

# The Wesley Times



NEWSLETTER OF WESLEY COLLEGE COLOMBO OLD BOYS UNION AUSTRALIA BRANCH  
Summer Edition 2019

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members

It has been a delight to serve you as President in 2019. I would not claim to be the greatest Administrator but with an enthusiastic and young team the OBUA will continue to look after the members as in previous years. Most of the senior members of the former Committee decided to step down and I express my sincere thanks to Bryan Wijeyekoon, Norton Abeydeera, Darryl Koch, Ben Nathanielsz, Duminda Nissanka and Rienzie Mahamooth. Bryan and Darryl kindly accepted to continue to attend Committee meetings in a non-voting role to assist and guide the young Committee and me.

The OBUA donated funds to refurbish the furniture in two classrooms (34 desks and chairs X 2). We have funded four classrooms in total.

I apologies for this being the only newsletter for the year as our Editor has had a number of medical issues to deal with. He is back at his desk and has put together this issue.

I take this opportunity to wish every member and their families a blessed Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Ora et Labora

*Granville Norton*

## In this issue

From the Editor's Desk	2
OBUA Committee	2
Photos of Committee	3
Message from the Principal	4
Melbourne Round-up	7
Dates for your Diary	9
OBU NSW Report	10
The Justinians	12
News from Sri Lanka	13
<u>Features</u>	
Neville Koch	22
Monroe Reimers	23
Can you help?	24
Obituaries 2019	25
<u>Tributes</u>	
Neil Gallagher	26
Nirmali Fernando	28
Photo Gallery	30



## *From the Editor's desk*

Since the last newsletter the OBUA has a new President and new young Committee. I am the only old f\*\*\* on the Committee. It is a young team who will carry the flame with new ideas and with more enthusiasm. We must support them and all credit to them for a great job done so far.

I apologise for this being the only newsletter this year. However we have had a full program during the year and the inaugural Founder's Day Service was a great success. Thanks to Rushan Hewawasam a distinguished scholar and musician who prepared the Order of Service and prepared the arrangements and conducted for the Choir.

All the other events were well attended and the most pleasing feature was the increase in the younger alumni who are living in Melbourne that attend.

The Secretary has developed a quick way to register your details on a register of Old Wesleyites. It will only take five minutes to complete. We often get requests from around the world seeking to make contact with former classmates. So I urge you to register. The link is

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd8i-L1YBo9a3vjGdZCV\\_i1HlyL3laAlPwnGiKJf9p6QQPqWQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd8i-L1YBo9a3vjGdZCV_i1HlyL3laAlPwnGiKJf9p6QQPqWQ/viewform)

I hope to produce more news to the members in the new year.

Warmest regards

Keith de Kretser

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## Executive Committee 2019



**Granville Norton**  
President



**Faizal Deva**  
Vice President



**Seyad Azmaan**  
Secretary



**Anupama Wadugodapitiya**  
Treasurer



**Rushan Hewawasam**



**Keith De Kretser**  
Editor



**Khaleeq Jayah**



**Joel Oorloff**



**Ravi Mataraarachchige**



# Message from the Principal

**Mr Avanka Fernando**

**To the Old Boys' Union of Wesley College - Worldwide!**

Dear Friends,

Greetings from your Alma-Mater!

I have great pleasure in being touch with you through this e-mail which will give you an overall view of the College at a glance.

The place where you were moulded into what you are today, still stands forth, equipping many generations who have been placed in its care. The sole expectation of the College is that these young men who are still passing through the corridors of Wesley College will one day become matured men who would be great leaders and serve the society in a significant manner while being embedded with rich values.

Wesley has been continuously striving towards providing quality education to its students and has taken all possible initiatives to achieve this goal. Being in line with the vision of the College which is 'To be the premier Christian secondary educational institute and to provide men of stature and integrity to be leaders in the technologically advancing environment', and realizing the overwhelming power of the virtual world which is moving towards computer generated sphere, we envisaged a plan on providing an excellent foundation in IT so that it's students become more independent and all set to face the competitive world.

In our journey of producing young men of caliber, Wesley College has leaped great heights by the grace of God and the genuine concern and partnership of few of the Old Boys Unions who have voluntarily extended their support whenever a need arose.

As an initial step of our journey towards equipping the Wesley Community (both teachers and students), Smart boards / Interactive boards were introduced to a few classes. On realizing the level of enthusiasm of the children and the interest of the academic staff, we felt the need to install a Smart Board in each class. At present more than 30 of our classrooms are equipped with Smart Boards including the Senior Computer lab, Resource rooms, Conference room and all the A/L Science classes.

Our deepest gratitude goes out to the OBU in Sri Lanka, UK, Qatar, the various batches and individuals, for partnering with us in this project. We are certain that this initiative would provide students with an enriched learning experience by projecting visual elements.

Another significant phase of partnership was when the OBU decided to organize the 'Double Blue Classics' – an evening of Music with renowned artists, in order to raise funds for the Smart Board Project.

Among the innumerable support we have received and continue to receive from the OBU, I wish to highlight a few which include the wooden furniture project. The old furniture which was being used for many years have now been replaced with new furniture. At present both the A/L and O/L sections

have been fully furnished, and steps are taken to furnish the classes in the Grade 8 & 9 section & also one classroom each from the Primary Schools at both Havelock Town & Tampola.

The need for a proper reading / resource room for our Primary School at Havelock Town has been existing for quite some time. With nearly 800 number of primary students who have been entrusted to our care to provide an appropriate environment which is conducive to learning, giving them the facility to learn and grow is purely ours. My gratitude to the President of the OBU Sri Lanka and many other Old boys who went the extra mile to contribute books and other materials towards the Reading / Resource room which has a new look with books to read and bean bags to relax while reading. Another step in the sphere of development was the refurbishing / renovation of the Chemistry Lab. Once again it is the faithful old boys who came up and extended their voluntary support to make this a reality.

The next phase was the Sick Room project. With nearly 2,100 boys in Borella, a sick room was a 'most needed' part in the College. It was a delight to see so many faces walking into the College with donations of beds, other equipment / furniture & medicine. At times though I was not present in College they ensured that everything was put in its place and that the room was in a proper condition with a nurse to assist.

Development has no borders when it is commenced and I am able to witness it at my own Alma-Mater. It was just the walls which were to be painted and some patch up work to be done but at present the entire College has taken on a new look with fences separating the paths, direction boards, and the stone embedded front wall which are admired and appreciated by our own old boys and the parents as well. It must be mentioned that this was done simply by an individual but with the immense support we received from the Old Boys by means of donations and ideas. Our gratitude to the ones who have assisted the College in their own areas of expertise such as the support we received from dialog for sending instant sms, the LED Television, Career guidance and including Internet related assistance. Cement and wooden seats have been placed at several areas giving the children to enjoy an open classroom – of course when the weather is perfect.

A Green House has been put up at both Borella and Havelock Town, as an initiative of the Science Union, giving an atmosphere to learn while observing. Washrooms at the Havelock town Primary school have been totally renovated with new fittings the students were allowed to use them this term. Wesley College not only develops its own facilities but rather, goes out to assist the other less privileged, in our own capacity. Once again the Old boys have reached out and set an exemplary example in being blessed by giving. The HinidumaThavalama School was assisted with some new agricultural equipment, books and stationery items after their school was affected by the heavy floods, Tables and chairs items which were in good condition, Exercise and stationery items have been given out to some schools, assisted the Prison Fellowship with a donation of exercise books and some gift packs for about 150 deserving children. Recently the Sinhala Literary Union decided to celebrate the children's day with a difference and invited the students from the Duluwita Primary School in Mathugama, to spend their day at Wesley. The students who had very less access to a Colombo school, were brought to Wesley by the College Bus and were taken on a tour around the city of Colombo after which they had a fellowship lunch at Wesley. The kids were given gifts of Books, School bags and stationery items and in addition the OBU in Colombo donated a Computer to this well deserving school.

In our journey of completing 150 years (in a few years' time), we will not only be focusing on developing our facilities but will also extend a helping hand to the deserving community in our own capacity, and thereby create an awareness among the society, while teaching our children values that will last lifelong. We are confident that the OBU will stand by us in this endeavour too.

I attach herewith the Sports Report which was released at the Colours nite, with a summary of the activities held in the recent past.

#### **Future Plans**

Our plans for the future of the College are clear and simple. We hope to focus more on Education. This would also include the development of Academic staff, and draw a strong structure in our education system with the necessary changes that are required the most. Upgrading of facilities and renovation will continue since each step will be taken gradually and steadily. Expansion in the areas of Sports and other extra - curricular activities and even on the variety of subjects.

#### **150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to the members of the OBU, for their depth of understanding on the need to integrate technology into the educational system at Wesley and their initiative to raise funds and support their Alma Mater so that the College may provide the students and IT enriched learning experience.

Apart from the introduction to the Information Technology, the college also hopes to develop the spheres of Culture, Education, Infrastructure, Sports, Development of Academic Staff & projects, in the years to come.

As the College strives to achieve the goals which have been set forth, I wish to call upon the Old Boys' Union around the globe to extend their support in whatever possible way towards the development of our College.

Best Regards

*Avanka Fernando*  
**Principal**  
**Wesley College**

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*“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”*

Nelson Mandela



The items are in chronological order with the most recent event first.

### **Seniors Lunch 15<sup>th</sup> December**

About 30 Senior Members and their wife/partner attended the annual lunch celebrating our Seniors (70 plus age group). The venue this year was the “Walawwa” which was decked out in the traditional Christmas theme of red and green. A three piece band provided music for dancing and entertained the gathering and also backed the Wesley choristers in singing favourite Carols. As the drinks flowed old classmates reminisced of their years at Wesley. The most senior members in attendance were Vivian Mack, Patrick Schokman and George Robertson. The Walawwa put on a sumptuous Sri Lankan buffet and the afternoon deemed a success by all that attended. As the lunch drew to a close, a small gift was handed out to the guests before they left. This was the 24<sup>th</sup> year of the lunch. For photos, refer gallery Section at the end of this newsletter.

### **Double Blue Ball 5<sup>th</sup> October**



The theme this year was a “Black Tie Gala Ball”. The 400 patrons respected the dress code and turned out in their finery. The guests artistes were “the de Lanerolle brothers” from Sri Lanka. These consummate entertainers kept the crowd spell bound with their mellow voices and beautiful arrangements of some well known hits of the past. They were a class act and added to the tone of the evening. A pleasing feature was the many younger alumni now domiciled in Melbourne that attended. An Airline ticket to Sri Lanka and two tickets to New Zealand were the main prizes in the raffle. Mrs Jeuel Blackett-Chelvaratnam was chosen by the judges as the Double Blue Queen of the Ball after the finalists paraded on the dance floor.

For photos, refer gallery Section at the end of this newsletter.

### **Rugby 7's 21<sup>st</sup> September**

The OBUA fielded a team in the Kingswood Sevens and were successful in winning the Bowl beating St Thomas' and Trinity along the way.

For photos, refer gallery Section at the end of this newsletter.



## **6-a-side Indoor Cricket 17<sup>th</sup> August**

The OBUA fielded avteam in the Royal College OBA six-a-side Indoor Cricket. The team did not fair too well and were eliminated after a few rounds of the draw. For photos, refer gallery Section at the end of this newsletter.

## **Curry Nite 25<sup>th</sup> May**

The annual Curry Nite was once again well attended. Two members of the band Redemption provided music for dancing. Cha's Cabin put on a sumptuous buffet as usual. A great time was had by all.

For photos, refer gallery Section at the end of this newsletter.

## **Inaugural Founder's Day Service 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

The first ever Founders Day Service in the OBUA's 40<sup>th</sup> year was held at 5 p.m. at St John's Anglican Church, Wantirna. The Service was the initiative of talented musician and academic Rushan Hewawasam(Head Prefect 2004). A small choir made up of Lorensz Stork, Felix Berman, Reg Bartholomeusz, Marky Makalanda, Keith de Kretser, Darrel Koch, Bryan Wijeyekoon, Rienzie Mahamooth and Ridhwan Adjumain performed three items and supported the singing. The Choir was conducted by Rushan who also did the arrangements. The Service was conducted by Rev. Chris Siriweera also an old boy. Following the Service refreshments were served and a cake cut to celebrate Wesley's 145<sup>th</sup> birthday by the niece of Mr Cedric Oorloff who lived with the Oorloff's on the campus. Melbourne turned on some very hot weather on the days leading up to the day of the Service in the high 30's and it was tremendous to see a congregation of about 80 and 45 alumni attend in such trying conditions. The AGM preceded the Service at 3:30 p.m. The Service is available on You Tube the link is <http://wesleyobua.org.au/wesley-college-colombo-obua-145th-founders-day-service-video>

## **Annual General Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

The Annual General Meeting was well attended. President elect Granville Norton (1990's) had put together a young team(1990-2005) to stand on the Committee who were duly elected. The only exception was Keith de Kretser(Founder member 1979) as Editor. The senior members from the previous Committee felt it was time to pass on the baton to the younger alumni. The President thanked them for their contribution over many years and their ongoing support into the future.

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*"Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again."*

Nelson Mandela



# Dates for your Diary 2020

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
		<p>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March</p> <p>AGM 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Founders Day Service 5:00 p.m.</p>
APRIL	MAY	JUNE
	<p>Winter Warm Up Saturday 30/05/2019</p>	
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
<div>SENIORS LUNCH DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED</div>	<p>Royal College OBA 6-a-side Cricket Date to be announced</p>	<p>Kingswood College Rugby Sevens Date to be notified</p>
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<p>Double Blue Ball Saturday 3/10/2018</p>		<p>Combined College of Sri Lanka Carol Service</p>



# OBU NEW SOUTH WALES

## The Committee

The Wesley College OBA NSW, has been very active this year under the leadership of President Keith Greiner. We had four lively events and they were all well patronised by the past pupils, their families and friends.



L/R Ravi Nadarajah (Treasurer), John Buultjens (Committee member), Nizar Sappideen (Secretary), Nimal Weerasinghe (Vice President) and Keith Grenier (President).

## 16<sup>th</sup> March 2019 - Bus picnic to the Entrance



A bus load of 60 joined. It was a fun filled outing, with many old-time favourites sung both in the bus and outside. The softball cricket match and party games loosened the creaking bones, which made the physio happy. Please see photos (1) & (2) of the old boys and one old girl who joined us. The old girl is former Principal Lou Adihetty's younger sister. She studied in the primary class many years ago.

## **29<sup>th</sup> June 2019 – Hopper Night.**

This event, once again brought the 'Wesley' spirit from the old boys of NSW. It was a house full function and the hoppers were enjoyed by all. Please see (Hopper Night photo) of old boys singing the College song.

## **28<sup>th</sup> September 2019 - 'DOUBLE BLUE SPRING BALL.'**

This was our main funding raising event. This event was very special to us, as we were also celebrating the 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our College. 20 past pupils, names below, showed up with their families and friends. President Keith Grenier, in his address made a special announcement that part of the proceeds of the function will go to support a project to replace the furniture in a class room in our dear School. As promised, the remittance was made and the furniture was delivered a month ago. The Principal and the old boys in Colombo have thanked us for this kind gesture. The night ended with the College song, passionately sung by the past pupils and the Wesley 'HAKKA,' performed by one of our senior member's – Nizar Sappideen, which as usual received much cheer. Please see Dance photo of the old boys who attended the function.



The Following past pupils attended the function:

Keith Grenier, Nimal Weerasinghe, Nizar Sappideen, Ravi Nadarajah, John Buultjens, Melville Mottau, Ray Jansz, Jaya Winslow. Glen Wambeek, Buster Harvie, Roger Hesse, Shantha Kulasingham, Mohan David, Noel Saravanamuthu, Godfrey Abel, Brian Perera, Zeshan Mantara,, Janaka Rodrigo, Asanka de Silva and Hami.d

## 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019 - Christmas arty



furniture will be made soon.

Like all our events this year, this event was also well attended. For the first time, we produced a booklet of popular carols. The young and the not so young, all joined to sing carols with great enthusiasm. The President made a special appeal to those present to 'dig deep' and contribute to the refurbishment of furniture for another classroom. The call was answered and we were able to get a substantial part of the funds required. Our second contribution for the

***Nizar Sappideen***

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## Can you remember?      The Justinians



In the mid-1960's a US Hospital ship named HOPE visited Sri Lanka for many months. The citizens of Sri Lanka received modern medical treatment from the skilled Doctors and Nurses on board.

Teacher Justin de Silva (father of distinguished Wesley scholar Kumar de Silva) a keen Americaphile was attracted to the mission of the good ship HOPE to the extent he formed a band in College named after him – The Justinians. They played at a number of venues. Performances

included one on board the Hope ship when it came to Colombo and another at the Prithipura Homes.

From left to right: Asoka Hayawardene, Tyronne Frida. Jeremy Kreltzeheim, Mrs De Silva (Justin's wife), Justin De Silva, Rodger Perera and unknown on the far right. The chap on the far right was a singer and possibly not a Westeyite.

There were 3 other singers in the band who are not in the picture: Rosemarie Kock, Noeline Mendis (now Honter) and Marise Pereira. - all All Saint's girls.

The band used to perform inspirational songs of hope composed by Justin and his wife exclusively.





## NEWS FROM SRI LANKA

The news items are in chronological order with the first item the latest.

- Former popular teacher Mr Haig Karunaratne delivered the E.F.C. Ludowyke Memorial Lecture 2019 at the University of Peradeniya. The subject of his lecture was ***“Theatre Life and Theatre Building in Sri Lanka: Memories and Observations”***. Professor Ludowyke was a Wesleyite and distinguished scholar in English and English Literature.
- Neil Gallagher member of the 1954 Cricket Team passed away after a long battle in Colombo.
- Wesley participated in the Shakespeare Drama Competition where we were placed Third Runners Up and we produced three outstanding actors who won the Best Actor, and Supporting Actors awards.
- The Choir won the first place in the competition VOCALIZE held at the Stein Studio.
- The old boys' Union in Colombo organized a musical evening titled 'Double blue classics' which was held at the Bishop's College Auditorium on 9th August , 2019 at 6:45 p.m. the programme featured Annesley Malewana of moonstones fame, backed by his Super Chimes band. The event was enriched by performances of renowned artists Dharmaratne Brothers, Corrine de Almeida, Paul Fernando, Anil Barathy and Ishan Bahar. The show was compered by our old boy Diomond Deen. This was organized in order to raise funds for the College Smart Board Project.
- In Scouting, Six Wesleyites participated in the World Scout Jamboree held in the USA.
- In the Impromptu and Prepared Speech Competition "Speak To Lead" organized by Stafford International School held in October 2019, Wesley College produced the Winner in the Intermediate Impromptu Speech Category and the Runner Up in the Intermediate Prepared Category.
- Annual Prize Giving 2019 was held on 12th of September at 4.30p.m. at the College main hall. Chief Guest was Dr. P.K. Ravindran.
- Wesley College were also the Winners of the All Island Tamil Quiz Competition.
- Cartman library gets 2 computers with software enabling access to Windows, including one large table with six chairs, for mind games like Chess.





- Adeetha Siriwardane son of OBU Vice President Asith Siriwardane breaks the 50 meter Back Stroke Schools Record after 10 years, and for winning the Gold Medal for the 200 meters Individual Medley.
- A total of 45,000 young people from nearly every country in the world gathered, standing side by side at the 24th World Scout Jamboree in wild and wonderful West Virginia. From Sri Lanka out of thousands of applications only 214 got selected at the National Level on merit by the Sri Lanka Scout Association and only 150 could participate. Six Wesley College scouts were selected to participate in this very important event representing Sri Lanka. Senior Scout Murthaaz Barry and Patrol Leader Nabeel Barry of the 14th Colombo Scout Troop of Wesley College participated at this 24th World Scout Jamboree keeping the Wesley College flag flying high with their discipline which was commendable by many high officials and for their language skills which helped to promote the country and the Sri Lankan scout movement.
- Ivor Mahroof an Old Boy of Wesley College and a Distinguished Past President of the OBU Colombo has been appointed as the Managing Director of the Metropolitan Group of Companies.
- "Ora Et Labora - Pray and Labour On" a Celebration of Prayer and Praise organized by the OBU Colombo was held at the Wesley College Chapel on the 17th of August amidst a well attended gathering of Old Boys of different era's along with their families. The Principal of Wesley and Patron of the OBU - Mr. Avanka Fernando welcomed all Old Boys and their families present which included three Past Principals of Wesley - Dr. Shanti McLelland and Wife, Mr. M.A.P. Fernando, Mr. Upali Ratnayake and Wife who graced the occasion. The Entire Service - Prayers, Singing, Worship, and Message, was Conducted and Led by Past Wesleyites. Mr. Lakshman Uduwara led the Congregation in the Prayer of Confession. Mr. Prashan De Visser had the congregation spellbound when he delivered a powerful message on the Theme - Ora Et Labora and the mandate and challenge for every Wesleyites which is - to "Pray and Labour On". The Worship was led by Pastor Rene Devadason, and the Singing/Hymns were led by members of the newly formed Double Blue Chorale. Mr. Peter De Silva led the Prayer for College and Country, while Mr. Rumesh Perera led the Prayer for Offertory. Mr. Peter Peiris delivered the Vote of Thanks.
- Senior Vice President of the OBU Colombo and The President of the OWSC Farman Cassim has been Conferred Silk - being appointed President's Counsel.

- The College Sick Room project was initiated by the OBU Colombo and supported by Mr.



Bill Deutrom who got the 2 beds, while the rest of the furnishing and equipping of the Sick room was generously funded by the Batch of 2006 led by Afzal Abdulla and friends. They have ensured that every minute detail has been looked in to, and today we can proudly say that Wesley College Colombo has one of the Best Sick Rooms among the schools. The OBU Colombo will furnish the Sick room with modern

furniture, table and chair, Cupboard, Mattresses, a Mini Fridge, First Aid Box, Bed Linen and Towels. Bill Deutrom from Australia donated two hospital standard beds.

- The 145<sup>th</sup> Founder's Week Celebrations of the OBU were a success with all the activities - the College Assembly, the Matches, the Lunch and the AGM well supported. It was great to see so many Old Boys come back to College after many years, and heartening to see many young Old Boys coming forward and participating in their numbers and nice to see many past teachers including Mr. Ivor De Silva who is 95 years old who returned from USA for the celebrations. Also present were three Past Principal Dr. Shanti McLelland and Wife, Mr. Upali Ratnayake and Wife, Mr. M.A.P.Fernando and members of the OBU Exco.

At the Founder's Day Service, Mr Avanka Fernando was formally installed as Principal of Wesley College by the Head of the Methodist Church- Bishop Asiri Perera.

At the lunch - the OBU also recognized the three College Students who brought Honor to Wesley by their outstanding performances in their respective sports - Zayan Sabar for Rugby, Adeetha Siriwardane for Swimming, and Rahel Karunaratne for Chess.

- The College Chemistry Lab was re-furbished and opened by Distinguished Old Boy Mr.



Nalin Karunatileka, for the Boys of Wesley as they commenced their new Academic Year. The cost of the Re-furbishing was Rs.833,750.00/= which Nalin donated in Memory of his Dad - late Mr. B.J. Karunatileka who was a distinguished Old Boy of Wesley. The photo shows the Science teachers at the opening ceremony of the refurbished labs.

- Wesley win the All-Island Milo Schools Under-16 Rugby Tournament beating Dharmaraja College 12-7 in the Cup final.
- A free Medical Camp was organized for Teachers, Students, Support Staff and Parents at Wesley College by the Batch of '87. There was an Eye Clinic with glasses presented, Lung and Chest Unit with ECG, Blood Tests for Sugar and Cholesterol, a Dental Clinic, with Doctors and Nurses in attendance.





## **FROM THE SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR'S DESK**

### **Clifford Rodrigo**

## **SPORTS REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2019**

It is my privilege to present to you this evening, the Annual Sports report for the year 2019(1<sup>st</sup> January - 10<sup>th</sup> November). In doing so, I have refrained from delving into detailed results which are normally embodied in my regular updates. Instead, I have provided an overview of the sports activities undertaken during the period under review.

Before I proceed to the narrations in respect of each sport, I am led to mention the adverse impact on sports as a whole, in the immediate aftermath of Easter Sunday debacle. Prolonged delays, postponements, abrupt changes in the schedules and set programmes, was the order of the day, especially during the 2<sup>nd</sup> term. The sports which suffered most in the process are the under 15 and under 17 Cricket, Soccer, Hockey and Badminton.

### **SENIOR RUGBY**

After a few set backs at the very beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the Singer League when we were pitted against strong teams such as Royal, St. Peters and Kingswood, Wesley began to dictate terms from the moment we defeated St. Thomas in the final game of that round, not only retaining Sir Oliver Goonetilleke Trophy but also qualifying for the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the league. In the second round we displayed a splendid brand of Rugby defeating teams such as Trinity, St. Joseph's and Isipathana securing the fourth position in the league. In the Milo knockout that followed we reached the final and was narrowly beaten by St. Peters after acquiring a comfortable lead in the 1<sup>st</sup> half. In the final analysis it was distinctly clear that Wesley had emerged as a major force among the cream of the School rugby circuit.

Our talented squad was fittingly felicitated to a grand celebration and dinner at a leading hotel at the conclusion of the Season.

Looking back in retrospect we owe the success of our rugger team to several key personnel. We are grateful to our head coach Mr. Paul Toia for introducing a brand new culture to rugger before he bid goodbye to us after serving 3 years. His meticulous attention to detail in planning and execution and more so his undaunted passion for the game was, indeed, an exemplary example to those on the field. Besides, the yeomen service rendered by the rugger committee led by Capt. Navin de Silva amply supported by our Principal, helped us no end to make rugger what it is today. The leadership displayed by Cap. Navin in particular over the last decade, with a short break when his son played for College, must be commended.

## **JUNIOR RUGBY**

It will be recalled that our under 16 team which won the All Island 10-a-side tournament in 2018 had to be content being the runners up in the tourney this year.

## **SENIOR CRICKET**

There was tremendous degree of optimism that our under 19 cricket squad, which in fact was formidable, had the capacity to reach the top bracket. However the eventual outcome undoubtedly left a sense of dissatisfaction and significant degree of disappointment.

When we began the season way back in September last year, the team did display glimpses of tremendous talent and potential especially in the batting department, where it was clearly evident in the preparatory games that we had the capacity score over 300 runs every time we went to bat. But in reality our performance from time to time lacked consistency and the determination to win. The Killer instinct was conspicuously missing.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, we cannot deny the fact that our overall performance for the season was far better than the disastrous performance in the previous season, when we lost as many as 6 matches outright. The summary of our actual performance for the year 2018/2019 as reflected below will testify to this conclusion.

### **TOURNAMENT MATCHES**

Played - 8 Matches  
Won outright - 1 Match  
Won on 1<sup>st</sup> Innings - 3 Matches

Lost Outright - 1 Match  
Lost on 1<sup>st</sup> Innings - 3 Matches

### **TRADITIONAL MATCHES**

Played - 7 Matches  
All were drawn

It will be observed that only one match was lost outright. However, the degree of success achieved belittled the talent and potential of the team.

In the current season which commenced in September, our College under 19 team is relatively inexperienced, so much so, that a concerted effort is warranted if it is to be groomed to become competitive. Mr. Keerthi Gunarathne a seasoned campaigner and a very experienced coach has taken over the reins as Head Coach. Although it is far too premature to run into conclusions, there are distinct signs that Cricket at Wesley will be well served given adequate time. His passionate involvement and disciplined personal attention to detail should augur well for the future of Wesley Cricket.

We have thus far managed to play only three games in the 3<sup>rd</sup> term due to absolutely poor weather. There was no decision in all three, although Ananda struggled to survive with a score

of 97 for 8 wicket in the first day. Although the Sun shone at 12 noon play did not commence till 3pm on the next day as Anandians felt that run-up was not conducive for play. We scored 35 runs for no wickets in 5 or 6 overs after which rain came down again.

## **JUNIOR CRICKET**

As expected our under 15 and under 17 teams which took part in the school Cricket Tournaments did not do well as they were ill prepared to participate in competition due to the reasons explained in our preamble.

However our under 13 A and B teams which reached the quarter final last year have already accomplished themselves in the current year's ongoing tournament by reaching the second round in division I and division III respectively.

The A team participating in division I has headed the group by winning 6 matches, 2 outright and the balance on 1<sup>st</sup> Innings while 1 match ended as a tie.

Our boys have already recorded 3 centuries, a match haul of 11 wickets, and 2 hat-tricks in the matches concluded thus far.

Our B team has also reached the second round.

## **SWIMMING**

The Swimming segment of the School has shown consistent improvement during the last few years. At present there are 8 Swimmers qualified to swim at National Level.

18year old Athiq Ahmeer was placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the 200mts breaststroke as well as the 100m breaststroke in the open Nationals Swimming Championship held in October 2019. This is a remarkable achievement.

Meanwhile, Adeetha Siriwardana continued to excel in his age group by winning 3 Golds in the Sri Lanka School Championship held in August 2019. He brought honour to the School by breaking a Sri Lanka School record in the 50mts Back Stroke.

## **FOOTBALL**

Despite the obstacles and handicaps faced by our team due to the postponement of all tournaments and our inability to provide a full ground for practices, our team put up a spirited display against Kingswood in their annual encounter played recently which they lost by 3 goals to 2. The significant improvement in the performance of our football team during the current year was very evident.

Besides, our under 10 team including players from Tampola and our under 14 team beat Kingswood in the matches that were also played on the same date. Our under 12 and under 16 teams did not fare too well.

## **HOCKEY**

The difficulties faced by our football squad is applicable to Hockey as well. Yet, the overall improvement in the quality and standard of Hockey displayed was clearly evident in their recent outings when they participated in the Royal 7's as well as the Annual Encounter against Royal which we lost 2 goals to nil in the Astro Turf where Royal practices on a regular basis.

**If football and Hockey is to make further progress we need to resolve their joint problem of not having a full ground for practices. Perhaps the need to develop the facility available at Tampola is pronounced.**

## **BADMINTON**

Badminton too suffered the same fate due to the regular tournaments being pushed back to November and December 2019. However, the Zonal matches were played in September which enabled some of our players to have an exposure.

Two of our players Joshuwa Shalom and Yohan Asher who are brothers, qualified to represent Wesley in the All Island Badminton Championship to be held in January 2020.

## **BASKETBALL**

We are reasonably happy with the progress made in Basketball during the year under review. The performance of the under 17 squad in particular was more than satisfactory. They accomplished themselves in the Rating tournament by defeating 5 teams and losing only to Lyceum Wattala. As a result, this team graduated from "C" division to "A" division this year. Our under 15 team became Runners up in "C" division of the All Island Schools Tournament conducted by Sri Lanka Basketball Association. Yoshua Amarasinghe was adjudged Best Offensive Player in that Tournament. He was also selected for the National Under 16 pool to participate in the South Asia Basketball Tournament during the current year.

## **TABLE TENNIS**

It will be recalled that our Under 19 Table Tennis team was promoted to "A" division last year. However the departure of two of our players to other Schools depleted our side which got relegated to "B" division in the current year.

we append below a summary of our performance in the Tournaments played during the year in respect of all age group.

- In the All Island under 19 Tournament played in July we were placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the "B" division.

- Our under 12 “B” team participating in the Inter Schools All Island Tournament was also placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the “D” division and were promoted to the “C” division.
- In the Western Province doubles Tournament Ishan Faleel partnered by an Anandian became the under 10 champions in August 2019.

## **CHESS**

Karunaratne brothers, Rahel & Ravish have excelled in the Kalutara Chess festival open International rating chess Championship in their age categories, organized by the Kalutara Chess club on behalf of the CFSL & FIDE.

Rahel performed well obtaining 4 out of 5 points in the 23<sup>rd</sup> battle of the Kings team Tournament.

Ravish performed excellently well obtaining 4 out of 4 points as a reserved player in the 23<sup>rd</sup> battle of the Kings team Tournament.

Shenal participated as a team member in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Battle of the Kings team Tournament and made an astonishing breakthrough to open his ratings by beating a rated player.

Hence his unique achievement brings honour to his team and the School.

## **ATHLETICS**

Participating in the Junior Tarbet Cup meet for Western and Southern Provinces, 3 of our Junior Athletes and 3 of our relay teams of different age groups qualified to compete in the National John Tarbet Championship scheduled to be held in December 2019.

It has been brought to our attention that our non-participation in All Island Athletic Meets conducted by the Education Ministry has been a major setback. This has precluded our Athletes from having an opportunity for wider participation. The end result is that our Athletes have had no opportunity to aspire to greater heights and recognition. This shortcoming will need to be corrected in the year 2020.

## **TENNIS**

Although we did begin tennis few years back, the game was reactivated just about 2 years back. During the latter period the standard of play of all categories has improved significantly. We append below a summary of results of the tournaments in which the school participated this year.

- Under 13 Inter School Tennis Tournament Division 2 Plate Champions
- “Kids pay day” Division B -
  - Green Ball - 2<sup>nd</sup> Runners up
  - Orange Ball - 4<sup>th</sup> Place
  - Red Ball - Semi Finalist

## **NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

- Water Polo which was introduced to the School early this year has progressed a great deal in that there are more participants now. We are in debt to Mr. Isuru Perera an Old Wesleyite who does the coaching on a voluntary basis.
  - At the present time we are in the process of introducing several sports to Tampola. The first phase of this exercise will be completed by the end of this year.
  - The enthusiasm shown by the little Basketball players at Havelock's Primary has grown. Nearly 100 students are attending practices.
  - Our centre for Table Tennis has been transferred to the Havelock's Primary where there is ample room.
  - We are presently exploring the possibility of introducing a new sport to the School each year in pursuance of the Principal's vision to expand the range of Sports year by year.
  - For some time now our Principal has been advocating the need to conduct internal competitions for all team sports, where available resources from all age groups are pooled together to form four teams of equal strength to compete against each other. The initial experiment involving sixty cricketers to play each other evolved a tremendous degree of interest. It was coined as the Wesley Premier League (WPL) which certainly was a huge success. Benefits are already evident. This concept will be replicated to all team sports in due course.
  - For the first time we have introduced a prestigious award for exceptionally brilliant sportsman at Senior level who excel in multiple Sports and also win Colours for at least two Sports. A proper criteria has been drawn up for selection. This award will be presented at this Colours Nite.
- 

*A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.*

Winston Churchill

# A DOUBLE BLESSING(for a Double Blue)



Congratulations to Rev. Neville Koch who celebrated his 50th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church in Sri Lanka on 27th August 2019.

A Thanksgiving Service was recently held in Toronto, Canada. If you wish to access a video of this service recorded by a friend, go to YouTube.com and type in 'Neville Koch 50th Anniversary of Ordination'.

Neville is the son of Lawson (ex-locomotive Engine driver, CGR) and Margie (nee Walker). Neville and his family now live in California, USA. Although officially retired for some time, at 75 he still keeps himself busy in God's service.

It is not often that we receive promptings from God but when we do, we need to receive it as a **Blessing**. This is how Neville came about to writing his book "The Light Shines Through" and this is what he has to say:

"My original idea to write a book began a LONG time ago which sprang out of a seed (I believe) God planted in my mind with the purpose of encouraging and inspiring Seminarians and young pastors who are dealing with discouragement, weariness, and prone to burn out. But I never did. I thought I'll do it when I retire but when the day came, the book was again assigned to "back-burner" status, for two weeks later, I was offered a full time position as a Hospice Chaplain. It was an open door to further ministry (ministering to dying patients and their grieving families) which kept me as busy as before.

There came a time when several people close to me (including my son, Graeme) kept pushing me to write and finish the book - until one day, Graeme went to Target, bought a manuscript book, gave it to me and said, "Here, write, even if it is for me only!" That did it and its now history. This time, with a broader audience and purpose to include those who (like me), have battled discouragement and weariness. My overall purpose is to ENCOURAGE and INSPIRE its readers by fixing our focus on the Light that shines through (the One who makes a way, His Name is Jesus!).

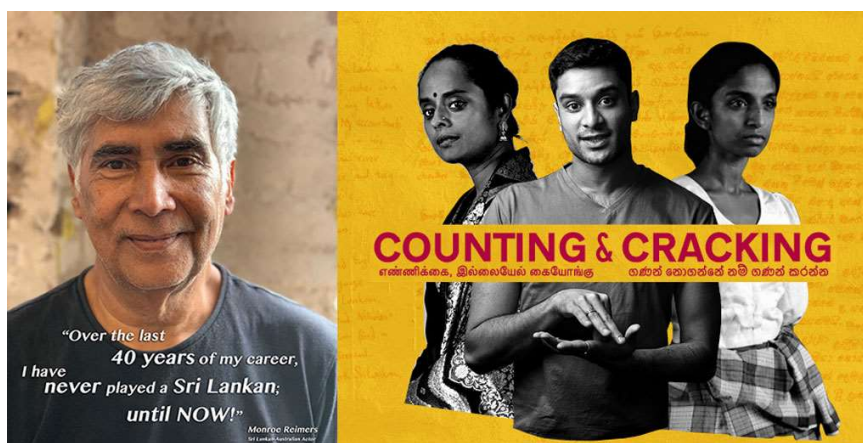
This book is not an autobiography but a story of how God revealed Himself (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) in very special moments and situations in my life and ministry. Be blessed!

This book is available (Paperback or Kindle eBook) go to Amazon.com and type in the search "The Light Shines Through" by Rev Neville Koch. (For those in Australia, omit the letters .au)

Charles Schokman

Editor's note: Neville is an Old Wesleyite. If you wish to contact Neville his email is [pastornev@cox.net](mailto:pastornev@cox.net)





Former winner of the Best Actor in the Inter-School Drama Competition – Monroe Reimers stars in

## S. Shakthidharan's Counting and Cracking

By Monroe Reimers

At one of the early workshops for Counting and Cracking I told the group that Sri Lanka was once named Serendipity, the accidental discovery of something wonderful. I was surprised to note that neither the writer or director knew this but as it turned out Serendipity it was. It was soon clear that Shakti's sprawling narrative that spanned three generations was a special work that was going to require a very special production. Sydney and Adelaide had never seen anything like it before and it was to change the theatre landscape in Australia forever. Though the play is in English it required the speaking of seven languages that had to be in most cases learned phonically by the actors. For the first time in my professional career this was the first time I was going to be playing a Sri Lankan and perform in Sinhalese no less. It was a daunting task but with the help of wonderful fellow actors and YouTube I managed to pull it off. The play covered three generations so the costumes and props had to be very specific and the brilliant Anandavali ( the writer's mum and subject of the story) with her amazing attention to detail was perfection itself. Altogether it took six years to get the play from script to stage there were many problems to be overcome but in the end the problems turned into brilliant solutions. The play was nominated for eight Helpman awards and grabbed seven of them, every one richly deserved. It was a wonderful journey for me both as an actor and ex-Sri Lankan, being able to re-visit my homeland albeit in a virtual way. There are murmurs about re-mounting the play next year in Sydney and Melbourne hopefully it will come to pass.

### Monroe Reimers – a Bio

Monroe Reimers is a seasoned actor, voiceover artist, teacher, newsreader and screenwriter who can quietly boast over thirty years of experience in the performance industry, going back to his 1979 feature film debut on "Hoodwink", which was nominated eight times by the AFI Awards. As a NIDA graduate who has a pragmatic view on the three decades-long growth of the industry that he loves, his ambiguously portrayed ethnicity (whether it be Indian, Polynesian, Southern European, Hispanic or even Eurasian) often took a backseat to the authoritative yet gentle veracity of his talent. In fact, he has often played a doctor throughout his career.

Monroe takes a similar grip on the adventurous, semi-biographical, coming-of-age element in "Race the Sun" (1995) sharing the same space as Halle Berry, James Belushi, a young Eliza Dushku and Casey Affleck. He also has acted opposite local luminaries the likes of Jack Thompson, Hugo Weaving, David Wenham, Judy Davis and Michael Caton. Based on J. M Coetzee's novel, Monroe's latest feature "Disgrace" (2008) was a significant sociopolitical piece on racism, rape and cavalier abuse of authority in post-apartheid South Africa with John Malkovich. He was on the right side of the law in "Better Man" (2013), integral to the outcome in the real-life case of Van Nguyen's crime as a drug mule in Singapore. At times, he'll go for more lighthearted fare, such as popular children's TV series "Spellbinder", "Time Trax" and "The Girl From Tomorrow" in the early to mid-90's.

He also has brought his firm, savvy, dexterous and glossy gifts into theatre, notably having worked with Melbourne Theatre Company and NIDA. Indeed when you look at his works, this Sri Lankan-born Australian finds value in the ingenious, histrionic collaboration and zeitgeist-like filmmaking that is arguably ahead of the times.

As teacher, Monroe also has been able to pass his hard-won lessons onto actors of all levels, as well as those in the corporate and migrant world. Fifteen years as a Radio 2RPH and ABC Radio National newsreader has enabled him to specialise in developing voice and speech in the workplace and speaking English with a neutral accent, all the while never losing sight of ethnic self-identity.

Editor's note: Monroe starred in Christopher Fry's - "The Boy with the Cart", Wesley's entry in the Inter-School Drama Competition and won Best Actor for his stellar performance. He is the cousin of Glenn and Robin Reimers.

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## Can you HELP?

### ONGOING PROJECTS

#### 1. Project to upgrade Campbell park –

The sports loving fraternity of Wesley College both here and abroad together with the current day sportsmen of the School know how important it is for Wesley to possess a well-equipped playground of modern day standard. With this thought foremost in our minds, we have deemed it fit to immediately launch a fund raising project so that we do not limit our plans towards but instead Initiate firm and decisive action without further ado.

The project will accommodate the following tasks to be undertaken in 3 phases.

#### PHASE I

RENEWAL /REPLACEMENT OF THE 3 OLD PRACTICE NETS	-RS. 460,000/=
INSTALLATION OF 3 NEW TURF PRACTICE WICKETS	-RS.540,000/=
INSTALATION OF NETS FOR NEW PRACTICE WICKETS	-RS.370,000/=
EXTENTION OF THE GROUND, GRASSING AND AFTERCARE	-RS.180,000/=
GRASSING VACANT AREAS,FILLING POTHLES AND CLEAN-UP	-RS.250,000/=

#### PHASE II

PROCUREMENT OF A MECHANIZED HEAVY ROLLER (2ND HAND) -**RS. 2,000,000/=**

#### PHASE III

UPGRADING AND EQUIPPING THE PAVILION	-RS. 500,000/=
LANDSCAPING, AND INSTALLATION OF CANOPIES ETC.	-RS. 700,000/=
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-RS.1,200,000/=</b>

As we firmly believe that our benefactors consisting of Old Boys, Well-Wishers as well as present sportsmen will rally round to make this venture a resounding success, the School will immediately undertake the 2 most urgent tasks consisting of extending the ground and renewing and upgrading the 3 sets of practice nets. Meanwhile we appeal to our benefactors to spontaneously contribute to this worthy cause. All cheques should please be crossed and drawn in favour of "Principal, Wesley College". Each and every contribution will be formally acknowledged, and a register of donors will be maintained in the School.



# **O B I T U A R I E S**

## **SRI LANKA**

**Nirmali (de Silva) Fernando** Teacher at Wesley.

**Vice Air Marshall Kingsley Samaratunga** (retired)

**Raja Athukorala**

**Don Newton Kodituwakku**

**Brian Mack**

**Keith Benjamin** (Easter Bombings)

**Chandran Perera**

**D.M.D Dharmaratne** Teacher at Wesley

**Duminda Kariyawasam**

**Neil Gallagher**

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

**Hariharan Jeganathan**

## **AUSTRALIA**

**Howard Nathanielsz**

# TRIBUTES

(Source: Double Blue International)

## In Memoriam - Neil Gallagher

Photo: Neil at Wesley in 1953

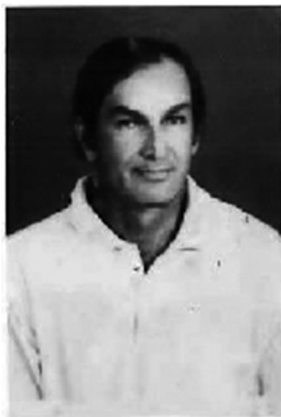


I first came to know Neil when I joined the boarding in 1952. He was many years my senior but being a fine cricketer he was well known to everyone at school. I remember him as a kind and helpful senior being very modest and not affected by the adulation and the back slapping. He was an immensely popular figure.

Neil joined Wesley during the Cartman era and showed a marked talent for the game of cricket. He continued to play for the school when Mr CJ Oorloff became the Principal. He was part of the legendary unbeaten teams captained by the Claessen brothers, Radley and Bryan. In 1952 the team was captained by Radley

when the only loss was to St Thomas', after our cricket season had ended. From 1952-53 were the glorious years of cricket at Wesley when Neil Gallagher was an integral part of the unit. He was an important cog in the fabulous team of 1953 captained by Bryan Claessen that finished unbeaten. Fair-skinned and handsome, Neil stood out from the crowd. On the pitch he possessed the panache and the courage to match his competitive spirit. Off it, he was unfailingly good-humoured and friendly.

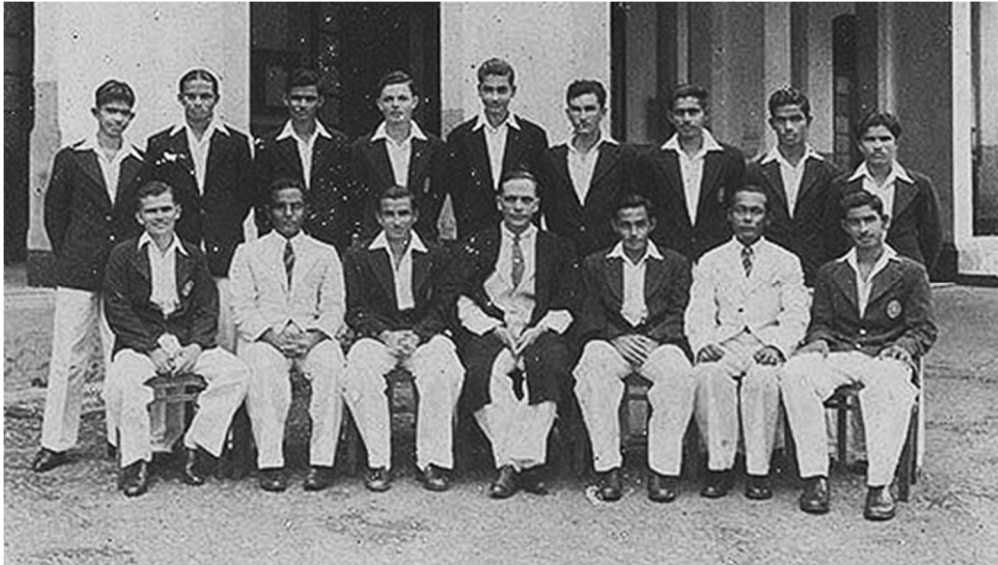
Neil while at Hong Kong Bank



Neil at the Reunion Sept 2012



Throughout his school career, on and off the field, Neil had a relaxed and calm demeanour which earned him many friends and a string of vocal supporters who showed off their colours at the cricket matches at Campbell Park. He was also a quiet man off the pitch and in the boarding. Neil and Arthlow Chapman were the best of friends in the boarding and it would be fair to say they were inseparable. They played cricket together and also joined in the practices at Campbell Park together. I cannot recall any instance when Neil got into trouble with the strict rules of the school or the boarding. Academia never suited him. He remained a principled and dignified student concentrating on sports.



Standing from L to R: B.N.Jurangpathy, V. Adhihetty, L. Adhihetty, A.R. Chapman, H. Claessen, N. Gallaher, D.T. Range, A. Batuwitage, M.N. Samsudeen.

Seated from L to R :P.N. Schokman, Mr. A.V. Fernando(Coach), B. Claessen (Captain), Mr.C.J.Oorloff (Principal) M.A.M. Fuard, Mr. F.de Mel (Master in charge), M.A.H. Fuard.

Neil was a handsome and stylish cricketer at Wesley. Tall, fair skinned, broad with curly black hair, Neil looked down the pitch from a neat, upright and perfectly balanced stance. This perhaps gave promise of the range of stroke play at his command. As I recall, despite the theory at the time, he remained very much a back-foot player. Neil seemed to have all the time in the world to play his shots. He made his mark as a reliable and effective batsman. His on-drive was of the highest calibre. Neil never gave away his wicket cheaply. As well as his prowess with the bat Neil was an excellent fielder, either close to the wicket or on the boundary where he was known for the strength and accuracy of his throw. Although Neil never scored any centuries he made half centuries on many occasions at important matches during crucial stages of games.

Neil left school to join the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank. He played cricket for the bank and rose to become one of its trusted executives.

He travelled to Australia in 2003 to see his former schoolmates and also old colleagues from Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank now resident in that country. George Robertson who was his classmate has written a fine account of his meeting with Neil Gallagher. This must have been a wonderful opportunity to relive those glorious years in Ceylon.

#### **Neil Gallagher visits Australia by George Robertson 2003**

Neil lead a happy life in retirement in Hendala. It was recently that illness struck a cruel blow. Neil is a fighter and he had recovered well when we saw him at the Grand Reunion of September 2012. He still has a tremendous love for Wesley. When I saw him with Arthlow Chapman it was like those good old days in the boarding when we all were young and carefree. I was sad to hear that lately he retreated into solitude. His recovery from a stroke in 2011 was slow but he was able to enjoy some of the pleasures of life. He is now free of pain and hardship

### **GRANT HIM O LORD ETERNAL PEACE**

**Dr. Nihal Amerasekera** *Double Blue International)*



# In Memoriam - Nirmali (de Silva) Fernando

25th September 1969 – 25 January 2019

By Kumar de Silva



It was exactly half a century ago, this month, January 1969, that Nirmali de Silva came into my life. I was a 7 year-old impressionable little brat at Wesley College Colombo and she was our beautiful 23 year-old, Grade 2 class teacher. My father Justin, also her colleague on the teaching staff at Wesley, had told me that 'Nirmali Teacher' was a distant niece to him. That made her my distant cousin. Wow I felt proud and privileged but kept that secret all to myself without ever revealing it to my classmates. My earliest recollections of her are that of an all-enveloping maternal figure. You wouldn't expect a 23 year old single young woman to be that maternal at that age but Nirmali de Silva was all that and more. She literally spread out her large wings and took us under them – teaching us, guiding us, nurturing us, comforting us and protecting us. Even as little children we felt the tangible largesse of her heart. And we, in turn, loved her deeply from the depths of our little hearts.

I remember how overjoyed we were when she came back again as our Grade 3 class teacher the following year. We couldn't have asked for more. Those two years spent under her tutelage formed a deep and lasting impression in my mind. I admired and adored her as my teacher and class teacher. I loved her as much as I did my own Mother. Nirmali de Silva was My quintessential Mother at my Alma Mater.

I remember hearing from the grapevine that our Grade 04 class teacher was going to be a horrible and nasty old spinster who had a long standing reputation of lashing children with her tongue and unmercifully hammering their buttocks with her pet little black umbrella. We dreaded her and hated her. Having her for one full year was absolutely unthinkable.

Towards the end of the Grade 3 year, out of sheer panic and desperation, I summed up whatever courage I could muster, crawled to the Principal's Office all the way from the Primary Block and pleaded with Shelton Wirasinha saying, "Sir can we please have Nirmali Teacher next year also and not Miss XX". The diplomat he always was, the Principal smiled and said, "Let's see Putha". Karma played a trick on me and we had one full miserable year of Miss. XX and her tongue lashing and buttock bashing.

I now understand how very, very impressionable a child's mind can be. Those early memories, good and bad, are deeply etched in one's memory for life. In later adult years I often wondered how this 23 year old could be so very maternal. Talking to her family at the funeral parlour that night, the how and the why dawned on me. Anil her brother is four years younger. But Minoli her sister was born thirteen years after Nirmali. "The very day I was born, Akki wrote me a letter saying that she would look after me and take me under her wing and that is precisely what she did", a tearful Minoli recalled. Minoli was Nirmali's doll and playmate and even her bridesmaid at her wedding. "Akki extended that same love and caring even to my children right throughout her life".

Nirmali de Silva was born on 30th March 1946 to a family with a very strong and abiding Methodist lineage spanning generations. Her father Rev. Denzil de Silva was the President of the Methodist Conference from 1970-1975. Prior to that, his older brother Rev. Fred de Silva went on record as being the first President of the Methodist Conference. Her other paternal uncles Rev. Roy de Silva and Rev. Lynn de Silva were also Methodist ministers. Her paternal grandfather, Rev John de Silva

and his father (her great grandfather) were also Ministers of the Methodist Church. On the other side, her maternal grandfather Rev. George Senaratne was the first Sri Lankan Chairman of the Methodist Church. The Methodist Church was thus an integral part of the de Silva family. The two girls Nirmali and Minoli understandably attended Methodist College Colombo, my sister school.

Her husband Hemal Fernando has been the rock of her life since their marriage on 25th September 1969. They were blessed with two children Dimantha and Shanelli and five adorable grandchildren. If she were still alive today, they would have celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this year. What a joyous occasion that would have been.

My mind vividly goes back to 1969. We were very jealous of that tall, young and handsome Hemal Fernando who suddenly appeared from literally nowhere ... or rather that's what we thought. He was going to marry her and take our beloved teacher away and so we hated him with our little hearts. He came to help her at the end-of-year concert at the College Hall. We plotted to 'accidentally' trip him and incapacitate him for life. But our plans went awry and they lived happily ever after. The couple knows this story. I recalled this story again when I visited her at home in Talawatugoda last November. Even though breathing with the help of an oxygen concentrator she laughed heartily ... this story is now a family joke. I never thought that would be the last I saw of her.

Nirmali Fernando taught at Wesley College for an eventful thirty eight years, from 1964 to 2002. It was also during this time that her father was the President of the Methodist Conference. She came to school from the Methodist headquarters in Kollupitiya.

I remember Daddy telling me that never ever did she flaunt her father's position, nor did she expect any privileges. She behaved like just another teacher at Wesley College. Such were her simplicity and humility. Similarly, being her colleague's son I was never a privileged student in her class. I was treated just like any other child. She was fair by all. BUT I knew that deep down there she loved me a little bit more than the others and that was perfectly in order.

Years later she must have been very disappointed when she learnt that I had converted to Buddhism (after years of being a Christian) but not once did she ever mention it. She just smiled. I was proud to have Hemal and Nirmali at my wedding and what a co-incidence it was years later when it was she who interviewed my son Rahul for admission to Grade 1 at Wesley College.

Nirmali Fernando had this uncanny ability to see the world through the eyes of a child. This gave her great insight and perception and she often took the side of the child. She touched the lives of 38 successive batches of Wesleyites with her love and gentleness. The outpouring of their collective grief at her demise on social media, via text messages etc was moving and tearful. I single out two of her students whom I know well ... former Head Prefect Dilshan Boange and former Prefect Rumesh Perera. They were shattered in as much as I was.

That night at the AF Raymonds Funeral Parlour was sad. It was a horrible and empty feeling. The grief stuck like glue at the pit of my stomach. To me it was like seeing my own mother in that coffin. Nirmali de Silva was My quintessential Mother at my Alma Mater. I grieve. I keep consoling myself that death was a release. At the end I'm told she had wanted to go ... the pain and physical suffering were too much to bear. And as her mortal remains lay there, there was peace on her face.

I still grieve ... but Nirmali Fernando now continues on her journey through Sansara. My only wish for her is that that journey be speedy. May she one day attain the Supreme Bliss of Nirvana. And may the Blessings of the Triple Gem be with her Family.



### **Kingswood Touch Rugby 7s | 2019 - Bowl Champs**



### **Royal Inter-School Indoor Cricket Tournament**





# Curry Night







# Black Tie Gala Ball









## Seniors Lunch





## **NEW LOOK WESLEY COLLEGE AT 9/2019**

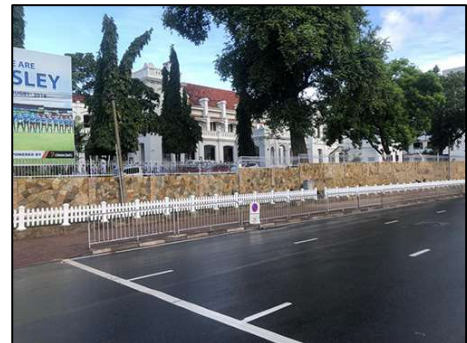
**SOURCE: DOUBLE BLUE INTERNATIONAL**



**DRIVEWAY LEADING UP FROM THE GATE PAST  
THE HIGHFIELD BLOCK**



**VIEW ACROSS FROM THE PRISON**



**BASELINE ROAD FRONTAGE**



**THE FRONT GATE**



**HIGHFIELD BLOCK STAIRS TO STAFF ROOM**



**DRIVEWAY TO PRINCIPALS BUNGALOW**