

Message from the Principal:

St. Xavier's College Nuwara Eliya, established in 1859 has a proud legacy that has evolved over the years. This year, the College celebrates its 166th anniversary, having faced numerous changes and challenges throughout its rich history. I am pleased to mention that our College is once again making progress in education, sports, and various other areas to promote holistic education.

We are pleased to announce that Hardball cricket was introduced at St. Xavier's College in 1925 by Rev.Fr.Alexander Siriwardene, the Rector of the College during an era when the sport was predominantly confined to planters and few schools. This year, we proudly celebrate the centenary of cricket at our esteemed institution. To commemorate this remarkable milestone, the OBA in collaboration with the College staff, has organized the annual Xaverians Cricket Tournament, which will see participation from numerous cricketers from previous years. The primary objective of this event is to popularize the sport while encouraging the younger generation to engage in activities that foster their personal development with healthy minds and bodies.

It is remarkable to mention that we have taken efforts to re-register our under-13, 15, 17, and 19 teams with the Sri Lanka Schools Cricket Association for the 2024/25 season with the guidance and generous sponsorship of the OBA.

May I thank Our Chief Guest Mr. Samuel, past Cricketer of St Bede's College Badulla, Rev.Fr.Camilus Janz, Dr.S.Pihillegada-Zonal Director, and all of you ladies and gentlemen for being a part of this event today. Let me thank the members of the organizing committee for their hardwork and the Cricketers for enthusiastically taking part in this tournament. Thank you.

Mathew Paulraj SLPS

**Chief Guest
Mr.Samuel**

Past Cricketer of St Bede's College Badulla that was under the purview of the De La Salle Brothers from 1934-1964



News Letter

St Xavier's College Completes 100 Years of Cricket



Rector of the College, Rev.Fr.Alexander Siriwardene 1918-1932



1951

Cricket in Nuwara Eliya dates back to 1856, and St. Xavier's College began its cricket journey in 1925. The college celebrates 100 years of cricket in 2025. The sport was introduced at St. Xavier's under Rev. Fr. Alexander Siriwardene, the College Rector. Throughout the years, several principals, including K.P. Joseph, D. Amos, Noel Nedeson B.G. Bonifass, and the incumbent Principal Mathew Paulraj have contributed in popularizing cricket in the school.



**Mr. H.Roy Hyde
President of the
N'Elia Cricket
Club**

In his 2017 work, Michael Roberts discusses the origins of cricket in British Ceylon, where it was initially a pastime for the British ruling class, including military personnel, officials, merchants, and planters. This activity was part of a broader range of leisure pursuits enjoyed by the British. Cricket's early development in the 1820s and 1830s was primarily driven by military figures and schoolmasters. It remained an urban activity, with the exception of the hill country's plantation clubs, until the late 20th century.

The game spread through various social spheres, with young people playing cricket with makeshift equipment like tennis or kaduru balls on streets, verandas, and other open spaces. Early cricket in Ceylon was institutionalized within military regiments and schools. By the 1860s, cricket clubs were formed. By the 1930s, cricket had become integral to the education of young men from schools in Colombo and Kandy.

In the present context, the game of cricket is no less important. While Sri Lanka has been competing at the highest level for the last four decades, cricket has truly evolved, if not quite into a national game, then surely into a national pastime. Cricket in Ceylon grew alongside the introduction of tea, becoming more organized and popular over time. Tea planters' clubs in the Nuwara Eliya district, such as the DACC, founded in 1856 at Radella and the DMCC at Darrowela, played a key role in establishing the game. The first match between DMCC and DACC in 1870 is one of the island's earliest fixtures. Notable milestones in Nuwara Eliya's cricket history include the 1930 visit of legendary cricketer Sir Jack Hobbs, who named his cottage "Darrowela," and the founding of the Nuwara Eliya Cricket Club.

It is recorded that the first cricket match at Radella had taken place in November 1892, between Lord Hawke's XI and Up-country XI. Another notable match followed in 1962, when the MCC, captained by England's Mike Smith, toured and played against the Up-country XI.



Race Course Grounds 1900

Commenting on the Nuwara Eliya Cricket Club, Henry W. Cave (1900) mentions, "There is an excellent cricket pitch in front of the club, and although this once supremely popular game has, to some extent, suffered through the introduction of golf and croquet, some first-rate cricket is often played here." N'Elia Cricket Club (NECC) has had the Governor, as its patron with Rev.E.Vere Freeman as the President and E.H.Mellor as its Secretary in 1910.

Cricket in Nuwara Eliya peaked in the 1950s, with major tournaments contested by clubs like Ceylon Brewery, Public Services Club, Police, TRI, Cargills, Old Xaverians, Archives, and Forest Club. Notable players included Ivor Newman, Nadarajah, M.A. Sinnen, A. Rafeek, Hema Weerasinghe, and others. The NECC, DACC, DMCC, and Summerhill Cricket Club (SCC) were represented by many Old Xaverians since the 1920s, including cricketers like Athula Senanayake, Van Owen Mattau, Neomal Leonidas, and Noel Leonidas. Old Xaverian Russel Jacobs captained Summerhill CC in 1987, leading the team to Division 3 championships in 2004-2006, later followed by captains Tharanga Wijekoon and Sunanda Ratnasiri.

In 1961, during an award ceremony at the PSC Club, the President of NECC, Mr. Roy Hyde, made a request for a turf in Nuwara Eliya, a dream that remains unfulfilled to this day, and over the past three decades, four sports grounds that were once available for use have disappeared.

The "Battle of the Oldies," a cricket match between the old boys of St. Xavier's College and Gamini National College, is a key event during the Nuwara Eliya holiday

1960



season. Introduced in 2010 for the Mayor's Challenge Cup under the theme "Unity in Diversity," it is seen as a revival of cricket in the area. The event has encouraged many schools to join the Sri Lanka Schools' Cricket Association and motivated non-registered Division 3 clubs to participate in annual matches. The event aims to strengthen bonds among old boys and improve sports and education standards in the district.

The old boys of St. Xavier's College have worked hard to revive their institution for the benefit of future generations. To commemorate 100 years of cricket at St. Xavier's College, the OBA, in collaboration with the principal has planned to organize the Xaverians Cricket Carnival on February 21, 2025, at the Race Course grounds. The event will feature a 20-over match between four house teams: Beckmeyer XI, Alexander XI, Anselm XI, and Noel XI. The tournament will follow international cricket rules, with local umpires and Old Annite Desmond Samuel as the referee. Awards for Best Batsman, Best Bowler, Best Fielder, and Man of the Match will be awarded. The organizing Committee comprises President SXCOBA Sanjeewa Weerasinghe, Jt.Secretaries Benjamin Jeganathan & Nilan de Zoysa, Chandana Fernando, WL Chathurika, Rohan Peiris, RM Nawaz, UC Emmanuel, John Christopher, Gerald Anthony, V.Balendra, Tharanga Wijekoon, Ujitha Samarawickrama, Mohamed Zaky, Shantha de Silva, Subash Gorden, Tony Maxwell, Chrisantha Wanapushpa and Robin Anthony.

<p>Bekmeyer XI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Gerald Anthony--C 2.Sanjeewa Weerasinghe 3.Irshard Mohamed 4.K.Sujeewan 5.Cholitha de Silva 6.PT Prakashan ? 7.Kavindu Peterpaul 8.Ranga Weerasinghe 9.Milad Rayen 10.Puhaneshwaran 11.Colombus Christopher 12.Laxan Chinu 	<p>Anselm XI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Tharanga Wijekoon- C 2.Tony Peterpaul 3.C.W. Peterpaul -WK 4.A.Sudaharan 5.Ramlan Mohamed 6.Gamini Ratnayake 7.S. Luxan 8.Timothy Jeganathan 9.Ujitha Samarawickrama 10.Shantha De Silva 11.Mohomed Zaky 12.Ramesh Kumar
<p>Alexander XI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 UC Emmanuel- C 2 Praveen Tunnard 3 Nadun Buddhika 4 Sameera Dilshan 5 Quinten Charles 6 Nirmal Supun WK 7 Nadun Kalinga 8 Ravichandran 9 Shenal Perera 10 Nuwan Madushanka 11. TS Thuwan 12.Robert Johnson 13.Dammika Medagama 	<p>Noel XI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.John Paul - C 2.Gokul Kumar (wk) 3.Ilshan 4.Akila 5.Pradeepan Jeganathan 6.Ravindran 7.Theeban 8.Ravichandran 9.Radhan 10.Dhiwa Ajei 11.Vijithkumar 12.Vickneswaran 13.J Kumar

Celebrating 165 Years of St. Xavier's College &

77 Years of the Old Boys' Association

Extended version of the article published in the Daily News



The 165th anniversary of St. Xavier's College and the 77th anniversary of the Old Boys' Association organized by the OBA were celebrated on December 7, 2024, at the Queensbury Hotel Nuwara Eliya. The event was graced by the presence of the Chief Guest Dr. Madhura Seneviratne, the Deputy Minister of Education and an alumnus of St. Xavier's College. Principal of the College Mathew Paulraj, Guests of Honour, Rev.Fr.Sivantha Rodrigo-Rector of Our Lady's School, and Addarage Lal, the Assistant Secretary General of the Sri Lanka Schools' Basketball Association, Vice Principal Laxmi Gunasekara and staff members.

The celebrations began following the Vespers service at St. Xavier's Church, led by Chief Celebrant Rev. Fr. Henry Wijeratne, Rector of St. Anthony's College, Kandy and the Parish Priest Rev.Fr.Camilus Janz.

In his address, Chief Guest Dr. Madhura Seneviratne, the Deputy Minister of Education and higher education highlighted the present Government's commitment to fostering equality and equity in education, ensuring that all students have access to a high standard of learning. He commended the administration of St. Xavier's College, under the leadership of Principal Mathew Paulraj, for its dedication to academic excellence.

Dr. Seneviratne reflected fondly on his childhood memories at St. Xavier's College and expressed his happiness at witnessing the scale of the event organized by the Old Boys Association last Saturday.

He emphasized that the new Government's policy is focused on enhancing education across the country and raising the standards of all schools to a uniform level. Acknowledging the challenges that St. Xavier's College has faced in recent years, he expressed his satisfaction at seeing the institution's revival under the current administration. He assured the audience that he would intervene in addressing the issues the College has encountered over the past two decades and pledged to contribute to restoring its former glory and prestige.

Dr. Seneviratne further explained that the Government follows a "Bottom to Top" approach, fostering dynamic dialogues to find solutions to critical issues, with all stakeholders bearing responsibility. He also stressed the need for improvements in other key sectors, such as tourism and agriculture, and reassured that the government is actively working to elevate the nation to the next level.

Looking ahead, Dr. Seneviratne emphasized the importance of unity, with a shared vision and common goals. He underscored that education and healthcare are two critical sectors requiring attention, with the government's policies set to drive meaningful change. "Education is the foundation of all other fields," he stated, highlighting its role in shaping individuals from early childhood through adulthood. He noted that education must be inclusive and sustainable, preparing young people with the skills needed to thrive in today's job market.

Dr. Seneviratne concluded by urging the support of all stakeholders in achieving the country's educational goals, emphasizing that the collective effort is essential for the advancement of education in Sri Lanka.

Principal Mathew Paulraj expressed his gratitude to the staff and members of the Old Boys Association for the trust they had placed in him. He assured them of his commitment in preserving the Xaverian spirit and expressed his anticipation for continued support and cooperation from all parties.

He acknowledged that the presence of Deputy Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr. Madhura Seneviratne added significant value to the event and noted that the celebrations would be remembered in history.



Reflecting on his year in office, the Principal emphasized the importance of unity, urging everyone to work together with shared objectives, thoughts, and aspirations. He remarked that although the College had been in a neglected state, it was now making progress, though the staff would need more time to complete this revitalization. He commended the current teachers for their dedication to both academics and sports, highlighting a 12% improvement in the GCE O/L examination results compared to 2022.

Further, the Principal noted that the Drama Crew had participated in the All-Island Sinhala Drama competition, while the senior football team had reached the All-Island tournament. He also praised the athletes for their strong performances in Zonal and Provincial level meets. In addition, he announced that after registering with the Sri Lanka Schools' Cricket Association, hardball cricket had been reintroduced to the school after two decades. He expressed gratitude to the OBA members for their generous sponsorship for the matches and for providing the necessary sports equipment.

The Principal also mentioned that a recent donation from the OBA, which included two new computers and a brand-new printer, had addressed a long-standing need at the College. He thanked the Old Boys for their efforts in renovating the two-story building in January 2024 and expressed his expectation that the renovation of the staff resource centre, office, and vice-principal's room would follow.

However, he pointed out that the College had yet to receive support from the authorities to improve its building facilities. He noted that the Primary School building had been closed due to its dilapidated condition and emphasized that both the three-story building and the middle school building were in need of repair.

Old Xaverian Sanjeewa Weerasinghe, delivered the welcome address and emphasized on the importance of collective support for the College's revitalization. He called on all stakeholders to rally around the College flag to reinvigorate the institution.



Benjamin Jeganathan, Joint Secretary of the OBA, underscored the inclusive nature of the College, which has served students of all backgrounds for the last 165 years. He introduced St Xavier's College as the mainspring of social mobility in the district. He highlighted the important role of the OBA in supporting the development of the College, referencing key projects such as the construction of the College's upper building in 1958, which was spearheaded by Rev. Fr. D.M. Xavier with the OBA. Promoting education, sports activities and extracurricular activities, and safeguarding the College since 1960 are a few projects launched by the OBA.

The arrival of the new Principal Mr.Mathew Paulraj in October 2023 has renewed focus on the College's revival, especially after challenges the institution has faced since its takeover in 1960. Jeganathan noted that the OBA has contributed over Rs. 4.5 million to various projects, including the renovation of the two-story building, donation of cutting-edge 12th-generation computers and a new printer, and the promotion of athletics, football, and cricket across various age groups, Twenty Scholarships, and the donation towards the renovation of the Church.

He also commended the Principal and staff for their dedication to both education and sports. Special mention was made of the Under-19 football team, athletes and the drama crew for their participation in National Level competitions this year, all of whom received sponsorship from the OBA.

In recognition of the contributions to Sri Lanka's music industry, Paul Perera, Cecil Palpola, and Anton Mathew of the Rubicons Band formed in 1963 were awarded with a token of appreciation by the Chief guest.

The Chief Guest was presented with a copy of the Xaverian book published in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the College, and a dossier of documents with school development proposals that would be supported by the OBA.

Joint Secretary Nilan de Zoysa urged the educational authorities to conduct a thorough and fair investigation into various unresolved issues, including the mysterious fire that engulfed the College's main hall in 2017, staff appointments, closing down of the Advanced Level sections and the destruction caused to the science laboratories that were set up in 1958 by Rev.Bro.Anselm Stanislaus, and alleged irregularities during the previous administration.

Suren Swaminathan, Senior Advisor and Chairman of the Sri Lanka Business Council in UAE, shared a message celebrating the 165th anniversary of St. Xavier's College, Nuwara Eliya. He reflected on the school's humble beginnings in 1859 with just 33 students and a single teacher, growing into one of Sri Lanka's most esteemed bilingual boys' schools. Swaminathan highlighted the appointment of a distinguished old boy as Deputy Minister of Education and higher education and praised the school's legacy of excellence. He acknowledged the challenges faced by the school, including periods of neglect, but credited the alumni's dedication for its revival. The appointment of an old boy as Principal and ongoing projects aimed at improving the school's facilities and educational standards were also celebrated. He concluded by reaffirming the commitment to St. Xavier's mission, emphasizing the importance of nurturing young minds, instilling values, and shaping future leaders.

The event also saw the Assistant Secretary General of the Sri Lanka Schools Basketball Association, who attended as the Guest of Honour, pledge support for the revival of basketball at St. Xavier's College, a sport that had flourished in the 1950s.



As a final highlight, a cheque for Rs. 350,000 was presented to Gamini Bandara Manikdiwela to launch an Artificial Intelligence teaching program worth over Rs 2 million for a group of 100 students at St. Xavier's College.

The event was attended by distinguished guests, including Senior Journalist Mr.Gamini Bandara Manikdiwela of Rupavahini Corporation, Nimal Kumarasiri, Principal of Gamini National College, Vaniha Malar Balendran, Principal of Good Shepherd Convent, as well as representatives from Past Pupils' Associations of Gamini CC, Good Shepherd Convent and Holy Trinity CC, parishioners, and well-wishers.

The event was compered by V.Balendran. Past President RM Nawaz proposed the vote of thanks and Senior Advisor Paul Perera proposed a toast during the fellowship. The event was enlivened by the performance of the Beat Band Xaverians, featuring Kamal Gunaratne, Tiran Thobius, and Timothy Wanigasekara. The organizing committee, which played a key role in bringing the event to life, included Mathew Paulraj, Benjamin Jeganathan, Sanjeewa Weerasinghe, Nilan de Zoysa, UC Emmanuel, RM Nawaz, Rohan Peiris, UA Ranjith, V. Balendran, Ramesh Kumar, S. Vincent, Srinath Wickramasinghe, Gerald Anthony, Anthony Joseph, C. Medagama, Chaminda Namal, and Dammika Wahindara.



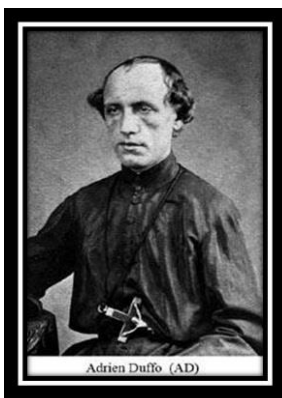
OBA 1947



OBA Members at the 75th Anniversary – 1947-2022

St. Xavier's College: A Concise Journey Through History and Progress

The chronicles of the history of St. Xavier's Church extend far beyond the threshold of the year 1844, gaining prominence in 1848 with a generous land donation by the 4th Viscount Torrington, George Bying, for a new ecclesiastical sanctuary. The school's humble beginnings in 1859 with 33 students and a single teacher eventually evolved into the esteemed St. Xavier's College. Initially established as a modest missionary school, it soon emerged as a powerful agent of social progress in Nuwara Eliya, providing free education and becoming a beacon of social mobility.



Rev. Fr. Adrian Bertrand Duffo and Rev. Fr. John Peter Perreard took the pioneering step to establish a school aimed at enhancing Parish activities. The foundation of what was then known as the Tin Bungalow, situated behind the present College main block, marked the inception of this educational venture. As months turned into years, the news of this initiative spread rapidly throughout the town, attracting a significant influx of students. Since its inception, the management of the school has been guided by Parish Priests. From 1865 to 1910 notable figures include Rev. Fr. Leo Cingolani and Fr. A. Lanfranc Assaw, Rev. Fr. D. Paul Perera O.S.B, Rev. Fr. D.M. Craner O.S.B, Rev. Fr. H. Tozzi, Rev. Fr. D.E. Regni O.S.B, Rev. Fr. D.S. Papili O.S.B, and Rev. Fr. D.H. Leitan, each contributing their leadership and vision to the school during their respective tenures.

From 1910 to 1932, the helm of St. Xavier's College was steered by Rev. Fr. S.J.S. Rodrigo, MA Mis. Ap, distinguished as the first Sri Lankan to enter the University of Rome, alongside Rev. Fr. D.B. Hyde O.S.B., a true son of the soil, and Rev. Fr. A. Siriwardene spearheaded both educational advancements and transformative initiatives. Their pioneering efforts extended beyond academics, leading to the establishment of the first-ever Western music band, a boarding house, and the formation of the inaugural district scout troop. Recognizing the

inadequacy of temporary structures in coping with Nuwara Eliya's weather conditions, they laid the foundation for a permanent edifice, giving rise to the Siriwardene Block in the early 20th century.

As of today, St. Xavier's College stands as a prominent national institution, reaching diverse segments of society, and is set to celebrate 165 years of excellence in 2024. The College achieved grant registration as an English School in 1921, marking a significant milestone. The Managers demonstrated unwavering dedication, overcoming initial challenges and steering the college towards rapid progress. Their remarkable efforts are cherished by both alumni and parishioners, fondly remembered for elevating educational standards, pioneering sports activities such as hardball cricket, and boxing, introducing the house system, initiating the publication of the College magazine, and establishing Sri Lanka's first-ever school museum at St. Xavier's College. Their indelible contributions resonate in the hearts of thousands. During the years 1922 to 1927, the progress of the College was significantly aided by the dedicated efforts of Rev. Fr. D.M. Silva, Rev. Fr. D.G. Phoebus, Rev. Fr. Robert Perera, and Rev. Fr. D.H. Van Reyk. Their collective contributions played a vital role in advancing the institution during this period. Following this, in 1932, Rev. Fr. D.R.M. Balderelli OSB assumed leadership. One of his early initiatives was the construction of the College main hall and a senior-class block. Mr. D. Terrence Coddipili, a distinguished Xaverian and Superintendent of the Postal Service, has put forth a proposal to christen the esteemed hall as 'The Balderelli Hall'. Unfortunately, both structures met an unexpected tragedy when a mysterious fire engulfed them in 2007, the cause of which remains undisclosed.

Between 1934 and 1955, the school was under the able guidance of dedicated individuals, including Rev. Fr. D. Clement Marri O.S.B., Fr. D. D. Basenbach O.S.B., Rev. Fr. D. P. Farina O.S.B., and Rev. Fr. D. O. Filipponi O.S.B. Their enthusiasm and commitment played a vital role in shaping the destiny of the school during this period. In 1929, Dr. James T. Rutnam, a distinguished alumnus of St. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia, made history as the first lay Principal of the institution. His unwavering dedication was a driving force, instrumental in propelling the college to greater heights, fostering enthusiasm, and instilling a healthy collegiate spirit. The 1930 edition of the College magazine proudly declares, "the school can rightfully boast of being one of the premier institutions of its kind in the Island. The education provided at the school is in line with modern, up-to-date methodologies". Mr. K.P. Joseph BA, BL, hailing from India, held the position of Principal from 1930 to 1945. His profound influence in shaping the character and academic pursuits of the students is still recalled fondly by those fortunate enough to have experienced their school days under his guidance. As recalled by Old Xaverian Freddy Young in 2010, "his contribution in moulding boys in character and fostering a passion for knowledge remains a beacon for us. During his tenure, examination results consistently stood at the highest standards, preparing the departing students to confidently face the challenges of the world." The 1930 college magazine chronicled the endeavours of several Old Boys who had excelled in diverse fields such as the mercantile sector, postal service, estate administration, and various other branches. Notably, in 1941, the school was elevated to the status of a senior secondary institution, marking a significant milestone in its educational journey.

Mr. A. D. D'abrera was appointed Principal in 1945. It was during his tenure that the Old Boys' Association of the College was established with the inspiration of Rev. Fr. Fareena. This initiation with a handful of old boys has come a long way; the OBA, the oldest of its kind in the district reached its 75th Anniversary in 2022.

The Old Boys' Association Presidents, including Messrs. D. D'abrera, D. Amos, H. Hameed, S. J.

Anthony, T. G. Rayen (Attorney at Law), Russell Jacobs, G. W. Sigamoneypillai, R. M. Nawaz, M. M. P. Senaratne, U. D. Peiris, Chandana Fernando (BSc, MBA), along with Secretaries such as Messrs. Thomas Bastian, Francis Xavier, H. Hameed, T. E. Sama, P. C. Jayaratne, Paul Perera, T. B. Jeganathan (MA), Michael De Silva (B.Com.Spl.), Stephen Samraj (MBA), Douglas Anthony, and Nilan De Zoysa, deserve immense credit for their outstanding leadership within the Old Boys' Association. Their dedication and efforts have effectively preserved the Xaverian flame for the past 75 years. The construction of the science laboratories and the office block in 1958, spearheaded by Rev. Fr. D. M. Xavier, received significant support from the Old Boys. They actively participated in fundraising through carnivals and contributed labour, demonstrating their dedication to the enhancement of the college facilities. The late Mr. Robert Perera used to passionately recount his experiences of carrying bricks and sand, exemplifying the dedication and hands-on involvement of the old boys in the project.

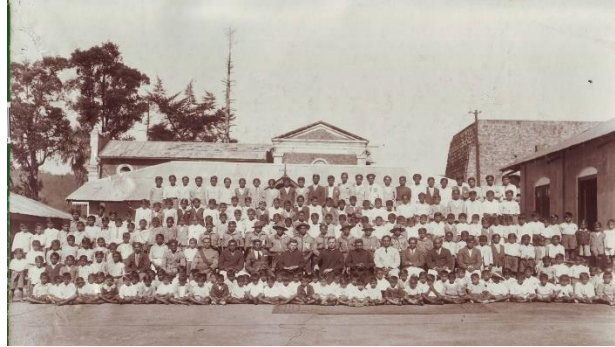
Since 1957, Rev. Bro. Anselm Stanislaus FSC well supported by Rev. Bro. Alfred FSC, Rev. Bro. Condred Rodrigo FSC, Rev. Bro. Gabriel FSC, Rev. Bro. Mathew De Silva FSC devoted tremendous effort to elevate the college to new heights. Rev. Bro. Anselm spearheaded the establishment of the physics, chemistry, and biology laboratories; and the introduction of basketball, soccer, hockey, drama, and music—initiatives that added significant prestige to the College. Under his wise guidance, the rich tapestry of Xaverian traditions was meticulously woven into the fabric of the institution. Among his students, Fr. Bertrand Mack and Fr. Anthony Crooze pursued a path to priesthood. Tommy Kelaart emerged Manager at the Grand Hotel, and T.E. Sama became the Manager of Cargills. Additionally, Mahinda Ranaweera achieved the distinction as the best Batik Artist in Sri Lanka, winning nine Presidential awards. Athula Senanayake emerged as Mr. Ceylon in 1963. Moreover, Jewel Gunathilake (The Morton Cole Combo), Ananda Gunathilake, Cecil Palpola, Kalabushana Paul Perera (Rubicons), Julian Pakeer (Jet-Liners) Claude Mathew, Patrick Aroykam, and Albert Thomasz gained recognition as accomplished musicians. These successes are a testament to the profound impact of his guidance, with many others under his tutelage reaching remarkable heights in their respective lives. After his tenure at SXC, Rev. Bro. Anselm embarked on a remarkable journey. He became the pioneering director of St. Peter's High School in Lyallpur, Pakistan (1961-1981). His journey continued as he spent his final days in Jerusalem and peacefully entered eternal rest on the 11th of July, 1994, in France. Until his passing, he maintained regular correspondence with the OBA Secretary, Mr. T. E. Sama. Mr. Sama along with fellow old boys, played a pivotal role in resisting the school take-over bill in 1960. Their determination led them to invite Hon. W. Dahanayake—the Ex. Prime Minister to address a gathering in Nuwara Eliya as part of their crusade.



St Xavier's College 1964

During the tenure of Mr. D.M. Amos (1945-1965), the school navigated through some of its most challenging times. One of the most distressing events, destined to remain a topic of fervent discussion and debate for years to come, was the takeover of the College in 1961—an event that marked the tragic end of a glorious era due to unfortunate circumstances. Regrettably, we continue

to witness the lasting repercussions of this short-sighted decision. Prof. J.N.O. Fernando (2009) aptly points out that the term 'Educational reforms' is one of the most abused phrases in Sri Lanka. Additionally, Prof. G.T.D. Francis de Silva highlights that modifications in education and employment opportunities have taken a negative turn due to shifts in language policies and the takeover of schools (2010).



St Xavier's College 1932

Mr. Noel Nadeson, who served as the principal from 1967 to 1984, skilfully steered the college through turbulent times, maintaining the standard of education while upholding discipline and fostering unity among diverse communities. His passion led to the formation of the modern Western band, and the inter-house sports meet gained the prestigious title 'Mini Olympics'. Xaverians thrived under his guidance, clinching championship titles in athletics, soccer, basketball, hockey, and English language competitions. Notably, in 1981, Dr. Savithri made history as the first A/L student from St. Xavier's College to gain admission to the medical faculty at the University of Peradeniya. Athletes D.M. Indrapala, R.M. Nawaz, Susil Ratnasiri, Ram Gopal, M.M.Zameem, Buddhasiri, Thilakasiri, Ajith Wijesinghe, UC Emmanuel, Sridaran and Sivakumar Lamahewa, excelled in sports. Today, Xaverians can be found across diverse walks of life and professions, embodying the essence of the college motto: 'God, Truth, and Charity.' They have excelled in various fields, including priesthood, law, engineering, medicine, academia, music, cricket, soccer, golf, athletics, entrepreneurship, and more. Their accomplishments stand as a testament to the holistic education imparted by the college.



St Xavier's College 1982

It is worth commending the notable contribution of Mr. Paul Perera, the senior advisor and former secretary of the OBA, for his instrumental role in the declaration of St. Xavier's premises as sacred land in 2017. In 1987, the SDS was established, with Mr. Percy de Zoysa as its secretary, leading the initiative to reintroduce Sinhala Medium A/L Classes. The Principal-Mr. Gaston Bonifass strived to improve the standard of education and promoted sports including hardball Cricket; Sunanda Ratnasiri, Dhanushka Gunasekara, Sugeeshwara M. Frank Julian, Shantha de Silva, Rukmal Fernando, Mohamed Zaky, Tony and Wanapushpa, S. Weerasinghe, Tharanga Wijekoon, Mohamed Ishard, Gerald Anthony, Sudaharan, Lal Senanayake and many more excelled in the sport. Following his retirement in 1997, the OBA education committee, consisting of Messrs. Paul Perera, Suren Swaminathan, R. M. Nawaz, T.B. Jeganathan, Nilan De Zoysa, Neil Wijeratne, Rohan Peiris, V. Vadivel, M. Ranasinghe, U.C. Emmanuel, Srinath Wickramasinghe, J. Crooze, Abdul Latheef, Mahinda Silva, Dilan Dominic, Paulraj Rosario, S.

Vincent, V. Balendran, Robin Prasad, Princely David, John Christopher, the late Messrs. Marshal Wickramasinghe, Mervyn Nicholas, Ralph Quyn, Arthur Perera, Bernard Amarathunga, Patrick Jayaratne, Bernard Benjamin, Freddy Fernando, Noel Perera, Ms. Shiro Manathunga, Shirly Mack et al worked tirelessly to revitalize the College. Their unwavering dedication played a pivotal role in advocating for the appointment of a De La Salle Brother (SLPS G -2)—a distinguished alumnus of the University of Peradeniya, a Principal (SLPS G-1) holding a Master's Degree in Education from Colombo, and two alumni within the SLPS to guide the destinies of the College. However, these visionary proposals faced resistance from the authorities, and the exact reasons for this opposition remain undisclosed. Concluding his write-up on SXC in 2021, Capt. Elmo Jayawardena remarked, "Perhaps from its vantage view, Pidurutalagala witnessed the entire narrative. It might have even shed a tear or two for some of the governing absurdities. Yet, in silence, it cheered for the inherent goodness that resided within the walls of this institution"

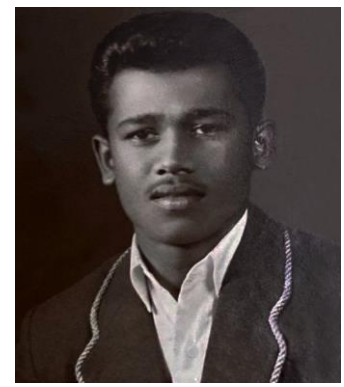
Nevertheless, the OBA, driven by unwavering loyalty, has triumphantly spearheaded numerous initiatives. These include the revival of the cherished Xaverian crest and blazer, modernizing the College Anthem through cutting-edge technology, establishing a website, organizing sports meets, promoting English language and mathematics, nurturing hardball cricket through the Mayor's Cup and the Baker's Cup, refurbishing the College office building, generously contributing over a million rupees towards the church renovations, and collaborating with other OBAs to address educational irregularities through legal interventions. In 2010, a momentous milestone was achieved with the inception of the OBA-Colombo branch. In 2017, Mr. M.M.P. Senaratne, the most senior active King's scout in Sri Lanka, took on the role of President at the remarkable age of 90. In addition, several impactful projects were successfully undertaken by the OBA from 1997 to 2023. These initiatives include the school development proposals in 2017, the establishment of twenty scholarships, the publication of the College history, the implementation of free online teaching during the pandemic, online Christmas Carols, contributing to the school library improvement, and the preservation of vintage photographs.

While offering our sincere tribute to all our mentors and teachers at SXC, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to Rev. Fr D.M Xavier, Rev. Fr. Theodore Peiris, Rev. Fr. G.I. Fernando, Rev. Fr. J. Fernandez, Rev. Fr. Kingsley de Silva, Rev. Fr. P. Warnakulasuriya, Rev. Fr. I. Samarakoon, Rev. Fr. J. Miranda, Rev. Fr. Leslie Perera, Rev. Fr. V. Wijesuriya, Rev. Fr. Nerio Abraham, Rev. Fr. Christy Fernando, Rev. Sr. Felicia Jusse, Rev. Sr. Shirly de Silva FMM, Rev. Sr. E. Gunaratne and the current Parish priest Rev. Fr. Sudath Rohana Perera for their Support and motivation. The OBA's primary aim of this initiative is to rekindle the former glory and rejuvenate this esteemed institution, ultimately benefitting the children who are destined to thrive as individuals of virtuous character and excellent education—a pressing need for our beloved Mother Lanka in the present day.

At this important juncture, we urge all stakeholders to collectively uphold the standards while revitalizing this esteemed institution for the betterment of future generations, ensuring inclusivity and equality for all

Forward her children dear, ever with hearts sincere, - render with joy to your mater her due. All that is vile reject, Heaven will e'er protect, - Sons of St Xavier's valiant and true!

These words, a mellifluous testament, encapsulate the ethos of our journey - one of unity, divine guidance, and intellectual illumination. May the 175th Jubilee of St. Xavier's Church pave the way for success in our endeavours.



Athula Senanayake, Cricketer of yesteryear

Almost a century later, in the 1950s, leather ball cricket was re-introduced to N' Eliya schools by Athula Senanayake at the request of Mr. H.R. Hyde and Mr. Archie Vansaden of the N' Eliya District Cricket Association. Athula, an all-rounder for the Nuwara Eliya police cricket team, was tasked with selecting players from various schools, as none had enough boys for leather ball cricket.

With the help of Mr. Bonifas R. Payo from Gamini College, Athula trained the boys, and despite lacking cricket equipment, they successfully raised funds from local shops and estates. Athula became the captain of N' Eliya's first combined schools cricket team, and they won their historic match against St. Thomas' College Guruthalawa at the N' Eliya racecourse ground. The return match and subsequent games followed at other venues, including Kurunegala, Kandy, Kalutara, and against senior club teams like Ceylon Brewery and Dimbula Cricket Club.

Support from tea planters helped further the development of cricket in the region. At 82, Athula reflects with pride on the progress of cricket in Nuwara Eliya, expressing his lifelong love for the sport and the cricketers who came before and after him.

He had an illustrious career in sports, academics, and work. He was a prominent athlete, bodybuilder, and sports leader, achieving several milestones throughout his life. Athula was Mr. Ceylon professional in 1963 and 1964, and he was also the first Mr. Kalutara and Mr. N' Eliya District. He excelled in athletics, winning titles in shot put, discus throw, and the 4x100 meters relay at the All-Ceylon International Schools Championship.

Athula was the first-ever captain of combined schools' cricket teams in N' Eliya and captained various teams in cricket, football, volleyball, and athletics. He was also a top performer in sports like the shot put and discus throw, representing multiple institutions including the Police Cricket Team and ACE Athletic Club.

In 1954, he introduced physical culture and bodybuilding to Kalutara, training young athletes free of charge. He later worked in Saudi Arabia as a sports instructor and earned numerous accolades, including the Best Employee

When contacted by phone on February 18th, 2025, Athula Senanayake expressed his happiness upon hearing that the Old Boys' Association (OBA) of St. Xavier's College is actively working to revive and strengthen the institution in all aspects. He emphasized that the current students and their parents should be deeply grateful to the OBA members for their dedicated efforts in revitalizing the school for the benefit of future generations.



OBA Cricket Team 2023