



THE TERNION

Volume 7, Issue 8 September 2007

EDITORIAL

It is always a pleasant feeling to unite and work for a common cause and this is what most Thomians are undoubtedly feeling these days as performers from every nook and cranny in College are toiling away to make their humble contribution to the Chapel of the Transfiguration.

It is our hope that this unity and dedication transcends all boys within the school who now have their opportunity to contribute by the collection of funds. Just like how past Thomians worked when the Sports Complex was being built, we too should work with the common objective of resurrecting the Chapel for future generations of Thomians. This fact should not be retold every day but should linger in our hearts for this is "All we have and are".

On the same note the Ternion wishes to bring up a debatable issue regarding College functions. We would like to state that the article 'Days in a Daze' is not aimed at criticising any particular organisation but was written to act as an eye opener and we hope only the good will be taken in to account.

Certain issues have also been propping up disgracing the name of College within society. To the boys involved we can only say your actions not only disgrace yourself but the institution you come from as well. Think wisely always and control your impulse for your own and others benefit. On the brighter side this is all part of a school learning curve and we hope we will all learn from our mistakes and move forward.

The proceeding months promise to be full of bustling activity and we would encourage each and every Thomian to be part of it all. Cherish every moment you have at the School by the Sea.

Esto Perpetua!!!

Canto Perpetua – Songs Forever

The College Hall echoed with the rich voices of Thomians young and old on the 19th and 20th of October where voices combined to sing forever producing yet another musical phenomenon by S.Thomas' College. This was the debut performance of both Nuova Vitae and the All Thomian Boys Choir.

Canto Perpetua had quite a unique style to its variety of entertainment. It was a Classical and Modern musical entourage where the decades and centuries before were brought back to life within one and a half hours leaving the audience mesmerized.

Nuova Vitae (New Life), an ensemble of past choristers of S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia made its debut choral performance at this concert. This much anticipated choral group has been put together by past choristers who have left in the last decade and have been trained by the maestro Russel Bartholomeusz.. From the first majestic chord of "Great is Thy Faithfulness" the College hall was filled by the rich and soulful tenors and the fortified gruff bass voices who all sang with passion gleaming in their eyes and their hearts leaping in joy to be back at their Alma Mater to do what they love: sing.

Throughout the evening this ensemble ranged through many songs

such as *We shall walk through the Valley in Peace*, *The Barber Shop Songs*, *You Raise Me Up*, *Stars of the Summer Night* and *Vincent*. All these songs together with more glorious enchantments varied in tone, dynamism and emotion provided the audience a splendid journey through the musical soul. Past Choir Leaders Dayan Fernando and Rumesh Fonseka are also to be commended for their solos of *Silent Worship* and *Bless this House* and also the brothers in harmony; Keshan and Sushan Jayatheepam brought the house to candid delight with the duet of *Amigos Para Siempre*.

The Thomian Boy's Choir is a delightful concept for all boys of the College. This Choir, put together just a month and a half before the concert, practised in the mornings with zealous dedication. The whole choir performed *Lean on me* and *Oh ma Curly headed Baby* both conducted by Amila Gunasena. The jovial young Thomians certainly kept the show going with these performances as well a range of Solo's and Duets.

The All Thomian choir soloists were Sandesh Bartlett, Niran de Mel, Dinel Dias, Shan Jayasena, Chatura Gunasekera, Ashwin Shafter, Shehan Mendis, Rohantha Jayawardene, Denushka Perera, Milindra Kulugammanna and Harith de Mel. The treble soloists left the audience amazed; yearning for the wings of a Dove holding on to a Wild Rose as the Lass with the delicate air passed by. On some enchanted evening a brown Bird sang melodiously to be watched by a lovely Shepherd. The Tenor duets grabbed an emotional heart string as The Prayer soulfully cried out to be ensured later on that we will never walk alone.

After reminiscing on their *Memories* the

audience was treated to a different flavour as the favourite Sinhalese tunes of *Ran Tikiri Sinha* and *Olu Pipeela* sang out in harmony accompanied by the traditional instruments. It was a first for a Thomian Choir and it certainly did add yet another dimension to the performance.

The whole ensemble of performers got together at the end of the show in College Tie to perform John Rutter's *The Music's always there*. The College Hall was filled in the promise of ever present music as the voices combined to ascertain the Thomian Music tradition which will last for ever. The final words added to the intensity as the choir emphasized: "The Music's always there in our Hearts".

The performance ended with the premiering of The College Song in Harmony. This was conducted by Harith de Mel. The Choir reverberated the portals of S.Thomas' College for all they have and are and the essence of Thomianism touched every heart.

It was certainly a tantalizing performance and it must be said that all these efforts add to the Chapel Renovation Fund. This performance certainly shall be the stepping stone for many more to come in the future as the Musical borders of S.Thomas' expand to greater strengths. The show was produced by Mr. Jith Peiris and Directed by Mr. Vinodh Senadheera whose dedication and tireless efforts made this venture a true success. Hats off to Canto Perpetua and its cast and we wish both the Nuova Vitae and the Thomian Boys Choir all the best for the future.

"Men are wise in proportion, not to their experience, but to their capacity for experience"

James Boswell

Days in a Daze!

There was a time, in the not so distant past, when an event organized by S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia, would excite a considerable amount of expectation and anticipation; it was generally expected that Thomians, being Thomians, would come up with something, not only far better organized than their competitors, but also something creative- something that would challenge the norm and raise the bar. This perception was created and maintained by a string of distinctively brilliant productions, projects and events, spearheaded by innovative and pioneering Thomians.

Sadly these feelings of expectation and anticipation have diminished -it is now the exception rather than the rule that S. Thomas' College comes up with something that sets it apart from the rest. True, over the years we have had many successful projects and events taking place, but their positive effects have often been offset by the badly-planned, inefficiently carried-out events that have been taking place with alarming frequency. The positive view of S.Thomas' concerning these areas has been eroded by a particular cancer; its spread has remained unchecked despite the fact that it has done material damage to our reputation and ignored Warden Buck's famous exhortation to all future Thomians: "You belong to one of the best schools in the world, a school with... a most honourable name, and I charge you to try and hand down... that name to those who come after you, untarnished and unimpaired."

The Ternion would like to bring up an issue which has been a black mark on our image: Theme days.

We are referring to the "Day"s many of our forty-odd clubs and societies host under a certain theme, throughout the year. When first put into practice it seemed like a good opportunity to garner support, gain additional members, and receive the acclaim and admiration of those present. In many cases this happened - theme days have proved both successful and meaningful; however, it has to be admitted that there are many clubs and societies that have made a mockery of the whole concept. It is now common for even some of the more active and reputable clubs and societies of College to deliver a poorly-planned, terribly executed, mediocre performance. The entire concept has become, in a large part, a mere exercise in activity- an excuse for coquetry.

Let us first describe what often takes place at such an event: a theme day is planned with a suitable sub-title; an eminent Chief Guest and many prominent schools are invited; souvenirs are printed and refreshments are prepared. On the day of the event, however, we are treated to an afternoon of farcical nonsense, where hardly anything related to the host-club or society is done; rather, many of these theme days turn into what could be more aptly termed "afternoons of entertainment", with a welcome address, the Chief Guest's speech (which is often the only thing that comes close to relevance), a vote of thanks and a gargantuan list of entertainment items! At the end of the day, the only people who benefit are those few over-zealous boys who attend these events religiously, often with the knowledge that help will be needed to finish off the leftover food stuffs.

"Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first,
the lesson afterwards"
Vernon Sanders Law

Before continuing, a few distinctions have to be made: we are not criticising the talent or the ability of the individuals who take part in the entertainment items, nor are we attacking the entertainment items in themselves. We do *not* think that theme days should be stolid affairs, with morose club-members giving speeches and a grave Chief Guest delivering a forty-five minute lecture; entertainment and enjoyment *are* important parts of such events, but when there are so many of them that nothing related to the club or society is actually done, that is when they have lost their purpose.

Having said this, what can be done to solve this problem? It is our belief that for events such as these theme days- where S. Thomas' College is exposed to the outside world- a few guidelines are needed, because their success or failure often defines the image of ourselves we project to the outside world. We should not send guest schools away with the impression that these badly-organised events carry the approval of S. Thomas'.

For example, it could be made compulsory that a club or society should have reached a certain level of activity before it is allowed to host a theme day. An active membership and the successful completion of a few projects during the year are ways in which one can assess a club or society's capability. After all, a club should understand its purpose thoroughly before it gives its knowledge to the public. Next, the proposal for a theme day should not only be put to the Executive Committee of a club or society for approval,

but also to a committee of higher authority, which could judge whether the planned theme day is relevant and organised suitably. This would ensure an evening of quality benefiting all those present and becoming an event hosted by S.Thomas'.

It is the duty of us as Thomians to think out of the box and come up with innovative ventures. It is up to us to host events which will never be ill-spoken of. This system (or something like it) is necessary because its absence has made members of our clubs and societies think that the sort of theme days one often sees now (a Chief Guest's speech and a few entertainment items, along with a presentation), are perfectly acceptable. If we do not curb this dangerous trend, we will probably be faced with a collapse of standards. The above suggestions are just a few of the possible remedies to this situation, and discussion on this topic will give us even more options.

It is time for our clubs and societies to start acting more responsibly; we need not tell them that our school's name has to be protected, and that whenever they organise an event, they are representing S. Thomas' to the world. It is in their hands, and indeed in all of our hands, as ambassadors of our school to the outside world, that the "most honourable name" of S. Thomas' College is placed; will we prove careless stewards?

NOTICES

- Poppy Week will be held during the following weeks and students are encouraged to contribute to this noble cause.
- Chapel Renovation Cards have been distributed among the students and we would urge each student to contribute in the best possible way.

“Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes”

Oscar Wilde

Mr. Leo De Silva, a past headmaster of S. Thomas' College recently passed away. While the entire school mourns the loss of a great teacher and mentor this article outlines his life and also his innumerable contributions to the school.

Mr. K. J. Leo De Silva was born on the 2nd of November 1924 in Seeduwa. He had his primary education at Seeduwa Methodist School and his secondary education at Saint Mary's College in Negombo.

After the successful completion of his secondary education he enrolled at the Teacher Training College at Peradeniya. After three and a half years at the college he joined the Boys' High School at Aluthgama where he served for eighteen months and thereafter joined Christ Church School at Dehiwala where he served for eight years.

A dedicated and hardworking teacher, he later rose to the position of Head Master of the Lower School. He taught Thomians of many ages ranging from Form Two to Form Five throughout his career as a teacher in both the Lower and Middle Schools. He later rose to the position of Head Master of the Middle School.

Mr. Leo De Silva spent over thirty eight years serving in the school as a teacher and served under the Wardens Reverend Canon R. S. De Saram, C. H. Davidson, S. J. Anandanayagam, Reverend A. J. C. Selvaratnam, M. L. C. Ilangakoon and Neville De Alwis.

The Ternion interviewed the Deputy Headmaster of the Upper School, Mr. Denzil De Silva who had a long acquaintance with Mr. Leo De Silva on how he handled the school back in the day.

Mr. Leo De Silva was said to be very friendly and warm with the students

and his classes were extremely fun due to his friendship with his students. He was also a dedicated and absorbed teacher who often kept an eye out for the students and constantly checked their books. He was also a very knowledgeable and experienced Sinhalese teacher.

At the same time he was also a strict and effective disciplinarian who succeeded in guiding boys, sometimes with the use of a cane. Many past students fondly remember him as a kind yet strict teacher.

His relationship with teachers was also no different. His warm personality created a sense of respect within his colleagues and the relationship with them was very strong. He was also a remarkable teacher who treated the school like his home and was a part of every school event in which he helped in every way possible.

When speaking to several of his past pupils many stressed on his passion for teaching and how he dedicated thirty eight years of his life to teaching in S. Thomas' College. Therefore his contribution to College cannot be put aside as one of little significance.

He had an undeniable impact on the lives of those young Thomians he taught throughout his life. S. Thomas' has thus lost a great teacher whose memory will live on in his pupils forever. May he rest in peace!

"A good teacher is like a candle - it consumes itself to light the way for others" - Anonymous

"Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment"

Barry LePatner

Chapel Renovation Fund

The Special Events Team of the Old Boys Association organized a “Grand-Sing-Along” and “400 voices of praise” on the 11th of August and 30th of September respectively. The purpose behind the events was to find revenue to fund the Chapel renovation project.

”400 voices of praise” combined the choirs of Bishops College, Ladies College, St. Benedicts College, St. Peter’s College, Royal College, St. Joseph’s College, S. Thomas’ Preparatory School, Wesley College and S. Thomas’ College, Mount Lavinia and was held at the Cathedral of Christ the living Saviour from 6.00pm onwards. This was a unique event where all schools bonded together within the space of two weeks and produced quite a breath taking service. The Service was excellently attended.

Chelunkalanjali 2007

The Annual Vaani Vizha organized by the Hindu Students Union of S.Thomas’ College Mount Lavinia named Chelungkalanjali 2007 was held on the 13th of October 2007 at the College Hall.

The chief guest for the event was Dr. R. Ajanthan, M.D. and the guest speaker was Arul mozhi Arasi Vithuwan Mrs. Vasantha Vaithiyathan. The guest of honour for the event was the Warden of our College, Dr. David A. Ponniah.

Commerce Day 2007

The Annual Commerce Day 2007 organized by the Commerce Society was held on the 25th of October. The

Commerce Society lived up to its reputation for producing fine theme days. The theme of the day was “Regaining Sri Lanka through Commerce” -a very apt theme given recent times.

Science Day 2007

Organized by the Senior Science Association, the Annual Science Day 2007 was held on the 21st of September at the College Hall from 2.00pm onwards.

The Chief-Guest at the event was Mr. Indrajeet Fernando and the Guest-Speaker was our Warden Dr. David Ponniah. Over 513 students from 20 schools participated at the event. It was a well organised Science Day which had some unique traits. The theme for the day was Economic Development through Technology.

Quiz Team placed 3rd

The College team participated in the general Knowledge quiz organized by Lyceum International College and was placed 3rd. The team members were D.S Wickramasuriya, D.S Casie Chetty, S.R De Alwis and D.S Rajasingham.

Model Parliament reactivated

The Model Parliament was reactivated after a long period of inactivity. This club played a major role in S.Thomas’ over the years and brought together many students interested in the field of politics to the Parliamentary room in the Commerce Section.

“You cannot acquire experience by making experiments.
You cannot create experience. You must undergo it”
Albert Camus

We hope that its revival will rejuvenate the thirst for parliamentary issues whilst creating some passion for open debate within the student body.

Royal ends Thomian Stickers' dominance!

The Annual Royal-Thomian Hockey encounter was held on the 10th of October at the Astro Turf, Reed Avenue, Colombo 7. The Under-19 Thomian Hockey Team suffered an unfortunate loss after seven consecutive years of victory. The Royal College team beat the Thomian team 4-0. The 1st half was played extremely well by the Thomian team despite a very doubtful goal scored by the Royal College team. The 2nd half was a let down in comparison, with the Royal College team securing a further three goals. The team was lead by Captain I.S.A. Gunasekara. The team also consisted of over seven colors men.

1st XI prospers

The Thomian Under-19 Cricket team did extremely well in the past few months. The match against Kingswood College was held at the Big Club Grounds at which the Kingswood team was bundled out for 107. The match was later called off due to bad weather.

The match against D.S. Senanayake College meanwhile was won by the Thomian team. The D.S. Senanayake College team was all out for 150 in the 1st innings with the Thomian team scoring a massive 240 with D. Soysa, 51 and R. Nirrushan, 46, top scoring. The Thomian team reached 169 for the loss of 9 wickets in the 2nd innings. The match against Richmond College held in Galle was also won by the Thomian

team in the 1st innings. The Thomian team also won a match against Mahinda College held at the Big Club Grounds with M.F. Saleem, 64, and A. Fernando, 50, piling up the runs in the 1st innings.

Mini Regatta lost

The Annual Royal-Thomian Mini Regatta was held on the 18th of October recently with the College Team suffering an overall disappointing loss. S. Kalupathirana won the "A" scull. Most other races were lost although the Thomian team finished most of them with record timings.

Chess whiz!

The Sri Lanka Schools Association Chess Tournament was held recently. The Chess team was the first runner-up in the Western Province division. R.T.A. Fernando, A.P.Dias and S.A. Abeynaike received prizes for exceptional performances at this event. The College team became 2nd runner-up at the finals held in Bandarawela.

Strides in Swimming

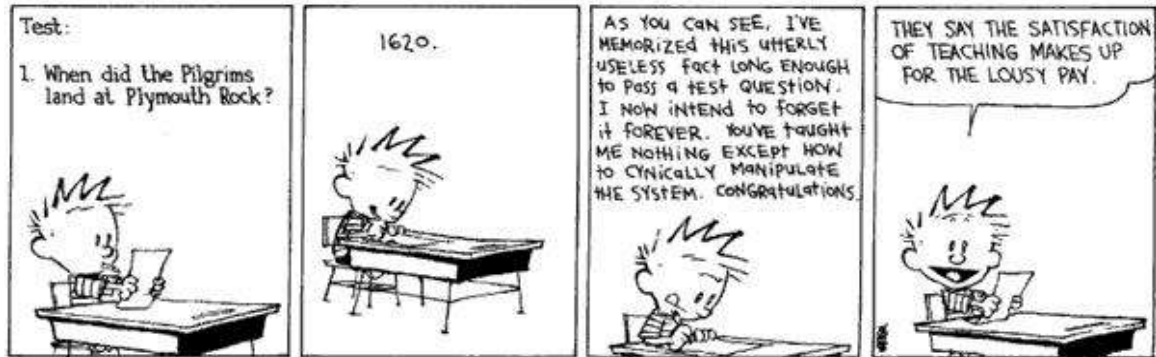
The Public Schools Swimming Meet was held on the 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd of September at the Sugathadasa Stadium. The Under-19 Swimming Team performed extremely well and was placed 1st to become All Island Champions, while the entire team was placed 4th overall.

Upcoming Royal-Thomians

The Dr. R. L. Hayman water polo encounter will be held on the 14th and 17th of November, while the Royal-Thomian football match will be held on the 19th of November.

“Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what man does with what happens to him”

Aldous Huxley



Calling all comic artists!

The Ternion is looking for students who are interested in publishing their own comics on its "Comics" page. If you are interested, please contact one of the Editors.

Thank you.

Editors

W.H.W. De Mel, M.B. Kulugamma, D.T. De Silva, R.P. De Silva, Mrs. T. Bartlett