

DOUBLE BLUE BULLETIN

Newsletter of Wesley College(Colombo) Old Boys' Union Australia Branch Incorporated

2002 ISSUE 2

SEPTEMBER

Message from the President

This issue of the Double Blue coincides with the end of the inter schools rugby season in Sri Lanka.

During this past season the Wesley College 1st XV performed extremely well and reached the final of the President's Trophy, where though we lost to Royal, won much admiration for our grit and determination.

As proud Old Boys I am certain you will all join me in saying "Well Done" to the players for their performance as well as to the coaching and administrative staff who helped them achieve this milestone.

The Annual Double Blue Dinner Dance is scheduled for the 5th October and I strongly entreat all Old Boys in Melbourne to join us on this day to both celebrate and also raise funds necessary to support our beloved Wesley.

**Ora et Labora
Reg Bartholomeusz**

Your Committee 2002

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AIMS OF THE OLD BOYS' UNION AUSTRALIA BRANCH INC.

1. To unite in one fraternal band those who were educated at Wesley College, Colombo.
2. To afford an opportunity of bringing together past and present pupils of Wesley College.
3. To assist in meeting the needs of the College as they arise.
4. To do all things necessary to preserve the honour and dignity of the College.

DATES TO REMEMBER

October 5th The Prestigious Wesley
College OBU Annual
Ball — Cretan Village
Reception Hall

December 1st The Combined Colleges
Christmas Carols

February 2003 The Old & Bold Seniors
Night

March 2003 The AGM

Editors View.....

RUGBY - The Mighty Warriors

This is a celebratory issue of the Double Blue Bulletin recognizing the outstanding performance of our rugby teams in the season just concluded in Colombo.

Our first XV "THE MIGHTY WARRIORS" after a series of convincing wins in the early season qualified for the finals for the first time in our rugby history by beating League Champions the powerful St Peters College team 16-12.

Although beaten by Royal in the finals 20-6, Our Lads won much admiration for their grit and determination in a classy display of attacking rugby.

Wesley College rugby is reaching greater heights – our heartiest congratulations to all concerned.

WHEN DID RUGBY ARRIVE AT WESLEY?

It was February 1953, a brilliant team effort by our cricketers and Wesley had defeated our traditional rival Royal College, for the second year in succession. There were 15 lbw decisions in this match which produced 253 run for 23 wickets. Pat 'Spud' Schokman played a cavalier innings of 74 runs, including 14 fours, Samsudeen was unplayable, taking 5 for 17, and our fielding was inspirational with Neil Gallagher, Ansar Fuard, Brian Claessen and Arthlow Chapman being outstanding.

The last Royal wicket had fallen and Wesleyites of all ages joined in the ecstatic celebrations that followed. The late Gordon Amaresekera, who was holding a rugby ball confiscated from a youngster, kicked it in the direction of the vanquished Royalists who picking the ball up ran in the direction of University College Grounds. All hell broke loose – Wesleyites of all ages gave chase to recover the ball and restore honour – a scrap game of rugby football commenced no rules, no quarter asked. Sanity soon returned and the sporting cheerleaders of both colleges arranged a game of makeshift rugger – the prize the rugby ball.

I cannot recollect the final score if any, or whether the ball was returned to the young owner, but one thing is certain Rugby Football had arrived at Wesley and those first players were Brian and David Mack, Ralph Maas, S K Kasinathan, Gordon Amarasekera, P B 'Kuiya' Herat, the late Rodney Schokman, David Schokman, Denzil Perera, Ranjith Authokarale Ranjith Abeydeera Melville

Mottau, Vernon Speldewinde, Mohamammed Iqbal, Chris Stork, Tissa Amarasingha, Gamini Seniviratne, Brantha, Preena, Geoffrey Fernando, Richard Dwight, "Abee" the Buell brothers and many more.

Wesley commenced playing rugby as an official sport in 1954. Our first captain was Edward Buell and Vice Captain Noel Beven. Both these players represented the CR and FC and the Ceylon Barbarians. Pat Schokman T Allasundream, S K Kasinathan played for the Havelocks.

We will be compiling a more detailed history of Rugby Football at Wesley and hope to include this in our next issue of the Bulletin.

So, Wesleyites, this is my version of rugby arriving at Wesley.

ABEE

We Salute the mighty double blue warriors of 2002



("The Island" – 12/06/2002)

Invincible that Wesley style of rugby by Jatila Karawita

The giant killers in the on-going Milo Inter-Schools Rugby season Wesley College Colombo have just one motive to accomplish this year.

They are ready to continue with their superlative brand of rugby and triumph during the league and the ensuing President's trophy knock out tournaments respectively.

Coach Dishantha Priyadarshana airing his views to 'The Island' in the aftermath of the teams heady success against teams such as Trinity and defending league



champions St Anthony's College Katugastota during the past fortnight said he was not unduly surprised by the outcomes.

"The performance against Trinity was not something which surprised me really.

I knew the lads were more than capable of prevailing over the Lions but the one they dished out against St. Anthony's was quite exceptional" said Priyadarshana whose coaching record at Wesley from Under-13 level has been enviable to say the least.

He said as coach of Wesley the school that he had targeted this year was the match against St. Anthony's Katugastota as they were supposed to be the best team for 2002 and the fact that his charges had managed to beat the Anthonians in their own back yard had given him immense pleasure.

" In my opinion I thought the Anthonians were going to be the pick of all schools teams this time around.

And to see the way the boys delivered the goods up in Bogambara was stupendous and I couldn't have asked for more from my boys" said the gleaming Wesley coach.

The all conquering Wesley team of 2002 have virtually re-written the rugby record books at the famous educational institution in Borella.

The lads from Campbell Park have registered some unique first ever milestones becoming the first Wesley team in History to have tasted success over Trinity.

They then continued to hand that exceptional dose of rugby magic to St. Anthony's College Katugastota after 25 years.

Both these above named feats and the fact that the Wesleyites also emerged as the Under 15 All Island Cup Champions for the first time in history speaks volumes for the coaching track record of this ex Science College Mount Lavinia rugby player.

Asked to comment on any team which may come forward to spoil the hitherto unblemished playing record of the side he simply replied saying they were ready to take any team under any condition and in any venue to showcase their true mettle.

" I am feeling more than confident of the abilities of my players.

Having coached teams from the age group of Under-13 to first XV level since 1999 the lads were threatening to perform wonders and this year the boys have shown what they are capable of achieving if they really mean it," explained 26 year old Priyadarshana.

Wesley coach emphasized experience is something which can not be substituted in rugby unlike any other sport and said the amount of training they had undergone commencing from December 2001 for the 2002 season is starting to pay dividends.

" As you would know being a rugby journalist experience matters a lot in this game and I am pleased to say the squad at my disposal is not lacking in that aspect.

We have more or less continued from where we left off in 2001 and the hard work and dedication of the lads are beginning to bear fruit.

This team surely possess that killer instinct to whip any team they come across this season".

He said the contributions made by technical analyst S W Chang has also been crucial for their success story thus far and paid a glowing tribute to the one time Sri Lanka's foremost rugby referee.

" He (S W Chang) is a very knowledgeable person when it comes to rugby union.

There is so much to be learnt for coaches like us and his support has not gone in vain.

He has always given me his 100% backing and I am grateful to be coaching such a formidable outfit with him on the sidelines," commented a very humble and unassuming Wesley coach.

Chang himself airing his views to 'The Island' said he was satisfied with the teams showing hitherto but said the important thing was to maintain their present success rate on a regular basis.

"Is there anything to talk about these lads after all.

Their performances are there for all to see and for the disbelieving critics they have accounted for the scalps of Trinity and St. Anthony's to name a few.

There is still a long and winding road to scale but the gifted skills of these ruggerites should carry them through," said the former Trinity College rugby product.



Led by Sri Lanka under 19 cap and number eight Lahiru Botheju Wesley appear to be the well oiled machine that is ready to roll their rivals over.

Besides skipper and fifth year coloursman Lahiru Botheju who also happens to be one of the most experienced schools players this year the others who have represented the country at national level are prop Steve Perera, and centre Ziard Thaheer.

Wesley's forte this year are their marauding set of forwards with couple of muscular players adding that ferocious forward fire power to pummel their opponents to a standstill.

Their three quarters have also been providing that cutting edge to their overall game plan and the creative instincts of their speedy backs make the outfit from Campbell Park a special kind of rugby juggernaut.

Wesley pull through in game marred by violence

("The Island" – 14/08/2002)

In a game which was worthy of a cup final Wesley College fended off a wonderful second half onslaught from St Peter's College to score a rousing 16-12 win in an enthralling Milo President's Trophy Knock Out Semi Final match at Reid Avenue yesterday.

But sadly this game will be remembered for the melee which took place soon after the completion of the match.

Immediately after referee Dilroy Fernando blew no side the supporters of the two schools ran onto the field and got involved in a free for all.

St Peter's skipper Dilanka Wijesekera told "The Island" that the melee had been initiated by the Wesleyites after two of their players winger Mohammed Rinaz and centre Ranidu Peiris were assaulted.

However Wesley's Technical Adviser S W Chang told "The Island" that he only saw the supporters of the two schools getting into a fight.

When asked for his comments the Secretary of the SLSRFA Kumara Rodrigo was of the view that he was totally unaware of this incident and that he was unable to stop the unruly elements from leaving a sour taste to this closely contested game.

Meanwhile in another match played at the same venue Royal beat St Anthony's Katugastota in a lack-lustre Semi Final.

Wesley "eight" vs Royal "threes"

("The Island" – 16/08/2002)

Two of the best schools rugby teams this season Royal College and Wesley College will play each other in what shapes up to being an absorbing Milo President's Trophy Knock Out Final at Reid Avenue (Royal rugby grounds) this evening.

This match will also bring the curtain down on the 2002 Inter Schools rugby season.

The record books says Royal have had the better fortunes as far as the history of the schools rugby knock out tournament is concerned ahead of their rivals from Campbell Park.

Royal have clinched the knock out title once way back in 1988 under the leadership of Lasitha 'Bonsa' Gunarathne when it was then known as the Premadasa Trophy.

However since that heady success 14 years ago the lads from Reid Avenue are still desperately vying to lay their hands on the Knock Out trophy, a task which they feel they will achieve today in their own back-yard.

But in contrast Wesley College have never ever been to the Schools knock out final in the tournament's 17 year history.

They have however managed to reach the semis in 1997 and 1998 under the captancy of Anupama Wadugodapitiya and Asanka Gammanpila respectively and this year under Lahiru Botheju they have managed to go a step further and reach the final.

This evening they will do their best to topple the home team and etch their names into the record books in a do-or-die game expected to be witnessed by a capacity crowd.

Going through the season's performance Royal will start as hot favourites to triumph today but Wesley will be only too pleased to go in as underdogs and be concerned at the finish.

Royal's forte has been their scintillating back-play from an experienced set of three quarters.

Apart from the halves combination of skipper Zulky Hamid and S Badurdeen who have been instrumental in winning quality possession Indika De Silva, dynamic Rajith Jayasundere, Bilal Yusuf, Lakshman Dissanayake



and Chamath Dhanawansa have all been in the thick of things and will be hoping to deliver the goods when it matters most.

Their forwards also have been faring well and a good display from the Royal 'eight' complimented by their fluent backline should make it tough for Wesley.

Wesley on the other hand have based their attack on their power-packed set of forwards comprising of the likes of Steve Perera, Tyronne Harrison, Kasun De Silva, Heshan Dissanayake and skipper Lahiru Botheju to crush the Royalists on their way to the final.

Wesley's backs Naushki Fareez, Ziard Thaheer, Saliman Buckman and Zakeer Badurdeen will also have to combine effectively with their 'eight' if the lads from Campbell Park are to prevail over the rampaging unbeaten Royal College 'fifteen'.

Meanwhile it is also fervently hoped from a spectators point of view the officials of the tournament organisers (SLSRFA) will have more security officers at the ground in a bid to prevent the unruly elements from causing any fracas at the end of the game. A brawl which took place between the players of Wesley and St.Peter's and followed by a even bigger free for all among the supporters of the two teams at the end of the quarter finals last Monday is proof to showcase the security arrangements put in place by the SLSRFA for this tournament.

Teams

Royal

Shamil Mohammed, Mafaz Ismail, Venura Perera, Nanda Abeysekera, Rakeem Barry, Kushan Athukorale, Channa De Silva, Dushanth Lewke, Zulky Hamid (Capt) and S Badurdeen, Indika De Silva, Rajith Jayasundere, Bilal Yusuf, Lakshman Dissanayake and Chamath Dhanawansa.

Wesley

Steve Perera, R M Manahara, Chithrajith Weligamage, Mohamed Shaker, Lahiru Botheju (Capt), Kasun De Silva, Heshan Dissanayake, Tyronne Harrison, Rukshan Omar and Prasad Perera, Naushki Fareez, Ziard Thaheer, Nuwan Samith, Saliman Buckman and Zakerr Badurdeen. [J K]

Referee- Orville Fernando

The past winners of the Schools Knock Out Tournament.

1985 - Isipatana 1991 - STC 1997 - Isipatana
 1986 - Isipatana 1992 - Isipatana 1998 - Thurstan
 1987 - Trinity 1993 - Trinity 1999 - Isipatana
 1988 - Royal 1994 - STC 2000 - Kingswood
 1989 - STC 1995 - St.Peter's 2001 - Isipatana
 1990 - STC 1996 - Isipatana

Wesley rugby reaching greater heights

("Sunday Times" – 25/08/2002)

Wesley College created rugby history when they entered the President's Trophy final the first time. In this final they were beaten by high riding Royal team led by Zulki Hamid. The star-studded Royalists, have created a new milestone in the annals of the Bradby Shield carried too many guns to the Campbell Park School. Wesley though beaten by a superior side won much admiration for their grit and determination. They had a good set of strongly built forwards. But what they lacked was a better game plan and an experienced coach to assist them.

It augurs well for the future of schools and Sri Lanka rugby. Two of their forwards have found their way to the national squad. Wesley, in the semi-final created a sensation when they defeated the Schools League champions - seasoned St. Peter's in an absorbing contest, (August 12).

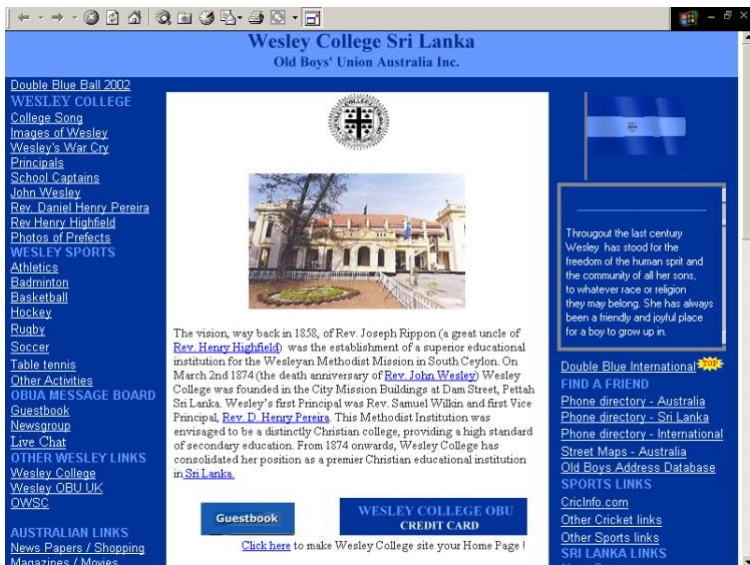
It was a Red Letter Day for their rugby. Unfortunately, after the game pandemonium raged by a section of the crowd who went berserk. They were not tackling, but indulging in a boxing contest. It was most uncalled for. It soured what was otherwise a superb game of open rugby dished out by both teams. Whoever started must learn to take defeat, in any walk of life.

According to Kenneth de Silva the Prefect of Games, the rugby revival at Wesley was started in 1993, by an ardent old boy Clive de Silva. Initially he was the cog-in-the-wheel. He drafted the services of former Peterite and Police SC Scrumhalf S. Sivendran, to coach the youngsters. Old Royalist, versatile sportsman former Sri Lanka sprinter, Summa Navaratnam handled the physical fitness. The duo did an excellent job. Summa, was the father-figure to the boys. The school won the 'B' div. Championship.

The present Principal, M.A.P. Fernando, is a source of inspiration looking into their needs be it at the classroom or in the playing field. Studies and sport go hand in hand at Wesley. Courage and resolution, has paid dividends.



**NEWS IN BRIEF
FROM THE EDITOR**



Our Website
www.wesleycollege.org

By the time Old Wesleyites receive this message on the internet our classic Website will have received in excess of 25,000 hits from over 20 countries worldwide in a period of just over a year.

The website has received many plaudits for its extensive range of information, layout and uniqueness and we are proud to have won the Golden Award for the best website in 2002. A truly remarkable achievement.

Old Wesleyites resident in the UK, Switzerland, USA, Denmark, the Philippines and the UAE are highly appreciative of the Double Blue Bulletin and several messages of goodwill have been received. Some have queried our perceived over exposure of cricket news. We can understand this constructive criticism, Wesley College Colombo is no longer a premier cricket school as in the years gone by. Rugby football has taken over as the major sport and our successes have meant that the younger generation wishes to read more of the achievements of the rugby football teams, other popular sport and scholarship of modern Wesley College, Sri Lanka.

This point is recognized and in cooperation with the OBU's in UK, Sri Lanka and USA we will do our

utmost to meet the needs of the younger generation of Wesleyites.

Our webmaster, guru and engineer is not responsible for editorial content or articles carried in the bulletin. Mahendra's task undertaken with great love for his Alma Mater is to take our website to greater heights, and to ensure that we are the best of all Sri Lankan schools.

Please refer any queries to the Editor or Hon Secretary.

In the last issue of the bulletin, we advised that it was our intention to investigate possibilities of generating revenue for College through advertisements on the Web.

We have had to hold this initiative in abeyance until further expert clarification is obtained in relation to administrative and possible tax implications. We do not consider this a major issue and will keep you duly advised of developments. The potential for revenue generation is significant since we are now directly linked to Old Wesleyites throughout the world. We are sure when the time is right to go ahead, we can count on the support of all bound by the fraternal band of double blue.

We will greatly appreciate any literary contribution, ideas and innovations from old boys anywhere in the world, for inclusion in the Double Blue Bulletin.



TO THE OLD AND THE BOLD

The President and Committee of the OBU, eagerly looks forward to your presence at the WESLEY COLLEGE, prestigious Dinner Dance, on Saturday 5th October at CRETAN VILLAGE Reception Hall, Cathies Lane, Wantirna, commencing 07.30pm.

Tickets are \$60.00 per head all-inclusive.

We assure of a NIGHT to remember.

Please contact

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A TRIBUTE TO THE COLLEGE SECOND TO NONE WESLEY COLLEGE COLOMBO, SRI LANKA, FROM AN OLD BOY IN CANADA

"I am a proud ex-Wesleyite. I live in Ottawa, Canada. I am very proud of Wesley College for several reasons. Being an orthodox Tamil, I never felt uncomfortable or uneasy studying at Wesley. I captained the Wesley's Table Tennis Team and also took part in several other activities. I was also a prefect under Dilanjan Jayasekara and YP Rajasingham. Mrs Ranjini Fernando, who was a teacher at Wesley was my mentor in Table Tennis. She and Mr Fernando really made me a "person" with their attention, encouragement and love. My years at Wesley were the best years in my life.

I would also like to throw an open invitation to all Wesleyites who are going to be visiting Canada.

Please be my guest and I live in the capital city of Canada.

My Phone number is 613 824 8472.

LONG LIVE WESLEY TRADITION"

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SOME SKETCHES FROM MY SCHOOL DAYS

1950 was a time of idyllic splendour and tranquility in Ceylon. D.S.Senanayake was the Prime Minister. The sense of humanity and decency installed by the British for over a century was still in place. The buses were run by private entrepreneurs. Ebert Silva and Ceylon Tours provided the service in style. The Galle Face Hotel, The Queens Hotel Kandy and The Grand Hotel Nuwara Eliya were the only Hotels with any star quality. The affluent and the not so wealthy indulged in a weekend flutter on the horses at the Race Course in Reid Avenue. You shop at Cargills or Millers, have tea at the Pagoda Tea Rooms in Chatham Street or the Fountain Café at Union Place and buy your Lingus (Spicy sausages), Orange Barley and Lanka Lime at the Ceylon Cold Stores at Slave Island. During April the rich went to Nuwara Eliya to escape the Colombo heat. Galle face Green on a Sunday was packed with people sucking Alerics Ice Cream. When all was said and done those who needed special favours from God went to the “Novenas” on Wednesdays, at All Saints Church Borella. Meanwhile Ranis rang the school bell with the passion and precision of Big Ben.

Colombo in the 1950's as is now was a city of contrasts with the beauty of prestigious estates with pleasant houses in some areas and slums shanties and tenements in other areas. The poor with large families lived in a single room in screaming poverty. The falling plaster, broken windows and railings, corrugated iron roofs were the hall marks of the poverty we saw. For many the new found political independence did little to give them home or hope. The prize jobs were in the government service with job security for life. In those days everyone knew his place. The master and servant, teacher and student, rich and poor, parent and child accepted the situation as if ordained by God.

I joined Wesley in January 1950 during the ‘reign’ of Cedric Oorloff. With his Oxford accent he had an air of authority and dignity. He commanded respect and received it. Being just 8 years old and bottom of the pile viewed school life with fear and trepidation. Oorloff inspired terror and always had our attention. In later years as a boarder living just behind his back garden we appreciated his humour and generosity. Mrs. Oorloff was a tall kindly lady, looked after her garden and taught English and History to the seniors. Gillian their daughter, a bubbly teenager, was a pleasant sight playing with her dog in their well manicured lawn. I can still picture his green Austin Devon parked in the porch of their large and spacious bungalow. My first brush with the law came quite early in my school career. I was involved in a serious conversation with a classmate at assembly when CJO spotted my indiscretion and asked us both to stand-up for the whole proceedings. We coped with the embarrassment quite well but on our return to class Mr. MT Rajapakse gave us a rasping blow on the face. I remember being dazed for a few minutes and unable to hear for couple of days. Soon all was forgotten and we both got back to our old ways.

Unlike at present the students had no voice at all. Parents took decisions for us at home and the teachers did so at school. We had to use HB pencils and HH or BB wouldn't be acceptable. Having been used to the vernacular at home my English was appalling and Mrs. Blackers efforts with the sharp edge of the ruler encouraged me to read Aesops fables, Grimms and Andersons Fairy tales. Reading then on became a habit. C.M.Fonseka who also taught my father was the Headmaster of the Primary school. He was a strict Victorian teacher good at his job. He inspired terror and had our attention and never spared the rod. I can still picture his dark face with short grey hair and white suit. His son Robin was at school and it was with much sadness I heard he died tragically at the Kurana Methodist Minister's bungalow where he was the parish priest. John Gogerly made us do wood work and carpentry which was a welcome relief from the struggles at Maths and reciting poetry from memory. My desk was full of carved names and initials and I happily added my own which horrified Mrs. Blacker. The stern warning and ear pulling did not deter me from indulging in the same every year until I left school. It pleased me no end to find my name in the chemistry lab 40 years later. The equipment and apparatus hadn't changed either which did not speak much of the science at school.

I am an only child, a rare breed in times when 4 or 5 was the norm. Being spoilt and pampered at home I was becoming an incorrigible brat. The boarding gave me more brothers than I ever wanted. The Camaraderie and the brotherhood in the hostel was the best that happened to me at school and feel eternally grateful to my parents for the experience which didn't come cheap. Learning to share was difficult at first but sharing stood me in good stead in later life.

This was the era of amateur sportsmen and winning was never the only motive but to play the game. “Umpires’ word was law” was the teaching and often we walked away even when the umpire made a mistake and the finger stayed down. I still can recall the many games I played at Small Park with Kenneth De Silva, Randolph Crutchley, Kenneth Anthonisz, Michael Christoffelsz, Boris Schrader, Upali Perera, Asoka Ranasinghe, Mynah Wickramaratne, Arthur d'With-Barbut, R.Ratnavale, Masilamony, Soundravel etc. Cricket was all consuming. We played it several times a day in any corner we could find some space. If the space was limited tried French cricket. I dreamed a lot about the game too. The first eleven



games at Campbell Park were never to be missed. We gathered in our hundreds and it had a carnival atmosphere. In the 1950's we had the best decade of cricket at Wesley. DBC Mack, Claessens, Adihettys, Fuards, Abeysooriya, Kretser, Ebert are just a few of the names that rolled freely as we speak of those vintage years. I recall going to CJ Ooroff's bungalow in a procession with hundreds of others after a thrilling win against Royal singing "Monday holiday" to the tune of "he's a jolly good fellow". The request was granted to our utter delight. The setting sun behind All Saints Church as we watched the drama on the matting is an image that is firmly etched in my memory.

The boarding taught me the value of regular study. L.A.Fernando, Ivor De Silva, E.L.Rodrigo, AJ Vethanayagam, DB Welikala, Ben Jayasinghe, Wilfred Wickramasinghe, Henry Rajapakse and Charles Yesudian were the teachers who maintained law and order and helped the brotherhood to thrive and succeed. Hide and seek was a popular game played on a weekend. We had the whole school to hide in. Under the Assembly hall stage was a fine place to hide, dark and quiet. The games went on for a whole day and kept us well amused and out of trouble.

1955 saw the beginning of the political decline of our country. We moved away from the Westminster style gentlemanly politics into an abyss. The jingoism and the ultra-nationalism was a recipe for division and disaster. The rapid abolition of English as the state language drove many educated people away from the country. The Burghers who formed a colourful community and contributed immensely to the welfare of the island emigrated in their thousands to Australia, England and Canada. I remember the goodbyes which were heart rending because of the thought of never seeing them again. In 1957 we saw CJ Ooroff leave Wesley for Trinity College. He steered the school through some difficult times after Independence. Mr.P.H.Nonis brought a more relaxed style. He was a kind and gentle person but very efficient and Wesley continued to move steadily forward.

Devananda Peiris was a tubby, happy lad and played his part in the rough and tumble of boarding life. Once when we returned after the August holidays learnt that he died of complications of appendicitis. I recall we were utterly devastated and it dawned on us of our own mortality at a very young age. The second tragedy was that of DGM Perera who had just left school at the age of 12 to attend Pembroke Academy. For some unknown reason decided to commit suicide. We spoke about this and sulked for many weeks. The loss of Hermon Claessen in a motor cycle accident was tragic indeed. Hermon was an excellent cricketer and a wonderful person too. Shanthi Perera lost his life soon after leaving school and joining the Air force, in an air accident. He was a Senior Prefect and a talented musician.

End of the year we gave our Class teacher a present which was the tradition. At the end of every year many left the boarding and the school and I recall the sadness of our goodbyes. Finally in 1958 it was my turn to leave the hostel but not the school. I felt lost for awhile but the impending exams helped me to recover and move ahead.

In the boarding we were fascinated by the occult and ghosts. Numerous stories were told of past principals who walked the corridors at night. They all wore white and disappeared when confronted. Mostly these were confabulations by students to pass the time. I personally have not had any such encounters but this does not mean such activity did not exist. As these stories were told and retold with the passage of time there were interesting additions to make it sound more plausible and enjoyable. The school laboratory was a no go area after dark and boarders had seen apparitions there walking to the school late on a moonlit night. Be it a restless soul of a person who cannot break off his ties with Wesley or a figment of someone's imagination, the stories have been passed down through many generations to be incorporated into the folklore of the school.

Preparing and sitting for the GCE one feels grown-up. During PH Nonis' kingship the senior students and the Prefects were given special privileges. We were bigger than the rest and some of us represented the school in sports, certainly adding a feather to the cap. There was a hardcore of "honkers" and "rioters" whose main idea was to disrupt class with jokes and vice cracks. Looking back they helped to break the monotony adding a bit of spice to school life. Those who took it to the extreme fell foul of the law with serious results. It amazed me how little they cared about the exams which for most of us was the passport to a reasonable future. After leaving school, thankfully, they all found their niche in life without being in the scrap heap. Some of them have had outstanding careers having had the best of both worlds.

We had a vast array of teachers ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. Charles Silva was a small kindly man with a round face and taught Pali. He spoke with his mouth closed and the lips hardly moved very much like a ventriloquist. I had no intention of taking this subject seriously and he just could not fathom how stupid I was. I remember being dismissed as a loafer and a bad influence on the others. He was a dedicated teacher and took his task seriously producing some excellent results. He finally rose to become the Vice Principal of the school. A well deserved position indeed after more than 25 years service to Wesley. Tall gaunt eccentric Sethukavalar taught Maths and Physics. He had an



encyclopaedic knowledge of matters scientific but was an absent minded professor. He made a hissing sound at the end of every sentence and many students learnt to mimic him. He once related the story of a gathering of Chemists to decide on the worlds best solvent that would dissolve everything. One bright spark asked “where are you going to store it?” Sethu was a most popular teacher and we were sad to see him leave for Union College Tellipalai. I saw the obituary of Mr.N.E.H.Fonseka a couple of weeks ago in the Ceylon Daily News. He taught Sinhala and looked the part with his national dress. “Fonny” tolerated no nonsense and taught well. Felix Premawardene and his brother Cyril were so different in appearance and style like chalk and cheese. Felix taught Sinhala and history, had a big tummy and a handle bar moustache. He barked commands at us and was tough. Punishments came thick and fast. Cyril was gentle wore his “dog collar” and was a man of GOD. CJT Thamotheram was a fine maths teacher, one of the best having obtained a first class in the subject. His last few years were marred by the controversy about the lack of promotion to a higher rank. When he left for England we lost a good teacher. Dabrera taught us Rugby in the Maths and Physics classes. As for the exam results your guess is good as mine. He was a good and friendly person and most helpful if you played in his team. Perhaps “Dubby” believed Oscar Wilde when he said “ Nothing that is worth learning can ever be taught”. For English we had some excellent teachers. Fred Abeysekera, Mr. Joseph and Ivan Ondaatje. Fred and Ivan gave us a good grounding and Joseph built on it. JLF De Mel or De Mel Pappa never taught me but being the headmaster. He spoke softly and slowly and his manner was gentle. I can’t recall hearing him say a cruel or harsh word about anyone. I had many opportunities to appear before him to argue my case. To speak he made a circle with his lips as if to whistle which often amused me. I cannot think of a kinder man. He was a father figure for us all. “Pappa” was a deeply religious person taking an active part in the school services and in the chapel. Miss. Iris Blacker was more than a teacher for the Primary School. She was an institution. Though slightly built and very slim we felt she was like a fire blowing dragon and was capable of reducing anyone to tears by her fierce look and the swing of her hand. She maintained strict discipline and kept us firmly in the straight and narrow path. I think every school needs a Miss. Blacker to instil in the juniors a fear of the law and a respect for the school rules. It is much later in our school life we realised what an invaluable part she played for well over a quarter of a century. Without her at least some of us would have spent sometime in the in the large building opposite Wesley. I wish life treated her kindly in her retirement for her tireless work. We shouldn’t forget the Kindergarten and the wonderful work of Mrs. Joyce Leembrugen and Mrs. S.Perera. The blocks opposite the old Tuck Shop belonged to the little ones. Passing through that way they always seemed to be singing nursery rhymes giving it an air of calmness and serenity. St Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit Order once said “ give me the child until he is seven and I will show you the man”. The quip proclaims that early education can decisively mould childrens’ characters and future. Those teachers did that wonderfully well.

Punishments at school was a necessity to keep the riff raffs on the straight and narrow. The types of punishments were brought to Wesley by the British Principals from English Public Schools like Eton, Rugby and Harrow. They were harsh and on looking back unnecessary. In this 21st Century of human rights, corporal punishment is looked down upon as demeaning and humiliating for which there is no real need. Reading the reminiscences from the first half of the last century we get a glimpse of those hardtimes. By the 1950’s when I joined corporal punishment was mostly confined to the primary classes. The majority of the teachers having been to Teacher Training school learnt to control the class without the need for the cane. Throwing the duster or chalk and slaps with the hand were not uncommon. Standing on the form or outside the class was a favourite too. Mr. Wilfred pinched the tummy quite hard until the tears rolled down. CJ Oorloff liked the cane and gave an almighty swing with a grunt like a Wimbledon tennis player serving for the match. Having received a caning once for swearing when I came out of his office just swore again, this time quietly for the “injustice”. It never had its desired effect!! Edmund Dissanayake , Lionel Jayasuriya, Charles Yesudian, Charles Silva and DB Welikala were teachers who never used physical force but taught and controlled the classes well. Saturday detention with the names read out at Friday assembly was a hard one to take but was fair.

Nick names were the bane of our school lives. TW De Silva in his early years had coarse features. They called him “kimbula” (alligator).He was in our class and had an awful stammer starting every sentence with a “ffffffff”. Thankfully he got over it. The son of a Methodist priest became “Padiliya”. The teachers weren’t exempt. AJ Vethanayagam was “Balli” (bitch). Mr.Wilfred became “padlock” and El Rodrigo “Pettha”. Frank Jayasinghe was known as “parrots beak” for his curved nose. There was a streak of cruelty in us too. A boy with a crooked jaw from birth was called “monkey”. One who now holds high office at Wesley was Called “farther” in his schooldays for his indiscretions when the rest of the class was silent.

When I left school the politics of the country was in crisis and our coffers were empty. The many upheavals, disunity and the workers strikes had brought the country to its knees. The Government grant to assisted schools had stopped and the financial crisis at school began. An optional fee was charged from all students to keep the school afloat. Small park was



sold with the Wesley College Flats to balance the budget. This must have been the hardest time for the school since life began in 1874. We seem to have emerged from those hard times bruised but not beaten with a vision of better times ahead.

As we reached the top of the pile, in the sixth form ,after years of toil the end of our school life was upon us. As we looked to the uncertain future, the poem of Christina Rossetti came to mind.

*Will the road wind uphill all the way
Yes, to the very end
Will the days journey take the whole long day
From morn to night my friend*

Without leaving the thoughts so negative, I would add

*Will there be no joy, no hope, no success
To overfill your cup, my friend, to overfill your cup*

It is hard to describe my excitement at entering Medical College. I felt in some strange way this was my destiny. Nothing else was more important. I looked forward to hard work anticipating the fabulous goal ahead. I felt the romance of being a bohemian medical student. I felt special. I was proud and arrogant. I presume I am allowed to have these delusions of grandeur as a teenager with all my life before me. I must confess I view it all differently now approaching the end of my medical career.

When we first went to Wesley we joined a school with a unique way of life. Life thereafter was moulded by its customs and tradition. The founding fathers of the school have entrusted the principals and the teachers to maintain the academic standards, sports and the traditions that make Wesley so special. It is our hope they would succeed in this task.

Greetings to all those Wesleyites in Australia. I consider it more than a privilege to write these notes for the Newsletter of the OBUA. Though it is nearly 40 years since leaving school the memories still seem fresh and clear. To all the members I send my personal good wishes. To my many close and dear friends I send my warmest regards hoping we have the good fortune to meet again.

Thanks for the memory.

Dr.N.D.Amerasekera (15th November 2001)

Email: douglas@amerasekera.com

Your Views / Ideas

We encourage letters to the Editor on any issue.
Articles of interest. Births, Anniversaries etc...
Suggestions and new ideas we would like to hear

All Correspondence Should Be Sent To:

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CORRECTION & APOLOGY

In the June issue of the Bulletin we advised that the Hon M H Mohammed was Governor of the Western province.

We have now been advised that The Hon M H Mohammed was in fact re-elected a member of Parliament from the Colombo District. Hon Mohamed has been an MP for over 30 years. He was the Mayor of Colombo, Speaker of Sri Lanka Parliament and on five occasions a Cabinet Minister.

He is the only Wesleyite in the present Parliament and Great Old Boy of the College.

CONGRATULATIONS

Our heartiest congratulations to Harold and Esther Matthysz, who will be celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary on the 27th September 2002.

We wish them good health and great happiness in the years ahead.

CONDOLENCES

The Committee and members of the WCOBU, in Australia extend our heartfelt condolences to:

- Our Treasurer Nelson de Silva, his Mother and the rest of the family on the death of his father Neville De Silva, brother of Mr Ivor De Silva (teacher at Wesley) and the Rev Shelton de Silva, (Chaplain in the 1950s).
- Spencer Carnie on the passing away in Sri Lanka of his father Robin Errol Carnie brother of our members Hilary and Dr John to whom we also offer our sympathies.
- Norman de la Harpe on the passing away of his brother Beltram Langston de la Harpe also a student at Wesley from 1936 to 1948.



VALE

Edward Ramsay Miller

I first met Ramsay when we were both students at Wesley College, Colombo in the early 1950's. That sounds like it was such a long time ago. Maybe it was. We were both young lads then, in our teen years. I remember Ramsay as being rather quiet, well-mannered with a preference for English Literature. This was during the years when Mr C J Oorloff was the Principal, and Mrs Oorloff took 4th Form English.

I left college a few years later, and never heard from, or saw Ramsay again, until forty-five years and about 25,000 kilometres away in Australia. In the meantime I had married, raised a family, become a grand-parent, retired from work and with the wonderful support for the MS Society in Victoria, my wife Beryl and I were about to commence visiting residents in a nursing home close to where we lived.

Imagine my surprise that first day, when I was informed that I would shortly be introduced to "Mr R Miller, born in Sri Lanka, educated at Wesley College....etc." And that's how I had the privilege of meeting Ramsay twice a month for the last few years of his life.

Ramsay was not a well man, we knew that. In the early days we used to play cards, or draw pictures, or cover the board when they called the numbers for Bingo. He seldom uttered a word, but I shall always remember him saying to me, once

"...Have a coffee?"

And after a short pause

"...I'll pay."

To have a cup of coffee together in some small café was always the ritual when two friends met in the old days in Colombo. And it was considered good manners to offer to pay.

I'd like to believe that just for that one brief moment, Ramsay was transported to another time and place, and he had just met an old friend with whom he would share

a cuppa and a chat, and catch up on all the news.

There was no wheel-chair, no physical restraints on movement or speech and he looked at me with an intense recognition that I never saw again.

Ramsay succumbed to his illness on 29th August 2002.

Ironically, just a few days before, I was visiting Sri Lanka and spent a wonderful couple of hours at my old school Wesley College, showing my wife all the classrooms where I spent so much of my early years.

I began by suggesting that we never can tell how our lives will turn out. I quote below the last verse from a poem written by him and titled:

"A Farewell From Ramsay"

Goodbye Australia

Farewell my family and friends

Take heed of what life offers

And embrace your families

For who knows

What tomorrow may bring

George Robertson

When I Reminisc

When the Editor of the Wesley College Centenary Celebrations souvenir requested me to write a short piece reminiscent of my schooldays at Wesley, I had no alternative but to write a little about myself which has now become history. I am well aware, being a journalist, that it is unethical to do so. But I can think of no other incident which is important to me and to the college. Hence this article.

The resurrection of Wesley cricket after a lean period for almost a decade came under the leadership of Henry L Van Buren, who died a few years back. Van Buren piloted Wesley to an invincible season in 1935 which brought back Wesley to where it belonged. To carry on the good work that Van Buren had left was no easy task.

Wesley's ardent supporters of the game, well wishers and old boys, kept their fingers crossed the following year, hoping that Henry Duckworth (now in Australia) would continue with the good work. Although Van Buren's reputation of invincibility was formidable, skipper Duckworth performed something that was beyond even the great Van Buren. Wesley had never won against St Joseph's in the long cricket association of the two schools up to then.

To triumph against the Darley Road boys was a gargantuan task, especially in 1936, under the astute Josephian captaincy of Malcom Spittel, whole team that year was unbeaten. The Josephians, with victories against Royal, St Thomas' and Trinity, was a formidable combination of strength and naturally Spittel and his men were classed as firm favourites against Wesley at Darley Road.



There was drama and excitement from the first ball bowled until the last. This was expected as both teams had in their ranks some of the finest schoolboy cricketers, who later won their Ceylon “caps”. They were Spittel and Gerry Gooneratne of St Josephs and Mahadevan Sathasivam, Sella Nagendra and Ivan Walbeoff of Wesley.

Yes, in the cricket firmament that year a new star was born., He was M Sathasivam, who later established himself as the most outstanding batsman Ceylon ever produced. With Satha in brilliant batting form, with a classic century to his credit the previous week against S Thomas’, Wesley’s batting could match evenly with that of the Josephians.

This last school encounter between St Joseph’s and Wesley produced spectators of unprecedented magnitude. In fact the whole Darley Road grounds and precincts were swarming with crowds who had come to watch the “battle of the giants”. The two schools were led by first cousins Spittel and Duckworth and the scene was charged with excitement. In theory the Josephians had the edge over the Wesleyites and it was with some trepidation that Wesley took the field.

Despite the treacherous matting wicket and the scorchingly fast outfield, it was a tussle in which bowlers dominated, preventing batsmen from taking undue liberties. Even the mercurial Sathasivam, of whom everyone expected a century, failed to penetrate the tight field and the effective bowling. Strangely enough, spinners of both schools contributed to the low scoring game. Gooneratne, David Arndt and Spittel proved unplayable, while for Wesley the damage was done by the spin twins Stanley Jayasekera and Reggie Joseph.

As a fresher who opened the new ball attack for Wesley, no one took me seriously as a batsman, but it was in this game that I had the great honour of steering Wesley to victory with Walbeoff, to the tumultuous cheers of the record crowd. In this low scoring clash, the Josephians trailed the Wesleyites by a dozen runs on the first innings, with the batting and bowling honours evenly distributed.

The second day’s play evoked great interest and enthusiasm and when the last Josephian batting pair left the centre, Wesley were given a victory target of making 120 odd runs in almost even time. Against the tight Josephian attack spearheaded by Spittel, Gooneratne and Arndt, victory for Wesley was out of sight beyond the distant horizon. Wesley wickets fell at regular intervals and with Sathasivam, Duckworth, Nagendra and Emil Othen back in the pavilion , the task of winning looked remote.

The fall of the eight wicket sent me to the centre with 15 runs to make for a win in even time. At first I was nervous and trembling, as I never experienced an ordeal of this nature before. But I was consoled with the fact that Walbeoff was at the other end quite unperturbed, having been there for a considerable time.

Spittel’s first delivery whistled past my right ear and his second smacked me on the hip, leaving a dent which remains up to this day! The impact of leather on muscle and bone is something I cannot describe to this day. At the other end Walbeoff cautioned me to play a straight bat to the ball that came straight through. Later, of course, I did this with the efficiency of a veteran.

Then came the crucial moment, when a Spittel inswinger hit my bat and to my great delight the ball sped to the leg side boundary, bringing the target closer. Eleven precious runs to make in 10 minutes. The tantalising bowling of left armer Gooneratne was my next hurdle to clear.

Gooneratne, kept me quiet, although at times I swung in desperation and missed. In the meantime after a scratchy single, Walbeoff took strike and within a matter of minutes the confident Walbeoff, brought victory within striking distance, leaving me the hazardous job of facing the last over. At this stage Wesley had to make three runs with two wickets intact.

Although Spittel had ideas of shattering my stumps, I was equally confident about myself. Spittel charged down the bowling run-up with additional zest and his fatal ball, an inswinger, I despatched to the fine leg boundary, giving Wesley the much needed runs and victory – the first ever, against St Joseph’s College.

Christie Seneviratne
Late Sports Editor
“Ceylon Daily News”



Lemonade Invitation Schools sixes on Oct. 12-13

by Chris Dhambarage

The tenth annual schools invitation six a side cricket tournament organised by the Old Wesleyites Sports Club and sponsored by Ceylon Cold Stores Limited will be worked off on October 12 and 13 at the Wesley College grounds, Campbell Park.

A total of 33 teams including two international schools and three outstation teams from Jaffna, Batticaloa, Polonnaruwa/Anuradhapura will participate in this tournament. Last year a total of 28 teams participated with Royal College winning the title and De Mazenod College Kandana were the runners up. The losing semifinalists were Ananda College and Nalanda College. There will be a three member tournament committee running the tournament and their decision on any matters arising will be final. The umpires will be from the Association of Cricket Umpires. In addition the third umpire will be in action on the second day. The adjudicator will be appointed for both days.

The champions will receive the Lemonade trophy from the sponsors Ceylon Cold Stores. The runners up will receive a trophy from the Old Wesleyites Sports Club. In addition the players of the champion and the runners up teams will receive a replica each. There will be special awards to the

best batsman of the tournament, best bowler of the tournament, best fielder of the tournament and for the man of the final.

The letters have already been posted to the respective schools and their entries closed on September 26. The draw for the tournament will take place on October 1, at the Old Wesleyites Sports Club house at 6.30 p.m.

Disclaimer

Whilst every effort is made to ensure correctness, the Wesley College (Colombo) Old Boys' Union Australia Branch Inc. does not accept responsibility in whole or part for views, contributions or advertised products or services included in this publication.



NEWS FROM UK

The WCC OBU UK will be celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. The Committee under President Ananda Thevatasan is making arrangements to celebrate this occasion in a fitting manner. Our best wishes and congratulations to our brothers in the UK.

The tenth Annual Double Blue Dance will be held on the 26th October 2002 at the Renaissance Hotel Middlesex.

The festival of Cricket will be played at Shenley Cricket Centre Hertfordshire. The UK OBU has donated 800 Pounds Sterling towards a rugby coach at Wesley. Well done.

On a sad note older Wesleyites will remember Ronald Klyn, 5th Form 1949 who passed away on the 10th April 2002. Ronald was Hony Secretary of the OBU UK in 2001.

Membership rates

Full - \$12, Pensioners - \$10, *Seniors -
Voluntary
* Members over 70 years of age are to
inform the Treasurer of their age to
qualify.



MILLENNIUM CLUB

Last years Newsletter of March carried the story about the setting up of the Fund and the October issue carried details with a donation form.

We have eight member donors todate from Australia, Harold Matthysz, Trevor Collette, Nelson de Silva, Felix Berman, Ramon de Silva, Keith de Kretser of Victoria, Ivan Wijetunge of Boondal, Queensland and Gladwin Wijeratne of Hobart, Tasmania.

Extracts of last October’s article and a donor form are reproduced below for your contribution.

MILLENNIUM FUND LAUNCHED IN COLOMBO

The aim of the “Millennium Club” was to raise Rs1,000,000 that would be invested as a Fixed Deposit in the bank and the interest generated could then be used by The Principal in running the school.

Dr Louis Adhetty, in his speech at the 125th Jubilee Dinner in March 1999, stated something along the following lines *..”surely a school like Wesley College with such a long and colourful history should be able to find 200 old boys that can donate Rs5,000 to set up a fund that would generate a handsome interest to help the Principal with running the school”.*

The equivalent of Rs5,000 in Australian Dollars would be about \$125. If you wish to donate more that \$125 it is up to you. You may wish to make a donation in memory of a family member, teacher or classmate. The Wesley College (Colombo) OBU Australia Branch invites YOU to make a contribution to this worthy cause. All donations will be acknowledged and a receipt provided. Please make cheques payable to the OBU Australia Branch and ensure they are crossed “not negotiable”.

MILLENNIUM CLUB DONATION

DONOR NAME

ADDRESS

IN MEMORY OF (if applicable)

AMOUNT DONATED

