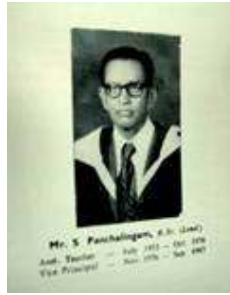


## **TRIBUTE TO MR PANCHALINGAM**



A person's true wealth is the good he or she does in the world.

- Prophet Mohammed

Today we heard of the death of our dear Panchalingham master. It is a very sad day for a lot of us who knew him during our time at St John's. I fondly remember him as one of the last people I met before I passed through the main gate on my way to the Jaffna Railway station after finishing my A/Ls. I still fondly remember his words of wisdom to me. Knowing that I was not a very good student, he encouraged me not to give up but to work hard.

I had the good fortune to grow up at St John's. I went there at the age of eight and moved into Evarts Hostel. Next to our boarding house was this nice old house where Sir lived. It took me sometime to work out exactly what he did in the school. I knew that his son Shanthakumar was in the same class as me. Sir took a keen interest in all the college activities. He was the person that was in charge of all catering / meals for the boarding house. He was the man behind the College time table and he was the man that catered for the tuck shop. Slowly and steadily I began to understand and realise his enormous contribution to the school. He was a very kind and soft spoken gentleman. He neither lost his temper nor his cool. He had a dry sense of humour and it was used very rarely.

When I left Evarts hostel, I went to his house to say good bye because I was moving to Thompson hostel. Those who have lived in the hostel know that it was like getting a promotion. Mr. Panchalingham wished me well and in the same vein reminded me that I will now have extra study time after dinner, so called second studies. Of course I had not realized this and was a bit disappointed. Sure, I was to miss Evarts Hostel in the years to come. After a period of five years, I came across Sir again. This time he was my Physics teacher. He was a great teacher. He was calm and guided his students according to their skills and intelligence. He had to look after so many other non-academic activities but he didn't flinch from his responsibilities towards us.

Sir did a lot for the college. It will take a long time to write everything he did. He was there at the sports meets, he was there at the boarder's days and he was always there as an usher at our college Carol services. He made sure that everything was run according to plan and smoothly.

Sir, we salute you and thank you for everything. You were a true gentleman. You did a lot for all of us and we will always be very grateful to you. God Bless you.

**BERNARD SINNIHAH**