

## VISAKHA VIDYALAYA OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION



**LIGHT UP  
THE WORLD  
WITH YOUR  
LAMP**

The privileged lot, reading this newsletter has so much to be grateful for. We were raised, and guided by a society which upheld, high leveled principles and values. We were taught in a school which respected the Sri Lankan culture, the diversity and helped us grow into law abiding citizens who are capable of respecting fellow human beings, irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Should this be the means to the end, or should we now do our bit to spread the ethics and values more extensively to the next generations? We are sure that the answer is going to be "Yes we should".

World has changed drastically, it has become highly, technologically advanced, which has brought both merits and demerits. Today we can reach thousands of people in one second, over the social media but do we have the time to reach out to a friend or family member who desperately need an ear? The younger generation (and some of us as well) have become slaves of technology and have lost the ability to appreciate simple things in life. Connect and have a chat face to face (not on face time or skype)

We spend a considerable amount of time on our phones, computers connecting, searching and hopefully learning. Some of the youngsters, with ear phones plugged keep staring at screens oblivious to the simple pleasures of the world. They do not get the time to smell the roses, watch the birds sing, admire the setting of the sun, enjoy the breeze that smell of the sea. They feel the world is closer, now at a touch of a screen, but little do they realize that the things that were closer are being alienated at the same time.

Can we pledge to start small? with the youngsters close to us, motivate them to appreciate a good book, to read and share the learnings with their friends, who use only digital and electronic media for entertainment. Can we show them by example that we believe society should not compromise values for short term gains, by us being honest, truthful, respectable and kind all the time.

There is a trick here, you cannot preach what you don't practice. So start with self, it is never too late. A journey of a thousand miles has to start with the first step. It is never too late to start something you have never done before, go where you have never gone before.

May your lamp help, light up this world further...

*Tusitha Kumarakulasingam  
Gaveshika Abeyratne*

## VV AGM JULY 2018

The Annual General Meeting of the VVOGA was held at the Jeremias Dias Hall on 7th July under the patronage of the Principal Ms Sandamali Aviruppola.

Members from all age groups attended the event. The Executive Committee for 2018/ 2019 were appointed in keeping with the formalities.



## FELICITATION OF THE CENTENARY COMMITTEE

After the AGM a felicitation of the special committee that was responsible for the Centenary Celebrations of Visakha Vidyalaya was held. The Centenary Celebrations Committee had to shoulder the mammoth task of organizing a series of events during the year to showcase this landmark milestone.



## A TRIBUTE TO MRS. SITA SIRIWARDENA

A dedication and glowing tribute was made to Mrs Sita Siriwardena, for her outstanding service as a Teacher, Sectional Head, Deputy Principal, OGA Secretary, and SDS member. Every Visakian who has been connected with this great institution during the past four decades, will have memories of their personal interactions with this gracious lady, who has been responsible in guiding and forming the future of thousands of Visakhians. Her composed stature, pleasant smile and eternal kindness are just a few qualities we will always treasure when thinking of her. Her commitment to our alma mater and perseverance in moulding the character of the students who passed through it's gates during this time, cannot be measured.







## SEATED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Nimali Heenpella, Sabitha Gunathilake (Staff Member), Sarala Kodagoda (Treasurer), Imojani Marasinghe (Joint Secretary), Priyangani Ratnasekara (Vice President), Principal Ms Sandamali Aviruppola (President), Shrimathi Jayasuriya, Eranthi Premaratne (Joint Secretary), Amaya Ellawala, Shanta Gunarathne, Renuka Dharmadasa.

## STANDING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Gaveshika Abeyratne, Champa Jayawardena, Uthpala Dasanayake, Awanthi Wickramasinghe, Lumini Amarasinghe, Sachini Mendis, Chiranthi Bartholameuz, Gayathri Weerathunga, Dhanurda Suriyaarachchi, Navodya Waidyarathne, Chamindi Alwis, Hemali Gunasinghe, Madhushani Sadhana, Mithrika Ekanayake, Samanthi Chandrawanse, Udesika Samaraweera, Manuja Dayaratne, Wathsala Abeysinghe, Chamari Obeysekera, Thathya De Silva.

### Absent

Jeewani Pandithage  
Manoja Wickramasuriya  
Tusitha Kumarakulasingam  
Savanthi Kodagoda  
Thilini Gunasekera  
Thilini Samarawickrama

### Conveners of the 2018 OGA Committee

<b>Archives</b>	- Champa Jayawardena
<b>Cafeteria</b>	- Lumini Amarasinghe
<b>Secretariate</b>	- Savanthi Kodagoda
<b>Social Services</b>	- Thathya de Silva
<b>Religious</b>	- Udesika Samaraweera
<b>Medical</b>	- Hemali Gunasinghe
<b>Building &amp; Maintainance</b>	- Awanthi Wickramasinghe
<b>Education</b>	- Mithrika Ekanayake
<b>Fund Raising</b>	- Navodya Waidyarathne
<b>New members</b>	- Gayathri Weeratunga
<b>Communication</b>	- Tusitha Kumarakulasingam

# CELEBRATING THE SPIRIT OF VESAK

The VVOGA celebrated Vesak 2018 by completing three projects that truly encompassed the spirit of giving.



## Setting Up a Library for the Katiyape Kanishta Vidyalaya, Deraniyagala

Situated in the furthest corner of Matara this primary school was in need of a library. The project executed by the VVOGA completed the partially built library building as well as equipping the library with books and a computer. The students were provided a utility pack of essential school items.

## Reconstruction of the A/L Science lab of Kahatuduwa Central destroyed by the floods.

The VVOGA stepped in to support the school in setting up the Advanced Level Laboratory and equipping the lab, as well as providing book cupboards and books for A/L Math and Science streams.



At the request of the temple the VVOGA provided a cupboard to house the valuable books of the Vajirarama Temple library.

## PULIMOOD ORATION



Mrs. Susan George Pulimood, the visionary educationist, was the principal of our school from May, 1945 till January 1967. Her contribution to growth of the stature of this great institution cannot be measured. The 28<sup>th</sup> Susan George Pulimood Memorial Oration was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July well attended by the Principal, Deputy Principals, Staff, Old Girls & the public.

This year, the Oration was delivered by Prof. Niranjanie Ratnayake (nee Kodikara), BSc Eng (Hons) (Cey), MEng (Wales) Chartered Engineer FIESL, Member IEPSL, Emeritus Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Moratuwa, President, Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka President Elect, Institute of Environmental Professionals, Sri Lanka.

The subject of the oration was 'Breaking Barriers and Changing the World - Women in Engineering'. The Orator delivered a very interesting and enlightening lecture on the role of Engineers improving human life .

Niranjanie reminded us that "Engineers change the world" that they "help advance cultures through providing platforms for entertainment and communication." As a female engineer she reminded us that " To become an Engineer, as women, we have to break stereotyped social barriers . Female Engineers have been coined 'double stereotype breakers'; the stereotype for a 'good woman' as well as that for a 'good engineer. Visakha Vidyalaya has always empowered girls to take on challenges and do what they are best at, not being confined to stereotypes. This foundation helps a girl to confidently enter a male dominated field and still be a 'good woman'; beautiful, graceful, eloquent, and cultured."

Four scholarships were awarded, for outstanding performances at the 2017 A/L examination.

## ESALA SIL PROGRAMME 2018

**The Esala Sil Programme, an important annual event organized by the Religious Sub-Committee was held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at the Visakha Bo Maluwa.**

Dhamma sermons were delivered by erudite monks such as Ven Meegoda Subitha thero, Ven Siyabalagoda Dhamminda thero, Ven Maharagama Paduma thero, Ven Veraduwe Mahinda thero and Ven Weleboda Gunasiri thero. Mediation programme was conducted by Ven Kotagala Dharmakeethi thero and a Dhamma discussion by Prof Saman Chandra Ranasingha. The programme concluded with the Bodhi Pooja in the evening facilitated by Ven Boralasgamuwe Sumedha thero.





# ANNUAL MEDICAL CAMP

The Annual Medical Camp for the Past and Present teachers, organized by the Medical Sub Committee of the Visakha Vidyalaya Old Girls' Association was held for the 30th time, on the 13th of May 2018 at the school premises. Over 30 consultants, covering 15 specialties provided services, along with the support of many doctors from VVOGA. A pioneer in Sri Lanka's field of Ophthalmology, who is a proud product of Visakha Vidyalaya, Consultant Eye Surgeon, Dr. Mrs. Champa Bangala graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. An infinite number of diagnostic and curative services such as ECG, Echocardiograph, Ultrasonography, Doppler studies, Cancer Screening, Family Planning, Vision Screening & Dental services were offered along with a range of laboratory investigations, all free of charge for all the participants of the Medical Camp. These services were delivered to approximately 250 participants including past and present teachers, principals, other staff members and their families and to members of the VVOGA too.





# THE VISAKHA VIDYALAYA ARCHIVES

In the period 2017/ 2018 the following projects were completed:

1. Preservation of Historical Rubber tree planted in memory of Mrs. Jeramias Dias's son & placing a memorial plaque.
2. Placing a multi display panel book to display photographs of annual events of the school & VVOGA.
3. Collection of news letters of VVOGA for past 20 years.
4. Preservation of old log books of Visakha Vidyalaya.

The Archives is now open for students & visitors on school days. We invite you to come, take a walk down memory lane.



About 150 hostellers aged between 06 - 11 years were taken on a retreat for a day of outward bound training & fun to Wijeya Resort Kirella. The day's activities contained an extensive programme on developing leadership skills and team work.



## CELEBRATING CHILDREN'S DAY 2018

# VISAKHA VIDYALAYA - ACHIEVEMENTS AND EVENTS

## ACHIEVEMENTS

Erangi De Silva wins the Junior Speech Master 2018.

## SCHOOL EVENTS

### COLORS NIGHT

The Colors Night 2017 was held in July 2018 at the Jeremias Dias Hall with Lieutenant General Mahesh Senanayake RWP RSP VSV USP USACGSC, The Commander of the Sri Lanka Army as the Chief Guest. The event saw Visakhians who have excelled in sports being recognized & celebrated.



### ANNUAL PRIZE GIVING - VISAKHA VIDYALAYA

The Annual Prize Giving was held in September 2018. The Chief Guest for the event was - Prof Maheshwari Ladduwahetty an Old girl of Visakha Vidyalaya, who is now the Professor of the Science Faculty - University of Colombo, Member of the Sri Lanka Association for Advancement of Science (SLASS).

Mrs Indira Samarasinghe - President Counsel and Principal of the Sri Lanka Law College and an Old girl of Visakha Vidyalaya was received as the Guest of honor.

Best All Rounder title for year 2017 was awarded to Chatuni Wijegunawardana





## INFO V

InfoV 2018, the ICT exhibition organized by the IT Society of Visakha Vidyalaya for the fourth consecutive year was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2018 at the school premises. Hon. Harin Fernando Minister of Telecommunication, Digital Infrastructure and Foreign Employment graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

The INFOV 2018 - ICT Exhibition was organized with the view of enlarging the IT horizon of the future generation of the country.

This event attracted many stakeholders who are responsible for the ICT development of the country. InfoV 2018 - Smart Destination will no doubt created many opportunities for these stakeholders to showcase their technology leadership in the smart sphere, while generating business value both in short and medium term. More than 7,000 of a crowd includes principals, teachers, students, parents and the general public visited the exhibition.



## ALL ISLAND SCHOOL GAMES 2018

Visakha Vidyalaya received the following awards :

<b>Netball</b>	Under 17yrs	- Champion
	Under 20 yrs	- Runners up
<b>Badminton</b>	Under 17yrs	- Champion
	Under 20yrs	- Runners up
<b>Tennis</b>	Under 17 & 20yrs	- Runners up
<b>Table Tennis</b>	Under 20yrs	- Champion
<b>Chess</b>	Under 17yrs	- Champion
<b>Swimming</b>	Under 20yrs	- Champion
<b>Aerobic Gymnastics</b>		- Runners up

## NATIONAL AQUATIC CHAMPIONSHIP 2018

Visakha Vidyalaya was awarded as the National Aquatic Champions 2018, defeating the reigning champions Mahamaya Girls College Kandy, at the Sugathadasa Stadium. Whilst they were able to upgrade from runners up at the last years event, the Visakha Relay team set a new record for the 200meter medley bettering their own record set last year.

Visakha Vidyalaya was awarded the **"Best Performing School of the Year"** at the **All Island School Games 2018**, held in October 2018. The Competition was facilitated by the Ministry of Education and is presided by His Excellency the President .



## SHINNING STARS



### **Jayathma Wickramanayake Dias**

Serves as the UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth since June 2017 to date. Having graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Science from the UOC, she served as a senator in the SL youth parliament. She was the country's 1<sup>st</sup> ever youth delegate to UN. Jayathma is also a co-founder of Hashtag Generation, which is aimed at increasing the civil and political engagement of young Sri Lankans, particularly young women. One of her goals as the Envoy on Youth is to create opportunities for young people and engage them in discussions at all levels.



### **Justice Kumudini Wickramasinghe**

Was elected Gender Representative of Indian Ocean Region at the Commonwealth Magistrates' and Judges' Association 18<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference held in Brisbane, Australia (CMJA - September 2018). Justice Wickremasinghe is currently a Judge of the Court of Appeal of Sri Lanka. She was enrolled as an Attorney-at-Law in the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka in 1986 and she joined the judiciary as a High Court Judge in 2006.

## BIDDING FAREWELL

### **To Visakhians**

We bid farewell to Visakhians who left us

Ms Savithri Nagodawithana (A tribute will be included in the next issue)

Ms Manarangi Wijerathne

Ms Pushpamala Dharmasena (nee Eriyalla)

### **To the Teachers**

Ms Dayani Gunathilake A/L Science section Biology teacher

Ms Indra Samarasinghe O/L section Mathematics teacher

## GLIMPSE OF 2019

- 16<sup>th</sup> January - 102<sup>nd</sup> B' day - Annual Bodhi Pooja.
- 17<sup>th</sup> February - Musical show by Bhathiya and Santhush featuring the new album "Oba Nisa".
- 25<sup>th</sup> March - Founders Day Pirith and Dhana.
- April - Avurudu Pola 2019.
- May - Religious activities and Vesak Celebrations.



## THE VISAKHA VIDYALAYA DINNER DANCE

The Dinner Dance committee came together yet again under the Chairpersons Dehara Gomes & Amal Goonethilleke to organize & execute the Dinner Dance 2018.

The well attended, sparkling event was concluded with high levels of energy on the 25th October 2018. Visakhians of many generations spread across the globe participated at this colourful night and the funds raised will enable, setting up of a **"SMART CLASS ROOM"** for the Visakhians.



## SUB COMMITTEE NOTICES AND OTHERS

### Volunteers Needed

- To serve in the Cafeteria. Please contact Lumini on 0772533229, Chamindi 07776053661.
  - To serve in the Secretariat. Please contact Savanthi on 0776072382 or Madushani on 0778463618.
  - To teach at the Sunday Damma school (qualified) Contact Sabitha on 0777250999.
- 
- Support Exhilaro 2019 - call Navodhya 0772295873, Dhanudra 0718514086 or Thilini 0770292360 for info.
  - Cafeteria requires an employee for cash handling. Working hours will be 6.30am to 3.30pm. Contact Sachini on 0772245949.
  - Desktop computer needed for the Treasurer's room. Contact Amaya on 0773864197.
  - Support and assist VVOGA projects please speak to Savanthi on 0776072382 or Madushani on 0778463618.
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- Opt for the e- Newsletter, please send a request mail to Gaveshika on g2abeyratne@gmail.com
  - Get your school friends to join the OGA and support contact Gayathri 0714779186 or Chethani 0772321254 or send an email to secretariat.vvoga@gmail.com
  - If you have any comments or suggestions please connect with us at secretariat.vvoga@gmail.com

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*Visakha Vidyalaya Old Girls' Association*

*133, Vajira Road, Colombo 5.*

**WISH YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**