



Dear Ladies' College "Old Girls"/Alumnae,

RESTORATION OF THE LADIES' COLLEGE MABEL SIMON HALL

We write to update you on the repair and refurbishment of the Mabel Simon Hall, built in 1955 and, for decades, informally known as the "New Hall."

First, we thank alumnae who donated to this effort through the *Hallmark* "Dedicate a Chair" project, which, once the Hall is restored, will name chairs in honor of those designated by donors.

The School launched the *Hallmark* campaign in mid-2023, estimating that the restoration of this heritage building would require considerable funds, around Rs. 250-275 million. Over the past year, we worked with architects and engineers to develop a comprehensive, detailed plan and cost estimate for the essential repairs and upgrades. After these experts carried out in-depth assessments of our almost 70-year old building, the final cost estimate came to Rs.315 million.

The School has awarded the contract through a competitive bidding process. It covers: structural repairs, water and fire proofing; replacement of the damaged ceiling; updating of electrical, mechanical and other key systems; and repainting. Chairs and balcony benches will be either repaired or replaced, and new stage curtains, blinds, and lights will be installed as needed. Work on the Hall commenced in mid-April and is scheduled for completion by the end of October 2024, in time for the School's 125th anniversary celebrations in 2025.

We have made significant progress in mobilising funds to cover the Rs. 315 million estimated cost. The School has pledged Rs.175 million from its reserves. To date, an additional Rs. 90 million has been raised by the Old Girls' Association (OGA), Parent Teacher Association (PTA), the *Hallmark* project and other efforts. This leaves a shortfall of Rs. 50 million to be raised in the next six months.

The Hall has played a central role in student life for almost seven decades. Countless assemblies have brought children from diverse backgrounds together to foster a cohesive school community. Debating and oratorical competitions in three languages, theatrical productions and Bharatanatyam, Kandyan, ballet and tap dancing performances have showcased student talent, engaging both school and public audiences. Since its inception, music from singing classes, Oriental and Western choirs and concerts has filled the Hall. We are proud to share that the Hall today is a vibrant centre of school activities. In constant use, both during and after the regular school day, it hosts various activities that reflect the multi-faceted education and enrichment that Ladies' College continues to provide.

The School has given its alumnae an excellent foundation and preparation for life. We hope that our alumnae will show their appreciation by coming together to bridge the current Rs. 50 million funding gap for the Hall restoration.

We ask each of you to contribute according to your means. We especially hope alumnae who have been very successful in their careers will recognise the School's contribution to their achievements and donate generously. The Hall Restoration Fund-Raising Committee, comprising a few alumnae volunteers, will help the School to co-ordinate this effort.

Those who wish to contribute can make donations either directly to the Hall Restoration project, or through the *Hallmark* "Dedicate a Chair" project. Instructions are available at the following link:

[Mabel Simon \(Main\) Hall Restoration Project – Ladies' College \(ladiescollege.lk\)](https://www.ladiescollege.lk/mabel-simon-main-hall-restoration-project)

With regard to the *Hallmark* project, only 135 chairs have been claimed thus far. There are more than 500 chairs waiting to be claimed! Not everyone can afford to individually dedicate a chair. So why not donate collectively, as groups of friends or batches?

Let us together ensure that the Mabel Simon Hall is restored to its former glory with facilities upgraded to meet 21st Century needs and serve future generations.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Deepika Dassenaik
Principal

Ranmalee Balasooriya
Vice-Principal