

**Lakshman Jayatilaka**

Attorney-at-Law

23,1<sup>st</sup> Lane, Kirillapone,  
Colombo 05, Sri Lanka

Office

Tel: 8 54164,828273,812956-8  
(Direct) 818989  
Fax: 812959

Residence

Tel: 828272  
Mobile: (Hand) 072-246324  
(Car) 072-245078

October 04,2001

Mr.Upali Jayawardena,  
Hon.Secretary,  
S T C G- O B A  
No.27,42<sup>nd</sup> Lane,  
Colombo 06

Dear Upali,

**Original by -Hand**  
**Duplicate by-Registered Post**

**S.Thomas College, Gurutalawa – O B A**

1. I am handing you herewith a further 09 Data Sheets from No.248 to No.256 which I have received to date together with a list thereof marked “A”. We have inserted these particulars in the Directory in our Computer.

I also enclose herewith 2 complete lists marked ‘B’ & ‘C’ of Members to whom letters addressed have been returned undelivered by the Postal Authorities. It would appear that these Members have left their addresses and have not communicated with the OBA as regards their change of address/present addresses.

2. Some members have inquired from me about the Directory and seem to have got the impression from written documentation of your Ex-Co that I had undertaken to complete and print the Directory. This is incorrect. I had only done what I could, to collect the Data from Members in Sri Lanka and abroad, by contacting them personally, by letter, by telephone, fax, and e.mail and transmitting such data to you. As I have explained in writing, the layout, format, cover, design etc,etc, are matters for the Ex- Co in the absence of a Sub-Committee for such matters, to finalise and thereafter get printed. Of course the longer you delay, the more out-dated the Data will become, with changes of addresses and members passing from the living to the land beyond as has happened several times over during the last one year , since you initiated this project. If you need any other Material or Data or Information which is available with me I will be happy to transmit same to you. You are most welcome to it.
3. As regards your telephone call to me to inform me that “somebody” had told you that some Applications forwarded by me to you of Old Boys who wished to join the OBA could not be accepted because they were “**not in the Format as approved by an A G M**” held about 4 decades ago, I reiterate that I have no words to express my **disappointment and revulsion** at the attitude displayed by that “**some-one** “. Further more I cannot excuse you for this display of ineffectiveness.

4. You have been in College with me; I have known you to be a good and simple man. Our friendship is one thing. But you are also the Secretary of the OBA. That office is a very responsible one. You should be able to advise yourself or where necessary get advise **from a competent person**. You should not be “somebody’s” mouthpiece. Surely if there is some minor flaw you can contact the Applicant direct and ask him to drop in and delete any “unwanted” or “irrelevant” material or Data or get his permission to do it yourself. To reject it outright is so **childish, puerile and self defeating**. Is it that you have too many members in the OBA- or your Ex-Co does not want to have people who question them. If the Application is defective, then decency demands that in the final analysis you communicate with that Applicant and state the grounds on which you are rejecting same. I can assure you that such letters will get all the publicity they richly deserve.
5. The OBA had arrived at a stage when almost 300 members had been side-lined, ignored and left in the dark about its activities. Even today an old boy phoned me and subsequently met me in connection with his Data Sheet and mentioned that he has not heard anything from the OBA for years. **This is a common lamentation**. On this I speak with authority as during the period June – end of August 2001 there have been hundreds in touch with me with this same grouse with the current and past Ex-Co’s. I have written to you so many letters, advising you to take corrective measures.. You and your Ex-Co have chosen to ignore this. I have personally made contact with several of them and brought some of them back into the activities of the O.B.A.
6. In addition, although the formation of Sub-Committees for various projects, essentially for the development of the college, was discussed and later undertaken by the Senior Vice President at the last OBA in February, the members have been kept in the dark todate of any steps taken in that direction. My friends and I would like to associate ourselves with those Committees and give them all the help and encouragement, to see that College is benefited.
7. I have written urging the appointment of these sub-committees, **one of them being the one relating to the Membership Drive**. On my own, I have communicated with Old Boys in Australia, U K and Canada in order to have enrolled as many Old Boys as possible for the sake of the College. I am in touch with them and keeping them advised about the developments in College as well as the OBA. I have also arranged to obtain information relating to the Old Boys from the College office to enable them to be contacted so that they can be persuaded to join up. In this scenario, for you as the Secretary to inform me that Applications cannot be accepted, for such a trivial reason or should I say excuse, is **unfair and unreasonable**.
8. If you were to peruse the Old format of the Application itself,( copies of which I turned out and gave you) together with the **Amended Format read with your Data Sheet**, you will see for yourself that there is no extraneous data and that it is a combination of the original Application with the Data Sheet. This will only save you unnecessary expenditure by way of Postage and wastage of time and energy. Common sense demands that you accept it, although I fail to see for what reason our O.B.A decided the name of the spouse was also required for the Directory. Our O.B.A as any body can see is a far cry from such social service Organisations as the “Lions Club”et al.

Furthermore, it is absurd **to imply that you need another General Meeting of the Membership to approve the Format of an Application** ( to join the OBA). Please do not tell this to others who know something of these matters as you will be the laughing stock.

9. Today Statutes passed by our Legislature and the **RULES FRAMED BY THE JUDGES OF OUR SUPREME COURT** lay down Forms but strict compliance is not called for. **An additional piece of information does no harm and certainly is no disqualification.** I note that whoever who advised you appears to be an even greater Legal authority than those who have interpreted statutes and Regulations in our Superior Courts. We would certainly like to meet this Individual or “Somebody” who must be very knowledgeable in this field of Civil Law!!! Please do introduce him to us. **THE SUPREME COURT ENTERTAINS EVEN A POST CARD TO INITIATE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT PROCEEDINGS ALTHOUGH THE RULES CALLED FOR A PETITION SUPPORTED BY AN AFFIDAVIT.**
10. The persons who applied for Membership are also eagerly awaiting a communication from you as to why their Applications are not even acknowledged. In fact they are very concerned about the delay. You should not wait for the next AGM to announce their admission. Once I mentioned to you this practice should change. Is Nero Playing the Fiddle while Gurutalawa is burning or is your Association so crowded that there is no room to accept new members.
11. I wish to emphasise and reiterate that the Office you hold is one of great responsibility and importance. You are directing operations of an Association which is required to play its proper role in the destiny of hundreds of Young Thomians at Gurutalawa. Your duties are not confined to organizing a Picnic in February and a Dinner in October every year. You should not let your self **be pushed around in this manner.** You should be able to make up your mind and if there appears to be any difficulty, go about with tact so that you do not hurt people’s feelings or act in a manner detrimental to the OBA or it’s objectives.
12. In a recent letter to me a Very Senior Old Boy who was actively involved in the affairs of the OBA, even in its formative stages over 40 years ago (when you and I were still students in College) has said that the Ex- Co of the OBA should not be **A ONE / TWO MAN SHOW** and other members **“YES MEN”**. This is the sorry picture your Ex- Co is projecting right now.
13. In this context you would do well to read the following remarks made by no person other than Dr.Hayman to refresh your memory. I hope you will pay some heed to his words, and put some sense in to the heads of those whose advise you seem happy accepting.

Dr. Hayman said thus on February 21,1959 at the inaugural meeting of the OBA

“Gentlemen

“-----”

“ Our business here today is to establish an Old Boys’ Association for past members of the staff and boys of the school. **ONE OBJECT IN DOING SO IS TO HELP OLD BOYS TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH ONE ANOTHER AND WITH THE SCHOOL.** How this is best to be effected will be the task of the Executive Committee to decide. One suggestion that has been

made is that in addition to the holding of an Annual Old Boys' Day, **THE ASSOCIATION SHOULD ESTABLISH A REGISTER OF OLD BOYS ADDRESSES AND THAT THOSE WHOSE NAMES APPEARED ON THAT REGISTER SHOULD RECEIVE AN ANNUAL NEWSLETTER FROM THE SCHOOL.**

**THE OTHER MAIN OBJECT OF THE ASSOCIATION IS TO RALLY ROUND THE SCHOOL ALL OLD MEMBERS WHO WISH TO UPHOLD AND HELP IT BY EVERY MEANS IN THEIR POWER**".

14. Please also refer Rule No.02 of the OBA, which I quote for your ready reference.

"2. The Objects of the Association shall be –

- a) to rally round the College all old boys and well wishers of the College who desire to uphold and assist the College in every way they can ;
- b) to enable old boys to keep in touch with the College and with one another ; and
- c) to afford guidance and encouragement to the younger generation ."

**DR.HAYMANS WORDS ARE,AS YOU WILL SEE IN BUILT IN TO THIS RULE**

Please be good enough to convey the above to your "some body" and enlighten him.;

15. In this context I ask you to look to your conscience and see **WHETHER THE MANNER IN WHICH**

- a) the OBA has maintained the Register of Members.
- b) encouraged Old Boys to rally round the College and uphold and help it by all means in their power.
- c) kept informed the Old Boys of the situation, progress and events at College (Particularly the deterioration of all standards and facilities etc) by any News Letter.
- d) helped Old Boys to keep in touch with one another and the College,

is in keeping with the ideas expressed by the founding fathers.

Have I not repeatedly told you, you are ignoring the main objective of the OBA. Have you not, by your conduct rejected all our offers of help for College and the OBA itself.

I have been personally in touch with hundreds of Old Boys since June 2001 and can tell you that they are utterly disgusted with the manner in which the affairs of the OBA are being run by your Ex-Co. They try to distance themselves from the Ex-Co and the OBA because no offers of help are accepted for reasons best known to you all.

**THE CURRENT GENERATIONS OF THOMIANS WILL HOLD YOU RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR FAILURE TO DO WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF YOU ON THEIR BEHALF BY THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE COLLEGE.**

**PLEASE DO NOT FORGET THAT THE OBA IS THE TRUE CUSTODIAN OF THE TRADITIONS OF THE COLLEGE. IT MUST PLAY ITS PROPER PART AND ROLE.**

Don't you see that it would be a sad day for the OBA if Old Boys who knock at its door are to be turned away because of asses, who wish to strut around in a pompous manner to boost their egos. I am sure this description does not fit you. You are too nice a person.

I would like you to table this letter so that my sentiments in this regard are recorded. You can be sure that I am making copies of this letter available to all those Old Boys who have expressed their concern about the manner in which the affairs of the OBA are being handled or mishandled.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

**LAKSHMAN JAYATILAKA**

LJ/ns