

Late Mr. Mandalanayagam Balasubramaniam



23 February 1935 – 2 March 2015

An affable personality, he embodied true Thomian grit

Once again the cold hand of death has snatched a man of great character. When the unassuming passes into the unknown, paeans are hardly ever sung but, with Mandalanayagam Balasubramaniam passing away, the legend will live on. Bala popularly known as Walkers Bala, Lucas Bala and Castrol Bala, an esteemed and affable personality, epitomising true Thomian grit, received the lifetime achievement award at the 125th OBA celebration dinner.

As a father, he was the best of the best and a pillar of strength to all those who crossed his path. Born February 23, 1935, he celebrated his 80th birthday this year and also his 52nd wedding anniversary on February 9.

Bala excelled in athletics, as Captain of the Athletics squad, STC won the Tarbet Shield and he also held the public school record for the 100 metres and 200 metres in athletics. He was Head Prefect of St. Thomas' College in 1955 and was awarded the Victoria Gold Medal.

Bala was constantly active in the numerous projects of the OBA as Vice President in the mid-90s, Chairman of the Athletics Steering Committee; moving on to be Co-Chairman of the Organising Committee for the 125th Battle of the Blues and later President of the Centenary Group.

Career-wise, he joined Walkers right after school and stayed with them for 30 years. He was the Founder and Chairman of Klevenberg (Pvt) Ltd., and introduced synthetic lubricants and the concept of mobile automotive battery service to Sri Lanka.

Bala lived a simple life worthy of emulation. He was a dedicated, intelligent leader, athlete and entrepreneur, whom we will all greatly miss. We convey our deepest condolences to the family members of this true gentleman who has left indelible footprints on the sands of time.

Esto Perpetua!
- A friend