

Shamrock

Issue: October 2012 to March 2013



The Half - Yearly Newsletter
of the Past Pupils' Association of
St. Bridget's Convent

From the Editors

A year in office is almost complete, and it is now time to take stock of what has and has not been accomplished. The adjudicators for this exercise would be our membership. Bouquets, brickbats or suggestions for future will be willingly accepted and handed over to the next committee.

In keeping with the pledge we made at the onset of our term, we had programmes focused on our members, our students, teachers, and we also ventured out to help those outside our orbit. We also tried to infuse an element of erudition, so that our members could extend their boundaries of knowledge. Details of all the programmes can be viewed on our web site.

The success of any organization is member participation at events, and it was most gratifying to see that most of our programmes were packed to capacity. Through past experiences we realized that many of our members, particularly the younger ones, were reluctant to participate in some activities due to the high cost, and so, we did our best to keep the entry fees as modest as possible, and this we think is the reason for the wide participation. We hope the next committee will follow the same policy.

Dilmani Warnasuriya & Nirmala M. Pieris

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2012/2013

PATRONESS

Rev. Sr. Solange Fernando

PRESIDENT

Dr. Nirmala M. Pieris

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Prof. Rohini Fernandopulle

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

Dr. Swinitha Ranasinghe

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Ms. Habira Lafir

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Dr. Sarojini Perera

Ms. Sonali Rassool

Ms. Swarna Ratnayake

Ms. Tamara Sivagurunathan

Ms. Upekha Wickramaratne

Ms. Yu Mei Kumarasinghe

Editorial Committee

*Ms. Dilmani Warnasuriya, Dr. Nirmala M. Pieris,
Ms. Hiranthi Fernando, Ms. Nareshka Perera,
Ms. Namalie Herath & Ms. Tamara Sivagurunathan*

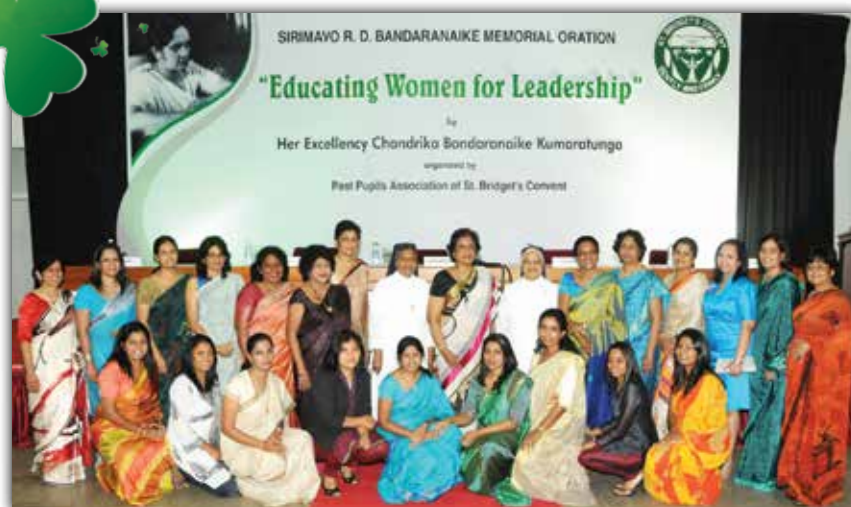


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More at: <http://sbcppa.org/index.html>



Executive Committee with Ms. Sunethra Bandaranaike, Rev. Sr. Rohini Mendis,
Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and Rev. Sr. Solange Fernando

More at: <http://www.sbcppa.org/Committee.html>



From the Desk of the Executive Committee

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held on the 22nd March at 5.30 p.m. at the School Auditorium.

Two resolutions relating to membership and subscription are scheduled to be presented for adoption at the meeting.

Our Focus Areas

We continued to focus attention on the following six areas, when planning events

- ✿ Social integration and fellowship (Member events)
- ✿ Religious activities
- ✿ Events with school (Conducting supplementary programs)
- ✿ Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects
- ✿ School upgrading (Projects for school)
- ✿ School support (Participation in school events)

PPA Office

The PPA Office will be open every Wednesday from 9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. for receiving membership applications, monies and also for any other matters.

Membership of the Past Pupils Association stands at approximately 3500 as at end February 2013.



MEMBER EVENTS

Sports Meet - 01st December 2012

What an absolutely memorable day it was when we gathered in the primary school grounds, to re enact the annual sports meet - an event which holds nostalgic memories to all Bridgetines. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Ms. Yasmin Zarook, a past President of the PPA and an outstanding sportswoman, who has brought credit to our country.

The present day sports meets, complete with the regalia of reciting the sports oath, to the lighting of the Olympic torch by past games captains was simulated with much fanfare. And

then the games began! All the events were organized with the age of the participant in mind, but a casual observer would have had a hard time in guessing their ages, so energy packed and vibrant were they all. It was hilarious to see the younger ones hopping in gunny bags and falling ignominiously flat on the ground, or running awkwardly in the crab race of yore, struggling to keep the lime on a spoon, and balancing a book on the head, - an activity mistakenly considered suitable for the over 60s. Shuttle relays for every age group followed, with some amazing sprints displayed by the 20s and 30s age groups.

But the highlights of the day were the drill display and the march past. The drill display was organized with each house doing their own moves - and what moves they were, arms, legs bodies flying in all and every direction, in a vain attempt to emulate the movements of oft seen drill displays, but failing miserably. Borgia house carried the show. The march past was the culmination of it all and this was a fitting end to a fantastic day. The school uniform, tie, shoes and socks seemed to have magically erased the lines of age, and it would have been hard put to differentiate between present and past Bridgetines. The only visible difference was the generous display of both bosom and hip by the latter.

The award winning houses were, Melizan House for the Best Decorated 'Tent', Borgia House for the March past with the overall winning house also being Borgia house with Melizan a close second. These announcements were met with shouts, shrieks, and cheers, even lustier than the present Bridgetines. A fair

atmosphere prevailed throughout the day, with the food and drink stalls - the Acharu stall selling out the fastest. The meet ended with a fireworks display.

More at: http://sbcppa.org/Event_Inter-House_Sports_Meet.html



Memorial Oration - 15th January 2013

The PPA honoured the most celebrated student of the school, Hon. Sirimavo R D Bandaranaike, by organizing the inaugural 'Sirimavo Bandaranaike Memorial Oration'. The venue was the Sirimavo Bandaranaike Exhibition Centre at the BMICH. The orator, Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, yet another proud product of St. Bridget's Convent delivered the oration on "Educating Women for Leadership".

The program commenced with a documentary film on Madam Sirimavo Bandaranaike which was followed by an Introductory Address by Rev. Sr. Solange Fernando, Patroness of the Association. Whilst congratulating the President and Executive Committee of the Association for initiating and conducting this event, she went on to say that she was hopeful that such orations will be a regular event in the PPA calendar.

Dr. Nirmala M. Pieris, President then provided a preamble to the Oration that was illustrated with many pictures and then introduced the orator. She focused on the personal life of Ms. Bandaranaike and her life at school whilst also emphasizing the role played by the school on the life of Sirimavo. She

highlighted the fact that Sirimavo Bandaranaike holds a record unmatched by any person in this country and for that matter in the world. She said that the PPA was extremely proud that the school laid the foundation for the enormous achievements of this great lady.

H. E. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga delivered an eloquent oration highlighting the many facets of leadership and women as leaders. She said that a good leader is one who makes better humans of others, giving them a vision of a better world and inspiring them to greater heights.

Dr. Swinitha Ranasinghe, 2nd Vice President proposed the Vote of Thanks, whilst Ms. Jayani Wickremanayake, Joint Secretary of the Association was the Master of Ceremonies.

The event was attended by Members of the Association, Past Presidents, Rev. Sisters, Teachers, Students and Distinguished guests.



More at: http://sbcppa.org/Events_Sirimavo_Bandaranaike_Memorial_Oration.html

Extract of Letter from
**Her Excellency
Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga**
addressed to President PPA

My dear Nirmala,

"I wish to express my gratitude and that of sister Sunethra to the Past Pupils' Association of St. Bridget's Convent for having instituted the Sirimavo Bandaranaike Memorial lecture and having organized it so beautifully and efficiently. Also your speech on my mother was well researched and excellently crafted. I enjoyed the event hugely. It is most touching that SBC decided to hold the event and I feel most privileged that you chose me to be the keynote speaker."

With fond wishes

Chandrika

Letter from
Ms Jezima Ismail
addressed to Members of the PPA

Just a note of appreciation of your wonderful event of 15.1 from a proud Bridgetine. You did St. Bridget's proud. The event moved so smoothly that I could envisage the perfect team work that went on behind the scenes. It is this kind of togetherness and unity we need in our Nation. The example you set and the model you portrayed will no doubt be a lasting lesson to the present Bridgetines and I hope that those present will communicate to the rest. Although my voice is now feeble I joined in the school anthem lustily since the feelings had to be expressed.

I must comment on the positive spirit of warmth, welcome and togetherness that embraced the whole environment.

Jezima Ismail

St. Bridget's Day - 01st February 2013

It was a perfect star lit night that was enhanced with little fairy lights on the trees that gave the entire Primary school grounds such a festive air. The evening was special to all of us Bridgetines when we celebrated St. Bridget's day on 01st February 2013. Rev. Sr. M. Thomas Aquinas graced this special occasion as the Guest of Honour.



Prior to the evening function a Holy Mass was held, for which the celebrant and preacher was Rev. Fr. Anjelo Wijewickrema. The choir led by Priyanthi Seneviratne Vandort sang all the hymns lustily and the entire congregation present joined in with much enthusiasm to sing the Hymn to St. Bridget at the end.

The evening's program was attended by Rev. Sr. Solange Fernando our Patroness, the Principals of all 03 schools, Past Principals and several other Sisters from the Convent.

The evening commenced with a Welcome address by the President Dr. Nirmala M. Pieris, followed by a short, pithy entertaining presentation on Rev. Sr. M. Thomas Aquinas by Ms. Sharmini Mendis. Priyanthi and her choir then gave a Special Tribute in song to Sr. Thomas. Sr. Thomas then expressed her deep appreciation, with an inspiring address. Jayani Wickremanayake, Jt. Secretary PPA did a perfect job as the Master of Ceremonies.

After much mingling and renewing of friendships amongst PPA members the evening ended with dinner well after 9.00 p.m. The event was the first, to be held outdoors on St. Bridget's Day. and we received so many appreciative comments.



More at: http://sbcppa.org/Event_StBridgets_Day.html



Letter received from Rev Sr. Thomas Aquinas

My dear Nirmala and Members of the Executive Committee and my dear Past pupils Etched in my heart will remain forever the joy that was mine, on the evening of school day 2013. Thank you most sincerely for the warm and heartfelt wishes for my Golden Jubilee. I deeply appreciate your generous and thoughtful gift of a Retreat at Chalakudy.

Congratulations to you Nirmala and your team for the thoughtful and splendid organization right from the inspiring mass and harmonious singing to all festivities that followed together with the delicious dinner. I was touched by the love, affection and appreciation shown by all who knew me specially those who knew me some time in their school life. I am proud of all of you, for all you have achieved in life personally and professionally. I glorify and thank God for all he has done using me as his instrument, and I say the credit goes to the very able and committed staff, teachers and others who assisted me, in sharing the responsibility of Integral formation of all those entrusted to our care. Thank you once again for a very happy, touching and memorable evening. I close with a warm and affectionate embrace to each of you together with the blessings of God and St Bridget.

EVENTS WITH SCHOOL

Programs for the School were continued with Resource persons drawn from past Bridgetines who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields. All programs comprised a Welcome address by the respective Principal, an Introductory address by Dr. Nirmala M. Pieris, and the presentation of the Resource Persons by Ms. Dilani Yatawaka/Ms. Upekha Wickramaratne, who also acted as Moderators for most of the programs.

Programs were:

- Montessori (300 children) - 'Zippy the Zebra' Puppet show by Ms. Sulochana Dissanyake on 03rd October 2012. Biscuits were provided by Maliban Biscuits Ltd.



- Teachers of the Collegiate School (100) and Grades 11, 12 & 13 (450 students) - 'Personal Grooming' by Ms. Ramani Fernando in Association with Ramani Fernando Training Academy on 04th October 2012.



- Grades 1 & 2 (400 students) - "Personal Cleanliness and Healthy Habits" by Dr. Yoshani Fernando on 05th November 2012. A cake of Lifebuoy soap and a flyer were provided to every child by courtesy of Unilever (Sri Lanka) Limited.



- Address to Parents of students in Grades 6, 7 & 8 (27th February), Grades 9, 10 & 11 (28th February) and Grades 12 & 13 (01st March) on "Education of Children is a Partnership Enterprise" by Ms. Jezima Ismail.



- Grades 9 & 10 in 2012 (300 students) - to be scheduled.

More at: http://sbcppa.org/PPA_Events_With%20School.html

SCHOOL UPGRADING

We completed the work on the Library upgrading program which encompassed the Montessori school, the Primary school and the Collegiate school.

For the Montessori School,

a room that had been used as an office was completely upgraded to a Library. This culminated in an attractive colourful library, complete with book racks, coloured cushions and carpets and attractive mobiles which will no doubt entice the little ones.



For the Primary School,

a complete overhauling of the library was carried out, by repairing of walls, ceiling and floor – with new tiles being laid - and the setting up of a separate area for audio visual use. The library was furnished with new book racks, and the tables and stools that were in use were all polished. The entire stock of books was also sorted and only books suitable for primary school children were retained.



For the Collegiate School,

attention was paid to polishing, installing new cupboards and racks and rearranging the furniture. Several cupboards had completely perished.



Our Sincere Appreciation..... to Ms. Marie Mendis, President, and her Committee of the Past Pupils Association in Victoria, Australia for making a financial contribution of 1000 Aus\$ (Rs. 131,270/-) towards the upgrading of the Collegiate School Library. We could not have completed the work of this Library without this contribution.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Mass for the Departed Souls

The Mass for the departed souls to thank God for the lives and memory of all those in the Bridgetine family who have left this world, was held on Wednesday 07th November 2012 at 5.00pm at the St. Bridget's Convent Chapel. The Celebrant & Preacher was Rev. Fr. Angelo Wijewickrema, OMI, Parish Priest, Fatima Church, Maradana. A time of Fellowship for all those who attended the Mass followed.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) PROJECTS



Community Assistance

In an effort to have an overall positive impact on the Community, we provided assistance to two schools.

Our Project in Kottantivu

This project focused on the Perakuwatana Sinhala Vidyalaya in Kottantivu. It is a mixed school of 174 children with classes from Grade 1 to Grade 9. The school has minimum facilities for the extremely underprivileged children who come from very distant places to attend classes. At present we support 03 children to attend O-level and A-level classes in other schools and we also provided an allowance to a Trainee Teacher.

On the 24th of October a group of us visited the school with a van load of stuff that included shoes & socks (for all the children), school needs such as books, pencils, pens, goodies etc. also a bicycle for 02 girls (sisters) who were walking 10kms to school on a daily basis. We were also fortunate to have been able to set up a modest Computer Centre with Five Computers received from Associated Motorways (Pvt) Ltd., Two dongles (donated by Etisalat (Pvt) Ltd.) and a printer & computer tables donated by the PPA.



Our Project at Ragama

This project focused on the St. Joseph's School for the Deaf which is a charitable Institution run by the Sisters of Perpetual Help for the education of young students who are impaired in hearing. Presently, the school has 200 students of whom 125 are day students whilst 75 are provided accommodation facilities. The PPA Ex-com team made 03 visits to the school. Assistance was provided to renovate an old kitchen within the premises to a lunch room which was an urgent need. The room that was also fully furnished with tables and benches will be formally declared open on 19th March 2013. Five Computers (donated by Associated Motorways (Pvt) Ltd.), Two Dongles (donated by Etisalat Lanka (Pvt) Ltd.) and computer tables (donated by PPA) were given to the school for the use of the children.



Our Appreciation to a Teacher, Principal and Rev. Sr. Superior

We facilitated a visit for Rev. Sr. Thomas Aquinas to attend a spiritual retreat at Divine Retreat Centre (DRC) in Chalakudy in Kerala, India in appreciation of 19 years of dedicated and exemplary service to our Alma Mater. We also remembered her completion of 50 years of committed service as a Sister of the Good Shepherd Order.

Following-up on the Workshop on E-Waste recycling that was carried out for the Collegiate School in July 2012 by Cinnamon Grand in association with 'Think Green', the recycling of 254 kg of E-waste (comprising of 15 CRT Monitors, 11 CPUs, 03 Printers, 02 Fans and 02 UPSs) was facilitated for the school.

More at: http://sbcppa.org/PPA_Events_CORPORATE_SOCIAL_RESPONSIBILITY.html

Environment Project

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL EVENTS



Dr. Nirmala M. Pieris, President, PPA was the Chief Guest at the Under-15, 'A' Division Inter-schools Basketball Championship Final held at St. Bridget's Convent Courts - 05th November 2012

Carol Service (Primary School) - 08th December 2012

Carol Service (Collegiate School) - 15th December 2012

St. Bridget's Day Celebrations & Prefects Investiture Ceremony - 01st February 2013

Blessing of new Band Instruments - 11th February 2013

Inter-House Athletic Meet (Collegiate School) - 21st February 2013

Inter-House Sports Meet (Primary School) - 28th February 2013

The PPA was represented at all School events for which we were invited.

More at: http://sbcppa.org/School_Programmes.html



Invitation Relay

A PPA team comprising of Dilani Yatawaka, Gayathri Hewawasam, Dilini Perera and Nishika Aponso participated in the 4x100 Invitation relay at the Sports Meet of the Old Girls' Association of Ladies College held on 16th February 2013.



School Achievements

St. Bridget's excels at Athletics

St. Bridget's Convent, Colombo won the overall field events championship at the 83rd Sir John Tarbet Senior Athletic Championship organized by the Sri Lanka Schools Athletic Association held at Diyagama in October 2012. The medallists included Amanthi Silva (under-18 discus throw and shot putt champion), Kushnara Herath (under-18 shot putt silver medal) Andrea Perera (under-18 discus throw bronze medal) and Navodha Perera (under-16 high jump champion and long jump silver medal).

Amanthi Silva rewrote the record books in the discus throw for girls under-19 erasing a record established in 2006 at the All-island Schools Athletic Championships held in Beliatta in October 2012.

St. Bridget's win Gold, Silver at Age Group Swimming Relay

The under-16 swimming relay team of St. Bridget's Convent, Colombo, comprising Sharon Perera, Shenali Perera, Thamashi Bandara and Shenelie Dias, won a gold and silver medal in the 200m Medley and Freestyle relay respectively, at the Age Group Swimming Relay Championships 2012, held at the Sugathadasa Stadium Swimming Pool in November 2012. A new age group record was established in the Medley, while the existing age group record was also bettered in the Freestyle, though the team had to be content with the silver.

St Bridget's produces excellent results at the A/Level Examination

22 Students brought glory to the school by obtaining 3A's in the 2012 A/Level Exam. This is the best we have done after 10 years breaking a school record of highest number of students passing the examination so far. A total of 161 students sat the examination of which 120 are eligible for University Admission. Another creditable achievement was in the London (A/Level) Section - June 2012, where Rushka Silva was awarded the World Prize for Accounting.

More at: <http://www.stbridgets.lk/>

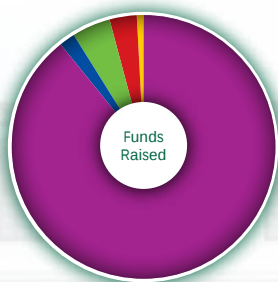
Congratulations girls!
We are proud of you. Keep the Bridgetine flag flying



Funds Raised & Disbursed (01st April 2012 to 15th March 2013)

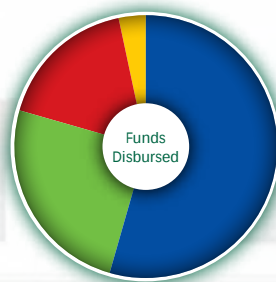


Total Funds Raised - Rs.2,815,218/-



Funds Raised

Fundraising Events (Bridgetine Drive & Mini Fair and Bridgetine Fire)	-	89.3%
Other Events (Jolly Jaunt and Sports Meet)	-	1.9%
PPA Victoria	-	4.7%
Contributions for CSR Projects	-	3.3%
Other	-	0.8%



Funds Disbursed

School Upgrading and Student & Teacher Development Programs	-	54.5%
Member Activities Memorial Oration, St. Bridget's Day and Printing of Shamrock	-	25.2%
CSR Projects	-	17.2%
Balance	-	3.1%