



S. Thomas' College Gurutalawa

Old Boys' Association

Newsletter No: 10/05

June 2005

Dear Members,

In our last newsletter we gave a very realistic but hopeful picture of the future of Gurutalawa. Our faith was not misplaced as we have now gone further on the road to improvement of the School of which you are the proud bearers of traditions – We shall succeed with Thomian Grit. We must.

In our last letter we outlined some action contemplated to be taken by the Board and the Committee appointed has completed most of its mandate. The urgent needs were identified and the Board of Governors gave a start by immediate personal contributions from the Board Members themselves while some Old Boys, the OBA and the OBA of Melbourne Australia have pitched in. The list /donations are attached.

Interviews for new student entrants for 2006 are in August and we must impress parents with the facilities and the ambience of the place, by that time. STC Mt. Lavinia has placed their notice for admissions in the newspapers with a reference to Gurutalawa applicants, so as to impress new applicants of the closeness of both Schools, and offer any rejects to opt for Guru.

To make an impression and attract students, we must draw to the maximum on what Guru can offer. While English & IT are 'musts', the Swimming Pool and Sports must be emphasized on, as unique to Gurutalawa. Its setting is special but the appearance has to be improved. While the Pool is a great draw, few schools in the area have a playground so readily available for field sports like athletics, cricket, football, hockey & rugby, with further land for badminton, basket ball & volleyball courts. We must build on these assets. An Indoor Court for badminton and other sports, will in addition to School use, be a source of revenue. The space is there but we must raise the Funds.

Already the U-15 Rugby team has won the Plate Prize this month and any members can see the newspaper report on our website.

In the field of IT, seven computers are in place and an Old Boy from Sweden, Dulip De Silva has already despatched 15 computers expected here by the first week of June. That void is also now filled.

The list of other needs is only a start. Much more needs be done. But now the Board of Governors, the new Headmaster, the Manager, Old Boys, the OBA have all risen to the challenge together and individual members are requested for their support before we lose the momentum, the moment of impetus. We cannot do it in fits and starts – the time is now.

As we advised you, two important decisions were taken by the Board – to raise a debenture issue for Rs.3.5 million to set off the current overdraft, and to hold a Thomian Fair jointly with Mt. Lavinia, currently scheduled for 8th., 9th., & 10th. September 2005.

The first one of the debenture issue, is over and already fully subscribed by only two parties – we cannot simply express our gratitude to them by mere words. But that is all we can say for now. It is an auspicious start. However we can, each one of us, donate our share and vindicate the act of faith of these benefactors.

The second has already kicked off – we are deeply gratified at the ready support extended to us by the OBA of Mt. Lavinia which has assumed 90% of the responsibility and allocated to us of Guru, only the specific task of bringing out the Souvenir. We must show we can shoulder our responsibility to ensure the success of the Thomian Fair by collecting the targeted Rs. 1.5 million through the Souvenir. Please get us some advertisements.

At its last Ex-Co Meeting early this month, while fully endorsing the need to help out Gurutalawa, the Mt. Lavinia OBA further agreed on sharing the proceeds with greater advantage to us. Again only our words of 'THANK YOU VERY MUCH' but they are deeply felt words with sincere appreciation.

Mr. B.R.L.Fernando, Chairman, CIC Ltd., will chair the Main Organising Committee and we have to give him our unstinted support. If expectations are met, and certainly they will be, the Fair will give Gurutalawa the much needed funds to effect improvements. The forecast is for the Fair to nett Rs.12 million of which we will get more than half. This is indeed the time when our members can all assist us further.

Our OBA has been given the special task of bringing out the Souvenir for the Thomian Fair and a small steering committee has been placed in charge. We request all members to extend their support as we cannot contact them individually, by sending us an advertisement or two, collected by them in the form we are enclosing herewith, from any advertisers they know. Since Mt. Lavinia is doing so much, we must rise to the occasion by raising Rs.1.5 million on the Souvenir, and which is our main responsibility. With the proceeds of our share of the Fair, the improvements in the desired fields will be undertaken to make Gurutalawa a school that children will want to enter. This can be done. We have done all we could – now the individual members must rise to the occasion and open their purse strings without hesitation to send in their donation without delay. We thank those who have done this already. To make this easy, a donation form is enclosed for you to fill & return.

We are very grateful to the OBA of Melbourne, Australia for their very sizeable contribution of \$.1637.12 and we hope the other overseas members & OBA's abroad will help us too. After all 200.- dhrs or 100.- pds is a small amount to each of you but very big sum for us in Rupees.

We are also grateful for many who sent us their contributions within the range of Rs.5000.- to Rs.10,000.- but a special 'Thank You' to Mr.M.D.M.Vazeer for undertaking the upgrading of the Junior dormitory toilets for Rs.200,000.- and the Board members for their very valuable support.

Please do not let this moment slip away – a moment when all from the Board of Governors down are making a valiant effort to go forward. Your help will take it further ahead.

Please heed the request of our President and Headmaster, Mr. E.C.J.Canagasabey, in page 3.

Ed.

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Members views are much appreciated. Please write in or e.mail your comments/suggestions to:

Secretary : 78/2 Kumaragewatte, Pelawatte, Battaramulla OR Senior VP : 9-1/1 Bullers Lane, Colombo 7.

E.Mail : supuman@sltnet.lk

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

As you know, it is now eight months since I undertook the task of being Headmaster of this prestigious institution and it was indeed a challenge to us to address the problems, which we will overcome by intense hard work and the grace of God. **For this task, we need the unstinted support of all the Old Boys and I earnestly hope that they will rally round the Board of Governors and the College, to resuscitate the School to its past glory.**

In the short time I have been here, we have identified the areas of concern to us all, and, where ever possible, within the constraints of the financial position, improvements have been effected. Discipline has been tightened and accent has been placed on sports. Proper supervision of the students is maintained, guidance to the students has been given regularly so that there is a considerable change in the attitude of the students, resulting in the building up of character and moulding them into good citizens. Quality of food has improved and the students sit at table in one sitting and eat with spoon & fork. I invite all old boys to come to Gurutalawa and see the difference. There is a sense of expectation.

The School has started cultivation of the areas that were earlier alienated to the minor staff, as a part of the Farm Activities. Goats and ducks that give good returns without any extra feeding costs, have been introduced. Milch Cows are a gift of our Old Boys, beneficial especially to the underprivileged and malnourished as a source of rich nutrients. Introduction of Turkeys/Poults too would meet the market demand of the neighbouring hotels without any feed cost.

We have to increase the student numbers by at least another 35% as soon as possible in order to make the school financially viable. It is not possible to decrease the Staff without further financial inputs for a voluntary retirement scheme, so that the other alternative is to increase the student numbers. For that, we have to make the School attractive enough to get students. At all times, ours is essentially a boarding school., and the only way is to improve the infrastructure, provide better boarding facilities and give quality education. This means of course, the accent has to be on English and Information Technology.

A definite effort is being made in these two areas & the IT unit is a reality already with 6 computers, and fifteen more computers will arrive by end June. The Campus is being surveyed presently and fencing will be done for which funds have been earmarked.

The Board of Governors and the OBA and all others interested in the school have met and devised ways and means to move ahead. Mt. Lavinia, Kollupitiya & Bandarawela are helping us as well. They have all made personal contributions to kick off the rehabilitation. But for these to succeed, each and every one of the old boys must give a helping hand in this hour of need in whatever way possible, in cash or kind. I am sure everyone of you will not hesitate for the sake of your Alma Mater, to dip deep into the pocket – to the furthest end.

The School and the Old Boys are one family. Let us treat the School that gave you so much when you were young, as your Father and remember that when the Father is old and in need, our Eastern Culture always stressed that your bounden duty was to help our parents. In turn, you will have a school to be proud again, I assure you. **You have my word that I will be doing my best. I hope that you all will do your best too.** The presence of Old Boys and Well-wishers at the College, is a source of inspiration and moral support to me and my TEAM.

Together **E**veryone **A**nd **M**ove.

Esto Perpetua.



E..G.J.Canagasabey
Headmaster & President, STC(G) OBA..
31 May 2005

S. Thomas' College, Gurutalawa
Urgent Infrastructure Needs

	Description of Item	Budget estimate	Funded by	Remarks
01	Restructuring new Kitchen / Stores	Rs. 150,000/-	Some Old Boys	P.H. De Silva & others
02	Swimming Pool - More Urgent repairs	Rs. 98,000/-	Vijitha F'do & the OBA (Australia)	Vijitha Fdo Rs.30,000/- OBA (Aus) Rs.75,474/31
03	Upgrade – Keble dorm toilets	Rs. 62,990/-	OBA	Funding OK
04	Upgrade + Add extra toilets Junior dorms	Rs. 256,250/-	M.D.M. Vazeer	Funding OK
05	Upgrade Senior dorm toilets	Rs. 67,500/-	An Old Boy	*These items expected to
06	Upgrate night toilets Senior+Junior dorms	Rs. 16,000/-	...ditto...	*be financed from funds
07	Main Office Toilet (fittings in hand)	Rs. 17,500/-	...ditto...	*sent by Mr Kapila G .
08	Upgrade Staff Toilets Senior classrooms	Rs. 73,000/-	Lord Bishop	Funding OK
09	Upgrade Visitors toilet Canon Foster Hall	Rs. 10,500/-	OBA	Funding OK
10	Renovate 3 Toilets – HM's Bungalow	Rs. 65,000/-	Archdeacon	Funding OK
11	Mesh covering for Water Tanks	Rs. 1,000/-	An Old Boy	Funding OK
12	Roof Repairs Keble dorms & classrooms	Rs. 72,400/-	Sunil Pieris	Funding OK
13	Roof Repairs Junior dorms	Rs. 35,000/-	Mano Gnanaraj	Funding OK
14	Roof Repairs Senior dorms	Rs. 35,000/-	HM Kollupitiya	Funding OK
15	Roof Repairs Senior classrooms	Rs. 43,750/-	Prof. Priyan Dias	Funding OK
16	Fencing of Campus Premises	Rs. 453,125/-	Prof G L Pieris & Aritha Wickremanayake	Funding OK
17	Fencing College Playground	Rs. 38,750/-	HM Bandarawela	Funding OK
18	Painting College Buildings	Rs. 135,000/-	Rajan Asirwatham	Funding OK
19	Capital Inputs – Farm improvement	Rs. 191,500/-	Jayantha Hanthi Hon.N.Mathew	Rs.105,000/- 5 Cows rebated price
20	Swimming Pool - stop leaks, tiling, machinery overhaul	Rs. 500,000/-		Funding required
21	Refurbish Staff Quarters & HM's B'low	Rs. 590,000/-		Funding required
22	New Vestments & Refurbish Chapel	Rs. 49,058/-	OBA (Australia)	Funding OK
23	15 Computers	gifted	Dulip De Silva	Shipment ETA 5 June
24	12 Nos. Fluorescent lights for Prep Area	Rs. 10,500/-	OBA	Funding OK
25	Indoor Sports Court	Rs. 2 million		Funding required

- A donation of US\$.2200 sent by Mr. Kapila Gunawardena from USA is very much appreciated and the funds will be applied to those items stated above and shortfalls in other areas after obtaining his concurrence.

DONATION TO THE OBA.

Herewith is my donation to the OBA to assist you to revive the School.

Amount: Rs.....

My cheque No: fromBank is enclosed.

Name :.....

Address:

.....

Date:.....

Signature

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE SOUVENIR OR BANNER FOR THOMIAN FAIR – SEPT 2005.

I am able to get you an advertisement/s – a banner as below :

(An Advertisement is Rs. 10,000/- per single page - black & white. A Banner is Rs.7500.-)

1. Name of Company:.....

Address:

2. Name of Company:.....

Address:.....

I will be responsible to collect the material and hand it over to the Souvenir Committee and ensure collection of payment before / after publication. (delete: 'before' or 'after').

Name of Member :.....

Address:.....

Contact Telephone No:.....Date:Signature

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Post to: **S. Thomas' College, Gurutalawa OBA, c/o :
9 - 1/1 Bullers Lane, Colombo 7 OR : 78/2 Kumaragewatte, Pelawatte, Battaramulla.**

