

S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia Warden Rev'd Marc Billimoria being presented with '100 Years at Mount' chronicle by Sidath Gajanayake



S. THOMAS' COLLEGE RELEASES ITS LATEST CHRONICLE



Bishop of Kurunegala Rt. Rev'd Keerthi Fernando opening the new and updated college history board at the foyer

S. Thomas' College Warden lighting the traditional oil lamp to mark the start of the chronicle unveiling ceremony



By
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'100 Years at Mount: A History of S. Thomas' College at Mount Lavinia, 1918 - 2018' was unveiled at a ceremonial launch held on June 19, 2018, in accordance with the 100 Years at Mount celebrations held earlier in the year.

The function took place at the Main Hall of S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia, with Dr. Nimal Sandaratne, a prominent creative writer, economist and an Old Boy of S. Thomas' College, taking seat as the Chief Guest. Thomian School Prefects, House Prefects, Sports Captains and Club Heads were present at this occasion.

"It is very essential for the present generation of Thomians to know where they have come from, where they have to go and how best they can get there. It is vital that they have a sense of their history, their roots and their past, in order for them to appreciate their present and press on for the future," said S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia Warden Rev'd Marc Billimoria in his welcome address to the audience.

The Warden further stated how the past 100 years have seen the school face its toughest challenges and accomplish much. This book contains an extensive documentation of the school's history over the past century and will serve to educate Thomians, both young and old, on the Thomian heritage and their Alma Mater over the past 100 years.

It is divided into two parts. Part One consists of the history of S. Thomas' College from 1918 - 1993 and Part Two consists of the subsequent happenings from 1993

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- 2018. Part One is a revised edition of '75 Years at Mount' written by Rev'd Marc Billimoria in 1993, during his time as a staff member of the school. Part Two has been authored by a committee of Old Boys headed by Oshanthaka Cabraal and Sidath Gajanayaka, both former School Prefects and current members of the academic staff. The committee consisted of Warren White, Darren White, Senal Seneviratne, G. Neelaghandan and Vidath Samararatne, all of whom had illustrious careers at S. Thomas' College. "Thirty pages of reading an hour a day amounts approximately to 36 reading hours, just a little over one day. Hence, we do not want to overwhelm you with this tiresome task," stated Gajanayaka during his speech, at the weight of the monumental task entrusted to them.

The book comprises 13 chapters. Each chapter spans through the reign of a single Warden, with two chapters for Warden De Alwis, whose term in office is mentioned in both Part One and Part Two as '75 Years at Mount' was written during his tenure. Part One of the chronicle '100 Years at Mount' contains the story from "Warden Stone's ambitious yet spirited task of transferring a well-established school in Mutwal to a new location", as pointed out by Cabraal and ends with the fifth year in office of Wilfred Michael Neville De Alwis as Warden. Part Two is the continuation of the same and carries all

information from thereon to the end of the year 2017.

Dr. Sandaratne was introduced by the Warden as "no stranger to S. Thomas' College and just the right person for the event with his background in the industry."

Dr. Sandaratne talked fondly about his days in the college and how there was a radical change during World War II and how the school was scattered and brought together during this time.

He stated, "Life at the college was never the same. It was anew and brought back to life after the wars."

This event also marked the first appearance of Bishop of Kurunegala Rt. Rev'd Keerthi Fernando since his Episcopal Ordination and Enthronement in January 2018. The function was made colourful with a performance by the De Lanerolle Brothers awakening the nostalgic memories of the past 100 years into life for Thomians from all walks of life, through a most apt song for the occasion. Rt. Rev'd Keerthi Fernando was also bestowed upon the honour of unveiling the updated history board at the foyer of the Main Hall, prior to the event.

It would be most fitting to quote Rev'd Roy Yin, a former Chaplain of the College, whose words were repeatedly mentioned throughout the function by all of its speakers: "What is S. Thomas' College? The answer surely is that S. Thomas' changes from year to year. Even from day to day. When a parent says, 'I want my son to go to the school that I went to as a boy', he's asking for the impossible. By the time his son is ready to go to school, that school that his father went to no longer exists. For good or ill, the S. Thomas' of yesterday is gone forever. The S. Thomas' of today is you."

ESTO PERPETUA