

History of the school: S. Thomas' College Bandarawela

1942

On the 20th of January St. Thomas' Preparatory School was started by Mr. W.T.Keble in Walden Place, Welimada Road, Bandarawela. He was also the founder of S. Thomas' Prep. School.

Kollupitiya. The idea of forming an up country school first entered his mind in 1929 after a visit to Nuwara Eliya, on which occasion he expressed that a school like St. Thomas' should take advantage of the amenities provided in the up country. But he felt that the cold climate of Nuwara Eliya was not suitable for an average low country boy and therefore explored the possibilities of finding a suitable site. He felt that Bandarawela would be an ideal place and set about acquiring land there. As a result, in 1942 the Bandarawela branch was started in a rented house. No sooner it was started the war in South and Asia intensified and the premises of St. Thomas' Kollupitiya was taken by Navy. This situation paved the way for Kollupitiya branch to be temporarily shifted to Bandarawela. The small rented house was not sufficient. Mr. Keble bought an empty dairy shed which was for sale in Nugegoda and transferred every bit of frame and corrugated sheets to a friend's land (Mr.

Former Headmasters

Mr. W.T. Keble (1942-1956)

Mr. V. D. Paul Raj (1957-1964)

Mr. S.L.A. Rathnayake (1964-1985)

Mr. D.B. Welikala (1985-1989)

Mr. R.R.R. Herathge (1989-2000)

In Memoriam: Staff of Yesteryear

Miss L.A.L. Blanchard

Mr. David Edirisinghe

Mr. P. B. Ratnayake

Mr. G. C. G. Peiris

H.A.J.Hulugalle's) on the Golf Links Road, Bandarawela, and erected a large shed to house the school rooms.

The entire school consisted of a Chapel, office, classrooms and tiny two-roomed apartment for Mr. and Mrs. Keble. The house built by Mr. Hulugalle was also given to be used for the school until the land for the school premises was acquired. While the school was thus going on, Mr. Keble was able to acquire 10 acres of land in the patnas nearby on a 99 year lease to put up the Headmaster's house and farm.

The school was inaugurated as St. Thomas' Preparatory School, Bandarawela.

1944

Construction work commenced. The first building of the present school was built with the help of parents and friends of Mr. Keble, who generously helped with gift of materials and donations to the building fund. Mr. D.R. Wijewardene helped to put up the building, which housed a variety of departments of the school. This building is known as Wijewardene Dormitory now. Since Mr. Keble was a great scholar he wrote two books at this time, "First Term" and "Life of James Peiris" (the latter with Deva Suriya Sena). Both these books provided funds buildings. The present Peiris Dormitory was such a building. Sir Claude and Lady Corea helped with Corea house (now Corea Dormitory). The late Mrs. P.E.P. Deraniyagala, Mr. Hayes Jayasundera and Mr. J.H. Chandrasekera along with parents were able to raise funds to put up more buildings.

1946

A open air theatre, built after the fashion of ancient Greece, was put up. This was the first of its kind built in Sri Lanka. The cost of this was contributed b two parents later this was converted to an Agricultural site.

1949

The swimming pool was constructed. Mr. Keble was the first swimming coach. Later due to the lack of water, this site was used to put up the present Edirisnghe Dormitory.

1951

Mr.Sydney Ellawala gifted the Science Room.

1954-1956

The present Upper school classrooms were built. The Headmaster's office shifted to this building.

1956

Mr. Keble and his family left the island.

1957

Mr .V.D. Paul Raj was appointed as Headmaster.

1959-1960

The Chapel of the Good Shepherd was built. Mr.Keble did the site for the Chapel and the plan but he could not start on it. It was during the time of Mr. Paul Raj that this was started and completed. In 1961 The Lord Bishop of Colombo dedicated the new Chapel.

1962

New classrooms, Sport Pavilion and the Summer House were built.

1964

Mr. Paul Raj retired and Mr. S.L.A.Rathnayake was appointed as Headmaster.

1965

The Edirisinghe Dormitory was built. In August Mr.W.T. Keble passed away in Canada.

1966

The first Parents' Day was held in school.

1967

The present office and tuck shop were built.

1968

The Keble Memorial Hall was built.

1969

The school was elevated to Junior Secondary school status from primary school school status. The present Science laboratory and classroom block were built as a result the expansion of the school.

1971

The Science laboratory and classrooms were built.

1974

The Library and Blanchard Dormitory were built.

1975

The school elevated to Senior Secondary Status.

Classes were conducted up to grade nine (9). 32 students were presented the National Certificate of General Education Examination, which was the first public examination at Senior Secondary level.

1976-1977

The old building of the school was demolished and a new upstairs building was put up. This is the present Harold De Soysa Memorial Block.

1978

The first batch of students were presented for the General Certificate of Education (O/L) examination.

1980

General Certificate of Education of Education (A/L) classes were started. A new building to accommodate the growing population of students was put up, named the Middle school Block.

1981

The name of the school was changed to S.Thomas' Collegiate school.

1982

The Indoor Stadium was built. This was later named S.L.A.Rathnayake Memorial Indoor Stadium.

1984

The Uva Battle of the Blues Big Match with St. Thomas' Gurutalawa was inaugurated. This match was abandoned in 1987 when S.T.C. Gurutalawa cancelled its Advanced Level classes.

1985

Mr.S.L.A.Rathnayake passed away. Mr.D.B.Welikala was appointed as Headmaster.

1987-1988

The Middle school Block was extended. The College compound was fenced. A stock tank with a capacity of 10,000 gallons to store water was built. The Old Boy's Association of S.T.C. Bandarawela was inaugurated.

1989

The name of the school was changed to S. Thomas' College. The College colours Crest and College Song are that of the Parent school in Mount Lavinia. Mr. D.B.Welikala retired from the post of Headmaster.the Chaplainof the school,Rev D.R.Canagasabey was appointed as acting Headmaster in February.

From May 1989 Mr. R.R.R.Herathge was appointed as Headmaster. School was in session for only 53 days due to internal disturbances in the country. Most of the buildings were repaired during this period. The play ground was done up and the entire school premises was fenced.

1990

The Colombo Branch of the S. Thomas' College Old Boy's Association was inaugurated.

1991

Construction work commenced on four (4) Staff Quarters.

1992

On 20th January the Founder's Day Thanksgiving Service and Fellowship breakfast was held.

The Golden Jubilee Commemorative Staff Quarters were also opened by the Lord Bishop of Colombo.

1993

On 21st May 1993 S. Thomas' College entered the computer age. The first ever students invoices were computerised and printed in the college.

2000

Mr. R.R.R. Herathge retired from the post of Headmaster. Mr. L.A.M. Chandarasekara was appointed as Headmaster.

2001

In May 2001 the 'Echo X' Science and Technology exhibition was conducted on the four days.

A Children's Park was constructed for the primary school children.

2002

60 years for the College on 20th January 2002. Middle school staff room was completed.

2005

Middle school science laboratory, Art room, Aesthetic Music room and Karnatic Music room were completed.

The school buildings were repaired and colour washed.