



THE BLUE WHITE & GOLD

Volume 1

Issue 1

Dec 2013

Editorial

It gives me immense pleasure as the Editor of the OBU to bring you this first issue of the Newsletter which fills a void that existed in bringing news of the OBU and of course College.

Up until now we used the Peterite Email Network (PEN), the website (www.stpetersobu.com), emails via friends, Facebook, etc. to bring you news but a newsletter of this nature, which we hope to bring to you on a quarterly basis, will be a centralised point for all news related activity. Though we will continue to use the other modes too to disseminate news of College and the OBU it is our hope that this long felt need will now be filled.

I trust that those with different interests will find something here to read, be it a write up about a function or a sports event or may be reminisce about the glorious days gone by. News from our overseas branches will not be forgotten either and whatever be your interest we will strive to give you something covering different facets of College and the OBU.

I am sure you'll appreciate that this requires time and effort of many dedicated members and I'm happy to record that I have a dedicated team that helps make this possible.

Apart from the Editorial team, I must thank in a special manner, the President of the OBU, Dr. Nicholas Jayasekera for his encouragement without which perhaps this would not have seen the light of day.

It is my sincere hope that all will lend hand and heart wherever and whenever you can, to make this a continuing success.

Let's keep the flag unfurled.

Algi Wijewickrama

President calls for collective effort to achieve our Common Objectives!

I consider my appointment as president of this prestigious union both a challenge and an opportunity. I say it is a challenge because of the need to improve or at least maintain all the good work done by my predecessor. On the other hand, I say it is an opportunity because we have a solid foundation to build on.

With almost a century of activity, St Peter's College has contributed immensely to the development of the Sri Lankan society. Development of a good citizen requires not only knowledge and skills, but more importantly development of positive attitudes thorough team work and ethics in class room, sports and co-curricular activities. In working towards this end the OBU has collectively identified and embarked on over 125 activities to be carried out by seven teams, eight sub-committees and nine foundations.

The seven teams each led by a Vice President are: Student & Teacher Affairs; Attitude & Academic Development; Administration & Finance; Health & Environment; Media & Membership; Social & Welfare; Sports & Co-curricular. Now in order to achieve these common objectives, I sincerely hope that all members will act collectively. Each one of us has individual objectives for sure, but any organization which permits individual needs to undermine its collective needs will soon destroy itself. Hence, I request the entire membership to contribute as a team, to make our common objectives a reality.

In working towards our objectives, collective decision making and financial transparency are some of the strengths of our union which now stands at approximately 70 Committee (46 Management and 24 Co-opted) and 6000 General members. Permit me to remind all members that a decisive factor for their current achievements has been the contribution of our alma mater. Hence, I solicit the continued support of every single member in realizing the common objectives of our Union, and thereby improve the quality of learning, for the younger generations of Peterites.

Surgeon Rear Admiral NELW Jayasekera VSV, USP, MBBS, MSc, MBA, MD.

President OBU.

Stop Press

The Rector, Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel will be leaving St. Peter's to take over the Rectorship of St. Joseph's College along with Fr. Anton Ranjith who will be Vice Rector there.

Rev. Fr. Trevor Martin has been appointed as Rector of St. Peter's while his deputy will be Fr. Vincent Ashley.

These changes will take effect from 1st January 2014 as announced by the Cardinal - Archbishop of Colombo.

ATTITUDE AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM

School Leaver's Day

The OBU arranged for a School Leavers' Day for those who were leaving College this year after receiving their A/L results.

The event began with the welcome address by Mr. Lindsay Melder followed by a prayer and address by the Rector, Ref. Fr. Travis Gabriel.

Guest speakers were Dr. Suranjith Seneviratne and Mr. Rohantha Athukorale. This was followed by speeches delivered by the President of the OBU and General Secretary of the OBU.

The function was attended by 165 students and the vote of thanks was delivered by Master Johan Perera.



ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE TEAM



The House of Worship



On 21st November, Dr. Nicholas Jayasekera, President of the OBU handed over a cheque for Rs. 3M to Fr. Rector, being the OBU's contribution to the chapel refurbishment project.

Dr. Nielhaan Samaranayake, IPP during whose tenure the Peterite Walk was held to collect funds, was also present.

The Grotto Gets a New Look

A place where many a Peterite prayed to Our Lady, the Grotto at St. Peter's College, refurbished and looking beautiful was blessed and declared open on 4th December 2013 by His Eminence Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi OMI, Bishop of Anuradhapura in a simple ceremony. The College premises was decked in blue and white flags and was in festive mood for the occasion.

Bishop Andradi was welcomed by the Rector, Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel and the priest community at the College. The Old Boys Union which funded the project was represented by the President and several members of the Committee of Management.

(Pictures on the Pictorial News page)

Algi W

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT TEAM

On the 5th of September 2013 the Peterite Health Centre was opened by Fr. Rector accompanied by the President of the OBU. The Immediate Past President, Dr. Nielhaan Samaranayake and several other committee members.



MEDIA AND MEMBERSHIP TEAM

The OBU Spells Out its Strategic Direction

The OBU recently hosted the print media to a briefing at "The Lounge". Rev Fr Lakmin Silva the Sports Coordinator, represented Fr. Rector at the function at which key members of the Management Committee participated.



At the outset the Editor of the OBU welcomed the pressmen who were present despite the inclement weather and traffic.

The President addressing the participants spoke about the contribution St. Peter's College, with almost a century of activity, had made to the Sri Lankan society.



Presenting a copy of a detailed activity plan to each invitee, he said that collective decision making and financial transparency were some of the strengths of the union which now stands at approximately 60 Management Committee and 6000 General members.



Lasantha Dissanayake the Chairman of the Media and Membership Team, presenting a detailed Event Calendar, requested the press to give sufficient publicity for the future activities of the OBU in the coming months.

MORE FROM THE MEDIA & MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Media & Membership Committee has also been able to give a facelift to the wall round the College grounds and has plans for several improvements to the look of the Lounge.

Membership Drive – All members of the OBU and the various batch groups are invited to rope in Old Peterites who are yet to become members

FB Page of the OBU – An FB page was recently launched for OBU. Members who are on FB already are invited to “like” it.

SOCIAL & WELFARE TEAM

The annual dinner dance organised by the OBU “Golden Gleam” was held on 10th August 2013. This dance held at the Hilton has earned the reputation to be the dance of the year in Sri Lanka. It was a sell out and enjoyed by all who attended.



The Social & welfare team also organised a Choral event at the Lionel Wendt on 6th September and a Teachers Day Musical Show at Mount Lavinia Hotel on 13th September 2013

Another event that this team organised was the Annual OBU Committee outing on 21st and 22nd September 2013, which was to Beruwela this year.



The Teachers' Day



The Old Peterites Group of 87-92 of St. Peter's College OBU the "Legends" as they are known, organized the Annual Teachers' day on the 12th of October for the 13th consecutive year to coincide with the World Teachers, day celebrated globally.

This year, to raise the required funds for the Teachers' Day and spice up the event, they first organised **"The Old Peterites group of 87-92 with Marians"**.

The Teachers' Day 2013 was held on 12th October and the exiting day for the tutorial staff began at the Ratmalana Air

Force Base with a flight to see the harbor, twin towers and the city of Colombo and thereafter along the coastal line they were taken up to Kalutara and back to Ratmalana. This was followed by a guided tour of the Air Force Museum and a traditional breakfast at the Air Force "Log Cabin". The day's activities then continued at Vinrich Lake Resort Bolgoda with a day filled with fun, creative games and competitions and a sumptuous buffet lunch.



Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel, Rector of St. Peter's College thanked the committee for a truly memorable day.

Sing Along

The Social & Welfare team of the OBU was also involved in the very enjoyable “Petes Go Retro” - Sing Along which was organised by the 83-86 Batch on 26th October 2013. While Thattaya kept the crowds entertained 2 of the staff members also joined in the singing not to mention the many others who joined in singing popular oldies. After all this was a Sing-Along, wasn't it. A 92 year old Peterite, Mr. Ahmed Kuthdus, also joined in the singing with a performance that would have made any Peterite singer proud.

Requiem Mass

A Requiem Mass was offered on 21st November for the repose of the souls of all deceased Peterites, past Rectors and Priests and the tutorial and minor staff.

+ RIP +

The celebrant was Fr. Vincent Ashley, himself an Old Peterite.



After the Requiem Mass on 21st November, some of the relatives present paid floral tributes at the College War Memorial to those Old Peterites who made the supreme sacrifice in the near 3 decade old war with terrorists.



SPORTS&CO-CURRICULARTEAM



SPORTS SPORTS SPORTS SPORTS

TENNIS, RUGBY, ATHLETICS AND CRICKET



Peterites Regain the Overall Inter Schools Tennis Championship 2013

St. Peter's College regained the overall inter schools tennis championship for 2013 at the Sri Lanka Tennis Association (SLTA) courts on 21st June 2013. The Peterites who had held this championship for 5 consecutive years from 2007 to 2011 had lost the trophy last year by the narrowest of margins. But this year the determined Peterites whose pride had been pricked from their loss last year played some scintillating tennis in all the age groups to win this trophy back.

They won the under 19 and the deciding group under 15 and were runners up in the under 17 age group.

The Coach, Mr. Dinith Pathiraja, the Assistant Coach Mr. Delwar Hossain and the Master in charge Mr. Bernard Jesudasan all need to be congratulated along with the boys for their dedication and tireless efforts which has brought deserved credit to St. Peter's tennis.

Tennis achievements since July '13

SSC Tennis Tournament 2013 · Under 16 doubles champion - Krishanthan Rajendrasingham
- Under 18 doubles champion - Chehan Fernando

Negombo Tennis Tournament 2013 -

- Men's singles runner up - Nishangan Nadaraja
- Men's doubles CHAMPIONS - Nishangan Nadaraja

Cosmopolitan Tennis Tournament 2013 -

- Men's singles champion - Nishangan Nadaraja
- Men's doubles champion - Nishangan Nadaraja

Colombo Championship Tennis Tournament 2013 -

- Under 16 singles champion - Chehan FERNANDO
- Under 18 doubles champion - Chehan FERNANDO
- AIRTEL PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT- CHEHAN FERNANDO

Junior National Tennis Tournament 2013 -

- Under 14 doubles - runners up - Inthujan Selverathnarajah & Isuru Wijeratne
- Under 16 doubles champion - Chehan Fernando
- Under 18 singles runner up - Nishangan Nadaraja
- Under 18 doubles - runner up - Nishangan Nadaraja

International Representations:

Junior Davis Cup – Out of the 4 member Sri Lanka Team 3 were Peterites - Chehan Fernando, Nabeel Sabri and Davishka Ranasinghe

Under 14 World Juniors team 2013 - Isuru Wijeratne

ATF training Camp in Bangkok, Thailand – representing the Sri Lanka under 16 contingent was Nabeel Sabri.

ITF Under 18 world Ranking events - Nishangan Nadaraja played tournaments in Thailand, Singapore, Qatar, Jordan, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Nadarajah attained career high Ranking after beating world's No.394, Huang Jun Wei of China.

Senior National Championship - T Dineshkanthan- National Champion for the 3rd successive year and was also the Men's Doubles Champion.



RUGBY



The 2013 Season

The under 20 (1st XV) team of St. Peter's after a great start to the season had some setbacks towards the latter part of the season and ended as the 2nd runner up in the inter school rugby league tournament.

They beat St. Anthony's, Royal, Science, Wesley and St. Joseph's but lost to Trinity, Dharmarajah, Isipathana and Kingswood.

The annual Inter House Rugby Tournament

The inter-house rugby tournament played for the Very Rev.Fr. Joe E. Wickramasinghe memorial trophy was held at St. Peter's College grounds in September 2013.

The tournament was held under the patronage of Dr. Clive James who was the Chief Guest of the evening and Mrs. James and the Rector of St. Peter's College, Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel was in attendance.

Maurice House emerged the overall champions while Anthony House was awarded the trophy for the Runners-up. Every participant was given a jersey and certificate of participation.

Nutrition Programme

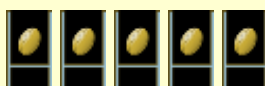
In October 2013 a nutrition and wellness programme sponsored by the Rugby Foundation of St Peter's College was conducted.

This workshop was done by Dr. Asanga Wijeratne, Sports Scientist from Glasgow, Scotland.

(Pictures in Pictorial News page)

Junior Rugby

The junior rugby teams did very well with the under 16 team remaining undefeated and ultimately winning the Western Province Under 16 schools XV a side tournament concluded in November.



ATHLETICS



The Athletics Foundation supported College athletes through providing athletic gear for needy athletes and took the athletes for an outing for a day. The Foundation was also instrumental in getting sponsorships for our Master in Charge to travel to India recently for the Junior South Asian Games.

Three of our athletes who participated in the recently held Junior SAF games brought honour and glory to the alma mater and the country.

Peterite Athletic captain Malik Khan won the bronze medal in 200m improving on his personal best timing by completing the race in 21.69. He also became 4th in 100m with a timing of 10.85.

Harsha Chathuranga managed to come 3rd in his pet event the 400m while being hampered by a niggling hamstring injury. Although his timing of 48.52 was not his personal best, should he have run anywhere close to his best timing he would have secured the gold medal.

Last year's cricket captain Dushan Hemantha was placed 3rd in the 1500m with a timing of 4.02.57.

Apart from the individual medals, these athletes did the country proud by being members of the gold medal winning 4 x 100 and 4 x 400 teams where Malik Khan and Harsha Chathuranga won medals in their respective races.

While we congratulate these athletes for their efforts we would also like to thank all who supported them while in preparation for the meet and for the generous donations that were given. We look forward to the continued support from all our well wishers to uplift Peterite Athletics.

Earlier in the year Malik Khan Fernando won the 100m and 200m finals at the National Youth Games at the Sugathadasa Stadium. He returned an impressive timing of 10.8 sec. in the 100m and 21.8 sec. in the 200m. Also Harsha Chathuranga won both the 400m and the 400m hurdles event in 49.5 secs. and 54.7 secs., respectively.



CRICKET



Saints Quadrangular Tournament



The OBU participated in the Saints Cricket Quadrangular tournament organised this year by the Old Anthonians and held at Katugastota, Kandy on 24th and 25th of August this year.

Malinda Warnapura smashed a massive 176 off 122 balls to help the Old Peterites whip the Old Benedictines by 228 runs in final. The Old Petes amassed a massive 469 aided by Warnapura and Angelo Perera who put on 160 for the third wicket. Malin Silva made a breathtaking 62 off 28 balls and went over the ropes six times.

The Bens were never going to make it. However Jason Perera and Rally Tissera showed some fight with good half-centuries.

Awards were won as follows:

- Best Batsman – M. Warnapura
- Best Bowler – A. Emmanuel
- Best Fielder – A. Perera
- Man of the Final – M. Warnapura

Peterite Cricket League

On 15th September 2013 the PCL season III tournament was conducted at the Colts cricket grounds.

Battle of the Saints Inter-batch 6 a Side Cricket



This event was held on 1st December 2013 and the plum was grabbed by the Petes.

Cricket Season 2014

Please take note that due to restoration work being currently carried out at the College Grounds all home matches will be played at different other venues as indicated below.

Fixtures for the 2014 Season

January

3rd & 4th - Vs. Ananda College - Moratuwa Tyrone Fernando Stadium
10th & 11th - Vs. Maristella College - Negambo
13th & 14th - Vs. D.S. Senanayaka College - Moratuwa Tyrone Fernando Stadium
17th & 18th - Vs. St. Sebastians College - SC College Grounds
24th & 25th - Vs. Prince of Wales College - POW College Grounds
31st Jan & 1st Feb - Vs. St. Thomas College - Mt. Lavinia

February

7th & 8th - Vs. Royal College - Reid Avenue
14th & 15th - Vs. St. Benedicts College - Kotahena
21st & 22nd - Vs. St. Anthony's College - Katugasthota
26th & 27th - Vs. Gurukulla College - Venue not Confirmed
28th Feb & 1st March - JOE-PETE Mini Battle - Venue not confirmed yet

March

7th - 8th - JOE - PETE Big Match – Colombo Oval
15th - JOE - PETE Limited Overs Match- Keththarama



BATCH GROUP NEWS

Pre Seventies Batch

The Pre Seventies Batch of the OBU held its annual get together on 30th November 2013 at Raja Bojun and what a night it was.

The Chief Guest was Mr. Ashantha Andradi (Tim Andradi), CEO of the prestigious London School of Commerce (LSC) who was the donor of the Andradi Library to St. Peter's and ten Guest of Honour, Doric Atton who has been helping the batch every year.

Being a member of the Pre Seventies batch Ashantha in addressing the participants, spoke of the fact that the base for his success in education and business was laid at St. Peter's and stressed on the value of education which, he added was why he was in the business of education. The highlight of the evening was having learnt of the donation of scholarships to students of St. Peter's by the batch group, he made a spontaneous gesture by offering to sponsor 3 students to follow Degree programmes at the British School of Commerce, the Sri Lankan branch of the LSC plus a staggering 1 million rupees to add to the scholarship fund of the Pre Seventies batch group.

From all the reports we heard, those attending enjoyed the function.

(Pictures in the Pictorial News Page)

Algi W



COLLEGE EVENTS

- Grotto gets a new look (see report elsewhere)
- College Christmas Carols on 14th December
- Cricket season commences on 3rd January '14
- Big Match on 7th & 8th March '14
- 50 over Joe – Pet on 15th March '14



PETES AROUND THE GLOBE

The OBU of St. Peter's can proudly boast of branches scattered across the globe from Australia to UK, from the UAE to the US and even a Josephian-Peterite Alumni Association in Canada. Here's news from some of the branches.

AUSTRALIA



Melbourne

From the overseas branches of the St. Peter's College Old Boys Social Club Australia we have news of the following events organised by them:

- ✓ Peterite Night Fever, Dinner Dance on 15th June 2013
- ✓ Memorial Mass on 2nd July for all deceased Peterites
- ✓ AGM on 21st July

The coming events include:

- Seniors Christmas Lunch on 8th December
- Joe-Pete Cricket and Stag Night – March 14 (dates to be confirmed)

Other events also planned for later in 2014

For updates and information please visit their website www.spcmelbourne.com

Old Peterites' Club of Brisbane

The Second Peterite Golden Gleam Dinner Dance of the St. Peter's College Old Boys Social Club Brisbane was held on October 19th at the Astills Function Centre, Acacia Ridge with the dance being well patronised once again.

With this dance being the only dance in Brisbane that offers return airline tickets (two return airline tickets from Brisbane to Colombo were offered this time) and with the dance ticket prices being amongst the

lowest in Brisbane, this dance is well sought after by the Sri Lankan and Australian community in Brisbane besides bringing the Peterite Community in Brisbane closer to one another.

As in the case of the inaugural dance, there was good food & music thrown in once again as evidenced by the several testimonials that the Club received from attendees

CANADA



PAA Canada launched its new website on Monday, October 7, 2013 – with the domain name www.jpaaacanada.com. We invite you to visit the site, devour the information laid out and send us an e-mail with any comments, constructive feedback, suggestions or remarks.

JPAA President Upali Obeyesekere said "this is a dream come true". He adds that this will be an online tool to reach out to most Peterites and Josephians in Canada and keep them informed and enhance communications within the membership reaching out to the alumni of St. Joseph's College and St. Peter's College throughout the world.

The website is a menu driven site with opportunity for advertising banners in the last extreme right column. At present, interesting information is posted on the graphic icons that lead you to a document or another 3rd party website with news of Josephians and/or Peterites in the world.

JPAA President invites comments on the site from anyone out there who happens to visit the site. Please send all comments, suggestions and feedback to JPAA Canada via email address jpaaacanada@rogers.com and we will respond within 24-hours.

Rugby in Canada

Combined Joe-Pete team wins Sri Lanka Schools Rugby Sevens Tournament in Toronto

A combined Joe-Pete team led by Dominick de Kauwe trounced the Antonians 44-0 to win the "Quintin Israel Memorial Trophy" at the picturesque Oakville Crusaders Rugby Grounds. S. Thomas' College OBA hosted the tournament this year which is called "Sri Lanka Schools Rugby Sevens Tournament – 2013". Chief Organiser for the Thomians was D.R. (Ranjan) Weerasinghe – former Thomian, CR&FC and skipper of the Colombo Schools team. Other teams that took part in this year's tournament were the Thomians, Royalists, Trinitians and a combined Dharmarajah/Wesley team.

A high standard of rugby football was maintained throughout the tournament.

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

Rev. Fr. Joe Wickramasinghe – Our Eighth Rector



While St. Peter's is grateful to all Rectors who steered St. Peter's over the years, including Rev. Fr. Maurice Le Goc who was responsible for establishing St. Peter's in the dim distant years of 1922, I felt compelled to write about Fr. Joe Wickremasinghe whose period as rector was known as the golden era of College.

On 9th January, 1978 Rev. Fr. Joseph Emmanuel Wickremasinghe, affectionately known as Fr. Wicks took over as Rector of St. Peter's College. His first task was to bring the management out of turbulence and reorganize the College Administration. This he did through the establishment of a board of Administration. This led to an era at St. Peter's which was filled with activities and laid the foundation for the much talked of golden era.

He installed a new public address system to communicate any urgent announcements to the classes directly from the office and also to conduct morning and afternoon prayers. As the student population increased Fr. Wickremasinghe saw the immediate necessity for an accelerated building programme.

His first step was to enlarge and improve the Science Laboratories with the construction of a new three storied building, which housed classrooms on the second and third floors. The foundation stone for the new building was laid on the 27th of August 1979 by His Grace Most. Rev. Dr. Nicolas Marcus Fernando, Archbishop of Colombo. The new Science Laboratory building which housed the Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Zoology Laboratories with sixteen classrooms was blessed and opened by His Grace Most. Rev. Dr. Nicolas Marcus Fernando, Archbishop of Colombo on the 23rd March 1981.

The Next phase of Fr. Wickremasinghe's building programme was to refurbish the College Hall. A statue of St. Peter, the apostle, our Patron Saint was installed in front of the porch on the lawn facing the road which was donated by a loyal Old Boy, Mr. Francis R. Gomez. It was unveiled on 8th October 1980 by the donor.

In 1981 Fr. Wickremasinghe established an award called "The Peterite Gold" to recognize the loyal and outstanding services rendered by the students to the College. The first such award was made at the prize giving in 1981. He also established the Memorial prizes, to enable loyal Peterites to perpetuate the names of their loved ones by making a reasonable donation.

The year 1982 was a special year for all Peterites young and old, for it was the Diamond jubilee of their Alma Mater. A special celebration was arranged with His Lordship Oswald Gomis Cooray, the auxiliary Bishop of Colombo as the Chief celebrant. Under the leadership of Fr. Wickramasinghe the diamond jubilee celebrations were held in the 1982 on 15th July.

With the influx of new students, two new "Houses" were added in the Diamond Jubilee year, Basil House named after the second rector Rev. Fr. Basil A. Wiratunga O.M.I. and Arthur House named after the third rector Rev. Fr. Arthur N. Fernando. These houses first participated in the Diamond Jubilee sports meet Held on June, 26th 1982.

On 28th June 1985 His Grace the Archbishop laid the foundation stone for the Centre for Vocational studies overlooking the Primary quadrangle which was opened on 1st September 1986 by His Lordship Oswald Gomis, the auxiliary Bishop of Colombo. The new building housed the modernized canteen, music room, the school Hostel, some classrooms and a new Computer Unit.

On the 29th June 1988 a site for the Swimming pool was blessed by Rev. Dr. Dalston J. Forbes O.M.I., himself an old boy of St. Peter's and forty distinguished Old Peterites laid the foundation stone for the Swimming Pool. While the Pool was being built a new three story building was added to the Primary School, alongside the pool which was blessed and opened by His Grace the Archbishop on 6th March 1990. The swimming pool was blessed and opened by His Lordship Oswald Gomis in January, 1991.

The rectorship of Fr. Joseph Emmanuel Wickremasinghe ended on 1st September 1994.

Fr. Wickremasinghe was called to his eternal reward on 6th May 2007. Thousands of grateful old Peterites turned up at College to pay their last respects as the body lay at the College Chapel and later at the funeral when he was and was laid to rest in his home town.

May the glory he brought to St. Peter's never be forgotten and may the Lord's glory shine on him.

+++++

General Denis Perera



(Contributed by Mano Chanmugam President OBU – 1984-1987 & 2002- 2003)

No superlatives can do justice to this magnificent personality called General Deshamanya Denis Perera VSV. He was the epitome of a man of common sense and supreme achievement and I am truly thankful and humbled to have been his friend.

Although I knew him as an accomplished Ruggerite and Athlete and a commanding figure even in his mid teens, Denis entered my life more fully when he decided to join the college cadets in late 1948, consequent to our winning the Millers Challenge Cup for Shooting. After a very short stint on the parade grounds and early morning route marches to the Hunupitiya shooting range, Denis turned out to be an excellent marksman and easily one of the keenest cadets St. Peter's ever produced.

With surely the strongest platoon amongst schools, the genuine hopes of our Senior Commander, Major Edward Dias, of our winning the 1949 the Herman Loos Challenge Cup, were shattered when our platoon was quarantined in Diyatalawa, because one of our cadets contracted Chicken Pox. Even in this disappointment and sadness Denis's subtle humour was heard when in isolation we were made to attack an imaginary army stronghold and while crawling on all fours in a muddy bog infested with leeches, Major Dias heard Denis whispering to his companion Sri Pats. Major Dias in anger asked me to crawl up to Sri Pats and ask him what the commotion was all about. Sri Pats replied "Denis said that if he were to die in combat bitten by leeches please tell his mother that he died bravely"

Being altar servers at St. Peter's our regular daily mass schedules ended with brisk walks along the Kingross railway lines and a quick share of a single cigarette with our senior Dion Walles – the thought of breaking basic College rules so soon after Holy Mass was in our school boy minds an allowable mischief.

It was obvious that Denis had his sights set on an Army Career and so it was no surprise that on his 19th birthday – 10th October 1949 – he joined the then Ceylon Army and was selected for training at the World's most prestigious Military Academy – Sandhurst. Happily our paths met again in England in 1950 when I visited Sandhurst regularly and Denis spent weekends in London. In all our exploits where the mischief of youth dominated Denis participated however showing a dignified restraint even in Soho. Our Rector Rev. Fr. Basil Wiratunga on holiday in UK and I, were fortunate to witness the Sandhurst Passing Out Parade where Denis came out with flying colours as the best candidate of that year.

On our return to Sri Lanka, Denis remained a friend for all seasons – he a young army officer and I a seminarian at the National Seminary in Kandy. On two separate occasions late at night he willingly obliged in driving me from Colombo to Kandy and returned alone in the early hours of the morning to be in time for his arduous Army duties as a Major.

Once again I was lucky to be associated with Denis back in the UK when he was selected to be the Military Attaché at our London High Commission. On his return to Sri Lanka, Denis's journey to stardom was obvious when he was appointed the Chief Coordinating Officer in charge of the Non Aligned Conference in 1975.

In 1978, after a serious fall in England, I happened to be in crutches at the Peterite celebration honouring Denis's appointment as ARMY Commander, when he spotted me in the audience and mischievously announced “I am so happy to see my old friend Mano who taught me how to march, thank God he didn't teach me how to walk.” What more can friendship provide than when I virtually forced Denis on the eve of our AGM in 1987 to take over the Presidency of the OBU and he obliged with a painful look on his face – Army discipline dominated the OBU committee meetings which terminated generally in 30 minutes much to the glee of Gerry De Mel the Hon. Secretary and other committee members. I once got a few minutes late for a meeting and judging by the chit-chat, I thought proceedings hadn't started. Much to my surprise Denis announced that the meeting had ended before I arrived. Long after his three years as President Denis got his own back at me when at the AGM of 2002, he proposed my name for President of the OBU to run our 75th Jubilee Year.

During his illustrious career as Army Commander he earned for himself the sublime respect of HE J. R. Jayawardena and the entire Cabinet. Major General Anton Muttukumaru the First Sri Lankan Army Commander once said “Denis is undoubtedly the best Commander we have ever had and he has unstintingly achieved the Army's greatest goal of establishing the Sir John Kotalawela Defence Academy”

(The additions below on Gen. Denis Perera are by Gerry De Mel, another former President of the OBU – 1999 – 2002)

- General Denis Perera was President of the OBU from 1987 to 1989.
- He was the first and only President to be elected at an evening meeting.
- He had his entire education at St. Peter's even during the war when he went to the different branches.
- He was president when the 2nd Honours Awards of the OBU was held in 1988 and a set of criteria was formed. He thereafter went on to chair the next 3 Honours selection committees in 1997, 2002 & 2006.
- During his presidency the 5 trophies awarded at the annual cricket Big Match was mooted and awarded. These trophies are still awarded.
- It was during his presidency that the OBUH was started.
- A proper accounting system was put in place for the OBU during his presidency, moving away from the old income/expenditure statements. The Treasurer was Ajit Jayamanne.
- The foundation stone for the swimming pool was laid during his presidency.

PICTORIAL NEWS

The Grotto Gets a New Look (4th December 2013)



At the Pre Seventies Get Together at the Raja Bojun on 30th November 2013



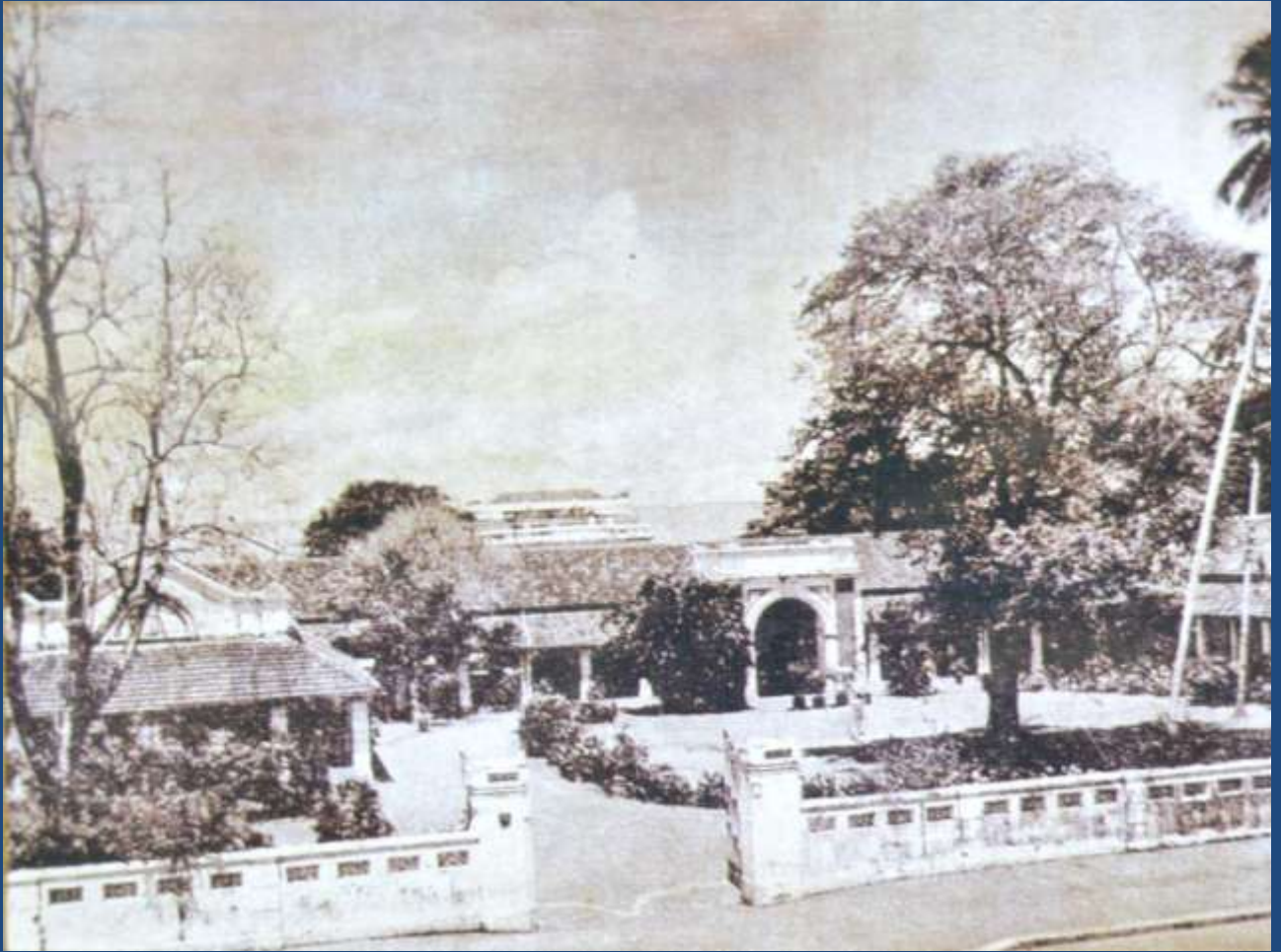
Inter-House Rugby



Rugby Nutrition Programme



From the Archives



Galle Road Frontage (January 1929)



Corpus Christy (Circa 1930s)



Tennis Courts (1929)



Quadrangle – 1930s

(The Editorial committee earnestly hopes that other Sports Foundations, Committees and Overseas branches which missed this opportunity will contribute to this Newsletter and let the Peterite community around the world know the good work they do. **Next Issue due in April 2014**)

.....

DETAILS OF MANY OF THE STORIES COVERED IN THIS ISSUE ARE AVAILABLE IN THE WEBSITE

Like us on FB - OBU St. Peters College, Colombo 4, Sri Lanka www.facebook.com/obuofstpeterscollege
(link available in the website)

Website: <http://stpetersobu.com/index.php>

Editorial Committee

Algi Wijewickrema (Editor), Dishan de Saa, Shasthri Irugalbandara, Lasantha Dissanayake, Lindsay Melder, Neil Pereira

ADVERTISE YOUR EVENTS HERE

To All Batch Groups

The next Issue is due by April 2014. So here's your chance to reach the widest coverage among the Old Peterite community.

Advertise your events scheduled for May, June or July 2014, in the next issue.

Only Rs.500/- per quarter page.