

are celebrated all over India and Ceylon for over thousands of years. It is heartening to note that there is a common theme found in all three festivals is that they have some relevance to the God.

As the name states Tamil New Year is a 'Kondattam', which is celebrated for the birth of the Tamil New Year. The date is decided by the Tamil Lunar Calendar, however it normally falls on April the 14th. The Tamil people rise early on New Year's morning and have their ritual bath. Each member of the family is anointed with Maruththu-Neer (sacred water) before the bath. It is a decoction of a variety of medicinal herbs, leaves, flowers, saffron, etc prepared by temple priests and available only at temples. Herbs and flowers used in the preparation are lotus, pomegranate, vilvam, aruham grass, saffron, thitpili, sukku and pepper. The ritual bath signifies the outer purity of our body making way to spiritual purity. Going to the temple and visiting to the houses of relatives and friends is also a common during the Tamil New Year.

The second well-known festival is Thaipongal. It is the merriest and by far the most popular of the Hindu festivals in Ceylon. This feast of the sun, the harbinger of a plentiful harvest, should, strictly speaking, be observed on December 23, the day after the Northern solstice, however Hindu astrologers have fixed the date to coincide with January 14, the first day of the auspicious month of Thai. It is the day we pay tribute to or rather thanks giving day to God Sun. It also the day we pay tribute to farmers for all their hardships that they go through so that they are able to place food on our plates. This family festival hallowed rituals begins with the boiling of a pot of rice at sunrise on the front doorstep of our house and the delightful cry of the family gathered round the pot, which is filled with rice and milk. Later on this boiled rice is consumed with the family after a special pooja to God Sun..

Last but not the least festival, which I believe should be celebrated, is the festival of lights: Deepavalli. I believe it is the most enjoyable and colourful festival as you see the flowing, multi-coloured saris fill the streets and also when the firecrackers make the dark sky bright with different radiant colours. There are many stories as to why Deepavalli is celebrated by the Hindus some, of which are, the return of Rama to Ayodhya, and also the killing of Ravana by Rama. It is separated slightly differently in all the states of India, but all of them have the common theme of rejoicing and also strengthening your relationships.

All these festivals are celebrated extensively throughout world particularly India, Ceylon, Singapore, Malaysia, South Africa and each one of them have their special significance to our Tamil culture. We as proud Australian Hartleyites shall endeavour to celebrate with our family and friends.

Suthan Sivarajah is an offspring of Hartleyite and he is a Year 10 student at Melbourne High School, Victoria

The Batsman or the Bat?

Roshan Vaseeharan-Year 8, James Ruse Agriculture High School, NSW

“See that batsman walking out there? He scored one hundred and fifty-four runs on debut.” I said to a friend one day at a cricket match

“No he didn't. His bat did.” My friend smirked with an expression of disgust. I nodded in agreement as we continued down the concrete steps to our seats. Suddenly the players from both teams were visible. Excitement stirred inside us- 22 talented men were about to entertain us. But as my friend and I knew only too well, it would be the Slazenger's and the MRF's to entertain most of this crowd.

Speaking of which; at that very moment a young child's shout of “Look daddy, that's the guy with the bat that I asked you for. See, people with that bat can smash it for a six!” I rolled my eyes. This is what my friend had meant. It seems that nowadays the bats, the boots, and even the balls are suddenly the things making the professional sportsmen in the public eye today.)

We see the professionals of today advertising their sponsors' products be it Nike, Adidas or Slazenger. These people are the heroes of millions of children worldwide and of course, whatever they have,

so should the children. What the children don't realize is that Ronaldinho the world famous soccer player and Cricket captain Ricky Ponting and anyone else are actually getting paid to advertise the products. Which brand doesn't really matter to the professionals- they just look for the most money. But to an admirer of Ponting, Kookaburra bats are a way of life.

The 3rd dimension to this issue involves those who lose a week's earnings in one shot because they are forced to get an MRF of the summer season- not to mention the boots and shin pads in the winter season, and the other two kids! It is the parents, who cannot win the battle despite having the correct values. And those values are simple:

Son, give me those boots. Then run outside where the grass is and juggle the ball with your slippers. Show true passion and practice until you fall to the ground and sleep out there instead of this bed where you dream of million dollars boots. Son, put the ball into a sock and attach it to a string. Practice the cover drive until the ball drives *you* up the wall. No more nets. And use your grandfather's old stump; what is this G&M and MRF?

To the honestly devoted and passionate child, sport is not about the brand names. To the future professionals in any sport, sport is not about the brand names.

Money Risks Future problems;
as No amount of money will be an Instant Key to Enjoyment in sport.

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Roshan Vaseeharan is an offspring of Hartleyite and he is a Year 8 student at James Ruse Agriculture High School, NSW

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HARTLEY COLLEGE 2006 GCE (O/L) EXAMINATION RESULTS

Main Highlights:

- 6 Students obtained 10 A
- 8 Students obtained 9A
- 13 Students obtained 8A
- 10 Students obtained 7A
- 4 Students obtained 6A
- The total number of students sat for the GCE O/L in 2006 =126
- The total number of students qualified to follow GCE(A/L) =117 (92.8%)

GCE O/L DEC 2006 RESULTS - HARTLEY COLLEGE								
SUBJECT	# APPLIED	# SAT	A	B	C	S	PASSED	% PASS
SAIVISM	117	117	92	18	6	1	117	100%
ROMAN CATHOLISM	6	6	2	2	1	1	6	100%
CHRISTIANITY	3	3	2		1		3	100%
TAMIL LANGUAGE	126	126	74	31	16	5	126	100%
ENGLISH	126	126	19	11	21	39	90	71%
SCIENCE	126	126	28	16	39	27	110	87%
MATHS	126	126	74	13	21	11	119	94%
SOCIAL STUDIES	126	125	42	28	39	13	122	97%
ART	8	8				3	3	38%
MUSIC	7	7	3	3		1	7	100%
ENG.LIT	10	10	5	3	2		10	100%
TAMIL.LIT	101	101	32	23	29	12	96	95%
COMMERCE	94	94	27	17	16	20	80	85%
ELECTRONICS	32	30	2	7	13	10	32	100%
GEOGRAPHY	126	126	42	21	44	17	124	98%
HEALTH	126	126	91	25	9	1	126	100%
Results	Name of the Hartleyite						Subject	
10A	1. Shamugaradnam Kokul						N/A	
	2. Subendren Prasanth							
	3. Sivarajah Ragulageethan							
	4. Raveendran Senthoooran							
	5. Kathiramalai Umasuthan							
	6. Gnanasampanthan Abiram							
9A	1. Ariyaratnam Ajarthan						Commerce . B	
	2. Tharmakulasingam Jeyenthan						English literature . B	
	3. Santhirasegaram Kajugaran						English Language . B	
	4. Pushpalingam Mithn						English Language . C	
	5. Sanjeyan Rajeetharan						Electronic .B	
	6. Yokeswaran Vathanaseelan						Electronic . C	
	7. Anton Crises John Nirajh						Tamil Language. B	
	8. Thavaratnarajah John Jeyanthan						English Language . C	

Memory Lane of a Girl Student in a Boy's College

Kanchana Krishnathasan - Sydney

I have heard many people saying that the best years in life are the school years when there were no worries and the simple things in life gave so much pleasure. Hartley College was one of those schools that ensured one would feel this way. The teachers, playgrounds, teaching facilities and students made it a pleasant and memorable experience for persons like me to study at Hartley College, and the time I spent at Hartley still give me so much happiness if I go on that memory lane path.

My parents decided to send me to Hartley College and I agreed to my parents' suggestion. I joined Hartley College in 1973 to do my Advanced Level studies in Biological Sciences, which was known as AL 1 and AL 2. I completed my previous grades at Vada Hindu Girls' College, where I gained a sound foundation for further studies and good values in life.

Coming from a girl's school, I was extremely nervous about starting at Hartley College. My only perspective of mixed school was from Tamil movies where they depicted new students being ragged. I was pleasantly surprised by the respect and cordiality with which the Hartleyites treated me and the other female students.

1973 was the first time after four years of no female intake that Hartley College enrolled female students. There were 8 girls in the new intake. Interestingly each of us came from different schools. As we were the only girls in the whole school, we were treated like VIPs.

Regardless of how late we went to the science laboratories or classes we would always have 8 chairs in the front row cleaned and polished. The boys who went earlier prepared for our arrival would stand at the back, as they had no chairs.

Sometimes we used to hear comments like why should girls be treated special but they always treated us really special. Once during an exam one of the girls needed a pen and the next minute there were 30 pens on her desk.

Late Mr. P. Ahamparam was the Principal and he was one of the best Chemistry teachers at that time. He encouraged the teachers and the students and listened to their needs. He treated each student with great respect like his own kids. This was uncommon in those days.

I really enjoyed my days in Hartley College. I got married half way through AL 2. In the 33 years of marriage with my husband who is also a Hartleyite, I have never stopped telling him how I would have become a doctor if I had finished my studies. Luckily we would never know what the outcome would have been.

I am glad to have joined the Past Pupil Association of Harley College as a life member. Indeed, I am very proud to see the Association's commitment and the hard work they have been doing to help the school.

Long live Hartley and her students!

Editor's Note: Mrs Kanchana Krishnathasan is an old girl of Hartley College and the current President of the Vada Hindu Girls College PPA of New South Wales.

A Successful Year for HCPPA of New South Wales

According to President Paskey, the year covering the period from July 2006 to June 2007 has been another successful year for the Association. Here are the main highlights:

Incorporation of HCPPA: During the financial year Hartley College Past Pupils Association has been incorporated as an Association with the Office of Fair Trading in terms of the provisions of the Associations Incorporations Act, 1984 in the state of NSW, Australia. The legal name of our Association is "Hartley College Past Pupils Association of NSW Incorporated" bearing incorporation number INC9886632.

Milestone in Life Membership: HCPPA of NSW has passed the landmark figure of 100 Life Members and it has achieved this milestone during the current financial year of the Association. Here are the details of our life members who have the honours of being associated with this milestone:

Life Member-99: Dr K Ratnagobal who is a career Medical Officer (mental health) and is currently working in Hobart Tasmania.

100th Life Member: Prof Mahadeva Mahendran, Professor of Structural Engineering at the University of Queensland Technology.

Life Member-101: Mr. C Ketheesan, Project Manager at IBM Global Services and probably the first Tamil person commissioned as an Officer in the Australian Army Reserve

HCPPA of NSW would like to see more interest among Hartleyites in joining the Association as Life members to show their affection to our beloved school.

Social and Fellowship Activities:

20th August 2006: A get-together/BBQ was organised to honour Mr.V.Jeyarajah (currently living in Colombo) one of the Past Presidents of HCPPA - Colombo Branch and Mr.S.Sooriyakumar (Currently living in Switzerland) an old student of Hartley College

27th August 2006: The Inaugural Tennis Tournament: Hartley College Vs Jaffna Hindu College old boys

24th September 2006: The annual cricket match between Hartley College Vs Jaffna Hindu College old boys

2nd November 2006: Dinner hosted in honor of Mr. Thambirajah (Retired Zoology Teacher who served Hartley College for 20 years)

3rd December 2006: The annual Movie Benefit show – Something Something (Unakkum Enakkum)

10th March 2007: BBQ for Vallipuram Master (Retired Physics teacher and Vice Principal)

13th May 2007: Tennis Day and Get-Together for Hartleyites and their family members.

Helping Nilojan: We have received positive response to help Nilojan Rajakulendran one of the current A/L pupils of Hartley College and collected around \$4000. This money has been remitted to HCPPA Trust based in Colombo to be distributed to Nilojan's parents.

Life Members of HCPPA of NSW Inc as of July 2006

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. K Arulventhan | 57. T Shanmuganathan |
| 2. K Amirthalingam | 58. Prof M Sivakumar |
| 3. P Arunothayam | 59. V Sithamparanadarajah |
| 4. S Balasubramaniam | 60. R Sithamparapillai |
| 5. R Baskaran | 61. S Sivakumar |
| 6. G Baskaran | 62. S Skandakumar |
| 7. P Elango | 63. S Somasundaram |
| 8. Dr David Gunaratnam | 64. S Sriandarajah |
| 9. S Gnansundaram | 65. K Srisivalingam |
| 10. A Gnanendran | 66. K Sriskandarajah |
| 11. S Gobinath | 67. K Sritharan |
| 12. S Gunalingam | 68. S Subenthiran |
| 13. V Jeya Menon | 69. V Sugumar |
| 14. M Jega Rajan | 70. B Sutharsan |
| 15. J Jeyakumar | 71. G Thavalingam |
| 16. S Jeyakumar | 72. T Thampapillai |
| 17. J S Jeyadevan | 73. G Theivendrarajah |
| 18. S Jeyaseelan | 74. S Thillainathan |
| 19. K Kaneshalingam | 75. G Thirukumaran |
| 20. V Kandasamy | 76. S Thiruloganathan |
| 21. N Karunakaran | 77. P Thirunavukarasu |
| 22. K Krishna Sarma | 78. V Thivyakumar |
| 23. R Krishnakumaran | 79. S Umakanthan |
| 24. W Krishnathasan | 80. S Uthayakumar |
| 25. B Kuganesan | 81. G Vaseeharan |
| 26. R K Kulasekkan | 82. Dr Vasikaran Samuvel |
| 27. R Manimaran | 83. Dr V Vasanthakumar |
| 28. K Manomohan | 84. V Vijayakumar |
| 29. M Manoharathas | 85. K Visakulan |
| 30. V Mathivanar | 86. S Yoganathan |
| 31. Robert Mohan | 87. Dr R K Wickramachandran |
| 32. M Nanthakumar | |
| 33. S Nanthakumar | |
| 34. Dr N Naganathan | |
| 35. R Naganathan | |
| 36. C Paheerathan | |
| 37. K Panchalingam | |
| 38. K Paskarajothy | |
| 39. S Paramaguru | |
| 40. Dr S Ragavan | |
| 41. V Ragunathan | |
| 42. J Reginold | |
| 43. Dr D Rajasooriyar | |
| 44. M Rajendran | |
| 45. M Raveendran | |
| 46. K Ratnavel | |
| 47. R Rubasingam | |
| 48. S Santhakumar | |
| 49. C Satcunarajah | |
| 50. Dr S Sabesan | |
| 51. Dr S Sathanathan | |
| 52. T Sathiyamoorthy | |
| 53. Dr S T Seelan | |
| 54. K Selvarajah | |
| 55. B Selvanathan | |
| 56. Prof A E Selvanathan | |

Life Members who have joined during the Current Year

1. A Aravinthan
2. S Balachandran
3. P W Jeevanayagam
4. T Jeevarajah
5. B Kanan
6. K Kantharoopan
7. C Ketheesan
8. Ms Kanchana Krishnathasan
9. Prof M Mahendran
10. K Nagarajan
11. K Nirmalan
12. P S Paramatheva
13. S Prabhakaran
14. K Ramachandran
15. Dr K Ratnagobal
16. V Sivanathan

Editor's Note: I am pleased to inform that for the first time in the history of HCPPA of NSW a female Hartleyite has joined as a Life Member: Ms Kanchana Krishnathasan

The Greatest Discovery of my Life

Charles Somasundaram-Sydney

An Email pops up in my computer screen as I was working hurriedly to finish off something in the office. That was a friendly reminder - wake up call - from the Hartley College Past Pupils Association's editor inquiring how far I have progressed with my promised article for the 2007 Miscellany. What a vibrant character is this editor of our HCPPA? I know that he wouldn't let me off the hook that easily if I didn't deliver what I promised to contribute. Concerned about the task in hand I walk away from my seat to take a break from work. 'What am I going to write about for the Miscellany?' I ponder. The editor will 'crucify' me if I say 'I haven't done anything yet'.

I close my eyes digging deep in to me for inspiration. I drift in to my yesteryears tracking my memory from my schooldays to date to find answers as to how I have arrived to the state I am in as a human being. Am I happy with my intellect? The level of success I have achieved in the economic front and the temperament I have developed to deal with the people I interact with in my life? These were some of the questions that raced through my mind. I am aware that I am happy with my achievements to date and with myself as a person.

How did I achieve all this? Who shaped my thinking from childhood and how did I inherit the values and virtues I possess? Suddenly I jump for joy having discovered my story line.

Receiving an education at Hartley College is undoubtedly the biggest event responsible for transforming me in to the person I am today. The period of nine years (1961-1969) I studied at Hartley College has turned out to be the decisive period in my growth from a child to a teenager. The Physical and mental development experienced during that period is like building blocks of the make up of an individual who grows into manhood soon after leaving school.

In addition to my parents, the school was responsible for my physiological, psychological and emotional development. The Hartley College that I knew was an extra ordinary educational institution that went beyond its traditional expectation of providing good education and sporting activities to students. The dedication and commitment displayed by teachers in creating a thirst for prolonged learning and developing the young minds to address complex and difficult issues in school life was beyond comparison.

I believe the school either deliberately or spontaneously employed three prime drivers to turn young children into great success stories of high achievement and good future citizens. The drivers used by the school included the following:

- Creating a **dream** for high aspiration in life
- Instilling good **discipline**
- Aiding the process of self **discovery** of educational talents and skills

The Dream

I believe having a dream when you are young, about how you want to aim high in life is very important for all individuals and students in particular. The dream is the underlying influence of everything a student does in his school days and beyond, such as striving for academic success, sporting achievement and achievement in extra- curricular activities. Hartley provided a thriving environment for young minds to aim high in life and creating burning desires going for that extra mile.

I recall many day-to-day events that took place around the school creating the right environment for any student to dream about becoming a very successful person in life. I recall the Tuesday Assembly Meetings where information about student educational success, sporting achievements and awards won in competitions were disseminated to students regularly. In my days at school I sub consciously absorbed stories of joy and elation of academic excellence in the fields of engineering, science, medicine, banking and commerce through the attendance in these assembly meetings.

These were not simple forums for dissemination of school related information and achievement of students, in fact the assembly was sowing the seeds of hard work, academic and sporting excellence, leadership and social recognition. The annual Sports Meet was another good example where the chief guest usually would be a distinguished student of Hartley, reminding young students that all high achievers from Hartley were once humble students like them at the very school they were studying.

I should confess that a good part of my success in life is attributable to that dream Hartley created in my mind as a student that I vigorously pursued in my own way to achieve the success I have in my life.

The Discipline

Learning discipline at a young age made a huge difference in my life. The conditioning of a young mind to respect authority and abide by the rules and regulations of an institution prepares him/her to become a good citizen in a democratic system. The legendary principal Mr Pooranampillai stood tall like a pillar in my days as a guardian of good discipline. Hartley taught many forms of discipline that was both physical and psychological. The imposition of external form of discipline over a period switched on the inner-discipline in the minds of many students.

Hartley teaches simple day today things of discipline such as attending to school on time, wearing the school uniform, attending the weekly assembly, orderly marching to classes, respect for teachers and prefects and authority in general, to name a few.

The regime of punishment, although was not welcome by the students in their school days, was surprisingly much valued and accepted in their adulthood after leaving school. Leadership and stewardship were taught to students in an informal way through the regime of class monitors, prefects and sports and athletic captains.

I believe that majority of the students who grew up in a school environment of effective discipline turned out to be good law abiding citizens of the country when they reached adulthood. In this respect the discipline implemented at Hartley College was an excellent investment in turning out good fathers and mothers and in particular model citizens.

Self-Discovery

I believe achieving voluntary participation in studies by students is the key to successful teaching. The situation is best described by the story line that 'one can only take the horse to the stream and it is up to the horse to drink the life giving water'. I believe Hartley scored great success in this critical area. Every student who managed to pursue higher studies beyond their school days is a living example. The influence of the dream and the switching on of the inner-discipline paved the way to self-discovery of the importance of learning at school and ones own potential.

I am aware that imparting knowledge to students who have achieved such a state of self-discovery is pure joy for teachers. Stories about teachers of Hartley providing additional

coaching to help students and playing mentoring roles in student's personal development testify to such student-teacher partnerships.

In the senior classes of student life many examples of self-discovery of own potential to succeed becomes more evident. Once they have achieved this critical stage then the urge to learn becomes an obsession in a student's life. A typical example is found in Professor Sivapalan's article in the 2006 Miscellany of the Hartley College PPA (NSW). In his article he talks about his dismal performance in the early stages of his GCE Advanced Level class followed by his self-discovery and determination to succeed. He also talked about his respect for his mathematics teacher and the close relationship he enjoyed with him as his mentor.

There is plenty of evidence to support that most of the students from Hartley benefited in varying degrees from the above three distinct 'drivers' or influences. I believe the outstanding students of Hartley discovered their own talents and skills early at school life compared to their peers. Professors A Thurairajah and C J Eliezer belong to that category.

I am proud to say that I discovered myself at the opportune time at Hartley College. The foundation for success in my life was laid there. The burning desires to excel in whatever I am doing, respect for law and hard work are all gifts from my Alma Mater. I may have enhanced these qualities and supplemented them with additional ones necessary for my life, but it matters as to where they came from.

Editor's Note: Charles Somasundaram - a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) attached to Sydney Water Corporation and a former President of Hartley College Past Pupils Association of New South Wales.

With best wishes and compliment from

Dr (Mrs) Jeyarani Sivasubramaniam

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Life at Hartley- Before Standardisation

Dr Vadivelu Vasanthakumar-London

I have been invited to write something that may interest the youngsters in Hartleyite families. I give you here glimpses of life as a student at Hartley College from the late 50s/early 60s and hope you find this enjoyable reading.

This was before the Sri Lankan Government dreamt up the idea of *standardisation*, whereby students from Tamil areas had to obtain more marks to get into higher education. The excuse was that there were better schooling facilities for the Tamils, mainly from the North. Standardisation was probably the first nail in the coffin for peace in Sri Lanka. The rest is history.

My earliest recollection of Hartley College is walking along the College Road (now blocked off by the Sri Lankan Armed forces) for the entrance test at the age of 7. Yes, Hartley College had too many people wanting to study there- so how many of you had to STUDY to get into year 4?!

Our teachers taught us not just the various subjects but about life in general- and we believed in them blindly. Perhaps not recommended these days, and people may even consider it wrong, but we had no doubt that every teacher of ours had our welfare and nothing else in mind. I have to say that I must have been quite naïve to believe our Principal who made a special visit to our class to tell us that we had outdone all other schools in the Province in the 8th standard test conducted by the Northern Province Teachers Association (NPTA)- he said that if we got swollen-headed by our achievement, our head may burst and he may hear it from his Office at the other end of the school!

At every Tuesday assembly there would be a general topic for the whole school be it sportsmanship, responsibility or etiquette- and near the end of our school career we would be taught how to sit, behave and eat at a formal (HSC union) dinner. They did not tell us how to get a seat next to a girl though- with some six girls for 100 plus boys that was not easy.

Quite unbelievably, coming late to school was something that almost never seemed to happen. There will of course be suitable punishment but how did we cope in the days when no parents dropped us off and we had to depend on erratic bus services, walking or riding bicycles- ours or someone else's; but beware, if seen riding double by any teacher or College Prefect, the risk was greater than if caught by the *ralahamy* (Policeman)!

The rod was never spared at Hartley- not that it was used often- but I do not see any Hartleyite psychologically damaged by the caning he may have received. It did not matter who you were- it was the offence that merited the punishment. You may think going out of your class to check why the teacher had not turned up is reasonable- but no it is NOT your responsibility if you are not the monitor. I was simply told this, given one cut with the cane, and briskly returned to the class.

I did not have the opportunity to do what one of my classmates used to do- shove an exercise book inside his shorts. He was the most mischievous amongst us but that problem was solved by appointing him as the monitor for the next year!

Some of the rules and systems in place at Hartley would probably be considered draconian or inappropriate in today's context- the uniform had to be exactly the same. It was not acceptable to make it from expensive materials in the same colour (white shirts and blue

shorts). Every boy had to go to cricket practice in the lower classes- it did not matter if you were scared of round objects (in fact it was within 10 years of this initiative that Hartley College cricket reached its top). For the Sports Meet every boy had to participate in a run, a jump and a throw- it was not just for the elite athletes.

Hartley in the sixties (and before and after) was of course nationally recognised as a top educational establishment in Sri Lanka, probably considered as an equivalent to a selective school in Australia or a grammar school in the United Kingdom. But it had an even greater reputation for its discipline and the integrity of its students. A testimonial from our Principal was considered enough for positions in Banks and other elite establishments in Sri Lanka. We had an unfair advantage in many walks of life.

Strict discipline of course meant punishment- usually detention class which meant that we had to dream up some explanation at home. This would never work because of the close contact between parents and teachers and their knowledge of whole families. Discipline also meant having to stand outside the class for minor misdemeanours- I am grateful to one of my classmates (now a Sydney resident) who fainted and collapsed while standing outside with me. The teacher got scared and never again gave us that punishment!

Drilled into us too was punctuality. I suspect our general inclination as Sri Lankans has probably over-riden our training as Hartleyites so much so that we have drifted into the lackadaisical Asian lifestyle. But one could set the clock at 3pm on the second Saturday in every July- that is when the College bell will toll to mark the start of our annual Sports Meet.

I remember with fondness every one of our teachers and cannot but feel that they toiled hard to get us to a position where we would face the today's competitive world with confidence. Theirs was a task without any selfish motive, and they rejoiced in our successes just like a parent would do. I place them at par with Mother, Father and God, just as in the Tamil song- *maathaa pithaa guru theivam...* - that used to play every morning in those days.

Editor's Note: Dr V Vasanthakumar-MBBS who is an old boy of Hartley College is currently living in London with his family.

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A Look Back In Time With Gratitude

Dr V Sathiaselan- Illinois, USA

It is with much apprehension that I write these few words, as I feel a moral obligation to publicly acknowledge my indebtedness for the benefits I have gained from the education I received at Hartley College, our Alma Mater. This self-perceived long overdue obligation has been troubling me for years now and I did not have an opportunity to rectify until now. As I begin my last decade of my professional career, this is a burden I feel compelled to unburden, even though I do not feel any more accomplished or more qualified than any one of the multitudes of Hartleyites who have come before me or after me. Neither do I believe I have anything more significant or valuable to say that has not been said in the past about our beloved school. But I have often wondered about the major factors that influence one's success and/or failures in life. And as you mature in age, you come to the realization that one of the most precious gifts one can hope to receive in life other than good health is a good education. I believe we were blessed in this respect of having had the opportunity to have our early education at Hartley College during our formative years. This is further reinforced as we struggle now to provide the best possible education to our children in the developed countries many of us have taken residence in. I now strongly believe that a good primary education is the necessary foundation to build a successful career and this is true for majority of us. I also believe teachers who set great expectations make a difference in one's life.

It amazes me that even in one of the wealthiest countries of the world where I currently make my living, the society is struggling through many discussions and debates to find the reasons why their educational system is failing to provide the majority of the students with adequate skills to be productive members of the society. Whereas the visionaries who established Hartley College years ago and those who maintained and developed the school in the ensuing years were able to accomplish this successfully. They were able to design an educational system that has helped the majority of the students they catered for to develop according to their individual talents to their fullest potential. This is evidenced from the many success stories we hear or read about Hartley alumni from every walk of life: whether it is in public service; or running a successful business; or being a well regarded academic; or having successfully raised a family in difficult circumstances, just to name a few.

I entered Hartley College at the 4th grade level and completed my entire pre-collegiate education there when I graduated grade 12 in 1971. During this nine-year period, I had the privilege of being taught by some outstanding and dedicated teachers. It is impossible to single out any one of them individually as each one of them I am sure had some influence in molding my personality and my values. I am so humbled when I realize whatever little I hope to accomplish in my professional career can not come close to what our esteemed teachers have done or continue to do with their dedication and selfless service, most of the times under very trying circumstances. Teachers are the most noblest of all professionals and we were very privileged to have had the very best any child could have hoped to have. Of course they were not perfect. They had their flaws just like any other human being. However, nobody can deny that the values of self-discipline, organization and striving for excellence they imparted to us at Hartley, in addition to the excellent education they worked hard to provide us with, continue to help us cope with our daily life well. I do not recollect any of these values being instilled into us explicitly. But the structure was there such that we absorbed these values without being aware of them. That is how I feel when I look back. These tools help us on a daily basis to compete with many of our colleagues who have had more advanced opportunities during their early education

and to succeed in our professional careers. It is probably impossible to identify any one single event that influenced your life most but the many smaller experiences, which you are not even aware of, I believe matter most.

The total educational experience at Hartley included many organized sporting activities in addition to other extra-curricular activities. The annual sports meet in which each one of the students was mandated to participate and the cricket and football matches provide many memorable experiences for a young person that you still remember well. I was able to actively participate in all the sporting programs since in the sixth grade I became a boarder at the college hostel, which was situated within the school sports grounds. Over all these are many good memories that keep flooding back when you sit and reminisce with some of your friends you are fortunate enough to be able to keep in touch over the years. The only regret I have is that I did not have the wisdom then to enjoy the companionship of a larger group of my peers.

The value of a good education is impossible to quantify other than by personal experience. How one perceives the educational experience he had and how it impacted his life is very subjective. What one believes when he looks back may be completely biased by other experiences he might have had during that time and he may not be objective enough to see the benefits he derived. However, I am sure majority of the Hartleyites would consider they were privileged to have had the opportunity to go to school at Hartley and their educational experience has been life changing. I am not sure if many of our children who enjoy the benefits of a school system which offers them the luxury of myriad career options can say the same thing.

Having strongly survived the past twenty five years of the worst times in its history, it is my strongest belief our beloved school will live on forever for the future generations with the help of the indomitable spirit of the past, current and future teachers. To them I dedicate with gratitude whatever little of my accomplishments.

Editor's Note: Dr V Sathiaseelan-Ph.D, who is an old boy of Hartley College, is currently attached to Clinical Schools Faculty at the Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Illinois, USA as the Chief Physicist and Associate Professor Radiation Oncology.

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REMINISCENCES OF MY HARTLEY DAYS

Prof. Balasingam Muhunthan- Washington State University

Reminiscences are customarily nebulous and vague. Thus after nearly thirty years of removal from the scenes of my student days at Hartley and having lived in an alien environment where those days are seldom if ever mentioned nor could be experienced, I find that many details and perhaps some facts of importance which occurred during that period are more or less hazy and indefinite, and now “out of consciousness”. I hope the details of my fond memories and the names I have shared and those unnamed would realize that my appreciation of past Principals, Teachers, fellow students, and other Hartleyites extends far beyond the ensuing paragraphs.

I was fortunate to be born into a family circle of distinguished Hartleyites including my mother and father who was one of the teachers and the Principals of Hartley College. It was thus natural that my childhood was intimately linked with Hartley. My early student days were spent at Vada Hindu Girls College and Puttalai Mahavidyalayam but even then I liked to walk with my family friend Manimaran, the eldest son of my first Mathematics teacher at Hartley College, the late Mr. M. Ramakrishnan, to watch cricket and soccer matches at Hartley playgrounds. It was quite a long walk down Athiyady road but the thrill of attending the game somehow made it easy for us youngsters.

My classmates and I were lucky in that after a brief hiatus, Hartley College decided to enroll students again from Grade-6 onwards. Entrance to Hartley, as always, was through a competitive selective test administered by the school. Since my father was teaching in an upcountry school at that time, my cousin Sivakumar walked me to the school premises, put me in the right class room, wished me good luck, and left. Sadly, we lost him a few years back at a relatively young age as we did his father Mr. S. P. Nadarajah, one of the famous teachers of Hartley, who too died about the same age. The first memory that came to my mind upon hearing about his death was this first walk to Hartley. I will cherish this memory forever along with his charming and bubbly personality.

I entered Hartley in 1972 and passed out in 1978. This was a momentous period in our lives as well as that of the nation politically and educationally. On the political side, the Sri Lanka Republic Constitution was passed which effectively put an end to the peaceful co-existence of the Tamil and Sinhala Nations in Sri Lanka. But life for us as students was calm until the events of the police brutality at the 1974 International Tamil Research Conference held in Jaffna. The youth who turned militant ever since expressed their opposition to the rule of the day mostly through peaceful means such as partial or total boycott, “pahiskaripu” of the school. This, especially the partial boycott of the school, was, at times, a welcome break for us as we could wander to the nearby beach or to Hartley Grounds and play cricket or soccer before going home as if we were in school! Our time at Hartley ended about a year or so after the passing of the Vaddukodai Resolution calling for a Separate State for the Tamil Nation and the subsequent capture of all Northern Parliament seats by the Tamil United Liberation Front, which ran its platform on this resolution. But, to the credit of Hartley and its teachers, none of this political turbulence interfered with their class activities or their goal of imparting the best education possible towards the pursuit of excellence in all fields.

On the educational side, the dreadful Standardization for University admission was in force from the previous year which denied many of the brilliant Jaffna youth admission to elite fields of study altogether. Incidentally, I am told by my father that one of our past Principals and an illustrious mathematics teacher, the late Mr. S. Ratnasabapathy used to complain that standardization was brought about as a result of his entire class of 21 Hartley

College students entering the Faculty of Engineering at the Peradeniya University in the preceding year!

Unlike the majority of previous generations of students who had essentially one Principal during their stay at Hartley, we had three of them - Mr. C. Rajadurai (1971-1973), Mr. P. Ahamparam (1973-1975), and Mr. W. N. S. Samuel (1975-1985). But since all of them were steeped in the highest traditions of Hartley, the transfer of baton was smooth. Strict maintenance of discipline, school functions and sports activities, and phenomenal success in academic and athletic fields continued uninterrupted. Hartleyites owe a deep debt of gratitude in this regard to the late Mr. W N S Samuel, who was the Deputy Principal all along until his period at the helm, for ensuring continuity of the highest traditions of Hartley. WNS, as he was often referred, cared for Hartley as his second home. But I gather from his son Vasikaran's article in the Miscellany of 2006 that Hartley was, at times, his first home!

Most importantly on the educational side, the United Front Government of the day wanted do away with the General Certificate of Education or the G.C.E system and introduced the National Certificate of General Education, N.C.G.E, and the Higher National Certificate of Education, H.N.C.E, without examining fully well the implications of this change. We were the first batch to get through the N.C.G.E exam in 1975 and dauntingly drifted along afterwards as H.N.C.E students not knowing how our university education would be fashioned or would come at all. Mercifully, the government was voted out of power in 1977 and the new United National Party government reinstated the G.C.E format. But this brought along another issue - a challenge of parity between students taking G.C.E A'level examination based on the old syllabus and us with the new syllabus. It had to be eventually settled by the Supreme Court, which conferred equal status to both examinations. I still wonder to this day what would have happened to the Sri Lankan youth had the N.C.G.E/H.N.C.E system continued. This shortsighted meddling by the government of the day with the basic educational system of youth is but an example of similar callous tinkering of the constitution of the country by successive governments of Sri Lanka with the dreadful consequences that we see today. But as with the political upheavals, Hartley teachers took the change of educational system in stride and taught us with classic dedication.

We were fortunate in having many wonderful teachers during my time at Hartley who fashioned our thoughts in science and mathematics. My formative work on science was inspired first by Mrs. S. Sellathurai and then by Mrs. Inbamany Selvarajah, both of whom rivaled each other in excellence. It was further enriched by the famous Zoology teacher Mr. K. Sivapathasundaram. Privileged as the son of a Hartley teacher, all teachers evinced a soft heart towards me, but I treasure Mr. Sivapathasundaram's memory for his many acts of kindness.

The basic foundation of our mathematics education was laid by the late Mr. Ramakrishnan and Mr. J. S. Rajaratnam each with a different style of teaching. The former did it with a carrot approach and the latter with more of a carrot and stick one! I very much liked the blackboard skills of Mr. Ramakrishnan especially his slow and steady writing of perfect numbers, mathematical symbols and expressions, and the drawing of figures. It was clear that every letter or number he put on the board came slow and steady, indicating the thought process involved in putting each one of them. This is a trait that could be found only in the very best of mathematics teachers. I am yet to find one who could create mathematical artwork effortlessly as Mr. Ramakrishnan did on the blackboard.

Education at Hartley College was enriched with a number of courses in social studies, languages, religion and physical education taught by some fine teachers who left their mark in our lives. I recall with affection the teaching of Ms. S. Joseph who joined Hartley around the time we entered and taught us social studies. Her genteel handling of us and scholarly

teaching made a dull subject very interesting. She left us to a school in Jaffna after a brief but memorable stay. The multi-talented teacher Mr. V. K. Balasubramaniam, who succeeded her, taught us social studies, Tamil language, and Religion in his characteristic style, full of knowledge, wit and humor.

Unlike the previous generation of Hartleyites, our generation was taught in the Swabasha medium with English as a secondary language. As such many students in the country fell back in sound English but not Hartleyites. This was evident at the University where Hartleyites were known to be “Kadu Karayo”, a slang of the Sinhalese students for a person highly proficient in English! This was due to the sound English teaching at Hartley, spearheaded by Mrs. F. P. Selvaraj nee Ms. Pushpam, Mr. D. R. Arumaynayagam, my father Mr. S. P. Balasingam, Mr. S. Manuelpillai and, of course, the irreplaceable WNS.

Mrs. F. P. Selvaraj was the first one to teach me English at Hartley and essentially treated me as her own child. I loved her charming demeanor and the breath of freshness she brought forth to our class. All students eagerly awaited her class, which was usually at the end of the day, for she brought charm and cheer to every meeting. She took immense pains in preparing us for the English Declamation and Essay contests. I was deeply saddened to hear of her sudden death in a plane crash in 1998 and wondered how something like it could happen to a sweet soul like her. I am certain that she is in a better place now among the celestial angels. She and her jubilant smile shall remain in my memory forever.

Our English education continued to flourish with the teachings of D. R. Arumaynayagam and WNS. WNS was particular about grammar and style and he loved the book, *Living English Structure* by W. Stannard Allen. He was insistent that we all had a copy of it in our possession in class with his often quoted words, “buy, beg, borrow, or steal.”! He went to great lengths to update the college library and exhorted all of us to make use of it during our spare time. He had the vision to make us read English magazines, especially the Time and Newsweek at a very young age. It is a habit that I had kept up and I thank him for this. It is no wonder that when our library was burnt down by the Sri Lankan Armed Forces in September 1984, he decided to give up the reins at his beloved Hartley and pass it on to my father.

Passionate teachers like Mr. M. Sathanathan and Mr. Balasubramaniam, who not only imparted the very best knowledge but also practiced it in their daily lives, nurtured our Hindu religious education. Mr. M. Sathanathan was an ardent devotee of God Krishna and it was moving to see him worship at the Vallipuram temple on Sundays. The sight of his frail body carrying the deity in procession on every Sunday in the month of August wells in my memory often. Likewise, teachers, who practiced Christianity at their core such as Mrs. F. P. Selvaraj, D. R. Arumaynayagam and WNS, taught my Christian friends the very best of scriptures. We had prayers on Friday mornings. Hindu prayers were held in the upper hall of the school whereas the Christians went to the Church across the street. The Hindus celebrated major functions such as Saraswathi puja with aplomb in the school hall.

The unsung hero of the tremendous success Hartley enjoyed in the sports arena whether in Cricket, Soccer, or Track and Field, was Mr. T. Nithiyaratnam. Nithi, as he was affectionately called, is one of the most kind hearted and selfless persons that I had ever met. He pretty much gave up his family life and lived at the college hostel to dedicate his services to Hartley and never expected anything in return. He was a physical education teacher par excellence. It is a pity that due to government regulations Hartley could not offer him a permanent place and it was sad to see him eventually leave to join Jaffna College. He will always be permanently remembered by us as one of the finest teachers ever to have walked through the portals of Hartley.

Our upper level classes were divided into Physical and Biological Science streams. The subjects of both streams were taught with rigor by the very best of teachers. I followed the physical sciences stream and was blessed to be taught Applied Mathematics by Mr. K. Nadarajah and Pure Mathematics by Mr. N. Gunaseelan. They were both strict but treated all students with empathy and taught Mathematics in a systematic manner very few could emulate. I have used a few of their teaching styles, especially in the manner in which mathematical deductions and derivations are made, and incorporated them into my own teaching of engineering courses with positive feed back. I was happy to note both Mr. Nadarajah and Mr. Gunaseelan were made principals of our college in due course. I was saddened to hear of the passing away of Mr. Nadarajah in 2000. His frail frame always donning a white pant and a white shirt, a faint “viputhi” mark on his forehead, and his straight long strides to our class remain indelible in my mind. I wish Mr. Gunaseelan the very best of happy times in his retirement.

Mr. M. S. Petersingam, a lean and tall teacher who joined Hartley directly upon completing his degree at the University taught us Chemistry. He brought forth the most up-to-date knowledge of the subject and was especially great at teaching the intricacies of physical chemistry, a subject dreaded by many. He supplemented his class teaching with some unique laboratory experiments. The appearance, demeanor and style of Mr. M. Padmanathan were, it seems, made for teaching Physics. I learnt a great deal of the basic as well as advanced topics in physics so essential to solving engineering problems from him. He was subtle but strict in ensuring all students complied with his requirements and performed experiments carefully and accurately. He was a paragon of humility and simplicity.

Our Hartley teachers were richly rewarded for their efforts when five students (two in the Physical Sciences stream and three in the Biological Sciences stream) of our graduating class received distinctions in all subjects at the G.C. E A’level university entrance examination.

A person’s education is not complete nor does he become a fuller person without the support and camaraderie of his fellow students. I was fortunate to have had many such friends including G. Thirukumaran- Sydney and V. Rahunaman- Melbourne who were with me from Hartley until the end of our journey at the Peradeniya University. There were numerous interruptions during our university education, but we Hartleyites stuck together as one and ensured that we saw the light in the end. May be we were guided subconsciously by our motto *Fiat Lux* to complete our education successfully despite the many hurdles put along the way. Though my friends are now in different climes and regions, all of them remain in my heart.

My years at Hartley have been glorious. I look back at them with pride and a wishful longing. Leaving Hartley was like leaving behind all the joys of childhood and adolescence that never come again in life. Those were the years when we lived in a world beyond all the pretences and hypocrisy that seem to poison the modern world.

Editor’s Note: Prof B.Muhunthan-PhD, an old boy of Hartley College, is currently attached to the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the Washington State University.

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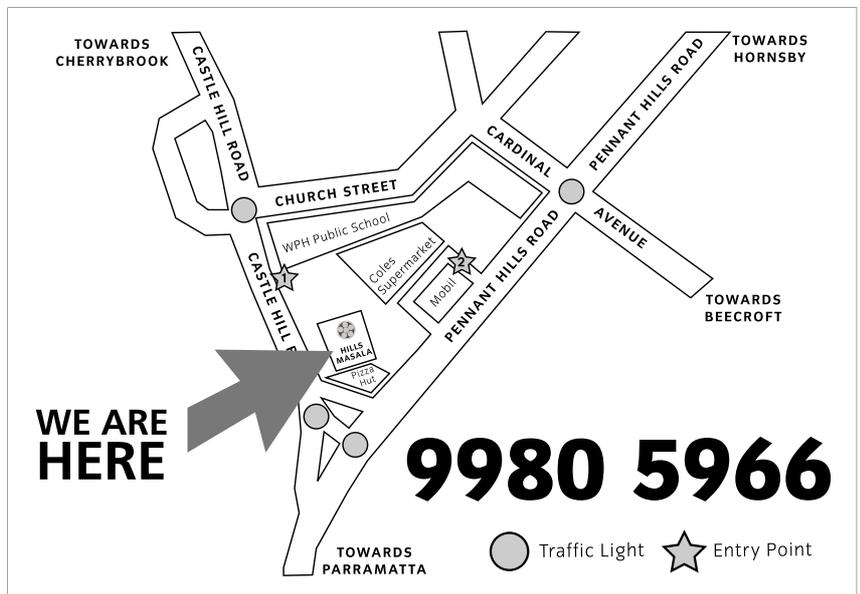
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