills that were later to be further honed in his long and distinguished professional career.

By the mid 1970’s Saba had joined the Attorney General’s Department as State Counsel and I had decided to join the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as an Assistant Legal Advisor. This was the beginning of another phase of our friendship and in our respective professional careers. As Saba rose his way through the ranks in the Attorney General’s Department, as State Counsel, Senior State Counsel, Deputy Solicitor General, Additional Solicitor General, Solicitor General and finally Attorney General of Sri Lanka, I always turned to Saba for advice, on many and varied issues which had implications both on the domestic law of the land and Sri Lanka’s international obligations. He had the ability to examine an issue not only from the limited confines of the domestic legal framework, but from a wider perspective, not losing sight of the international dimensions of an issue which could have implications for Sri Lanka.

A long list of extradition cases come to mind on which Saba’s advice was invaluable. Saba was involved in dealing with virtually every extradition request made by a foreign government since the enactment of the new Extradition Law in 1977. A request of the United States (US) for extradition which invoked a pre-independence Treaty which the United Kingdom had concluded with the US in the late 18th century, and extended to the then colonial territory of Ceylon gave rise to a range of complex constitutional and international law issues. The US request was upheld by the High Court, set aside by the Court of Appeal and finally affirmed in the Supreme Court. Saba battled his way through all these stages until the Governments position was upheld and the principle ‘*Pacta Sunt Servanda*’ (good faith) affirmed.

This episode had the positive fall out in finally convincing the US Administration of the need to conclude a new extradition Treaty between the United States and Sri Lanka, taking on board contemporary developments in Extradition Law and in international law in general, to replace the 18th Century pre-independence Treaty, with a view to avoiding further legal uncertainty. The onerous task of negotiating the new extradition Treaty fell upon Saba and myself, virtually hand-picked by the then Foreign Minister, Late Lakshman Kadirgamar P.C. who had bought about a new sense of purpose and direction in the US-Sri Lanka bilateral relationship in that ‘brief shining moment’ in the conduct of Sri Lanka’s foreign relations. Late Kadirgamar had the greatest respect for Saba’s professional skills and on many sensitive matters he invited Saba for a ‘chat’ at his residence. I was fortunate to have been present at same those ‘informal talks,’ as they weighed the pros and cons of an issue with great forensic skill.

Thus Saba and I found our way to Washington D.C. for the extradition negotiations. We were ranged against a formidable team of legal and foreign relations experts from the US Department of Justice and the State Department. At the end of three days of intensive negotiations we had finalised a new Treaty, which was a carefully balanced instrument. The then US Assistant Secretary of State for Asian Affairs, Karl Inderfurth wrote a personal letter of commendation praising the professionalism of the Sri Lankan delegation to his counterpart and good friend Kadirgamar. Foreign Minister Kadirgamar with his customary spirit of graciousness copied this letter to Saba and me, along with a warm letter of commendation from himself. It is at moments like this, I am sure Saba will agree, that life in the much maligned Public Service of Sri Lanka seems worthwhile! My mind is still fresh with pleasant

memories of our walking around the Capitol and Washington monuments bathed in moonlight on a cold late autumn evening, after a hard days negotiations.

Finally, Saba's appointment as Attorney General. At the time, there were those who were keen to install an 'outsider.' Lakshman Kadirgamar resisted this and intervened with the then President on Saba's behalf and on behalf of the Department. Saba was finally confirmed the Attorney General of Sri Lanka. It is a strange irony that Lakshman Kadirgamar P.C. passed away on the 12th of August 2005 a victim of an assassin's bullet and that Saba chose the same date two years later to bid good bye to family, friends and colleagues.

Saba, we wish you a well-earned rest. May you attain Moksha!

Dr. Rohan Perera P.C.



K. GANESHALINGAM (1938 – 2006)

"Ganesh" as he was popularly known was called "Thamby" by his close friends at S. Thomas'. Within a short period of time he had many friends - not only boys from the North but from the South as well, including the elite 'Colombo 7 boys.'

One incident, in which Ganesh was involved, still comes to my mind. The first signs of an 'ethic problem' in Sri Lanka set Colombo and its suburbs ablaze. Along with Cannon de Saram, the Warden of S. Thomas' at the time, 'Ganesh' and several other boarders were in the forefront of efforts to save the life of an innocent old man who had been attacked by thugs who were on the rampage near De Saram Road, Mount Lavinia. By this act Ganesh, at the age of seventeen displayed his natural leadership and special humane qualities. From S. Thomas' he gained admission to the University of Ceylon, where characteristically he was an immensely popular figure amongst the student body. Since he was interested in accountancy, on his graduation, he joined KPMG Ford, Rhodes & Thornton.

Realizing his competency and efficiency as an accountant Ganesh was appointed as the Treasurer of the United National Party (UNP). In recognition and appreciation of his leadership and capability the late President Premadasa requested him to contest the Colombo Municipal Council election. After a successful campaign Ganesh was elected to the office of Mayor, and thereby came to be in charge of the most urbanised municipality in Sri Lanka. As Mayor he knew every nook and corner of the Colombo municipality, and he went out of his way to help any taxpayer who sought his assistance. During this period Ganesh had the honour and privilege of welcoming His Holiness Pope John Paul the Second on the occasion of the papal visit to Sri Lanka.

He fabulously donated large sums of money to several cultural and religious organisations and in his generosity never forgot his *alma mater*, S. Thomas' College. He was always there in a big way at every Thomian Fair. One of his specialities was running the 'Thomian Thosai Kade.' In order to give the stall an authentic look he would personally transport palmyrah palms and plantain trees and decorate the stall in such a manner that an authentic ambience was maintained.

Yamuna, his wife, was a tower of strength to Ganesh and readily supported him with all the Thomian functions he undertook to organise. Indeed the genial disposition and warm hospitality of Yamuna greatly enhanced Ganesh's success.

Thomians young and old will miss Ganesh very badly.

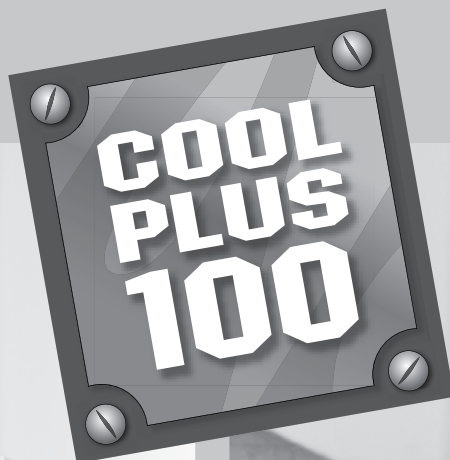
M. Balasubramaniam



A. R. MANOHARAN (1936-2007)

Mr. Manoharan was a teacher of great repute - sadly never more shall we hear his golden voice and never more shall we enjoy his jovial company. Fondly referred by all as "Mano," he was an inspiring teacher, who kept his students in dead silence, but at times in fits of laughter. I still wear a smile, whenever I go down memory lane. He always had a smile and a nod for everyone and was the center of attention whenever he walked into a classroom or gathering.

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Mr. Manoharan was a gentleman worthy of respect and emulation and admired both by his colleagues on the staff as well as his students. Too numerous to place on paper are the events and experiences that took place during his teaching career. It would suffice to say that they are colorful and legendary and etched in the memories of his contemporaries. All who had the privilege of being around during his time as Headmaster of the upper school, would fondly remember his presence in the front room of the new science lab... always monitoring the movements of not only the students but also the teachers. He was a tough administrator and managed the section well. He had the knack of extracting the best out of the staff and students. In his own work he was always punctual and aimed for perfection. Whatever task entrusted to him, he did it to the best of his ability with dedication and devotion.

As our botany teacher, he always ensured that we were well prepared to face exams, be it internal or external. His USP (unique selling point) were the sessions he used to have in discussing past papers, which are still vivid in my mind. Mr. Manoharan possessed a supernatural gift of being able to recall the names of all his students as well as the biological names of plants and trees. His mind could be compared to the hard disk of a computer. Even if he glanced at a tiny bit of paper with a news item scrawled out on it, it would get logged in his memory and readily recalled when needed. All those who didn't have the privilege of interacting with him directly would still know him as the teacher who stands every morning in front of Ebert Silva's for a lift (and always succeeded in getting one).

Mr. Manoharan's command of the English language was excellent and S. Thomas' could have benefited greatly if he was teaching now, with the introduction of the English medium. He was an avid reader and well read on many subjects. He had his own private library in addition to a mini library, which he would carry around with him for his daily reference.

His last words to me when I met him in college were, "Devchandra, I have done a great job for College in recovering the students fees which were in arrears and I was successful in reducing it by 50% within 3 months." He was a man of responsibility and determination. If he had not neglected his health, working without a rest for many hours, I personally feel that he would still be with us.

We must be thankful to his wife and children who were a tower of strength to him and made him what he was to all of us. May his family have the courage and fortitude to bear his passing! I regret my failure to be present on his last journey.

We will miss a great teacher and a fine human being!

J.S.D (Class of 87)

LAID TO REST

- | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| • A.R Manoharan | • Quintus Tennakoon | • Rodney Goonethilleke | • Leo de Silva |
| • Anil Obeysekera | • Ranjith Sri Nissanka | • Tissa Wimalasekera | • Lal Thenabadu |
| • R.M. de Silva | • K .C. Kamalabayson | • Hiran Upasena | • Quentin Israel |
| • Senaka Alles | | | |
-
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REMINISCENCES OF A BOARDER

LIFE IN THE BOARDING AT STC – IN THE 60'S AND 70'S

Would I be suspended for my misdemeanours? Would I be punished for 'scooting' out of the college premises? Would we be lucky enough to find a good spot to play softball cricket? Worse - would I be questioned about enjoying the bliss of floating in the serene water of the swimming pool at unofficial hours, when boarders were meant to keep away?

Such were the miscreants within the precincts of our home - the boarding of S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia. Each one of us, perhaps more mischievous than the other, strangely united in our varied endeavours, yet as diverse in thought and deed as one can imagine! Our guiding principle was always to stick with one another through the good times and the bad, through the thrills and spills. Race and religion were not factors that sowed the seeds of prejudice

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– perhaps the common goal of wanting to have fun and outdo one another in acts of clean and youthful exuberance merely blinded us to such negative thoughts. This carefree spirit in most instances did not incite jealousy or the need for revenge; instead the determination to evoke more fun sustained our friendships. Of course, competition was rife but never did one think of severing the deeply rooted and sustained bonds of friendship that were born out of a common feeling of brotherhood in sleeping on rock hard beds and eating equally rock hard bread at the same table!

Our little cosy home it was - a home like no other. It was indeed a real home, which fostered qualities of goodness, true friendship, and humility. Most importantly however, it was a home, which offered us a balanced perspective in life. It taught us values and formed principles we yet honourably treasure. Even today, undue displays of sophistication and luxurious living will only be looked at with an air of scepticism – having been boarders – we knew only too well that circumstances do change and are a mere gift of privilege which can be taken away, unexpectedly due to some adversity.

Looking back on all those years, it is undoubtedly the life devoid of fanciful trims but ripe with the integral qualities of being ‘human’ that stands out as the highlight of it all, and rekindles the eternal wish of the boarder to be gifted with a slice of that absolutely stress free and vibrant life for a mere week in the least, in a moment of fond reminiscence!

Esto Perpetua!
Ajmal Wahab

THE THOMIAN BOARDING - LESSONS LEARNT AND TAUGHT

Taking your mind back to think of what took place nearly 50 years ago is no easy task. I knew that the editors of ‘The Old Boy’ must be thoroughly hard up for articles when a request for an article came to me from an old boarder, on behalf of the editors. Despite my fading memory I agreed to take up the challenge and what you read now is the result.

The Thomian boarding has always been a place of action in every sense of the word. Studies, sports, pranks, practical jokes, conspiracies, fights and many more activities, both during day and night, cover the life of a boarder. Every generation will have a plethora of anecdotes to relate and each one of them has its stamp of class and humour. My era was no different. We had more than our own share of fun; but let it be told that it was good clean fun with malice towards none. In my article I hope to deal with the persons and events that have left indelible impressions on my life and the values that were inculcated in us during the short period that I spent in the Thomian boarding.

My first night in Chapman ‘B’ as a ‘fresher’ was an eventful one. Clutched away from the comfort of my parental home at the tender age of nine, I was seated all by myself on my bed thinking of the life ahead of me, when a tough looking boy came up to me and asked whether I had shoe polish. When I answered in the affirmative, he wanted to ‘borrow’ my tin of polish. Not knowing exact meaning of ‘borrow,’ I showed him the tin of polish and put it back in my trunk. The ‘toughie’ then gave me one clout on my head, opened my trunk and darted away with my tin of shoe polish. Humiliated and saddened by the lack of support from my dorm-mates I pursued him and hit him with the shoe brush that was in my hand. Although I did not mean to hurt my aggressor, I was horrified to find that my shot had caused a gash on his head and he was bleeding quite badly. He was quickly hauled off to the sick room while I found myself standing before one Mr. Jesudasen, our house master. The house master having listened to me attentively told me that as a boarder one should learn to share everything irrespective of ownership. Helping each other was a way of life of a boarder, I was told. No punishment was meted out to either of us. After a visit to the sick room to inquire in to health of my ‘enemy,’ whom I came to know as Roger, we became best of friends and remained so until he migrated to Australia with his parents. The first lesson I learned as a boarder therefore was to share what you possess for the good of everyone.

Food, as even now, was very precious to every boarder. That was a commodity that was always in short supply and no amount of it was enough to satisfy us. All boarders were hungry at all times and, like crows, were always on the look out for food. At College there were only two sources of food at that time. One was the tuck shop and the dining hall kitchen was the other. In the tuck shop one had to pay for his food while the dining hall only dished out well-rationed portions of sub-standard food, which never satisfied the hunger of the boarders. So the only way to overcome our hunger was to carry out planned invasions of either place. Most of these invasions were successful, but it was easy for the authorities to hunt the culprits, as good old Samaris, Martin, Abey, Narada, Premadasa and Co. - the faithful

“Whether you think that you can, or that you can’t, you are usually right.”
- Henry Ford (1863 -1947)

servants of College, knew each one of us by name. On being hauled up before the house master or the Warden for stealing food the excuse was always the same - "Sir, we were very hungry!" The punishment was also known well in advance - in addition to a few 'cuts,' the cost of the pilfered food would be shared equally by the invaders and added on to their bills as 'extras.' Surprisingly none of our parents ever bothered to question this item when settling our bills. So my first lesson on collective responsibility was learnt at the Thomian boarding.

The prefects who provided leadership to us are worthy of mention. Lynwood Stork, Maurice Fairweather, Gamini Marapona, K.D.K. Perera, D.M.S. Fernando, Jit Wanigasekera, are some of the names that come to my mind (I wish to be pardoned for any names missed out). They were mentors in every respect. I recollect Stork and Fairweather inculcating the traditions of Miller-Chapman to the young Chapman house boys during room-time just prior to their departure from College. They loved the house so much that young Chapmanites were identified for the passing on of the baton. We had not heard of succession planning at that time - but here it was being practiced at the Thomian boarding way back in the early sixties. They were the true leaders of our time.

Caring for the sick is a noble tradition. In this respect the Thomian sick room had its own Mother Theresa in Mrs. Morrell. She was a mother, doctor, nurse, healer, counsellor and companion to nearly 400 boarders. She had only Diyonis, the old faithful, and a young boy whom we referred to as 'Podi Kolla' to assist her. She cared for every one of us without any discrimination. We were treated as boys and were cared for as if we were her own sons. She was always cheerful, but spared no time for those who feigned sickness to 'cut' school. Here we learned fair play and equality in treatment, from a lady who learned it all in the 'university of life.' I am informed that Mrs. Morrell celebrated her 100th Birthday early this year and all Thomians wish her good health and longer life.

During our time the boarding was the spirit of the school. The entire hockey, swimming and basketball teams came from the boarding. Furthermore a good percentage of the rugby, cricket, tennis, and badminton teams came from the boarding. It will be remembered that all cricket Captains from 1963 to 1967 were boarders.

The rivalry between Miller-Chapman and Copleston-Claughton was unimaginable. It brought out the best in both sides and a Miller-Copleston encounter was fought more fiercely than any other battle that we knew. This rivalry was very healthy and brought out latent talent through which the College would benefit later. No inter-house event went uncontested where the boarding houses were concerned. I remember an occasion when Miller did not have anyone to fight in the 'extra heavy class' at the inter-house boxing meet. The Miller selectors approached the biggest guy in Miller to fight in this class. He was a mild mannered personality who would never dream of getting in to a boxing ring. But the selectors told him that he had to do it "for the sake of the house." Finally he obliged. On the big day he knocked the day lights out of the favourite by using his 'pol adi' punches and won the bout for Miller to be crowned as house champions of that year. Here was a classic case of competitiveness through commitment - another management lesson learned at the Thomian boarding.

My article would not be complete without mention of the house masters who fostered the spirit of the boarding and provided the boys with the guidance and courage to achieve what they desired. Some of these gentlemen had dedicated their entire lives to the Thomian boarding and their efforts have certainly not been in vain. Looking at the galaxy of star class citizens who have passed through the Thomian boarding every house master could be proud of his achievements. Mr. Lassie Abeywardena, without doubt, stands tall among the house masters of our time. Small in stature but big in deeds he guided the destinies of Miller for nearly two decades in total. During his time Miller-Chapman became the 'best all round house' on several occasions. His contribution to Thomian cricket, hockey and office administration is too well known to mention here. Equally prominent was Mr. Daniel Edirisinghe, who took over as house master of Copleston-Claughton and served in that capacity for several years. Mr. Quentin Israel who took over the reins of Miller-Chapman from Mr. Lassie Abeywardena, is another master who spared no pains in inculcating discipline and order to the lives of boarders who always had the tendency go astray. His contribution to Thomian rugby is a foregone conclusion. Mr. Orville Abeynayake, who was to become Sub-Warden later, was a strict disciplinarian who took the unpopular step of stripping the prefectships of a few boarders who slid down drain pipes at night to go for a movie at the Odeon. He acted fearlessly and without favour in that instance and those affected by his decisions hold no grudges against him for his actions. To support these masters, and many more who held office for shorter periods, was a bank of dedicated teachers who were resident at College and accepted to be a part of the boarding set up. Mr. G.K. Mandawela, the cadetting master was the best known among them. His passion for cadetting and physical training was well known and as a disciplinarian he had no match. Boys feared him more than even the Warden and his infamous 'pack drill' was dreaded by all. Mr. R.N.S.K. Karalakulasingham was the academic equivalent of Mr. Mandawela. A mathematical genius R.N.S.K.K. was particularly severe on Tamil students, as he did not want to be accused of being biased. Another pleasing personality in this pack of dedicated teachers was Mr. S. Vinasithmaby who taught Tamil language and literature. Much loved by all, 'Vinasi' as he was popularly known, was a complete vegetarian but managed to survive on the boarding food that was dished out. These were all men of character belonging different ethnic groups and religions. They added colour to the fabric of Thomian boarding

through an incredible understanding of each other's culture, values and customs and passed on the message of "live and let live" to their young charges. Yet another lesson - the best, learned at the boarding of the school by the sea!

Esto Perpetua!!!!
A Mil-Chap

MY SHORT SOJOURN AT STC

It was after my SSC (Senior Schools Certificate) at St. John's College, Jaffna that I decided to transfer to S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia in 1952. There was a perception at that time that one had a better chance to enter university from a Colombo school. Furthermore my paternal cousins had been at S. Thomas'. My maternal cousins went to that central school, in Kollupitiya. After an entrance exam I was selected to start in 'college form B - science.' I was the only outside entrant, as all the others had transferred from Gurutalawa - like my good friend the late P Rajeswaran. It was with some trepidation that I went to Cloughton house. For some inexplicable reason I had grown 8 inches in about 6 months and my long trousers ended just below my knees. Embarrassing to say the least, what with the sons of the mudliyors of C7 and walauwwa owners of the deep South in designer shirts and shoes, large gold watches and well tailored trousers. I looked like the proverbial "he comes from Jaffna."

After just a few days in the boarding I was ordered to go for boxing practice. I had no choice in this. My first sparring partner was a champion boxer, but he managed to get himself knocked out by my first punch. Thereafter I was admonished never to get in to the boxing ring again. I was ecstatic. Later on I opened the batting for Cloughton house and scored a few runs. Once my father was in Colombo on official business and came to see me open the batting but alas on that occasion I was bowled off the first ball by one Z. Cader much to my chagrin.

I got into trouble with our house master, Mr. B Perera and also the head prefect at that time, because of my hedonistic trait. They were not at all tolerant of the customs pervasive amongst the senior students at that time.

I am indeed grateful to Canon de Saram, Mr. Anandanayagam Mr. Davidson and Mr. Brookie de Silva for their guidance during those formative years.

On leaving S. Thomas' I qualified as surgeon in 1964 and served in the Health Department. While serving as a surgeon at the Government Hospital, Ratnapura I resigned from the Sri Lankan Health Department in 1974 and migrated to Sydney, Australia, where I continued my practice. Having served as surgeon in Sydney for the last 33 years, I now am in semi retirement.

Dr. Kethies Thuraisingham

PRIZE GIVING – 6TH OF JULY 2007

Extracts from the Warden's Speech

"We have all been through another eventful and interesting year in the on-going life of the College, and we come again together to recognise and give credit to the many who have excelled in academic and extra-curricular pursuits. The ensuing sections of this report highlight the many achievements of the boys in academic, sports and other extra curricular activities.

The greatest challenge facing us today is that of sustaining normality within the College under a trying and highly abnormal external environment. The fear of violence and the resulting tensions, the prospects of a protracted war, and the difficulties of making ends meet in the face of the rising costs of living, impact the life of the College and of its occupants - the staff and students. It is not possible to shed all these concerns when entering through the gates of the school. However we must continue to the best of our abilities to provide a haven in which the boys can grow and develop into men capable of leading this country to better and peaceful times.

"The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it."
- Oscar Wilde (1854 -1900)

We continue to pursue the ideal of Thomian education, which is about the mental, the physical and the spiritual growth of the boys. On the academic aspects we strive to maintain standards and considerable improvements continue to be made. But it must also be stated that there is still room for further improvement.

On academic matters, 158 students were presented for the G.C.E Ordinary Level examination in December 2006 of whom 152 qualified for the A/L classes. Thirty of these students, around 20%, obtained more than 7 A's and of the total number of subjects taken around two-thirds were passed with better than a B grade. Around 250 students were presented for the G.C.E. Advanced Level examination (local) and London Advanced Level examination in June 2006, and about two-thirds passed all 3 subjects. In the local Arts section, of the 115 students who sat the exam a remarkable 88 students passed all three subjects. We are aware of about 40 students entering universities in Sri Lanka and abroad.

Our own results must be viewed in relation to what is happening across the country. When the countrywide Ordinary Level results were released in May there was much gnashing of teeth and huge criticism of the Sri Lankan education system. It was published that of those who sat the Ordinary Level examination, across the country only 50% passed overall, with an even lower pass rate in mathematics and the mother tongue. Over 10% failed in every subject. In 1995 the corresponding pass rate was shockingly 20%, increasing to around 40% in 2002. Put in context, the figure of 50% is relatively acceptable, and encouragingly on an increasing and upward trend, but there are some clear signs of impending problems such as a reduction in the quality of the education, even in the reduction in the pass mark, the over emphasis on examinations and the resulting tuition culture and a lack of understanding as to the goals of education. We must not forget that the ability to read, write and numerate, the '3R's', are insufficient goals of an education system. In addition to these educational requirements we must equip students with techniques, skills and attitudes to make them employable and productive citizens, and instil in them correct values, compassion and care, and the ability to live with one another in harmony.

I do not believe that the problem is one related to the curriculum or subject content of education, instead it is related to the recruitment, training and retaining of good teachers. Our educational system, as in most systems, depends on the personal influence of the teacher on the student, and said to be an interaction 'of mind on mind, and of personality on personality.' Therefore in order to succeed a system of education must have teachers of academic excellence, of high moral character, and enthusiasm for the subject they teach, and of course happy and content in their environment. Therefore the rhetorical question is; are we attracting the best men and women with a high sense of vocation to serve in our schools and colleges?

As already stated the performance at public examinations is not the primary purpose of education. If education was to be measured by exam results then I am certain that we can program robots, mechanical or not, to give correct answers to all questions, much of what is done in tuitories across the country. Thomian education is something much wider and we believe it must make a boy understand, think, discern, choose, and be able to take his rightful place in society and make a valuable contribution.

One way of developing these skills is through extra-curricular activities. We continue to support 18 sporting type activities and 49 clubs and societies. While it is a significant aspect of the life of the College, it is also a substantial drain of our limited resources. The commitment and dedication of the boys has to be admired. The contributions made by the staff to these activities must also be gratefully acknowledged.

The refurbishment of the buildings is continuing. Our focus is at last turning to the refurbishment and renovation of the Chapel, which has stood over the College for eighty years. The renovation involves replacing the sheeting on the entire roof, replacing the timber on the roof and door and window frames, rewiring,, repainting the internal walls, and repairing damage to the outside façade.

In conclusion what I report on is the result of contributions made by large numbers of people who must now be recognised. I gratefully acknowledge the help and support afforded to me by the Board of Governors, who are of course ultimately responsible for the good governance of the school. I must thank the Sub-Warden, Headmasters and all tutorial, administrative and support staff who have unstintingly supported the College through these difficult periods of change. We are extremely fortunate to have such good staff. Through the hard work of the Old Boys, the College continues to benefit with resources of all sorts and we are grateful for this. I must also thank the parents, particularly the PTA, for assisting us in areas, which add significant value to the basic education being provided at College. The current students continue to get involved in clubs, societies and sports with varying levels of achievement and success. The Thomian family made up of all these groups, who have performed well and the synergy of these groups, has to be recognised and appreciated.

Quotations from the Chief Guests Speech

“I believe all of us here, to a greater or lesser extent, are where we STAND, in regard to the important national issues that challenge us today – questions of peace and war, violence, governance, human rights, development and so on, on the basis of our own individual experiences in what is normally referred to as the formative years of our life, in school.”

“... the Winchester house boarding years – accompanied with tears at leaving the comfort of a home and adjusting to a life governed by bells and ‘prep’ and time tables, and living cheek by jowl with a bewildering cohort of boys of different sizes, ways and backgrounds. It was traumatic, but of foundational importance in teaching me how to live with diversity, appreciating the differences and getting on with others.”

“We were inspired in those stirring days (with political independence around the corner) by the vision – sadly not yet realized – of a nation where in the words of an eloquent Thomian Prime Minister, ALL – regardless of race, class or political ideology would enjoy - freedom from want, freedom from ignorance, freedom from ill health and freedom from fear. I think we in School at the time, shared the dream that Martin Luther King dreamed later in the United States, that all our children would live in a nation where they would not be judged by the race they belonged to or the creed they believed in but by the content of their character.”

“There is a line in our College Song which I feel has a special significance for Thomians in today’s uncertain and challenging world. It endows Thomians with a special role and function. That particular line – towards the end of our Song – behoves us to LOUDLY LET THE ECHOES RING FOR ALL WE HAVE AND ARE. In other words it is asking us to be loud and clear in proclaiming what we stand for, on the grounds of what Thomians HAVE and ARE. In a world often characterized by compromise, prevarication, hypocrisy, and what our former teachers would have said – humbug, it is asking Thomians to be fearless and vocal in the defence of what are their cherished values.”

“What are those cherished Thomian values I just referred to? I believe they are universal, and anchored in a priceless spiritual and moral tradition we have. It is these values which have shaped and formed the Thomian spirit over the past 150 years and influenced through the leadership that Thomians have given the country, in so many fields, -politics, medicine, law, education, administration and so on - the basic texture of our polity and society. Foremost among those values I would rate - ... Inclusiveness... Pluralism... Equality... Transparency...”

“Based on these values let me move towards... (what) in my view make the Thomian identity – in short what the ideal Thomian today would look like. It is a composite image capturing the essence of the lives of some great Thomians of the past I have known well – some of them our teachers - but could well be improved with additions from this distinguished audience. So I offer it to you in the nature of work in progress. I was able to identify 7 distinct competencies... the famous Thomian GRIT... MODESTY in demeanour... a passion for EQUALITY... a sense of DUTY... VERSATILITY... PLAYING BY THE RULES... And finally seventh, and I thought about this one quite a lot and could not reject it for it is so much a part of the Thomian make up – THE GIFT OF FUN... As I said I offer these to you, particular to the young ones yet in school as food for thought. It is a working draft and open for addition and improvement for I thought a definition or redefinition of who or what is a Thomian is very relevant at this challenging time.”

“One final quotation, which I believe is appropriate – not only for today but for everyday on the kind of men this school could and should produce. It is an extract of the poem GOD GIVE US MEN by the American novelist and poet, Josiah Gilbert Holland and it goes like this;

*GOD GIVE US MEN the time demands;
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, willing hands.
Men whom the lust of office does not kill,
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,
Men who possess convictions and a will;
Men who have honour; men who will not lie.”*

[The full text of Deshamanya Bradman Weerakoon’s address at the annual Prize Giving (2007) was published in the Sunday Island of 29th July 2007]

“Try to learn something about everything and everything about something.”
- Thomas Henry Huxley (1825 -1895)

'E-CAMPUS' PIONEERED BY S. THOMAS' COLLEGE MT. LAVINIA

150 Year Old Doyen Of Education Leaps Ahead With Fibre Optic Based IT Infrastructure...

S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia, backed by a 150 year old tradition of excellence in secondary education took a bold step towards the 'knowledge era' by launching the first phase of its 'e-Campus' - a campus wide IT infrastructure based on fibre optic networking and a state of the art e-learning solution. Endowed by the alumni of the College, this groundbreaking project will see one of the most scenic educational campuses in the country electronically networked. Designed along best practices in electronic education prevalent in the world today, the e-Campus is aimed at providing a non-obtrusive IT based educational environment for Thomians. In addition to campus wide networking the project includes a complete e-school soft infrastructure supporting the automation of a wide range of educational activities.

Officially inaugurated to coincide with the annual 'Old Boys' Day' celebrations in 2004, the 'e-Campus' will give students access to a range of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The project also includes the provision and generation of electronic educational content and will provide extensive training of students, teachers, and College administrators in the use of ICT.

Dr. David Ponniah, Warden of S. Thomas' College said, "Through its strong tradition in high quality education spanning over 150 years, S. Thomas' College has always thought ahead to give its students the very best in facilities and an enabling environment. The e-Campus follows in the wake of many other firsts - to name a few, Sri Lanka's first grass wicket, swimming pool and more recently a sports complex built to international standards. S. Thomas' recognises that excellence in education in the knowledge era is going to be based on our students developing a close affinity to ICT and its capabilities. With the launch of the e-Campus Thomians would be second to non in the region with respect to ICT exposure and training."

The e-Campus architecture designed, initiated and formulated by the 'Class of 87' features several highly interactive modules, which encompass all working areas of the College. Among them are modules for school administration, student admissions and registrations, examinations, library facilities, bookshop, clubs and societies, human resource management etc. The faculty of the college are also set to expand their capabilities in the area of ICT with an aggressive training programme already underway aimed at elevating IT based teaching skills to a high standard. With computer assisted teaching methods and techniques being constantly improved and updated, the provision of IT will enable teachers to exploit related opportunities to their fullest potential. The e-Campus would also be linked nationally and internationally via the Internet, while a robust intranet will facilitate intra-campus communication between students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

Under Phase 1 of the project, several of the monumental buildings of the sprawling campus have been networked using fibre optic technology while several computer labs have been established. Access to computing, Intranet and Internet facilities in staff rooms and resource development areas provide an ideal environment for student teacher communication and staff skills development. The e-Campus will also precipitate an enhancement of efficiency and productivity of the administrative back end of the college with the computerisation of accounting and general administration functions.

Members of the College community, including parents, are soon to be empowered to access content and relevant information via the Internet. A College spokesman said that conscious of the role S. Thomas' plays in its immediate community, the newly established IT infrastructure would also be used to contribute to the educational facilities of other schools in the area.

Since those early days of dreaming about an 'e-Campus,' College has come far but there is yet more to be done. Especially considering that the IT field develops at a tremendous speed, there is a constant need to invest in new technologies to keep abreast with advances in the field. In order that the 'e-Campus' project keeps pace with the changing technological environment, any help from old boys would be appreciated. It could be a donation of a computer or even the donation of a software CD, but the important point is that every donation you make helps your *alma mater* to maintain and retain the IT leadership it has achieved in a short span of time.

Contact details:

Email: www.warden@stcmount.sch.lk / Web: www.stcmount.sch.lk

[A comprehensive report of the 'IT Project' is available on the web and can be accessed at www.stc-it.org]



CHAPEL RENOVATION FUND

On an invitation by the Warden, the Special Events Committee of the Old Boys Association took the lead in efforts to raise the funds, which were necessary for the much-needed renovation of the College Chapel. Accordingly a plan of action for raising the funds was drawn up, and is at present is being implemented.

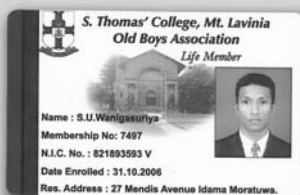
The fund raising effort was launched with a special Service of Thanksgiving on the 17th of June 2007. Immediately after the service, a presentation was made, informing the Thomian community of the events that had been organised, and the manner in which they could contribute towards this effort. On the same day the 'Chapel Bonds' project and a special website were launched. The 'Chapel Bonds' project envisages the issuing of a collector's item 'bond certificate' for all contributions made towards the Chapel Renovation Fund. The 'bond certificates' are available in 'Platinum' (for contributions in excess of Rupees 100,000/=), 'Gold' (above Rupees 10,000/=) and 'Silver' (above Rupees 5,000/=). The website, which is dedicated to the providing information regarding the renovation of the Chapel can be accessed at www.StcChapel.org. The 'first lady,' Mrs. Shiranthi Rajapakse, a loyal supporter of S. Thomas' attended the Service of Thanksgiving and made a commitment to support the fund raising effort. On the 19th of June, a media campaign was launched in order to create awareness of the efforts being made to raise funds to renovate the Chapel.

The first fund raising event was a concert by the group 'Revelations,' a group of Old Thomian singers. This event was held at the Lionel Wendt on the 1st of July 2007. The 'full house' in attendance, was treated to a musical feast. Thereafter a 'Thomian Sing-a-long' was organised on the 11th of August. This effort, a first time effort for STC at organising such an event, was spearheaded by Dr Vijaya Corea. Once again a 'full house' thoroughly enjoyed the evening. The next fund raising effort was a combined-schools service of choral music, which was held on the 30th of September at the Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour. This brought together the choirs of ten schools. The service titled, '400 Voices in Praise' was unique in itself, as it is very rarely, that such a multi-denominational combined choir can be witnessed. There was an overwhelming public support for this event, with an estimated crowd of around 2000 attending the service. Although no tickets were sold, a voluntary contribution was collected towards the Chapel Renovation Fund.

At the time of 'The Old Boy' going into print 'Canto Perpetua' a performance by the newly formed Old Thomians Choir, trained and developed by Vinod Senadeera are scheduled to perform on the 19th and 20th of October. This will be followed by a production of the Drama Society (Dramsoc) on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of November, a Grand Dinner for old Thomians and partners the Saturday before the Royal Thomian (in March 2008) and a musical show in May 2008. Mr Lakshman Fernando and Mrs Siva Obeysekera have volunteered their services to assist the Special Events Committee in making a success of the latter events. Plans are also underway to produce a 'collector's book' on the Chapel, dealing with aspects such as the mural, the art and architecture of the Chapel. This project is being handled by Mr. Chandra Schaffter In addition to all these efforts the Special Events Committee will also be issuing Chapel renovation collectors cards to the schoolboys. There are attractive prizes on offer for the most successful 'fund collector' amongst the schoolboys.

A separate Committee has been invited by Warden to lead the effort to renovate the Chapel. Architect Deshabandu Ashley De Voz represents the Special Events Committee. Progress reports from Mr de Voz will be posted on the website.

The funds collected as at the beginning of October now amounts to nearly 5 million Rupees. More details of these efforts can be obtained from Messrs Senaka De Fonseka, Kumudu Warnakulasooriya and Shawn Sheik who will be leading this effort. For further information visit www.stcchapel.org



OBA Membership Card

The OBA is implementing a new plastic OBA membership card with a photograph of the member. Current members can obtain the new card by surrendering their old membership card and for a payment of Rs. 200/- . Contact the Administrative Secretary for more details on 4955047 or 4944530.

ORGANISING A ROYAL THOMIAN ENCOUNTER

Having commenced in 1879, the Royal Thomian encounter is the oldest cricket match in the world that has been played without any interruption, even amidst the World Wars. Over the years countless numbers of Heads of State and other dignitaries from the country and from across her shores have witnessed the encounter. Old boys from both institutions, including those now domiciled abroad mark out the days of the Royal Thomian encounter, in their otherwise busy schedules at the very beginning of the year and then anxiously look forward to three days of making merry and reminiscing about the 'good old days.' Even national players who have traveled the globe playing cricket, concede that they have been spell bound by the atmosphere at the grounds. This atmosphere, or rather carnival atmosphere has not gone unnoticed by the media, and international media agencies such as the BBC, have mentioned the match in their news broadcasts.

However behind this three day carnival of cricket, which unfolds in March is a meticulous process, which begins months before the encounter. It is a process, which involves striking a delicate balance between competing interests and ultimately ensuring a pleasant and safe atmosphere for everyone. In this issue of 'The Old Boy' where we focus on the 70's – the period in which the Royal Thomian encounter evolved into a three day match the editors had the pleasure of interviewing the Chairman of the Joint Organising Committee for 2007, Air Cdre. Ajit Jayasekera. A former opening batsman for S. Thomas' Air Cdre. Jayasekera got involved with the organising committee in the nineties when he was the Secretary of the OBA. He not only provided us with insights in to organising the Royal Thomian, but also highlights the pleasant experience of working in a joint committee, an experience, which he sates he "thoroughly enjoyed."

Tracing the history behind organising the Royal Thomian, Air Cdre. Jayasekera stated that at the initial stages the tent committees such as those in charge of the 'visitors tent,' and the 'boys tent' were involved in organising the match. The joint organising committee evolved in the sixties with the Warden of S. Thomas' and the Principal of Royal being the co-chairman of the joint committee. The joint committee became a more professional outfit from the 'centenary match' and the commencement of the three-day encounter. One such move towards greater professionalism was the introduction of a concept of having a chairman nominated by the head of the school with each school nominating an individual to head the committee each alternate year. This practice materialised during the nineties. The unspoken rule is that head of each Sub-Committee was nominated from the same school as the chairman. When selecting the members to serve on the joint committee, the Warden selected individuals from the executive committee of the OBA. The procedure is very much similar at Royal. Together the Principal of Royal and the Warden nominate 15 names. The joint committee is finalised in October and is then given around 4 months in which to form the respective Sub-Committees and complete the mammoth task of organising the Royal Thomian encounter. Meetings of the joint committee are alternatively held at Royal and S. Thomas' at the beginning, but closer to the Royal Thomian they are shifted to Royal for convenience. Finally, two weeks before the match all the meetings are moved to SSC, the current venue for the match. Air Cdre. Jayasekera reminisces of the days the match was held at the P Saravanamuttu Stadium, or as it is popularly referred to as the 'Oval.' He notes that even though it is one of the best grounds, the ever-increasing size of crowds that attend the Royal Thomian, and the nature of the stands (enclosures) makes it impossible to revert back to the 'Sara' stadium.

The Royal Thomian joint organizing committee has several Sub-Committees, which work separately on particular aspects of the match and as a whole contribute immensely to the smooth running of the match. At present there are sub-committees for security, catering, publicity, sponsorship and secretarial. In Air Cdre. Jayasekera's opinion each Sub-Committee has an important role to play, but he emphasises the importance of the Sponsorship Committee. According to Air Cdre Jayasekera, experience has shown that securing sponsors has not been too difficult a task, primarily due to the fact that most heads of the corporate sector are old boys from either one of the schools. Having said this he is quick to point out that there have also been 'outsiders' or commercial establishments with no relationship to either one of the schools that have been willing to sponsor the event due to the prestige attached with it. The organising committee has always given due consideration to old boys in the corporate sector and to companies who have displayed their loyalty through their continuous support of the Royal Thomian when selecting the sponsors. Air Cdre. Jayasekera stated that this years Royal Thomian (2007) recorded the highest profits, and attributed this to the sponsors who have been loyal for a long period of time.

One of the most important items on the joint committee's agenda is discussing ways and means of reducing unwarranted incidents during the match. Air Cdr. Jayasekera states that everyone who attends the Royal Thomian wishes to witness the match without any violence and unruly behavior, which ultimately tarnishes the image of both Royal and S. Thomas'. While on one hand there have been comments made in the past stating that the Royal Thomian will not be the same without such incidents and crowds invading the pitch, Air Cdre Jayasekera points out that the past could not be compared to the present as the outlook and agenda of certain spectators have changed for the worse.

An example of action taken by the committee towards this end was inviting teachers, past captains and parents of the players to occupy the 'Red Cow' tent, thereby minimising any unwanted issues in this particular enclosure, which over the years had become notorious due to uncontrollable crowds. Even though the revenue earned through this enclosure was higher than other enclosures the joint committee was forced to give priority to security considerations. After all Cdr. Jayasekera points out "at the end of the day the committee was responsible for the safety of life and property and it is essential that every measure be taken to minimise incidents of unruly behavior." He added that the committee had decided to continue with this strategy, as it yielded positive results this year, by contributing towards stemming violent behavior to a great extent. Another decision taken by the joint committee was to continue only long-standing traditional 'stands' such as the 'Mustangs,' 'Stallions' and 'Colts' in the future and to prevent individuals from creating 'tents' of their own, which do not come under the umbrella of the joint committee. On the whole Air Cdr. Jayasekera notes that the Security Committee this year (2007) did a wonderful job and hoped that the same level of security would be maintained in the years to come.

Air Cdr. Jayasekera made one suggestion to improve the Royal Thomian on the whole. This was for the joint committee to get more involved in the cricket. He noted that the Committee needed to have more past cricketers in its fold, as this would definitely boost quality of the cricket that would be on display at the Royal Thomian.

Esto Perpetua - Floreat

[The Editors of 'The Old Boys' wish to thank Air Cdr. Ajit Jayasekera for giving of his time and sharing his thoughts with us. We congratulate him on his successful organisation of the Royal Thomian (2007) and wish him well.]



Thomian First XI skipper receiving the D. S. Senanayake Shield after winning the 128th Battle of the Blues by an innings and 44 runs



Thomian First XV rugger team with the Cannon R. S. de Saram Shield



Thomian basketball team win the Hon. D. S. Senanayake Challenge Cup after beating Royal 86 - 44



Thomian Hockey team in action

STC SOUVENIRS

Hats :	Rs. 400/=	OBA Tie :	Rs.1000/=
T-shirts :	Rs. 500/=	Royal-Thomian Tie:	Rs. 250/=
Vehicle Badge (Gold/Silver/Bronze):	Rs. 400/=	Tea Mugs:	Rs. 150/=
Pendant :	Rs. 200/=	Beer Mugs:	Rs. 200/=
Stickers :	Rs. 50/= to 200/=	Royal - Thomian History Book:	Rs. 750/=
Key Chains :	Rs. 300/=	Thomian Pictorial Book	Rs. 100/=

Contact the OBA Secretariat for purchases on 0114955047 / 0114944530 or via email on stcmloba@sltnet.lk

**S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, MOUNT LAVINIA
OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION.**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE 122nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH 2008 AT 6.30 PM
AT THE COLLEGE HALL, S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, MOUNT LAVINIA.**

PROPOSED AGENDA

01. MEETING OF THE 122nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.
02. READ THE NOTICE CONVENING THE 122nd AGM, IF NOT TAKEN AS READ.
03. OBITUARIES - OBSERVANCE OF TWO MINUTES SILENCE IN THEIR MEMORY (SEE REPORT).
04. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE 121st AGM HELD ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 09th, 2007.
05. BUSINESS OR MATTERS ARISING OUT OF AGENDA ITEM 04 ABOVE.
06. ADDRESS BY DR. DAVID PONNIAH, PRESIDENT, STCML OBA.
07. REVIEW AND ADOPT THE 2007/2008 ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL REPORT.
08. REVIEW AND ADOPT THE 2007/2008 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BALANCE SHEET.
09. MOTION(S) OF WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN (If received- See Annex II of Annual Report).
10. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
11. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS AND AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2008 / 2009.
 - I. PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION / EX. OFFICIO WARDEN OF S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, MOUNT LAVINIA.
 - II. FIRST VICE PRESIDENT / EX-OFFICIO, SUB WARDEN OF S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, MOUNT LAVINIA.
 - III. SECOND VICE PRESIDENT.
 - IV. HONORARY SECRETARY.
 - V. ASSISTANT SECRETARY (NOMINATED BY THE WARDEN OF S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, MOUNT LAVINIA).
 - VI. HONORARY TREASURER.
 - VII. HONORARY ASSISTANT TREASURER.
 - VIII. HONORARY AUDITOR.
 - IX. HONORARY ASSISTANT AUDITOR.
 - X. FORTY (40) MEMBERS TO BE ELECTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AS FOLLOWS:
 - a. TEN (10) MEMBERS UNDER THIRTY (30) YEARS.
 - b. TEN(10) MEMBERS BETWEEN THIRTY (30) AND FORTY (40) YEARS.
 - c. TEN (10) MEMBERS BETWEEN FORTY(40) AND FIFTY (50) YEARS.
 - d. TEN (10) MEMBERS OVER FIFTY (50) YEARS OF AGE.
12. ELECTION OF 2 MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN
14. ADJOURNMENT.

NOTICE OF AGENDA ITEMS 11 AND 12 ABOVE:

NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS, THOSE REPRESENTING THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS AS PRESCRIBED IN ITEMS 11 AND 12 ABOVE SHALL BE RECEIVED AT THE STCML OBA SECRETARIAT, S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, MOUNT LAVINIA, NO LATER THAN CLOSE OF BUSINESS AT 1700 HRS, THURSDAY JANUARY 24TH, 2008, HAVING GIVEN FOURTEEN (14) CLEAR DAYS NOTICE BEFORE THE SCHEDULED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. NOMINATION FORM MUST BE DULY PROPOSED AND SECONDED BY TWO (2) SEPARATE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, TOGETHER WITH THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE MEMBER SO NOMINATED. NO MEMBER WHO HAS SERVED THE STCML OBA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR FIVE (5) SUCCESSIVE OR CONSECUTIVE (UNINTERRUPTED) YEARS SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR ELECTION, UNTIL A LAPSE OF TWO (2) CONSECUTIVE YEARS HAS OCCURRED.

NOMINATION FORMS CAN BE SELF-PREPARED BY HAVING THE NAME OF PROPOSER, SECONDER, THEIR RESPECTIVE MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS AND THE CONSENT OF THE NOMINEE WITH HIS ATTESTATION AND MEMBERSHIP NUMBER. THE ABSENCE OF THE STATED INFORMATION MAY RESULT IN REJECTION OF THE NOMINATIONS, REJECTED NOMINATIONS CANNOT BE RECONSIDERED.

BY ORDER OF THE 2007 / 2008 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

STCML OBA SECRETARIAT,
S.THOMAS' COLLEGE,
DE SARAM ROAD, MOUNT LAVINIA.
Tel : 4955047, 4944530

Sgd.
C . P. Sanjay Mendis

1 December 2007

EPILOGUE

The Newsletter Committee brings to you another edition of 'The Old Boy,' the voice of the OBA. 'The Old Boy' whilst keeping us 'boys' updated of all events of the College and the OBA takes pride in reminiscing the past of our *alma mater* and circulating nostalgic stories from our brethren both young and young at heart. During the past few years we focused on the bygone eras and have trod back in time as far back as the 1940's. This year focuses on the 70's, yet another memorable period in the College history.

Changing times tend to have an impact on people's perceptions; this includes our very own fellow old boys as well. We Thomians should understand that the right attitudes and values taught to us by our forefathers of this great institution have moulded us to be what we are today and no doubt the current College administration is taking to task this responsibility against all the odds one would experience in these fast changing times.

The OBA has always played an important part in the life of the College. This year has been no different with the OBA embarking on several projects. Some such as the 'e-campus,' 'IT project' and the 'career placement project' are long-term projects aimed at ensuring that College and the students who leave its gates are prepared to face the challenges of the future. Likewise many infrastructure development projects have also been undertaken, the most notable being the 'Chapel Renovation.' All these activities undertaken by the OBA have been possible due one dominant factor - the generous help of old boys of all vintages.

As editors of the newsletter, we wish to emphasise the role of 'old boys.' Of the many schools having such associations, we at S. Thomas' are indeed privileged to belong to an association that the College administration looks forward to working with towards achieving a common objective. This enables past students, or old boys to be actively involved in seeing and indeed being a part of their *alma mater's* development. Therefore 'Old Thomians' have a responsibility to ensure that they give to College their best and support the administration to continue to uphold the standards of excellence S. Thomas' is synonymous with. There have been many old boys throughout the ages who have come forward to support College when assistance was needed. Examples of this at present include, but by no means are limited to helping in sports, implementing the College IT project (a task taken up by an entire batch), collecting funds for the renovation of the Chapel and serving on the staff. While this is indeed highly commendable, there is much more that we can do. There are times when College requires a suitable person to advice the administration on building maintenance, sports or recreation. That person could and should be one of us.

Today the OBA is a powerful association and is expected to work hand in hand with the Board of Governors and the school administration to meet the challenges of the new millennium. We as old boys need to take up the challenge and ensure that College continues to hold its status as the 'most preferred educational institute in Sri Lanka.' Let us, the members of the OBA unite for this single cause in the coming years and ensure that we do justice by our *alma mater*, without being concerned about personal interest or glory.

In conclusion the Newsletter Committee wishes to place on record its appreciation of all those who sacrificed their time and contributed an article, our commercial partners Mobitel, Epsi and Aramex for their generosity the anonymous donor for the kind contribution and Dragonfly Productions (Pvt) Ltd for a professional printing job. Finally we thank the Warden, Sub-Warden, and Secretary of the OBA for their assistance in publishing this edition of 'The Old Boy.'

Esto Perpetua.

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Reader Response

The Newsletter Committee would most appreciate your comments on the current edition of 'The Old Boy.' Please send us your comments and criticisms so that they can be considered when work begins on the next edition. The Newsletter Committee also welcomes articles on any aspect of 'College life' or a response to an article in this edition of 'The Old Boy' for publication in the future. You can forward your comments/articles to newsletter@stcmloba.org.