



ANTO NEWS

JUNE 2025

Newsletter of The Old Antonian Social Club of Australia Inc.
O.B.A. of St Anthony's College, Kandy, Sri Lanka

OUR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

by [Naomal de Alwis](#)

This year marks 10 years of our scholarship program supporting students through their educational journey. Over the past decade, we've helped 22 students — from their school years to university or vocational training, and in some cases, until they secure meaningful employment.

Typically, the Principal along with the Teacher-in-Charge, nominate deserving students for our consideration. Once a candidate is approved, we explore funding options and commit to supporting the student.

Currently, Acting Principal Fr. Dushatha Perera and Teacher-In-Charge Mrs. Thushari de Silva are working to identify the next group of students who would benefit from our scholarships. Once the selection process is complete, we will reach out to potential donors to seek funding approval.



Visiting the college and meeting scholarship recipients is a key item on our committee members' itinerary during visits to Sri Lanka. The below photo and the rest on page 4, taken during recent visits by our President Ashok and Naomal, are a testament to this meaningful tradition.

Read more [here](#).



THE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

Ashok Ariyaratnam

VICE PRESIDENT

Nadeesha Ratnayake

SECRETARY

Indika Kaluarachchi

TREASURER

Dhammika Jayasekera

SOCIAL SECRETARY

Dumudu Rambukwella

SPORTS SECRETARY

Chanaka Waidyaratne

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR

Naomal de Alwis

SOCIAL MEDIA and EDITOR

Afzal Laphir

WEB MASTER

Manoj Wijekulasuriya

PUBLIC OFFICER

Martin Pereira

GENERAL COMMITTEE

Senaka Amerasinghe

Jayantha Peries

Mohan Gomez

Robin Koelmeyer

Junius de Silva

Titus Peter

Denver Pereira

Sujeewa Amarasinghe

Chaminda Adikari (NSW Rep)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My dear fellow Antonians,

It brings me great pride and joy to present this President's Report at the 171st College Day celebrations — a fitting occasion to reflect on the year that has been and to renew our shared commitment to the spirit of St. Anthony's College.

Since our AGM in November 2024, the Club has been actively engaged in events that strengthen our fellowship, honour our traditions, and continue our mission of service.

We ushered in the festive season with our much-loved **Christmas Party at Jells Park**, where laughter, music, and the joyful presence of families reminded us what it means to belong to this special community. My heartfelt thanks to all who made it a memorable day.

In **early January**, I had the honour of visiting our Alma Mater in Kandy. I was warmly welcomed by **Rev. Fr. Rector Henry Wijeratne**, **Rev. Fr. Deputy Principal Dushantha Perera**, and several dedicated teachers. Most touching of all was the opportunity to meet our **scholarship recipients** — bright, determined students whose lives are being transformed thanks to your generosity. Seeing firsthand how our scholarship program is helping children pursue education, excel in sports, and grow in confidence was truly moving. I extend my deepest gratitude to our donors, the College administration, and especially Mrs. Thushari de Silva, our dedicated teacher coordinator, for helping sustain this remarkable project into its **10th consecutive year**.

January also saw us taking part in the **Quadrangular Cricket Tournament**. A special thank you goes to our Sports Secretary, **Chanaka Waidyaratne**, and our



spirited team of cricketers who braved a sweltering 40°C summer day to represent us with commitment and pride.

In **February**, our Club achieved a milestone by raising an incredible **One Million Rupees** in support of the **Antonian Rugby Board**. This unprecedented contribution is a testament to the generosity of our members — with a special shout-out to **Leroy Fonseka**, the legendary captain of our 1988 champion side, whose leadership continues to inspire.

Come **March**, we once again renewed our friendly rivalry with the Trinity OBA at the **Big Match**. While the scoreboard didn't tip in our favour, the real win was the enduring camaraderie and fellowship shared between the two great Colleges.

A special note of thanks goes to **Naomal de Alwis** for his dedicated efforts in organising this year's **College Day celebrations** in Melbourne. Your commitment to making this day meaningful for all is truly appreciated.

I'm also proud to share that our Sydney-based Old Antonians are hosting the College Day for the very first time — a historic step that reflects the expanding spirit of Antonian brotherhood across Australia. Congratulations to the **Sydney Old Antonians** on this wonderful initiative!

On behalf of the Club, I also extend heartfelt congratulations

to the Service Award recipients for 2025. These awards recognize and celebrate individuals whose tireless contributions have strengthened both the Old Antonian Social Club and the wider Antonian fraternity in Australia. Your service does not go unnoticed — and today, we honour you.

Looking ahead, I am thrilled to announce that the **"Wings of Elegance" 42nd Annual Dinner Dance** will be held on **Saturday, 20th September 2025** at **Springvale Townhall**. This signature event promises to be truly special, with **Clifford Richards** from Sri Lanka as our guest artist. I'm delighted to learn that many Antonians from Sri Lanka, overseas, and across Australia have already booked flights and tickets, making it a truly international Antonian gathering. I warmly invite all **Antonians, families, and friends** to join us for an unforgettable night of music, elegance, and camaraderie.

As we celebrate our 171st College Day here in Australia, let us reflect with pride on what we have accomplished together. From strengthening ties with our school to fostering unity among Antonians worldwide, we remain true to the values instilled in us by our beloved alma mater.

May God bless you all,

May God bless St. Anthony's College.

In Antonian Spirit,

Ashok Ariyaratnam

President -Old Antonian Social Club Inc



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

I am indeed honoured to send a note of appreciation to the 171st College Day Celebration of Old Antonian Social Club, SACKOBA Australia as you celebrate the 10 years of the Scholarship Scheme. I am deeply touched by the worthy cause of the event: raising funds for scholarships. Congratulations on 10 Years of Transforming Lives Through Your Scholarship Scheme...!

Over the past decade, your dedication and generosity have converted the lives of countless students at St. Anthony's College, Kandy, many of whom would not have had the opportunity to pursue their education and extracurricular activities without your support. This milestone is not just a celebration of the years passed - it is a testament to your enduring commitment to giving back and to the power of a united alumni community. SACKOBA-Australia has proven your worth



and I wish the blessings from above to shower upon you in the name of the Holy Saint of Padua, St. Anthony, the patron of the college.

As the Rector, I have seen firsthand the impact of your efforts. Your scholarships have not only eased financial burdens but also inspired hope, encouraged excellence, and built

confidence in our students. Your legacy is now woven into the fabric of our school's story.

We join you in celebrating this remarkable achievement and look forward to many more years of meaningful partnership. Thank you for keeping the spirit of St. Anthony's College, Kandy, alive and thriving.

LUX DE COELO....!

With warmest regards and deepest gratitude!

Rev Fr Henry Wijeratne OSB
Principal, St. Anthony's College,
Kandy

ACTING PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It is with a profound sense of pleasure that I extend my warmest wishes to the Old Antonian Social Club Inc. on the celebration of the "171st College Day".

This remarkable milestone is a testimony to the enduring legacy, unity, and the deep-rooted spirit that continues to flourish within the global Antonian family. It reflects the perpetual pledge to maintain the proud traditions and cherished values of St. Anthony's College.

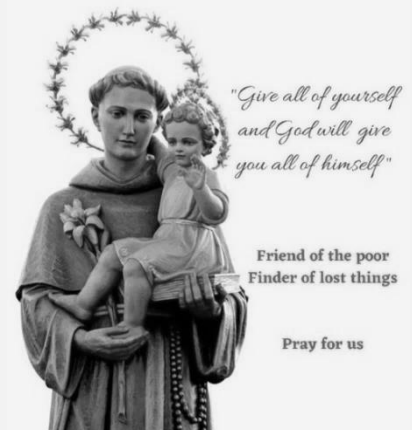
Your dedication is keeping the flame of our beloved Alma Mater alive is both inspiring and deeply appreciated.

I wish to extend a special gratitude for your decade-long



commitment to the scholarship scheme. This initiative has opened doors of opportunity for young Antonians, creating an impact not only in the individuals, but in the future of our college community as well.

Happy Feast of St Anthony of Padua



As you commemorate this special occasion, let us all celebrate not only our shared past, but also the bright future that lies ahead.

Thank you for keeping the spirit of St. Anthony's College alive, vibrant, and ever forward.

With Best wishes!

Rev Fr Dushantha Perera OSB

Acting Principal
St. Anthony's College, Kandy

From Page 1

ASHOK & NAOMAL'S SRI LANKAN VISIT



With Scholarship Students and Rev Fr Henry



With Rev Fr Dushantha, and Teacher-In-Charge, Mrs. Thushari de Silva



With Rev Fr Stephen and Rev Fr Henry



With members of the Colombo OBA



2025 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Completed Events:

(Refer pages 5 & 6 for details)

1. Saints Quadrangular Cricket Tournament

Date: 28 January 2025

Venue: Le Page Park Cheltenham.

2. OBA Big Match

Date: 22 March 2025

Venue: Livingstone Reserve, Cranbourne East.

Future Events:

3. 171st College Day Celebration

Date: 15 June 2025

Venue: St Gregory the Great Church, 71 Williamsons Road, Doncaster

4. ANTO DANCE '25

Date: 20 Sep 2025

Venue: Springvale Town Hall

5. 44th AGM

Date: 16 Nov 2025

(tentative)

Venue: TBA

6. Christmas BBQ

Date: 7 Dec 2025

(tentative)

Venue: TBA



CLUB ACTIVITIES IN 2025

SAINTS QUADRANGULAR T20 CRICKET TOURNAMENT (28 Jan 2025)



OBA BIG MATCH (22 Mar 2025)



REFURBISHED RUGBY BOOTS PROJECT 2025

by **Senaka Amerasinghe**

The year 2025 happens to be the 3rd consecutive year for us to provide refurbished Rugby boots to use at the forthcoming Rugby season. This year we managed to collect and send 65 pairs of boots including 5 new boots, 17 new Rugby balls, 19 refurbished joggers on 22/02 to be available well before the commencement of the season in early May with the ETA on the 19/04. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, distribution was delayed to early June and also the 1st XV season uncharacteristically began with the knockout tournament in late April instead of the customary league in mid-May. The boots were mainly distributed amongst the U12, U14 & U16 teams, and used for the match against DS on 6 June.

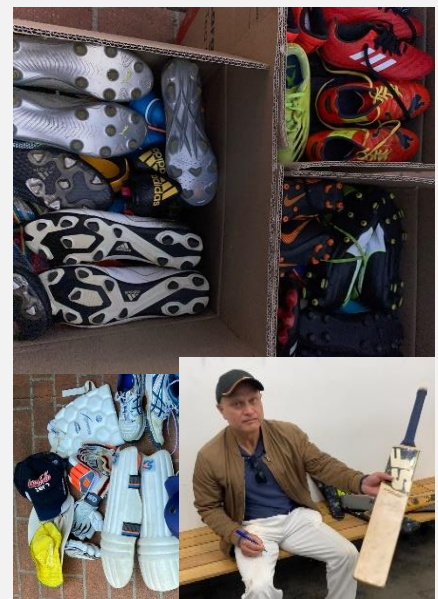
Norman Thompson, Manoj Wijekulasuriya, Christy Peter, Titus Peter, continued to support the initiative with Dhumudu Rambukwella, Denver Pereira, Junious De Silva joining them. Special mention needs to be made of all the anonymous donors amongst whom we had an old boy donating 14 new Rugby balls & 2 new pairs of new boots with another donating 16 pairs of refurbished boots, clothing etc. & also sponsored the freight of the collection from Sydney to Melbourne and also to Sri Lanka which totalled to about \$ 175/-. Antonian Rugby Board, group 85 members Nalinda Suriyampola, Jayantha Manthilaka and Dhammika Karunaratne looked after affairs at the SL end which included the payment of duty.

Apart from the above for Rugby, we also received 2 autographed bats from the Melbourne based Antonian Cricket legend Marlon Von Hagt & a full set of new cricket gear from a well-wisher which were presented to the best young performers at the big match and the 50 over encounter vs Trinity College. The cost of freight of \$ 165 /- was also borne by the same well-wisher. Lester Herathge along with an anonymous old boy and also a

well-wisher donated refurbished cricket gear filling two and a half boxes (tea chests) which will be shipped to Sri Lanka shortly.

We wish to continue with the refurbished boots project. The collections must be made immediately after the Oval / Football season that culminates by the end of winter. If we do our rounds with the clubs & friends, we can collect many free of charge. We have around 40 players in the U 19 squad, 25 in the U 18 squad, 30 in the U 16 squad, 25 each in the U 12 & 14 (2 teams each) - approximately 150 Rugby players. We also have Hockey & Football teams using the same type of boots. The potential to help is enormous. The Cricket gear too will be well received throughout the year as 1st X Cricket is being played from August to May and age group Cricket during the rest of the period. As & when sizable quantities of Cricket gear are collected from clubs & individuals who wish to part with them, arrangements can be made to deliver to SL.

All these contributions are gratefully acknowledged and very much appreciated. The boots sent continue to serve very well easing the burden of purchasing boots cost of which is prohibitive with the cost-of-living pressures in Sri Lanka. Same sentiments are expressed with the Cricket gear as well. These donations cost nothing. All we must do is to organize ourselves and spread the message about the project. The recipients are sincerely appreciative of our efforts.



CLUB ACTIVITIES IN 2025

COMMITTEE MEETING at Esther and Martin's home (9 May 2025)



ANTONIAN GATHERINGS IN MELBOURNE



BASKETBALL IS BACK IN COLLEGE

by **Jayantha Peries**

Basketball (BB) at college commenced in the late 1950s and grew rapidly through the 1960's and 1970's. College became noticed by the national BB officials for our competitive standing alongside other major BB schools in Colombo and outstations. We had Prasanna Peries being selected to play for Sri Lanka in 1973, the first Antonian to have that honour. The sport was gathering momentum in the 1970s with several of our players being included in the Central Province team and being noticed by the national selectors at the "Nationals" and Public Schools' tournaments where Antonian BB players went "toe-to-toe" against the best BB players in the country and schools.

Sadly, basketball in college was suspended from about 2010 to commence erecting the six storey "Padua" building on the site that had two Tennis courts adjoining the BB court. The BB court was used as a convenient thoroughfare to transport materials for the construction of the building. As the construction of the building dragged on for several years, BB too went further into oblivion. The responsibility of seeing the building to completion fell on the shoulders of our current Principal, Rev. Fr. Henry Wijeratne. On his visit to Australia in 2012, Fr. Henry made it known to us that he is committed to resurrect BB in college as soon as the building was completed. He expressed his concern and regret about BB having been suspended for such a long period in college. But that is now history, and a new era for BB dawned in 2022 with plans for a new BASKETBALL COMPLEX like we have not seen in college before.

The first stage of the complex which was a new BB court was opened in late 2022.



Fr. Henry found the perfect ally he needed in Rohan Wijesinghe, the President of the Colombo branch to kickstart the program. Rohan himself was an excellent BB player, having played for college and the Central Province team. Rohan sent out a circular to the College of Presidents of SACKOBA in March 2022, to announce the proposal to build a BB Complex in college. This project was designed to make it the premier BB venue in the Central Province and to make St. Anthony's College a force to be reckoned with in BB in the country. Most importantly, the students were given the opportunity to expand their choice of sports once again by selecting a global, Olympic sport that was offered by our college.

The First Stage which has been completed included a new BB Court with an A-Grade bitumen surface on the same court as the old one, a fibreglass transparent shooting backboards and rings of international standards, attached to concrete pillars and acquisition of a portable backboard with ring for shooting practice.

The construction of players' changing rooms, and washrooms is currently in progress, and the work planned for future includes visitor toilets, electronic scoreboard, concrete terraced seating for spectators, floodlights for main court and car park on the adjoining land which can be used as a staff car park on school days.

Half Court in Primary School

In addition to the main complex that is planned around the main BB court for competitions, it is proposed that BB commences at college from the Primary School. This will give the kids of ages seven and above a feel for the game before they reach the "upper school" and play competitive BB to represent college. This will certainly give college BB an edge over other schools who take BB far more seriously than college. This initiative (we believe) will be "a first" among most Sri Lankan schools where this great game will have its roots in Primary schools.

The "Half Court" will have a concrete playing surface with a safety fence around it. A portable Shooting Board with Ring of adjustable height will be acquired for the kids to learn and practice shooting.



The portable backboard with ring for shooting practice

.... Continued on Page 9

From Page 8

The organisers (through Rohan Wijesinghe) are appealing to the Universal Antonian fraternity to assist in their completion of the BB complex by donating funds to this project.

Rohan Wijesinghe has written to our President Ashok to inform him that this part of the project for the Primary school will be rolled out next.

He is reaching out to the Australian Branch to assist in making this a reality. In his own

words: *"This will be a major breakthrough for kids as they will enjoy BB during intervals. Surely the Australian Branch could be the proud owners of this part of the project. We could display a name board stating - Sponsored by SACKOBA Australian Branch"*

The new BB court was opened with "muted fanfare" in 2022, where the focus was mainly to give thanks to God for getting the first part of the project completed and the doors opened for those interested in playing the sport. Rev. Fathers Shamindra Jayawardene (Recently appointed Abbott General of the

OSB order of priests globally), Fr. Henry Wijeratne (Principal, currently on medical leave), Fr. Dushantha Perera (Acting Principal), Rohan Wijesinghe Project leader, the Senior prefects and other distinguished personnel attended the "soft" opening of the new BB court. What was most significant was the participation of 80 students who turned up to be future BB players for St. Anthony's college. The joy that rang out from their short game of BB must have resounded in the heavens loudest of all.

AN ANTONIAN ABBOT GENERAL

The **Most Rev. Dr Shamindra Jayawardena OSB**, a proud Old Antonian from Group 90, has been elected as the new Abbot General of the Sylvestro Benedictine Congregation. This momentous election, held on 28 May 2025, is historic for several reasons: he is the first Sri Lankan and only the second Asian to be chosen for this esteemed position. Remarkably, the General Chapter that elected him is also the first in the Congregation's history to be held outside of Italy.

With this appointment, Father Shamindra becomes the 119th successor of Saint Sylvester Guzzolini, the founder of the monastic order.

Born on 13 January 1972, Fr. Shamindra took his first vows on 15 August 1992 and professed his final vows on 15 August 1998. He was ordained a priest on 21 December 2000. Prior to his election as Abbot General, he served as the Prior Abbot of the Sri Lanka regional province, having been elected on 21 November 2013 and re-elected for a second term in 2019.



During his time at college, Fr Shamindra was actively involved in the choir and the Catholic Students' Federation. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Peradeniya before departing for Rome to pursue his postgraduate studies.



Above: Fr Shamindra with President Ashok in Kandy (Jan 2025)

Below: Fr Shamindra met with then President Afzal during his brief visit to Melbourne in 2013.



CLUB ACTIVITIES IN LATE 2024



FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW: ANTONIANS WHO EXCELLED BEYOND EXCELLENCE.

by **Bernard VanCuylenburg** and **Sisira Weragoda**

Prologue

As an introduction to the subject of this article I had to choose a title which nails it all in just one line. It is the story of an academic miracle which emanated from a simple school in its infancy, St. Anthony's College Katugastota, by a group of students who raised the bar of achievement and excellence in the prestigious London Matriculation Examination in 1934, with a 100% pass rate **THUS OBTAINING THE BEST RESULTS IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE**. It was a path breaking year for the College and a validation of the school's excellence. Twelve students sat the examination that year of whom six obtained first division passes, and six obtained second division passes. Their names which should be emblazoned in letters of gold in the field of education, will be mentioned in this article. Paraphrasing the title of the book, we should "Carve their names with pride".

Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort. And from the small island of Ceylon, twelve students competing with some of the best brains in the British Empire set a record-breaking standard of excellence. As news of their singular stellar academic achievement was made public in the halls of learning all around the British Empire, these students acquired the reputation of 'Giant Killers!'.

To set some perspective to their story which also entails a fair share of drama as will be seen later, a brief reference to the early history of St. Anthony's College is worth mentioning.

In The Beginning

It was Father Felice Zoppi a Franciscan friar from the Chinese missionary field who with untiring zeal opened a school for boys and one for girls in the house where he resided, in the year 1854. Mr. Van Twest was the Head Teacher of the boys' school. That was the genesis of Saint Anthony's College in Kandy. Constraints of space and time do not permit a detailed account of the school begun by Father Zoppi in this article, and we fast forward the clock to the year 1927. It was the year in which the plague hit Kandy, and the year in which Bishop Bede Beekmeyer purchased the old "Dunuwille Walauwa" in Katugastota, the present premises where the College stands today.

Towards the end of 1927 Reverend Father Lawrence Hyde obtained permission from the Bishop to shift the junior boarders from Kandy to Katugastota. On the 16th of January 1928 the junior boarders were installed at Katugastota. Two lads from the Kandy school joined the classes in Katugastota to share in the spirit of the new St. Anthonys which, like the bird in Egyptian mythology that burnt itself on the pyre and arose phoenix-like from the ashes every five hundred years, heralded a new beginning for the College.

During the first few years the school held classes from the kindergarten up to the Cambridge Junior with a staff of twelve, gradually increasing the range to the London Matriculation Examination and an Inter-Arts Form. It was Father Lawrence Hyde the Principal who in 1929 was responsible for the first set of open classrooms erected alongside the mighty Mahaveli,

and these classrooms today house the Primary School of the College. Father Hyde headed a formidable team of pioneers – they were Mr. P.B.A. Weerakoon, Brother Columban Macky, Brother Joseph, Brother Lysons, and Brother Timothy. Reverend Father D.D. Barsenbach was appointed Director of Boarders in 1937 and classes were started for Boarders and others who wished to come over from Kandy.

However, it was not a case of "all work and no play". There were cricket matches between the lads from Kandy and their rivals in Katugastota, and often it was the latter team that was victorious. From 1936 to 1938 more than half of the players in the cricket team were from the Katugastota school, who came first in the under 16 division and later in the 1st division. They also outdid their counterparts from Kandy in the field of athletics. The lads from Katugastota belonged to the Maroon House while those from Kandy belonged to the Light Blue and Double Blue House.

It was here that twelve conscientious, diligent and hardworking students in 1934 set the world – or rather – The British Empire alight, bringing glory to themselves and the College by obtaining the best results in the London Matriculation Examination scoring a pass rate of 100%. These are their names:

First division passes: K.S. Gunaratne, T.B. Naranpanawe, W.H. Navaratne, T. Tikiribanda Illangaratna, S.S. Vedanayagam, P. Roberts.

Second Division: P.J.I. Thistle, J.J. Peries, C.E. Offen, H.W. Pereira, T. Arthur, R.J.H. Reeves.

.... Continued on Page 12

Cometh The Hour Cometh The Man

When the results of the Examination were announced, it was the finest hour in the life of the new College. The reputation of the school soared on eagle's wings, and for a long time they basked in their seasons in the sun and walked in valleys of green. The Man of the Hour responsible for this record-breaking result and to whom many accolades and plaudits are due was the legendary Mr. P.B.A. Weerakoon (Mr PBA Weerakoon was elected to the Parliament in 1956 and was appointed Deputy Minister Education till the end of 1959). Throughout the years, many tributes have been paid to Teachers. To name a few, Alexander the Great once said "I am indebted to my Father for living, but to my teacher for living well." He should know because his teacher in philosophy, law and politics was none other than Aristotle, the Greek Philosopher and Polymath. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk the first President of Turkey said "A good teacher is like a candle. It consumes itself to light the world for others". Maria Montessori the Italian Physician and Educator founder of the Kindergarten School system which builds on the way for children to learn naturally, remarked "The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say "The children are now working as if I did not exist!"

It was Guy Kawasaki the American Marketing Specialist and Author who wrote "If you have to put someone on a pedestal, put a teacher". There is a Japanese proverb which sums up a teacher's worth beautifully – quote -"Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher".

Mr. P.B.A. Weerakoon to whom the phrases quoted above could apply admirably, was a teacher who to this day evokes the

deepest respect and admiration and deserves to be placed on the highest pedestal. He was a special teacher who saw "tomorrow" in the eyes of every child. Mr. Weerakoon had the reputation of not just teaching, but by acting like a compass which activated the magnets of curiosity and knowledge in his pupils. He believed that all his students could excel, and learning was not limited to classroom walls. Whatever he wrote on the blackboard of life in a classroom could never be erased. He was not just a teacher who supplied facts and taught a class, but a special kind of teacher in whose presence students became different people. Please pardon the pun, but without teachers like Mr. Weerakoon life would have no class!

However, following the success by these students, dark clouds gathered on the horizon and there were negative forces at work, which for a while threatened to sow the seeds of despair. The Board of Examiners in England insinuated that the results obtained by these students could have been due to some form of cheating or malpractice. Some of them surmised that it was impossible to obtain such a result without fraudulence. When the news was conveyed to Father Lawrence Hyde the Principal and Mr. Weerakoon, it was the proverbial body blow, and for a while they were at a loss as to how they could deal with this ugly monster of jealousy and bias which had reared its ugly head.

But the Members of the Board of Examiners in Britain had not reckoned with Mr. Weerakoon who at the time was a man in his prime, of solid physique and strength. But more than that, he was a man of stronger spirit and character with a sound code of ethics, decency and fair play with high principles of honour, civility of manner, and refinement. Their

accusation awoke the lion in him and he threw down the gauntlet to the Board requesting them to reset the examination adding the 'coup de grace' when he told them that once the examination papers were reset, he would send a new class of students to sit the exam with the guarantee that they would obtain better results than the students who obtained the record breaking results in the first exam !! Stunned at this challenge to which they had no answer, the Board of Examiners were forced to eat humble pie and the original examination results were upheld. It seemed that in the words of Lord Tennyson, Mr. Weerakoon was determined "to strive to find and not to yield".

Epilogue

Mighty oaks from little acorns grow. The humble beginnings of Saint Anthony's College in 1854, and the relocation of the college to Katugastota in 1928 were the genesis of the school which later earned the reputation of being one of the leading educational institutions in the island. This is the beloved Alma Mater we love so well. The College on the hill still stands today in majesty as she has for over 150 years while the mighty Mahaveli meanders along. If those walls could talk, to what would they testify? What could they tell you of things they have witnessed and heard? Only memories of the thousands of students, who over the years have passed through her hallowed portals....memories that whisper in the silence.....

One of the star students Tikiri Banda Illangaratna later became a successful Politician and was a Minister of Trade. W.H. Navaratne and T.B. Naranpanawe became Divisional Revenue Officers.

This article was written over a period of time mostly at night when the world slept. Finding the appropriate words to pay tribute to these students who excelled

From Page 12

beyond the bounds of excellence and then follow it through with a tribute to the Teacher who was responsible for this unique accomplishment, was not easy through the sights and sounds of the day. It all came together in the stygian darkness of some long nights which engulfed me in waves of nostalgia for the school we love.

Although a time span of 88 years divides us, We conclude with this tribute to Mr. Weerakoon and his gallant band of students who in the year 1934 brought glory to the college and credit to themselves:

"Softly the leaves of memory fall

Gently we gather and treasure them all

Some may forget now that you are gone

But Antonians will remember – no matter how long."

It is hard to forget those who gave us so much to remember.

SACKOBA AUSTRALIA WEBSITE

It's been a year since we launched our website <https://www.sackobaaustralia.org/>

Designed with our vibrant community of alumni in mind, our website is your ultimate hub for connection, inspiration, and growth.

Visit our website today and experience the power of the SACK OBA Australia community like never before!

Some of the useful features include:

- Past copies of [NEWSLETTERS](#), ranging from our very [first edition](#) in 1981 to the [last edition](#) in 2024.
- [SERVICE AWARD](#) Recipients.
- [MEMBERS BLOG](#) – series of articles from Bernard VanCuylenberg and Afzal Laphir
- [CLUB PROJECTS](#), including details of the scholarship program.
- [GALLERY](#) – photographs from past events
- [COLLEGE](#) AND [CLUB HISTORY](#)
- [COMMITTEES](#) – Current and past



[Home](#)

[About Us](#)

[Club News](#)

[Membership](#)

[Gallery](#)

[Contact Us](#)



OLD ANTONIAN SOCIAL CLUB INC. AUSTRALIA

Old Antonian Social Club Inc Australia was established in 1981. The purpose of the Association is to build a strong network of social connections among the old Antonians around Australia and the world, help worthwhile causes sponsored by the Alma Mater.

[Learn more](#)



A U S T R A L I A

WHERE ANTONIANS GATHER in SYDNEY

With Rev Fr Clement Gnanapragasam and Rev Fr. Eugene



With Gerard Amerasinghe, Premalal de Silva and Anura Mawilmada



With Neil Bogahalanda visiting from Sri Lanka



With Channa Moonnekulama (from USA) and Pathmanathan



Antonion team at Saints Quadrangular in Sydney



With Navinna (from Dubai)

in PERTH



L-R: Alastair McKenzie, Michael & Chris Drieberg, Geoffrey Paul and Rodney Taylor.

in MELBOURNE



Celebrating Chan Fa's 76th Birthday.

L-R: Chris Drieberg, Leyriss VanderWert, Chris Henricus, Chan Fa (the 1st Antonian to play Rugby for Ceylon), Paddy Guneratne (1966 Rugby Captain), Michael Macky (1965 Rugby Captain), Norman Thompson and Peter Cortelling (1970 Rugby Captain).

MARLON RETURNS TO THE CREASE IN SRI LANKA

by **Afzal Laphir**

The clock rolled back to the 1980s, a time when Sri Lanka was witnessing the rise of a prodigious young opening batsman. At just 19 years old, he had already dominated the school cricket scene and was rapidly rising through the ranks, around the same time Aravinda de Silva was beginning to carve out his legendary international career.

During the recent tour of Sri Lanka by the Melbourne based Colombo Sports Club, that young talent—now 60-year-old **Marlon Von Hagt**—found himself reflecting on his journey. The visit offered him a nostalgic opportunity to revisit the grounds and the city where his name first captured the imagination of cricket fans across the island, remembered for his flair and early promise.

The touring over 40s Masters team, captained by Jerome Ephraums, played four matches during their brief tour, with Marlon featuring in three of them. In the opening game on Sunday, 20th April, they faced the Colombo Cricket Club Masters, led by former Sri Lankan international Roger Wijesuriya. At the CCC grounds, Marlon scored an unbeaten 53 — a performance that echoed a remarkable coincidence. Nearly four decades earlier, in November 1984, he had recorded the exact same score of 53 in his first international outing at the same venue, opening for the Sri Lanka Board XI against a touring England side. That innings came against a formidable English attack featuring Norman Cowans, Neil Foster, Richard Ellison, Phil Edmonds, and Pat Pocock.

In his next game, played on 23rd April against a combined SSC/St John's Nugegoda Masters side, Marlon produced a stylish

unbeaten 76 at the picturesque SSC grounds. Many of his Colombo Sports Club teammates considered it the finest innings they had seen him play in years. What made the moment even more special for Marlon was the presence of his beloved mum in the crowd — it was the first time she had watched him bat in nearly 40 years.

As a footnote, Marlon played his first international game at SSC in January 1986, representing Sri Lanka A — captained by Arjuna Ranatunga — in a four-day match against England A, led by Mark Nicholas. He scored 22 runs in

the only innings he batted in that “unofficial Test.”

In the third game, played against the Cavaliers at the Colts Cricket Grounds, Marlon scored 13 runs.

The touring team also featured Dirk D'Silva—Marlon's opposing Big Match captain in 1984—former Sri Lanka star Manjula Munasinghe, and Josephian Gary Gunesekera.

Despite the soaring heat and humidity in Colombo, conditions rarely encountered in Melbourne, the team performed creditably, winning two of the four 35-over matches.





OLD ANTONIAN SOCIAL CLUB INC.

A U S T R A L I A

Proudly presents

Wings of Elegance

A Night of Grace, Glamour and Flight

42nd Annual Dinner Dance

SPRINGVALE TOWN HALL

SATURDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER 2025

7.00 PM Onwards



Entertainment by
Clifford Richards,
Band Mystery & DJ Rush



Your ticket includes a delicious Eastern & Western smorgasbord dinner catered by Silverline Caterers, along with a complimentary bottle of single malt Scotch whisky and two bottles of wine per table



Harvey Norman
your local store
DANDENONG

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR

DRESS CODE

Gents - Black Tie or Lounge | Ladies - After 5

FOR TABLE BOOKINGS CALL

ASHOK	NADEESHA	NAOMAL
0425 497 733	0412 866 275	0407 477 447

\$130
PER HEAD

RAFFLE DRAW - AIR TICKETS + MORE