



# St Patrick's College Jaffna OBA

Melbourne, Australia

P.O.Box 574, Rosanna, Vic 3084



Newsletter 5

September 2008

*Dear Fellow Patricians,*

*I am delighted to meet you again via this Newsletter.*

*I wish to take this opportunity to express the association's deep sorrow at the untimely demise of one of our Patricians and founding patron of Melbourne SPC Jaffna OBA. Most of you are aware that Dr. Emmanuel Patrick served as Patron of our association for a very long time. The committee wishes to offer our prayers and convey deepest sympathies to the members of his family and friends.*

*We have been actively engaged in organizing the forthcoming Patrician Nite for sometime. Our committee members' enthusiasm and drive led the way for the sale of all tickets within just 10 days. Their sheer dedication and commitment need to be applauded. Maximum effort was put in to contact all known patricians. It is the limitation of seating accommodation at the chosen venue that compelled us to restrict the issue of extra tickets sought and our apologies for those who missed out.*

*Our open invitation in our last newsletter for forming a Patricians and Friends Musical Group received a positive response and many talented musicians have come forward to form a musical group. I urge you to give your support and encouragement to these budding musicians.*

*I once again thank all members and their families for their cooperation and look forward to seeing you at the Patrician Nite on September 13, 2008.*

*Jeevaranjan*

President

**Our former patron the Late Dr . E. Patrick will be remembered at the 6.00 pm vigil mass on Saturday 13th September 2008 at St. Scholastica's Church, Burwood, prior to the Patrician Nite program.**

*May God Grant Him Eternal Peace*

## SPC Jaffna OBA—Melbourne

**Established :** ..... 1992

**Current Membership:**..... 28

**No. of Patricians in Vic :** ..... 100 Approx

**Annual Membership Fee:** .... \$20.00

### **Our Objectives:**

- Socialise and share the Patrician spirit with benevolence
- Support our Alma Mater in meaningful ways

**OBA Locker :** St Pascal's Church  
100, Albion Rd, Box Hill.

## Committee— 2008/09

**President:** Jeevaranjan.Fernando

**Secretary:** Antony Gratian

**Asst. Secretary:** Angelo Fernando

**Treasurer :** Philip Ravindraraj

**Social Secretary:** Nimal Augustine

**Committee Members:** Cornelius Sebastian

Jerad Jogaratnam

Anton Newton

Guna Arulanantham

Alfred Reynold

William Nimalraj

## Cricket Team Captains—2008/09

**Matthews Team :** Ranjan Gunaratnam

**Long Team :** Isidore .F. Manoraj

**Dunne Team :** Terry James

**Bonjean Team :** Dilip Manuelpillai

## Where to... From here.....?

As the founding member of the St Patrick's Old Boys Association in Melbourne, I was approached to write an article giving a background of the origins of the St. Patrick's OBA in Melbourne and my thoughts on the future directions of the association.

I arrived in Melbourne, Australia in the year 1975. At that time, it was very rare to see any Srilankans or any Asians for that matter in Melbourne.

Very soon after the Anti-Tamil riots in Srilanka in 1983, a few Srilankan Tamils gathered at a meeting in the Melbourne City Town Hall. Everyone was very concerned about the plight of our fellow brethren back home. At that meeting a decision was made to lobby the then Australian government to allow Srilankan Tamils to come to Australia on refugee grounds. We were asked to gather signatures for a petition to be forwarded to the government.

Thousands of signatures were obtained from fellow Aussies at work and outside. It was a difficult task as we had to explain the situation to fellow Aussies and obtain their signature. On many occasions, we were refused signatures by some Aussies who did not want to be part of this. In spite of that, we continued our efforts and were finally successful in forcing the Australian government to allow Srilankan Tamils into Australia as refugees.

Not long after, one of my former teachers Mr. Satchithanandan arrived in Sydney. He was solely instrumental in getting me to organise a St Pat's OBA in Melbourne having himself founded the OBA in Sydney. Finally I agreed to do that.

The St Patrick's OBA Melbourne was formed exclusively as a friendship association. The primary function was to enable old Patricians to meet on St Patrick's Day and to enjoy each others company and reminisce about old times. It was meant to be a social group to the enjoyment of the old boys and their families. It was not formed for any other purpose.

We believed a constitution was unnecessary as we only met once a year on St Patrick's Day. This was not a corporate entity, just a very small friendship association.

The Inaugural St Patrick's OBA meeting was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1992 at the St Joseph's Parish hall in Northcote.

We were fortunate to have our former Rector Rev. Fr. Mathuranayagam to say mass and give his blessings to the association. Dr. Mariampillai of Ballarat was our very first president and Dr. E. Patrick of Carnegie, who was a long established Melbourne resident and well known physician was our very first patron.

As I write this article, I have just received the sad news that Dr. E. Patrick had passed away. He was a pillar of strength to our association and took a very keen interest in the welfare of the OBA in Melbourne. Whenever we approached him for anything to do with St Patrick's, he was always very generous with his time and his financial contributions. He would simply ask, "How much do you need?" and then promptly wrote out a cheque for that amount.

St Patrick's was very dear to his heart and on many occasions said that "the day will come when St Patrick's will again rise from its ashes like the Phoenix". I hope his dream will come true. It was a very sad moment when he was removed from his office as a patron in a very un-patrician like manner.

The very first St Patrick's day was held at the Hemmingway Park in Dandenong on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 1992. We played a social cricket match with Jaffna College and a free barbeque lunch was provided and a good time was had by all.

Every subsequent year, we added different things, such as games for the ladies and for the children. We also decided to help our Alma Mater in some small way. We offered a scholarship to the best performing student in the G.C.E. (O.L.). This was presented at the Annual prize giving.

Later on we came up with an idea to have a dinner dance. This was meant to be our primary fund raising event.

The sole objective of the dinner dance was to generate funds so that we could afford to have a free BBQ lunch or dinner on St Patrick's Day and to have enough funds to send to the college for the student scholarship without additional contributions from the members.

The dinner dance was a major success as we pulled in crowds of 300 or more. Office bearers worked tirelessly with very little help from fellow members.

However, we were restricted as few of the members refused to pay \$25 for dinner and dance. Therefore our profit was very little. Because of this, some of the office bearers even spent their own money in order to keep the costs down so that we could generate some profit. The Patron donated additional funds and former presidents of the association also donated funds for door prizes on a regular basis.

The St Patrick's dinner dance truly became a very popular event in the social calendar of the Melbourneans, especially because of the excellent presentation, the standard of the bands and the quality of the food.

This was evident when people asked us to inform them early when we propose to have the dinner dance, so that they could mark it down in their calendars.

But all this was to no avail. Even though in the opinion of many, we staged one of the best dinner dances conducted by any school in Melbourne (including the Colombo schools which charged \$100 per head), still a few members were not happy.

Sadly, this led to the cancellation of the dinner dance as there was talk that the organizers were more interested in personal benefit than the good of the association. This was the Jaffna mentality (criticize everything without contributing anything,) that destroyed a noble cause and disillusioned hard working and dedicated office bearers and other members who did the actual work.

As an association with 50 to 60 members, we are never going to generate enough income to do the things that we want to do. Also we cannot spend all the money we have without a plan to generate some income. We certainly cannot expect the few members to contribute hundreds of dollars each for every little thing we want to do. This is not a viable way to run an organization.

So I hope in the future, we can come up with some suggestions from our members to generate some income, so that we can have a BBQ lunch or dinner on St. Patrick's Day free of charge. Not only that, this way we could also have enough money to contribute to the various needs of the college without constantly asking the members to contribute.

I am extremely glad that today we have a President who is keen to unite everyone and to make sure that this association is up and running again. I am sure that under the able leadership of Jeevaranjan, we can rise above the petty differences and make St Patrick's OBA Melbourne, a happy and worthwhile association which we can all be proud of.

Thank You & God Bless you All,

*Basil Patrick.*

Founding Member

St Patrick's OBA Melbourne.

25 August 2008.

Want to be in touch with our SPC Community around the world?

Please join Ferdi's email list by sending your email address to:

[e\\_ferdinand1@ekit.com](mailto:e_ferdinand1@ekit.com)



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- St Patrick's College Jaffna OBA Melbourne - Annual Dinner — 13 September 2008
- St Patrick's College Jaffna OBA Melbourne - Cricket & BBQ — 25 January 2009
- St Patrick's Day Mass , Celebrations & AGM — 21 March 2009

### **SPC Alumni Association UK President**

#### **Dr. Rubakumar Up Close and Personal.**

The wintry night of Friday, 25th July 2008 was a special one for the Patricians who were present at our President Jeevaranjan's residence to meet and greet Dr. N. Rubakumar, President of St. Patrick's College Jaffna Alumni Association UK. His recent visit to Melbourne culminating with an impromptu meeting with the OBA Melbourne committee members and friends, provided a rare opportunity to discuss matters of mutual interest.

The committee members Antony Gratian, Philip Ravindraraj, Nimal Augustine and other attendees Joseph Vijayarajam, Jesurajah Mariampillai, Joseph Bastiampillai and Ranjan Gunaratnam made use of this opportunity to rejuvenate their friendship with a close college mate after many long years.

Our discussions on this evening were devoted mainly to exchange firsthand information about the activities of both SPC OBA Melbourne and its UK counterpart.

When asked about the UK sector he took pride in updating us with their major achievements:

- |                     |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Perpetual Fund      | : | The capital is now worth £80,000. Target is to reach £250,000.                                    |
| Student Sponsorship | : | Members sponsor college students to cover their educational expenses.                             |
| Subcommittees       | : | Focused subcommittees for Finance, Treasury, Communication and Editorial sectors.                 |
| Charity Status      | : | Provides tax benefits and helps fund raising from members, organisations and corporate sectors.   |
| Direct Debit        | : | Nominated bank accounts make membership and other fund raising activities easy.                   |
| Sponsoring Teachers | : | Provides wider exposure to the teachers in order to improve educational standards of our college. |

Dr. Rubakumar mentioned that SPC OBA Melbourne is on the map of the Patricians worldwide and praised our efforts in the College Cricket Sponsorship. This is a recognition that all members of SPC OBA Melbourne rightly deserve.

He was very keen in listening to the OBA Melbourne activities. In order to reap the benefits from OBA's worldwide, we raised our concern that there is a need for improved level of interaction between the college and the OBA's worldwide. As a matured association that has better communication with the college, Dr. Rubakumar mentioned that he will put the point across to the Rector.

He earnestly requested SPC OBA Melbourne to support building the College Perpetual Fund.

This meeting gave us an opportunity to gain an insight into the UK Alumni's efforts in implementing many of the above mentioned initiatives and share constructive ideas relevant to our local situation.

In a nutshell Dr. Rubakumar's visit enabled us to see a bigger picture and get a snapshot of how our organisation is faring. In that sense, all of us can proudly say we are making good progress in both strengthening our association and helping our Alma Mater.

All in all, it was a pleasant productive evening filled with lots of fun and Patrician Spirit!

Yours sincerely,

*Angelo Fernando.*

### **Feedback from Dr. Rubakumar.....**

Dear President and Ex co,

First of all let me thank the President and the Ex co of the SPC Alumni Association of Melbourne for inviting me to spend an evening with you, even in the midst of your busy schedules. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening and also it gave me the opportunity to meet and get to know you all. I also learnt how energetic and enthusiastic committee you all are. It was really encouraging for me to know that we are all very passionate about our Alma Mater where ever we are. You certainly proved that you all have the real "Patrician Spirit". It is good to know that we all are working towards the same goal of helping our Alma Mater. As we all know, our Alma Mater needs us greatly during these difficult times.

As I mentioned during my visit, the UK association is mainly concentrating on raising the Perpetual Fund and we are trying our best to reach the target as soon as possible. Sooner the we reach this target, greater the benefit to the College. As it is a global fund, I feel we all should work together to achieve this. From what I saw and learned on that day, I have no doubt that you will work tirelessly and you will do your utmost to achieve this target.

I also have to thank Mrs. Jeevaranjan for being the most wonderful host and for the scrumptious dinner she served.

Once again, I must say that I enjoyed the evening thoroughly and it was a memorable one too. I thank each and every one of you who were present and I hope we will meet again either in UK or Melbourne.

May God Bless you all

Fide et Labore

Dr. Rubakumar

29 August 2008