

Outward Letters

LJ responds to S, Nallainathan, in an e-mail of 19th October, as follows:

Hi,

Thanks for your mail.

I am pasting below some Links. I suggest you browse through them. You are sure to come across some of your Class mates at Guru. You could make Contact if an email address is available and proceed from there.

You could run through part of my Mailing List. **Contact Details of Old Boys**

<http://www.stcg62group.org/Noticeboard.htm>

You could also run through the **Member Directory**

http://www.stcg62group.org/PDF/OBA/12_STC_Guru_Members_Directory_Feb_2008.pdf

These are New Members who joined recently **New OBA Members 2007-2008**

http://www.stcg62group.org/PDF/OBA/10_New_OBA_Members_2007_2008.pdf

New Members who joined during the year 2008 / 2009

http://www.stcg62group.org/PDF/OBA/New_Members_Joined_during_2008_09.pdf

Keep safe & keep in touch.

Warm regards,

Lakshman J

LJ responds to Khan, in an e-mail of 18th October, as follows:

Dear Khan,

Thanks for your mail.

Razeek has written to me about you. Hope it will be possible to meet you in December.

Also hope you will be able to drop in at Guru and meet the Headmaster who is doing a great job to develop the School.

Warmest regards,
Lakshman J

LJ responds to Indran Indrakumar of the Class of 1971, in an e-mail of 14th October, as follows:

Dear Indran,

Thanks very much for your mail and the attached Newsletter through which I had a quick glance. I hope to read through this at leisure .I can see that the contributions have been excellent. I hope to circulate it among my entire mailing list consisting of Old Boys from the age of 90 yrs to those who have left College just a few years ago.!! Although we call our Group those of 62 it has a wide reach. The actual Class which may have consisted of less than 45 O' Level boys of the ages of 16-17 who left College in 1962, is sadly now reduced to less than 15 or so. That is why we are not restrictive about actual class or for that matter age.!!

Thanks for contacting me and hope you will keep in touch.

ESTO PERPETUA

Warm regards
Lakshman J

LJ responds to Harish Nilaweera, in an e-mail of 23rd July, as follows:

Dear Harish,

Thanks for your mail.

Mithra tells me that he will use my article.

My own memory fails me with regard to the Saradiel episode. It was Jabir and Sarath Suraweera who helped me along and jogged my memory in that matter. What you have said may perhaps be correct. It only shows how badly the need has arisen to have a drink in the hand and sit around with our batch mates and have a jaw jaw!!! Truly it will be a very nostalgic journey down memory lane. STPS are having their AGM during the weekend August 6th to 8th. I hope to attend. The family will be with me on a short holiday at Bandarawela.

Don't fail to drop in when you come to Sri Lanka in August.

The Thomian Society of Colombo is having a Dinner Theatre on July 30, 2010 at the Continental Hotel. I have booked a table. I hope it will be possible to meet some of our friends on that occasion.

Keep in touch.

Warm regards,

Lucky

In an e-mail of 22nd October LJ writes to Astrid Chapman as follows:

Dear Astrid,

Thank you very much for sending me the 30 Images of "The School By The Sea" . My brother Upali who is in London and involved with OTAUK too sent me the same Images. Please let me know where you found them.

In the meantime I have already uploaded the Images you sent under <Gallery > <Old Images of The School By The Sea>.

I am sure most Old Boys will find the Images very interesting and appreciate your sharing these with them.

Thank you very much for your support and interest.

Warm regards,

Lakshman Jayatilaka

In a circular e-mail of 12th September to old boys, LJ writes:

Further to the email of August 22nd from Larry Shockman of Australia, and my response thereto of September 11th already sent to you.

Ananda Jayasinghe (Andy) of UK presently in Sri Lanka has sent his Observations, Comments and suggestions to both of the above. That together with my response to Andy are also attached.

These are sent for your information and to stimulate dialogue and discussion and also as an update on Guru.

Any comments and observations you would care to make are welcome.

With Warm Regards,

Lakshman Jayatilaka (Lucky)

In a further e-mail of 12th September, LJ responds to Andy Jayasinghe as follows:

Dear Andy,

This is an oft repeated story, yet true. I think it was Evin Mohamed who came across Warden De Saram in his retirement at Nuwara-Eliya tending to his roses in his little garden. Evin had knocked on the gate and when the great man came close said "I hope Sir you can remember me". In his well known nasal tone Warden had said "Why not Evin, I am still trying to forget you."

I might do well to avoid a similar thought from His Lordship Duleep De Chikera.

But tales do get carried. This is one unfortunate reason for the Bishop to have been prejudiced against us. He relied too much on social climbers who wanted a place in every conceivable organisation or Board Table. In the end they mis directed him and it was too late.

Anyway let us see whether there will be any response favourable to your ideas.

Please keep in touch and take care.

If you know any old boys who would like to be plagued with our missiles from time to time let me know their contact addresses.

I cannot place most of the guys who had lunch with you that day apart from B Muna and Sanath.

Warm Regards,

Lucky.

In an e-mail of 12th September, LJ responds to Andy Jayasinghe as follows:

Dear Andy,

Thanks for your mail. Last Saturday my daughter had been invited to spend the day at the home of one of her school friends (who was celebrating her birthday) residing down Templers Place. By the time I dropped her off it was almost half past noon. As I had planned to do some shooting at Mount of the Cricket Carnival which was scheduled to start off at half past eight, there was no way I could drop in at your place. I am sorry I was unable to make it for the chat and lunch. I am sure your discussions were interesting and fruitful. I have involved myself with Guru only very recently and I can contribute only from my personal experiences during that short period.

I shall upload the images you sent on to the Site at the next upload. The guy who helps me being a Muslim, this is not the best time to get work out of him. He was here today to upload some material which I am sure you will find useful and interesting.

As regards your suggestion re- "International" I can tell you this. It is good and perhaps one way out for Guru. We did discuss this option with guys of our vintage as well as others from time to time since 2002. The school being a part of the Anglican Church establishment and the attendant limitations perhaps imposed on them voluntarily or otherwise is the first hurdle. I do not go so far as to question that justification or statutory legality or reasonableness. Nor would most Old Boys. Nobody who has been in close touch with their thinking would have ever imagined that their hierarchy would even consider this proposal. But to our great surprise this idea was explored in some way towards the latter part of 2006. Lyceum was one organisation that showed interest and Gateway. Even Lalith Kotalawala sent a team to Guru to check it out. I understand that within the framework permitted they found it not viable. The amount of capital required to be pumped in is so stunning to bring the place up to acceptable standards of an International School in order to lend their name to the Association. Yet the return from their point of view would be far below expected. We must remember this is a Church School and in Sri Lanka the Anglican Church seems to take a narrow view. I have discussed this with my friends in Perth, Sydney and Brisbane. All of them who are familiar with the Aussie set up pooh poohed this Sri Lankan view and said their Church Schools are doing good business. But then that is their privilege. It is not for us to question them or tell them how to run their establishment.

It might interest you to know that an Old Boy who was at College when Mr. Duleepkumar was teaching introduced to me a Sinhala Lady who is running five International Schools in Tokyo and preparing students for Universities in UK. She was interested in starting an International School in Bandarawela. The situation at Guru having been brought to her notice she realised that it was a ready-made situation. I arranged for her to visit Guru. She did so, took photos and communicated with those funding her from Japan. She informed me that the first thing she would do was to compensate and get rid of the entire Staff and Workforce!!! She had seen and heard enough about them. She was also keen to start off afresh with new students from abroad and any from Sri Lanka who were willing and able to afford. She was prepared to retain the Students until they were found places elsewhere. A huge amount of money was to be pumped in. The name of the College was to be retained, by and large. But the Flag, the Song etc would prevail. It would have been a Joint Venture. I had several discussions with her but found that a proper Project Report or Proposal could not be prepared to be submitted to the Bishop for his study as the required data was not forthcoming. When a Board Meeting approached I was contacted and it was indicated that the Bishop was anxious to learn more. I had met him previously and discussed this matter with him. But I did not want to personally get involved unless a proper proposal could be submitted. The day before the Meeting, the Bishop was so anxious that he wanted the Lady to meet him even without the Proposal. I dropped out of the scene because I was not satisfied about the credentials of the Lady. Probably the Bishop too having discussed matters with her may have thought likewise. So ended that episode. I am mentioning this to show you how

frantic the Administration had become. I understand that similar conditions had been suggested to Mr. Lalith Kotalawela too. Yet, he did not find it sufficiently attractive financially.

The lesson to be learnt is that given the current conditions and situation in Sri Lanka one has to choose between running a Private Fee Levying School and running a Charitable Institution for the destitute and needy or refugees from war torn areas or unwanted children or children from broken homes or children whose parents are employed in West Asia and who need to secure accommodation for their kids in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately this is the stark truth. Today there is no Educational Institution running at a loss. Some say Education is the best business. Almost every Sunday papers carry huge supplements on Education that is on offer. Other organisations have opened dozens of International Schools all over the country. But we have found it difficult to make this choice. Neither can we run the School on the present lines in a viable *manner*. The conditions in Sri Lanka when Dr. Hayman ran the school were totally different. There were 300 odd Students, all Boarders, who were charged about Rs.100/- per month for Boarding and Tuition Fees. A Staff of around 20. Dr. Hayman was not interested in increasing the number of Students. Staff salaries would have averaged a few hundreds. There were only 05 Classes. Every possible Sports facility was available. In certain areas Guru did better than Colombo Schools. An O/Level Cricket Team was able to beat the A/Level Cricket Team of Mt. Under Michel Tissera. All were happy, contented and satisfied. Today things are much different. We need to accept this fact.

If Guru is perhaps the only school in Sri Lanka that keeps its doors open on every single day of the year and is prepared to admit Students to any Class from Kindergarten to O/Level and even without an Admission Fee, and for a monthly Fee of Rs.7,500/- for Boarding and Tuition when its Branch at Bandarawela charges over Rs.60,000/- as Admission Fee and thousands vie to gain Admission, the picture is crystal clear but we are refusing to see the stark truth.

To get back to your idea. **The slight change of name suggested by you**, etc may not pose major problems. In order to recoup the initial capital expenditure the administration will think of a fee far in excess of what the Bishop could approve having regard to what I have stated earlier. Next, in order to start the type of school you refer to the stumbling block would be the capital outlay for Infrastructure, Facilities, Equipment and Services etc. If you visit Guru you will realise the enormous sum required. Otherwise, the type of student you are thinking of attracting, will not be satisfied with what Guru has to offer.

Then to consider, will there be parents of 250 students willing to send their kids to Guru. Even if the facilities on offer are similar to what the International Schools provide I have my doubts whether you can get the numbers you refer to. Why would parents of today want to board their kids in far off Guru when Colombo offers the same at the same price. Although I am aware of the positive aspects of a Boarding School away from Colombo, I will not board my son or daughter at Guru. I take the view that Parents would not want to deprive their kids what they enjoy now, eg: Satellite TV; PC with email and Internet facilities; ,Mobile Phone; Mc Donalds; Pizza Hut; KFC; DVD Rentals; Birth

Day Parties, Pool Parties and Spend- the-Days with school friends, Shopping Malls, Entertainment Parks, Food Courts etc Additional classes in Ballet; Elocution; Art; Singing; Swimming; All other Sports like Tennis etc etc which are available in Colombo to kids Schooling here.

A few months ago when there was so much of uncertainty in Colombo on the security aspect of travel to and from school as well as to and from these classes I thought to myself what a blessing a school like Guru would be for harassed and anxious parents who would have no reason to fret. Yet the overall scene may be that parents prefer to keep their kids at home and send them to school, traffic jams and Security Alerts notwithstanding.

As regards Old Boys in their hundreds and thousands who would rise to the occasion and seriously make donations or funding as referred to by you, instead of the hitherto saga of doing minor repairs and maintenance work at Guru, Andy, I sincerely do not subscribe to your optimism. You are way off course. My experience since 2000 to date gives me a totally different and sad picture. The Bishop too had an idea of collecting Scholarship money for the under privileged at Guru. He would have been disappointed with the reception he got which I will for cosmetic reasons say was less than lukewarm. The OBA too has sent SOS's from time to time. Sometimes even the postage expended cannot be recovered. The few guys who may be interested in spending have indicated they are interested in the return and wish to run Guru on the lines of a Company naturally managed by them. I have advised them not to waste their time because the Bishop will not and perhaps cannot have any of it.

I want to point out one thing. In 2001 we referred to the situations which prevailed at Guru. We cautioned that we could see the end of the road. Old boys in their numbers rallied round and remitted funds from far and near. It was spontaneous. One Old Boy by himself spent millions refurbishing the entire Senior Dormitory Complex of four Dorms. All I did was to invite him to attend the AGM of March 2002 and have a look at his Old School, having previously kept him informed of the deepening crisis. He visited College after over 40 Years. What he saw moved him. He immediately made his offer. This happened with so many other Old Boys. But we did not cringe and beg for funds. Nor did we ridicule those who did not give or scornfully refer to the meagre amounts they remitted and suggest they could give more. Sadly a lesson has not been learnt from that experience. Lists keep going around and hat collections take place at gatherings and functions leaving a dirty taste. And embarrassing the not so fortunate. And retired Old Boys.

I do hope I have not succeeded in dampening your enthusiasm. What I say is from the little I have gathered from the very short time I have involved myself with Guru perhaps from the fringe. If you peruse the Newsletter and Reports that we have placed on our Website you will see the picture differently.

I trust I have touched on all the matters you made reference to.

To stimulate further discussion on all of these matters I will pass on these mails to all those on my mailing list in the fervent hope that the collective strength of our discussions may bring out some support and perhaps new and fresh thinking.

Warm Regards,
Lucky
Lakshman Jayatilaka

In an e-mail of 11th September addressed by LJ to Larry Schokman in response to his e-mail of 22nd August, writes:

Dear Larry,

First I must thank you for your e-mail of August 22 conveying your Comments and Observations. I know you are letting off steam. I have also done so many times on this subject.

Next I must apologies for the delay in responding, due to a host of reasons. One reason for the delay was the difficulty to gather my thoughts and ideas in to a brief response and to present same in a coherent manner.

The current situation at Guru and its Past, present a complex picture. Complex Firstly because conditions and the situation of the country have changed so much since the Hayman-Foster Era. Secondly because due to a chain reaction arising from the first and also independently of that, Guru itself has been through so many vicissitudes and changes mostly inevitable.

I note that you had visited Guru about 10 years ago. You have obviously not failed to notice these changes.

The feelings you express thereafter are shared by me, and by so many others of our era, and those who were at Guru before us and thereafter, for some time.

I was at Guru during 1958-1962. Having been at S.Thomas' Prep School at Bandarawela from 1952- 1957 under Mr. Keble's Headmastership. We had Hayman, Foster, Chapman, J De S Jayasinghe, Chinniah, F L Amarasinghe, Oliver De Soysa, L M Fernando, John Marasinghe, Laffir and others of the Hayman Army. You would have had to contend with an infrastructure of dorms, classrooms, sports facilities etc, slightly less appealing than what we had. Yet the quality of education, the standard of sports and discipline was good. The finished product that came out, I feel, was much more cultured and gentlemanly in outlook. It is a fact that in our time we did not have the comforts that students of today have. The classroom and dining hall furniture that is available now and the tiled toilets of today were then non-existent. But these are standard requirement of today when you compare other Schools and Home. Yet this did not prevent the

production of Thomians in the mould you refer to by name by the hundred. Then what went wrong ?

Over the years of Stewardship of different Headmasters, (all of whom definitely made some positive contribution in different areas), the main fabric of the College, the Thomian Traditions and production of Men and Cultured Gentleman underwent a change. Inter-alia, the 'socio-economic' changes in the country; the neglect of English; over emphasis on Sinhala; the entry to the College of students from a totally different social background; deterioration in the quality of the Tutorial Staff brought about a marked difference. To compound the situation, during the last decade or so, delay, neglect and failure on the part of the student to pay their School Fees on time; the consequent problems in not having the means for the maintenance, upkeep improvement of the infrastructure; the funds necessary to pay salaries and wages; such that by numbers which had peaked at 1200 some years ago had come down to around 240 and kept going down.

Overdraft to the banks stood at millions and each month the deficit was around Rs.600,000. It was not possible to go on. By December 2006 the Board decided to close down the school.

Other factors too had contributed to this malaise:-

1. STC Bandarawela started classes for students from standard 6 to O/ Level and A/ Level. Thus the intake from a Thomian branch school effectively dried up.
2. Guru was therefore forced to start classes from Standard 5 downwards to Kindergarten . Thus numbers had to be increased at Gurutalawa. Staff too had to be increased, but with inadequate facilities and infrastructure.
3. The standard and quality of Government Central Schools which were held in ridicule in our time improved by leaps and bounds. Their Tutorial Staff attracted the best teachers whose Salaries and Terms and Conditions of employment had improved hugely. Their infrastructure too improved. The State had the funds and pumped in more for Education which was their social responsibility. Their Scholarship Schemes and other benefits were very attractive. Their Sports and Extra Curricular activities improved vastly.
4. The International Schools then came on the scene offering an English education and Passport to Foreign Universities. Despite the fact that their fees were in excess of Rs. 100,000/- and Admission Fees of a similar amount, students who hitherto clamoured for Private Schools found an easy pathway. There was henceforth no need to fret in order to gain admission to much sought after Government Schools in the Metropolis and big cities. Those who could afford it, found themselves on a highway direct to foreign universities, diplomas and degrees to study and work abroad. Various institutes offered courses after the Ordinary Level and Advanced Level and for the first time these courses were made available in so many areas of disciplines. There was no need to be in a Private School and fight for a small quota to gain admission to local university. As time went by even students from very modest homes found these avenues very

- appealing. Naturally these Colleges and Institutes too attracted the better Tutors. They could afford to pay very handsome salaries. Their gain was the loss of the Private Schools.
5. Another phenomenon was the Tuition Mania. No student would want to forego same. It became a necessity. In our time we had no tutors at Guru. The class work was sufficient. Today Teachers in Private and Government Schools who teach for the Local and Foreign exams all earn loads of money giving Tuition after school. Their salaries from their regular employment are but a small fraction of their private earnings from Tuition. Even a student who does not need Tuition is made to feel inadequate unless fed with after school Tuition. At Guru Tuition from outside masters understandably is not possible. So it has come about that the favoured and much sought after Boarding House at STC Mt is virtually closed. On the other hand Guru has now reverted to a total Boarding School. Fees are to be increased from Rs. 7000 to Rs. 7,500 for Tuition and Boarding from January 2009. Compare these figures with the International Private Schools. Additional help will be from the existing Staff only and that too only if the persons concerned approve of same. These regulations may be laudable. Yet Guru has attracted students from single parent homes and with other disabilities and the overall picture is bleak.
 6. The major part of the staff at Guru are Ladies. Being a Boy's Boarding school with students going up to O Levels, Female teachers are not the best option. They are unable to take any of the Extra Curricular activities. Eg: Sports, Hiking, etc. These are part of Boarding School life. Furthermore the major part of the staff are Non Resident. This is a huge draw back. The Head master needs a strong support staff, particularly House Masters, resident in close proximity to the Boys Dorms and who are able to enforce discipline and students look up to. Dr. Frank Jayasinghe who took over as Headmaster from Dr. Hayman was the Chief Guest at the Guru Prize Giving this year. In his opening remarks he mentioned that he too had been a young man of similar age as the present Headmaster- Rev. Marc Billimoria when he took up the challenge at Guru. He went on to say "***but I was lucky because I had the support of a fine Staff to help me***". That statement says it all. It would appear the infrastructure and facilities is not as important as the quality of the Staff. Today the Headmaster is sadly saddled with all these deficiencies. Tennis, Boxing, Gymnastics, Life Saving, Social Service, Rifle Shooting, Cadetting, Wood Work, Outward Bound Course, Cross Country Runs, Hiking, Bird watching, have disappeared. The standard of other Sports has declined to such drastic levels as to be almost non existent. Years of neglect and failure to address the relevant issues by those concerned too have contributed to this situation. It is only now that the Bishop and the Board appear to have risen to the occasion. The OBA had been for a long time largely inactive in not highlighting this situation. Each of the Headmasters had their own priorities and agendas. They were not given proper guidance and some even misrepresented matters to the Board. The Academic staff and support staff were not helpful to the Headmasters. He could not run the place by himself. There was infighting amongst the staff. Consequently, corruption, petty theft, misappropriation of funds became the order of the day.

7. The Government Educational Policy; the changes in the socio economic situation; the Boom in the business called education etc etc plus the corresponding decline of standards at Guru all resulted in what Guru is now.
8. As regards the future it is difficult to say. Guru now has a fine Headmaster, perhaps one of the best after Dr Hayman. A Mount Thomian who is a Priest, and having a penchant for History. As at present his task is difficult. But his approach has been different and humane. He has very little help from the Academic staff, almost all of whom are from a different mould. Yet a few are backing him. He selects the Student Leaders carefully and they appear to be a great source of strength to him. It is bound to take a long time and much effort. Really not the job for one man at the expense of his personal Health, life and family. Fr Goodchild though advanced in years is a tower of strength for the Headmaster. They duo one might say strongly resemble Dr Hayman and Fr Foster despite the vast difference in ages. In this scenario it could be too much to seek a revival of the Hayman era.
9. The river has flown down for almost 45 years. The trend is irreversible. We need to accept that. Our understanding is required by the Headmaster who deserves it. Material help wherever and whenever possible should be made available to the Administration by all those in a position to assist.
10. In answer to your question I think more than 3,000 Students would have passed out of Guru since 1942. The OBA has around 750 Members. About 75-100 participate in the Annual Pilgrimage to Guru for the AGM each February. Less than 10 participate in Prize Givings, Special Assembly, Sports Meets, Swimming Meets or similar activity. It has become most difficult to find Office Bearers and fill up the positions on the Ex-Co. You can draw your own conclusions from this picture.
11. The above is a very brief resume. I would not have referred to many other areas worth mentioning, most of which have been dealt with in detail in our News Letters and Reports which have been placed on our Web Site.

Thanks very much once again for taking the trouble to express your views on a subject which is very dear to us all.

Warm Regards,

Lakshman

In an e-mail of Aug 15th Addressed by LJ to Old Boys and well wishers, he writes:

Hello Everybody,

This is to inform you that the above Link of our Web Site has recently been uploaded with Images and a Write Up of the Annual Inter House Swimming Meet at Guru which took place on August 08, 2008.

We made use of the opportunity to visit S.Thomas' College Bandarawela and participate in their OBA AGM and Re-Union Celebrations on August 09,2008. The Traditional Cricket Match and Awards Ceremony were also covered. The relevant Images and a write up have been uploaded.

Most of us who joined Guru in or around 1958 had our Primary Education at S. Thomas' Preparatory School - Bandarawela, as it was then known. The Bandarawela Branch is doing very well. We have placed a link for a write up and the Profile of the College in Images.

We have created a Facebook Group named "*Guru-Support Group*". Those of you who are already on Facebook could join this Group or visit same. Others could create a Profile on Facebook by visiting www.facebook.com and then join the Group or visit same.

An old Image of Guru capturing the Under 14 Cricket Team of 1953 and another of the Participants of a Sinhala Drama of 1959 sent by Old Boys Brig. Bandu Munasinghe and Sarath Suraweera Rtd. SSP, respectively have also been placed in the Link for < *Old Images of Guru* >, under < *Gallery of Events* >.

Your comments and observations are welcome.

Please inform us in the event of your changing your contact details. Let us know if any of your friends would like to be included in our mailing list and if so inform us of their e-mail address/es.

Warm regards,

Lucky

Lakshman Jayatilaka

In an e-mail of July 18th Addressed by LJ to Old Boys and well wishers, he writes:

Hello Everybody,

Once again a short message to let you know that our Web Site >stcg62group.org< has just been updated, with the latest news and images from Guru. Some of the latest items placed are:-

1. News of Old Boys (as at July 2008)
2. Members Directory – (as at July 09, 2008)
3. Old Images of Guru (latest image is of ERV, Jayantha Sellahewa and T.R. Bridge - Taken almost 50 years ago)
4. Updated e-mail addresses. (as at 09.07.08)
5. Images of the Royal Thomian Cricket Match in Canada – July 01, 2008.
6. Images - Malik Candappa – Immediate Past President of STC- OBA Canada visits Guru – July 2, 2008.
7. Present composition of the STC Board of Governors for the next 04 years (July 2008)
8. STCG Ex-Co minutes – May 27, 2008
9. Thomiana June, 2008.
10. Images- Blue Black Night- STC OBA Canada - Dinner Dance – May10, 2008.

11. Dr. Hayman's speech at Inauguration of OBA-1959
12. Images of Ex-Co Meeting at 80 Club- July 11,2008
13. See Gurutalawa/ Welimada Road on Wikimapia

See whether you can recognize the following Friends in the Images taken almost half a century ago (while they were Students at Guru).

[D C Kannangara \(presently Don Gazara\), Upali Jayasinghe, R Shagundaran, Kishin Butani, Anilal Algama, F M Tan, Jurair Marikkar, Lakshman Jayatilaka, Robert Dobbs, A A De Silva \(presently Ananda Amaranath\), Anura Nilaweera, Sarath Suraweera, H D Wickramatilake, Ranjith Butani, Zubair Caffoor, Ranjith Lowe, Timothy Bridge, I A Munasinghe, Sunil Watawala, R L Weerakoon, T Sundaraj, Tilak Nialaweera, Mahen Ranasinghe, Crysantha Ratwatte, Mario Fernando, Upali Jayawardena, L U Jayawardena, Harish Weerasekera, M A Siriwardena, Ravi Kotalawela, Lal Yapa, Harish Nilaweera, Jabir Junaid, U K D Jinapriya, L N De S Jayasuriya, O C R Jayasinghe, Kamal Nilaweera, Lakshman Amunugama, A M Gunaratne, Sarath Nanayakkara, S Sivasinniahnathan \(presently Siva Selvaratnam\), N L Fernando, S N Rodrigo, A G Jayasinghe, Ananda Medonza, G Radhakrishnan, U De S Jayasinghe, Anil Ratwatte, Mahen Divitotawela.](#)

Recall the following who moulded us whilst members of the Staff at Guru .

[Dr.R L Hayman, Rev.A J Foster, Mrs.Mary Hayman, B J H Bahar, A C M Laffir, C Karunanayake, Daya Jayasuriya, J De S Jayasinghe \(Uncle J\), Selwyn Gunawardena, C M Chinniah, Oliver De Zoysa, A K Chapman, Benjamin Fernando, L M Fernando and D U Samaranyake.](#)

Not forgetting the following members of the Support Staff who were our good friends.
[Bell Simon, Van Simon, Driver Piyasena, Sick Room Hand Ariyadasa, Pantry Hand Gunadasa and Ground Boy Karunadasa.](#)

You will also be able to recognise Pioneer Old Boys [P S Duleepkumar, L W A Fernando, Sisira Nanayakkra, Navaz Caffoor](#) and a host of others most of whom attended the Inagural Re-Union Celebrations of the OBA at Guru in 1959.

You may be interested in reading the The Prize Giving Speeches of Headmasters [Dr.R L Hayman "1954,1959 & 1962 \(Last Speech\); Fr.Foster 1963 \(last Speech\), Frank Jayasinghe 1967, M L C Illangakoon \(1974\) and Patrick Gunawardena \(1983,1984 & 1985\); Chief Guests H A Hulugalle \(1954\), C J Oorloff \(1959\), Rt.Rev.Rollo Campbell \(1962\), Prof C C De Silva \(1963\), Canon R S De Saram \(1967\), Bradman Weerakoon \(1974 & 1983\), Ronnie De Mel \(1984\), and Gamini Dissanayake \(1985\).](#)

Read the speeches of Mr. Bradman Weerakoon at the STC- Mount Prize Giving of 2007; at the Unveiling of the Portrait of Dr. R L Haymen at the OTSC.

Read about the Official Opening of the Guru Swimming Pool in 1953; the Unveiling of the Portraits of Rev. Canon R S De Saram and Mr. C H Davidson by Prof. C C DeSilva ; the Visit of Dr. R L Haymen to Buckingham Palace for Investiture as a Member of the

British Empire; the progress in the Buildings and Infrastructure of Guru from 1942 to date.

General Notices, Obituary Notices, and other useful information sent to us by the STC OBA Branches of Canada, UK, East Coast of USA, Australia as well as STC Bandarawela OBA continue to be placed on our site regularly.

Some of our friends who have not visited College since their departure in or around 1962 informed us that they are able to visit College from the comfort of their homes flung as far away as Ontario, New Jersey, Los Angeles, London, Scotland, Cambodia, Japan, Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. These long distance visits must surely bring back pleasant memories.

Owing to the information placed on our Site, others have been able to renew childhood friendships, even after almost five decades by communicating with each other through e-mail and snail-mail. Yet others have travelled cross continent and visited friends, from Brisbane to Perth; from Los Angeles to Sydney/ Melbourne and so on. They have commended us for making these possible.

I am attaching a list of names of our friends together with their e-mail addresses as available with us. We hope the e-mail addresses are valid as at date. Some of you may wish to make contact and exchange ideas and renew friendships.

If you are aware of the email addresses of any other Guru Old Boys of our vintage or otherwise who may be interested in our Web Site or receiving News of Guru please inform us of same so that we may add such persons to our Mailing List.

Please forward this mail to any of your friends who may be interested in Guru.

Please let us have News of Yourself, Your Current Contact Details, E-mail Address etc. etc. so that we may update our records and also keep others informed, through the Web Site.

Due to our persistent efforts in bringing College to your homes, Old Boys from Canada, USA, UK and Australia have individually, through their Old Thomians' Branches and otherwise remitted funds for development work at Guru.

Your Feedback, Observations and Comments are welcome.

It is hoped that the efforts of our Site will continue to assist the Revival Process at Guru.

Warm regards,

Lakshman Jayatilaka