



# THOMIANA

## NEWSLETTER

S. THOMAS' COLLEGE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA BRANCH INC  
PO BOX 2337, Mt. Waverley, Victoria 3149, Australia

*Dear Members of the STC OBA,*

*We have already come to the last quarter of the year and it seems like only yesterday that I penned my first message for the Thomiana.*

*We have had quite a bit of activity over the last three months, the most significant being the annual Annual Dinner Dance. I am happy to report that this year's event was a great success, despite the recession. The Annual Dinner Dance, also known as the 'Big Dance' is the OBA's only proper fundraising event and we managed to exceed our modest revenue target, thanks mainly to the continued generosity of the advertisers in the dance souvenir.*

*Immediately prior to the dance, in keeping with Thomian tradition, the OBA celebrated the Feast of Transfiguration at St. David's in Moorabbin. This event was well attended by members and their spouses who stayed on afterwards for some refreshments and fellowship. A few weeks after the dance, we met again for the Members Night Dinner at the new Curry and Chips Café. Once again, we saw a packed house and the karaoke singing of a few of our members was the highlight of this event.*

*The OBA organizes a full calendar of events and most events are either subsidised or conducted on a cost recovery basis. As such, I want to thank the members who support our activities – your participation is gratifying. For the other members out there, I urge you to visit our web site and review the calendar of events as we're sure to have something that you will enjoy.*

*The strength of our association is in its members and without your support it would be difficult for us to continue to maintain a full calendar of events. In this context, I must thank Arasu Saravanamuttu for his untiring efforts to follow up on members who had forgotten to renew their membership. Arasu's efforts to collect past dues has eased the burden on the Membership Secretary.*

*As we approach Christmas, the OBA events leading up to the festive season include the Golf Tournament on the 8th of November, the Outback Night Dinner Dance on the 28th of November and the OBA Carol Service on the 12th of December. Details of all of these events are to be found elsewhere in this issue and I urge you to participate.*

*Given that the next issue of the Thomiana will come out in January, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you the very best for the Christmas Season and the New Year to come.*

*Feliz Navidad!*

*Esto Perpetua*

*Chris Varney  
President*

**For the latest Thomian news, scores and special events  
[www.STCOBAust.org.au](http://www.STCOBAust.org.au)**

# EDITORIAL

## Lest we forget...

Karti is dead! Sadly, STC will never be the same again. Karti, to the uninitiated, was STC's unofficial-official vendor of salivating treats that held many a young Thomian in trance till they were rudely disturbed by the clanging of the school bell. Karti was the only trader allowed on the premises and he seemed to repay the trust placed in him by conducting a business that never generated a complaint. What an impressive achievement that was? No fair trading commission, no arbitrators and no regulators were needed for Karti to ply his trade for over four decades.

Karti's wooden platform, just outside the Shooting Range Gate, seemed to overflow with toffees, chewing gum, stickers, marbles and a whole lot more. Kids would crowd around and a few would haggle, still few would buy and most would just drool and dream. Only God and the Osama bearded Karti knew where he got his stuff but he certainly didn't shop at the local grocery store or CWE.

Watching the man in his Batticaloa sarong and Velona banyan, you wouldn't think he knew anything about supply and demand and credit and commerce, but he did. Karti outlasted four Wardens and an acting-Warden or two and he hung around long enough to give our new Warden something to think about... if he didn't have enough on his mind already. Time, however, doesn't stand still - not even for Karti. That said, it's not difficult to imagine Karti plying his wares, perched outside St. Peter's pearly gates.

Whilst Karti will be missed at STC, the boys are sure to find other distractions and outlets for their pocket money. Perhaps the new Warden will find something to distract them as he charts a new course for STC?

Whilst it shouldn't surprise those of us who remember that STC is a church school, the new Warden's perspectives are unmistakably grounded in faith and academic in bent. He gave us a glimpse of his thinking in our Dance Souvenir and emphasized that in his recent speech at the College Prize Giving. Whilst acknowledging the positive energy that permeates all things Thomian, the Warden wants to prepare today for a better tomorrow. He calls for better financial planning and greater application of information technology in the classroom and he challenges Thomians to balance their curricular and extra-curricular pursuits.

Perhaps as an OBA, we can take a cue from the Warden? Shouldn't we develop a long term perspective of our finances and focus some of our energy on activities that will help give something substantial back to the college? The Warden wants to sow the seeds of learning and development that will produce a new generation of Thomians who can leave their stamp on

society. As Old Thomians, how can we not help him succeed?

Meanwhile, the OBA is recovering from a hectic August and September and the quiet of October helps prepare for an event filled November and December. The Transfiguration Service celebration in early August was serene and beautiful -- in contrast to the high energy glitzy dinner dance that lived up to its billing. The embers from that aptly titled the Hot August Nite were still glowing when the OBA's Members' Nite celebrations took shape in September. The photographs reproduced elsewhere in this newsletter would be poor substitute for those who missed these memorable events but they are sure to encourage participation in years to come.

In November, the OBA takes to the greens with the annual STC Golf Open and to the dance floor (again) with the 'Outback Nite' Dinner Dance. This second dance for the year is fast becoming another Thomian tradition.

The 'Small Dance' was initially a response to the call for a more affordable alternative to the 'Big Dance.' Affordably priced and with a slightly more relaxed dress code, this event has proved to be no less entertaining. If last year's 'Small Dance' is anything to go by, this event will deliver unmatched value for money. Despite an increase in costs, the OBA has managed to keep the ticket costs at the same absurdly low levels as in previous years. The 'Outback' theme also gives the OBA an opportunity to salute our new country with cultural flavours from our old. The angus had better watch out for those curry munching drovers.

A week later, in December, Shantha Hallock and the Thomian Family Choir promise spiritual and musical upliftment of a different sort with the STC OBA Festival of Carols and Nine Lessons. In similar vein, Shantha's predecessor Roger Aldons, is busy organizing a choral performance and recording that will result in the release of a special CD collection to mark the 100th birthday of Father Roy H. Yin, on 7th October, 2010.

Meanwhile, in Mt Lavinia, the College is gearing up to honour its War Heroes on 11th November - 'Poppy Day' or the Day of Remembrance. Almost a hundred Thomians have given their lives in the two World Wars and in the 30 year Sri Lankan Civil War. Those heroes are remembered forever in a War Memorial on the edge of the 'Big Club Grounds.'

## Lest we forget...

Esto Perpetua

Vasee Nesiah  
Editor

# THOMIAN NEWS

## Class of 60 Celebrates 50 years of Thomiana on 2nd January 2010

On 16th January 2010, it will be exactly 50 years to the day since members of the Class of 60 joined STC at Form 1. All those who belong to the 1960 batch, including those who joined College mid-stream and either sat for their O'Levels in 1968, or joined up in the Col Forms after the O'Levels are invited to join in the Reunion Celebrations to be held in Colombo.

The program of events for 2nd January 2010 includes a Chapel Service, Group Photograph, Breakfast and Walk through College, and a Banquet Dinner. A 2 day trip out of Colombo after the event is also being planned for interested parties. A donation will be made to College from the proceeds of the event.

Those interested in joining the celebrations, please e-mail the organizers at [stcclassof1960@gmail.com](mailto:stcclassof1960@gmail.com) or contact any one of the following for more details: Vijaya M B Ratnayake ([zodiac@isplanka.lk](mailto:zodiac@isplanka.lk)) | Mike Anthonisz ([mike.anthonisz@gmail.com](mailto:mike.anthonisz@gmail.com)) | Abbas Esufally ([abbas@hemas.com](mailto:abbas@hemas.com)) | Wimal Heenetigala ([southportlanka@gmail.com](mailto:southportlanka@gmail.com)) | R Renganathan ([rajr@dir.ceylife.lk](mailto:rajr@dir.ceylife.lk))

Please also forward your contact details (phone numbers included) for inclusion in the Class of '60 directory.

## Romesh Jayasinghe appointed as Sri Lanka's new Foreign Secretary

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced the appointment of career diplomat Romesh Jayasinghe as the new Secretary of the Foreign Ministry, with effect from October 01.

Jayasinghe, a senior Foreign Service Officer, also served as the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in New Delhi. He succeeds Dr. Palitha Kohona, another Old Thomian. Dr. Kohona has been appointed as Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York.

## Obituaries

1) **Wendy Harris.** Wendy (the daughter of Warden de Saram) died in England and her Ashes were recently interred in Warden De Saram's grave back in Sri Lanka. Wendy was in the junior forms in College in the late forties (*see page15*).

2) **Lumpy (L.M.P.) DE SILVA** - Ret. Deputy Inspector General of Police.

3) **Aussie (A.W.R.DE ALWIS) SENEVIRATNE** -- His brothers, A.T. (Tassie) and A.N.(Newzie) were also Thomians.

4) **Annesley Theideman**

5) **Col. Saman Weerawatta** - Class of '78

## Thomian Chief of Staff



SRI LANKA Army's new Chief of Staff (CoS) Major General Mendaka P. Samarasinghe is an Old Thomian. Prior to his appointment as CoS, Mendaka served as the Commanding Officer in Jaffna.

Mendaka was born in Colombo in 1958 and had his education at STC. Mendaka was a College Prefect, he captained the College Boxing Team, led the Junior and Senior Cadet Platoons as the Sergeant, played 2 XV Rugby and brought fame to his alma-mater. He joined the Military Academy as an Officer Cadet in 1978 and passed out in 1980 winning the Sword of Honour for the Best All Round Cadet.

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The THOMIANA's Editorial Team would love to have your feedback, suggestions and contributions. Please email your contributions and comments to the Editor ([editor@stcobaaust.org.au](mailto:editor@stcobaaust.org.au)) and we will try and accommodate them in the next edition.



S. Thomas' College OBA (Australia Branch) presents

# OUTBACK NITE

**28th November 2009**

**@ Hungarian Community Centre - 760 Boronia Road, Wantirna, Victoria 3152**

**(Drinks @ 6:30pm for a 7:00pm start ^ Last Dance @Midnight)**

**Music by Rendezvous & Tukka by Aus-Ceylon Caterers**

**Sumptuous Dinner Buffet & Generous Raffle Prizes**

**Limited Bar & Ice on offer ^ BYO Spirits & Wine**

**Dress Code : Smart Casual or Outback Formal ^ Cost: \$40 per head**

**Milinda 0458 998 850 🦋 Nabil 0405 258 776 🦋 Peneeth 0404 213 166 🦋 Vasee 0403 471 642**

*The OBA database in Colombo needs the following information from all Old Boys of STC.*

1. Name with Titles and initials

2. Full Name

3. Date of Birth

4. Year of joining college

5. Year of leaving college

6. OBA membership number (if you are currently a member)

7. College Admission Number (if known)

8. Profession/ Occupation

9. Residential Address

10. Work Address

11. Telephone number

12. Mobile

13. E-Mail address

*If you haven't done so already, please send these details to [stcmloba@slt.net.lk](mailto:stcmloba@slt.net.lk)*

## Special Offer for Members

### DELOUALYN COTTAGE

*Tranquil Holiday Home in Ravenswood*

- Two Bedroom Unit (BV) on 20 Acres
- 16 km south of Bendigo's CBD
- Close to Wineries, Goldmines, Farms, Hiking Trails and many historic towns
- Fully self-contained & private
- Breakfast provisions and linen supplies available on request
- Minimum Booking - Two Adults, 2 Days

~ Special Discount for Members of the STC OBA

~ Extra Special Discount for Senior Members of the STC OBA

*For inquiries:*

*Contact Lynwood & Deidre Stork on 03.54353569*





## The Warden's Report

### STC Prize Giving 2009

The academic and sporting achievements we celebrate today occurred in 2008 and the early part of 2009, and so as a warden installed in July 2009 I am in this respect rather like the man in the Bible who "reaps what he has not sown". Nonetheless, that serves to remind us all, wardens included, that the traditions and strengths of a school are based upon a past to which we did not contribute and will find further fruit in a future we will not see. We are all transient in the history of a great school, and the fruits of any year are only one of the harvests that arise from the work of many years.

Yet, even as a warden who reaps what he has not sown, I am also reminded that we can only reap what someone has at some time sown, and that what we strive to achieve must be based upon proper intentions. Perhaps the most remarkable and most satisfying of S. Thomas' achievements is that whereas, like all schools, it continues to take in children who are little more than infants and send out adults who are almost grown men, the qualities of those who leave it are those of mature, self-confident, resilient, resourceful citizens ready to make their mark in further education or in employment. Sri Lankan society is enriched in every aspect by Thomians who occupy significant responsible positions, and it is worth remembering that not all of them earned prizes on occasions such as these, and many of them, dare one say it, were probably keener on their sports and their social interactions when here than they were on their studies. But academic achievement without personal maturity and responsibility has little merit, and personal maturity and responsibility without the intellectual equipment and skills to make a mark upon the world have little impact, the school song, sung as lustily now as ever it has been, reminds us all that life is about a complex mixture and integration of what we have and what we are, and the measurable concrete achievement we celebrate today may be considered a kind of having while the general rich fruit of S. Thomas' long traditions and the ongoing work of its staff and boys may be seen as a kind of being, and so "To the College we sing, for all we have and are".

It was Sir Isaac Newton, perhaps the greatest English scientist and mathematician, who once responded to praise for his work by saying "I have seen further only because I stood upon the shoulders of giants", and that modesty is something that should be in our minds as we watch and applaud today all the young men and boys who have achieved so much: their success is a testament to the work of our predecessors in providing us with a school at all; to their teachers for nurturing them over many years during which all of them will at some time have needed encouragement and special help; to the support staff who clean and feed them, who cut the grass and paint the walls and try to avoid the power going off as much as possible; to the Old Boys and other benefactors who continue to support the school in so many ways, financially and through work experience and other help with day to-day workings of the college. And of course their greatest debt of gratitude, to often left unspoken or unsung, is to their long-suffering parents who endured the torture of the admissions process and have risen at ungodly hours for years and years either to get them to school or to very early sports practices. To all these essential members of the Thomian community, and especially to the many boys who will not walk upon this stage today but whose involvement in the school is every bit as essential to its health and the facilitation of its learning, we owe immeasurable thanks and gratitude.



## The Warden's Report

### STC Prize Giving 2009 (cont...)

Since in another year it will seem rather a remote memory, however, on behalf of everyone from Board Of Governors to the humblest member of staff or most junior boy, I would like to add a special word of thanks to the Sub Warden, upon the mantle of David Ponniah fell unexpectedly and who discharged his duties as Acting Warden for almost a year with great distinction. To him the entire community owes a particular debt of gratitude and thanks.

The college continues to try to do its work in the face of considerable difficulties. Parental concerns over the government position on compulsory Sinhala and Tamil qualifications in religious studies and history are properly at the top of our immediate agenda. The ongoing need to find the financial resources necessary to maintain and enhance the facilities of a school blessed with wonderful buildings and grounds which cost a great deal to look after is never far away; the pressing need to improve the remuneration of teaching-staff in order to make teaching a more attractive proposition for new graduates is particularly demanding in a resurgent economy which will generate greater and greater demands for well-qualified graduates; and the absolute necessity of bringing the school; up to date It equipment and skills will make demands on our resources that are frighteningly large.

Writing in his report in July last year my predecessor continued to lament the elusiveness of peace, and even at my interview in January the promise of peace still looked more a dream held in hope than a reality shortly to be achieved. Yet the extraordinary tenacity with which the government pursued the cause of establishing a lasting peace has brought about a change in Sri Lanka that probably has no precedent since independence in 1948, and we all now look to the future with renewed optimism. There is absolutely no doubt that the peace and prosperity of the country depends upon the full integration and mutual respect of all its citizens, and equally no doubt that the friendships that Thomians form while here as boys will serve to add stronger bonds to that social cohesion as they have done through more troubled times. We must all make our contribution to helping this great nation to win the peace just as so many gave their lives to win the war.

For all the pomp and ceremony associated with the installation of a new warden, no warden worthy of the post can ever allow himself to forget Jesus' saying, "he who would be greatest among you must be servant of all". The responsibilities of this office are huge, as are the expectations so many have of its incumbents. Sometimes the burden of office involves saying things that people do not want to hear and doing things that people do not think should be done. But in this as in we do, are these things we say, solely driven and motivated by concern to enhance the education of our boys? Our celebration today is witness to the successes of the past; it falls to all of us to ensure that there will at least as much success in the future.

**For the full text of the Warden's Report  
and all the photographs please visit  
<http://www.stcml.org/STCMLOBA/PG-09/PG-09.html>**





*FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION - 2009 @ ST. DAVID'S MOORABBIN*

The Feast of the Transfiguration was held on Sunday the 9th August 2009 at St David's Anglican Church, Moorabbin. Rev Baldwin Daniel conducted the service together with Rev Ravanel Weinman who preached a very fitting sermon. The altar servers were also represented by old Thomians i.e. Godfrey Senaratne, Peter Weerakoon and Edward Jesudhasan. The hymns sung were in keeping with the tradition back home. After the service, our new president thanked the congregation for attending and many old Thomians mingled and reminisced over morning tea. The morning ended with the singing of the college anthem.

Esto Perpetua.

Doug Ingram





*MEMBERS' NITE - 2009 @ CURRY & CHIPS CAFE ON BLACKBURN ROAD*



## Married to a Psychologist

by Bryan Reid

(article reproduced from the 'The Island' of 17th March '09)

Any of you out there married to a Psychologist? You don't have to be, you know. Most women are quite competent psychologists. They always know what you are thinking. A woman psychologist is another step up the rung. A woman psychologist wife, is the pinnacle in the evolution of that science. Not only do they know what you are thinking, they know what you are going to think long before that thought enters your head. (I was going to say brain, but I was reluctant to do so because I was only referring to us mere males.)

"Why do you want to go? You were there last year, weren't you?" says Rani. I have to go on the defensive now, but very close to the pad. Stay compact, one mistake and you are heading back to the pavilion. "But I missed the Royal Thomian last year. Went in April, remember? And this time it is a significant milestone. The 130th Royal Thomian. Everyone is going. Shaw, Vasee and the rest.

"But isn't it just school cricket?". "What?? You cannot be serious. There is nothing closer to death than losing a Royal Thomian." Why do Old Royalists and Thomians from all parts of the world fly in for the Royal Thomian? Even though some of us have been overseas for thirty, forty, even fifty years, we are drawn to Colombo in March. It is the hub that attracts us oldies, the best chance to meet old friends. You don't have to have been a cricketer either. Some have not played the game (other than down the lane tennis ball cricket), nor have they been close enough to the dressing room to smell the liniment. The longer we are away from home, the more we tend to nurture the pleasant aspects of our childhood.

Particularly impressionable is the metamorphosis from childhood to adulthood, when we are at the cutting edge of newfound independence, charged up with a burst of testosterone and knocking on the door to adulthood. Numb and delirious are we, as the transition is now executed. It is the end of an era, albeit with some reservation as we leave childhood behind. As a result, shared experiences amongst friends are treasured and indelibly imprinted in the amygdala, where feelings are registered in the longest of long term memory e.g. hearing that first roar of the crowd as the first ball is bowled, riding in old crows, trying to get into the girl school compounds to ring the school bell etc. Even though jumping over girl school fences is clearly unacceptable, you feel that you have permission because you are doing it as a group of friends.

We go back to our childhood and youth, knocking again at that door from the other side, perchance to have a glimpse at those early days again. Old friends and places hold the key to our heart. The secret old flame, perhaps the music teacher you had had a crush on, sporting achievements that always seem to

improve as the years go by, or the dreaded examinations that found us wanting and brought out the worst in most of us.

How do I know all of this? Psychologist wife Rani told me so.

But there is more. The desire to attend these occasions could be a part of 'mid life crisis.' We are the only species to suffer from this affliction - Regression. We are now looking into the rear vision mirror at the past, rather than into the future.

When we are young, we visualize what we are going to be when we grow up, like the car we will drive and the job we will do and the person we will be. With a twist of irony, we have now become the person we wanted to be, so we seek comfort in that inward mind that flourished so long ago, sowing the seeds of our destiny. When we reach middle age, we have achieved many of those dreams, and there is no more to look forward to. Why? Our future is now more clear or planned and you have already become the person you always wanted to be. You have got your dream car, built that holiday home in the country. All this happens at an unconscious level and takes you back to your childhood.

When you go back physically to that cradle of friends, places and situations, reminiscing laughing and rejoicing, it brings about a release of endorphins in the brain's pleasure centre, encouraging it to happen as frequently as possible like an addiction that brings pleasure. It feels as though time has stopped.

And why do we want to come back? Because now we can.

Now Vasee is the best example of this phenomenon. He comes here, from Melbourne every year. Despite the financial crisis, recession and the impending depression, in a climate of job scarcity, he would accept a recent job offer, only if he were allowed to make his annual pilgrimage to the Royal Thomian barely two months after taking up his new position.

Friendships formed during those early days are binding, because your friends hold the key to your inner secrets.

The brain is the last bastion for any form of pleasure that comes from the inward mind. When there is not much to look forward to, we regress into our youth and childhood. This is exhibited even when one has the misfortune of dementia.

To those bachelors and would be bachelors out there, go seek out a psychologist.

It is worth the ride.



**Contemplating a mid-life crisis? Fancy a laugh and a bit of frolic with your old mates?**

**TravelScene @ the Glen has special airfare and accommodation packages for STC OBA members who want to visit Colombo for the Roy-Tho in March 2010. The upcoming encounter will have special significance for our OBA as Barney Reid returns to the Roy-Tho as Coach of the Thomian First XI.**

**For details please contact:**

**Alex Fernando - TravelScene at The Glen (Centro) 03.9886.1499 / 0411.015.559 / alex@travelglen.com.au**

# HOT AUGUST NITE

*By Anonymous*

## The Expectation (Pre – Dinner Dance)

Once more, the annual flyer is out to the STCOBA membership with all the essential details. This year the dinner dance will be held on Saturday August 22nd at the Hilton on the Park, Melbourne. Is it really twelve months since the last one? Are we about to see all those friendly smiling faces, followed by the ritual of shaking hands, hugging old mates and even, sparing a somber thought for those we shall never meet again.

The Dance Committee in its eternal wisdom follows up with another message through the STCOBA network that all tickets are already booked, so if one has not made prior arrangements, then one's chances of attending are rather bleak. Is it clever marketing or supreme arrogance depends on which school one attended, I suppose? This announcement brings a wry smile to the face of the writer, for some things never change and we did this well over twenty years ago. Mind you, back in those days tickets were priced at \$29.50 when other dances charged \$22.00 and we, had a full house always.

There is no doubt that this dinner dance format will never go unattended and despite eternal misgivings and doubts in the minds of some committee members, will continue to be a strong success. Whether the numbers of STCOBA members who attend on the night itself will diminish in time, remains to be seen. What is not obvious to most be the planning and hard work that goes into this function which is, and continues to be, the STCOBA's main fundraiser?

So the excitement and anticipation builds. It is time to find the old "Penguin suit" and make sure that it still fits, especially around the waist. A few telephone calls to other members and with a few neighbours (big fans of our annual dance) joining in, we now have sufficient numbers to fill two tables. This means that the drinks menu on the night is in line for a good "working over". Who are the nominated drivers or are we staying over in the city? Planning for the dance is not confined to the Dance Committee.

## The Realisation (The Dinner Dance)

"If it isn't broken, why fix it?" must be the catch cry of the current Dance Committee because the formula of the dinner dance in 2009 remains the same. The venue - Hilton on the Park, Melbourne - now shows its age, the band – Replay 6 - is all too familiar and well worn, the dance programme is almost exactly last year's and could be repeated verbally without looking too closely at the dance souvenir. Bring back the floorshow, one thinks, if suited and there is spare cash in the budget. Maybe the time is ripe to breakup the monotony; it is time if at all possible for new ideas.

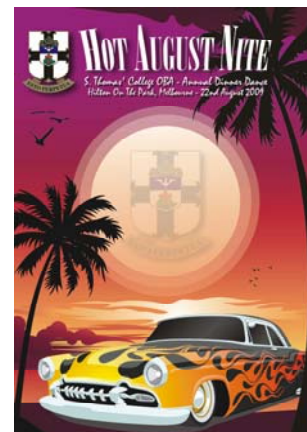
**But** there is good news, lots.

In its wisdom, and full marks for trying, the Dance Committee has incorporated two guest artistes in Corrine and Conrad. They are, I think an undoubted success for they bring a touch of professionalism and talent. There has to be a touch of nostalgia on a night such as this, so as Conrad sang at the 1st Dinner Dance in 1978, how good it is to hear him sing so well three decades later. However, the comments on Corrine's dress sense on the night are not too complimentary, sad because how sexy she would look in a more glamorous outfit. By heck, this lady can move and sing. Maybe next time she dresses more suitably for the occasion.

This year in a subtle move the College song immediately follows the STCOBA President's address and the rendition is as lusty and spine tingling as ever. Maybe the voices are better earlier in the night after only a gargle or two of alcohol. When one is not blessed with a singing voice, it is far far better to hide in the throng and listen.

The food is definitely one of the highlights of the night. The entrée is tortellini, the mains a choice of either scotch fillet or snapper fillet followed by dessert of profiteroles. We are most fortunate since both of our tables are extremely well served with food and drink. Credit where credit is due and the Hilton kitchen and drinks staff can stand up to be counted for their efforts on the night. For most of us, the cost of \$110 per head is well spent for we have got we think, more than our money's worth.

A complimentary word about the drinks menu served on the night. I truly do not know of any dinner dance that serves such an extensive list of spirits for the entrance ticket price of \$110. Where would one get unlimited amounts of scotch, bourbon, brandy, rum, vodka and gin along with sparkling wine, chardonnay, shiraz, merlot, mineral water and soft drinks for this price? This night's slogan with regard to the drinks menu aptly then has to be "use it or lose it," so therefore a nominated driver or a taxi is a wise choice.





*HOT AUGUST NITE - STC OBA DINNER DANCE 2009 @ HILTON, MELBOURNE*



### **Hot August Nite (cont...)**

The dance souvenir is a great read and something from the night that we can preserve for the future. The striking cover is truly a work of art - good work from Shev (*cover design*) and Lou (*printing*).

All the dance sponsors are to be thanked and patronised whenever possible. Thanks to their contributions the event will turn out a healthy profit. How the STCOBA can ever manage, I think, without the monetary assistance from that very loyal old boy, Ralph D'Silva, the most ardent supporter of our dance without question. Others who help year in year out are John and Glen. Good to see newcomers to the sponsorship stable like Gerard and Ruzaik.

It could be argued that the smaller numbers present at this year's dance, about 400 one is informed, compared to larger numbers of recent years is actually a blessing in disguise, mainly for those who still possess the stamina, willpower and willing partners to dance all night. The Hilton and other similar venues do not always have large dance floors so a little more room to manoeuvre those creaking bones is most welcome.

Now a word from the writer on the crowd one spots that night. Here and there we see some familiar faces. How good it is to see David and Rod present here tonight, two strong supporters of the current format, they believed in it when not too many did. A look to the left and one spots Sarath and Sanjiva, always present, always smiling. Richard is there, so are Roger, Michael and Trevor. And many more, the list goes on and on. All Old Thomians, all staunch and true. To a man, the Dance Committee is present, Chris, Mark, Glen, Peneeth, Nalin, Trevor M., Jayantha, Ari and Vasee, all resplendent in their dinner suits. Well done boys, another good effort all things considered!

### **The Aftermath (Post-Dinner Dance)**

Where to from here? This thought must reverberate through the STCOBA President's mind. The dinner dance remains the main, if not the sole fundraiser. The STCOBA has been blessed through the years with good management so funds and deposits are not the issue. The heart of the matter I think is probably the level of support of the event, not so much in spirit as in attendance with cost probably a key factor. After all, similar to the country and times we now live in; the STCOBA does have an ageing membership. A core support of about 250 – 300 can always be counted on to attend, no matter what. How fortunate our OBA is to have such members and well wishers on hand.

Also, I am told the hotels we use are no longer able or willing to extend those courtesies and discounts as in the past. Maybe these hotels, the Hyatt, Hilton, etc. no longer need our custom. Is it possible that other hotels not previously considered could or should be targeted? The Langham, I believe, is waiting.

One band is possibly a better choice than two bands, slightly cheaper and a welcome break in between gives people a chance to meet and talk.

Does the programme need a revisit? There are limitations, sure, as people demand and are entitled to the core constituents, being food, drink, music and structure. So what and where are the points of deviation from tried and true standards?

These are some of the questions that Chris and his band of loyal followers face for 2010. But one constant remains for sure. Like all former Presidents, I believe that Chris can always count on the Thomian spirit that runs through the membership, mostly silent, preferring to wait until called upon on occasions like the Annual Dinner Dance.

The 2010 Dinner Dance cannot come quickly enough for many of us. With bated breath, we shall await the next Dance Committee's offering because whilst one looks for improvement always, the standards set so far by numerous helpers through the years remain high.

### **Good Luck!**

***Author's Note:** This is an article by a member of several previous STC OBA Dance Committees. The opinions expressed are based on observations and feedback, both before and after this year's event -- written hurriedly under extreme pressure from the Editor. Therefore no correspondence will be entered into and no apologies are forthcoming for any boredom suffered by the reader. This writer has missed only one such event since 1978 and feels somewhat qualified to comment.*

***Editor's Note:** The Author was not under pressure to do anything that he didn't promise in a state of exuberance as that 'Hot August Nite' drew to a close. The Editor's obligation to honour the Author's request for anonymity is cruel and disproportionate punishment for whatever mild pressure the Editor may have brought to bear on the author.*



## A SPORTING AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVER

By Arasu Saravanamuttu.

### *A National Sporting Hero in Sri Lanka*

Rupert William Ferdinands, born in 1936 in Colombo, Sri Lanka then known as Ceylon, emigrated to Australia in 1972 and now resides in Melbourne. His early education was at S.Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia from 1946 to 1956.

From his early teens at College, he showed promise as a sportsman with interest in many sports. Rupert represented college at tennis, table-tennis, badminton and soccer. He had many achievements in tennis, his first love at school. At the age of twelve, he first won the national tennis under sixteen singles and doubles championship and continued to dominate the age group for the next three years. Whilst still eligible to play in the under sixteen, he entered the under nineteen national tournament and won the singles and doubles titles for the next four years. In 1953, Rupert had the distinction as a sixteen year old schoolboy to be selected nationally for the first Davis Cup tennis team. Thereafter, he played in almost every team up to 1972. In 1956, he had the honour of being appointed the Head Prefect, only a few Thomians could accomplish.

In 1957, he gained entrance to the University of Ceylon (Colombo) and graduated with a B.Sc (Hons) degree in 1961. There he received colours in tennis, table-tennis, badminton and was chess champion on one occasion.

In 1962 after graduation, Rupert entered the mercantile sector as assistant brewer. In 1963, he underwent a one year course in England as a brewer and was admitted as a member of the Institute of Brewing in London. Later on, he worked as the acting head brewer at Ceylon Brewery, Nuwara-Eliya. His second love was cricket and while stationed in Nuwara -Eliya, he was a member of the Dimbulla Athletic and Cricket Club representing them in the Sara trophy as a wicket keeper (with a tennis eye). He later on played for the Colombo Cricket Club.

Rupert had many outstanding tennis achievements in Ceylon. Below are many notable performances he mentioned when I spoke with him.

- Completed Singles wins against Japan's no.3 R.Kamo, India's Anand Amritharaj, Premjit Lal, S.P.Misra, D.K.Wallia and England's Michael Davies who later became England's No.1 and Davis Cup player for many years.

- Held match point against Canada's No.1 Don Fontana, set point against India's Ramanthan Krishnan and American Ham Richardson in a tournament in India.

In 1952, Jack Arkinstall who had many convincing performances behind his name, came to Ceylon as a player/coach from Australia said, "Rupert was the equal of any Australian youngster but the exceptional pair of Hoad and Rosewall," a glowing tribute.

At the age of twenty one, he was ranked No.1 tennis player, a ranking which he held for over a decade. In 1957, 1963, 1969 and 1970 he won the national Mens' Singles title. He also won four national mens' doubles and five mixed doubles titles and the national Triple Crown title at the same tournament in 1957 and 1970.



Rupert singing a duet with his friend, Errol Jacotine, at the STC OBA Members' Nite on 19th September '09

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**The OBA and STC need your support  
Of the 333 members on the OBA's roll;**

- **5 members last paid their dues in 2004,**
- **11 members last paid their dues in 2005,**
- **21 members last paid their dues in 2006,**
- **28 members last paid their dues in 2007, and**
- **33 members last paid their dues in 2008.**

**Special thanks to all Thomians  
who've paid their dues  
and graced various OBA events.  
The OBA couldn't survive without your  
continued support and participation.  
Look for the Special Offer  
for Members on Page 4**

## A SPORTING AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVER (CONT...)



On emigrating to Australia, Rupert was employed as project manager for standards Australia from 1972 to 2005, specialising in the medical and dental areas of standardization. He continued his interest in tennis and in 1973 qualified as an Australian level 2 coach and umpire and later on advanced as a level 3 coach. His other involvements with tennis included being a board member of the Tennis Coaches Association of Victoria, member of the Tennis Professionals Association of Australia for over 10 years, lecturing fellow coaches at national tennis seminars, being a member of a five man technical committee at national level for standardizing stroke techniques for teaching purposes for tennis coaches around Australia and manager of the training school for coaches and Chairman of the examination panel in the Tennis Coaches Association of Victoria for almost 10 years. He has other interests such as playing bridge and he was ranked 9th in the Australian wide novices duplicate bridge competition in 2009, under the auspices of the Bridge Federation and.

At present, Rupert's interests are playing piano and contract bridge and as a relaxed occupation, he continues his tennis coaching from his property in Rowville.

According to Rupert, the most significant achievement in his tennis career was on the 16th July 2008, when the Ministry of Sports and Public Recreation in Sri Lanka awarded him with national colours as a national sports hero "in recognition and appreciation of his unwavering commitment to further the glory of Sri Lanka through participation and outstanding performances in tennis" at the international level. Rupert won a bronze medal at the 1958 Asian Games held in Tokyo. A sovereign gold medal and certificate was presented to him for his love for tennis and pride in representing the motherland internationally as one of Sri Lanka's "Sporting Heroes".

*Note from Arasu: I would like to thank Rupert for helping fill in the gaps for this article and for his contributions as a Thomian and as a sportsman. I congratulate him on his many outstanding achievements.*

# GOLF



**Sunday**  
**08th November**  
**Waverley (Private) Golf Course, Bergins Road, Rowville**  
**Tee-Off @ 12.15pm**  
 (please be present at 12 Noon)  
**\$35**  
 (incl. Golf, BBQ & Drinks)



STC OBA members who wish to participate must contact:

Claud Reid (9763 7309) | John Rodie (9720 4710) | Delwyn Lappen (9764 5336 / dlappen@bigpond.com)  
 or Trevor Meares (9763 9825 / 0402 338 637 / tameares@bigpond.com)

Teams from four other OBAs are expected to participate in this year's Golf Open. Approximately 24 spots have been reserved for STC OBA members (and family). Full payment of \$35 will be required to confirm participation as the Green Fees have to be pre-paid by Sunday 1st Nov. Players will be notified of all the competition details (draw, exact tee-off times, etc.) once all entries have been finalised.



# Thomian Tribute

## WENDY DE SARAM: A Tribute to a Fine Friend

By Dorothy Wijesinha

Wendy was one of my dearest friends. Our friendship dates back to the time of our grandparents, who were great friends too. We attended the Kindergarten of St. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia over the same period, a time when the school entertained girls in its primary grades. Wendy was one class senior to me and her contemporaries were Heloise Pereira (nee Anthonisz), Yvonne Abeyratne (nee Wise), Derrick Samarasinha, Lakshman Bandaranayake, Jumbo and Gigi Abeysekera to name but a few.

In school, Wendy taught Pansy Gauder another great friend, and me how to swim. Of course, I almost drowned and Wendy had to leap in to pull me out!

Sixty years ago, it was Wendy who drove my father and me to the Chapel of the Transfiguration (St. Thomas' College Chapel) where I was married. Heloise was my bridesmaid. Later, Wendy and Heloise were Godmothers to our eldest daughter Maya.

Wendy was always a 'Friend in need' from a very early age. Derrick Samarasinha recalls how he was sobbing in the class on his first day in the kindergarten. Wendy gave him her handkerchief. Later, when he was Head Prefect and went to the Tuck Shop, Mrs. Gauder informed him that his bill had not been paid. Derrick explained that he had not received his allowance as yet. Wendy, who was nearby, once again came to his rescue.

Even just before she passed away, Wendy was kind enough to send me some medicines from the UK which she knew were too expensive for me in Sri Lanka.

When my family lived in the UK, Heloise visited us from Australia. The two of us and our daughter Maya, spent days with Wendy and her husband Charles at their home in Oxford. What a memorable time we had. Charles of course was "Surrogate" father to us all.

Wendy's last visit to Sri Lanka in 1994, was to sort out her father's affairs. After all, she was the daughter of the legendary Canon R.S. De Saram of St. Thomas' College. She wanted to visit her "Special" friend, so we duly took her to visit Vernon Tissera who was visiting Rangala Estate. There she enjoyed herself a great deal, especially with a trip to Corbett's Gap. She also made a trip to Pottuvil with the Tisseras to their Guest House there, reveling not only in the good company and fine environment of Arugum Bay, but also in the idiosyncrasies of the staff of the "Hideaway." They never failed to amuse her.

Right up to the end, Wendy though in pain and discomfort, would always be cheerful when Heloise and I, and her other good friend Mystica would ring her up. Dear Wendy, may the angels look after you and when we meet again, we will start our own STC OBA!

On her request, Wendy's ashes were interred at the General Cemetery, Borella (Anglican Section), at 10am on Wednesday July 15, 2009.

And when (s)he shall die.....(s)he will make the heavens so fine."

### **STC First XI - Cricket Fixtures**

Sept 11TH & 12TH v Mahinda College Galle @ STC Grounds  
 Sept 18TH & 19TH v D.S.Senanayake College @ STC Grounds  
 Sept 25TH & 26TH v Dharmapala Vidyalaya @ STC Grounds  
 Oct 9TH & 10TH v Joseph Vaz College @ Albert Peiris Stadium  
 Oct 12TH & 13TH v Thurstan College @ Thurstan Grounds  
 Oct 16TH, 17TH, 18TH v Wesley Six-A-Side Tournament  
 Oct 23RD & 24TH v Richmond College Galle @ STC Grounds  
 Oct 29TH & 30TH v Isipathana College @ Colts Grounds  
 Nov 6TH & 7TH v Dharmarajah College Kandy @ Kandy  
 Jan 4TH & 5TH v Lumbini College @ STC Grounds  
 Jan 8TH & 9TH v St.Benedict's College @ STC Grounds  
 Jan 15TH & 16TH v Ananda College @ STC Grounds  
 Jan 22nd & 23rd v Wesley College @ Wesley Grounds

Jan 29TH & 30TH v St. Joseph's College @ STC Grounds  
 Jan 5TH & 6TH v Mahanama College @ Tyrone Stadium  
 Jan 8TH & 9TH v Prince of Wales College @ STC Grounds  
 Feb 12TH & 13TH v Old Boys Match @ STC Grounds  
 Feb 15TH & 16TH v St.Peter's College @ STC Grounds  
 Feb 19TH & 20TH v Trinity College Kandy @ Asgiriya Stadium  
 Feb 26TH & 27TH v Nalanda College @ Nalanda Grounds  
 Mar 5TH & 6TH v St. Sebastians College @ STC Grounds  
 Mar 11TH, 12TH & 13TH v Royal College @ SSC Grounds  
 Mar 20TH v Royal (Limited Overs Match) @ SSC Grounds

Note: Barney Reid takes over as STC's Coach in January 2010. OBA members who wish to attend the Royal-Thomian celebrations in March 2010 can take advantage of special airfare and accommodation offers available on the web and at The Travel Scene at The Centro Glen Shopping Centre. The OBA can try and negotiate access to the Mustangs, Stallions, Colts, Stables and other exclusive tents for members who have purchased their air tickets.



## STC OBA CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2009

**STC OBA GOLF OPEN** on **Sunday, Nov 8th** @ 12:00pm for 12:15pm start  
Waverely (Private) Gold Course, Bergins Road, Rowville  
Contacts: Delwyn Lappen on 0418 582 301 or Trevor Meares on 0402 338 637

**'OUTBACK NITE' Dinner Dance** on **Saturday, Nov 28**

Hungarian Community Centre, Bronia Road, Wantirna  
Contacts: Nabil Mubarak (0405 258 776) or Milinda Liyanage (9837 5509)

**STC OBA FESTIVAL OF CAROLS & NINE LESSONS** on **Saturday, Dec 12** @ 6:00pm

St David's Anglican Church, 4 Redholme Street, Moorabbin  
Contacts: Ashton Anthonisz (9702 5326) or Mark Nanayakkara (0408 990 146)



## Remembrance Day @ S. Thomas' College

The STC OBA in Colombo has scheduled a special Thanksgiving Service to be held on the 11th of November 2009, at the College Chapel, to honour those Thomians who have sacrificed their lives in battle. This is the 10th such occasion and the Thanksgiving Service will be followed by a Ceremony at the STC War Memorial on the edge of the Big Club Grounds. There will be a brief time of fellowship hosted by STC after the event.

- ♦ STC has lost 14 of her sons in the 30 year Sri Lankan Civil War.
- ♦ Our Roll of Honour includes 80 killed in World War 1 and 4 killed in World War 2.
- ♦ The proud Thomian military tradition includes the ONLY Victoria Cross ever won by a Ceylonese, that won by Lt Basil Horsefall, for outstanding gallantry. He was killed in action in 1917. He was also a member of the 1914 STC First XI Cricket Team and was 12th man at the Roy-Tho.
- ♦ The tradition of sports and military success was continued into the Sri Lankan war as well, as a number of the 14 who died for Sri Lanka, were outstanding sportsmen.
- ♦ STC has also a further proud record of having contributed to the Sri Lankan Armed Forces and Police by having a number of Old Thomians going onto either Commanding an Armed Force or being The Chief of Staff or Inspector General of Police (13 of them in total including those currently in service).

***Esto Perpetua !***



*Note : At 11 am on 11 November 1918 the guns of the Western Front fell silent after more than four years continuous warfare. The moment when hostilities ceased on the Western Front became universally associated with the remembrance of those who had died in the war. The allied nations chose this day and time for the commemoration of their war dead.*



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Here is my payment of \$ <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 80px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> [2009 subs = \$25 (full-time students' & pensioners' concession = \$10)]  <input type="checkbox"/> My Cheque/Money Order is enclosed (Cheques in favour of S.Thomas' College OBA)  Debit my Credit Card Number: <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 150px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Visa (Please tick)                      Expiry: <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 80px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></span>	
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Prestige Wardrobes and Shower Screens  
Programmed Carpet Management  
John Allison Monkhouse  
A H Fencing  
BaySide Pizza  
Utopia Vacations  
InVogue Blinds

Blackwood & Sons  
Hudson Pitt - Accountants  
Elephant House  
Floor Stop - Vinyl & Tiles  
Telnetworks  
The Communication Clinic,  
Professional Window Tint  
Easter Property Services  
Waverley Spices  
APWDS Logistics  
React Property Maintenance  
Barrie Vagg Packaging  
NPR Building Concepts

*Esto Perpetua*

### Get more out of life and give something back - join the STC OBA. Engage!



Old Boys who wish to share Thomian anecdotes and stories should email them to [editor@stcobaaust.org.au](mailto:editor@stcobaaust.org.au)

Please visit our website for the latest details on all of the OBA's functions and events.

If you have paid your Membership Dues, you will receive a copy of the '*Thomiana*'.  
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The Membership Secretary [ 0402 338 637 / [tameares@bigpond.com](mailto:tameares@bigpond.com) ]  
PO Box 2337, Mt. Waverley 3149, Victoria, Australia

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