



## HAPPY EASTER TO ALL!

On behalf of the Peterite Alumni Association and the entire board, we wish you a blessed and joyful Easter. As we celebrate this season of renewal, let us reflect on the hope that Easter brings— a hope that, as the Pope reminds us, encourages us to look beyond our challenges and trust in the promise of new life. May this time inspire peace, love, and the strength to embrace the hope that unites us all. Our heartfelt wishes extend to you, your families, and loved ones here and across the globe. Happy Easter!

## IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER THIS MONTH

- 1st April - Eid al-Fitr
- 8th April - Suren Sugamaran Birthday
- 10th April - Chehan Mendis Birthday - Vice President
- 11th April - Kushan Delapalage Birthday
- 12th April - Marlon Fernando Birthday
- 14th April - Sinhala and Tamil New Year
- 20th April - Easter



- 23rd April - Rahal Delpechitra Birthday
- 26th April - Tinoj Perera Birthday
- 30th April - Travine Liyanage Birthday

## NOTICE OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA

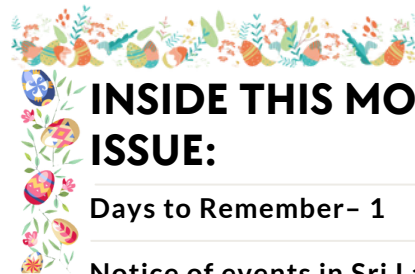
- 3rd, 4th and 5th April - 91st Battle of the Saints will be held at the SSC, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 26th April - 51st Battle of the Saints, 50 Over Encounter will be held at the SSC, Colombo, Sri Lanka

## ADVANCE NOTICE OF EVENTS

- 2nd May (Friday), Membership Night at The Base Kitchen + Bar, Scarborough. This is the perfect opportunity to connect with others and enjoy a night of fun and entertainment. With karaoke, live games, and a delicious dinner buffet, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Whether you're coming solo or bringing family and friends, it's sure to be a night filled with laughter and great memories. Limited tickets are available at just \$55 per person, so don't wait – reserve your spot today!

## WHAT'S GOING ON AND WHAT'S NEW WITH US?

- Practices for the 2025 Cricket Season have commenced from this month. Please check in and place your preference on dates, locations and attendance on the PAAO Cricket group chat.
- If you are interested in playing soccer/futsal please get in touch with Mr. Trevine Fernando - Secretary Memberships. Please check in and confirm your attendance on the PAAO Soccer/Futsal group chat.
- We are excited to announce an art competition for all young Peterites aged 10 and below. We invite parents to submit a photo of their child's drawing, created under the theme "Welcome Spring", to Mr. Trevine Fernando, Secretary of Memberships, via WhatsApp. We look forward to your participation!



## INSIDE THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

Days to Remember- 1

Notice of events in Sri Lanka - 1

Advance Notice of events- 1

Whats going on and new - 1

Notices - 2

Membership Renewal - 2

Reminiscing by James A. - 3 - 6





## NOTICES

- Membership renewals for 2025 are now underway.
  - Please take a moment to visit our website and renew your membership at your earliest convenience. (<https://www.spcobutoronto.ca/membership> - and click renew my membership)
  - Please note that participation in any social or sporting activities of the PAAO is only available to members who are in good standing with active, paid memberships.
- If you're interested in contributing articles to the Newsletter or exploring other ideas, please reach out to Mr. Trevine Fernando - Secretary Memberships.
- Check out our Marketplace and Industry Leaders pages on the website – jump in and join the action if you're up for it!

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL UPDATE: A WARM WELCOME TO OUR CONTINUED SUPPORTERS

NUMBER OF PAID MEMBERS AS OF 28TH MARCH 2025 : **45**

For those who have not yet renewed, we invite you to join these dedicated members in continuing your journey with us. Your membership is crucial to our collective success, and we are excited to work alongside you in the upcoming year.

To renew, please visit <https://www.spcobutoronto.ca/membership> - and click renew my membership

Thank you once again to all our members for your ongoing engagement. We look forward to achieving even greater milestones together!





## REMINISCING - AN ARTICLE BY MR. JAMES ALAGARATNAM

In this set of memories, I thought of highlighting the history of the formation of Peterite alumni in Toronto. No better Peterite than Upali Obeysekera – an almanac of information, regards the history of St. Peter's and one of the founding members of the 1<sup>st</sup> joint association of Old Joes and Old Petes. Upali had been at the helm of the joint association, leading it and keeping it alive for many years, even at his own expense when necessary to look after the travel and hosting of Rectors and former dignitaries, the likes of cricket captains, Adiel Anghie, Tyrone LeMercier to mention just a few. Worldwide, our Lankan alumni hold such camaraderie spirits, that from north to south of the country, almost all of the schools continue their camaraderie. Thank You to Upali for the following history.

### **AUTHENTICATED HISTORY OF JOSEPHIAN-PETERITE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF CANADA**

The Josephian-Peterite Alumni Association of Canada (JPAA Canada) was formed in 1984 in Toronto, Canada. JPAA Canada was the first Sri Lanka Schools' Alumni Association to be formed in Canada. We pride ourselves of this fact. Others followed in the early 90s and now every school in Sri Lanka have formed Old Boys' Associations in Toronto mainly, and in other provinces as well.

It all started in 1982 at the home of a loyal Peterite Upali Obeyesekere. Over a drink one summer day – Elmo Obeyesekere, an old Josephian was having a drink with his son Upali and his good friend Benito de Silva (Josephian). Elmo had already earned his name as a sports promoter par excellence in his hometown of Kurunegala. In conversation, Elmo suggested to Upali and Benito to launch a Canadian version of the Josephian-Peterite cricket series in Toronto. At the time there may have been around 50-75 Canadians who attended either of the two schools in Colombo.

Elmo sadly passed away in 1983 of a heart attack. The seed he planted became a reality when Upali took it as a challenge to get the job done in memory of his dear father. In 1984, Upali met with his close friend Benito and together, they enlisted a core group among their circle of friends in Toronto who attended both SJC & SPC. They agreed on some fundamental protocol such as the group should consist of equal number representing each school. After deliberating, they came up with the following who are the founders of what was the first Josephian-Peterite Alumni Association of Canada,

**Mission Objective** - The Mission of JPAA Canada was to provide a forum where the alumni of SJC and SPC could meet and greet one another, engage in sports activities, social activities, and foster camaraderie between the alumni of both schools. As an extension, another objective was to assist the alma mater of both schools by sending funds periodically.

**AD-HOC COMMITTEE** – With the sparse numbers available it was decided to form an Ad-Hoc Committee to get the ball rolling. The following were handpicked to be part of this committee with a mission to organise the inaugural Josephian-Peterite cricket encounter on Canadian soil.

Benito de Silva, Sunimal Perera, Roy Alles, Jimmy Raymond, Raymon Lord, from the Josephian camp and Upali Obeyesekere, Hazmee Hameed, Nihal Perera, Anton Perera, Lyall Bakelmun from the Peterite camp. Upali functioned as the Co-ordinator while Anton Perera was Treasurer of the group. All meetings from 1984-1990 were hosted at the residence of Upali at 57 Overton Crescent in Don Mills.

## INAUGURAL CRICKET MATCH

Securing a cricket ground in Greater Toronto Area (GTA) was alarmingly difficult in the eighties. With great difficulty a cricket ground was negotiated, and the Inaugural Josephian-Peterite Cricket Encounter was played in 1985 at the picturesque Marigail Cricket Grounds in Orangeville. Benito de Silva captained the Josephian team while Upali Obeyesekere captained the Peterite team.

The image below shows the two captains (Upali Obeyesekere SPC and Benito de Silva SJC) walking out from the Marigail Sports Club pavilion for the toss in 1985 – inaugural Joe-Pete encounter in Canada.



After many phone calls, the two captains successfully got the teams ready for the match. The Josephians had a formidable team compared to the Peterites.

Led by Upali Obeyesekere, the Peterite team comprised of Ronnie Willenburg, Nihal Jayawardena, Andrew Goonetilleke (visiting from Sri Lanka), Susantha Obeyesekere, Ranjit Wijeyesekere, Lucky Ranchigoda, Nihal Perera, Basil Gurusinghe, Maurice Ranchigoda and Neville de Silva.

The Josephian team led by Benito de Silva comprised of Ray Lord, Ian Joseph, Chris Cooke, Sunimal Perera, Rohan Vanigasooriyar, Noel Bartholomeusz, Derrick de Silva (From USA), Melvin Machado, Anslem Lawrence, Shirley Rangalla, and Ken Serpanchy (From USA).

Reserves were Errol de Silva, Peter Karunaratne, Srilal Wijeyesekere, Lalith de Silva, K. Kulendran, Sarath Rajanayagan for the Peterites. The Josephian reserves were Balendra Naguleswaran, George Wannappa, Kumar Lawrence, Roshan Wannappa.

For the record, this “big match” in 1985, was the first Sri Lanka Schools’ encounter that took place on Canadian soil. JPAA Canada is proud of this honour. Kudos to the Ad-Hoc Committee for their initiative in organising this memorable match. Rev. Fr. (Dr) Stanley Abeysekara, Rector of St. Joseph’s College was Chief Guest at this inaugural match. Using his personal connection, Upali negotiated with him to attend the event., using his personal funds. There were no funds available in the newly formed JPAA coffers. It was a great start that was well received by the Sri Lankan-Canadian community at-large.

The Josephians won the Inaugural Josephian-Peterite (Canadian Series) match easily with a young star-studded team.





NOTE: Originally scheduled Joe-Pete match of 1984 was called off due to bad weather and all players were informed.

## **INAUGURAL DINNER DANCE**

JPAA Canada flourished in time and decided next to have their Inaugural Dinner Dance. The same Committee organized a super dinner dance on the 27 of May 1988, at The Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in Don Mills. Music was provided by Music Masters (DJ) and attracted around 350 guests. Another for the record, that this was the first dinner dance by a Sri Lanka Schools' Alumni Association in Canada. The "JPAA Brand" had made an indelible mark on the Sri Lankan-Canadian Community. Guests who attended the dance were from Toronto, but came from Ottawa, Hamilton, Windsor, and other cities within the Ontario Province.

## **JPAA CANADA REGISTERED ASSOCIATION**

As the years went by, the numbers increased with the exodus of Sri Lankans immigrating to Canada among whom were past students of SJC & SPC. After much deliberation, it was decided to structure JPAA Canada as a registered association and this was done 1993, with a set of by-laws and Constitution. Upali Obeyesekere was elected the Inaugural President of JPAA Canada. Others who were elected at the meeting were Ian Joseph (Vice President-SJC) and Anton Perera (Vice President-SPC), Benito de Silva (Hony. Secretary), Srilal Perera (Hony. Treasurer), Hazmee Hameed (Social Secretary), Bhanu Wijeyesekere (Membership), Nihal Jayawardena and Chris Cooke (Joint Sports Secretaries).

Chris Serpanchy was appointed Hony. Auditor. Group photo of the first Board of Directors is shown here below. It must be noted that Chris was Hony. Auditor of JPAA Canada from 1993-2017.





## **THE FOLLOWING PETERITES HAVE PRESIDED OVER THE JPAA CANADA – BETWEEN (1993-2017)**

1993 - Upali Obeyesekere  
1994 - Anton Perera  
1996 - Hazmee Hameed  
1998 - Bhanu Wijeyesekera  
2001 - Nihal Jayawardene  
2003 - Rehan Goonetilleke  
2005 - Roderick Diaz  
2007 - Ranier de Lambert  
2009 - Roshan Navaratnam.

The JPAA under Upali's guidance continued to be active with the influx of more old boys of both alma maters arriving in Canada. It was an opportune time to separate into the respective alumnus.

Srimal Abeyewardene together with an ad-hoc committee worked towards forming a Peterite Identity registering the Peterite Alumni Association, Ontario.

## **THE FOLLOWING HAVE PRESIDED OVER THE PAAO SINCE IT'S INAUGURATION**

Nakulesparan Prabhakaran, James Alagaratnam, Ricardo Joseph, Terrence Rajah, John Shanil Fernando (current president). We owe a big thank you to the ladies (and families) of our old boys who have always been there to "Lend a Heart and Lend a hand". The many dignitaries, like past captains, players, well known personalities, from all over who have willingly graced our occasions.

In all these times one loyal Peterite has always been there carrying the flag, whether a committee member or not- Glen Ragell. Keep the flag flying. Thank You to Upali for all the records.

**-END-**

*On behalf of the President and the Board, we extend our sincere appreciation to Mr. James Alagaratnam for his insightful article, "Reminiscing," which beautifully captured the inception and key milestones of the PAAO. His detailed narrative offers a compelling look into the organization's history and accomplishments, highlighting the dedication and progress that have defined PAAO over the years.*

We encourage all our readers to engage with our newsletter by sharing articles or stories that inspire them, just as James has done. Your contributions help enrich our community and provide valuable perspectives that reflect the diverse voices within PAAO.

We look forward to more engaging content from our members and hope to see many others share their stories in future editions.



*Peterites*



1ST APRIL 2025 VOL. 1 NO. 5

SPC OBU Canada Newsletter



**Peterite Alumni Association Ontario**

# Membership Night

**"Bridging Generations, Strengthening Bonds"**

**2 MAY / 8 PM**

**Come and connect with your fellow Peterites**

**DJ KUSH**

**DARCO &  
BLACK  
MAGIC**

**DISCOUNTED  
DRINKS**

**\$55 PER  
PERSON**  
LANKAN  
DINNER BUFFET

**THE BASE**

KITCHEN + BAR

**3482 LAWRENCE AVE E  
SCARBOROUGH**

**KIDS  
WELCOME**

**TICKETS**

**TREVINE 403 870 2780 / NAVIN 905 922 2936 / JOHN 905 598 5646**