

The Story of Royal College as Experienced by the '59 Group

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Update

The draft form of this document, consisting of thirty or so pages, went out on August 23rd. It is with great pleasure that we received many additions. We appreciate and value them and they are included in this revision, now called RC-Forms-I-VI-Rev2, and consisting of 77 pages. It is being sent out as a pdf. The additions have been incorporated as a series of appendices to the core narrative, and each author is acknowledged. We encourage those who did not have an opportunity to contribute earlier to do so. You will now have the pleasure of reading what others have written and have an opportunity to develop a narrative based on your own experiences through Royal. The objective is for others take a look back at RC in the late 50s on to the 60s. At this time we are unable to predict when the next revision will come. However, be assured that we will maintain the integrity of this document and will eventually be posting it on a web site so that it will be freely available for the future.

Preface

The history of life at Royal in the 40s was written by only a handful of authors. Brendon Gunaratne, T D S A Dissanayake and Col. Lankadeva, have recorded their experiences. Happily and more recently a book titled Glendale: Stories from the Bandarawela Branch of Royal College by M B H Wariyapola appeared. My observation is that those among us able to bring up memories from 1959 to the late sixties are a dwindling band. Therefore, capturing the spirit of life at Royal in that period has become a priority, before these memories disappear forever! It is with that thought that I began the endeavor of recording Royal College (RC) life in the 50s and 60s. I have constructed a Core Narrative, with additional information in appendices, which are referenced throughout the narrative. Much of the information in both the narrative and the appendices are incomplete. Additions- and amendments- would be very welcome, so that we may record as much as possible concerning these immensely formative years. So this document could be viewed as a template, into which additional recollections may be engrafted. It is my hope that this will evolve into individual or collective attempts to capture the recollections and experiences, beyond cocktail party social discussions and banter!

As was the format with my previous two articles, that I consider the book end for this article, I originally intended to collaborate with other batches around our batch (batches 56-61). Given all the variables in one batch, it became impossible to capture all their information. My intention is not to exclude them and hope this document will help them write their own story at RC.

As you read through, do not hold back, just pen down your thoughts (or, more likely, let your fingers touch the laptop keyboard!) and record your own narrative. Let us, through our network, try to capture those events and moments before memories fade. In recollections of that era, humor and joy provide a happy balance for the readability of such assemblages.

I am aware of the existence of other platforms, including Blogs. In my judgement although they at times provide useful and meaningful platforms for discussions, they tend to be casual exchanges and also limited to restricted topics. I suggest that we attempt to capture a broader representation of RC history as experienced by the 59 group. Frankly speaking at this stage I have no clear idea where such a document may end up, or if it will just fade into oblivion. However, it is better to have tried than not try at all!

This has been a truly collective effort by many, without whose valuable contributions a work of this nature would have been impossible. There were many others too numerous to be listed individually. We are indebted to them and here express our appreciation and sincere gratitude to them all. Individual contributors are acknowledged where appropriate in the core narrative or in appendices.

Core Narrative

It is of particular interest to capture aspects of life at RC which contributed to later experiences and achievements in our lives; situations one is exposed to and how one handles them based on the values learned. Some excelled in learning from books and embarked on academic and administrative careers. Others learn from men, exposure to sports and competition, and followed a path in a business environment. The hostel environment is another arena that provided lessons of life in a social environment. All this is, in a way, an oversimplification of what Royal meant to you.

One key experience at RC which continues to stand out is being exposed to others from different ethnic backgrounds, in a cosmopolitan environment. Royal was quite selective in capturing the upper strata of the society, and gifted students, creating a unique environment from the day the new students entered its gates. Opportunities to interact among Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim, Burgher and even a sprinkling of foreign nationals were at hand. Muslims here refers to those of Islamic faith or those coming to trade in Ceylon and later settled that may have had their origin, in middle-east and the Indian subcontinent, or Malaya. Some married into various local ethnic groups. The 59 group of young adults were representative of the Ceylon populace of the time, albeit from the upper social strata. We learned to communicate with them all, attended each other's social events, cheered on our school at interschool events, studied and played together as fellow Royalists. Beyond those platitudes lie the details of experiences that carved out our personalities. These experiences may include one on one interactions with our teachers and friends, to know right from wrong and the limits of acceptable behavior, discipline and the ability to focus on specific goals, to name just a few.

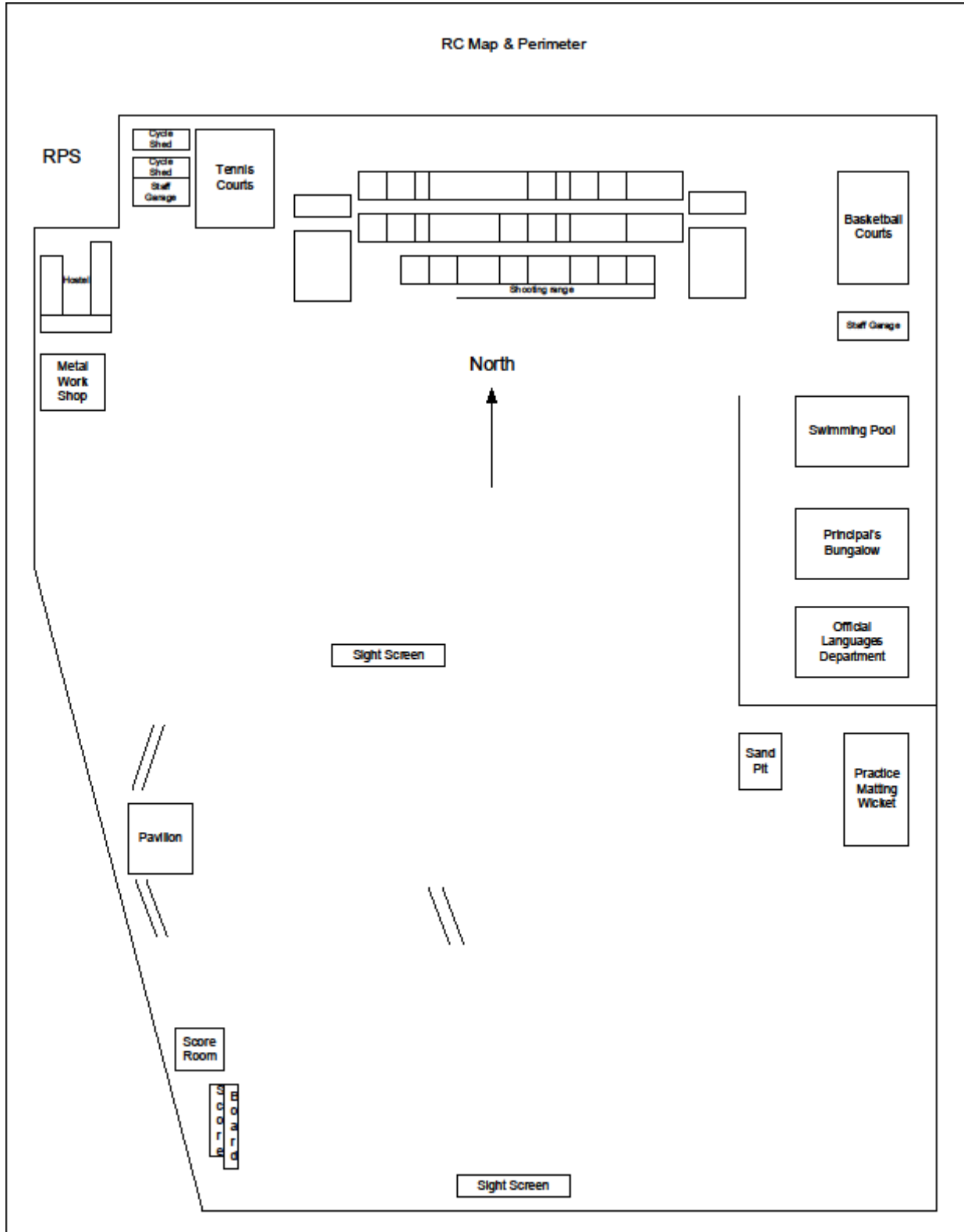
At this distance in time, there are many lacunae in the core narrative as well as in the appendices- so please feel free to amend or add as appropriate. As was the trend in that time, most of the 215 students that entered RC in 1959, pursued science, the documentation we have of the Arts stream is poor. Although I made several efforts, another short coming the lack of the perspective of our Tamil friends. I encourage them all to kindly add to this narrative.

Some listings will be found at the link below:

<http://www.worldgenweb.org/lkawgw/rcgroup59.html>

RC Premises and Perimeter

Let us begin with the layout of the school. A map of the perimeter is included below:



On the north, Race Course Avenue (renamed Rajakiya Mawatha) marked the boundary. At the north-east end was a statue. Reid Avenue ran the length of the eastern boundary, ending at a Naa Tree (*Mesua ferrea*) at the corner with the University of Ceylon (Colombo Campus). The southern boundary was University property. The demarcation on the western boundary was more complex. As I recall the southern end of the west was university property and after a short distance heading north was Thurstan College, followed by the Royal Preparatory/Primary School (RPS) forming the northwest corner.

All the entrances to RC were on the northern perimeter. We cyclists entered Royal at an entrance that served as the entrance to the RC hostel directly ahead. See Appendix 2 on the Hostel. A hundred yards on, a right turn led to RPS. We made a left turn about 20 yards in. A short distance in were the two cycle sheds, one on each side. At this entrance on Race Course Avenue stood two vendors; one called Balloon or Bella and the other Francis, who were in eternal conflict. There were three main gates. The eastern most gate, the Boake gate, could be clearly seen from the Prefects' Room, which it was in line with. The next gate to the west, which was permanently closed, was in line with the entrance to the college hall where most pictures that went into the college magazine were taken. The third gate was of similar design to the previous two. This gate aligned with the Staff room. To the west of this entrance were the two tennis courts. Looking west over the tennis courts one could see the cycle shed.

This western-most gate served as the entrance to the grounds. On entering through this gate one would make a right turn past the tennis courts and go round the west wing and get to the grounds. On the west side of the west wing was an open area with a staff car garage at the northern end and the hostel on the west side. On continuing, one would find the Tamarind tree (*Tamarindus indica*) to the left and a weed covered patch of grass, and at the far end was the metalwork shop. Next one would walk past the junior cricket grounds on the left and the old gym to the right, to the area where the indoor Badminton court was located. A few yards to the south was a small building that served as the storage area where cricket paraphernalia - bats, balls, gloves, pads, mattings, etc. - were stored under lock and key. This little building also served as the "pavilion" for the junior and house cricket matches. Behind the storage area was a small living area for the grounds man- formerly David and later Noor. The northeast sight screen, a temporary was put up opposite this storage area on match days.

The pavilion was located a good 30 yards southwest. It served the main grounds with the turf wicket, serving both the home and visiting teams, as well as guests. The competing teams had a dressing room on either side. There was also an upper level for guests to view the cricket. There were two narrow and long structures on either side of the pavilion with three concrete ledges of increasing height for students' use.

Going around the grounds, a few yards beyond the pavilion was a small shed where scorers from each team would sit and communicate with the umpire and record the scores. About 5 yards further on was the small scoreboard that gave a bare minimum of information - the score, how many wickets down and the last man's score. A few yards further on was the southwest end sight screen, at the south end of the property.

On a college first XI match day, on the Reid Avenue side, after the tea break, one would see a growing crowd of well-dressed men standing on the sidewalk and observing the game. With the passage of time we discovered that they were mostly old Royalist returning home from office via Reid Avenue to meet old friend and enjoy the game. Normally a quiet broad street

with cars parked on both sides, Reid Avenue was crowded on Friday and Saturday evenings as home games were being played.

Proceeding north along Reid Avenue, the grounds had a practice side matting wicket. A sand-filled jumping pit was located near it for high and long jump, etc. Near here was a unique tree, *Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*, in Sinhala Hora tree. Its special feature was a fruit/seed about an inch in diameter and two long wings about 6 inches long extending from it. When ripe the dried contraption would fall off and the two wings would rotate in the wind and get carried in the wind... dispersal. There was a building more like a house with access from the avenue, where the Official Languages department was located. Next to it on the north side was the principal's bungalow. Ground breaking for the swimming pool began about 1965 and it came into being about 1969. It was located between this bungalow and the East wing. Between the East wing and Reid Avenue stood the Basketball courts. The staff car garage was located between the bungalow and the basketball courts to the south.

An anecdote of the time was that Mr. C E Belleth, warden of the Hostel, would arrive in time for the tea break. He would arrive about 3-30pm just before the interval. If Royal was batting, one would hear a sigh from the boys viewing the game. His arrival was considered a bad omen and Royal was bound to lose a wicket. It was a moment of excitement and jubilation if the opposing team was batting!

Beginnings

We began in RC Form I in 1959 with about two thirds coming from RPS and the rest from other primary schools. Our six parallel classes were located on the third floor of the west wing. Appendix 1 presents the beginnings of an attempt to list the books which we used. Further information regarding books in the arts stream would be welcome. There is also little on the Pali/ Sanskrit scholars. Our Form masters in Forms I and II are also listed in Appendix 1, which also attempts to list teachers of more specialized subjects in later years.

RPS boys formed the biggest cohort of the 59ers, and it was evident that they were more familiar with each other. However, even though the RPS group was a homogenous unit there were discernible differences among them. Most others came from Colombo district schools, and it took some time before those coming from other schools became fully integrated. Our home classes were integrated, consisting of Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and "Burgher" students. The hostellers, about 15 of them, spending 24 hours of the day together, formed their own connections. More details regarding hostel life will be found in Appendix 2.

A favourite pastime was to read Enid Blyton and Hardy Boys' Mysteries by Franklin W Dixon- and of course many comics that had their origin in the US: Tarzan, Roy Rogers, Lone Ranger and Tonto, Beetle Bailey, Lulu, Looney Tunes (Bugs Bunny, Elmer Fudd, Yosemite Sam)etc. are some titles that come to mind. When a free period occurred due to a teacher's absence, another pastime was to play book cricket with the imagined opponents being England vs Australia. Ceylon cricket had not risen to prominence yet and the three top competing teams of the time were Australia, England and the West Indies. Two would play this game; one would randomly open the book and look at the even page numbers, 0, 2, 4, 6, 8; 0 meant out, 8 was considered one run. The other would draw up the teams and score. When 10 were out we totaled the score and the other team would bat. The more sophisticated we got at it we would rename the page numbers to increase the outs and singles to make our simulation realistic.

As for the real cricket- when the Ashes series was played in Australia, one would get up at 5am to listen to the commentary on short wave before going to school and get updates at school until about noon. When the matches were played in the UK, the games went on until about 10pm Ceylon time.

Among the sports, cricket had the pride of place with both overt and subtle messaging. Although many of us went for house cricket practice in Form I, the start for that path to glory, aged between 10.5 and 11.5 years, there was no opportunity to get into house teams to play under 14 cricket. Form III students looked huge to us and now we know that there was a growth spurt into young adulthood. Those opportunities came to us later, about Form III, when we hit our own growth spurts, and now, at 13 plus years of age, we were well - primed to play cricket at that level. However, boxing, athletics, tennis and swimming provided some sports to participate in at a younger age.

The other sport we participated was athletics. The standard test was for all students all were expected to participate. There was the 100 yards, long- and high- jump. Here we had the opportunity to rate our individual performance against others. Students with the best performance found their way into the annual athletic meet.

The Time Table

My parents gifted me a wrist watch, a reward for passing the entrance test to RC – and which I wore proudly to school. School started at 8:45am. There were eight periods of 40 minutes each day, two period blocks being spaced between intervals. After roll call, the first period started at 9am and went on until 9:40am and the second period until 10:20am. The morning interval was 10 minutes long and the third and fourth periods started at 10:30am and 11:10am. Sometime during the 60s the morning break increased from 10 to 15 minutes – the first period beginning at 8:55am and the second at 9:35am.

The one hour lunch break began at 11:50am and the afternoon session at 12:50pm, when the fifth period started. When the lunch bell rang, running down with bags in hand from the third floor of the west wing to the grounds to claim your own spot in the grounds to play lunch-time cricket was a major priority. Two suitcases served as the wicket with one placed on the ground with the short edge and the second with the long edge on top. We were not allowed anywhere near the turf pitch and the grounds man, Noor, enforced this rule stringently. The Tamil stream students played on one side of the matting wicket while the English stream played on the other side.

Those living not too far from College would come in early, for about another hour of cricket before school. This group of students were an ethnic mix and the abbreviated form of the game was played with the wall to the shooting range behind us. In this format, behind the wicket runs were not allowed. After about Form II this practice came to a slow end as other avenues to vent our energies emerged.

The fifth period, following lunch, was the most challenging, having to sit still and concentrate, in sweaty clothes, between 12:50pm and 1:30pm. The mid-day meal a half hour earlier that created a tendency to doze off, did not make matters any easier. (I do not recall attendance being taken in the afternoon.) After the sixth period the afternoon break of 10 minutes was between 2:10pm and 2:20pm. The last two periods ended at 3:40pm and the day was done. The last period on two days of the week were assigned to Drill. We went to the

grounds and did physical exercises. And the rest of the time we hung around the shade of the tamarind tree.

The Assembly

Friday's first period was devoted to school assembly. The students of the entire school were assembled and the hall was filled to capacity. The balcony upstairs at the back of the hall was for the Lower School, Forms I – III. Form I, at the back, Form II in the middle and Form III in front. Prefects were placed at strategic locations to ensure peace and quiet.- no talking or any form of noise. If caught, prefects had the authority to detain you after school and write 100 lines each - "I shall not disturb..."

Upstairs, between the name panels listing past prize winners, were openings for about six feet across and there were probably six of them. Form IV class rooms were located on the second floor corridor opposite these openings, and Form IV students viewed the assembly through these. The main hall was assigned to the fifth and sixth formers. Lower fifth classes at the back, followed by the upper fifth students. In front of them were the Lower sixth (first year A/L) and right up front were the upper sixth (second year A/L).

Prefects, generally about a dozen in all, sat just below the stage, facing the students. The head prefect sat in the middle flanked by the other prefects on either, with the most junior furthest away to the sides. Some prefects were posted at locations on second floor viewing areas to assure that strict silence was observed.

The Principal was the first to walk on to the stage, followed by the teaching staff, initially all male teachers. In later years, a Buddhist monk, Ven. Kahaduwe Chandrajoti, a Sinhala honors graduate from Peradeniya, and a lady teacher, Mrs Thelma Seelawathie Samarasekera joined the staff. A grand piano was located to the right of the stage covered by a black cloth and was concealed by overhead screens.

As the principal entered the stage, all students rose to their feet. The Principal went to the head table, placed right at the front center of the stage, and waited for the staff members to claim a chair. Two rows of chairs for staff were placed on each side at a 30 degree shallow angle. When all were in place, the Principal, followed by the students, sat down. Now there was pin drop silence. The formalities at this weekly event sent many message on unwritten rules and behavior. We observed them all with a keen eye, learning to emulate them in time.

The prefects were not well- known to the younger students and there was a natural curiosity about them. As time progressed, we learnt what it took to become a prefect – they were exceptional sportsmen or academically-oriented prize winners. Very few excelled in both fields. Initially there were about twelve prefects, distributed evenly among the four houses, Hartley, Harvard, Marsh and Boake. All students belonged to one of these houses. If you had an older brother or a father at RC, you were assigned to the same house.

One day in the early sixties, Mr. Philip Gunawardena's son (AIR, aka Indika) wore national dress to school. That day and the day he was appointed a prefect mark a time of change. Mr. Philip Gunawardena, an MEP politician with strong nationalist tendencies, was a part of the coalition government of PM Mrs. Bandaranaike, between 1960-64.

A guest speaker was invited to about a half of these assemblies. They were often old Royalists- and also others who shared their later experiences in life - to reinforce the traditions of RC. On one occasion Palitha Alwis, an exceptional student at the time who had attended Lumumba University in the then USSR, was invited to address the assembly. This was a singular event, since his former classmates were in the student audience and he was the guest speaker. N Chandra Wickramasinghe, who distinguished himself as an astronomer at Cambridge, was also a guest. Chandra had carried out exceptional work on cosmology, in collaboration with Sir Fred Hoyle, at Cambridge. There were several non-Royalist guest speakers- one being Richard Arndt, of the USIS, giving a vivid presentation, with music clips, on American jazz; with due acknowledgement that this music was born from the pain and tribulations of slavery. There was also a 'Born again' Christian Band from the US, which among others, played a song called 'This Train is Bound For Glory'.

New awards in recognition of service to the school were formally shared at these assemblies, the appointment of prefects being a highlight. When the name was called the student rose from his seat in the audience, went up the stage on the steps on the left, shook the Principal's hand, came down the steps on the right and sat on the assigned empty chair to thunderous applause. Appointments of Captains to the various key teams, Cricket, Rugby, etc., was another such feature. Also of high significance was the award of colors in various key sports. For example, for Cricket, there were re-awards for the current year and new awards for the complete eleven, and also for the Rugby fifteen. On rare occasions there would be an additional student who would have met the requirements for colors. These were a chosen few, representing RC at the big matches against STC and Trinity.

Termination of the assembly had its own ritual. At the end, the principal stood up and walked off the stage, followed by the teachers. When the teachers had disappeared from view, the head prefect or the most senior prefect in attendance that day had the responsibility of dismissing the students. He would rise with a face of serious demeanour, walk down the central aisle to the far end of the hall. He would take his time and dismiss the lower school (Forms I – III) students in the balcony. Then he would dismiss the Form IV students, leaving only those in the main hall. Those in the lower fifth were dismissed next and then the upper five students were let go. Since the prefects were all sixth formers, there was now a sense of friendliness and relief. The lower sixth were let go next and finally the upper sixth. At this time the rest of the prefects would rise from their seats, mingling freely with their colleagues. We eventually returned to our classes for the next period.

Sports – learning to play the game!

Interschool first XI cricket began in the third term. The matches I recall in that term were against Prince of Wales, St. Sebastian, Mahinda, Richmond, St. Johns, Jaffna and Jaffna Central. Not all teams were played in any one year, with only 3 or 4 matches being played. The season began in earnest in January, against Ananda, St. Benedict's, Zahira, St. Anthony's, St Joseph's, Nalanda, St Peter's, Wesley, Trinity, and ending with the big Royal Thomian (RT) match.

Preparations for the RT match were immense. Unlike at the present time, two prefects were appointed tent secretaries for the match. They together with rest of the prefects and 15-20 appointed stewards managed the college souvenir and discipline at the grounds. A souvenir was printed each year with articles on highlights of past encounters, and cartoons of participating cricketers, etc. I recall a big scramble to get one's own copy. Next we had to

buy tickets at one rupee for the boys tent and if you knew adults who wanted to attend the game, one could buy tickets at Rs.3.50 each. The match was played at the Oval in Wanathamulla. The previous Thursday evening, a cycle parade to the captain's house, ostensibly to convey our best wishes, began in the mid-sixties. Friday's preoccupation was the old crock parade. On the first day of the two day match, vehicles of all sizes and shapes began to assemble at the Race Course Avenue. They were decorated in blue and gold and noise making paraphernalia. With hired bands in attendance the parade began mid-morning. The route to The Oval took a circuitous route hitting the girl's schools; Ladies, St. Bridget's, Bishops, Methodist, Visakha, etc. prior to reaching the destination.

Around ages 15-16, the dynamics of interactions and forces at play changed in the second half of a student's life at Royal. By this time the stalwarts had made their mark and all had entered young adulthood. Starting about the Fifth form we discovered our own talents and capabilities. Alternately we were encouraged by others both friends and staff for greater participation in extracurricular activities.

I had played cricket at the 2nd XI level and began to drift towards other sports. Rugby caught my fancy and was the key sport for the second term. Athletics and Hockey were the other activities. We stayed away from the Turf wicket at Reid Avenue. In those days Rugby practice was initially at the CH&FC grounds across Reid Avenue, within the horse track later, and at the University grounds next door.

One of the practice matches of the time was between RC and the University. Two old Royal stalwarts, O G Samaratunge and G Tiruchittampalam, both in the Engineering Faculty then, playing for the University in their black uniform. CH&FC at the time had a whites-only team headed by John Burrows. We could go across Reid Avenue to watch them play. I was interested in playing as a forward and quickly learned to play wing forward. A colorsman, R T "Necker" de Zoysa was the scrum half and I was on his tail at practice, but more often than not I was a split second behind and the ball was gone. After practice he would often encourage me. I played for the house and 2nd XV. Next came my forays into Hockey. This came from the blues. Two of my classmates played full back for college; one came to me and asked if I could be the house goalie. I was taken by complete surprise and when I queried they said "Why, you have been keeping wickets for our house all these years, just wear the pads and make sure you don't let any balls get through to the goal". So began my Hockey. I did not let any balls through and we beat the other team. It was then the time to play in the final. My recollection is that we probably won that match too again the opponents did not score any goals against us.

First fifteen Rugby matches were fewer in number and the opponents I recall are Zahira, St. Peter's, STC and Trinity, for the two Bradby Shield fixtures, one played in Colombo, the other in Kandy. First XV ruggie matches played against Club's junior teams as well. CR&FC Cossacks, CH&FC Kabaragoyas, Havelocks Bambaras. As we had many old Royalists playing for CR&FC at Longdon Place, our inter-school home games were played there. The protocol was that the first of the two games were played in either Colombo or Kandy, in alternate years. Making the trip to Kandy by train took a significant turn in the early 60s- the train from Colombo Fort station to Kandy being filled with RC fans, and blue, gold and blue flags dangling at all angles from the train.

I do not recall that during our day, under 15 Rugby Football or Junior Hockey but for cricket, there were two under 14 and under 16 teams. Other junior teams came later. The sports

curricula were vast. In addition to the above there was Boxing, Swimming, Badminton, Table Tennis, Basketball, and Athletics. In Athletics there were field events, Discus, Putt Shot, Javelin, (but no hammer throw), High Jump, Long Jump and Hop, Step and Jump and Pole Vault. Track events included, Hurdles, 100 yards, 220 yards, 440 yards, 880 yards, and the mile races. Winning the interschool competition for the Tarbet trophy was the ultimate objective. In 1960 Darrell Lieversz swept the senior field events and M W Sellayah won the junior field events, thus securing the Tarbet for RC.

For each sport, we appeared to have a specific key opponent. Although Royal did not produce winning teams in each sport each year, they generally remained a top inter-school competitor year in year out. STC was the key opponent in cricket, hockey, tennis, rowing and many other annual sports encounters. Trinity was the key opponent in Rugby Football, the Bradby shield being awarded to the team with the higher aggregate score. The match against STC took second place in importance behind Trinity, which did not make the Thomians very happy! In the 60s the Guneratne Cup was introduced.

The Stubb's Shield was the ultimate objective in Boxing and St. Mary's College, Dehiwala, and St. Michael's College, Polwatta (Colombo-3, produced many competitive boxers. Mr. Danton Obeysekera was our perennial coach and Mr. E M J S Fernando, served as the master-in-charge. A fellow 59er and a later boxing captain, G E S Edward de Silva brought our attention to the role of boxing at Royal. His recollections on Boxing and other musings are in Appendix 8.

A long-term key opponent in athletics was St Joseph's College. For basketball it was St. Benedicts – and St Peter's came up with fine Rugby teams during that era.

The winners of interschool competitions received an award- a cup or a shield. When Royal won these awards they were brought back by the team captain and presented to the Principal at the assembly. Indeed it was a big deal to win the Herman Loos trophy for cadetting, Tarbet for Athletics, Stubbs Shield for Boxing, Noel Fernando Rowing trophy against STC, etc.

Although Royal had played soccer in prior decades, we did not field a soccer team in the sixties. One oft-repeated mantra of our time was that in Ceylon, rugby was a game for thugs played by gentlemen while soccer was a gentlemen's game played by thugs. Soccer is arguably the most popular sport in the world today, and in later years both soccer and baseball were established at Royal. The camaraderie that evolved among the alumni of Royal, Trinity and STC often endured for a lifetime. To be humble in victory and gracious in defeat were the early lessons learnt from these sporting encounters.

Rowing was a very special event between Royal and STC as not many schools had facilities for Rowing. Both teams practiced at the Colombo Rowing Club and the annual races for the A and B teams were held in the Beira Lake. A contribution from O K Padmasiri Gunasekera on rowing will be found in Appendix 3.

The 59ers had two captains each in Rugby, Hockey, Boxing, Table Tennis and one each in Badminton, Cricket, Athletics and Chess.

Indoor Games Club

During most of our years at RC Mr. R M Devapriya Wickremasinghe, a master at the hostel, was the Vice-President of the club and also served as its master-in-charge. To my recollection the club included Badminton, Chess and Table Tennis. The indoor Badminton court was in the Gymnasium, and Table Tennis tables were in the East wing lobby. See also Appendix 9 by Firoz Nilam for Table Tennis and Appendix 13 by Jayantha Kudahetty for Badminton.

Sports Meet

The Sports meet was an annual event at the end of the second term. The chief guest was usually an old boy or a parent of a current athlete who excelled in Athletics during their day. There were Under 14, 16 and 19 events and possibly a few for Under 12.5 boys and over 19 as well. There were cycle races, slow cycle races, parent's races, old boy's races, staff and minor staff races. The meet started around one in the afternoon and continued until late afternoon and concluded with the relays 4x110, 4x440, etc. This was followed by the distribution of prizes; certificates, cups of various sizes and shields all given away by the chief guest.

A School Year

According to the December 1960 roll call, the total number of students in Forms I through VI was about 1180. Gaining a well-rounded personality was considered a priority. Students were encouraged and required to participate in the many extracurricular activities described above. The teaching staff, in addition to in-class instructions, were required to serve as guides and mentors for these activities. This aspect of education was another feature that make us Royalists.

The school year began in January each year and ran for three months. Each term was followed by the holiday months of April, August and December. April, at the beginning of the southwest monsoon and August, at its end, were the hottest months. The southwest monsoon was in May, June and July, the second term months. Cyclists were forced to seek temporary shelter from the passing rains on their way to or from school, or were obliged to resort to alternative transport.

School terms commenced with fortnightly tests, resulting in the issue of a report. In addition, what was learned during each term was tested at the end of the term. Students were rated and ranked at the end of the three terms and a report was sent to the parents. The term reports were signed by the class master and countersigned by the Principal- who often added his own comments. Remarkably, the Principal read each and every report concerning every student in the school. We used innovative methods to divert the delivery of the report to our parents!

The College Farm

The college farm was located in Narahenpita, coming down Thimbirigasyaya Road, across the Kelani Valley Railway line. Mr. R M Devapriya Wickremasinghe was in charge. It was an experience learning basic skills in farming, which we did in forms II and III. Boys made their own way to the farm. We worked through the better part of the day and then walked back to College at the end of the day.

Prize-giving day

Prize-giving was at the end of the third term. The class prize was awarded to students with the highest aggregate of the three term tests. There were Junior (Form IV) and Senior (Form VI) prizes for the best student at each level. Those performing well in languages, mathematics, sciences, art, music, etc. were awarded prizes, too numerous to list. In addition, sportsmen received prizes and special prizes were awarded for all-round performers (that is, in academics and sports).

The chief guest was a top government official, for example the Governor General, Prime Minister or Education Minister. Guards of honor were presented by both the junior and senior cadets, the senior performance naturally being the more impressive, presenting arms to the chief guest. The event began around 5:30pm and went on into the night, ending past 9pm. Parents and prize-winning students were assigned chairs and others were either in the back rows or in the balcony. It was customary for the students to stamp on the wooden floor of the balcony to make additional noise when names of winners were called out and awards were presented.

Music at Royal College

In the 1957 April magazine, a single organization called the Music Society is recorded, with the principal as its president, Mr. S. Sivaraman as the vice-president and S. Amarasingham as the secretary. However one of our contributors noted that when he joined Royal in 1958, he became a member of the Oriental Music Society. This suggests that the Music Society split into Oriental and Western Music Societies by January 1958.

In Form I, the Principal DKG ensured that the college anthem was firmly etched in our memory cells. There were periods for western and oriental music. DKG's special interest was in western music. At Christmas time each year, he would personally conduct a choir singing carols

Mr. W A Wickremasena, the Oriental music master, had a room in the west wing. A sitar, veena, tabla, etc were at his disposal. He would get us to sing the scale: sa, re, ga, ma, pa,, da, ni, sa, and go back from high to low in reverse.

Variety entertainments took place near the end of the year. This was a showcase for musical items, comedies and short playlets. The program was organized entirely by the students and I do not recall staff being present. The names I do recall at random are Tissa Wickemasuriya ('52 group) who served as the compere, George Handy ('56) playing the piano, Mahesen Richards and Sidath Jayanetti ('52) playing the trumpet, Viji "Charlie" Gulasekharam ('57er) on the trombone and clarinet. Gamini (Gabo) Peiris (another 57er) was on drums.

Mr. Belleth's son Leon took over the reins as the compere. In later years he was an announcer at Radio Ceylon. It was not, unfortunately, unusual to be booed off the stage for a poor performance.

The Royal College Swingtette was a jazz/ dance band, under the astute management of Mr. Ernest Amarasekera. The band played at the College carnivals and at hotels and nightclubs, raising money for the swimming pool fund. Successive drummers included Gamini (Gabo)

Pieris (before he became a Sri Lankan musical legend), Arooz Sherriff and Fazli Sameer. Mohan Asbury was on piano - Ranjan Rajaratnam (trumpet), Viji Gulasekharam and Git Wickremasinghe (clarinet) making up the 'front line'. The original vocalist Sohan Peiris, later of Jetliners fame, was replaced by our own Ranjan Dandeniya. Git continues to play jazz in London- sometimes accompanying Ranjan's vocal gifts! (Appendix 15).

Puvi Puvenrarajah, a star guitarist, joined the Jetliners, using the stage name IndraRaj. In the good old days he used to play as lead guitarist of Shadows songs and many others - and is still performing widely as a lead guitarist, all over Europe. He is now domiciled in Switzerland along with another 59er Brice R Fernando.

SCHOOL SOCIETIES

The Principal is Ex-Officio President of all School Societies and Clubs

Senior English Literary Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. E. F. C. Pereira and C. V. A. Ratnayake
Chairman: S. C. L. Francke
Secretary: M. F. Ismail

Intermediate English Literary Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. V. Weerasinghe, D. R. Senanayake and E. J. D. de Silva
Secretary: A. G. A. Jayasuriya

Junior English Literary Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. A. N. Perera, R. I. T. Alles, M. M. Alavy and K. V. Sabaratnam
Secretary: M. A. C. Haseeb

Senior Sinhalese Literary Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. K. C. Fernando, D. R. Senanayake, S. J. Dissanayake and Rev. K. Chandajothi
Chairman: P. S. Alwis
Secretary: W. P. de Silva

Junior Sinhalese Literary Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. M. K. J. Cantlay, S. H. Perera and L. de Silva
Secretary: M. A. Wijesuriya

Senior Tamil Literary Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. K. L. Iyer, A. N. Ratmathicam and S. Sethukavalar
Chairman: N. Sivapalan
Secretary: J. A. Radhakrishnan

Junior Tamil Literary Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. K. V. Sabaratnam, M. M. Alavy and V. Sivalingam
Secretary: T. Parameshwaran

Buddhist Brotherhood

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. K. C. Fernando, L. Samararatne, J. de S. Abeyleera and D. R. Senanayake
Secretary: C. N. U. de Soysa

Student Christian Movement

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. C. E. Belleth, E. F. C. Pereira and L. F. M. Samuel
Student President: S. C. L. Francke
Secretary: A. L. Ponnambalam

Hindu Students' Union

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. K. L. Iyer, S. Sethukavalar and A. K. Sarma
Student Chairman: R. Nadesan
Secretary: K. Sittambalam

Islamic Society

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. B. G. N. Sarifodeen, M. M. Alavy and O. H. Abdeen
Student Chairman: M. G. A. Izmeth
Secretary: M. C. Amoo

Science Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. S. Muttucumaru, S. E. Dias, A. L. Baldsing and M. M. Gunaratne
Secretary: S. P. de Silva

Historical Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. A. N. Ratmathicam, C. V. A. Ratnayake, J. de S. Abeyleera and D. Samaraweera
Secretary: A. G. Ameresekere

Geographical Association

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. H. M. Samaraweera and S. A. A. Perera
Secretary: A. S. de Silva

Natural History Society

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. S. E. Dias, M. M. Gunaratne and E. C. Gunasekera
Secretary: A. M. Rajapakse

Dramatic Society

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. C. P. de A. Abeysinghe, S. Sethukavalar, S. J. Dissanayake, L. de Silva and E. B. Sabapathipillai
Secretary: S. C. Chandrabhasan

Western Music Society

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. S. Muttucumaru and V. Weerasinghe
Secretary:

Oriental Music Society

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. M. K. J. Cantlay, S. J. Dissanayake, W. A. Wickramasena and S. Kulasegaram
Secretary: A. I. R. Gunawardena

Art Circle

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. E. M. J. S. Fernando and M. B. H. Wariyapola
Secretary: P. G. K. Fernando

Photographic Society

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. L. de Silva, M. B. H. Wariyapola and V. Weerasinghe
Secretary: P. J. S. de Silva

Radio Club

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. A. L. Baldsing and N. D. Gunawardene
Secretary: D. H. S. Athulathmudali

Motor Mechanism Club

Vice-President: Mr. L. F. M. Samuel
Secretary:

Industrial Arts Club

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. B. G. N. Sarifodeen, M. K. J. Cantlay, N. D. Gunawardena and R. I. T. Alles
Secretary: L. S. Munasinghe

Co-operative Farm Club

Vice-President: Mr. R. M. D. Wickremesinghe
Secretary:

Orchid Circle

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. S. E. Dias and V. Weerasinghe
Secretary: S. M. Tamby Raja

Social League

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. L. de Silva, S. H. Perera and D. R. Senanayake
Secretary: L. A. W. Sirisena

Tennis Club

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. E. F. C. Pereira, A. N. Ratmathicam and A. N. Perera
Secretary: N. L. Gooneratne

Rifle Club

Vice-Presidents: Capt. H. M. Samaraweera and Lt. A. N. Ratmathicam
Secretary: A. M. Wannakuwatte

Indoor Games Club

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. K. C. Fernando and R. M. D. Wickremasinghe
Secretary: A. G. Ameresekere

Cadet Contingent

O. C. Contingent: Lt. A. N. Ratmathicam and Lt. B. G. N. Sarifodeen
Other Officers: 2/Lts. L. Samararatne and R. I. T. Alles
Sergeants: G. A. de S. Wickremaratne and K. Balendra
C.Q.M.S: L. A. R. Perera

Scout Troop

Group Scout Master: Mr. M. K. J. Cantlay
Assistant Scout Masters: Messrs. M. M. Alavy and W. A. Wickramasena
Troop Leader: S. D. Arudpragasam

Library

Librarian: Mr. A. R. W. Tennekoon
Readers: D. H. S. Athulathmudali, S. C. Chandrabhasan, D. L. Fernando, N. L. Gooneratne, S. G. Gooneratne, S. Javanetti, P. C. Ratnatunga, T. Sunthareswaran, A. M. Wannakuwatte and R. Nadesan

Hostel

Warden: Mr. C. E. Belleth
Hostel Masters: Messrs. B. St. E. de Bruin, L. Samararatne and R. M. D. Wickremesinghe
Prefects: S. G. Gooneratne, G. A. Hettiaratchi, T. Mapagumaratne and S. M. Tamby Raja

Masters-in-Charge of Vocational Guidance

Messrs. E. F. C. Pereira and H. M. Samaraweera

Associations and Societies

As seen above, the Principal was ex-officio President of all school societies. Vice-Presidents were teachers, who held these positions on a long-term basis and provided guidance to the societies. The secretary was a student, a position which changed annually. Becoming a secretary gave skills in arranging and running meetings in accordance with Robert's rules. The teachers were the guides who taught us these skills. A complete listing of all the societies can be found at the back of the RC magazines of the time.

The debating teams were part of the junior and senior Literary Associations in English, Sinhala and Tamil. These teams debated a pre-agreed topic with other schools, both male and female, these events providing rare opportunities to meet students of the opposite sex.

The school societies listed above provided opportunities for gaining knowledge in diverse fields and enhancing life skills. We participated in these activities to fulfill our budding needs. A more detailed description of the Art Circle will be found in Appendix 3.

The purpose of the Social League was to reach out to Ceylon society at large. Many students at RC came from the privileged urban upper echelons of society, and The League had a commitment to reach out to rural areas, an activity which they performed with a sense of dedication and purpose.

Art and Crafts

These were only taught in Lower School. Mr EMJS Fernando was the Art Teacher- and we painted in water colours only. Oils being too costly. A lesser known activity was sculpturing that Mr. Fernando encourage. See appendix 3 by O K Padmasiri Gunasekera.

Mr Sherifdeen taught woodwork- in Form I we made a pencil sharpener, of sorts. A piece of wood carved into a trapezium shape, to which was glued a piece of sandpaper! Mr Sherifdeen, who was also a cadet master, disappeared- mysteriously- during year one.

'Teddy Bear' Gunawardena taught metalwork. We laboured long and hard to cut and bend a piece of metal to make a blotting paper holder. It came in two pieces; the inflexible top piece, bent at the two long ends to hold the flexible metal piece on which the blotting paper was to be slipped. A wooden handle was attached to the top piece with two screws.

Cadetting

Junior and senior cadetting was another activity, which with its uniform gave a sense of glamour and belonging. The Herman Loos trophy was awarded to the winners of the interschool competition held each year at Diyatalawa. For some, cadetting programs served as a path to a career in the Police or the three Armed Services in the country, Army, Navy or Air Force. A more detailed description of the Cadet Corps during our time will be found in Appendix 3 written by O K Padmasiri Gunasekera.

RC magazine – a record of history in bygone years

The RC magazine was an important and enduring symbol of Royal College life. Each student was given a copy and we held on to those with great care. It served as a ready reference to events of the school terms and reflected the societal changes of the times.

There were issues at the end of each of the three terms, in April, August and December. The magazine began with the names of the editors, one in each language, followed by the editorials composed by them. Group photographs began with the prefects for that term. In that era cricket, rugby and hockey team photos, along with others such as Debating Teams, Rowing, Boxing, Badminton, Chess, etc., were posted. Photographs in a particular issue often included winners of an interschool competition or other such high achievement. As a youngster entering RC, pictures of the various teams in each issue became etched in the memory. To be in one of these photographs was a special privilege and to be mentioned by name in the service of the school was another- giving us goals to strive for.

Students were encouraged write articles in English, Sinhala or Tamil. Topics varied, but were often of an educational nature. Some wrote about recent scientific developments, others on culture and history. Creative writers of poetry and short stories also contributed. Retiring staff and those joining anew were also listed, as were the achievements of the old boys. Games and Association Reports provided summaries of the term's activities.

Early years

The exact number of 59ers entering Form I remain elusive at this time. About 215 students entering Form I were divided into 6 parallel classes. Students from the three language media were mixed. As I recall English was the only subject that we offered with our class master and for all other subjects were moved to different rooms to study the subject with a different teacher. About 145 students were in the Sinhala medium, 35 in the Tamil medium and 40 in the English medium. Students of Burgher ancestry, a bulk of the Muslims and students whose parents were mixed in the English medium class.. At the end of Form I, a trip was arranged. This was a visit to the Castlereigh reservoir and the Norton Bridge dam. The father of a fellow student was the Chief Engineer at the complex. The parents of another student owned a holiday bungalow in the area, which provided our accommodation. Mr. Cantlay was the 'chaperone'. The scouts also went on 'camping' trips . In the first year, the camp was at the Wavulagala Estate. As expected, the property was a haven for bats, who roosted in a vast cave.

As the first year drew to a close, the barrier between Royal Prep boys and those from other schools began to disappear slowly. There was general camaraderie by Form II and at the end of the lower School in Form III we were an integrated and homogeneous brotherhood. Form IV began the middle school years. All subjects were taught in English and there were no divisions between different language streams of study. Those excelling in different subjects were awarded Junior Best Student Prizes at the end of the year.

Those doing exceptionally well at the Form IV end of year exam were promoted directly to the Upper Fifth and were required to take the GCE O/L at the end of that year, 1963. Until 1961, of the four parallel classes in Form IV, about 40 students were selected to go to the Upper Fifth. The rest went to the Lower Fifth. The 59ers were the last batch of students to

experience the lower fifth. (STC had a similar arrangement and their Lower Fifth was called the Middle Sixth and their L VI and U VI being College B and College A, respectively). It appears that this was a mechanism to bolster the sports teams. My recollection is, eventually a rule emerged that all interschool sportsmen had to be under twenty.

The layout of the school buildings in the sixties

The oldest part College was the main building, flanked by the West and East wings. These wings were mirror-image replicas of each other, in external architecture, but not in internal layout. The new wing ran parallel to the main building, on its Southerly aspect, with an open quadrangle in between the buildings. The hostel was located in a separate building, to the west of the West wing. The building layout plan follows:

On entering the West Wing lobby in 1959, one first encountered Kadale Aaccchie. She passed away in 1960- her place being taken by her former assistant, Thangiah Ponniah. Affectionately known as Kadalay. In addition to selling his delicious snacks from a glass box, Kadalay was an enthusiastic and knowledgeable supporter of RC sports- never missing a Royal- Thomian match- and even travelling to Kandy for Bradby Shield encounters. More information on Kadalay, an iconic RC institution who probably outstayed many a teacher, will be found in an affectionate blog by Eardley Lieversz:

<http://kadalayroyal.blogspot.com/>

All the Form I classes, A to F, were located on the top floor (third) of the west wing. Three Forms, II A to C were also on that floor. A music room and the art room were nestled in the corners of this floor. The 2nd floor was occupied by the rest of Form II and Form III. Opposite these class rooms was the Lower School headmaster's room- Mr C P de A (Cowpox) Abeyasinghe. At the Southern end of the wing, facing the grounds, was The Little Theatre. Its windows were blackened and at the end of the term we were entertained to 16mm black and white movies. The theatre was under the care of Mr. E F C Pereira. The first floor of the west wing was empty, except for a table tennis table or two. However on the north side was the Geography room under Mr. S A A Perera's care (formerly under Mr. A D Baptist) and next to it was Mr. Sheriffdeen's Woodwork room. Across from woodworks shop were the abandoned Badminton courts.

The Library, in care of Mr Ashley Tennekoon, was located on the second floor above these two rooms. The librarian was assisted by about a half dozen library readers. A description of the library by Geethapriya M G H Salgado will be found in Appendix 4.

The companion handicraft to woodwork, metalwork, was located in a separate building near one end of the hostel under the care of Mr. Gunawardena. (Teddy Bear). The Southern arm of the West wing lobby housed the toilet and provided access to the grounds. One had to jump off a corridor to get to the grounds. This corridor connected with the new wing on the first floor.

Upon climbing the steps into the main, central building's ground (first) floor corridor, the first room to the right was the armory where cadetting gear was stored. To the left was the staff room, from the windows of which one could see clear to Racecourse Avenue through

Royal College, Colombo, Floor Plan, early 1960s



the West gate. On the right was the Vice Principal's room with a black board and ledge on the west wall. Although I escaped that punishment, we have seen many students bending against the wall, hands outstretched, being caned on the rear. No one wanted look but an accidental observation was sufficient evoke a mix of emotions.

Adjacent to the VP's room were a couple of offices in which our school records were kept. I had been there only once, to locate my school records for the preparation of the school leaving certificate, to be signed by the principal Mr. Bogoda Premaratne. Across these rooms were the assembly hall. The college bell, rung to demarcate periods, was kept here. It was Jayasinghe's task to ring the bell on time. I recall him choosing an open spot so that the bell sound would be carried the furthest throughout college.

On either side of the hall were two walkways that took us to the two porches. These porches were rarely used except on rainy days, when students were dropped off. The two walkways traversed the main corridor to the stairs for the second floor. The west walkway wall housed a board with important notices. Among them were the listing of names of those selected to play in that week's matches. Climbing the stairs to the second floor of the main building one came to the set of Form IV classes, across from the hall. The classrooms to the west were occupied by some of Form III while those on the east side were for Fifth formers. The prefect's room was nestled here on the north side, with a direct view over the Boake gate, to Racecourse Avenue. The Upper fifth, consisting of a large number of parallel classes, were accommodated in various locations spread between the main building and the new wing.

Proceeding east along the main corridor on the First Floor, with the hall on the left, was the Principal's office. Trophies won by the boys were housed in this room. I recall DKG parking his Peugeot 203 and walking about 10 steps to his office. There were a few rooms in this area- the one across from the Principal's office was called The Green Room. A piano was located here and the room served as a dressing room, for preparation for plays and variety entertainment shows. It apparently also served as the meeting room for the principal with staff in the selection of prefects. It is likely that the other rooms in this area were used for Fifth and Sixth form Arts stream classes. The corridor then took a turn to the right and then a left, towards the East wing. The Two Physics labs were to the left of the corridor, Deen being the "lab boy". Opposite the lab was a toilet. At the end of the corridor, a set of steps led down to the East wing lobby.

The tuck shop- located off the East Wing lobby- was Mr Saranapala's empire. Short eats at the morning break included patties, Chinese rolls etc. Unfortunately, there were few of these delights remaining at afternoon break! At lunchtime, rice and curry plates- Mr Saranapala himself boiled the rice in a great aluminium pot, outdoors- just behind the tuckshop and facing the sports ground. He stirred the rice with a long wooden stick. Also, at lunch, saucers of beef curry, with slices of Perera's white bread to dip into it- five bread slices and beef! The tuckshop was a rather undisciplined affair- queuing was undreamt of. Students would jostle and clamour for service from the staff- including Saranapala's daughter Malini- an aspiring beauty queen. Some students had their rice (bath) curry delivered from their homes- by the colourfully clad Bath Karaya- balancing large numbers of plates wrapped in napkins, on the back of his bicycle. The plates were then returned to the correct addresses- a mystifying feat, since Bath Karaya was illiterate! The best explanation is that he recognized the patterns on the napkins the plates were wrapped in.

Tucked away in one corner at the West end of the Physics lab corridor was an entry to the new wing and the Chemistry Labs where Dabare served as the “lab boy”. If you needed a particular chemical he would find it for you, but at the price of a bribe-another side business. From the Chemistry lab corridor and behind the wall of the shooting range was a little path which led to the grounds. It was almost a secret passage which we discovered.

The upper school sciences began on the third floor of the East wing. The two Lower Sixth Bio classes were located here. In one corner was the Botany lab. The lab boy Martin wore a sarong and had a small 'konde' tied in the back. Next door was the Zoology lab. We had a selection of earthworms, cockroaches, prawns, sharks, toads and rats to dissect. If you wanted additional practice, the zoology lab boy, Arumugam whose usual attire was brown shorts, would supply them, as a side business. Opposite these labs was the Upper School headmaster, Mr. S E Dias' room and upon his retirement and later Mr. E C Gunasekera's.

On the second floor of the east wing, directly above the Physics labs, was the Lower Sixth Math class and next to it the Upper Sixth Math class. After Mr. de Bruin's departure, Mr. S Thillainadarasar took over as a key Math teacher. It is likely Mr. V Arasaratnam took over this role later. The next two rooms were the Physics and Chemistry Lecture theatres. The layouts of these two theaters were identical to those in the Science Faculty of the University. This uncanny resemblance made me think whichever were constructed first may have served as a template for the later. Opposite these Lecture Theatres was the Upper School teacher's staff room.

Variable durations of stay at Royal

This is an appropriate place to discuss the times spent by Royalists at College. Everyone joining Form I went through four years of school through to Form IV. Students performing well at the end of Form IV, coming within the first 25% of the students proceeded directly to the Upper Fifth, with a double promotion. At the end of the UV year these students took the O/L exam. If successful, some would apply for a scholarship for overseas University study. Others interested in pursuing a career in accounting left school and took the exams offered by British institutions to qualify either as Cost and Works or Chartered Accountants. These accounting courses were usually of five years' duration, but exceptional students usually completed them in a shorter time and entered the job market. Such students would have spent no more than five years plus a few months at RC, until the O/L results were released. There were no accountancy or business programs at the university level in Ceylon. Those proceeding to Law College also left school after the O/L to enter that institution.

The Arts stream included classics or languages, humanities and social sciences. Many of these students proceed to University and earned a baccalaureate degree in these fields. Others chose to pursue a law degree, LLB, at the Law Faculty. It is not clear if double promotion to Upper Fifth existed for the Arts stream.

At the Lower Five level and above, the class A was for those offering Arts subjects. Classes B and C were for the Bio-sciences stream and D for the Math stream. However, since there were many returns after the O/L in the Upper Fifth, the numbering became confusing. For example, the 1960 RC Roll Call in the UV class of 1960 shows there were seven parallel classes. These classes consisted of students taking the O/L for the first time- that is those who received a double promotion directly from Form IV of the previous year (1959), plus those

who were in LV in '59. In addition, there were students who had taken the O/L in 1959 for the first time but failed to achieve the minimum requirement to proceed to the sixth form.

In that era, one could remain at school and take the O/L three times, taking the exam in Dec 58, Aug 59 and Dec 59. If after these three attempts they failed to qualify for progress to the Sixth Forms when the results that came by about May '60, they would be required to leave school at that time. 'Disce aut Discede' Students with a "Burgher" ancestry and those that did not have sufficient background to pass Sinhala or Tamil as a second language were also required to leave. This additional requirement came after the 1956 elections and the Premiership of SWRD Bandaranaike. This same requirement would have applied to other student groups that did not have sufficient knowledge in Sinhala or Tamil. In the early years of implementation of this policy in late 50s, many of these emigrated, primarily to Australia.

The first exodus following SWRD's policy implementation was the result of the "race" riots of 1958. Although, some returned, many Tamil students left RC never to return. They went largely to Jaffna schools and some made reconnections in the University.

Lower Fifth was for the majority, about 75% , of the '59 group students. Here was an opportunity to "smell the roses at Royal". Studies went on at a slower pace as the O/L was a year away. This was also a year to indulge in sports and take life easy. My brother, having been through LV, warned me that it was a wasted year. That request to avoid the lower fifth fell on deaf ears. Later when I talked with other seniors, they pointed out that some used it to improve their academic skills whereas for others it was one more year of sports. One who obtained a double promotion found the pace of academics too fast and requested and reverted to LV. To me it was a year of growth, both academically and in sports. I remember Mr. Gunasekaram teaching Advanced Math and Physics. Mr. Shireshtarajah taught us Chemistry, with a life-long impact. During our Lower Fifth years, classes were held in the new wing, which was built circa 1959. This wing was adjacent to the shooting range, and our classroom were above the Dental Clinic and the Nurses room, where we were sent for minor physical ailments and cuts and bruises. This wing overlooked the grounds and the inter-house cricket matches were played on the matting wicket, so we could look out the window and follow the match. The turf wicket was further away, but we could get a glimpse of an occasional 2nd XI match played there. The Lower Fifth was abolished after the 1963 batch. In the earlier years Mr. W A Wickramasena's Oriental Music room was also nestled among the classrooms here. The Oriental music room was subsequently moved downstairs.

The lower fifth students were promoted to the Upper fifth, and did their O/L in December 1964. O/L results were released in May the following year. These big bundles of paper arrived from the Dept of Exams. Students' names were in rows and the combination of possible subjects were at the top, in columns. We were separated by our last names alphabetically into groups of two or three in the main hall. The master with the results read the subject and the grade. Word spread like wildfire across the hall as to who had done well and who had failed to meet the requirements to advance. There were about 450 students taking the O/L in Dec 1964. It was sad to see so many, having grown up together for many years, leaving us. For them, their stay at Royal had come to an end and they would have been at College for a total of seven years. Many of these students moved away from academic endeavor, but often excelled in other fields.

Students passing O/L at the second attempt they would spend their eighth year in the Lower sixth (or A/L first year) and move to the Upper sixth at the end of the ninth year, taking the

A/L exam. If they failed to enter the University they could attempt the exam a second time in the tenth year at school, in December. Generally, if they did not meet requirements they could not return. However, students who were younger on entry to Form I- that is barely over 10.5 years, were allowed to remain at RC. This was important, for the cricket season was the first term of the year - January through March.

I was happy that I met the requirements to move to the sixth form. Those who obtained the double from Form IV and passed the O/L the year before were now a year ahead of us and did their A/L that December. In all about 25 students met the requirements to enter the University out of about 100 taking the A/L. Others returned for their second attempt and sat the A/L with my cohort in 1966.

In the sixth form the standard pattern of designation for the different streams prevailed- that is, A for Arts, B and C for Bio-Science and D for Physical Sciences. In some years, the exodus after the O/L was heavy and the number of students remaining were insufficient to fill the four sixth form classes.

Students from other schools who had done exceptionally well were admitted to spend the sixth form years at RC. These entrants were mostly academically inclined and helped to bolster the admission from RC to the university. On the downside, with a few notable exceptions, not many of them participated in extra-curricular activities. It is with some sadness that I recall that they could not gain the true spirit of Royal. A few joined the LVI in 1965, but no outside students were admitted to RC to the lower sixth in 1966, as the classes were full. In ensuing years also, as the intake at Form I had increased, students from other schools did not join in the sixth form.

Principals of the time

RC was considered a Grade 1 government school and within that group Royal had a special designation as Grade I A. In this categorization the principal of RC had to be at the top of the heap. I have no idea of the ranking system but that was understood to be the system. Ananda came behind Royal.

Mr. J C A Corea held this position from 1946-54, after which he migrated to the UK and served as a counsellor for Royalists arriving there -helping them adopt to the new country. Dudley K G de Silva became Principal in 1954 and held this position until 1966.

In recent history this position was held by an old Royalist. The RC Old Boys Union (OBU) wielded substantial influence in the running of the school. The Principal had responsibility and authority for a wide variety of decisions. I remember in the mid-50s on each term report was signed by the class master and the principal. The latter had a place for remarks and yes, he did sign all of them.

An affectionate anecdote re Dudley K G will be found in Appendix 3 (O K P Goonesekara)

The Vice Principal

Following the retirement of Mr. Cameron Samarasinghe, Mr. Bogoda Premaratne joined Royal as its Vice Principal in 1959. He arrived at a time of major sociopolitical changes and worked diligently to win the confidence and trust of all around him. Mr. Premaratne was

a distinguished Buddhist scholar. After over a year as Acting Principal he was confirmed as Principal in 1967. This required the intervention of the OBU, who contacted the then PM Dudley Senanayake at the '67 RC-STC cricket match. The story goes that the PM called Mr. I M R A Irriyagolla, the Education Minister, holidaying in Nuwara Eliya, and instructed him to attend to the matter forthwith. Mr. Premaratne thus became the Principal. He left RC in 71 to become the Commissioner of Exams and went on to hold higher positions in education in Sri Lanka.

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bogoda_Premaratne

We have learnt of books and men (and a woman too!)

Teachers formed an important and integral part of our experience. Like all select groups, 59ers were a unique bunch, each having their individual aspirations and interests. They came to RC to develop and further their aspirations. The valued participants in this endeavour were our teachers. However, it is not possible to express how each of them contributed to the growth of the 59ers. Those are unique exchanges between mentor and student. One can go through the RC experience with much admiration for some teachers while others may not have had any interaction with other teachers. In that sense what follows is a set of names that we had the privilege to come into contact with. We take responsibility for the omission of others and encourage fellow 59ers to fill those gaps. Appendix 1 attempts to identify, the subjects, some of the associated books used and teachers during our progression through RC.

A complete list of Form masters in Forms I and II is presented below. Beyond these two Forms, the list is fragmentary. Teachers at Royal generally confined themselves to the class levels they taught in, but were also called upon to teach all levels from Forms I-III, each teacher dealing with multiple subjects. More specialized teachers became a feature at Form IV and above. Form V teachers specialized to a considerable extent to train for the O/L. The A/L teachers were specialized in their subjects taught those subjects for the most part.

This is a highly incomplete list- additions would be welcome!
It is listed here as a tool for recollections

Form Masters (with their affectionate nicknames!)

IA, Brevet Lieut M J K Cantlay (Canto); IB Harold Samaraweera (Lol Bataya); IC, Capt Lionel Samararatne (Pol Tokka); ID, Lennie de Silva (Lena); IE, E D Justin de Silva (Lincoln); IF, G W D (Kota0 de Silva).

IIA, Lionel Samararatne; IIB, E Winnie Rupesinghe (Rupperty); IIC, K V Sabaratnam (Half-soda); IID, V Sivalingam; IIE, M B H Wariyapola; IIF, MM Alavi

IIIA, M B H Wariyapola; IIIB, S A A Perera (Saape); IIIC, E D Justin de Silva (Lincoln), IIID, T D S A Dissanayake.

IVA, Mrs Thelma Seelawathie Samarasekera (Madam), IVB Mr. R Rajaratnam (Conner)

LVE Shireshtarajah

UVA: John Henri de Saram UVB: Hari C Arulanandan (cut-throat);

UVI B C. Rajapaksa, UVI C Rajendran (1966)

In addition to the class master's responsibilities and the subjects they taught, many teachers participated in extracurricular activities. These activities allowed us to learn from men in non-classroom settings. A partial list follows:

Messrs Cantley (Scouting), Lennie de Silva (Hockey), Sethukavalar (Tamil), E M J S Fernando (Art, Boxing and Basketball), M B H Wariyapola (Swimming), R M D Wickremasinghe (Farm, Badminton, Table Tennis), C E Belleth (Hostel), A N Ratnaticam (Cadetting), L Samararatne (Cadetting), R I T Alles (Cadetting), M T Thambapillai (Rugby), B.St.E de Bruin (Cricket and Athletics), E Christie Gunasekera and J H de Saram (Cricket), S J Dissanayake (Sinhala debating). B G Emanuel (Tamil Debating), W A Wickremasena (Oriental Music, Cadetting), EFC Pereira and SJ Dissanayake English and Sinhala Debating, respectively. E C Gunasekera in addition stood out as a strict disciplinarian.

Some teachers to whom subjects have not yet been assigned:

O H Abdeen, V Shanmugaratnam, Sawaad, A N Rathnathicam, Thavannetharajah

Further listings of masters can be found in:

<http://www.worldgenweb.org/lkawgw//teachers.html>

Towards the latter half of the 60s, with the main medium of instructions changing from English to Swabasha, a major change was afoot. Most of the older staff began to retire and others gained the language skills necessary to function in the new media of instructions. New staff joined; Mr. Ernest Amarasekera and Mr. R B A Jayasekera were two names I recall. Mr. Upali Attanayake also joined the staff about this time. He later became a famous actor in the Sinhala Drama Theatre. He was a short timer at RC. New teachers were brought in to the Upper school to fulfill the need for teaching in Swabasha.

Prominent in the terms of quality of teaching and duration of stay at RC, sixth form science teachers in the late '50s and early '60s included Messrs Mutucumaru (Chemistry), L F M Samuel (Physics), D'Abdera, A L Baldsing (Physics), B St. E de Bruin, M T Thambapillai and S Thillainadarasar (Maths), M M Gunaratne (Zoology) and S E Dias (Botany).

Palitha Manchanayake wrote the following:

Those students who opted for the Maths Stream in the Upper V class with the Double Promotion, did the subjects Applied Maths and the Advanced Maths Full Syllabus ONLY in one year. It was a marathon effort by Mr. V. Arasaratnam. He was very much dedicated to teaching the subject, and managed to complete the Full Syllabus within that year, sometimes holding special classes on a few Saturday mornings (all free of charge, spending his leisure time dedicated to the students). It should be specially mentioned that Mr. V Arasaratnam deserved a Very Big Thank You for his dedication to teaching. It should also be mentioned here that a fair number of students of his class got Distinctions for Pure Maths & Applied Maths, even though it was covered in one year with the double promotion.

With Mr. Arasaratnam's sound introduction to Mathematics, many of his students later emerged as Engineers, Professors in Mathematics & Physics etc. Prof. Mohan P C M Munasinghe, (Prof. Munasinghe, one time Energy Advisor to the President of Sri Lanka, & First Person to be Elected For Nobel Prize in Sri Lanka), Prof. Dayal (D T) Wickremasinghe of Australian National University, Canberra, Prof. Nalin (L N K) De Silva, Prof in Mathematics, Prof. Ranjith Galappatti, Prof in Civil Engineering at Peradeniya University, Prof. J K B Abeysinghe, Prof in Mathematics, University of Colombo, Prof J Satchithanandan, Mathematics, could be quoted as a few examples.

In the sixth forms (LVIB and UVIB), Mr. Chandrasoma Rajapaksa became our class master. He was a fine sixth form Zoology teacher, and later became my life-long friend. He had genuine love of his subject as well as the ability to interest and engage the students. He was not without controversy as some thought that he did not prepare us for the A/L. He came fully prepared and did not use any notes. He drew freehand diagrams on the chalk board and rattled off the notes which we faithfully took down. When he uttered a word not heard in common parlance he would promptly write on the board thus serving to broaden our English. He was unmarried at the time and we would try to probe his interests. He flatly said that he has no interest in ball games. Both Vietnam and Cuba were in the news and the more politically inclined would get him engaged in these topics. He would express his views succinctly and move on to teach Zoology. In the latter years Ms. Padmini Samaraweera joined the upper school staff. A fine Biology teacher in her own right and a fellow Biology enthusiast, their affection blossomed eventually to marriage.

A few of us admirers used to visit him after we left school. On entering his study one would find a rare collection of Zoology books filling his book cases and a collection of clocks. The interest he inculcated in me propelled me to offer Zoology as my subsidiary subject as I pursued my Chemistry major at the university. As this was an unprecedented, I was required to seek Prof Laduwahetty's approval which she promptly granted, with a special demonstrator assigned to assist me in the one of the two weekly labs that clashed with the Chemistry lab.

Mr. Carl I Muttiah, our Botany teacher, was equally skilled and enthusiastic, and focused on preparing us for the exam, staying on the straight and narrow. When we came to know him, he said that he was educated at Hartley College in Jaffna. He got about on his Vespa scooter and was a bachelor then. Mr. A K Sharma (Chemistry) and Mr. M Krishnamoorthy (Physics) were two other excellent teachers who made their subjects interesting.

Between '57 and '60, the original RC Science Association under Messrs, Mutucumaru, Dias and Baldsing transformed into the Natural History Society under the patronage of Messrs M M Gunaratne, S E Dias and E C Gunasekara. Mr. C I Muttiah became the patron of this society. He recruited me as its secretary about 65 or 66. I recall that we made two trips, one each year, in '65 and '66. One was to Horton Plains, to study bryophytes - lower plants, including mosses, which require moisture and are prevalent only in upcountry, by streams. The other trip was down south, when we spent a night at Dharmasoka College, Ambalangoda. He also took us on field trips to study different habitats such as the seashore, etc. Besides all the fun, these were memorable trips that brought me close to the subject, resulting from the opportunity to actually observe the habits of plants in relation to its environment (habitat). Ability to handle the plants under study was an added bonus.

By the sixth form I had transitioned to being a keen student. I began to go to Lake House bookstore, K V G De Silva and other used book stores (Asoka Trading Company and Dharmadasa Bros) and began to read books on life sciences and spent my pocket money on paperbacks and other interesting texts.

Appendix 7. Subjects offered at Form IV Exam, National Exams and College Scholars. Finally, Appendix 10 is a 59er premier sportsman's recollections of life at our school.

The impact of RC days on our future lives and careers

Impact of our RC experiences on future careers

We entered RC as the *creme de la creme* of society. However, there existed societal-sometimes parental- pressures: If one excelled in biological sciences, one was destined for medicine; those excelling in the physics and maths were pretty well obliged to follow an engineering career. Arts degrees did not offer so defined a career path- except perhaps becoming a lawyer- and was subject to uncertainties. In our parents' day, more career choices were available for arts graduates.

During our progression through the school, the curriculum of each individual student became progressively more focussed. One point that needs addressing is what happened in the first three forms. Although we did history and geography, the key subjects for us were English, Maths and Science, although the latter did not impact much in the early years. We were tested very often – recall that we had fortnightly tests and term tests. These reports went to our parents.

At the Form IV level, aged 14, with the looming doubles exam, we began to assess strengths and weaknesses in each subject and attempted to address the weaknesses. In Form V, whether LV or LV, we were channelled into Biological Sciences, Physics/ Maths or Arts, at age 15. This is the point at which the future careers of many was determined.

When the O/L results became known, we knew where we stood; some changed their field; others with 5 Cs with 2 Science subs for medicine, 3 Cs with 2 Science subs for English and 3Cs with 2 subs in Arts, etc. Entry into Form VI was crucial to winning the sporting accolades. About a half of our 59ers were allowed to do so.

In Form VI, aged 16 or 17, came the key decision between biology and maths/physics. The academic efforts continued in Form VI- many of us obtained the syllabus from the Government Printing Office and made sure the syllabi were covered. There were gaps, and private tutors were employed to fill in. For gaps in practicals Aquinas, Pembroke and Navalar Hall were possible choices. In addition to class teaching, private tuition at the hands of subject expert teachers were becoming more important.

Our career goals underpinned these efforts. Unfortunately, there were many who were not enthusiastic about the prospect of a career in medicine, but were nevertheless channelled towards this by parental pressure.

Exeat - Exit Chits!

'Exeat', a British term: a permit for temporary absence (as from a college or monastery).
Meaning, in Latin- 'Let him leave'!

If a student felt unwell, or needed to leave during school hours, he was required to obtain an exeat. Only the principal, vice principal and the lower and upper school headmasters were authorized to issue these exit chits. If you were caught outside the school premises without an exit chit you were in trouble.

So, dear fellow Royalists, here, for the present, we conclude the narrative, which is incomplete and reflect the experiences of a limited number drawn from the cohort joining in 1959. The accuracy of the narrative may also be compromised in some places by the passage of time, over half a century! So, it is time for us to request an exeat- and invite others to add to what we have recorded here!

Now follows a series of Appendices, containing more detailed information on some aspects of College life. And also on the impact of how experiences at RC impacted on long-term careers in diverse fields, all over the world. Almost half of the year ended up in business. A significant number went into medicine, academia, finance, and the legal system. The authors warmly invite others, who may be interested in this project of documentation, to contribute their own reminiscences.

Appendix 1 - We Have Learnt of Books and Men (and a woman too!)

Palitha Manchanayake's and Eardley Lieversz's contributions are acknowledged
Many holes need filling please..

Form I

Subjects	Books	Teachers
English	David Copperfield, Under The Greenwood Tree (Thomas Hardy) and; Merchant of Venice, Julius Caesar (Shakespeare)	Class Master, AN Perera
Sinhala	Nava Maga, Vesanthara Jathaka, Ummaga Jathaka, A.W. Kaluaratchi's Mau Basa, Martin Wickremasinghe's Ape Gama, Meemana Prematillake's Paalu Gama, Alagiyawanna Mukaveti's Kusa Jathaka Kavya Sangrahaya, Ven. Welivitiye Soratha Thero's Katha Madhuwa, A.E.S. Dassanayake's Kumara Rachanaya,	SJ Disanayake, WA Wikramasena, JdeS Abayadeera
Tamil	?	V Sivalingam
Religion	?	?
General Science	Daniel's Saamanya Vidyava- Daniels	Cantley
Arithmetic	Jacob	
Algebra	Hall	
Geography	SF de Silva's "Asia" in Form II and SF de Silva's "Europe and Americas" in Form III	
History	SF de Silva: Ceylon History (and Indian?) SF de Silva: Western History - Forms?	M Munasinghe, D Samaraweera, DR Senanyake, JdeS Abayadeera
Metalwork		Gunawardena
Woodwork:		Sheriffdeen

Form III

Choice between Latin or Pali

Pali	Pali Paata Manjari by Kahadamodera Piyaratana Thero; Pali Bhashawa Tharanaya by A. Polwatte	W Jinadasa SJ Disanayake
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Buddhadattha Nayake Thero

Latin	Kennedy's Latin Grammar	Viji Weerasinghe, SH Perera EFC Pereira EW Rupasinghe
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Form IV

Choice between Sanskrit, Greek or Geography

Sanskrit	?	Karunaratne, W Jinadasa
Greek	Small red paperback 5"x7"	CVA Ratnayake,
Trigonometry	?	
Chemistry	Fundamentals of Chemistry: Henry Wilkins	Ernest Amarasekera
Physics	Elementary Physics - Shakelton	SH Perera, CE Belleth, Rajaratnam, Upali Attanayake
Geography	A D Baptist, a master at Royal	SAA Perera, DPde Silva, L Samararatne, Amarasinghe
Arithmetic Algebra	Hall	
Geometry	Durrell	
Trigonometry		
Sinhala	Guttala Kavya – Mahagamasekara	SJ Disanayake
Tamil		A Canagaratne
English	Louis Pasteur and Madame Curie,	Viji Weerasinghe SH Perera

Form V and subjects offered for O/L:

Pure Maths	V Arasaratnam, S. Gulasekaram	
Physics	Nelkon: Intermediate series Principles of Physics Magnetism and Electricity; W.G. Davies A Test-Book of Practical Physics; H.S. Allen, H. Moore	MT Thambapillai, Kaneshalingam
Chemistry	Fundamentals of Chemistry; Henry Wilkins	HC Arulanandan
Applied Maths		Thayaparan
Biology	Ramakrishnan? A Textbook for First Examinations Biology H.J. Cooke, K.F.P. Burkitt and W.B. Barker	Shireshtarajah
English	A Book of English Poetry Ten Twentieth Century Poets.	JH de Saram
Sinhala	Kumara Rachanaya – A E S Dassanayake, Wijayabaa Kollaya – W. A. Silva	SJ Disanayake W Jinadasa
Tamil	?	BG Emanuel,

Religion		
Hinduism	?	?
Buddhism	Dharma Sangrahaya - Ven Narada	JdeS Abeydeera
English Literature	Treasure Island (RL Stevenson)	
Sinhala Literature		W. Jinadasa
Adv Maths		S Gulasekeram
Latin	Kennedy Latin Grammar	EFC Pereira
Greek	Red covered paperback 5"x7"	CVA Ratnayake

Latin/ Greek- see also Appendix 7

Form VI and subjects offered for A/L:

Physics,	Nelkon: Heat, Light & Sound, Magnetism & Electricity Intermediate Physics-CJ Smith	HC Arulanandan M Krishnamoorthy LFM Samuel AL Baldsing D'Abbrera Benedict
Chemistry,	Durrant, IL Finar, Prescott, Moore, Daniels & Albery, Lowry & Cavell, Peter Sykes: Organic Reaction Mechanisms, Parkington	ECG AK Sharma, Mutucumar,
Applied Maths	Statics, Dynamics, Hydrostatics - S L Loney Intermediate Mechanics- Statics and Dynamics by Humphrey	BStE De Bruin, Thillainadarasar,
Pure Maths	Advanced Algebra, Advanced Calculus, Trigonometry, Coordinate Geometry	V Arasaratnam, MTThambapillai,
Botany	Dutta, Lawson & Sarni, Joshua & Pulimood	SE (Kos) Dias Carl Muttiah R. Rajendran
Zoology	Ekambara Natha Ayyar, Grove & Neville-Animal Biology, Storer & Usinger, Maud Jepson: Practical Dissection	Chandrasoma Rajapakse ECG Padmini Samaraweera V Menon
Sinhala	?	S J Disanayake
Pali	?	K C Fernando
Sanskrit	?	Dharmaratne Silva
Buddhist Civilization	?	?
Latin	Virgil: Aenid; Caesar: De Bello Gallico	EFC Pereira
Greek	Homer: Oddysey and Iliad	CVA Ratnayake
English	?	EFC Pereira
British Constitution	AV Jennings	?

Civics	AJ Wilson	?
European History	History of Europe by HAL Fisher	?
	Europe the last five centuries by AJ. Grant	?
History	?	?
Geography	?	SAA Perera
Civics	?	Karunaratne
		JdeS Abayadeera
Economics	?	?

Appendix 2. The Hostel - O K Padmasiri Goonasekera- patgoonasekara@gmail.com

Judging from a hostel photograph taken in 1959, 91 students and 7 staff occupied the hostel premises. Hostellers were assigned times for study and sports. We took advantage and participated in these extra-curricular activities. The day scholars were at a distinct disadvantage, in particular those living in the out-skirts of Colombo. Students living within a short distance from school saw no obstacles in participation.

The floor plan of the hostel is presented below. The hostel building was L- shaped. The narrow arm housed the Main stair-well in the corner. On the upper floor, near the stairs was First Form Dormitory, Mr. R M Devapriya Wickremasinghe's room was next, then another narrow room accommodating six First Formers. Next to it was the warden, Mr. Belleth's, office and living quarters. At the furthest end was another stairway. On the ground floor was pantry storage next to the Stairs, then a small junior common room with carrom and chess, with a larger junior common room where we played table-tennis. Adjacent to that was the bedroom for the ladies who worked in the kitchen. Next to it were Matron Ms. Ratnayake's two rooms. Next were two rooms assigned as sick-room and First-Aid dressing room, then was a toilet, and then the stairway. There was another little Arm that accommodated Junior's bathroom and toilets.

Longer arm of L- Ground Floor (starting from the Primary school side): Seniors' bathroom and toilets, In front of this was a room that accommodated Boxing paraphernalia. Next to it was a Stair case, Kitchen, Serving-room, Dining Hall, Junior's study Hall, Seniors' Study Hall, Seniors' common room, Prefects Room in the corner.

Upper Floor- Mr. Lionel Samararatne's room, Seniors' Dormitory and Middle School Dormitory (without partitions), Mr. B St. E De Bruin's room (later Mr. Alavi's room), Form 2 and 3 Dormitory.

The Hostel Time Table, the way I remember it was:

Weekdays :

5.30am-Wake up

6am-7am-Study

7am-Breakfast, get ready and go to school

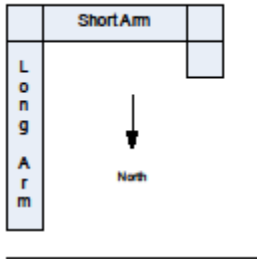
11:50-12.50pm-Lunch

4pm-6.30pm-Sports

7pm-8pm-Dinner

8pm-9pm-Study

Weekend schedule: 9am-12.30pm-Sports, 1.30pm-3pm-Rest/read/sleep



Hostel Layout

Short Arm Upper Floor

Stairs	Form I Dormitory	Devapriya Room	Form I Room for 6 students	Belleth Office	Belleth quarters	Stairs
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Short Arm Lower Floor

Stairs	Pantry	Junior Comm on Room	Sleeping Quarters Ladies	Matron Ms Ratnayake	Sick Room	Sick Room	Toilet	Stairs	Junior Bathroom Toilet
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Long Arm Upper Floor

Stairs	Lionel Samaralhe Room	Senior and Middle Schooler Dormitory	de Bruin/Alavi Room	Form II & III Dormitory	Stairs
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Long Arm Lower Floor

Senior Bathroom Toilet	Stairs	Kitchen	Serving	Dining	Junior Study Room	Senior Study Hall	Senior Common Room	Prefect's Room
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Boxing
?

Appendix 3. Rowing, Art Circle, Cadetting and other recollections from RC days – O K Padmasiri Goonasekera-

a) Rowing

Royal College was the first school in Ceylon, to initiate a rowing program, in 1953, with the formation of the Royal College Rowing squad. Alavi Mohamed was its first Captain. Its first Boat-Race was held on the Beira Lake, against the Colombo Rowing Club 'B Team' (all European), in which the Royalists won the 'Coxed Fours' event. Soon after, another Boat-Race was won against an all-European team from the Madras Boat Club, and colours for Rowing were awarded for the first time.

In 1962, The Boat-Race which was a 'Coxed-Fours' event began against Royal's traditional rivals, St. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia. By 1966, it broadened out to give rise to 'The Regatta', with a card of six events: 2 Coxed-Fours, 2 Coxed-Pairs and 2 Single-Sculls. This marked the beginning of the Royal-Thomian Regatta, which became the oldest Inter-School Rowing Regatta in Ceylon. The Trophies awarded were the Royal-Thomian Boat-Race Trophy for the Boat-Race, which was regarded as the most prestigious race, and the T. Noel Fernando Memorial Trophy for the overall-winner of the Regatta. Since its inception, the Royal College Rowing Club continued to use the Colombo Rowing Club facilities.

The Founding Master-In-Charge was Mr. E.C Gunasekara (ECG), later Vice-Principal of RC. The 1959 Group made its contribution to Rowing by providing a Coloursman and Captain of the Team, in 1967 with O K P Gunasekara, A N Gunaratne and C J Weerasuriya, rowing for the 'B Team' the same year. O K P Gunasekara started rowing in 1965, got into the 'B Team' within one month and took part in a regatta. He rowed for the 'A Team' in 1966 and won College Rowing Colours the same year. In 1967 he was made the Captain and annexed the T. Noel Fernando Memorial Trophy for the overall winner at the Royal-Thomian Regatta. In the same year, Royal 'A Team' won the first ever 'Centenary-Oar' trophy at the CRC Centenary-Oar Regatta.

A N Gunaratne and C J Weerasuriya were picked because they both were lean, tall, broad - shouldered, likely to be good for the middle-of-the-boat 'Engine-strength' to propel the boat. They were both willing to work hard to develop stamina, I guessed, because of who selected them together with individual encouragement. We did not know if their technique will be right, but we could help them learn it. That strategy worked when they beat the STC 'B' team in their race and we won the overall trophy. I am sure ECG looked similarly for a wiry, tall, hard-working guy and settled with me for whatever reason - or it may be pure destiny. Otherwise ECG was not a coach, he was Master-in-charge. However he had been in that same capacity since inception in 1953, he had a sense just like Mr. De Bruin and it was right, because the Coach and the entire boat club talked about my style and technique for the 'Bow' position. The captain won't commit his team merely to participate, but also took calculated steps at appropriate times to produce a winning team.

O K P Gunasekara joined the Sri Lanka Army in 1968 and introduced Rowing in the Army in 1982, and was made the Founder Chairman, and Captain of SL Army Rowing Team. O K P Gunasekara together with Percy Fernando (Another old Royalist) won the very first Trophy, called the "Firms Pairs" for the Sri Lanka Army in 1982 at a Colombo Rowing Club Regatta.

b) The Arts Circle

The Arts Circle was located in the new wing, near the Dental clinic and Photographic society. I was selected after I won the Art Prize, I believe in 1960. I was the only member for some time, when Mr EMJS Fernando (Emma) taught me how to sculpt in clay and plaster of Paris. Later on there were others, including G E S "Jigg's" De Silva who joined for a brief period, Senaka Senanayake and Indika Gunawardena (Philip's son Redda). I made and sold two clay sculptures, "**The Thinker**" and "**The Fallen Boxer**" to the Egyptian Embassy for Rs.800 at the 1964 Blue and Gold Carnival- my donation to the college swimming pool fund.

My association with the Art Circle was from 1960 to 1964.

In Forms I and II, we were exposed to only water colour painting, on large drawing paper.

Sculpting: Mr. E M J S Fernando. Endearingly known as Emma, bought a large quantity of good quality raw clay used exclusively in the ceramic making business in Sri Lanka. It was of a dark greenish brown colour and had to be kneaded. He taught me and Senaka Senanayake, who joined two years later, to make little lumps that one could hold in the hand and mix by making different shapes and rolling and hand drying them to the point it does not stick in one's hand. At this stage the clay one mixed in the hand was ready for making figurines. This was the technique used in 1960. However, today the clay is sold ready for use.

He taught us how to prepare a rough figure by adding small amounts of clay, the shape and size of marbles. He then taught us how to maintain the clay in the figure so as to not dry out on you by covering with a wet cloth, a technique not used currently. We were then taught about taking proper measurements and judging angles, using tools and skills to work out the details. Emma allowed us to use the few tools he had. Once the figurine was complete, it was allowed to dry naturally to prevent cracks, at which point it was painted. Emma wanted us to use only a brownish red on the figurines, so we never used other colours for additional details, which would have required a longer time to finish.

He also taught me the use of plaster-of-paris for mould making, which I used for making a "Mr. Universe." This sculpture was at my parents' home in Nugegoda, but I do not know where it is today.

Now in retirement, I do colour and black & white paintings using acrylic on canvas. These I use to decorate our home with, and to decorate our grandchildren's rooms. I have sold a few too. Check out the three attachments below. I hope you will like the paintings done with these old hands.

c) Cadetting

History: A voluntary youth group was initiated in 1881 by Mr. John B Cull, The Principal of Royal College, Colombo, with the aim of promoting discipline among students by doing drill. The principal role of this endeavour was the training of youth to become law abiding and useful citizens in the community at large, by instilling in them a keen sense of discipline and responsibility, the capacity to lead and follow, and to command and obey. Subsequently, uniforms were introduced to give a sense of identity and belonging to the cause.

Motto: Nunquam non-paratus (Latin) - Never Not Ready.

During our time, cadets were under the banner of CCC, Ceylon Cadet Corps, which was a part of the Army Volunteer Force, but headed by a regular Army officer in the rank of a Colonel. In 1972 it was changed as SLCC, Sri Lanka Cadet Corps. With the amalgamation of the Police Cadet Corps, it changed its name to NCC, National Cadet Corps.

Mission: To train and inspire cadets using an effective training curriculum, so that each cadet would develop character, courage, physical fitness, self-reliance, discipline, responsibility and civil mindedness, sportsmanship, a spirit of adventure and comradeship, so as to be a human resource of well-trained youth, capable of providing leadership in all aspects of life.

Age Group: Junior Cadets- 14 to 16 years, Senior Cadets- 16 to 20 years

The Corps was open for secondary school students on a voluntary basis. Its officers were school teachers. During our time Lt. L Samararatna was OC Contingent and senior cadet Platoon Commander. Other officers were Lt. RIT Alles, PO Mr. Wickremasena and PO E Amarasekara (Maskatta) and later Mr. Ariyapala. Royal College had the unique distinction of fielding 2 platoons each for junior cadets and senior cadets for the annual camps.

Training

Junior Cadets: Foot Drill, Physical training, First Aid and Hut Inspection.

Senior Cadets: Foot Drill, Physical training, First Aid, Map reading, Field craft, basic weapon training and personal weapon firing in the range, leadership activities incorporating a cross country adventure march, map reading, first aid, hut inspection. . These areas were part of the Commandant's test at the annual Ceylon Volunteer Force cadet camp in Diyatalawa,

Trophies: Hermann Loos Championship Trophy- awarded annually to the best performing senior cadet platoon among boys schools.

Ranks: Cadet, L/Cpl, Cpl, Sgt, S/Sgt, WO II, WO I

Prizes: Drill Prize-Junior, and Drill Prize-Senior, awarded to the best all-round cadet at the college prize-giving.

Cadets from 1959 Group who held the rank of Sergeant and above:

Nande Palihakkara-Junior Cadet Sgt

M Devakumar- WOII

O K P Gunasekara-S/Sgt, WOII

K P G Fernando-Senior Cadet Sgt

Upali Suraweera-Senior Cadet Sgt

M N Jaimon-Junior Cadet Sgt

Royal College platoon 1 won the Herman Loos trophy for all round efficiency in 1963 for the first time. Since then Royal had won few times and their sergeants & cadets ended up being very senior officers in the armed forces specially during the LTTE war. Army commander/Navy Commander.

Maniks Jayakumar was the sergeant of platoon 1 in 1963

His number 2 was Susantha Gunawardena.

Kumar Wijesinghe Sergeant platoon 2 in 1963

In 1964 platoon 1 sergeant Ranjit Sirimanne

*In 1964 platoon 2 sergeant Tharin Peiris
In 1965 platoon 1 sergeant Devinda Kalupahana
In 1965 platoon 2 sergeant Nihal Nilaweera
These years we were at the top of battalion level but didn't win the Herman Loos.*

*The equivalent at junior cadets was the De Zoysa Cup
Which Royal won in 1961 with Lakdasa Dissanayake as sergeant and Vijaya Malalasekera
as his deputy.*

The other platoon sergeant was Susantha Gunawardena.

Above material in italics was gratefully supplied by Tharin C P Peiris.

d) A unique recollection of Dudley KG de Silva

In reading the history of Royal College, we notice those times both in happier as well as difficult time-periods when the Principal of the day ensured that the School's hallowed traditions stood firm. By virtue of these traditions, success is important but honour is even more important. Consequently being successful is important, but being a gentleman is even more important.

This is the kind of Principal the we found in Mr. Dudley K G De Silva, who had a reputation for strict discipline and constant clamor for perfection, which was upheld by the students with dignity and pride. We boys would shudder while walking past his office during class hours, fearing a reprimand for not being present in their classroom.

I was uniquely fortunate to uncover at first hand the softer side of my Principal, as being a caring, empathetic and fatherly figure, when I was a new entrant in Form 1 at a tender age of 11 years. How did I make this very personal observation, you would wonder!.

It happened this way. After my beloved parents and particularly my maternal uncle Cyril, encouraged and got me to write the college entrance exam and passed, they could not find accommodation for me at the college Hostel. They decided on an alternative and boarded me in Nawala, at a home where the husband and wife were both teachers. The gentleman taught at Thurstan and the lady at Ladies' which meant they commuted daily to work, which was in the neighbourhood of my school. Our routine was for them to drop me at College and for them to proceed to their own schools. In the evenings they would pick me up at the roundabout near Royal Primary and Pembroke Academy. This arrangement worked well for all of us. What a great chance and opportunity the universe provided us all with.

One day, this family had an engagement and had to take a day off. However they were to drop me at the school and pick me up. Very likely they gave me pocket money to buy lunch from the Cafeteria, fondly called the "Tuckshop". I do not remember if I had anything to eat that day at school because it was totally a new experience for me to walk into a cafeteria, select suitable food that I would like and buy. I had never been in this kind of situation to act independently at my age. I decided that I would skip this complicated transaction and sit it out through the lunch break in the classroom. It was a new school, a new classroom full of unknown children and I was too shy to work out how to handle the moment. Around 3 pm I developed a headache and I didn't know what to do about it. This was my upbringing where

my parents did everything for me and my other siblings. I was waiting for the school bell to signal the end-of-the-day, and to walk out and be at the roundabout for my pickup.

I waited for a long time, which seemed forever, and my pick up did not show. I noticed after sometime that I was the only one waiting on the sidewalk. Even the two or three vendors and 'Kadalai' had called it a day. Then I saw a Peugeot 203 go slowly by, and I recognized it was the principal, as I had learnt the shape and colour of his car by then. I recognized him as the person who came on stage and sat at the table presiding over the college assembly. Only difference at this moment of course was he was not in his usual white suit and tie but in a casual shirt. He turned his head slightly and looked at me while passing. He may have wondered what I was doing there by myself at that time of day? and who knows may have seen a confused look on my face.

After about half an hour later he returned after his errand, slowed down and stopped the car where I was. He asked me in Sinhala if I was waiting for my parents, to which I answered 'I am waiting for Mr. Silva'. He asked me to get in the car, which I did by opening the back door on the same side as he was in the right hand side driven car. Very likely he may have asked me where I lived and the story leading to today's episode while driving the short distance to his beautiful residence with this huge garden around the corner on the prestigious Race Course Avenue address. (I recall in later years we fondly referred to this residence as the 'Principal's Bungalow' although it was a massive two-storied house. A huge chunk of that beautiful garden was later given to the Swimming pool project in 1967 and lost its charm somewhat as a result.) At his home I was served a sandwich and a hot cup of tea which I truly enjoyed and appreciated. I don't remember the details or if I thanked him before getting in the backseat of his car for the ride home to Nawala, Rajagiriya. Very likely he may have asked me about the daily routine of my commute and details of where the De Silvas worked and where their children studied. I would have very politely and respectfully answered those questions, it was a question and answer session and not a conversation in keeping with the times, circumstances and his position. Upon arrival at home I told Mr. Silva my story and he stepped out to greet the unexpected visitor. I knew in my young mind then that Mr. Silva may have had to face some stiff words from his guest whom he knew carried the rank of an Assistant Director of Education. After the Principal left Mr. Silva and the family very likely asked a few details as to how the day was, but we never talked about the conversation he had with my Principal. I am sure Mr. Silva too may have learnt a few lessons in life.

Now when I look back, I wondered if the Principal had this kind of occasional errand that he handled, after all I was only one out of 1200 students of our school and the country's future he was responsible for. Today I understand and appreciate the selfless service these great teachers of ours offered to us, the institutions they served and above all to our small but great country on earth.

Appendix 4. The Library - Recollections of M G H Geethapriya Salgado - salgado.g@gmail.com

Above the Woodwork and Geography rooms was the library, on the second floor. The librarian, Mr. Ashley Tennekoon, was assisted by Library readers, appointed each year. This afforded a fine training opportunity in library practices and gave the readers more access to material. This service came with a catch- in that that readers were required to serve here during the breaks and lunch. However, RC Librarians moulded me to be a Librarian valued by Library Communities throughout my working life, in Sri Lanka and overseas.

In 1955, as a seven year-old in the RPS Year 3 class of Mrs. Gertrude Sugathapala, I developed a love of books. I cannot remember a children's library at RPS. However, Mrs. Sugathapala asked my parents to drop me at their house on Saturdays, so that I may read from their wide collection of children's books.

When I entered RC in 1959, my first visit to a real library was inspiring. I was a regular visitor during the intervals. I read the whole Brer Rabbit and Secret Seven books of Enid Blyton, as well as her Famous Five series of children's books during Lower School days (Forms I to III). I recall skimming through magazines, including National Geographic, Finding Out, and Popular Science, during the lunch interval.

The Librarian at the time (1953 – 1964c), Mr. Ashley Tennekoon, had a lasting impact on my chosen path to be a Librarian. He was soft-spoken and methodical. He taught me the fundamentals of library classification (Dewey Decimal Classification), shelf arrangement (from general to specific), and circulation control (Browne System).

As a Library Reader, I was required to assist the Librarian in many housekeeping tasks, in addition to maintaining student discipline within the library. A couple of past students told me much later in life, how I asked them to leave the library when they were in junior classes. I simply could not recall those incidents.

I played a key role in assisting Mr. E C Gunasekara to set-up a separate Reference Library for A/Level students in the Year 12 classes on the 2nd floor of the East wing. The Librarian at that time (Mrs. Milda Pathiraja-Fernando) refused to release the books ECG wanted. However, as I was in her 'good books', I managed to persuade her to give in. When we took stock at the end of Term, we found that only a small book of Log-Tables (of a few pages) was missing. That was but one example of how ECG inculcated honesty in us students.

I recall that Mr. Tennakoon left RC around 1963/64, and was succeeded by one Mr. Thillakaratne (1964-65), followed by Mrs. Milda Pathraja-Fernando in 1965.

Learning Beyond the Syllabi – MGH Salgado

On Trust:

“Thrice I asked you all to be quiet, yet you broke my trust. If you drop a mirror, it breaks. Can you pick-up the pieces, and glue them to get the mirror back? No! Trust is also like that. If you break trust, you cannot get it back.”

Mr. K. Shirestarajah, Form UV, 1964

When he was asked whether the two of us could sit together to check the Science Exhibition, 1967 collection I handed over, with the ticket counterfoils...

“Did you handover to the RCU all money you collected? If not, your conscience will prick you. It is on trust that I put you in charge. Let’s go.”

Mr. E C Gunasekara

Beyond the subject:

English pronunciation in the Physics class, Form IV, 1962

Introducing the Barometer Mr. Cecil Bellath, wanted each and everyone of us to stand up, pronounce ‘Thermometer’, ‘Barometer’, and sit down.

One of us got up and said Barometer, Thermometer and ‘*Kohumita*’ (broomstick). The whole class, including Mr. Bellath, burst out in laughter.

Finer points:

Mr. Alles taught is to draw a straight line with pencil and ruler, keeping the pencil point sharp, beginning to the end, and with the thickness of the line remaining uniform. We need to roll the pencil, as we go along!

Comply and complain:

Cadets given the order “Forward March”, and then “Right wheel”. Unable to keep marching more than a yard, because there’s a canal on the right. We have to go to the edge of the canal and stop, without questioning the order - comply and complain

Mr Alles

Appendix 5. Western Classics at Royal. Recollections of Git Wickremasinghe

It is rather extraordinary that, in tropical heat, many of us Royalists were exposed to Latin and Greek- subjects which appear more apposite in an English public school in the Home Counties. Nevertheless, several iconic teachers gave us a love of the classical world. Winnie Rupesinghe (Rupperty) was my first Latin teacher- introducing declensions and conjugations in the third form. Amo, amas, amat, amamus, amatis, amanti. And Cotta, Cotta, Cottam, Cottae, Cottae, Cotta. In the fourth form Latin continued under the aegis of the splendid and iconic Viji Weerasinghe- with Kennedy’s Latin Grammar as our basis. Benjamin Hall Kennedy was a formidable- and rather forbidding-English schoolteacher, who produced this magnum opus in 1843. (Kennedy also wrote some rather severe books on Christian theology) Fourth form also allowed us to study Greek- with the erudite and enthusiastic EFC Pereira. Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey. EFC also took some of us through Upper V, O/L Latin- Caesar’s De Bello Gallico and Virgil’s Aeneid being our set texts. The former- rather tedious descriptions of military campaigns in present-day Belgium- the Virgil a bit more fun, with a fair bit of gratuitous sex and violence, eg Dido, Queen of Carthage and her dalliance with Aeneas the Trojan Prince. Ending in betrayal and high tragedy, of course!

English friends are somewhat incredulous about the degree of immersion we had in the classics. These subjects gave us an understanding of grammatical structure and syntax of

language- and also an introduction to a long-gone world- which has nevertheless shaped the world we live in now. Including of course Britain, which was incorporated into the Roman Empire under Emperor Claudius, masterminded by his military secretary Posides. Britain of course went on to establish a huge Empire of its own- which included our island nation. Irrevocably affecting the history of Ceylon- including the establishment of Royal College! So maybe Claudius and Posides, centuries later, were responsible for our school?

Laborum Dulce Lenimen- as our Latin teachers might say!

Appendix 6. Studying English literature at Royal - Recollections of Eardley Lieversz

Five years after departing Gregory's Avenue I was at Park Street but studying a poet who had indirect links to the man after whom, the previous road I had lived on, was named. Chemistry, physics textbooks left me cold. I still have five science texts which I still struggle to fathom, despite having read copious amounts of science books for laymen, with Dava Sobel's Longitude being my favourite. But the two books on poetry that I studied at Royal are read, fondled and cherished to this day.

One was A book of English poetry, Chaucer to Rossetti. This was my first introduction to poetry. While I became obsessed with the opening to Keat's Ode to Autumn, the nostalgia evoked in Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey Revisited perfectly encapsulates the melancholy I experience every day as I go back in time in my writing.

The other text was Ten twentieth century poets. Here I discovered Hardy, Frost and Yeats. Hardy's Friends beyond struck a chord and the melancholy that the poem evokes has kept on intensifying with so many friends and relatives gone. Over the past six years I have negotiated the building of two tall fences so that our neighbours and us are not visible to each other. We get on fine as a result and demonstrate Frosts' cynically expressed truism, namely, good fences make good neighbours. But the poem which had the biggest impact on me was Yeats' Second coming. The lines "*The best lack all conviction, while the worst Are full of passionate intensity*" resonate today on campuses and social media. Other phrases that were imprinted on my mind are "*A terrible beauty is born*" (Easter 1916) and "*A lonely impulse of delight*" (An Irishman foresees his death), which I now realise is a tribute to Gregory's son, but to me symbolised the thrill of danger when one faces it alone.

So, by happy coincidence, the road where I once lived has a connection with a colonial governor whose wife was associated with a poet I studied at school. Another happy coincidence is that William Gregory's son was a cricketer, and our English teacher, Mr. John de Saram, was also master in charge of cricket teams at Royal, starting from the under 14 team and progressing to the first XI.

The third book that was used in the study of English literature was Twentieth century short stories. The first story was The secret sharer by Joseph Conrad. I don't recall Mr. de Saram discussing any of the other authors in the book but the story of the captain who manoeuvres his ship to within half a mile of the shore to enable a fugitive to swim safely to shore, has stuck in my mind, as if the incident occurred yesterday.

His crew are aghast and doubt whether they will survive and the captain himself doubts whether he can avoid being grounded. But he maintains his course amidst a dark sky and the shadow

of the mountain on the water, which makes navigation difficult. But the captain sees a mark, the white hat of the fugitive, and uses it to steer the ship out of danger's way.

As a result of the risk he took the captain feels himself to be in better command of his ship and better respected by his crew. To Mr. de Saram this was the perfect example of good leadership and he went on to extol the virtues of taking calculated risks and backing oneself. We may or may not have been thinking along the same lines, but I couldn't but help compare the ship's captain to a cricket captain, and I did fantasise about being a cricket captain who was bold as the sea captain, and being in a similar position where I didn't flinch from danger but rode it to steer my team to triumph. (When we studied this story I hadn't even got my first eleven colours, although I had captained the 2nd XI team a few times.)

Studying Keats and other poets, and authors such as Conrad, at Royal, is the only facet of school attendance, which justifies the claim that at Royal, "I learnt of books" along with "Learning to play the game". Reading these three books, albeit partially, was the best school education I ever had. I hope to read them fully and to complete my education.

Appendix 7 - Subjects offered at Form IV and National Exams and College Scholars.

The Form IV and more importantly O/L and A/L were key exams.

Form IV exam subjects:

Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry & Trigonometry, English, Sinhala/Tamil, Physics, Chemistry, Geography. Pali/Latin, Sanskrit/Greek

Religion was not tested for the Form IV Double Exam.

Those who got more than 75% average at the Form IV Exam were given Double Promotions to the Upper V Class, bypassing the Lower V.

O/L Exam at the end of the Upper V

For the O/L we all had to do, English, Sinhala/Tamil, Religion and Pure Math for Science students and Arithmetic for Arts students.

Then for Science it was Chemistry and Physics

Bio students it was Biology

Math students it was Applied Math.

Their choices were: Eng Lit, Latin, Advanced Math and possibly a few subjects, Civics?

Arts Stream: Palitha Manchanayake recalls that these subjects were available at O Level:

History, Geography, Economics, Civics, Sinhala Language 'B' Syllabus, English Language 'B' Syllabus, Religion as appropriate, Arithmetic, Pure Maths, Sinhala Literature, Pali, Sanskrit, Latin, Greek.

Vasantha LVK de Silva gave an important comment I which merits inclusion in its entirety:

All O/L students had to offer 8 subjects for the exam. The Maths stream students offered Advanced Maths as the 8th subject though some offered Civics or another subject. Bio stream students appeared for only 7 subjects, as Botany and Zoology were combined as one subject, Biology. The 8th subject was filled by Civics or Latin. In 1963 for the first time all science stream students were given another choice by popular request of some of us. Mr Bogoda Premaratne established a Sinhala Literature class for science students in UV. The master who conducted the class was Mr. Jinadasa. In 1963 about 20 science students appeared for Sinhala Literature for the first time in Royal College history. Mostly they were Bio students but a few from Maths stream too. There were 3 students from those who did O levels straight from Form IV, Daya (JLD), Sarath (GSC) and myself (LVK). I remember Knightley Seneviratne, Kumara Hettiarachchi, Mani Dahanayake, Sarath Ileperuma, Saparamadu were in the class too. We read Pujawaliya, Apey Urumaya, Wijayabakollaya, Budugunaalankaraya and Navina Padya Rachana. When the results were released Mr Jinadasa was so impressed. There were 2 Distinctions, 15 Credits and the rest had Ordinary passes. No one failed. Mr Jinadasa was commenting that the Science students have done much better than the Arts students in Sinhala Literature.

The Bio stream students had an advantage in offering Sinhala Literature as a Credit pass could be obtained with moderate effort. Remember that they had to obtain 5 credits to proceed to A/L medicine course. So one of them was assured with a little effort. The department of examination, though had other ideas. When we appeared for O/L in 1963 a new regulation was brought in to say that out of the 5 credits 2 had to be in science subjects.

Additions here on the subject range offered by both the western and oriental arts streams would be welcome.

A/L Science

All Science stream offered Physics and Chemistry

Bio: Botany and Zoology

Math: Pure and Applied Math

Arts stream more input needed:

English, Tamil and Sinhala Languages and Literature.

Pali, Sanskrit, Latin, Greek

History, Geography, Civics, Economics

Buddhist Civilization

... and school scholarships

At RC the term scholar is used for those winnings scholarships at the annual prize giving. Some of their names are recorded in the lists on marble panels in the college hall.

At the annual prize giving day, many scholarships were awarded. The list of scholars awarded prizes is too numerous and to detail in its entirety. At this time we have very little information on the awards in the Arts stream as such no information is recorded below. However, Palitha Manchanayake has provided us with a window into the awards in the Science stream. Among the many scholar awards at RC, the prize list of 1964, documents the 59er recipients of the scholarship awards:

Turnour Scholar – S Sridharan

Lorenz Scholar – M H R Sheriff

Cecil Perera Memorial Scholar – S V Devendra

Rupasinghe Scholar – W Mallawarachi

De Abrew Memorial Prize – S C Senarath Yapa

EW Perera Memorial Scholar - P. Manchanayake

While in the Upper VI, K A Gunawardena being within the age range requirement took the exam and won the Turnour Scholarship. Thus the 59ers ended up with two Turnour recipients and none went to the 60 group.

These six scholarships were based on the same eight subjects offered at the O/L. Among them, those offering three Math subjects, were at an advantage over those offering Biology as a subject. For this same reason those offering Arts subjects at the O/L were not competitive for this exam.

Many other scholarships and prizes were awarded in other fields such as the Arts stream, and other specialities. The one name that come to our minds is DSDJ Dayalal Abeysekera who excelled in Arts subjects. Although we do not have specifics on those achievements of our colleagues, it is important to recognize their achievements as well.

Appendix 8 – Boxing and other musings by G E S de Silva- eds48_50@hotmail.com

Boxing becomes prominent as this is one of the few sports where one could participate at very young age (from Form I onwards) and win College colours by performing well at the Stubb's Shield meet, Junior Amateur Boxing Association meet etc. Further, one could even win Ceylon (now SL) School's colours by getting selected to the Ceylon school's team. This is because there is an age category for each weight.

There were many students from '59 Group who obtained College colours at very young age: namely, S W Athukorale, S M Abeygunawardena, S L Gunasekara, K A Gunawardena and G E S de Silva. S L Gunasekera in his first appearance won the Francis Jayawardena Memorial Trophy for the best boxer (Juniors) at the Stubb's Shield Meet.

At that time there were Dual Boxing Meets between Royal vs St Thomas's for De Soysa Shield and Royal vs Trinity for the Donald Obeyesekere Shield, as preparatory meets for the Stubb's Shield meet. The last Royal Trinity meet was held in 1960 whilst the last Royal-Thomian meet was held in 1966. Royal Trinity meet was revived after four decades when Trinity re-commenced boxing during that time. In the 1962 Ceylon School's Boxing team for the Indo-Ceylon meet, there were three '59 G members in S L Gunasekera, S M Abeygunawardena and S W Athukorala.

After winning the Stubb's Shield in 1958 under the captaincy of S P Liyanage, the closest achievement thereafter was in 1966. Royal was beaten by a mere point by St Mary's Dehiwela, in the last bout of the meet when Shaul Mohamed of Royal who knocked out his opponent Anton Swan of St. Mary's in the semi-finals, was himself floored by a sledge hammer blow by T P Halaldeen of Zahira College, a thrilling end to the cleanly contested meet at the open-air stadium at Bambalapitiya.

Mr. E M J S Fernando was the Boxing Master-in-Charge for a considerable period of time from 1956 until he migrated to Canada in 1967. In addition, he was the Master-in-charge of Basketball and the Art Circle. His early departure was a great loss to the school.

Royal was fortunate to have the services of Mr. Danton Obeyesekere, a past captain, distinguished old boy and a Cambridge blue in boxing, who was continuing the pioneering efforts of his father Mr. Donald Obeyesekere (father of boxing in Sri Lanka), as honorary coach for over half century of years. The school owes a great debt to a man who has become a legend in his life time with his untiring devotion to the sport for moulding the character of the boxers. In 1966 during my captaincy, Mr. P Rajenthiran, another Cambridge blue and an old Royalist joined as assistant coach and continued his services for many years. P Withana, a reputed boxer and a past captain seconded our boxers at the meets in the sixties.

School's boxing in general was of high standard in the 60's. Defense was equally important as attack as head guards were not in use those days and coaching was very scientific. St. Sylvester's, Kandy and St. Michael's, Polwatte were in the forefront in producing Olympians and Asian Games boxers at that time; Malcolm Bulner and Winston VanCulenberg, the

Olympians, M Jarroof and M Marzook the Asian Games, were boxers produced by these two schools.

Mention was made of preparatory meets in boxing and similarly I am in a position to comment on inter-school meets we had in preparation for championships in another two games, I was involved in. In Athletics we had a Triangular Meet between Royal, St. Thomas's and Trinity, and I took part in one held at Trinity College. I had no formal training in Athletics but was taking part in middle distance running with sheer boxing fitness, mainly 800 meters relay at the Relay Carnival and at the Triangular meet.

In Cadeting, Royal College had two Platoons and our two platoons and Thurstan College platoon had a practice camp prior to the competition for the Herman Loos Trophy. It was memorable for me as it was at one of these practice camps, I was trapped in to a fight with a cadet from Thurstan College and the end result was I was ceremoniously demoted from a temporary Lance Corporal back to a Private. Despite this set back I continued cadeting and ended up as a Senior Corporal in one of the Platoons.

If one has to mention the most selfless act by a cadet at Royal during our era, I wish to recall this incident. Train journey to Diyatalawa for the Herman Loos Trophy competition commence from Fort Railway station and when the cadets were mustered at the station it was found that we were short of one cadet. Lakdasa "Lucky" Disanayake and P Ramachandran (Head Prefect) who were corporals in the cadet corps before, and had given up cadeting by then for studies, came to the station to give a send-off to the two platoons. Lucky decided then and there to join the platoons to Diyatalawa to make the numbers and he functioned in the lowest rank as a private during the entire camp. Lucky kept the cadets happy all the time with his wit and humour and there was this incident which was memorable.

Visibility of hard work in the eyes of the cadet masters was considered by cadets as an easy route for promotions. In this instance some enthusiastic cadets were cleaning the roof top for the "Hut Inspection" the next day, whilst some were cleaning the floor and the rest the drains where no one could see them. Lucky pointed at the roof cleaners and said "that's what is called the height of keenness" making everyone around to laugh.

Sadly, both Lucky and Rama are no more with us. I had close links with both of them and they were thorough gents. Rama was the Captain of the College Boxing team when I was a junior boxer and Lucky and I joined SL Volunteer Naval Force in 1971 and 1972 respectively. Due to his exceptional contributions to the military, last rights were given at a tri-services funeral and I had the sad but proud duty as the officer-in-charge conducting the Service funeral rites for the late Surgeon Commodore. Rama also had his share of contribution in the military as an officer in the SL Volunteer Air Force.

In another memorable incident in cadeting, Corporal K G N Peiris (Gabo) was the right marker of the platoon 1 for the guard of honour given to the chief guest Governor general William Gopallawa, at the college prize giving. When Maj. M K J Cantly (Canto) was marching towards the platoons in attention for the final inspection, the first cadet to be inspected was the right marker Gabo, who was missing for a while and rushed to his position with his rattle and stood in attention when Canto was few steps away. Gabo's left shirt pocket of the uniform was protruding out and when Canto questioned as to what he has got in it, his prompt answer was "Sir, padding for extra smartness, Sir". Canto had a straight look at Gabo's face and said pad your right pocket as well, and went on to inspect the next cadet. The

padding was the empty cigarette packet which he could not throw on the parade grounds, having gone for a quick fag just before the Governor general's arrival. Sadly, Gabo is also not amongst us, anymore.

The most hilarious incident I encountered in college boxing life, Shaul "Ganja" Mohamed was at the center stage. One late evening, just after boxing practices Ganja offered me a lift. I didn't know that the lift was going to be on the bar of his rickety old push bike, from Boxing Room to the bus halt to Nugegoda, just 50 meters away in front of the then Pembroke Academy. Half way through the journey an English-speaking cop ordered us to halt and Ganja stopped the bike 10 meters passing the cop. We were reprimanded and the cop said that we have committed 5 offences. Ganja argued on the number of offences and said that the cop was wrong and there are only 4 offences in that, wrong side of the road, doubling, no dynamo/light and no 10 Rupee license as required in those days. Cop said well ok, and when I ordered to stop, you stopped 10 meters away and you don't have your damn breaks also, and that's your 5th, and hauled both of us to the Cinnamon Garden police Station. That was the most memorable lift I have ever got in my life.

Boxing humour:

- Some gave up hitting with the leather (Boxing) for hitting at the leather (Cricket). Padde Withana (Class of 54) and Metha Aeygunwardena (Class of 59) were reputed boxers are good examples.
- Many boxers did athletics, mostly middle distance running with boxing fitness. That is to run for life when the time comes you are unable to fight.
- At the house boxing meets many athletes and ruggerites took part to collect points for their house. They used the ring to good measure for running to gain fitness for their pet sports.
- Some who took part in boxing were better fighters outside the ring than inside the ring.

Boxing is the noble art of self-defense and those who participate are privileged in gaining self-confidence and learn never to hit another when he is down, which lesson if remembered would serve a life time.

The other side of E C Gunasekera "Kataya" we all knew

I also thought that I must pen something interesting with regard to the school life revolving our revered master Mr. E C Gunasekera (ECG) and again in the center stage it's our Ganja. In the year 1965 I was in the lower sixth Botany class, with a mix of '59 and few '58 students and the master Mr. Rajendran was absent on that particular day. In the nearby Lecture Room Mr. ECG was taking the chemistry class and he heard a commotion from our Botany class and it was mainly the loud noise of Ganja, as usual.

ECG dashed to our class room and there was a deafening silence and when he looked around, he saw Ganja looking through the microscope and drawing something, pretending to be a very studios student. ECG walked straight up to busy Ganja and saw half of an algae or some creature being drawn on the paper beside. ECG with his sixth sense told Ganja to get up and

looked through the microscope and found that there was no slide underneath! He took a stern look at Ganja and went off giving 100 lines to the entire class to be forwarded to him at 3.45pm, as it was the last class of the day. What Ganja did was, sensing ECG coming he went to the nearest microscope and noticing that he was a '59 G boy, pushed him using his seniority in college and occupied his seat.

ECG appeared sharp at 3.45m and wanted the boys who have not written or unfinished the lines to put up their hands. When he didn't see Ganja's hand up he wanted him to bring his lines to him. On a thorough examination, ECG found there were exactly 100 lines but the lines were shorter than what the other boys have written and ECG asked Ganja what he told the class to write. Ganja promptly replied "In future, I will not misbehave in class", which was exactly all of us have written. He asked him what have you written, when Ganja replied "I will not misbehave in class". Next question from ECG was "Why didn't you write 'In future?'" and Ganja's straight reply was "Sir, I will indicate, that it is in future" and therefore he did not write "In future". We all anticipated ECG to give Ganja a thundering slap but instead he put on his stern look at Ganja, then put a slight smile and nodded "Mohamed you are correct". That's the other side of ECG, we all new.

Ganja joined the Army in 1968 as an officer cadet and retired as a Major in the early '80s and says that it was on the good advice of then Army Commander Maj General (later General) Dennis Perera, stating that Ganja was too intelligent to the Army. I have been associating Ganja in military life and boxing circles until his sudden death which was also very dramatic. He is a very selfless and a hilarious person and we always enjoyed his company.

Appendix 9 - Firoz Nilam wrote the following of his accomplishments:

FirNil8@aol.com

Ceylon Men Singles Champion in 1966 and 1967 and became the first schoolboy National Champion of any sport in Ceylon at that time
Men's Doubles title in 1966 (with Barney Reid) in addition to the Men's Singles title
Mixed Doubles title in 1967 (with Nandani Daniel) in addition to the Men's Singles title
Appointed school Prefect in 1966 until end of 1967 due to sports achievements
Captain of the winning interschool table tennis titles for Royal in 1966 and 1967

More information is available in the following
website:<http://archives.dailynews.lk/2011/04/11/spo20.asp>
I also won the Carrom Singles titles from U 14 to U 19

Appendix 10 – Brian NBL Lieversz recalls: Life at RC- bricil2000@yahoo.com.au

During my first five years or so from 1959, apart from trying to establish ourselves into some sort of future career, we would try to lighten this burden by indulging in sports. My brother's success and reputation preceded me and certainly assisted me greatly. I started playing under 14 cricket and taking part in Athletics. The School organised what they called 'Standard Tests' which required all boys to take part assisting us all to reveal our competitiveness. At the 1960 Athletic Sports Meet I was placed second in Under 12 High Jump. Ramlal Gunawardena had first place and Wilhelm Koch was third. I continued my athletics at school over the years.

I started playing under 14 Cricket at inter-House level and progressed to RC level. Some of the others who participated as far as I remember were Nigel De Kretser, S. P Sellayah, Upali

Suraweera, C. Abeyewickrema, Jani De Silva, J. Kudahetty, to mention a few. Our lunch intervals and sometimes an hour or so after school were mostly spent playing some sport. We did attempt Rugby too. Which reminds me of an unfortunate and terrifying accident that occurred during one of these games. We must have been around 12 to 13 years old and having fun playing Rugby after school with Russell Geddes, Kusum Perera, Nizam Jaimon, myself and a few others, when Russell Geddes had a tackle and fall, fracturing his forearm midway between his elbow and wrist. It looked terrible and almost at right-angles across the fracture, and scared us immensely. Fortunately, for us my brother Darrell happened to be training for Athletics nearby, and so we ran to him and asked for help. He immediately took Russell and us to the Hostel from where they were able to get transport for Russell to hospital. That experience scared us.

From then on, I continued playing cricket in the under 16, and a few 2nd Eleven matches. I was a reserve in the 1st Eleven on and off in 1966, and in the Royal-Thomian of that year, I recall an embarrassing moment when I was called upon to sub for a regular player and dropped a catch at Cover Point.

In 1967, I played a full RC First XI season under S.J De Silva, opening the bowling with Chris Chitty. And receiving Colours that year for Cricket.

I represented RC in Athletics from 1965. My brother Darrell was my hero, and I wanted to do everything he did. I even chose the events that he excelled in, both in Cricket and Athletics. Also, our parents were very supportive in everything we did.

My introduction to Rugby came unexpectedly. In 1964, Nizam Jaimon, another great sportsman and I were training for Athletics, when we came across the boys at Rugby training on the CH &FC grounds on the Racecourse at the time. Watching them for a few minutes, Nizam said to me at the 'spur of the moment' that maybe we should try ourselves at Rugby, and so we asked if we could enter the Under 17 group. As we had been training for Athletics, we found that we could outrun most of them. Very soon, we found ourselves in the First XV group and played as the two Wings under the Captaincy of Keith Paul. We were both awarded RC Rugby Colours that year. We both played till 1967 and I had the fortune of being awarded Captaincy in 1967. However, my highlight in Rugby was in 1964, when I scored the only try in the first leg of the Bradby Shield game in Colombo, when Royal won 3-nil. In the 2nd game that year, played at Nittawela, Lakdas Dissanayake won the game for us with some magnificent drop kicking. I happened to contribute again scoring the only try for Royal. Arguably, Trinity had a great team that year but we prevailed, winning the Bradby that year. After leaving College, I continued my Rugby playing up-country for Dimbulla Sports club.

I went through school without much exception. I developed an interest in Science. After passing through LV, I sat the O/L in 1964. I remember liking Physics and attained a Credit in it. I passed through Maths, Chemistry and other subjects. This reminds me of another story. Chemistry was not my best subject, prompting Mr Arulananadan our Chemistry teacher to tell me one day, 'I say Lieversz, if you pass in Chemistry, I will give up teaching!' Well, he opened a challenge in me, and so being a very competitive person, I applied more attention and effort into my Chemistry studies. The results came through and I succeeded in obtaining a Pass. All excited, I rushed over to Mr Arulalanandan's classroom. He came out to see me, and when I told him I passed, not that I wanted him to 'give up teaching', but I was happy with my success and wanted to let him know. His response was, 'I knew you could do it son' and he surprisingly gave me a hug! That was the calibre of teachers we had in those days.

There was another O/L requirement to proceed to the sixth form. We were required to pass Sinhala or Tamil. We needed special assistance. Graham Koch, Ramlal Gunawardene and I were introduced to a Sinhala teacher for Tuition. He made us memorise three Essays. Luckily for us, one of the Essay topics appeared for the Exam , and all three of us passed.

The requisites generally required to be appointed a Prefect were High Academic Achievements, and being appointed Captain of any Sport, participating in multiple sports and debating. I achieved the prefectship on my appointment as Rugby Captain in 1967. Not having the requisites to enter LVI and UVI in the sciences, I opted to enter the Arts section. My cousin Eardley also happened to be in the Arts section. Due to the small numbers of students and subjects in this section, there were many occasions when we had free periods. Our classrooms were mainly on the ground floor in the main building next to the Hall. Due to the free time we had, Eardley and I were assigned to a task of generating a Time Table for the whole school. This was displayed on the wall of the room next door to the Vice Principal's office, where Eardley and I worked. It gave us a sense of importance. One day while seated in our little office, a boy from Form 1B came in and told us that there was no teacher in his class and they did not know what to do. Referring to our time table, we found that Mr. Rathnathicam was due in Form 1B. He was a fairly big made person but a very calm and gentle type .So we wrote out a letter to him saying, 'Mr Rathnathicam, you are due in class 1B, please see that you are there immediately as the boys do not know what to do'. We gave the letter to the boy and asked him to take it to Mr. Rathnathicam who we knew was in the staff room close by. A few minutes later Mr. Rathnathicam storms into our room demanding "Who do you think you are writing me this note?" We both got to our feet a bit shocked, but calmed down seeing him burst out laughing. He saw the funny side of our gesture. Again, that was the quality of our teachers in those days. There were other teachers who were very strict when it came to Discipline, but they were so devoted to guiding us through Education and Life in general.

The others who I could remember who may have been in the Arts section were Charitha Ratwatte, S Ambepitiya, B. Lieversz, S.T. Aziez, E R Hapuarachchi, Lakshman Kiriella? Others from the 60 Group... Eardley Lieversz, Anura Bandaranayake, Ranil Wickremasinghe. There could have a few more but I cannot remember.

I left school in March 1968 to take up employment in the planting sector. I am thankful to Royal College and our batch of 1959 with whom I grew up. Also, both fellow students across other batches, and teachers, they all contributed to the success of each of us through our growing years. We came through life without any class, creed, or religious differences, learning from each other, respecting each other, still the same to this day and age. There could have ups and downs along the way, but through it all, Royal has taught us to win and lose.

As we all know, there are 200 plus colleagues in our 59 group, and it is possible that some of us tend to have wider associations or contacts with others, for different reasons, and often not by choice. Some have sadly passed away. So we should attempt to highlight some of the contributions they have made in our life at RC.

A few names that come to mind in the field of Sports are, Nizam Jaimon, Ramlal Goonewardene, and Wilhelm Koch. They were all outstanding in Rugby, and Athletics, and I had the wonderful privilege of playing alongside them. Nizam was very fast and powerful, and we both played as the Wing Three Quarters in 1964. Being quite versatile, he later moved

to an Inside position and sometimes could substitute as Fly half when the need arose. He was also a Cadet in College and later joined the SL Army where he became a Lieutenant. Being into Athletics and Rugby, we spent a lot of time together and became close friends. Even after leaving College we kept in touch. He unfortunately passed on after contacting MS.

Ramlal too played as a Wing Three Quarter, and was a forceful runner. I remember one occasion when Ramlal had an unfortunate smash into the Rugby goalpost, and was momentarily concussed. He was carried off the field. It was at the end of the game, and a doctor was summoned to the dressing room to check him out. Ramlal had recovered by then but the Doctor kept asking him questions, checking his consciousness, etc. He then asked him what he ate for lunch that day. Ramlal looked at him and amusingly told him 'my head hurts but you want to know what I ate'. After the doctor's explanation, Ramlal gave him a full list of what he ate!! He too joined the Cadet Corp in College and on leaving, he joined the SL Police Force. He was a highly respected Inspector in the Force, when he passed on. We spent a lot of time together after College.

Wilhelm played as a Fullback in our Rugby team and had mastered the art of Placekicking. He too left College to follow a career in the Plantation sector Up-Country. He left Sri Lanka emigrating to Australia, where he passed on. In Australia, I am told, he developed a keen interest in sailing, and often went out alone to sea, and one day due to an unfortunate accident [details unknown], he drowned.

Others that I remember, who I played alongside in Cricket were, S.P Sellayah and Rama Sellamuthu. Prasantha N Dias Abeyagunawardene contributed in Tennis. Sports gave us the opportunity of building friendships by spending more time together. They became close and devoted friends. I do humbly apologize if I have made any omissions, which are purely unintentional.

Thanks to all of you

Remembrances of Teachers Past* at Royal College

I was blessed with better teachers than I, a lackadaisical student, deserved.

I was a student at Royal College from January, 1959 till the end of April, 1965.

Many teachers, and – as was natural – many more class and college ‘mates’ made indelible impressions on a mind that was plastic and could be moulded. Even in this group, when I reflect now, after more than half-a-century, *four* teachers left lasting marks on my professional and personal life: *Mr. Justin de Silva* (Class Master, in ‘form’ **1E**), *Mr. L. Samararatne* (‘Pol Tokka’ – Elementary Sinhalese, in the third form – i.e., 1961), *Mr. V. Arasaratnam* (Pure Mathematics, Applied Mathematics & Advanced Mathematics) in the IVth Form & in Upper V (i.e., 1962 & 1963) and *Mr. Viji* (‘Ducky’) Weerasinghe (English Literature) in the IVth Form (i.e., 1962).

I could, should, add a fifth, Mr. J.H. de Saram, but he does not belong in the class of the other four; however, he was liked and respected by many colleagues, whom I admired. His passion, over the years, was English literature and cricket. In 1961 he was instrumental in two of my ‘loves’ during my entire life at RC. He made me, and if I remember well, Skandakumar, read from the assigned text in the English literature period – I have forgotten the title and the author, but it was a ‘famous’ book – during class hours and he turned a ‘blind eye’ to those of us listening to cricket commentary of the Australia-England test match – occasionally asking ‘what the score was,’ meaning that he understood what we (some of us anyway) were up to!

Secondly, having succeeded the much loved and competent B. St. E. De Bruin as the under XIV cricket coach, he chose me for the first two matches to represent RC; I failed miserably, scoring 0 and 2 in the two innings that I batted. He gave me another chance, when he chose me to keep wickets and open batting for the RC ‘A’ team – again, I failed miserably.

He had, justifiably, given me three chances – but he did not coach me; he expected, I think, natural abilities to work themselves out and he expected me to *learn by experience*. Somehow, I didn’t and he – in spite of pleas by my good friends (Brian Lieversz and Somasundaram Skandakumar) dropped me from consideration of representing RC in any form of cricket!

It took me many years to understand his priorities – which was, always RC cricket – and, anyway, he never occupied the place, in my mind, that the other four represented.

Mr. Justin de Silva helped hone my feeling for justice, with his *passion* for **Abraham Lincoln**; I visited Gettysburg in May, 2005, entirely because of his dedicated teaching. To

* *Pace Proust!*

have him as the Form master, in my very first year at Royal College, was a liberating factor – especially after the regimented feelings that one came with after Primary School education. He gave us, obtained from the US Embassy or the USIS (which I later learned) a copy of a paper-backed book about Abraham Lincoln’s life; I treasured it all my brief life at RC. It was as if one began preparing for University education with training as a student at College – reading classics, discussing the topics in these wonderful books, and so on. In passing, I should mention that he always wore a tie – but never a jacket!

Mr. Samararatne taught Sinhalese in a way even an incompetent Tamil boy like me could learn and appreciate the *richness* and *nuances* of the language. Later in life, *his* effective way of teaching Sinhalese was instrumental in the way I *learned* Japanese, German, Italian and (some) Spanish. *All* of the teachers, including Mr. Samararatne, employed one method for the teaching of second or foreign languages. When I read Leonard Woolf’s autobiographies, much later, I understood his preference for the melodious nature of the Sinhalese language. I have to give credit to my friend and class-mate Siva Supramaniam and my Parents in the serendipitous choice of Sinhalese; my elder brother, three years my senior, was instructed – again by my Parents – to choose Pali, when almost all were choosing Latin/Greek. It was when I read Leonard Woolf’s autobiography – I think it was the third of five volumes – that I understood the wisdom of Mr. Samararatne’s method of teaching Sinhalese.

Mr. Arasaratnam’s ‘lectures’ in pure, applied and advanced mathematics were exceptionally clear; for someone as I was, without *any* tradition in the subjects, a lesson in the art of *formalisation* and *mathematical proof*. That I did well in all three subjects at the GCE ‘O’ levels is a testimony to the wonders of his teaching. His teaching was very much in the style of undergraduate lectures, when they were at their best. He did not waste time on superficial matters – they were, for me (and many others), most enlightening in that the lectures were also informative of the subjects and imparted a respect for traditions. He made, for example, an exhilarating experience of teaching Geometry, based on Euclidean axioms, that it felt natural to progress towards Hilbert’s axiomatization of geometry. His lectures on Newton’s laws of mechanics was an eye-opener for students like me who were ignorant of the scientific method.

At some point in Upper V, one of the very bright boys raised a question of the relevance of Newton’s three laws in the age of Einstein; Mr. Arasaratnam did not ‘put’ the student down – he simply professed ignorance of Einstein’s theories – then went on with his teaching. I, of course, did not know anything about the relevance of Einstein’s theories; perhaps I was being ‘instrumental’ – concentrating on learning (sic!) for the GCE ‘O’ level exams!

As an aside, I must mention that this ‘bright boy’ ended up as a distinguished Mathematician (I think) and a Professor at a prestigious department of a University in the US.

But, above all, ‘Ducky’ Weerasinghe taught me to read *Julius Caesar*, the **Bard**’s masterly play, with Lord Siva’s ‘*divine eye*’ – and enjoy even a *tragedy*. His passion for orchids was easy to understand when one listens to his narration of Mark Antony’s funeral speech for

Caesar, but it was the *Soothsayer's* prophecy that he transformed, as he did *Et, tu Brute – then fall Caesar*, that revealed in all its poignancy, the assassination of the great 'would-be' emperor. His narration of Brutus' parting words to Cassius (Act IV, Sc. III; italics and bold letterings, added):

*The deep of night is crept upon our talk,
And nature must obey necessity,
Which we will niggard with a little rest.*

was with intensity and passion.

My own passion for good literature, and poetry, in many languages, was greatly influenced by these wonderful lessons by 'Ducky' Weerasinghe. My passion for good literature, in the languages I comprehend, owes – without the slightest doubt – to 'Ducky's' wonderful lectures (I call them thus, instead of the more conventional 'classes' because they were like University Lectures).

Many years later, I visited the old Senate House, now a ruin designated as a cultural treasure, in Rome, several times – each time hoping to hear the stentorian voice of 'Ducky' Weerasinghe exclaiming, *Et, tu Brute – then fall Caesar!* I recall, also, quoting the above lines of Brutus, at the end of a splendid dinner, in Pescara (Italy), at a celebration in honour of me.

I may mention that I was honoured to mention that it owed very much to 'Ducky's' *lectures* of almost fifty years earlier, in remembering the way to recite!

The legacy of Mr. Justin de Silva, Mr. Lionel Samararatne, Mr. Arasaratnam (I do not believe I ever learned his 'first' name – which may have been as 'Arasa' wanted! We referred to him simply as 'Arasa' as we – the 'boys' – did in the case of many teachers at RC; of course, there also 'nicknames' for *some* - but I do not recall any for 'Arasa'), and Mr. Viji 'Ducky' Weerasinghe (thanks to my '1959' friend, Mr. Prasanna Mendis, I was able to write and publish in August, 2008, in **FLOREAT** - the 'official' newsletter of **RCOBAA** - a tribute to 'Ducky' Weerasinghe) lives on, *nobly*.

Appendix 12 - Michael Kreltshheim – Melbourne Australia 4th September 2020-
michaelkreltshheim@gmail.com

I was one of a small number of boys who entered in 1959 from Greenlands College, now Issapathana MV in Havelock Town . Though my two elder brothers went direct from Royal Primary to the First Form, myself and my immediate elder brother, Malcolm, had our primary education at Greenlands College as it was closer to our home in Bambalapitiya. Others who entered in 1959 from Greenlands were, Roger Herft, Russell Geddes, Firoz Nilam , Ashroff Rizvi and Sela Amarasekera to recall a few names. Apart from Nilam who is in the USA, the others are all domiciled in Melbourne. Your article brought back a flood of memories and I thought I might add to them. I shall go about it in both a geographic and temporal order to the best of my ability- remember this goes back sixty years! These memories are necessarily recounted from being a member of the sole English medium class in that year group. If I remember correct, the segregation for the different mediums of instruction disappeared after the Fourth form and English then became the sole medium of instruction.

“Balloon Man” had a dispensing cart on Reid Avenue at the entry road to Royal Primary, near the bicycle shed. He used to sell those 40, 60 and 80 page exercise book of doubtful quality where the ink use to smudge the paper or make holes in it. Seasonally, he use to sell green mangoes, ambarella fruit, jambu and rambutans, the former with a twist of paper containing salt and pepper as a dip. The staff garage near the West Wing was used by Mudguard Sethukavalar, Cow Pox Abeysinghe and the genial old Muthucumaru who taught senior classes. Later Jinadasa parked there. I think Sabaratnam who was a class master of the second form also parked his bike there. Muthucumaru had two nephews in school – the younger one was in the 59 year, Balakumaran and the older one, who was far senior, was nicknamed Father. All of my contemporaries in Medical College will remember Muthu’s daughter, a stunner by the name of Brintha. She was a Neurosurgical Unit registrar at the General Hospital and also lived with the Neurosurgeon, Darrell Weinman. They later migrated to Sydney, Australia.

Sabaratnam was rather a short man who wore grey cotton flared pants. He was appropriately nicknamed half soda. His son in the 59 group was called quarter soda and there was another younger sibling named one eighth soda. Thavaneetharajah also parked his bike here. He taught at Royal for a short time and was a former cricket coloursman? I dug up my old school reports – all still preserved- to recall some other school masters. Lionel Samarathne my Form 1 classmaster was always neatly dressed in white. His theatrical reproduction in the English class was a feature – the Highwayman came riding, riding, riding up to the old inn door! Cow Pox taught us Mathematics- a line had no thickness and joined two foci! He also taught us how to bisect lines and angles. The Dreadnought instrument box had a compass and dividers which came in useful to play darts on an elevated desk top in moments of leisure. I use to meet Cow Pox occasionally after I left school and he had retired from teaching. He lived at the top of Fraser Avenue in Dehiwela, and continued to augment his pension with work at a Sports Store in Front St., Pettah. Thatte Baldy Ratnayake taught us Western Music singing for one period a week. He wore a cream tussore suit and tie at all times, along with his trademark pith helmet. Again, a very kind old man. I can still recall a song we sang- ‘ the Minstrel boy to the war has gone, in the ranks of death you’ll find him. ‘ Unfortunately, one day the Principal, Dudley K.G. De Silva turned up and we were all shanghaied into the School Choir and also all the Christian Boys had to sing in the Christmas Carol Service for several years thereafter – no exceptions were allowed!

Somehow, I was the only Burgher boy to end up in the Sinhalese class with Cantlay in form 1. It was absolutely impossible to memorise 'kavi' to be recited in class when your mother tongue was English! – multiple episodes of abuse, sprayed with saliva – Fail Fail Fail! Lolbuttaya Harold Samaraweera was classmaster of 1B and Lennie De Silva was in 1D. During the morning and afternoon break we would all rush down to the area under the West Wing stairs where the Saranapala tuckshop would send a minion with a jug of milk tea- 8c a glass or 15c for two glasses, or a weak solution of lime juice for 10c a glass. Also a small assortment of patties or Chinese rolls which we could ill afford. Kadalay Aachi sold her wares in the West Wing lobby, to be later followed by Kadalay himself for several years. They sold cones of newspaper and you could have your fill- a choice of peanuts or chickpeas. Plain vadais or vadais topped by a deep fried prawn were also featured. The Woodwork Room was on the East side of the West Wing lobby and BGN Sariffodeen taught us eager lads how to make a bobbin to wind on string for a kite. Sariffodeen was a very kind instructor. I could not say the same of the Metalwork teacher –Teddy Bear who was a bit of a tyrant. On the opposite of the West Wing basement was the Geography Room- the province of SAA Perera who became my Third Form teacher. He was a kindly man too, when one got to know him.

Next to the Geography Room was the Science Room, the habitat of Edward Winslow Rupesinghe who used to have his lunch in there, followed by cigarettes and a cup of tea with a few other teachers. I can still remember the incident where one of the older students left the gas taps open and filled the room with gas overnight. Fortunately, the lab attendant was in early the next morning and smelt the gas before Rupperty could walk in puffing on a cigarette- or the West wing would have ceased to exist! Rupperty taught my older brothers too at Royal. His nickname then was Pockets, as he used to walk down the corridor with his hands in his pockets – and to that generation this meant that he was playing pocket billiards! Rupperty was my English Medium second form Maths Teacher. He had his strict foolproof methods of teaching and was an absolutely excellent Maths teacher. I would use his quotations for simultaneous equations well into my Senior years for Chemistry and Physics. Unfortunately, if you misbehaved in his class you became a marked person. I can still recall the late Ramlal Gunawardena leading the chorus of "Edward Winslow Rupesinghe" whenever he was fractionally late for class, copping a smacking for his efforts. Unfortunately, our classroom for Maths was also opposite Cow Pox Abeysinghe's Headmaster's room and we also attracted unfavourable attention from him.

My second form teacher in 2D was Mr. Sivalingam, yet another gem of a guy. In my class were Rizvi Sherriff and Peroos. Rizvi and Peroos went through Royal College and Medical School with me. Rizvi rose to great heights as the Professor of Medicine at the Colombo Medical College and as a Renal Transplant pioneer in SL, while Peroos became an Orthopaedic Surgeon in Brighton, UK. Sixty years later, we still visit and often communicate with each other on Facetime.

We started Latin in the 4th Form with that great man, Vijji Weerasinghe who became an institution at Royal College. My classmaster was S.H. Perera, another of that older generation of schoolteachers who taught us Maths in an effortless fashion. Latin was a very mechanical subject and if you performed reasonably well you were guaranteed a Credit pass at the "O" Level exam. Our Physics teacher was Conner Rajaratnam. We looked forwards to the Physics practicals in the lab where he taught us the different calorific value of the metals. To recount one of his stories- the hunter who was confronted by three leopards asleep on the track. The

hunter stuck his knife in the ground and then retreated to fire a bullet at the sharp edge of the knife. The bullet split in two, and killed the leopards on either side, while he knife was propelled centrally, killing the leopard in the middle! One dared not laugh at this impossible story or you got a slap for your trouble! Conner played cricket for Royal, as did his two older sons, HK (wicket keeper) and Sugi the left arm opening bowler. His youngest son was in our 59 year but I lost track of him.

I then went on into the Upper Five with a Double promotion. In the Upper Five we were provided with the most excellent tutelage in preparation for the O Levels. These included Hari Arulanandan for Pure Maths, Sharma for Chemistry and Kaneshalingam for Physics. Hari Cut throat had his own little room in College. He uses to cycle to work from Wellawatte and brew his cup of tea in the Chemistry lab and drink it out of a glass beaker. The boys in the Maths stream (Pure and Advanced Maths) were taught by that most dedicated of teachers, Arasaratnam. John De Saram was my class master and it was rumoured he was a Rock and Roll whiz. EFC Pereira taught us Latin with great effect and the Latin to English translation of 535 lines of Virgils Aeneid and 23 chapters of Caesars Gallic Wars were able to assure one of a Credit in Latin as stated before.

EFC Pereira also organised the Film Society with the “dark room’ on the 1st floor of the West Wing. In the junior years we were occasionally summoned for a film screening. The films were usually on loan from the British Council, the US Information Service or the Indian High Commission and were usually boring newsreels or documentaries. Rarely, there was a Western. The projector or the film reel often broke down to groans from the audience!

Palitha Manchanyake among others will bear testimony to the teaching of Arasaratnam to the Senior cohorts of Mathematics students at Royal. I think Palitha visited him in New Zealand where Arasa lived with his son after his retirement. When he left this mortal coil the eulogies from his students from all over the world were a testimony to his sterling efforts in pushing them towards perfection. I think Palitha recounted the story of how Arasa was recruited by Principal, Dudley de Silva to teach Maths and it was so moving that I wish he can reprint that story in these pages.

In the Lower Six, my class teacher was Ratnathican- another gem of the old school. He had one son who was in a senior batch – big Rat, and small Rat - who was in our 59 year group. Small Rat left after the O levels to do Chartered Accountancy at Turquand Youngs and then migrated to the US. I believe Old man Rat was a Major in the Volunteer Army Pioneer Corps and spent many months in Gal Oya.

As expected as a Burgher, my only failure at the O level examination was in Sinhalese. To enter University one needed a pass at the O Level in this subject. I managed to get this required pass on my third attempt after attending tuition classes held by Pippi Perera who was a Sinhalese teacher at St. Peters College. He held private classes in his home at the Bambalapitiya Govt flats. A stream of several Burgher boys and girls attended these classes and we had to memorise and adapt several essays in Sinhalese for this exam. Made it in by the skin of my teeth just in time before sitting for the A level exams.

Both in the Lower Six and Upper Six we were again provided by and large with excellent teachers, preparing us for the A level exams. Gunaseelan and A.A. Benedict for Physics, Carl Muttiah for Botany, Rajapakse and Menon for Zoology and JG Rajendram for Chemistry. I cannot forget the old Physics labs on the ground floor of the East Wing with the

magnetometers and resistance boxes set in polished wood. Arumugam was the lab attendant in the Zoology lab and provided us with the necessary dissection specimens. I cannot recall the name of the Botany lab attendant but I remember him clearly with his topknot - condary. He kept the lab very organised and clean.

Unfortunately, in the Upper Six we had Kos Dias for Botany and he spouted out all his outdated notes, most probably from his student days and one was compelled to copy them down. EC Gunasekara was another great human institution at Royal but not a very good teacher of Chemistry. Many in the Upper Six out of necessity, then attended out of school tuition classes for some subjects – if you could afford it! Ariaratnam for Zoology, and Jayasinghe at Peters College for Physical and Inorganic Chemistry. Sharma at Royal instructed us in Organic Chemistry and insisted in providing us with extra classes at Royal on Saturday mornings He was a real whiz at this. Organic Chemistry was considered an extra subject and we attended Visakha Vidyalaya for the written exam. I think we all passed this exam with flying colours.

Of course there were some other teachers to provide tutelage on some irrelevant subjects in these years, e.g. Sinhalese where I used to provide an empty page at the term end exams, with my name in English at the top of the page. I must not fail to mention old man Belleth who used to instruct us in Religion – who can forget the phrase, Holy Prison, Jailer Belleth when referring to the College Hostel! I lived in Dehiwela for several years and boarded the College Bus to and from school. A few of the masters also came along in the bus and they were benign individuals who sat on the lower deck of the bus – like Ratnathican and Thambapillai and Jockless Gulasekaram. John Hill lived on Hotel Rd Mount Lavinia and usually sat on the top deck with his quiet beatific smile . He only taught at Royal for a couple of years. Roger Herft was a rascal in the Lower Five and I had known him since I was six years of age at Greenlands College. He was great mimic and he used to stroke his Adams apple and imitate the voice of one of his teachers Jockless Gulasekaram. The nickname belied this teacher's dress, or rather his lack of it! He also did a good impersonation of Arasa and a few other teachers. Roger later entered the Anglican Ministry and rose to great heights becoming the Bishop of Hamilton in New Zealand, the Bishop of Newcastle in New South Wales and finally the Bishop of Perth in Western Australia.

I well recall the College Hall and the weekly assembly where we all sat in silence being policed by the prefects! The guest speakers were a feature and occasionally Muttucumaru played classical music records to deepen our artistic appreciation! The annual prize giving and the annual Christmas Carol service organised by Dudley KG de Silva, the Principal were also eagerly looked forward too. I best remember when the hall hosted foreign troupes, and especially a touring troupe of Chinese acrobats who performed the most amazing acts of balance and gymnastics. Many class of 59 boys now live in Melbourne and until this Covid 19 scourge we often met each other at the AGM of the Royal College Old Boys union, or whenever a fellow 59er passed through. Prasanna Mendis or Brain Leiversz usually instigated these meetings. I will not name them all as I am sure to offend the ones whose names I cannot recall! A few live in Brisbane, Graeme Koch and Alan Ebert to name two of them. Palitha Manchanayake from Sydney remains in faithful email contact but I am remiss in that I do not reply to his emails. My apologies Palitha but please keep on writing to me as I do read them all. I was in Sydney several years ago and met Indra Lokubalasureya and Palitha. Also met Rama Sellamuttu but he has passed on. Father Senthilkumaran has also left this mortal coil. Jebanesan and Godamunne are also in Sydney. Jeremy Perera has now moved his domicile to

Cairns in Far North Queensland. I promise I will make an effort to make a trip to Sydney and Brisbane as soon as this Covid 19 lockdown eases, to catch up with you guys.

Appendix 13 - Recollections Playing Cricket and Badminton - By Jayantha Kudahetty-jayanthakuda@gmail.com

It was a dream come true for me to enter Royal College in 1959. The batch of '59 comprised students from RPS and other leading schools around, including Greenlands (now Issipathana) College, me and few others colleagues passed the exam to enter. We came from different walks of life, ethnicities, religions etc - it did not matter. It didn't take long for us to get to know each other and to become and remain life time friend's to date.

The late start of school with a lunch break in between, unlike presently, gave us the ideal opportunity for all classes to mix and indulge in some sport with soft ball cricket being the most popular. It was a big scramble for space to play cricket in the Junior grounds by the famous 'Tamarind Tree' which still stands tall as a great monument of Royal College even today.

Although participating in many Sports at College, Cricket and Badminton were my passion, probably due to my early induction and exposure to these two games in my backyard with my neighbour friends from a very early age.

Cricket

From softball cricket, I graduated to playing with the 'red cherry', starting with junior levels and later representing my 'Harward House' and College, from the matting wicket on the junior grounds to the 'Turf' in the main grounds adjoining. House cricket was very competitive, with 'friends' playing against each other with no quarter given. The experience of facing the quick bowlers on the uneven mat, who often bowled from 20 yards without being 'no balled' by the umpires from own teams. Ducking and veering with bruised bodies and only your precious jewels protected by a plastic 'box' were experiences that made us improve our reflexes in meeting the challenges when later representing the school and country.

After gaining selection to the first X1 squad, my initial experience at this level was an unforgettable experience. In early Feb, 1965, Brian Close the former English captain visited Sri Lanka on a coaching stint and the Schools cricket association hurriedly arranged a session at the last minute for selected players from Colombo schools. Due to lack of time and availability of any other venue, the program was held on the underprepared Royal centre turf wickets. When I was invited to bat, the fast bowlers were operating, with all of them bowling fast (even chucking the odd ball) from 20 yards to impress Brian and the local authorities present. One ball from one of our own college fast bowlers eyeing for a place- Changa Samaraweera reared from a good length and took me by surprise. I had time only to turn my face. The ball hit me on the left jaw, breaking my jaw bone. I was wired in hospital, unable to open my mouth, and on liquid diet for three months which also resulted in my being not considered for the Royal Thomian big match that year.

However, I later played in the big matches of 1966, 67 & 68, obtaining cricket colours. In fact it was only recently that I came to realize that in 1968, my scoring 1000 runs and taking 100 wkts in one season was a record as the first Royalist to achieve this double. This

performance may have contributed to my being selected for best bowler & all-rounder Schoolboy Cricketer Awards, but the then College Principal- the late Bogoda Premaratne refused permission for me to accept these awards conducted by the 'Observer' newspaper, citing regulations applicable to Govt. School children which also affected other award winners from Ananda & Nalanda as well. Schoolboy cricketers were then selected from private schools and the same awards were presented to them instead. It was a very sad day for me and my parents, when deprived of an Award which was to culminate my Cricket career at Royal.

Badminton

One indoor court in the old Gymnasium by the Tamarind Tree was where all our House and Inter schools matches were played, using wooden Rackets and plastic shuttles. I represented college from an early age and won colours for 5 consecutive years from 1964 to 68. I was selected in 1967 & 1968 to represent Sri Lanka at the International Junior Championships' played in Colombo, Ceylon and Tokyo, Japan respectively. The tour to Japan was to be my first overseas tour on Sports and travelling by ship with stopovers in other countries en route and playing against the World's best was a memorable lifetime experience.

Two appointments stand out as proud achievement for me in my final year at Royal College. Being the Captain of Harward House and leading them to be the Champions and the appointment as Head Prefect of College in 1968.

There were many other than my parents to whom I owe my deepest gratitude for the progress in education and sports at College. However special mention needs to be made of my first Principal- Dudley De Silva, Senior Masters - Viji Weerasinghe, E.C Gunasekera, & Henri De Saram who were my godfathers with their dedication, guidance and support throughout the years at College. We learnt of books and men- and learnt to play the game.

Appendix 14 – S. Skandakumar- somaskanda21@gmail.com

I reflect on the values that were taught and upheld at Royal that held me in excellent stead throughout my life, and which I faithfully abided by.

These values were our foundation.

To recap,

- Distinguish between right and wrong, and always do what is right as you perceive it.
- Emulate the strong but protect the weak
- Every right has a corresponding responsibility
- Greater the authority greater then must be the accountability
- Priceless is the value of Integrity because when Trust is lost Everything is lost.
- Leadership is by Example....it is only then that a Leader can inspire
- Mutual respect and Humility.

These values I held on to and served me well in both my personal and vocational lives at all times.

I also have appreciation for my free education that paved the way for all that I may have achieved in my life.

In gratitude in retirement I try to empower those in need in the fields of nutrition and education.



An education at Royal is a priceless blessing

Appendix 15 - The lifelong impact of eight years at Royal College- and of Sherlock Holmes! Git Wickremasinghe

I left Royal in 1967, having obtained admission to the Biological Sciences Faculty at the Colombo Campus of the University of Ceylon. This was following my second attempt at A Levels, with some considerable assistance from Pembroke to get my practical skills up to scratch. I consider myself as paradoxically fortunate in not getting the required grades for Medical College- I would have been a disaster in that profession! So, apparent setbacks can eventually bring about positive conclusions! My chemistry teacher at Pembroke, Ranjith de Silva, was four years ahead of us at Royal. However, we discovered a mutual interest in jazz- and formed a jazz band- which also included our own Arooz Sherriff- and Ralph Menezes- of the famous Colombo musical family. Ranjith now lives in North Carolina- and we still play jazz together- on Google Hangout! Ralph Menezes is a psychiatrist in Chicago.

Following a very happy year at the Colombo Campus, I departed for the UK, to start on a degree in Biochemistry at Bedford College, University of London. Followed by a PhD at University College (UCL). I remained there for the rest of my career, working in the same lab, on the same bench for 43 years, until I retired in 2014. Although I retain an emeritus position at UCL and do some occasional lectures. My career included research in leukemia biology, considerable teaching of medical and science undergraduates, supervision of PhD students- and management of a research team. It gives me great pleasure that many of my charges went on to develop stellar careers in research, teaching and medicine. All of this is underpinned by the education I was so privileged to receive at RC- free at the point of delivery, as we say these days!.

Obviously, the fine teaching we received in sciences was a key factor impacting on my later life. Chandra Rajapakse (zoology), Carl Muttiah (botany), Sharma and Shireshtarajah (chemistry), Hari C Arulanandan (chemistry and maths) obviously made a huge impact. Organic chemistry was a major contributor to my eventual career in biochemistry. But, like Krelly above (Appendix 12), I did not gain much from the teaching of Kos Dias or EC Gunasekera.

However, there is more: the life of a career scientist is highly dependent on being able to communicate effectively and concisely in English- which has become the *lingua franca* of science. This is both to do with writing convincing grant-funding proposals to finance one's lab- and with communicating one's results and conclusions effectively, both in writing, and verbally, at international meetings. I also served as an editor on some scientific journals. So my thanks also go to the fine teachers of English- Lionel Samararatne (Pol Tokka), Viji Weerasinghe and John H de Saram stand out in my memory. My lecturers and colleagues

here were struck by the grounding in the sciences as well as fluency in English that I brought with me from the former British colony of Ceylon.

When I retired in 2014, I was given a grand send-off by my Department. At the end of the talks, I recited Prospero's final speech from the Tempest- Our revels are now ended..... Concluding the line: 'If of your sins you pardoned be, by your indulgence, set me free'. Prospero then destroys his books on magic- I mirrored this by ritually shredding my PhD thesis- and my degree certificates- to great applause!

However, I have to say that my attempts to master my own 'mother tongue' had no impact on my later life- I have Tamil and Burgher friends who speak much more fluent Sinhala than I do!

I was also invited to teach as a guest lecturer at the University in the beautiful Swedish town of Uppsala (though not in Swedish- leave that to Vela!). Uppsala University is where Celsius (he of the °C temperature scale)- and Linnaeus, who classified living things plant and animal- once worked. On one visit, in May 1986, Uppsala- and I- were thoroughly irradiated by the fallout from Chernobyl. However, over three decades on, here I am- and no trace of cancer! In 2016 my Uppsala colleague Professor Rob Bywater and I celebrated our thirty year survival with a tandoori feast, here in London. But it is perhaps going too far to claim that my time at RC rendered me invulnerable to measured cesium-137, technetium- 99 and uranium-238!

A small aside: Uppsala was also the home of the great UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld. His father was the Governor of the region and the family lived in the splendid Uppsala Castle. Hammarskjöld was killed in a suspicious plane crash, in Africa, in the mid-fifties.

In Form I, Mr. Cantlay, endearingly Canto, introduced me to Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories. This was not part of formal teaching- but for some reason Canto thought these would appeal to me. I was so taken by the stories that I was driven to pursue a career that involved deductive and inductive reasoning- hence science. (My parents put me off trying to become a consulting detective!). The Holmes Omnibus Edition sits on my bedside table even now, though I do read other authors and genres too!. Fluency in English opened up a huge treasure chest of both science and literature- especially since so many books written in other languages often are translated into English.

Now here is a curious story about how the very real Canto and the fictitious Holmes shaped the trajectory of my life. I chose to attend Bedford College because it was located in beautiful Regent's Park, very near 221B Baker Street, the fictitious lodgings which Mr Holmes and Dr John Watson, late of the Indian Army, rented from a Mrs Hudson. At Bedford, I was taught by some excellent teachers, three of whom, now in their late eighties, remain close friends, still dining together after over half a century- and who were key collaborators in many of my research projects. How's that that for a continuum between Canto, Form IA and the present?! Nine years on from Form IA, as I was about to depart for the UK, Canto rang me at home to pass on his best wishes.

The great Jazz bandleader Duke Ellington visited Ceylon in 1963, on a US State Department-sponsored tour of Asia. Thanks to the efforts of John H de Saram, I had the opportunity to attend a workshop by this extraordinary musician - and actually to play- very briefly, with the

band. I must also mention Ernest Amarasekera, who helped create RC's jazz band, the Swingtette, of which I was a member. I played jazz all the way through my life, as a sort of parallel career to the science. And also acted as music director for several stage musicals- West Side Story and Guys and Dolls have stuck in my memory. I still do the occasional 'gig'. Not right now- thanks, Covid-19!

The drummer in my jazz band in the mid-70s was a then dental student, Roger Waters. Roger then joined up with Brian May (an astrophysicist) and one Freddie Mercury, a Parsi from Zanzibar, to form the famous rock band, Queen. In the 1990s I formed a new band at UCL, consisting of academic staff- known, naturally, as Jazz Academy. The bass player was my boss, Professor Leonard Poulter. Jazz Academy was a commercial success, making three CD recordings, for which I wrote most of the music. We played gigs all over the UK, in Europe- and most notably, on massive cruise liners in the Med and Caribbean. Also, a deal with the UK Foreign Office had us playing at parties in UK embassies in Europe.

But what of Latin and Greek? So enthusiastically taught me by EW Rupasinghe, Rupperty, Viji W and EFC Pereira. (More details in Appendix 5). OK, so these languages helped with elucidating the meanings of some obscure scientific terms. However, there's more to it than that: in addition to jazz, I also became a conductor of UCL's choir and orchestra. Some of the works we did- the Faure Requiem, Vivaldi Gloria, Carmina Burana- had Latin texts. The ability to understand what these meant was a key to interpreting these fine works. At RC, I also subbed occasionally for Surath Piyasena as rehearsal pianist, in preparing Dudley KG's choir for the annual carol concert, which undoubtedly had distant echoes in my London experiences with choirs. Yet another continuum- a long and welcome shadow from the past!

But alas, I was entirely useless at sport- my cricketing career both began and ended one lunch interval in Form III. I had timidly ventured to play lunchtime cricket -- and was bowled out in three balls by Firoz Nilam. This persuaded me to try my hand at other activities- especially music- and also cooking, a rather curious pursuit for a Sri Lankan boy. Hobbies which keep me going even now, as I am under 'house arrest', thanks to Madame Corona, *Imperatrix Mundi*. But with a piano to play, CDs, DVDs and a nice kitchen in which to experiment on the world's cuisines, from Albania to Zimbabwe, via Ceylon - in my modest but pleasant artisan's cottage in a lovely village just north of London, life is quite tolerable. Especially when my dear daughter Roshana visits, whenever possible. Again, a positive consequence from failure- so many thanks Firoz! So the competitive spirit always eluded me and I was forced to find other ways of moving on- compromise, collaboration and cooperation served me well.

One more thing- in addition to teaching at UCL Medical School, I was also an admissions tutor- charged with the special responsibility of ensuring gender and ethnic fairness in the admissions process. A responsibility I took very seriously, especially since the kindness of my teachers in the UK impacted so favourably on my life and career. I like to think that this role might have had some connection with the extraordinary way in which students from diverse communities interacted so effortlessly and harmoniously at Royal College.

Appendix 16 - Recollections from Royal Primary School & Royal College during my 14 years (1953-1966) by Palitha Manchanayake- mancha123@tpg.com.au

Let me start with the way I got admitted to the Royal Primary School (RPS).

It was really an accidental happening that took place in the latter part of 1952. My dad who was working as a Head Master of a school in Hanwella at that time, was away from home and came home only during the weekends. During that time, my uncle who was working at Kandaana had got to know that they were entertaining applications for entry to year 1 at Greenlands College. So he had proceeded from his office by bus to Pettah, and from there he had got into the correct bus in order to reach the Greenlands College. But because he was not sure of where to get off, he had inquired from the person seated next to him how he could get to the Greenlands College.

That person had politely answered “Well, you will have to get down at Thimbirigasyaya junction and walk about 200 yards, but could I know why you are going there?”

“Greenlands College is entertaining applications for new admissions to year 1, for next year”

“If it is admissions to year 1 for next year, then you could get off at the very next bus halt and proceed to Royal Primary School (RPS), and they are entertaining applications there too, and I think this is a better school and more established.”

As per his suggestion, my uncle had got down at the next bus halt and gone to the RPS. When he inquired from the RPS office about the application forms for year 1, the office had mentioned that it was the last day to hand over the application forms, and the dead line finishes in one hour’s time. Then my uncle had hurriedly filled up an application form for me and handed it over before the close of the dead line.

After a few months on one particular day, the village postman has met my father casually while the latter was walking beside the village post office. Then the postman has shown him a telegram saying “Sir, please see whether this telegram has any relevance to you?”.

He had further said that “this telegram has gone up and down a few times to a couple of places without a proper destination, and because it said ‘DRM Imbulgoda’, I handed it over to the DRO (District Revenue Officer) office at Imbulgoda, but they said that they have nothing to do with that”.

Then my father had opened the telegram. It had said ‘Please bring your son for interview at 3 pm Friday 25th November, Head Master RPS’. My father, at first sight, had not figured out what it meant. But subsequently he had realized that this could be regarding the application for RPS which my uncle had filled up for me. He thanked the postman and accepted the telegram. The interview was scheduled for the following day at 3 pm. We were really lucky to have got the telegram at least one day before the interview, instead of receiving it late or not receiving it at all.

It was raining the whole day from morning. At around 1 pm my father, mother and I got into a bus from Imbulgoda and proceeded to Pettah. From there, we had to catch the ‘Bambalapitiya Bus’ which goes past the RPS. From where the first bus terminated, we had

to walk about a hundred yards to the “Bambalapitiya Bus Stand’. It was pouring rain and we only had one umbrella, and all three of us squeezed under it. With the relentless rain, and also because of the nasty wind that prevailed at that time, I could not avoid getting soaked in water. The reason being that I was so short and the umbrella had to be held high to cover the heads of my father and mother, and thereby I was exposed to the full onslaught of the slightly inclined rainfall. However, when we reached the RPS, the water was draining down me, and I was shivering in the prevailing cold weather. Luckily, my mother had brought another suit for me. She took me to a toilet, got me dressed up nicely in that new suit, combed my hair, and I felt quite fresh. I could still remember the particular suit which I wore. It was a dark greenish coloured velvet pants, held in position solely by the buttons of the white shirt that I was wearing. That was the style of clothing prevalent around that time.

After sometime, I was called in by a smartly dressed lady, whom I got to know subsequently as Mrs. Sheela Jayasinghe who was the Head of the Kindergarten Section. She offered me a chair and sat next to me.

She asked me “Babaage nama mokakda?”.

I said “Palitha Manchanayake”.

“Kaputage paata mokakda?”

“Kalu paata”.

“Babaage aagama mokakda?”.

“Buddhaagama”.

“Haamuduruwange Sivure paata mokakda?”

“Kaha paata”.

Then she gave me five marbles and took off two and asked me “Keeyak ithuruda?”.

I replied “Thunai”.

Then she added another four, and asked me “Ekathuwa keeyada?”.

“Hathai”.

She was very happy. That was the end of the interview, and I was selected. I did not realise at that time, that it was the first of a series of interviews that I had to face over the years, in my professional life.

How it became “DRM Imbulgoda”, was because in that application form, they have left the space only with one dotted line there, and have requested for ‘Name and Address of Parent’. My uncle had filled it up as ‘D.R.Manchanayake Imbulgoda’. Because we were the only Manchanayake’s in our village, there was no necessity to include a house number or a street name in our address. The admission clerk at RPS, while sending the telegram to the ‘Name and Address of Parent’, addressed the telegram to ‘DRM Imbulgoda’ which resulted in the

confusion. Had my uncle put a comma in between Manchanayake and Imbulgoda, it could have been OK.

But how destiny played its part, is really amazing. Had the postman not recognized my dad going past the post office that particular day, or had the telegram got misplaced or got thrown about in its journey up and down from place to place, definitely the recipient would not have received it. Even if he had received it, the said interview date would have been passed, and none of these would have eventuated.

I had an easy passage at RPS, I should say.

There my class teachers were : Mrs. Peiris (Year 1), Mrs. S.E. Jayasinghe (Year 2), Miss W. Ekanayake (Year 3), Mr. M. Banneheka (Year 4), Mr. John De Silva (Year 5) & Mr. H.P. Jayawardane (Year 6).

Also, Mr. M. E. Piyasena, father of Surath Piyasena's (of RC 59 Group) taught us General Science at RPS.

I played Soccer and did Wrestling at RPS. During the lunch break, we were playing soccer at the school grounds, and I remember quite clearly Senerath Yapa, Upali Suraweera, Sarath Suriyasinghe, DG Wickremasinghe & myself were taking part in it quite regularly. I could still remember we (Bradby House) were the Winners of the Inter House Wrestling Competition, and had a photograph with Vipula Godamune, Milan (YM) Silva, Tilak de Zoysa (from our senior batch) & myself, posing for a photo with the big Trophy. I remember Mr. Lankatillake was the Wrestling Coach, a really a nice man.

At Royal College, my class teachers were : Mr. Lionel Samararatne (Form 1C), Mr. E. W. Rupasinghe (Form 2B), Mr. Justin De Silva (Form 3C), Mrs. Thelma Samarasekare (Form 4A), Mr. Hari C Arulanandan (Form UVB), Mr. Carl Mutthiah (Form LV1), Mr. S Thillainadarasar (Form UV1) & Miss Vythilingam (Form UV1-Revision).

After the A/L Exams while we were awaiting results, our class room was located on the 1st floor just vertically above the college canteen, and it was beside the half built College Swimming Pool in 1966. Miss Vythilingam was a young teacher just graduated from the University, and she was given the appointment to Royal College and was posted to our class. We were delighted and we welcomed her dearly. Our guys were having a count of her sarees which she wore each day. If a saree of a particular design was being repeated, our fellows knew exactly the date when she wore it earlier to school. As we were awaiting results, nothing much was being taught during this period. But as she was supposed to teach us Applied Math, she herself said that if we have any problems in Applied Math, we could ask her. Our guys took the opportunity, and they always had a Math problem for her. While she was explaining how to do the sum at her table, all of us got used to rally around her table and watch it being done. To tell you the truth, our fellows were simply not interested in the 'problem solving' part of it, but were admiring the young beauty.

In one of these classes, somebody had tried to measure the 'Obe Theeraya' (the gap between the blouse & the saree) of her, and she happened to notice it. She really lost her temper, and ran to Mr. Bogoda Premaratne. He came with the cane, and gave us a lecture for about half an hour, and concluded that if there is any more complaints from her in the future, that he would be taking very serious disciplinary action against us, and that there will not be any pardon.

From that day onwards, our fellows were really quiet, and it went along without any problems. The quantity of problems in Applied Math the students had, came down drastically!

Mr. Lionel Samararatne was our English teacher, and I do remember him mentioning in our class one day, that he will be absent from school tomorrow as he would be going to Hulftsdorp Courts to listen to the language skills of Mr. G.G. Ponnambalam's conclusive speech in a famous court case. That was his interest on the subject!.

Mr. Samararatne was my class teacher in Form 1 in 1959, and I think he was one of the best teachers that I have had. Mr Samararatne had made a remark in my Term Report saying 'Good in Math, but English continues to be his chief stumbling block both in and outside the class'. He said that he would like to meet my parents to discuss it, and as a result my parents visited him and met him at the college hostel where he was one of the sub-wardens at that point in time. To improve my English, he wanted me to do more reading of newspapers and library books. Also, to improve in my conversational ability, he wanted my parents to put me to the college hostel for few years. Accordingly, though my parents wanted me to join the college hostel in my 2nd Form, I kept on postponing it as I was so attached to my mother, being the youngest in the family. Finally at the start of the 4th Form, I joined the college hostel and I was there for 2 years. Definitely, there was a good improvement in my language skills.

In this regard, I like to recollect that I worked as a visiting lecturer in Hydrology at the University of Moratuwa for about 7 years, in addition to my work as an Engineer at Irrigation Dept & Mahaweli Authority. I am much humbled to note that I had the honour to deliver the prestigious Prof. E.O.E. Pereira Memorial Oration-2018 on invitation by the Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka for Prof. E.O.E. Pereira's 112th Birthday. Today in 2020 after nearly 61 years, I would like to take this opportunity to express how grateful I am to late Mr. Samararatne for his kind and thoughtful guidance given to groom my future. I like to mention here that later on I have made a couple of occasional visits to see him at his Nugegoda home after his retirement.

When I was on holiday in Auckland in 2010, I gave a call to Mr. Arasaratnam (hereafter I would fondly refer to him as Arasa) after getting Arasa's telephone number from Prasanna Mendis. I mentioned to Arasa that I was one of his students of his Upper V Maths class in 1963, and I am holidaying in Auckland these days, and that I would like to pay him a visit. He said okay and welcomed me. I was with Arasa for about 2 hours, and we had a good chat. I was mentioning to my wife that I am still scared of Arasa even after 57 years, as I can remember how he used to slap people even though I have not experienced it. During the chat, I happened to ask Arasa when he did join the college staff? His answer was 1955, and he continued his talk. Arasa said that he got a letter from the Education Ministry asking him to meet the Principal of Royal College. He said that he bought a shirt from the pavement, and wore it for the said interview as he did not have a proper shirt to wear. Apparently, Mr. Dudley K G de Silva has had a chat with Arasa and before giving him the appointment, he had asked whether Arasa had got any character certificates. Then Arasa had said 'no'. Then Dudley had inquired where Arasa stays in Colombo? Arasa had replied 'YMCA Hostel, Colombo'. Then Arasa was asked to furnish a letter from the Secretary of YMCA, which he had done. That was how Arasa had started as a teacher at Royal. Apparently, Arasa had continued his teaching at Royal until his migration to New Zealand in the early '80s.

While chatting with Arasa, I mentioned to him about an experience which our class-mate Roy (HR) De Silva encountered in his professional life. To give a briefing on Roy, he graduated from Peradeniya University with an Upper Second offering Physics, Pure Math and Applied Math for his Degree. Then while serving as a temporary Assistant Lecturer at the University, he had applied for a post of Assistant Valuer in the Valuation Dept. At the interview, the then Chief Valuer one Mr. Abeygunawardane, himself an old Royalist had asked a question “What is a sequence?” Then Roy had remembered Arasa’s definition of ‘sequence’ taught to us while we were at college in Upper V in 1963 as “A sequence is an arranged set of numbers”. Roy had given that answer, and the Chief Valuer had been more than satisfied with Arasa’s definition, and with no further questioning, he had offered him the job. Later, after many years of service, Roy retired as the Chief Valuer of Sri Lanka. After listening to this story, Arasa’s comment was “Oh, I would have copied it from a book man”. Arasa did not want to get any credit for it. That was Arasa!

Sri Renganathan (of the '60 group of RC) had accidentally met Arasa in Colombo, and Sri Renga had mentioned to Arasa “Sir, I owe you very much. Because of you I managed to become an engineer”. Then Arasa had replied “I just did my duty man, You need not worry about it man” .

Mailvaganam (Maila of our senior batch of RC '58 Group) had been driving his car down Reid Avenue. Suddenly, Maila has seen Arasa standing beside the bus stand near our Basket Ball courts. Then Maila had stopped the car, and had walked up to Arasa and offered “Sir, could I give you a lift?” Then Arasa had declined saying “No, I would take the Omni Bus”. Then regarding the incident, Maila’s comment was “Machang, we are going by the ordinary bus, but he is taking the Omni Bus!”

Mr. Bogoda Premaratne did not know me at school, as I was not an outstanding student at College, neither was I a College Prefect, Cricket Captain, Rugger Captain, nor a Coloursman of any sport. This incident happened 16 years after I left College, in 1982. I had to give a lift to my in-laws, as they wanted to attend a meeting at Jayasekaraaramaya Temple at Kuppiyawatte. There in the temple I happened to meet Mr. Bogoda Premaratne, and I introduced myself as an old boy of Royal. Then he asked me for my details where I am working etc. The particular meeting was held to form the Colombo Branch of the Vipassana Bhavana Society of the Kanduboda Meditation Centre. Mr. Bogoda was appointed as the President, and from the chair he proposed me for the post of secretary saying ‘he had found one of his students after serving Royal College for 11 years’. In that we managed to organize weekly meditation classes that were run by the monks of the Meditation Centre.

Since then, I have associated Mr. Bogoda quite closely, so much so, was my Mentor/Guru in meditation. I must say that he had mastered the Vipassana Bhavana techniques very well, and he had written quite a number of authoritative books on this subject. Since then, I have had many discussions on Dhamma with him over the years. Needless to say, Mr. Bogoda could explain the most intricate issues on Dhamma with the simplest of clarifications. On a few occasions at his request, I have written a couple of ‘Book Reviews’ for some of his Dhamma Books for the Ceylon Daily News and other papers. Over the years, Bogoda came to Sydney twice and in his last visit in 1994, he stayed with me for about a week. During that visit, I organized a series of Dhamma Talks , where he delivered Dhamma Sermons on Vipassana Meditation at The Australian Buddhist Mission, Lankarama Temple and a few other places.

While staying with me, Mr. Bogoda revealed his interesting life story. As the Vice Principal of Royal, in order to maintain the college discipline, he had asked the teachers to evict the students who are disturbing them, and get them to stand outside the class rooms. So when he went around the school, he would pick up all those students and get them to follow him to his office. Then they were given two cuts each. But he says that he did not have any grudge anger against them as he didn't know what wrong they have done. Occasionally he had noticed some students trying to slip-in a file or a book to reduce the effect of the caning. But he had pretended not to know it, in fact he had liked it, as it makes a bigger noise so that those in the vicinity would get a fright! Mr. Bogoda passed away a few years back at the mature age of 91 years.

Appendix 17 – Prefects of the 59 Group - GES de Silva - eds48_50@hotmail.com and O K Padmasiri Goonasekera - patgoonasekara@gmail.com

Prefects of the 59 Group

In hindsight, it appears that special contributions to college life and other esteemed contributions were the criteria for prefectship. Two areas come to mind; a) exceptional academic achievements and active contributions in literary associations of the three media, b) leadership positions in the school's associations, clubs and societies, and above average representation in inter-school sports, cadetting, and other games, and providing leadership in these activities.

Prefects were appointed after the entry to the Lower VI Form and traditionally winner of the Turner Scholarship, First XI Cricket Captain and First XV Rugger Captain are appointed as prefects unless those students have had any serious breach of discipline issues beforehand. They were the first line disciplinarians during non-class hours. Naturally they were held to a higher disciplinary standard. At the time of an appointment to be a prefect they are given a small "silver" coloured metal badge to be worn on the shirt, that identifies them as prefects. De-badging of any prefect from our group on disciplinary grounds had not taken place. We were aware of two incidents of debadging that took place in late fifties and early sixties. Most of these circumstances are handled very delicately on an as needed basis only. Process of selection was unknown to the students and the appointments were known when the list of the names of prefects appeared on the main notice board under the signature of the principal. We both thought of speaking to Mr. W A Wickremasena, one of the few masters from that era who is amongst us and was accessible. Having had a discussion with him about the selection procedure, we got the impression that the masters in charge of Associations, Clubs and Societies, Senior Games Masters of sports and other games, Senior Cadet Master and the Scouts Master forwarded names with their recommendations to the principal. Final selection process although unknown would have been after discussion between the principal and the masters who sent the nominations.

The number of prefects appointed appeared to be depended upon the students' population. As per the records the number increased from December 1956 to December 1967, from 10 to 15. Appointments were made thrice a year beginning of each term and they held the appointment until left school. The bulk of the appointments were made in the First Term as majority of prefects left school at the end of the Third term, like other students. Few were appointed during the beginning of the other two terms to replace the ones who had left school before the end of the year. There were 22 prefects appointments from members of our group and this was equivalent to ten percent of the 59ers. At any given time the most senior amongst

prefects was appointed the Head Prefect and if there were more than one with same seniority, the criteria adopted were not known.

School records show the following from '59 Group have been appointed Prefects:

1965

First Term

S. Sridharan

Third Term

S. C. Senarath Yapa

1966

First Term

A. M. M. Cassim
K. A. Gunawardena
W. Mallawarachchi

Second Term

I. R. Thurairatnam

Third Term

D. J. Perera
S. Skandakumar

1967

First Term

S. J. de Silva
K. K. Amaradasa
G. E. S. de Silva
M. Devakumar
O. K. P. Gunasekera
M. N. Jaimon
J. Kudahetty
N. B. L. Lieversz

Second Term

F. Nilam
V. Thiruchelam

Third Term

S. M. Abeygunawaedena
P. N. Dias Abeygunawardena
A. U. C. Suraweera

1968

Third Term

S. Srikantha

Responsibilities of Prefects

Role of a prefect was mainly to assist the principal and the staff to maintain discipline amongst the students during school hours and at school functions. The former involved checking on late comers to school and those students who leave the school premises without prior permission of the principal or an authorized staff and the general conduct of the students, when the masters were not available in the classrooms. Prefects not on duty were expected to attend the school assembly and they had chairs just below the stage facing the students. Head prefect or the most senior prefect attending dismissed the students after the assembly when all the masters had left the assembly hall.

Other functions where the prefects were put on duty were house sports meets, school prize giving, school functions like carnivals, exhibitions etc., if held in school premises and cricket

matches played in own cricket grounds and more importantly at the Royal-Thomian cricket match.

Responsibilities of prefects at the Royal-Thomian cricket match were numerous. They were responsible for the overall discipline at the grounds without any outside intervention. Printing of the souvenir along with collection of articles, advertisements and messages to publish in the souvenir and sale of same at the match and entrance tickets prior to the match, were also coming within their purview. About twenty Stewards appointed to assist the prefects at the grounds and two tent secretaries appointed from among prefects by the principal to be overall in charge of discipline at the match and the souvenir with an appropriate message from them in it. Amongst '59 G members, S. J. de Silva and G. E. S. de Silva have functioned as Tent Secretaries. Prefects operated from the prefect's room, well located in the first floor of the main building above the left foyer, facing Race Course Avenue, now Rajakiya Mawatha. There was a door with two panels with glass upper, opening to the flat concrete roof of the foyer. When these doors were opened the Boake gate, main entrances to the school is directly in front and part of Reid Avenue were visible to the right and part of the west gate was also visible to the left. This vantage point was ideal to observe the movement of students from these gates. Prefect room was out-of-bound for students.

Next to Disce (learn) it was discipline and in that era corporal punishment meted out by the masters was accepted both by students and parents. After all, it was not for the fun of it. It was because you did not do something which you should have done or did something which you should not have done. Mild punishments for breach of discipline were meted out in the prefect's room and confined to standing facing the wall, kneeling down, singing the college song and standing outside the prefect's room. This was mainly for the students to recognize their misbehavior and remember same and not repeat. For collective misbehavior in the class room, students were given 100 lines to be written and handed over after school, and detention after school on rare occasions. Regular trouble makers are reported to the Head Prefect for suitable punishment and breach of discipline of serious natures were normally reported to the Vice-Principle or the Principal.

Policing for school cutters and apprehending them was a thrilling experience. Prefects were periodically stationed at bus halts and near cinema halls to apprehend them. There was this incident where self and OKP, Padmasiri, had to apprehend a regular school cutter who escaped many times, by getting in to the bus which followed the bus the offender got in and apprehending him at Thimbirigasyaya and bringing him back to school. We had our share of fun and the most hilarious incident that took place during our tenure as prefects was when R P Liyanage, the Head prefect, and eight prefects went as a group to Fort by bus. While in the Fort, we let our burly Head Prefect walk in front and rest of us formed a line right behind him (without his knowledge) and followed him like little kids! After a while he turned around when he noticed people staring at us and was not happy to see us following him in a straight line. It must have looked unusual as we were all in white and RP calmed down when he saw our amusement. If my memory serves right Brian Lieversz who always sees funny side of everything was instrumental in the formation of the straight line and Nizam Jaimon for maintaining it.

During our free time, we were fortunate to relax and have free discussions and occasional informal prefect meetings. Time was spent on playing few games of cards, carom, etc. Firoz Nilam, the champion table tennis player was also good in carrom and he beat the rest, all the

time. K. K. Amaradasa was a wizard at chess, and taught us rules and strategies of the game. Many of us were easy going and had many jokes, funny stories and laugh. Prefect duties, like participation in extra-curricular activities took an enormous time which invariably affected the studies by not being able to attend classes regularly. Fortunately the subject masters were very helpful and gave a helping hand to those who lagged behind in their studies.

Two students of the '59 Group have held the position of Head Prefect.

1968

First Term	S. J. de Silva
Second & Third Terms	J. Kudahetty

It was not clear as to whether house captaincy is a traditional stepping stone for prefectship or vice versa. The main goal of a house captain was to win the overall house championship shield. Hartley, Harvard, Marsh and Boake were the four houses during that era, named after four former principals.

Following '59 Group members have been house captains:

Hartley

1968	S. J. de Silva
	P. N. Dias Abeygunawardena
1969	P. N. Dias Abeygunawardena

Harvard

1968	J. Kudahetty
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Boake

1967	D. J. Perera
	G. E. S. de Silva
1968	G. E. S. de Silva
	N. B. L. Lieversz

The exposure gained in these positions added some discipline and balanced thinking to our carefree life during school days and it held in good stead in later life and the friendships built during these best years of our life, is lifelong.

Appendix 18 - Oriental Music Society (RCOMS) and Dramatic Society (RCDS) – Upali Jayamanne

Oriental Music Society (RCOMS) and Dramatic Society (RCDS) – Upali Jayamanne

The ORIENTAL MUSIC SOCIETY (RCOMS) was located in the new wing, overlooking the shooting range and the grounds, and it was on the 1st floor. The famous සියම්බලා (*siyambala*) (*Tamarindus indica*) tree was to our right when facing the grounds in the balcony of the RCOMS.

I am from the 58 Group. It appears that prior to '58 western music and oriental music were both within a single Association called the 'Music Society' but in around 1958 it had been split in to the 'Western Music Society' and the 'Oriental Music Society'.

The great majority of musical instruments the RCOMS had were only those **traditionally and popularly considered** as oriental musical instruments. I will therefore use that traditional and popular sense when I refer to oriental musical instruments because some of them such as the violin and the harmonium were not of Asian origin.

We had many string (bow – Esraj, Base Esraj, Dilruba, Violin, and pluck – Sitar, Veena, (English Mandolin), wind (Flutes), percussion instruments (Thabla, Dholki, Dholak, Cole, Mridangam, Bongos), and the sounds they produced were not amplified through the use of electrical/ electronic sound picking up and processing gadgets, allowing their natural sound properties (timbre, tone etc.) to be heard without distortion. To my knowledge 'there aren't any such things as 'electronic oriental instruments'. In the modern day these instruments are fixed with electrical /electronic sound picking up and processing gadgets to amplify and distort the sounds produced by them to the extent of producing alien sounds. A good example is the various unusual sounds produced by an electric guitar through amplification and sound processing. Modern keyboards can 'imitate' the sound of instruments such as the violin, sitar etc., but a good musician is generally able to differentiate between the sound of the original instrument and the imposter.

Special mention must be made about the ජල තරංග (*Jala Tharanga* – literally meaning 'water waves') set we had at school. It is an 'instrument' that I am sure not used at all these days. For the benefit of those who do not know what ජල තරංග (*Jala Tharanga*) is, it consists of a range of differently-sized cups similar in shape to curry dishes (about 24 cups to include a full range of notes that a NORMAL male voice can achieve) in to which water is poured to generate all the notes and half notes from lower octave to mid-octave to high octave when tapped with wooden rods similar to chopsticks. The number of cups may depend on the range of notes used in a song. For example, if a song has a wide range of notes from ජ (G) of lower octave to ඡ (F) of high octave, then there has to be 23 cups to correspond to 23 notes within that range. Likewise if a song has a range of notes from ධ (A) of lower octave to ඟ (E) of high octave, then there has to be 20 cups to correspond to 20 notes within that range. If a song has a range of notes from ඡ් (B) of lower octave to ජ් (D) of high octave, then there can be as little as 16 cups to correspond to 16 notes within that range. Not all the notes within a specified range of notes are used in a song and therefore there may be some notes within that range that are not being used in the song, but we cannot set the ජල තරංග (*Jala Tharanga*) by omitting the unused notes. Water filled cups for

those unused notes too have to be in the set, just like a keyboard or a harmonium or a sitar or a guitar has fixed positions for ALL the notes whether or not some of them are used in a song. However, water in the cups would go 'off-tune' as water evaporates at room temperature (and even under air-conditioning), and frequent tuning by re-filling water was necessary – and this took time. Perhaps this is the reason why ජල නරංග (*Jala Tharanga*) stopped being used. There are western instrument substitutes such as the Xylophone and the Glockenspiel, but their timbres and tones are not exactly the same as those of the ජල නරංග (*Jala Tharanga*).

When I joined the 1st Form in 1958, the RCOMS Music Teacher was Mr. Kariyawasam. The first instrument Mr. Kariyawasam handed me was the Base Esraj. It was larger than me! I stayed in the Society through my College years and went on to develop the ability to play the Base Esraj, Esraj, Dilruba, Sitar, Veena, Violin, English Mandolin, Harmonium, and the Box Guitar (the last one not from RCOMS). After Mr. Kariyawasam, we got Mr. Wickramasena. He was the composer of the melody for the 1962 Sinhalese School Song සීසු හද කුමුදු (*Sisu Hada Kumudu*) for which Mr. S.J. Dissanayake had penned the lyrics. However, I hear that another Sinhalese school song පුන් සඳේ සිරි දිනු (*pun sande siri dinu*) had been created in 1968 (after I had left College) yet again by the duo Mr. Dissanayake and Mr. Wickramasena. I am familiar with only the 1962 version සීසු හද කුමුදු (*Sisu Hada Kumudu*).

After Mr. Wickramasena there was a period without a music teacher (around 1966-1967), and at that time I was the Secretary of the Society. By that time I had developed the ability to read and write music in oriental notation, and compose music, and I had the opportunity to even compose an original instrumental item for one of the College Prize Givings.

In those days the main aim of the RCOMS was to train students on musical instruments they liked to play, and to present an orchestra item at the Annual Prize-Giving. In addition we organized musical evenings, mainly for listening to a series of Hindi Film Songs played on a spool tape deck owned by the Radio Club, and enthusiastically helped by its Secretary at that time, T.D.A. Wijenayake. During Mr. Wickramasena's time as Music Teacher we participated in two All-Ceylon Inter School Verse Rendering Competitions (සමස්ථ ලංකා අන්තර්-ආචාර්ය පද ගායනා තරඟ) in 1967, and under his tutelage I was adjudged the runner-up in one, and the winner in another.

Later we got Mr. Upali Attanayake as our Music Teacher. Though he was not really a qualified music teacher, yet he was a very talented and versatile instrumentalist (Violin & English Mandolin), singer, composer, and dramatist. He could play the violin the western way, and we (especially I) were awed at the way he played the instrument – sitting on an armless chair with one leg over the other, back, head, and the violin held high and parallel to the ground. I took to the violin mainly because of the imposing impression he made on me when he played the violin. The curly haired lanky Gamini (Marie) Wickramasinghe who played the violin was always too eager to demonstrate his skills, and Mr. Attanayake used to say, "Wickramasinghe, you are an impatient young man!" We also had the services of Mr. Lawrence Fernando as a Music Teacher for a brief period in around the same time. He was a composer, and a recording studio orchestra conductor, and as far as I could remember, played the violin, and an electrified string and bow instrument he called Violophone or something very similar. The sound it produced was a cross between a Violin and an Oboe. Some people of fame from the RCOMS are Lalith Weeratunga (Thabla), Prasanna Gunawardane

(Violin), late R.P. (Parry) Liyanage (violin) famous as a Sri Lanka athlete for Shot Put, Ajith M Abeysekara (Clarinet) and Bhadraraj Mahinda Jayatillake (Vocal). The violin got almost hidden away in huge Parry's hands. His actual first names were Rohana Parakrama, but the name 'Parry' got coined to him after William Patrick "Parry" O'Brien who was an American Olympic Shot Put champion, but many people erroneously believe that 'Parry' is his name. Other instrumentalists and vocalists I remember included Indika Gunawardane, Thilak Morawaka (Thabla), Sirimevan Wijesekara and Sumane Rathnasuriya (Flute), Ariya Samaraweera (Vocal), two Senanayake brothers (Violins), Thajudeen (Bongos), and Emil Gunawardana and Attygala (ජල නරංග - *Jala Tharanga*).

The RCOMS was closely associated with the DRAMATIC SOCIETY (RCDS), and most of the RCOMS guys were also involved in the RCDS. The RCDS had staged several Sinhala stage plays over the years during my time at College, but it reached its pinnacle with the stage play කොමිසම ඉදිරියේ සාක්කි දෙනෝ (*Komisama Idiriye Saakki Denno – those who testify at the commission*), a satirical partly stylised musical stage play of Dayalal Senarath Abeysekara. The play was about the sorry state of Sinhala Theatre (at that time) and those who came to testify at one of myriads of government-appointed commissions to investigate what could be done to improve the quality of stage plays. Mr. Attanayake and I composed music for it, and we were unfortunate to have been awarded the 2nd place by just one vote at the 1967 All Island Inter School Drama Festival held at the Lumbini Theatre. Narendra Nath Perera and I bagged merit award for singing and acting. It was a great achievement as the entire production was by schoolboys without the help of qualified music and drama teachers whereas some of the other schools had famous and qualified music/drama names behind them.

The cast as I recall included along with myself, Edward Ratnapala Hapuarachchi, aka Rathne/Hapua, Prasad Koralegama, W.S (Srilal) (Walla) De Silva, Sarath Gunatilleke, Gnanasiri Jinendra Pathinayake, Shanthi Pathirage, Lakshman Ranasinghe, Narendra Nath Perera, Emil Gunawardane, Bhadraraj Mahinda Jayatillake, Haritha Samarajeewa, Lal Gunaratna, Chandana de Zoysa, Hemantha Senanayake, and Dayalal Abeysekara. Please pardon me if I have forgotten others.

කොමිසම (*Komisama*)..., as it was lovingly called in short, was a partly stylised musical drama. But the funny thing was that except for myself, Shanthi Pathirage, Nath Perera, Mahinda Jayathilaka, and Emil Gunawardane, other main characters were almost tone deaf. It fell upon me to train these guys to sing. I would say it was achieved, but it was no mean achievement, training them at rehearsals to sing to the pitch while acting, with the help of the Grand Piano on the stage of the College Hall. The RCOMS orchestra provided music for the play.

During our days at the RCOMS we also formed a 'group' called 'Melodians' (as groups were a craze those days). Members were Ajith Abeysekara (clarinet), WBM (Buddhi) Abeysekara (bongos), Gamini (Marie) Wickramasinghe (violin & vocal), Christie de Silva (thabla/dholki/dholak/cole), Ariya Samaraweera aka 'Duma' (vocal), Bhadraraj Mahinda Jayatillake (vocal), and myself (guitar & vocal).

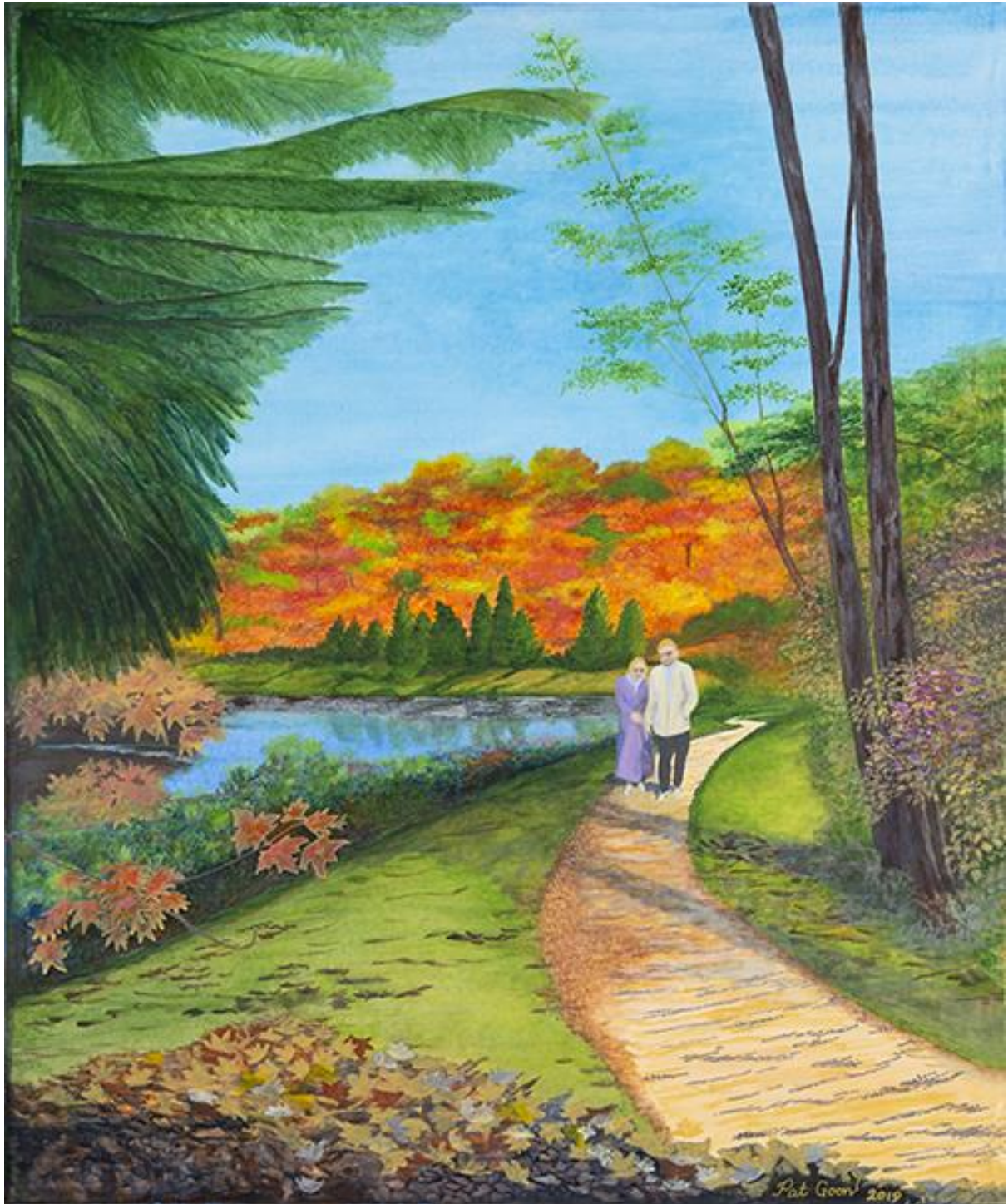
We had developed about 10 very good group songs (even if I say so myself), but it did not work out because a group-song heavyweight who was at the forefront of popularity at that time discouraged us at an audition and cut us off saying that the songs were too complicated! So was (and I believe still is) the music world.

Most of these guys from RCOMS were also involved with the Sinhalese Literary Association, the Buddhist Brotherhood, the Dramatic Society, and the Photographic Society, and there was much camaraderie and goodwill amongst the guys. Bandu Dissanayake, Asoka Malimage, Daya De Silva, Dudley Gunawardena, Palitha Samaratunga, and T.D.A. Wijenayake come to my mind as guys tangentially involved with the RCOMS.

We used to spend time playing instruments, practicing, intermingled with good-natured arguments and chats on the most popular topic among teen-agers after 3.40 until about 6.00 p.m., have something to eat (whatever was left over from lunchtime) at the Tuck Shop, had a few jokes with Saranapala, the lanky, fair nephew of the proprietor of the tuck shop, and go home. It was W.S. who used to say "Machang we must argue daily". The more studious would go to Mr. E.C. Gunasekara's new science library in the VIth Form wing to do a bit of reference work.

So those were the days - leisurely and light. No rat race as today. No tuition classes - almost. Those of us who loved fine arts thoroughly enjoyed and indulged in it. To-date some of us get together at family level from time to time over 3-day outings to enjoy music - real music.

Author's note: In the above narration I may have inadvertently missed out the names of a lot of guys who were involved with the RCOMS at that time due to failing memory. I apologize profusely for such omissions.



A Walk in the Park
Acrylic on Canvas by
OKP Goonasekara