

## HEADMASTER'S REPORT AT THE O.B.A. RE-UNION

20-22 FEBRUARY 2004

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Gentlemen,

“Everything I have learnt teaches me that it is only when you work with rather than against people, that achievement and lasting success is possible.”

-Sir John Harvey - Jones-

A warm welcome to the distinguished members of the O.B.A. of S. Thomas' College, Gurutalawa. It is indeed pleasant, meeting most of you after a long lapse of one year. I wish to mention that a few old boys living abroad visited the College. Some of them who traveled to Nawara Eliya did not forget to visit the College, very specially the Hony. Secretary of the O.B.A. Mr. Mahen Ranasinghe visited the college on many occasions as well as the Senior Vice President, Mr. Duleep Kumar. I thank you all for your goodness and loyalty towards your alma-mater. This has given the college enormous strength and encouragement to go ahead amidst all barriers. We should not move away but do our very best for our college.

I am sure, with our long term program, the School will be able to go ahead without and financial difficulties,

- 1). Introduction of English Medium
- 2). Computer Education
- 3). To provide quality education for the students and formulate them to become well disciplined students, which is the need of the hour.

I wish to report to the O.B.A. that Father Goodchild is back with us to serve the College. Apart from being the Chaplain of the School, he has already started English Classes, scouting lessons and swimming for the juniors. He also helps the students to discipline themselves and is a great source of strength to the school. My sincere thanks to the Bishop of Colombo for sending Father Goodchild to Gurutalawa.

### **Staff (Year 2003)**

Father Nihal Fernando was transferred to Christ Church, Baddegama. During his short stay of two years, he did his best to the College. He was a friend, good teacher and a father to us all. Apart from being Chaplain, he held elocution classes, taught English and trained the School Choir. Our sincere thanks to Father Nihal Fernando for his valuable services rendered towards the College.

Mrs. Dahanayaka Yapa who served the College for over twenty six (26) years retired last year. She was the Supervisor of the Keble Section. She has served the school with dedication and devotion to duty.

Mrs. Sooriyabandara and Mrs. V. W. Dikkumbura as the Keble Supervisor.

Mr. Shirantha Medawala was appointed as the Prefect of Discipline.

### **O. B. A. - EX-CO**

The O.B.A. was responsible to recommend to the Board of Governors to appoint an Administrative Officer, which the Board accepted. On behalf of the school, I wish to thank the O.B.A. for not merely recommending an Administrative Officer but also for contributing a big sum of money to pay the salaries of the Administrative Officer and the Farm Manager.

Another major project requested by the College was accepted by Mr. Lakshman Senevirathna. The College requested for a Tube Well from Mr. Lakshman Senevirathna who generously offered to help out with this project and already Stage I of Tube Well has been completed and the entire project will be completed today. On behalf of the School, I wish to thank Mr. Senevirathna for providing us with fresh water. This will help us to overcome the difficulties which we have continuously faced over the years during the dry season.

It is also my duty to thank Mr. Sunil Watawala for being our Chief Guest at the Annual Sports Meet. I wish to mention that he did a splendid job in organizing the Dinner Dance in the years 2002 and 2003 which brought in about Rs. 1.5 million to assist the school. I thank all the Committee Members for all their support and help.

Mr. Duleep Kumar, the Senior Vice President initiated the work on Dr. Hayman's Museum which has been completed now. I wish to thank him and all the members for this kind gesture.

I also wish to mention that three old boys sponsored three (03) of our students who needed assistance to continue their education. On behalf of the School, I wish to thank them too.

The School Prize Giving was the most important function in the school calendar. Our Chief Guest was Mr. B. A. Mahipala, a distinguished Old Boy of S. Thomas' Gurutalawa.

### **Education**

The school was taken steps to improve the standard of English. We have commenced elocution classes from Grades 01 to 09. The school has made arrangements to hold special English Classes for Grades 10 and 11. Introducing English Medium classes too has helped to improve the English standards of the College. Computer classes too have commenced.

In the year 2003, four of our students got through the Grade 5 Scholarship exam. The students who sat for the I.E.M.S. Examination in English, Music and Speech got through with honours. On the results of the G.C. E. Ordinary Level, 64% qualified for "A" Levels. Most of them have joined Mount Lavinia. All religious societies and Literary Societies functioned well during the year. We had the Sinhala Day, the Tamil Day and the English Day. On the Sinhala Day, Prof. Sunil Ariyaratne and the distinguished Singer, Mrs. Nanda Malini were the Chief Guests. For the Chapel festival Canon Dhanaraj was the Celebrant. Father Ganagasabaim, Arch Deacon of Nuwara Eliya was the Chief Guest for the Carol Service.

### Aesthetic Studies

Dancing : The College Dancing Troupe secured I First Place, 1 Second Place and 1 Third Place at the All Island competition, in the three events that they participated in.

Music : 1 First Place at Provincial Level.

### Sports

The College came upto all Island Level in Hockey, Athletics, and Rugby although we did not obtain places.

Soccer : District Champions

Basket Ball : District Level

Cricket : Under 12, 14 & 16 Tournament and Seniors

Swimming : A meet was held and represented at the Provincial Meet at Mahiyangana.

Squash : Went upto Semi Finals.

Badminton : A School Meet was held.

Finally, a word of thanks to all the members of the Staff, Supervisors, P.O.D., P.O.G., the Administrative Officer, the Accountant and his staff and my Secretary for their commitment towards the upliftment of the School.

Thank you.