



Newsletter

Visakha Vidyalaya Old Girls' Association
133, Vajira Road, Colombo 5. www.visakhav.org

January 2013

Hello Members,

We have had a very eventful and successful year in 2012. Our first big event the **Avurudu Pola** was a great success. The "Avurudu Pola" has always been an opportunity for past pupils, their families, the public as well as the present students to prepare for the festive occasion. The other major event was the **Dinner Dance** which was greatly enjoyed by the young and the old. The proceeds from both these events far exceeded our expectations. Our congratulations to the Secretary, Renuka Dharmadasa & her committee who were responsible for organizing the "Pola" and also to Dehara Gomes and Ramya Cooray the Co-Chairpersons of the Dinner Dance Committee and their teams for their wonderful enthusiasm..

The **Annual General Meeting** of the WVOGA was held on the 30th of June 2012 at the School Hall. This event was attended by old girls of many generations. The girls spent an enjoyable day in spite of the serious work at hand, for some met after many years. We were happy to see Ms. Sumana Saparamadu, the most senior old girl present on this day, and Mrs. Sita Siriwardena, who still take an interest in the activities of the OGA and the school and continue to give us strength with their presence.

The new committee for the year 2012/2013 was elected on this day.

We hope to see many more of our members participating this year.



Seated: left to right :

Ms. Ramani Gomes, Ms. Sita Siriwardena, Ms. Renuka Dharmadasa (Hon. Jt. Secretary), Ms. Shanta Gunaratna (Vice President), Mrs. Sandamali Aviruppola (President), Ms. Chandima Karunatilaka (Vice President), Ms. Darshi Neelawathura Bandara (Hon. Jt. Secretary), Ms. Punsirini Malavi, Ms. Srimathi Jayasuriya, Ms. Anoma Perera

Absent: Ms. Deepthi Ranasinghe (Treasurer), Ms. Buddhini Medawatte, Ms. Sharmini de Almeida, Ms. Nadeeja Wickramarachchi, Ms. Deepika Hathurusinghe, Ms. Rashmin Jayathilake, Ms. Senani Senanayake, Ms. Wathsala Madhavee, Ms. Yuthika Punchihewa

Standing left to right :

Ms. Sarangi Suriaarachchi, Ms. Gowrie Kathriarachchi, Ms. Sewwandi Harischandra, Ms. Achintha Jayawardhane, Ms. Ranjula Rajapakse, Ms. Arosha Nakandalage, Ms. Ishani Banagala, Ms. Sachithra Ilangantilaka, Ms. Yasoma Weerasekara, Ms. Heshani de Alwis, Ms. Imojani Marasinghe, Ms. Eranthi Premaratne, Ms. Nimali Heenpella, Ms. Nishanthi Wimalaratne, Ms. Samanthi Chandrawansa, Ms. Indunil Ekanayake, Ms. Thisanthi Kaluarachchi, Ms. Dinushi Abayadeera (Asst. Treasurer)

Celebrations and Appreciations

The Old Girls and the past hostelers together with the present ones recently celebrated Children's Day on the 1st of December and not on the 1st October... the day dedicated to two most precious groups of people in not just our society but all over the world. They are the children and the elders of that society.

Children, from babies to teens fall into this category. They are beautiful, vulnerable and precious. They have to be taken care of and supported to grow into confident adults in the world.

Elders, who have made their contributions to family and society and are now old, weak and feeble, are another group. This group too like children have to be taken care of. When man grows old he enters his second childhood. As we would walk and bathe a child; with gentleness and love thus an elder must be taken care of.

Societies all over the globe celebrate this day with various programmes to make children and elders feel wanted, loved and special. But is it only on this particular day that these wonderful people must be celebrated and made to feel special? No, as the old girls proved these wonderful people can be celebrated on any day of the year.

All children across the globe deserve to be happy and loved regardless of cast or creed. But sadly this is not the situation. Every day we hear devastating news of child abuse, child labour and child abandonment, from all over the world. This highlights that the world is not as beautiful as one would think. We must be glad that there are kind hearted people in the world who contribute to making a little difference to them.

It is heart breaking how elders too are ill treated and abandoned. Parents are forced to behave as maids and labourers in their child's home. A child they brought up with so much love feels ashamed of parents once they grow old. They feel that these very people who sacrificed so much to bring them up are a burden to them.

These parents deserve to be loved and taken care of just as much their own child. If this is not bad enough, the parents, the elders of the society are abandoned and left at road sides or elders homes alone. During their old age these elders deserve to be happy and be with their families.

Children and elders create a balance in society. In many Asian homes as well as in Sri Lanka. Children and Elders live together. Elders help bring up the children who acquire knowledge of culture and family through the association. In turn the children bring happiness to the elder; the grand parents. They make the grand parents feel loved, wanted and most importantly they make them feel young again.

Children and elders in families have special bonds which promote healthy development of the child and provide long life and happiness to the elderly.

We must be glad that there are many kind hearted people in the world who contribute to make the lives of children and elders happy. It does not have to be on any special day internationally or otherwise... This is something to do everyday. However we have to remember that it is the collective responsibility of all of us in the society to look after these two groups of people with love and care.

Ishani Banagala

Announcements

Exercise books with the school logo and name are available at discounted prices at the Secretariat. Those interested can purchase them during school hours.

The Secretariat is open from 8:30 a.m – 1:30 p.m. daily on school days.

Members who wish to make contributions and support any on going activities of the OGA, please contact the OGA Secretariat.

The Education sub-committee is on the look out for:

- Volunteers for the Hostel English project (one hour every two weeks)
- Part time English Teachers for the Primary School

Those interested please e-mail Eranthip@mashholdings.com or sarap.perera@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS 2013

Keep the Dates Free

16th January

Visakha has completed 95 years of existence and is now embarking on the 96th year. As has been the tradition the WVOGA has organized a Bodhi Pooja and Bana on this day at the Bo-Maluwa at 5:00 pm.

25th & 26th March

The Annual all night Pirith Ceremony & Dane the following day to commemorate the founder Mrs. Jeremias Dias will be held at the School hall.

[Nishanthi- 0777 768 324](tel:0777768324)

30th March 2013

Avurudu Pola

This very popular pola to do all our New Year shopping, is scheduled to be held on the 30th of March. Members are invited to take stalls and also join in the fun with their families and friends to make this event a success. It is a great opportunity to meet friends, peers, seniors, juniors and teachers.

[Ishani - 0713 011 379](tel:0713011379)

[Renuka - 0777 289 389](tel:0777289389)

May

Medical Camp

An annual event by the OGA for the past and present teachers of Visakha conducted by our specialists Doctors.

[Yasoma - 0718 377 106](tel:0718377106)

May - contd

Vesak Project.

Last year we donated Infusion pumps to Lady Ridgeway Hospital. This year our donation will be to the Cancer Hospital Maharagama

[Nishanthi - 0777 768 324](tel:0777768324)

Day Trip.

We are hoping to organise a day trip this year for members to have a fun time with their old school friends, relax, enjoy, and get-away from their daily chores.

[Achintha - 0773 626 164](tel:0773626164)

June

1st June - "Visakha Walk 2013"

After a lapse of several years the SDS, OGA, the school girls and teachers will get together to walk the "VISAKHA WALK 2013" Keep the date free. Members are invited to represent their year groups. This event is in aid of the Hall Renovation Project.

[Chandima - 0773 280 901](tel:0773280901)

[Darshi - 0773 084 142](tel:0773084142)

AGM

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Jeremias Dias Hall. An event attended and enjoyed by many old girls. Hope to see more members on this occasion. This is your forum to be heard.

[Darshi - 0773 084 142](tel:0773084142)

23rd July

Pulimood Oration

The Susan George Pulimood Memorial Oration held annually since 1991 to commemorate the services of an outstanding Principal.

Date- 23rd July.

Venue - The Jeremias Dias Hall. Time - 5pm

[Shanta - 0112 588 156](tel:0112588156)

Esala Sil Programme

A day of retreat and contemplation organized by the religious Sub-Committee.

Hope to see many of you there.

[Nishanthi - 0777 768 324](tel:0777768324)

We sadly remember the old girls who have left us.

1. Mrs. Beryl de Silva
2. Mrs. Manel Tampoe
3. Mrs. Sarojini Kodagoda (nee Daluwatta)
Former Secretary,
London Branch of the WVOGA
4. Dr. Anoja Jayawardena (nee Lanerolle)
Medical Officer Lady Ridgeway Hospital
5. Mrs. Daya Rathnayake
6. Mrs. Seela Perera (nee Seneviratne)

EVENTS FROM 2012

Birthday Celebrations of Mrs. Hema Jayasinghe

(Principal 1967-1983)



We celebrated Mrs Hema Jayasinghe's 85th Birthday on the 7th September last year with a Bodhi Pooja followed by a felicitation ceremony. Many of her students came by to wish her good health, happiness and long life.

Avurudu Pola



The Chief Guest for the day was Past student, and former Deputy Principal Mrs. Dhammeshwari Wickramesinghe. The Pola was well patronised this year. We thank all our members who took stalls and made generous contributions and assisted in numerous ways. The proceeds from the Pola will be utilized for the OGA administration expenses and to support various activities in school such as Drama competitions, workshops, sports events etc.

DINNER DANCE 2012

The Dinner Dance held every other year, was held at the Cinnamon Grand, Colombo on the 8th of September 2012. The Band was Misty and Black. Games, Dancing and prizes completed the fun filled evening. In all aspects the Visakha Dinner Dance 2012 was a huge success, with the support of the Old girls who attended and actively participated in the organizing in numerous ways. We are happy to state the funds collected have reached Rs. 7 million. The proceeds are to support the English Medium and the English Language Teaching at Visakha.



Education

The Education Sub-Committee organized a seminar for the grade 12 students on 31st July 2012 with the educational institutes CINEC and APIIT. Students were briefed on higher education opportunities available in these respective institutes and the career path after the completion of each programme.

As a part of phase 3 of the Student Scholarship Programme the monthly hostel fee of 13 hostelers will be paid easing the heavy financial burden on parents. 12 Students benefitted from phase 1 of the programme until the completion of their O/L and A/L examinations. There are 10 students on phase 2 of the programme. We thank the sponsors for their kind generosity & hope to launch phase 4 of the scholarship programme in 2013.

THE PULIMOOD ORATION



The Pulimood Memorial Oration was held on 23rd July 2012. Prof. Gita Fernando, Founder Professor of Pharmacology, Head of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Sri Jayawardenapura was invited as the Chief Guest. She delivered her Oration on “Marvels of Modern Medicine”

A Celebration of Music

“A Celebration of Music” a fund raiser organized by the Fund Raising Sub-Committee of the Old Girls’ Association of Visakha Vidyalaya was held on the 09th of June, 2012 at the Jeremias Dias Hall,

The proceeds of this project will be channelled towards the Hall Renovation Project.

The Revelations, Sri Lanka’s premier vocal ensemble and Menaka Singers with Past Visakhians; Avanti Perera, Manojie Gunasekara, Geethika Chandrasiri and Samadhi Tennakoon. enthralled the audience. Music was provided by Sureka Amarasinghe with Geethika Chandrasiri on the piano, Samadhi Tennakoon on the guitar and Manojie Gunasekara on the violin. A fantastic performance by the Visakha Vidyalaya Senior Choir completed this very enjoyable evening.



Hosteller’s Health Screening

Hostellers’ Health Screening Project was conducted by the Medical Sub-Committee on 18th October, 2012 at the school hostel premises. Acute medical problems of the hostellers’ were identified and referrals to medical institutions made where necessary. Prescribed treatment was given free of charge.

Children’s Day

The Children’s Day was celebrated on the 1st of December 2012 with the present hostellers and the contribution and the attendance of the past hostellers. A past hosteller, Nisansala Kusumsri (31 years) the Chief Guest on this occasion spoke of her journey from Trincomalee to Visakha hostel . She elaborated on her determination to study and pursue higher goals in life. On completing her A’lvels she opted to join a the University of

Moratuwa where Textile Technology was offered as a graduate course of study. She is currently reading for her PhD.

She recounted her days in the hostel so far away from her family. Studies were very important. Yet she found the time to read books, and recommended several books which had impressed her young mind. She cultivated the habit of reading which she still enjoys. She urged the present students to do the same. She delivered an inspirational speech on the theme ‘SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF – MOTIVATION’ which guided her during her years at Visakha and continues to guide her.

We were delighted with the appreciative feed back we got from the present and past hostellers.



OUR CONGRATULATIONS!!

School Events

Little Friends

The Little Friends of Visakha participated in the '**Lend –a- Hand**' project and visited the Gadawila Junior School. The girls took gifts and made donations to this school which included the construction of a playground at the cost of Rs. 67,000. A health and dental camp was conducted by Doctors who attended this event with the girls. The Little Friends won the Challenge Shield for this community project.

Education

Suharshi de Silva currently in grade 7 at Visakha won the Silver medal at the International Science Olympiad held in Lucknow, India in October 2012.

Sports

Badminton

The U16 Badminton team emerged champions at the All Island Inter- School Badminton Championships held at St. Thomas College Indoor Sports Stadium for the 3rd year in succession. Captain Nilupuli Liyanage.

Rowing

Our under 16 Rowing team emerged Champions at the inaugural School Rowing Championships held at the Colombo Rowing Club. Our team of 7 oarswomen beat Ladies, Musaeus and Bishops to win the team events and the single sculls events. Visakha started rowing in 2009. Captain Samakhya Gajanayake.

Waterpolo

Visakha records an unbeaten season by the Waterpolo Team emerging National Waterpolo Champions in 2012. They won the Sri Lanka Public Schools Tournament and continued the winning spell to become the National Champions by beating the Navy team. Captain Limashi Kosgodage.

Achievements of Past Visakhians

- Kamalini de Silva was appointed Secretary to the Ministry of Justice.
- Indira Samarasinghe assumed duties as the Legal Draftsman. She was also appointed President's Counsel by President Rajapakse.
- Charya Dharmadasa was selected to Captain the Sri Lanka National Waterpolo Team to Dubai to participate in the Asian Championships.

CONVENORS OF SUB-COMMITTEES 2012/2013

Archives	Gowrie Kathiarachchi
Cafeteria	Yuthika Punchihewa
Correspondence	Sarangi Suriaarachchi
Education	Eranthi Premaratne
Equipment	Samanthi Chandrawansa
Foreign Branches	Thisanthi Kaluarachchi
Fund Raising	Ranjula Rajapakse
MO/Sick Room	Yasoma Weerasekera
Newsletter	Ishani Banagala
New Members/ Ex Co	Heshani de Alwis
Religious Activities	Nishanthi Wimalaratne
School Matters	Buddhini Medawatte
Secretariat	Arosha Hemali
Social Activities	Achintha Jayawardena
Website	Thisanthi Kaluarachchi
UK Bursary Programme	Achintha Jayawardena

VVOGA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
2012/2013

President	Sandamali Aviruppola
Vice Presidents	Shanta Gunaratna Chandima Karunatilake
Joint Secretaries	Renuka Dharmadasa Darshi Neelawathura Bandara
Treasurer	Deepthi Ranasinghe
Assistant Treasurer	Dinushi Abeydeera
Staff Member	Buddhini Madawatta
60 years and above	Sita Siriwardena Srimathi Jayasuriya

Above 40 & below 60 years

Punsirini Malavi
Ramani Gomes
Anoma Perera
Nishanthi Wimalaratna
Sharmini de Almeida
Nadeeja Wickramarachchi
Ranjula Rajapakse
Deepika Hathurusinghe
Gowrie Kathriarachchi
Rashmin Jayathilake

Above 30 & below 40 years

Arosha Hemali
Nimali Heenpella
Eranthi Premaratne
Yasoma Weerasekara
Thisanthi Kaluararchchi
Sewwandi Harischandra
Ishani Banagala
Senani Senanayaka
Heshani de Alwis
Sachithra Ilanganthilaka
Samanthi Chandrawansa
Imojani Marasinghe
Sarangi Suriaarachchi
Madavi Thilakarathna

30 Years and below

Achintha Jayawardena
Yuthika Punchihewa
Indunil Ekanayake

*Wish you Happiness,
Good Health & Joy
in 2013*

The graphic features a blue globe with yellow orbital rings, set against a backdrop of a city skyline. The text 'Towering over the HIGHER EDUCATION Landscape' is positioned in the upper right.

Towering over the HIGHER EDUCATION Landscape

A P I I T

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