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*We wish all Sydney Bens, their families and
all our well-wishers Compliments of the Season
and a Happy, safe & successful 2009*

SYDNEY BENS CAROLS

It was a feast to please...

From very early on, the dance floor took a hefty hammering with foot-tappers forging in to keep up with the swinging beat.

After that big bang of a dance session Chris Pietersz' Six-piece band chimed in as the choir, led by Hyacinth Jones, chorused a melodious *Joy to the World* to commence the Sydney Bens carols for the night.

All 260 guests, including the children, making a full-house at the Don Moore Centre, joined in with a resounding rendition of some perennial favourites.

Dinner was next on the cards. As guests made their way to the magnificent spread of eastern cuisine by Dale Mendis' Caterplan, others were busy



• *She's got every reason in the world to smile about!*

selling raffle tickets offering a fine array of prizes donated by Committee members and well-wishers.

Santa seemed to be running a little late. But it seems that Ronnie Almeida knows everything about freight and getting things from place to place by air – even sleighs with reindeers on leash and a fat old man to boot. Somehow, Ronnie

made sure Santa was there, ah well, a few minutes late, so what. Thanks Ronnie, the children were delighted.

What next? Dancing of course. And with such a great selection of dance music coming their way, there was no such a thing as tired feet. Everyone wanted more, more and even more! But midnight was the deadline – ah, but we did stretch the minutes a little bit, thanks to our Treasurer Lionel Machado's charm and diplomacy.



We sponsor 24 students at SBC

SydneyBens have sponsored 24 students at St Benedict's College to assist them with their studies for 2009.

The Sponsorship Scheme was initiated by the Director, Bro. Granville Perera and is managed by a Sponsorship sub-committee under aegis of the College Development Fund.

Sponsorships cover only costs of school fees, text books and stationery and are granted to students "purely on the basis of **need**" according to Felix Dias. "They are students whose parents have [had] difficulties in paying the school and stationery fees in full even in the previous years."

These scholarships are awarded to students irrespective of whether they are sons of Old Bens, not limited to residents of Kotahena and regardless of their religion, caste or creed. Students gifted in sports are considered for sponsorships if, and only if, they come within the definition of "needy" in the above context.

It is envisaged the Sydney Bens will make this a long-standing commitment and fund all sponsorships as recommended by the Development Fund in future years.

More pictures
of the Sydney Bens'
Carols night is on Page 3



SYDNEY BENS' NEWS

Newsletter of the NSW OBA Inc.

**St Benedict's College
OBA (NSW) Inc.
Founded in 1993**

OUR MISSION

*Promote loyalty to and assist
our Alma Mater at all times,
foster social and sporting
interaction among Old Bens
everywhere.*

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Current in Kotahena

New Head Prefect

Warnaka Rajaratne took his oaths as Head Prefect of St Benedict's College for 2009. New Provincial Visitor Bro. Denzil Perera was chief guest at the Prefects Investiture ceremony which took place on Januray 13.

Royston Quyn and Ashwin Joseph were elected Deputy Head Prefects.

Bens excel at cricket

Apart from the Peterite match (see below) Bens have been very impressive this season with four outright wins and two first innings points wins so far.

Putting behind their earlier loss to the Peterites at Kotahena on January 6, the Bens had St. Thomas College first XI struggling to salvage a draw in their inter school under-19 cricket fixture. Continuing from their overnight score of 40 for 3 wickets, the Thomians found the spin of Dilanka Auwardt too much to handle and succumbed to be all out for 118 runs. Dilanka followed up his first-day hat-trick to bag a career best 8 wickets in an innings. Following on, the Thomians salvaged a draw with 160 for 5 at close.

Dynamic all rounder Dilanka Auwardt hit an unbeaten half century with Prageeth Fernando notching 65 in 59 balls which included three sixes and five fours, to bring up a formidable 250 for 9 in their first innings.

Bens in batting slump

Bad batting in both innings by the Benedictine top order ruined the impressive run of their first XI cricket season when they lost by 10 wickets to the Peterites at Kotahena January 3. Peterites who scored 253 bundled out the Bens for 129 and 136 respectively due to some poor shot selection. Peterites managed to get the required 13 runs for an outright victory without loss of any wickets

Bens beat Lumbini MV by 10 wickets

St. Benedict's College recorded a handsome 10 wicket win in their first XI cricket match against Lumbini Maha Vidayala on December 29. Lumbini MV who continued from 69 for 5 overnight did well to get 169 all out. Still short of 29 runs Bens who enforced the follow on, bundled out the visitors once more for 130 runs leaving just 2 runs for their fourth win. Bens star spinner Dilanka Auwardt was once again the main destroyer with a match haul of 8 wickets.

Superlative soccer

Old Bens Sports Club with a superlative display of soccer clinched the Dialog Premier League Segment 'B' Soccer title when they beat Don Bosco Sports Club Negombo in the finals played at the C.R. & F.C Grounds, Longden Place.

Bens won by 4 goals to 3 to carry away the handsome trophy and Rs 300,000/- in prize money.

Chanaka's mix

Last year's College first XI cricket captain Chanaka Wijewardena achieved 3 "A" passes and topped the Advanced Level results at College this year. It was a remarkable achievement by Chanaka, who led the Cricket Team from the front and enjoyed a successful season last year.

The overall results of the College was once again very impressive.

New Provincial Visitor

Rev. Bro. Denzil Perera has been elected as the new Provincial Visitor of the De La Salle Brothers in Sri Lanka. He succeeds Rev. Bro. Henry Dissanayake who relinquished office at the end of 2008 after serving nine years.

Rev. Bro. Denzil was a teacher at college in the late 70s and also the Brother in charge of the College Hostel. Besides being a dedicated teacher, he was also a former missionary in Pakistan before taking up the position of Principal Primary School of De Mazenod College. Bro. Denzil assumed duties on January 2.

COMING EVENTS

• **APRIL 19** - Sunday - Inter-school "Big Match" series. Bankstown Oval.

• **JULY 25 - Christmas in July** Bowman Hall, Blactown (in lieu of Dinner Dance)

• **OCTOBER 15** - Sunday Annual Bens Challenge Shield Golf Day.

NOTE: Further cricket matches are planned with our customary rival schools during the season. Details to be notified when available.



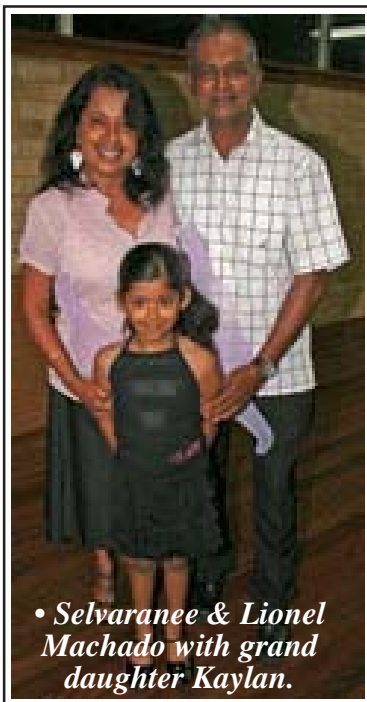
• • *President Ranjith and Gnani Veylayuthen*



• *Dr Sellappa Prahalath and wife Anouk.*



BENS' CAROLS - more pictures



• *Selvaranee & Lionel Machado with grand daughter Kaylan.*



• *Royce & Romaine Rebeira.*



• *Kumar Subramaniam & wife Regina*



• *"Love you Mum!"*

TRIBUTE

Dr Joe Sandanam

This is an official memo to staff from the CEO Sydney West Area Health Service of NSW Health as a tribute to their highly esteemed colleague. A much loved Old Ben in Sydney, he was exceptionally gifted but a simple, endearing man. Happy memories of Joe are indelibly etched in the hearts of all those who knew and loved him.

“Vale Dr Joe Sandanam MBBS, DPRM, FACRM, FAFRM.

It is with considerable sadness that I would like to advise staff that Dr Joseph Sandanam passed away on Wednesday 1 October 2008.

Joe obtained his medical qualification from the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka in 1971.

After migrating to Australia two years later he worked as an RMO at Gosford District Hospital, he then joined the Repatriation General Hospital Concord as Registra, training in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

After obtaining his post-graduate qualification, he attended a post as Staff Specialist at Port Kembla Hospital.

Joe was appointed to the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine of WMH as a Staff Specialist in early 1982. In 1989 he became the Deputy Director of this service.



In 1992, when the Westmead Medical Rehabilitation Unit in Parramatta Hospital was transferred

to St Joseph's Hospital, Auburn he was appointed its Director, while retaining his position at Westmead. He continued at Westmead as a Clinician in the Chronic Pain Service, Brain injury, Amputee and Orthotic Clinics.

He was elected Honorary Secretary of the Australian College of Rehabilitation Medicine in 1991 and served with distinction in that position until 1995, assisting in the College to join the RACP as a Faculty. Joe was also awarded the RACI Medal for outstanding service as an administrator, teacher and examiner.

Joe and his team at St Joseph's won the NSW Health Baxter Award in 2006.

Joe's loss will not only affect those at St Joseph's and Westmead Hospital, but will also be felt across the whole Area Health Service.

Sgd: Professor Steven Boyages
CEO Sydney West Area Health Service”

children. They were his world. Our firstborn, Avinash, now a young man, was still “his darling” at 19. I remember the time when Avinash was a baby, just learning to stand, when he toppled over the edge of the cot and came crashing down on to the floor. I don't know who cried louder. Lasantha or the baby.

.Ahimsa was his “darling only daughter”. Like the others, she got anything she asked him, especially after she came to live with him in Colombo.

Aadesh, our 10-year old, was almost an obsession with his father. “Malli Boy” became the most kissed, hugged and loved child in the world. Whenever Lasanatha came to Melbourne, father and son would have a ritual – the ritual of the 100 kisses. Dad had to have his 100 kisses before anything else.

Lasantha's day in Sri Lanka wasn't complete until he had spoken to the two boys in Melbourne. If one of the children wasn't available to talk with him, he would call back without fail. I only had to tell him one of the kids had the sniffles or a graze on the knee, and he would be in a panic... How our children will now cope without his love, I can't begin to imagine. Lasantha was the biggest hearted man I have ever known. Generous, loving and kind to strangers and friends alike.Thank you Lasantha for all the memories.

Lasantha Wickramatunge

FAREWELL TO AN ADORING FATHER

Old Ben Lasantha Wickramatunge (Editor-in-Chief, *The Sunday Leader* in Sri Lanka) was gunned down by unknown assassins. Copious appreciations from all over the world have poured in. The Sydney Bens send the Wickramatunge family our heartfelt condolences and prayers. This is a brief excerpt from a tribute written in the *Sunday Times*. by **Raine Wickramatunge**, the mother of the late Lasantha's three children.

Photo courtesy The Sunday Leader



I will not elaborate on Lasantha the journalist... I will instead write about the man Lasantha, the funny guy, the doting dad...the man who, at the risk of being called biased, I will call in all sincerity, the man with the biggest heart.

To say that Lasantha was a loving father would be an understatement. He adored his

Lest we forget

In prayerful remembrance of other Old Bens, from near and afar who passed away in recent months. Some of them are: Mrs Romany Pieris, Bro. Flavian (Fr Flavian Wilathgamuwa) Patrick Wickramaratne, Gregory Weera-manthri, Dr. Augustas Anandappa, Dr. George Benedict, Gamini Senadeera, Francis Delilkhan, Srilal Dissanayake, Stanley Fernando, Hilary de Saram, Chandra Ramanathan, Noel Caspersz.