



# THE TERNION

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## EDITORIAL

It seems that everyday the news we hear just gets worse: fighting in the North and the East, gruesome murders closer to home, and a looming economic crisis. Those on the opposite sides of the spectrum say completely different things; however, one thing is clear- there seems to be very little hope for our island home.

It is in times such as these that Sri Lanka needs true Thomians the most – people with integrity, humility and tolerance, among other things. In this issue, we talk to an Old Boy of S.Thomas' College who has left an indelible impact on the school, and has strong views and opinions on many issues relevant to Thomians living in society as we know it.

Meanwhile, the 3<sup>rd</sup> instalment of the critically acclaimed “Rally Round the College Flag” series of productions took place at the College Hall, providing, as in the past, a great opportunity for young Thomians to bring showcase their talents. The show was the climax of many months of hard practice, and was truly worthy of praise.

At a time when many are criticising the situation the country is in, there are very few who are actually willing do to something about it. As Gandhi said, “you must be the change you wish to see in the world”; if we want to bring peace and prosperity to Sri Lanka, we must change ourselves, and then, perhaps, we will be able to change our society and our country for the better.

Esto Perpetua!

## An interview with Revd. Marc Billimoria

*The Ternion sat down to talk to one of S.Thomas' College's most eminent old boys: former Master-in-Charge of Buck House, the English Literary and Debating society and the SCM; Staff Advisor of the Interact Club, author of the updated College History “75 Years at Mount” and soon to be the 13<sup>th</sup> Headmaster of S. Thomas' College at Guruthalawa, Revd. Marc Billimoria...*

### **Sir, could you tell us something about your time at S. Thomas' College?**

I joined school in Grade 3, in 1980. The Warden of the time was Mr. Lyn Illangakoon, and the Headmaster of the Lower School was the legendary Mr. D.S. Jayasekera. We had many good teachers there and in the Middle School, including Mr. Russell Bartholomeusz who taught so well English that he made the subject come alive for us. We also had a fantastic Sinhala master in Mr. Leo de Silva, and a dynamic Divinity master in Mr. Denzil de Silva.

It was in the Upper School that I first became intensely involved in school activities. Although I never played any sports, I never missed the Royal-Thomian Regatta, Cricket match or any Rugby match.

The teachers who taught us were truly dedicated to S.Thomas' College and her students. We were very fortunate to have

personalities like them, who, led by Warden Neville de Alwis, the Sub-Warden Fr. Duleep de Chickera and others, really made a difference to our lives throughout our school careers. They certainly inspired me when I became a teacher on leaving School.

**Sir, what was your most memorable experience while at College?**

I had many memorable experiences. The day I was appointed a School Prefect was certainly a memorable day- taking that oath really meant something to me. I would like to add that when I was at College, we did not fear the School Prefects, we respected them. The boys looked up to them as role-models. The Prefects did not try to force respect from us- they commanded respect. I don't know why that was, but that was the way of things. They were true student leaders – for that is what all Prefects are meant to be, never policemen!

**Sir, you were given the responsibility of updating the College History by Warden Neville de Alwis when you were still a student. What was that like?**

Well, at the end of Term 3, 1991, Warden Neville de Alwis called me into his office and asked “Would you like to join the staff when you leave this term?” I agreed. He told me later on that he had a special project for me- to update the history of the College for the 75 years it had been at Mount Lavinia. It was both a humbling and challenging moment. So, in September 1991, I joined the staff, and started work on the book. Every afternoon, after school, I would go to the library and sit there for hours going through the archive and old

magazines, souvenirs, etc., copying down important information, which I would collate at home. Great men and events of the past came alive to say the least! It was released in June 1993, at a public ceremony marking the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the College moving from Mutwal to Mount Lavinia in 1918.

**Do you think the S.Thomas' of the present is, or should be, like the S.Thomas' of your time, sir?**

No, it is not the same, and should not be the same. Any institution that stays in the past is doomed. One must realise that we are not living in a vacuum; S. Thomas' is part of something much bigger - and change must come. However, there must not be change for the sake of change, and we must take care not to sacrifice standards and Tradition on the altar of progress. If change is to occur it must be within the true spirit of Thomianism that preserves what is fundamental to the Thomian system of education.

**S. Thomas' College is famous for its traditions. Would you like to comment on them?**

Firstly, I would like to say that you cannot separate S. Thomas' College from its traditions. If you do, it will become like any other school. However, I think one should learn to differentiate between Tradition -with a capital 'T', so to speak, and mere 'traditions'. The former is something we must hold on to; for example the Tradition of pluralism at S. Thomas' College is a priceless one. Then there is the tradition of preparing you for life rather than just to pass exams or do well in games. These are

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“The roots of education are bitter, but the fruits is sweet”-

Aristotle

Traditions that must be kept alive and handed down.

However, the traditions which I think we should let go of are the things which have surfaced in recent years- the things we can do quite well without. For example, if the 'tradition' of trucking becomes synonymous with being a public nuisance and stooping to vandalism, then it should be discarded. You must not mistake such activities to be Tradition.

**Sir, what do you think are the qualities of a true Thomian?**

I would say that integrity is the most important quality for anyone to have, let alone a Thomian. A person of integrity is defined as someone who is the same on all sides. I think a Thomian should be like that; he should be a Thomian everywhere - in the classroom, at home, on the sports field or later in the office and in adult life.

Secondly, I think Thomians should have respect for all those around them, particularly those who are different. As I said before one of our great Traditions is pluralism. This quality was amply illustrated in the aftermath of the black '83 riots, when the Thomian community stood behind all its members who became victims of prejudice and hate. This quality is one the hallmarks of a true Thomian.

Finally, humility; and we need a lot of that. We are far too full of ourselves. I don't like to propagate the idea that Thomians are better than all the others, for that is a form of arrogance. It's all very well to be competitive and optimistic, but when it makes us look down on everyone and everything else, or if we lack the common touch, we are no longer behaving like true Thomians.

Thinking we are the best and boasting the same has often nothing to do with truly being the best.

I think these qualities are particularly important in the context of the society we are living in today.

**Finally sir, what advice would you give to the present boys at S. Thomas' College?**

Look to the past and learn from it, live in the present with what you've learnt from the past, and hand down not only what you've learnt from the past, but something of your own as well. There is much more to life than *saying* "It is great to be a Thomian". As a student of Thomian history I have come across a number of inspiring words by many of our benefactors of the past, but none has had as much an impact on me as the words of our revered Founder Bishop James Chapman. These words encapsulate what S. Thomas' is meant to offer her sons for they show his vision for STC as far back as 1845:

**"The real end of all education, is not to sharpen the intellect or improve the mind alone, but to form the character of the future man, to mould his habits, to fix his principles, and to make him good as well as wise and no system which aims at less than this, which would take any standard short of it, can be worthy of esteem."**

*Revd. Marc Billimoria will no doubt succeed and prosper as Headmaster of S.Thomas' at Gurthalawa as he did as a student and teacher at Mount Lavinia. We wish you all the best, sir. Esto Perpetua!*

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"Upon the education of the people of this country the fate of this country depends" – Benjamin Disraeli

**Ruggerites bested**

Despite a good start to the Rugby season by the 1<sup>st</sup> XV, wherein they beat both Trinity College and St. Peters' College, they have recently had a surprisingly sudden reversal of fortunes.

They were badly beaten in their match against Kingswood on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May in Kandy. At the end of the game the scorecard read 48-7 -a lackluster performance.

Then, they played against St Anthony's College Kandy on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May, and were unable to make an impact on the game, which they lost 32-0.

More recently, however, the Thomians managed to gain a face-saving victory over Thurstan College on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June at the Police Grounds. At the end of play the score stood at 23-12.

Hopefully, this victory signals a turnaround of fortunes for the team, and they will be able to play well in the run-up to the Royal-Thomian Rugger match, which is to be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June at the CR & FC Grounds/ Havelock Park.

**Hockey team powers through**

The Thomian Hockey team played well in the opening stages of the National Schools Hockey Tournament, held at the Astro Turf, Reid Avenue.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, in an Under-17 match, they beat their rivals Nalanda College 3-0. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of May, in a match of the same category, they beat Ashoka Vidyalaya in an exciting and hotly contested match, 3-1.

The Ternion hopes the Hockey team will continue its good performance.

**Swimmers Stumble**

At the recently concluded Age-Groups' Swimming and Diving Championships, held at the Sugathadasa Stadium from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of May, the Thomians

were unfortunately unable to go very far and were placed 5<sup>th</sup>. However, E.M.K. Fernando was chosen to be part of the Sri Lankan team to take part in the Bangalore Swimming Meet, which began on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May. We wish him the best of luck.

**Cricketers Excel**

The 1<sup>st</sup> XI cricket team of S.Thomas' College did well to reach the semi-finals of the Elephant Lemonade Trophy held during the month of April. The first few rounds were full of thrilling finishes, as the Thomian team progressed slowly towards the semi-finals. The semi-finals were held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April at St. Peter's College Grounds, against St. Sebastian's College.

Due to bad weather the match was shortened to 31 overs-a-side. St. Sebastians' scored 130-9, and the Thomian team were all out for 125 (with R. Nirrushan and V. Weerawardana high scoring), falling agonisingly short of the finals. However, progressing so far into the tournament was certainly an achievement in itself.

**Inter school tennis tournament**

The Under-17 Inter School Tennis Tournament was held at Kadhana from the 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> of May, 2007. S Thomas College won the matches against St.Benedicts and Nalanda College while losing to Ananda College and Royal College.

The following are the members of the Under-17 Tennis team;

M. Mallavarachchi (Captain), P. Sriskantha (Vice-Captain), R.Y. Dewage, M.S.B. Leeniyagolla, S.G. Goonetilaka, S. Dhantharayne, C.I. Senanayaka, K. Fernando, Satheekshan

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"I believe the first test of a truly great man is his humility."

John Ruskin

**Thomians mark 100 years of Scouting!**

The 21st World Scout Jamboree will be held in the United Kingdom from the 27<sup>th</sup> of July till the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 2007.

This will be the centenary world jamboree marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of scouting, an organization recognized as one of the oldest youth movements by the United Nations. Six Thomian scouts will be a part of the contingent representing the island. They are:

J.D.E. Ranasinghe  
R.A.I. De Fonseka  
N.D. Bastions  
M.G.S. Peries  
M.H.G. De Silva  
T. Thellahewa

The Jamboree will bring together 40,000 Scouts, Venturers, Scout leaders, and staff for 12 days. They will share adventure, international friendship, personal growth, and development.

Additionally, the 16<sup>th</sup> Colombo scout group recently appointed its new office bearers for the year 2007. They are  
Troop Leader – J.D.E. Ranasinghe  
Asst. Troop Leader – R.A.I. De Fonseka  
Scribe – S. Jayawardana  
Treasurer – R.A.I. De Fonseka  
Quarter Master – N.D. Bastions  
Badge Secretary – S. De Silva

**Culinary Arts Society revived**

After being dormant for almost a year, the Culinary Arts Society held its AGM on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, 2007. The society was revived by the Prefect of Clubs and Societies, Mr. M.D. Maurice. The main objective of this society is the promotion of independence among its members in the field of hotel management and kitchen work.

The following were appointed office bearers:

President: A.M. De Silva  
Vice- President: M.S. Junaid  
Secretary: W.T.H Fernando  
Treasurer: A.B.G. Silva

**The Leo Club triumphs!**

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Leo District Conference, for district 306C2, held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June at the Colombo Museum Auditorium, S.Thomas' College's Leo Club were 1<sup>st</sup> runners-up in the category of "Best School Leo Club" and awarded champions in the category "Best Leadership Development Program". The Ternion congratulates the club on its achievement.

**Red Cross School Circle yields yeomanry service**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2007 youth members from the Red Cross School circle engaged in the Shramadane held at the S.L.R.S Colombo District Branch.

A first aid training workshop was conducted, along with the support of the S.L.R.C.S Colombo branch on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2007 at the college main hall from 8.30 to 12.30 pm. The workshop was open to all students above grade 6. The first aid unit for the 128<sup>th</sup> Battle of the Blues at the S.S.C grounds on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2007 was hosted by the youth unit of the S.L.R.C.S Colombo for the first time in College Red Cross history.

The Red Cross school circle has implemented a H.I.V AIDS awareness raising program under the social service activity stream of the Red Cross unit. Any student from grade 6 to 11 may join the Red Cross School Circle and students above 18 years of age may join the Red Cross Youth Unit. Meetings are held every Wednesday from 1.35pm-2.30pm at the M-18 class room.

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“Life has its own hidden forces which you can only discover by living.”

Soren Kierkegaard

### Rally Round the College Flag III

“Rally Round the College Flag” – the name is familiar to most students in S.Thomas’ College, whether they are seniors who first participated in 2003 when it was directed by Mr. Jith Pieris, or the younger performers who were part of the production of 2005. These two shows had plenty of music, colour and dance, and enthralled audiences of all ages; as a result they became synonymous with the exposition of Thomian talent. Thus, this year’s edition held on the 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of May and the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of June, had great expectations to live up to.

Rally Round the College Flag III, under its director Mr. Vinodh Senadeera, did have some daring innovations: this year was the first time it was staged in the College Hall, and it also had a wide array of music, costumes and stage settings (including some fantastic lighting), which were used to bring out a sense of professionalism in the show. Additionally, famous singers -including Bathiya, Santhush, Fabian and Shannele- were to perform after the show, adding to its overall value.

The variance of musical styles and genres in this year’s production was astonishing. Ranging from children’s television shows to Broadway musicals to films, the show covered a panorama of musical magnificence. A few examples would be *The Lion King*, *The Jungle Book*, *The King and I*, *Friends*, *Les Miserables* and *Oliver*, among others.

Practices started in March, and 300 boys ranging from the ages of six to eighteen took part, often working hard into the night as they crafted out an entertaining show, ably guided by their director.

The Ternion talked to some of those who took part in those gruelling sessions; many of them said that it was encouraging to have rehearsals in the familiarity of the Hall, and to be surrounded by their friends while rehearsing. Rally Round was said to be a truly unique experience for those who took part in it, as it was an opportunity to make friends from the various parts of school, as well as to take part in a production that brought out their talents and skills. Most importantly, as the production was a joint effort, they had to work together, fostering a sense of family and unity between them.

During the production, a carnival-like atmosphere prevailed outside, as a stage was set up for the entertainment following the show, and various other stalls were set up around the quadrangle. The hall was decked up for the occasion, and seemed to provide the right atmosphere for the production. The audience took their seats, the lights dimmed, and the show began.

First up were the boys from the Lower School, whose performances were full of colour and dance; they showed great enthusiasm while singing songs like “The Bear Necessities”, “Can You Feel the Love Tonight”, and “Puff the Magic Dragon”. They could be heard very clearly and the audience greatly enjoyed their antics on stage, giving the show a good start.

The Middle School boys too performed reasonably well, singing songs from “Friends” and “Oklahoma”. Dinel Dias’ solo from “The Wizard of Oz” was very good, while Niran De Mel, Sandesh Bartlett, Ashwin Schaffter and Lochana De Alwis sang their solos and

duets well. Unfortunately the music for some of their songs over-powered their voices, and they could not be heard very well.

The senior singers were by far the best act out of the lot – there seemed to be a sense of professionalism emanating from them- their songs were very clear and to tune as they donned coats while singing songs from “The Aspects of Love”, “The Rose” and “The best you can do”. Denushka Perera and Shehan Mendis’ duet from “Les Miserables” was very impressive.

Old Boys Dayan Fernando and Rumesh Fonseka teamed up to sing “New York” which was definitely one of the best performances of the show. The show ended on a high note as the senior singers sang a variety of songs taken from popular films.

Afterwards, the Ternion spoke to some of the members of the audience. Many of them were pleased that it had started on time, and felt that since it was able to maintain a flow between songs and performances throughout the one and half hours, it had a satisfying sense of continuity, which greatly contributed to the overall experience.

However some lamented the fact that despite the vast amount of musical variety, there was very little variety in the performances themselves, such as dances and so on; and while many were very happy that there were distinguished performers on stage after the show, they felt that a lower bracket of ticket prices should have been considered to attract a larger crowd.

In conclusion, Rally Round the College Flag III, when considered as a stand-alone show was a very good performance, and its design, choreography and costumes will no doubt take school shows to a new standard; however, many felt that it was a step down from the earlier two productions. For one it was considerably shorter than the earlier two, and it might also be said that the College Hall is not the best place for a production of its magnitude.

However, one should applaud the director, the choreography crew, the make-up crew, the cast of young Thomians, and the innumerable others who were involved in the show for the hard work done and the sacrifices made to make the show the success it was.

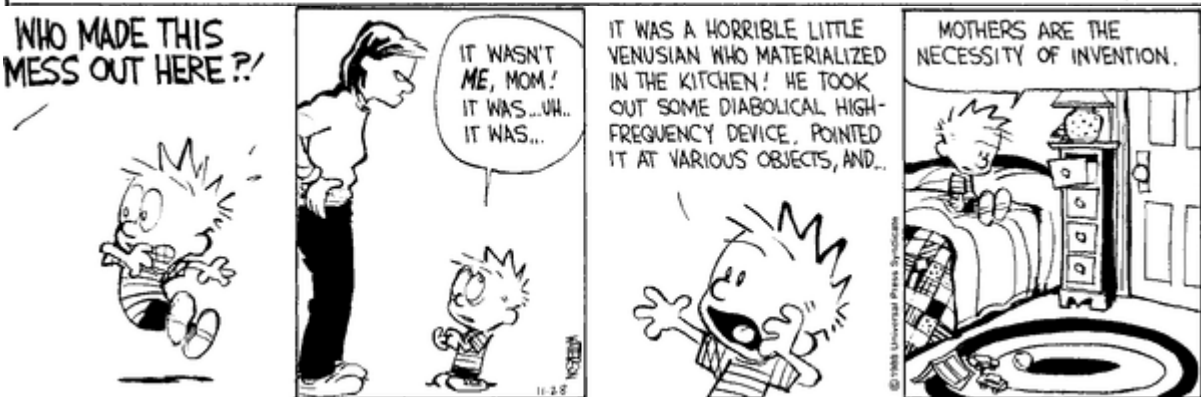
### NOTICES

- The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. Dr. Rowan Williams visited S.Thomas' College on the 10th of May, 2007.
- The Feast of the Ascension was held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May at the College Chapel.
- The following received 8A's at the G.C.E O/L Examination held in December 2006: P. L. N. Boteju, G.D.L.Z. Dharmaratne, T.A. De Silva, C.E. Dayananda, R.T.A. Fernando, W.S.A. Fernando, S.M.D. Fernando, N.N. Nanayakkara, V.M. Peiris, D.D. Ruhunuge, R.G. Ranaweera, I.D. Weerasekera

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“Thought is the labour of the intellect; reverie is its pleasure”

Victor Hugo



### Editors

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