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Message from our Patron

Ms Maria Cheung, Headmistress of SMCS

Dear Alumnae,

Can you guess where our new generation of St. Marians would like to go during school recess time? Amongst all school facilities, the library is the most popular place for many of our pupils, especially for those little P.1 and P.2 St. Marians. We are grateful to have a school library since whole-day school started in 2003. Currently, our record shows that we have a total of 11,000 books and magazines, including 5,000 in Chinese and 6,000 in English. Most of the time when old girls came for a visit, they showed admiration for the library, which, back in their days, they could only dream of. In the 1970s, there was only one cupboard of library books standing in the corner of the corridor, near the printing room, and only P.4 to P.6 pupils were allowed to borrow books once a month. We didn't even have a librarian, and work was handled by the office clerk. I still remember seeing the girls showing much excitement when they lined up in front of the cupboard, eagerly waiting for their turn to borrow the books!



Ms. Maria Cheung sharing a moment with pupils in the library.



P.1 pupils attentively enjoying a story-telling moment by a volunteer parent.

Many people have noticed that the young generation nowadays does not do much reading. However, good reading skill is essential for life-long learning. Hence we strive to train our pupils to be enthusiastic and smart learners, as well as develop a self-directed learning attitude through good reading habits. They are taught to read often, and to make friends with books. Every year our librarian organizes various activities to add fun to reading, and pupils are encouraged to read different types of books, not only those that they are interested in or familiar with. They are assigned reading tasks by their English and Chinese teachers, as well as their Social Studies, Music, Science, P.E., R.E., Geography, and Visual Art teachers. For upper classes, pupils are given a recommended booklist for reading.

Parents also play an important role in creating a reading-friendly atmosphere for our pupils. Once a month, volunteer parents come to school to tell stories to our P.1 to P.3 pupils. In addition, there is a "Through-Train" parents' evening every year for the parents of P.4 and P.5 pupils, during which preparation for their daughters' good reading habit is one of the core sharing items.

Knowledge is strength. Knowledge is precious. I sincerely hope that our library can serve the purpose of giving pupils fun and relaxing time to acquire the reading skills they need to get through different levels of education.

Maria Cheung

Poon Choi Dinner on Alumnae Day 2017

Over 600 enthusiastic alumnae, family and friends participated in the Poon Choi Dinner on Alumnae Day on Saturday, 25 November 2017, held in the basketball court of our familiar campus. The weather was nice and clear and all had a great time enjoying the delicious food and exciting company of old and new friends. Some also came to visit the school campus with their family in the afternoon, recollecting the times when they were students.



As evening came by, 50 tables were being set, and participants began to gather. The dinner started with a leading prayer by our Patron Ms. Janet Wong, followed by all alumnae singing the school song a cappella. Hearing that again, on campus, under the stars, was a very touching moment indeed.



Visitors at the reception counter during Alumnae Day.

The highlight of the evening was the video call to Mr. Philip Lee and Mrs. Kapo Lee, who were attending their son's wedding banquet! 600 congratulations were sent in unison, and Mr. and Mrs. Lee were overwhelmed, thanking everyone for their thoughtfulness.



Over 600 happy faces gathered around 50 tables to enjoy the delicious meal.



Tables being set in the basketball court in the afternoon.



All singing the school song before dinner started.



Mr. Philip Lee and Mrs. Kapo Lee were at their son's wedding when we congratulated them over a video call.



Friends were delighted to see each other, especially over a full stomach!



Mothers were having as much fun as their young ones.



See you again next time!

The evening would not have been successful without the full support of the school management and teachers-in-charge, and the energetic team of student helpers. A big thanks to them on behalf of all alumnae. Special thanks also to the school janitors who tirelessly assisted us during the day. Most important of all, we thank you, our past students, for your continuous support and keen participation. May God continue to bestow his blessings on the St. Mary's family!

Ms Candy Wu, Commercial Flight Captain

Do you pay attention to the pilot's announcement during flights? "This is your Captain speaking..." We usually expect to hear such announcement from a deep male voice. But have you ever heard the same from a female pilot? If you have, it is possible that you have been on a flight piloted by a fellow St. Marian, Candy Wu, the first female commercial flight pilot trained up locally by the territory's home-based airline, Cathay Pacific Airways.

"I wasn't Hong Kong's first female pilot, which many people might have misunderstood. I was the first 'home-grown' female pilot at Cathay Pacific, through the airline's cadet pilot programme, which had never taken in a female cadet before. I was their first female cadet back in 1994, and that created some publicity," Candy slowly walked down memory lane with us.



A publicity shot in the cockpit during her time as first officer.



Greetings from Candy Wu, F.7 graduate in 1991.

So what indeed propelled Candy to venture into this unlikely career? "I must confess that I didn't plan out to be a commercial flight pilot. I completed my civil and structural engineering degree at the University of Hong Kong, and was planning to become a civil engineer. In fact, I've already secured a job offer before being accepted by the cadet pilot programme. While the programme had been running since 1989, it was the first time that it appealed to female candidates. People around me encouraged me to give it a try since I do have great advantage – my outgoing personality and my perfect 20/20 eyesight!" said Candy with a hearty laugh. "I thought it was indeed a great opportunity for an interesting challenge. So I went for it. The selection process was rigorous, I'm glad I managed it fine, and became the first female cadet pilot," she recalled. "Incidentally, some of the interviewers noticed that I was from St. Mary's, and was already impressed. I must thank all teachers and past St. Marians who have built a great reputation for St. Marian graduates. We are usually highly regarded," said Candy appreciatively.

"My times at St. Mary's somehow groomed my personality. My secondary school days was very enjoyable as far as I could remember," recalled Candy. "I was the active type and participated in many extra-curricular activities. I was in the school handball team and the school athletics team, and I was also Blue House Captain," she added. "I still keep in close contact with Mrs. Kapo Lee, my House advisor, and Ms. Candy To, my sports coach. They have given me valuable advice all these years and I am truly thankful," she said. "It is important to participate more in extra-curricular activities, instead of simply focusing on text books. My best memories come from these activities, and I learned about responsibilities, leadership and team work. I guess these are character traits that are important for a flight pilot as well," she said with a confident smile.



A snapshot with Ms. Candy To during Sports Meet at the Wanchai Sports Ground.

Was it easy for her to adapt in an environment mostly comprising of male colleagues? “Well, it took a little getting used to, but all in all that wasn’t a big problem. Perhaps the uniform presented a little challenge at first, as there was no female uniform at that time. We had to fit ourselves into the standard uniform, which was quite bulky and unflattering for a woman,” she laughed. “It was a few years later when the tailored uniform was introduced for female pilots. We finally look smart and fitted,” joked Candy.

How was the path moving from being cadet pilot to captain? “It took years since we have to accumulate experience and flight hours. I first received my pilot training in Adelaide, learning how to fly a single-engine aircraft, how to understand the various instruments and charts in the cockpit. We also had to study aviation law and navigation. Then I had to spend a few more months learning how to fly a commercial aircraft, and to get a licence from the Civil Aviation Department,” she explained. “After that I became second officer in the cockpit, helping the captain during long flights. I also had to undertake regular training in a flight simulator to learn how to cope with emergency situation during a flight,” Candy continued. “In 1999, I was promoted to first officer, and began to fly commercial flights in collaboration with flight captains. And finally in 2009 I was promoted to Captain,” she shared.



Visit from family when in Adelaide.

Is it tough being a flight captain? “The captain has great responsibility. While the computer does help to manage many inflight matters these days, it is still the captain’s call when emergencies and unexpected matters happen. We have to be alert at all times. That’s why even as captains we have to take examinations and undergo health check every year to renew our aviation licence,” Candy said.

Are there more girls entering the profession in recent years? “Female pilots are still the rarer breed even twenty years down the road, though we do see more girls taking on this career. At the moment I believe that there are more than 50 female pilots in our airline. Incidentally, I came across a young second officer last year who is also a past St. Marian. We kept in touch and I was happy that we share some common memories about our Alma Mater,” Candy said cheerfully.



A happy family skiing trip with husband and two daughters.

Twenty years after her unconventional career, what does Candy think she has gained from her work? “The view from the cockpit is always priceless - day and night, dusk and dawn, urban and rural, rain and shine. It is still what I enjoy most on every flight,” she said. “But you know what the biggest gain is?” Candy asked with a naughty grin. “My husband!” she burst out laughing. “We were classmates at the cadet training programme, and the rest is history!” Candy and husband Mr. Yeung have two daughters who are now 7 and 4 years old. We are totally envious that the lucky little girls can be taken on a plane ride by either her mother or her father!

We thank Candy for sharing with us her unconventional career journey. Next time when you are on board a CX flight, see if you will come across our very own Captain Candy Wu!

... SCHOOL NEWS ...

2018 Drama "Dream Chasers"



"Dream Chasers" is a musical play written by Mr. Geoff Oliver based on a suggestion from past student, Lydia Wong, and with input from the Core Production Team. The play is set in Hong Kong in the 1960s and Hong Kong now and deals with how a group of friends achieve or do not achieve the dreams they had when they were young. The style of acting is somewhat unusual in that an "alienation effect" is used where the cast jump in and out of character, sometimes playing their role and sometimes being themselves, switching backwards and forwards in time. It is a musical with 12 songs with music composed by our student composers, and several dances choreographed by our students.

Performances will be at 7pm in the School Hall on 14/4 (Sat), 16/4 (Mon), 18/4 (Wed), 20/4 Gala Night (Fri) and 21/4 Last Night (Sat), 2018. Ticket prices are \$100, \$180, \$250 & \$500 (\$250 & \$500 tickets only for Gala Night and Last Night). For reservation please visit the school's website or contact Ms. Queenie Cheng of the School Office at 2724 2771.

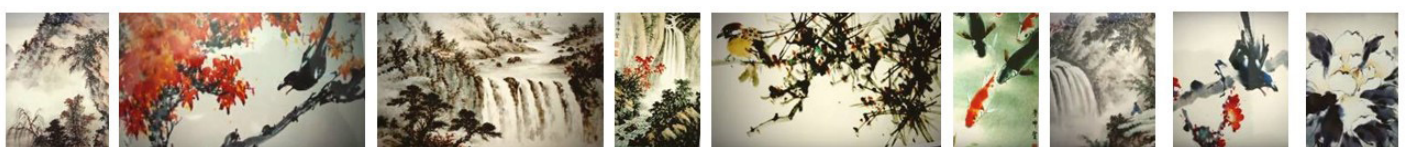
In Loving Memory



Mrs. Lee Liu Kwun Yin (李廖坤賢老師), secondary school teacher at St. Mary's for more than three decades, returned peacefully to God in December 2017 in Vancouver, Canada, at age 99.

Ms. Liu was Chinese and PE teacher from the late 1940s to early 1980s. Students remembered her as being gentle, caring and motherly. During PE lessons when girls often wanted to skip class, she encouraged them not to do so, but to eat more eggs to stay healthy. Apart from her interest in sports, Ms. Liu was also an enthusiastic Chinese painting artist. After her retirement, Ms. Liu moved to Vancouver, Canada, and continued to paint. She participated in many solo and joint exhibitions in Canada, the United States, Japan, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Taiwan. She was listed in China's Who's Who of Outstanding Contemporary Chinese Artist in 1995, and in 2000, she was also recognized as one of the Outstanding Artists of the New Millennium in China.

The fond memories with Ms. Liu will forever stay in the mind of those she crossed path with. A video celebrating the life of Ms. Liu has been prepared by her family, and can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/1GcTL6xh1EE>, or via the attached QR code.



~ Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen. ~

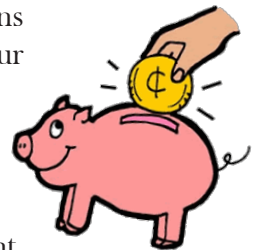
Alumnae Day 2018

The PSA is delighted to announce that the Alumnae Day this year is scheduled on **24 November 2018 (Sat)**. With the support from school management, the campus will be open on the day and past St. Marians can invite friends and family to visit your Alma Mater! Details of other planned activities will be announced in the next issue of the newsletter. Do mark the date now, and stay tuned for more update!

Want to make a donation to your Alma Mater?

We often receive enquiries from past students about making donations to St. Mary's. On behalf of the school, we thank you in advance for your generosity. There are two ongoing appeals:

- (1) the SMCC Development Fund which supports continuous campus, students and teachers development; and
- (2) the Drama Development Fund which supports expenses related to our school drama production, including the maintenance of equipment.



Please prepare a cheque payable to “**The IMC of St. Mary's Canossian College**”, marking “SMCC Development Fund” or “Drama Development Fund” at the back. If a receipt for tax deduction purpose is required, please also indicate the name to be put on the receipt and the address for mailing. For further enquiries, or for other donation requests, please contact Ms. Rainbow Tse of the School Office at 2724 2771 or rainbowtse@smcc.hk. Thank you again for your support to your Alma Mater!

Opt to receive soft copies of the PSA Newsletter?



To help save paper and administrative costs, we encourage members with email access to opt for receiving electronic versions of the PSA newsletter instead. Please contact the Membership Secretary at membershipsec@stmaryspsa.org if you'd like to help us out and opt not to receive the mailed copy. Thank you in advance.

Notice of the 2018 Annual General Meeting of St. Mary's Past Students' Association

Date : 17 March 2018 (Saturday)
Time : 3:00 pm
Venue : Geography Room, 2/F Marian Building

All members are welcome !

Agenda

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18 March 2017
2. Chairman's Report
3. Adoption of the Financial Report for the last financial year ending 31 August 2017
4. Any Other Business

Note : The Proxy Form can be downloaded from www.stmaryspsa.org.



新年進步
身體健康
笑口常開
萬事如意

Thank you for your continuous support to the
PSA. The Exco wishes you and your family a
Happy Year of the Dog!

