

Source: Koh Hock Chuan. Email January 18,
2002

Indra Pathmanathan

From: "ambia" <ambia@pacific.net.sg>
To: <ipathmanathan@pd.jaring.my>
Sent: Sunday, January 20, 2002 9:20 AM
Subject: The late Mr. V Ambiavagar

>Date: Fri, 18 Jan 2002 11:46:55 +0800
>From: kodoko@pacific.net.sg
>X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.61 [en]C-CCK-MCD PI (Win98; I)
>X-Accept-Language: en
>To: ambia@pacific.net.sg
>Subject: The late Mr. V Ambiavagar
>
>
>The family of the late Mr. Ambiavagar,
>
>Please accept my condolences on your recent bereavement. I was priveleged
>to have been a member of the Beatty staff during Mr. Ambiavagar's short
>tenure as Principal of the school. He was a soft spoken man but with enough
>steel in his voice to "intimidate" many of us recently graduated young
>teachers then. We all feared the short note on a small piece of paper that
>would be handed over by the office boy to any teacher , whom Mr. Ambiavagar
>wanted to see. It contained only two words: "Please speak." He had also
>absolute control over the whole school the quality of which not seen in
>many other Principals. I recall an occasion when there was an impending
>petrol strike. Fearing that we would run out of petrol we approached him
>for permission to leave the school to go to the nearest petrol station in
>the vicinity of Lavendar street. Several of us were given instant
>permission to do so. When we came back later the whole school was QUIET,
>even though several classes were without teachers. AND Mr. Ambiavagar was
>in his office doing his paper work! We used to be in awe at his command of
>the English language. Every staff meeting was an object lesson in English.
>We used to look forward to his intricate sentence construction that most of
>the time we would wonder how he was going to complete the sentence without
>falling into the pitholes that a lesser person would have fallen into.
>Finally, I was one of three non-graduate teachers who was recognised by Mr.
>Ambiavagar, for conducting classes, in my case, in English and Maths. at
>the present equivalent of Sec 4.
> 1/2 of the 3rd class graduate allowance. To enhance our "appointment" our
>names were even gazetted in the then Govt. gazette. koh hock chuan