

# DOUBLE BLUE BULLETIN

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

2004

ISSUE 1

## Message from the President

This message is the last one as President of the current committee, as the Annual General Meeting is scheduled for the end of March. However it is also the first one for the year 2004. It therefore raises the question should we look back and reflect on the year that was or look ahead to the New Year?

However we need to look both at the achievements and shortcomings of the past year and to use this experience to plan for the New Year and assist the new Committee embark on 2004.

We have had a successful year with the Dinner Dance once again proving to be one of the best in Melbourne. The "club nights" were also extremely popular and continue to provide the members an opportunity to meet and enjoy an evening out with friends and guests, while reminiscing with schoolmates. The "seniors" get together was an opportunity for the Association to fete the senior members and their partners and the night turned out to be a memorable one with great fellowship and a session of sing-along commencing with traditional carols and ending with nostalgic tunes of yesteryear. The Newsletter was sent out four times and provided excellent reading and news to all members.

The proposed trip to Sydney did not materialise due to our inability to agree on mutually convenient dates with our colleagues in NSW. The cricket quadrangular too was not held due to the fourth team pulling out at the last moment.

The success we have had in the past year has been due to an excellent team effort by all members of the committee and the support from the members who helped in numerous ways.

Our thanks to the membership for their participation and

encouragement, which made the hard work of the committee worthwhile.

I was sent an email message sometime ago, an extract of which I think worth sharing with our members:-

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like the following:

There would be:

- 57 Asians
- 21 Europeans
- 14 from the Western Hemisphere, both north and south
- 8 Africans

- 6 people would possess 59% of the entire world's wealth
- 80 would live in substandard housing
- 70 would be unable to read
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- 1 would be near death; 1 would be near birth
- 1 (yes, only 1) would have a college education
- 1 would own a computer

When one considers our world from such a compressed perspective, the need for acceptance, understanding and education becomes glaringly apparent.

### *Remember.....*

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep..... you are richer than 70% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace ..... you are among the top 8% of the worlds wealthy.

ORA ET LABORARE.....Trevor Collette

## Editorial.....

As the year 2004 unrolls like a red carpet before us, may I wish you all and your families a successful journey through the months ahead and also that you will tread purposefully through each new day until you achieve whatever goal you set yourself.

I went to the Oxford Dictionary for the meanings of words like "Birth", "Begin" and "Success" plus a few others for a way to express my wishes to you and the first paragraph is a composite of them all. I also came across two quotations; let me share one with you –

"Don't be afraid your life will end, be afraid that it will never begin".

This was written by a lady named Grace Hansen, who, I believe, is a grandmother.

So it is not too late to add a new dimension to our days, to be driven by a sense of purpose well beyond the daily tasks of domesticity. I reject such words as "Resolution" or promises "To give up gambling" or "To drink less". These are good and worthy intentions, but I refer to other more vital issues.

Let us try, by our actions, each of us to do some good right where we live in our own little corner of this wonderful world in which we all see out our days.

So let's kick off 2004 to a new start and begin to really come alive.

I hasten to express my respect and acknowledge the example of all those Old Boys whose lives are an inspiration to us all; it is not my intention to address any particular person or group. I wish you all the very best that life has to offer, this year and always.

I said I came across two quotations, here's the other one –

"It is not what men eat, but what they digest that makes them strong; not what we gain, but what we give that makes us rich, not what we read, but what we remember that makes us learned".....(unknown)

*....Be Happy....*

- Editor -



A new look at old BOOKS.....

## "THOSE LONG AFTERNOONS" Childhood in Colonial Ceylon

by E.F.C. Ludowyk

This is a gentle, beautifully written work in which the author describes what it was like to grow up in Ceylon in the early years of the twentieth century.

With chapters devoted to life with his grandmother, parents, brothers and sisters and as a boy raised in the structured society in Galle where he was born, he provides us with glimpses of early history and a very different time in Sri Lanka when the pace of life was much slower than it is today. And yet the book has much more than all this.

Evelyn Frederick Charles Ludowyk was born in 1906 and died in Colchester, England in 1985. After completing his studies at Cambridge University he returned to Ceylon and became the first Ceylonese Professor of English at the (then) University College, Colombo.

He is remembered as a teacher, scholar and author of many critical essays and reviews, plus his three major works on the history and culture of Sri Lanka.

"Those long afternoons" was written in the last years of his life and was published after his death in the land of his birth, in accordance with his wishes. The book was published in 1989.

It is a work that will appeal to all ages, but especially to those whose memories span a bygone era.

- Highly recommended -

- Editor -



### Your views/Ideas

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

## *Holiday Snapshots # 1*

I saw this old man when we stopped the car to buy some souvenirs, somewhere near Avisawella. I spoke to him in Sinhalese, and he replied in very good English. He told me he was eighty five years old and could not work anymore because he was losing his sight.

“What work did you do?”

He said he used to weave fishermen’s hats out of coconut leaves. He showed me some that he had made, not many, maybe less than a dozen.

“I can only do this now”, he said, softly, almost as if he was talking to himself.

We spoke for awhile. He had five daughters, he said, all left home – gone to Colombo.

“Where do you live now?”

He said he and his wife lived in a small hut in the village, not far.

I told him that my wife and I also were born here, and had returned to visit the places where we used to live, and the schools we went to, and to meet old friends.

As we talked, three small children, two girls and a boy moved closer to the old man so he could reach out and put his arms around their shoulders.

“Your grandchildren?”

He said they were the children of the village, sometimes they stayed with him for part of the day.

“They are my friends”. He placed his hand on the head of the boy.

We talked a little while longer until it was time to leave. I wished the old man good luck and said goodbye.

“Goodbye, Sir”

“Please do not call me ‘Sir’” –

Later I looked back and saw the old man; he had stepped out on to the street and was looking in the direction we had gone. His hand was raised over his head to shield his eyes from the sun but I do not think that he could see us.

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## *Holiday Snapshots # 2*

My wife Beryl and I had returned to Sri Lanka for the first time since we had emigrated to Australia almost forty year ago.

We visited the homes where our parents used to live, attended Sunday Service at the Church where we were married and went to the guesthouse in Bandarawela where I used to accompany Mum and Dad for holidays up-country. I walked with Beryl to the tennis court and showed her where I had carved her name on the side of the hill when I was a young boy. Now, half a century later, we were there as an old married couple, Grandparents, even!

I met and spoke with many people, in the villages, in the towns and city shops. They were warm and friendly and genuinely pleased to meet us. It seemed as if we were traveling back in space and time, back to places that remained almost exactly as they were then. Only we had grown older.

The gentle swell of the Indian Ocean was still as I remembered it.

### Wesley College

How can I find words to describe the emotions I felt when I walked into my old school? So many memories came flooding back. Here was my first classroom, with Mr. C S Fonseka teaching us the names of all the stops on the Trans-Siberian railway... “Chito”, “Harbin”, “OMSK”, “TOMSK” – all the way to Vladivostok. Mr. J E de Zylwa the Scout Master teaching us First Aid, Mr. Canagaretnam, English Lit., Teacher, Principals Mr. James Cartman and Cedric Oorloff; the Inter-House Drama competitions (I was in Moscrop).

I walked into the last classroom I was in, upstairs, climbing wooden steps that had been worn thin by a million schoolboy feet, unaware that they were treading the stepping stones to the future.

I entered the dormitory where we used to sleep when I was in Boarding School. My bed was right next to the open doorway and whenever it rained I got wet from the spray. The Dining Room is still the same. Harry Potter doesn’t know how lucky he is. Memories of Mrs. Hindle, the Matron came flooding back.

And of course, there was the inevitable meeting with Marshall, who, along with Ranis the Bell-ringer, was

one of the unforgettable characters of my early school days.

There was so much to remember here over 50 years, events and people we had known and loved, respected and even feared.

Beryl joined Wesley College even before I did, in the days when the early Kindergarten years included boys and GIRLS! She was by my side as we visited the College on this trip and related her own memories of early days there, and paused to examine the classroom that she had occupied.

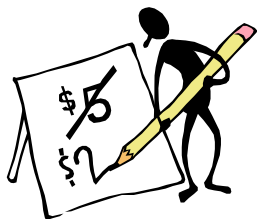
We spoke of her recollections of Miss Iris Blacker and Mrs. Lembruggen who were her teachers, in those days of youth and wonder.

I wish I'd met her then, but I had to wait a few more years for that to happen.

What we all are today, the moulding of each one of us, physically and emotionally, this is where it all began.

A tiny island in the Indian Ocean, sometimes called Paradise.

George Robertson



### *Dates to Remember:*

**2004** 28 February - **Curry Night**

21 March - **AGM**

(Notice and Nomination Form – refer last page)

### **All correspondence should be sent to:**

The Editor  
Double Blue Bulletin  
Box 123 Glenway MDC  
Mulgrave 3170  
VICTORIA - AUSTRALIA



The President, Committee and members of the Wesley College (Colombo) OBU extend their warmest congratulations and all good wishes to:

### **Peggy and Douglas MACK**

On the occasion of their  
50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary  
on 26 December 2003



and to

### **Harry de Vos**

On his 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2004.



### **Your Committee 2003**

<b>President</b>	Trevor Collette Tel: (03) 9706 1084
<b>Vice President</b>	Bryan Wijeyekoon Tel: 0409 554 582
<b>Hony Secretary</b>	Dayantha Makalanda Tel: (03) 9407 9416
<b>Treasurer</b>	Kenneth Mahamooth Tel: (03) 8707 2897
<b>Editor</b>	George Robertson Tel: (03) 9782 4789
<b>Committee</b>	Reg Bartholomeusz Tel: (03) 9949 3141 Rodney de Kretser Tel: (03) 9848 4623 Daryl Koch Tel: (03) 9408 7300 Keith Rozairo Tel: 0419 312 849

**Postal Address** Box 123 Glenways MDC  
Mulgrave 3170

**Email** [obua@wesleycollege.org](mailto:obua@wesleycollege.org)  
**Website** [www.wesleycollege.org](http://www.wesleycollege.org)

## L.A.Fernando - Remembered by Dr.N.D.Amerasekera



I first met Mr.Lancelot Aelian Fernando when I joined the boarding in January 1950. "Laffa" was a bright eyed lad from Moratuwa with a wicked grin and a bucketful of enthusiasm. He was amply blessed by the Methodist Saints for high office. He was the Senior Hostel Master and a father figure to the hostellers.

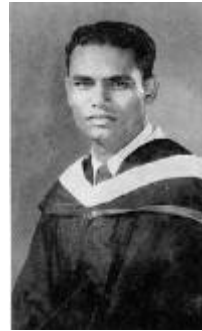
Laffa as he was known was kind and compassionate and knew us all by our nicknames, mostly of his own creation. He maintained strict discipline but rarely caned us and as I recall we were a very happy bunch. Laffa was fiercely loyal to the Hostel and Moscrop House and he was always there for the interhouse matches to cheer the boys. At the school cricket matches he was a cheer leader gathering the troops to sing baila and other limericks supporting the players. I recall he was a devout Christian and a lay preacher. As kids we loved to hear him deliver the Sermon at the hostel Chapel or Maradana Methodist Church for his great mastery of the art of story telling. Be it the story of the Prodigal son or Feeding the 5000 he brought them to life by his superb narrations. I have always remembered his story of the famous painting of Albrecht Durer "The Praying Hands". We were taken by him to the "pictures" in large groups to see "The Robe", "Samson and Delilah" "Demetrius and the Gladiators" "Quo Vadis"and many others. The whole hostel went with him to see these films.

At Assembly he enjoyed singing the school song before cricket matches and Hymns from the famous Wesley College Hymnal (sold for Rs.4.50 at the school bookshop). I seem to associate LAF with the Hymn "When I survey the wondrous Cross". Its lovely poignant lyrics and the lilting melody always takes me back to the Assembly hall with 500 students voices echoing and seemingly lifting the roof.

He immersed himself fully in whatever he did, sports, academic or extracurricular activities - an extrovert and a tremendously ebullient person. We knew it when he was around as he took over the affairs and directed the proceedings. Lafa urged the students to achieve what they didn't think they could. He provided pastoral care to those in trouble, financial or otherwise. Towards the end of his school career he had an old hostellers get together to meet all those who had been with him right at the beginning. It was a massive gathering and a fun day for all.

As the years rolled on I remember how sad we were to see him leave for further studies in the USA. A few years after his return he married Nalini De Mel (JLF's daughter) and became the Vice Principal of the school occupying the Bungalow opposite the Principal's residence. He had an open house for all boarders. I still remember his

classical music appreciation classes at the Vice Principals bungalow when he played the vinyl micro groove records he had brought from the USA. When I hear Mozarts - Eine Kleine Nacht Music it still reminds me of those happy times. Meanwhile I left the boarding in 1958 and Laffa became our Chemistry teacher. He was a good conscientious teacher and prepared us well for the examinations. He had the rare gift to teach to remember facts and I would call him a gifted guru born to teach. His didactic teaching manner suited students well. The most remarkable feature of his teaching was the attention he paid to those who were less able, always encouraging them to do better. L.A.Fernando taught us Organic Chemistry for A-levels to give us a superb grounding in the subject. I last met him when he personally brought my University Entrance results for entry to Medical College. He was just ecstatic, happier than me. He took great personal pride in our success, a sign of a great teacher. This great trait seems to be lacking in education now.



Though very much loved by the students, controversy followed him and he left Wesley to join the US Educational Foundation (USEF) in 1968. It was a sad loss for the school. The unhappiness in his personal life took its toll and the inner peace seemed to elude him. I was deeply saddened to hear Mr.L.A.Fernando died in 1986 at the relatively young age of 63 when he should have enjoyed his retirement in the company of old boys who were eternally grateful to him. I owe him a great debt of gratitude for the encouragement he gave me to fulfil my dreams for the future. It fills my heart with sadness not to have seen him as the Principal of Wesley which perhaps was his dream. My inability to see him after I qualified to recount the good times and pay my respects will remain with me as a matter of great regret. Even now he seems indestructible. His photo brings him back to life and his voice seems to echo in the background. He was so much a part of Wesley during my time that even after the passage of 15 years since his death it is difficult to believe he is no more. Despite the problems of his later years at Wesley he remains one of the great icons of my time.

Mr.L.A.Fernando brought to the school, the boarding, the classroom and his life as a Vice Principal a regal grandness of purpose and possibility. All of those who knew him were lifted by it, and there are many. We are greatly indebted to

him. We will miss him for many more years to come. I was deeply distressed to hear of his troubled life towards the end.

Teacher, Philosopher, Preacher and Raconteur

He had confidence in my ability when I had doubts:

He was one of the finest all round teachers of my time.

GRANT HIM O LORD ETERNAL PEACE

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## *SENIORS" NIGHT - 2003*

My contribution is a simple, but indeed most sincere expression of gratitude, not just for a truly happy evening but, as importantly, an acknowledgement of the fact that we, the Seniors of our Old Boys' Association, are ever remembered. President Trevor Collette and his Committee, assisted by wives and partners, spared no effort in ensuring that Sunday 14 December 2003, was undoubtedly an occasion to remember – a hall with tasteful Festive-Season décor, dining tables beautifully laid out, a "Welcome Gift" for each lady, an excellent smorgasboard of turkey and other choice Christmas fare, tasty and well presented by the popular Susy's Caterers. The 'Boys' too were not forgotten at the drinks table!

After dinner we were entertained to a time of much-appreciated and well-known music, provided by the accomplished and versatile Ms Cleonie Jordan on her keyboard. This time of musical refreshment developed into a sing-a-long of Christmas Carols and old-time favorites with everyone joining in – most enjoyable and much appreciated – and of course the College Song.

It was a pity that a few of our Seniors who normally attend our Old Boys' Association functions were unable to be with us and we want them to know that they were missed.

As one who attended this most enjoyable occasion with my fellow-seniors and their wives and partners, it would be seriously remiss of me if I ended my contribution without thanking our President, Trevor Collette and his Committee and also in spirit, our previous Presidents and Committees in Office, for their genuine efforts in resolutely upholding the traditions of our loved WESLEY COLLEGE OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION. Gentlemen, we ALL thank you.

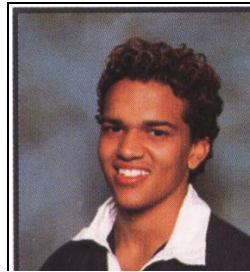
Langston Joseph

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## *Sports Section...*



Victorian Schools' Rugby  
UK, Ireland and Sri Lanka Tour - 2003



De KRETSER, Stuart

Stuart began playing rugby with the Box Hill Rugby Club when he was 11 years old. He captained the Under 12's in 2001 to win the flag and was awarded the "Player of the Year". He was the vice captain of the Under 13's last year that tied in the Grand Final. He is the captain of the Under 15's this year and is the leader of the forwards. He has represented the State of Victoria since he was twelve. He also enjoys playing cricket and swimming. He hopes to play Rugby at a high level in the future and to be a Physiotherapist.

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I was invited by the Editor to submit a brief article on my visit to Sri Lanka. The Victorian Under 16 Schoolboys Tour of Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom and Ireland kicked off on the 28<sup>th</sup> November with us departing Melbourne airport for a flight to Sri Lanka (S.L.). We arrived in S.L. in the early hours of the morning. On arrival we went straight to our hotel the Trans Asia for a short sleep. When we woke up it was breakfast and I was looking forward to eating string hoppers which I did. After a loosening up session in the pool we boarded the bus to go to Royal College Stadium to take on Isipathana and Royal Colleges. We defeated both teams Isipathana 33 -28 and Royal 17 – 0 and later attended an after match function at Royal College. The local students were friendly and pleased to meet us and some came back to the hotel to be with us.

The following day we got up early for the trip up to Kandy via Pinnawela. The boys enjoyed the Elephant Orphanage with most touching and riding them for the first time. The boys said goodbye to the elephants and we jumped on the bus once more for the trip to Kandy. We arrived at Hotel Suisse only to drop our bags off and get changed to go straight to the grounds for our next game against Trinity College at Pallekele Stadium in the middle of the jungle. Playing at a ground of so much beauty was a

delight to all players and spectators with the team. The game kicked off and it was a great standard of rugby with the Vics only winning by one point with a converted try on the whistle 19-18. The showers were turned on and the boys cleaned themselves up for the after match function at Trinity. After the function we headed back to the hotel and a good sleep was well earned after the days events.

The following morning we got up early once more to see what Kandy is known for, The Temple of the Tooth. The gold statues amazed the tour group, the paintings caught the eye of the art lover and the monkeys entertained the hands-on type. We had lots of fun and all our films were used up. Sadly it all had to end as we had to make our way back to Colombo for the long awaited game against the Wesleyites. Running on to the pitch to play basically my own school because I was brought up helping Dad at OBU Dinner Dances, Cricket matches and everything else. It was instilled in me from my early years what Wesley College was all about. It was a great feat for not just me but for my father as he couldn't believe that his youngest son was playing his old school. Unfortunately Wesley were the victors 14 -12 and I will never forget that the Vics did lose to the Wesleyites. The Wesleyites played it clean and hard but in the spirit of sportsmanship. A stark contrast to the game against Trinity which saw the hosts resort to foul play on many occasions. The Prefect of Games - Mr Kenneth de Silva, the Rugby Master – Mr Mayadunne and the boys made it a point to give me a special welcome and lots of Dad's mates like Tyronne Maye and other old boys made me feel very much at home. I was last there in 1999 for Wesley's 125<sup>th</sup> Jubilee celebrations with my Dad and this match was a special game for me.

Following the game was a trip to House of Fashion for 2 hours of shopping and relaxation. The boys got a great buzz from buying designer label garments really cheap. We later attended a formal dinner hosted by a prominent businessman. He turned on a grand show at his home with full waiter service and a band in attendance. Later that evening we went back to the hotel to pack and the circus was on its way to another site, the Colombo International Airport. We boarded the flight to England via Singapore and everyone caught up on a good sleep.

There were many other memorable moments on the Sri Lankan leg of the tour. I enjoyed the local food as I had to be without a curry or my favourite Lankan food for twenty two more days till I returned home on Christmas Eve. Playing Rugby in the Lankan weather was an experience. Hard grounds, monsoon rain and 100% humidity made life tough for all the tourists as it was sticky and physically exhausting. Another notable feature was the bus driver on the tour who was like a Rally Driver weaving in and out of the traffic and humanity to

the amazement of all of us. The boys cheered him on as he raced around Colombo and on our trip to Kandy. Most to the team did not dare to try the local food for fear of an upset tummy before the main leg of the tour to the U.K. and Ireland began. However, the Vics reckon that Sri Lanka makes the best Omelettes in the world. We were all impressed with the Sri Lankan hospitality and friendliness. I had a great time.

Stuart de Kretser

## 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



## E-mail.....

All members who prefer to receive OBU correspondence by email are invited to inform the Web Editor on [obua@wesleycollege.org](mailto:obua@wesleycollege.org). Your email address will then be included on our membership data.

This means that future OBU Bulletins will also be sent to you email, not by POST.

Your co-operation is appreciated.

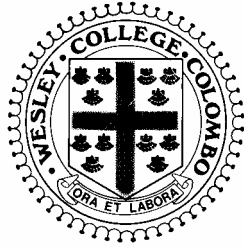
- Web Editor -

### Membership rates

**Full - \$12, Pensioners - \$10,**

**\*Seniors - Voluntary**

**\* Members over 70 years of age are to inform the Treasurer of their age to qualify.**



**WESLEY COLLEGE (COLOMBO) OLD BOYS' UNION AUSTRALIA BRANCH INC**

PO Box 123, Mulgrave, Victoria 3170

**Preliminary Notice of Annual General Meeting**

Pursuant to Section 8 of the Constitution of the Wesley College (Colombo) Old Boys' Union Australia Branch Inc., I, Dayantha Makalanda, Secretary of the above Association, hereby give notice of the Annual General Meeting for 2004.

- 1. Venue: The B.A. Hall, 358, Haughton Road, Clayton. (Melway Ref 79 B2)
- Date: Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2004.
- Time: 7:00pm

The meeting will be followed by an informal get together – dinner will be provided.

- 2. Nomination for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor and four General Committee positions are called for on the attached form.
- 3. Please forward any motions to be tabled at the above Annual General Meeting in writing. The motion should have a Proposer and Seconder who should be a financial member in 2003.
- 4. All duly completed nomination forms and motions should reach the Secretary by Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2004. Please address all correspondence to PO Box 123, Mulgrave 3170.

Dayantha Makalanda  
Secretary

**NOMINATION FORM**

WESLEY COLLEGE (COLOMBO) OLD BOYS' UNION AUSTRALIA BRANCH INCORPORATED

Position .....

Name of Nominee ..... Signature .....

Proposer ..... Signature .....

Seconder ..... Signature .....

Date ...../...../.....

***NB: Only Members who are financial in 2003 can be nominated. The Proposer, Seconder and those eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting must be financial members in 2003.***

Date received: ...../...../.....