



FELLOWSHIP



Message from the President

Dear Fellow Alumna,

A long time ago when I was still single, I joined the Alumnae. My reason then was probably based on loyalty to the School, a place where I had spent the happiest days of my childhood and made lifelong friends. Many however join the Alumnae for the purpose of making sure their daughters get into MGS at Primary One. The occasional reunion at the Founder's Day Dinner also confirmed their affinity to the school. Not questioning their loyalty, I would like us all to now consider our membership in a different light. The Alumnae can benefit you, too.

Developing channels for interaction among members, we had set up an email address and developed web pages housed in the school website. We also initiated email blasts to update you on events and happenings. We were pleased that these email blasts and attempts to update our database last year have been successful. Our email drew a great deal of response from alumna who expressed their interest in getting involved, and many from as far afield as the USA, Canada and the UK who wrote in, trying to get in touch with old friends.

So if you have lost contact with your friends but want to get connected again, do email us at mgsalumnae@gmail.com and give us your contact details. We will be sure to include it in our next email

blast and other communication channels to help you get in touch with them.

I would like all of you to look at the Alumnae as a community. Yes, we can have "community centered" activities for our members if you would like to join in – on the cards is a wine tasting session, and for foodies, a gourmet dinner cooked to perfection. If you have not already done so, please complete and return to us the mini survey which comes with this newsletter. Those of you who have special talents please come forward and share them with us. Let others learn from and enjoy what you are doing – be it baking or doing the salsa!

For many years now, a group of alumna has been meeting on the first Monday of each month to pray together. Bundled in their assortment of shawls and jackets (the Alumnae Room air-conditioning can be very cold!), they worship and sing praises, full of thanksgiving for their school days and blessing the school with their prayers and petitions. So on the spiritual front, join us as we pray for both the past and the present girls of the school, their families, the staff and for their concerns.

One event that has come about as a result of the enthusiasm of our younger alumna is Love MGS, the praise and worship celebration that is now into its 8th year. How wonderful that generations of MGS girls can come together to worship God and thank Him for our lives, and the school that has helped to shape us into who we are. The next Love MGS is scheduled for later this year – the

exact date will be confirmed later.

In October last year, I was delighted to see many alumna (from the 70's, 80's and 90's) spending the morning in school sharing their experiences with our Primary 6s. This reaffirmed

to the students that the school's ties remain strong among these alumna – that for them, the MGS school days are an integral part of who they are now, and that they are proud of the esprit de corps that transcends the generations that have passed through our portals. Why, you may ask, were they there? We wanted our P6 girls to know that more important than scholastic achievements, they should value the traditions and values MGS stands for.

So you see, all we need from you is a little of your time. Believe me, when you give, you will receive a lot more! So move it, girls – give us a call to find out what's happening and join the fun!

Wishing everyone a blessed year ahead,

Barbara Chee

Calendar of Events

Past Vs Present Games

14 April, Saturday
MGS Sports Centre

Annual General Meeting

28 April, Saturday, 3pm
Alumnae Room, MGS

Love MGS 2007

Date to be confirmed
MGS Auditorium

MGS 120th Founder's Day Dinner

25 July Wednesday
Raffles Convention Centre

TEACHERS DAY 2006

Elizabeth Tan recounts the Teachers' Day fun.

MGS is always about the children. For them, what the MGS experience will be is the result of partnerships between the teachers, parents and school administration. However, it is teachers who are truly the people who can touch the lives of the girls, and who can give them meaningful and happy school years. And so, it is only apt that we have a day dedicated to teachers.

Teachers Day 2006 was no different from past years in that the Alumnae has always been pleased to play a part in a celebration. Teachers' Day 2006 Luncheon was held at the Pines Club on 31 August 2006. The venue was accessible, the ambience good and the food quite acceptable according to feedback from some teachers. The theme this year? "I'd rather be athan a teacher!" Encouraged to dress up along this theme, it was an afternoon where they could let their hair down and live out – even for a moment – their alter egos.

By the high level of participation in the fancy dress, MGS teachers showed that they were game for fun. They impressed us by the effort and thought that went into the costumes. They came as Charlie's Angels, MGS students, even an ACS boy, a hula dancer, a mountaineer.

Teachers are also prepared to laugh at themselves and with each other. And when it came to puzzles, they were a focused lot. They had no appetite for other games until all their answer sheets had been submitted....quite in line, no doubt, with the classroom behaviour they demand of their pupils. And between all the tables, they managed to solve the puzzle completely. They were not satisfied to just sit down and enjoy the meal. They got up to sing the Doxology.

Chairman of the school board Fang Ai Lian took the opportunity to make a presentation on the school's "Vision Statement", too.

From the smiles as the luncheon drew to a close, our guess was that the teachers enjoyed the party. Our small effort towards showing MGS teachers of our heartfelt gratitude for their love and caring for the children seemed to be acknowledged. Praise the Lord.



The world is their oyster....

To learn, expand their horizons, and be of service to the community. With that in mind, the school is committed to providing a sabbatical programme, Reality Outside Classrooms (ROCs), for our Sec 3s every year. These experiences include immersion programmes abroad to reinforce learning in various fields and disciplines, subject-based programmes, service-learning programmes and also work experience in various organisations. Our teachers as well as professional consultants will engage our students in planning and preparing for these sabbaticals and guide them through their learning trips.

The cost of each student's sabbatical ranges from around \$50 for a job attachment to \$3,500 for a trip. No student is turned away from the programme for lack of funds.

To facilitate this, the school has set up the MGS ROCs! Fund. We appeal to you to support this fund with donations. Any amount, how large or small, would be appreciated. Kindly make your cheque payable to "Methodist Girls' School" and write MGS ROCs! on the back of your cheque.

For more information, please ring 64694800, ext. 404 and ask to speak with Ms Ainah.

Contact Us!

If you have any queries, or ideas to share, get in touch with us!

MGS Alumnae Association
11 Blackmore Drive
Singapore 599986
Tel: 6469-3155
Email: mgsalumnae@gmail.com

The Alumnae General Store

The alumnae's General Store at MGS' annual mini fair is known for offering great bargains and good fun. Sim Suh-Ting takes a meaningful look at last year's effort.

You should have seen the Alumnae Room nights before the mini-fair. It was mind-boggling. I was speechless. Indeed, I was quite horrified. Every single corner, nook and cranny and space including the furniture was chockfull with everything that you could think of and there were piles and piles of plastic bags bursting at their seams to say nothing of boxes galore stacked high leaving no walking room at all. To say that it was jaw-dropping is an understatement. To say that my heart sank to my shoes is equally not telling it as it was.

How on earth would we pack and arrange everything in the few days that we had before the mini-fair? I must say that I struggled to contain the panic that started to rise from deep within. Being the optimistic person that I usually am, I gritted my teeth and decided that it was best to weigh right into the many plastic bags instead of looking at them gloomily. Three hours and ten pairs of hands later, we were no closer to even ridding the room of the piles of bags that remained strewn all over, but it was heartening to see some semblance of order developing in the form of racks of clothing in one corner, books shelved in another, crockery stacked on the tables, toys heaped in one section and knick-knacks forming distinctive groupings in the available space on the tables.

In a matter of days, we transformed a dump into a shopping paradise. We had everything that anyone could randomly ask for and they were all for sale at giveaway prices. And give away we almost did as we put up for sale a treasured possession that one parent accidentally included in the bags of items donated. Tearfully, the child ploughed through the bric-a-bracs that were arranged on the table looking for that precious item which she eventually found with great joy!

As soon as the bell rang to start off the mini fair on 25 October last year, the Alumnae Room was packed with shoppers, from first-time Primary 1 shoppers to the seasoned shopping-teachers who drove hard bargains. The usual stories floated around of young ones not knowing how to bargain, to those who would look forlornly at a particular item only to come away with huge smiles when told that they could have it for the mere 10 cents that they had left in their pockets. Then there were those who came with money clasped firmly in their hands ready to buy a present especially for their mummies. What that present would be, they had no idea but slowly they would look at every item, once, twice, three times, then leave only to return to look at the items a fourth, fifth and sixth time, before finally settling on that one precious special present for mummy! Stories like that always warm my heart and is reason why I punish myself year after backbreaking year packing, unpacking and repacking for and after each fair.

Try it – any expression of joy on a child's face is priceless!





2006

Founder's Day Dinner

For the first time in umpteen years, the MGS Founders Day Dinner was held not in the usual venue of Shangri-la, but at the Raffles Convention Centre. The Island Ballroom was under renovation. So for the 119th anniversary, despite a few teething problems and one unfortunate incident where a guest was accidentally scalded by hot soup, we settled into our new dinner location.

As always the evening was an opportunity for the graduating class to turn out in their glamorous best, as the girls dramatically transformed themselves into young women for that evening. Not to be outdone were teachers and "old girls" who turned out in force, and dressed to the nines to relive the old days and catch up with friends. In particular, the Class of 1951 (Mrs AnnaTham's year!), 1961, 1971 and 1976 were there to mark their respective milestone years.

As is the tradition, a toast to MGS, and an enthusiastic rendition of the school song started the evening off. Barbara Chee, the alumnae's new president, gave her maiden Founders Day Dinner speech, and for a good part of the evening's programme, many gestures of gratitude were directed at Mrs Sim Suh-Ting, the outgoing president. Not only was she presented with the Service to Education award by Mrs Fang Ai Lian, she was also last year's recipient of the MGS Mrs Margaret Goh Service Awards. On a lighter note, a mysterious item titled "Special Item from the Class of 1951" turned out to be a delightful tribute to Suh-Ting from close friends who have worked with her in various occasions through the years.

Also recognised for their dedication to the school was principal Miss Kon Mei Leen, and Mdm Tan Tat Eng who received their long service awards marking 30 years with MGS!

That evening, guests were treated to a colourful excerpt from the school's musicale "From Eve to Mary". The Class of 2006 presented an amusing "Miss MGS 2006" item, with plenty of song and dance, accompanied by the invariable, enthusiastic surge of 16-year-olds towards the stage to cheer their friends on.

A year on and these girls would have now joined the ranks of "old girls". But as we all know, friendships made and pleasures shared will be the bond that holds all 'old girls' together in the MGS spirit!

Join us this year on 25 July to celebrate the Grand Dame's 120th Anniversary!





Class Of 1966 – Reunion at Tea Café

Undaunted by the heavy downpour during the afternoon peak hours, 40 girls, 40 years later, braved the steep staircase (no, not the 100 steps!) and spilled into the tiny foyer of the Tea Café in Seah Street on 10 November 2006. Pauline Khew Poh Leng writes about the Class of '66 reunion.

The reunion evening needed no ceremonial introductions to kick it off, but began with openers like: "Hi...(pause)...Oh my goodness, it's you!", or "Who're you???" And the most amusing one: "Which class were you from?," directed at Mrs Pok, our evergreen Maths teacher. Soon, some 'guess-who?' games followed, intently testing our 50-something-year-old memories. They were followed by the occasional, "You look the same!"; to be replied with typical Asian modesty: "No, lah, how can! You joking or what?" It was a really fun start to the evening as warmth and a sense of excitement filled the room. By seven o'clock, things had accelerated into a cacophony of loud chatter, punctuated by both sweet and hoarse laughter, especially that contributed by Long May Ling.

Twist and Shake

Our guest singer, Ernesto Valerio, then began to set the appropriate and nostalgic mood by crooning a medley of 'oldies' in the background, while we proceeded into the cosy 'living room'. Annie Seah Guay Choon, our chairwoman and organiser (who had mooted this idea even though she lives in L.A.!), then took over the proceedings with a welcome speech, followed by our loyal and passionate singing of the MGS song. Thereafter, we adjourned to the buffet table for 'food, glorious Peranakan food'. When we were feeling quite contented after dinner, Ernesto started to belt out familiar tunes like the Beatles' "It's Been A Hard Day's, Night", Chubby Checker's "Let's Twist Again" and Tom Jones' "Delilah", which, halfway through, was transformed to "Samson" by a cheeky lot; Maureen Kwee, Janet Lee and accomplices. The mood was electric! Sporting Mrs Wong Poh Yee and Mrs Pok danced and 'twisted' with the rest of the girls, while others did the shake, the swim and the crawl! This exhilarating sight of both teachers and ex-students dancing together, letting their hair down, 40 years after leaving school, will undoubtedly be imprinted in our minds for a long time.

Memory Lane

However, this fun had to be curtailed for our slide show "upstairs", and so we proceeded up the spiral staircase into the "loft". During the showing of old photographs taken in school, schoolgirl squeals of delight and laughter dominated. Yet again, we had to identify the girls in the photographs and it was a really funny moment in the reunion – how could we recognise others when some of us could not even recognise ourselves? Nevertheless, it was fun. After we managed to identify the persons in a photograph, they had to go up to the large photograph projected onto the wall and pose in front of their younger selves!





Next came “Memory Lane” time when we walked down the path with Shook Leng, Geh Min and Poh Leng, who represented the three Secondary Four classes that year (Secondary 4B, 4C and 4A). Shook Leng remembered toilet cleaning duties and hearing the ‘big bang’ of a bomb planted below Mount Sophia at the then Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank in Orchard Road. Geh Min shared fond memories of her classmates, including a challenge she faced from Kay Han in the selection of Cinderella’s part in a play. Poh Leng remembered the notoriety of her class and the teachers’ constant lamentations of their academic hopelessness and doomed future.

Nostalgia time resumed with a few songs offered by Poh Leng and ending with “To Teacher With Love”, dedicated to all our teachers. Then an invitation for singers was given. It was first taken up by Rose B. who gave a rendition of “Besame Mucho”, on barefeet, to great applause! Fang Ai Lian also came forward and gave a great impromptu speech on her recollections of school, incorporating a flattering rebuttal to Poh Leng’s

claims that the A Class was the “Black Sheep” class. She graciously turned the despised “loser class” into the “envied class” and called us the “Glamour Pusses”! I wonder?

Thanks!

On that note, the night came to a close. After some photo shoots, Annie concluded the reunion by acknowledging the people, without whom the gathering would not have been possible. They were: Annie’s daughter, Jacinda and her husband, Kevin Lee, for photography and the slide show, Gloria Wong, treasurer and organiser, Chew Fong and Yok Teng for the coconut candies, Josephine Teng for her assistance, Poh Leng’s daughter, Desley Khew, for videography, Linor for fetching Mrs Pok, Ernesto Valerio for providing the music and Poh Leng for enjoying herself! Last but not least, on behalf of the organisers, we would like to thank the two teachers, Mrs Pok, Mrs Wong Poh Yee and all the lovely girls of ’66 for being supportive and gracing the night with their presence to make it truly memorable!



Contact If you’d like to contact your friends, email: ac_mg@yahoo.com
A Yahoo group has been set up for networking among this Class well.
Log into Yahoo Group ‘MGS66’

Nine women in Umbria

Class of 1976 Reunion

Last September, nine MGS alumna from the Class of 1976 descended in Umbria for a week's gathering to celebrate our 45th year on Earth. Five of us came in from Singapore, the others from New York, Toronto and England. This was a culmination of two years' planning which in itself was half the fun. It was also a reprisal of our 40th year trip to Tuscany.

We stayed in a villa named Visentium overlooking a lake and which had its own grove of olive trees. We drove around everyday to the small towns of Umbria. And ate and ate – I think that seemed to be the theme of our holiday. We had one hysterical day of shopping the outlets. A telling moment was when we exited a toll booth of a highway near the Prada outlet. The toll collector pointed us in its direction even before being asked. He probably thought, "What else could nine women in two cars in the middle of the countryside be after?"

We had such a blast that we decided we cannot wait another five years to make another trip...so we have already started planning for our 47-and-a-half year. Think: no kids, no husbands, no work, no planning beyond the next meal. We had a glorious time! The only bad part were the long faces on the way to catch our flights home.

To read about our trip, check out www.9womeninumbria.blogspot.com.



From left: Vasanthi Rajalingam, Michele Fairlie, Michele Lim, Lorraine Ang, Violet Foo, Jackie Tay, Jennie Tan, Michelle Tan and Caroline Chee



Not Bad At All!

Vivien Goh, the head prefect from the Class of 1964, writes about her cohort of very rowdy girls.

The Class of 1964 met in 1984 for our 20th anniversary. With our busy schedules, we did not get together again until 2004 for our 40th reunion. Since then, we have been meeting every year.

Among members of the class are entrepreneurs Dawn Kwok of Stamford Tyres, and Serene Ho of Avana boutique. Many girls from the "B" class became teachers and have retired as Heads of Department. Among them is Ruth Ng Lee Gek of Commonwealth Secondary School and in administration at the Ministry of Education (MOE) is Olive Chay. Anne Chiang was with Public Relations at MOE for many years before moving

on to the Singapore Polytechnic. Specialising in career counselling is Wong Sing Chee who now heads the Career Counselling Centre at NUS. Katherine Chan was a pioneer lecturer in student counselling at NIE. Elaine Lim has just retired as Vice-President at McCann Erickson, having been in the advertising industry for most of her working life. Chia Foong Ying was also one of the pioneers at EDB. Pauline Wee is a grandmother of five and a busy nurse-administrator at KKWCH. Vivien Goh was for many years conductor of the Singapore Youth Orchestra. Not bad, for a class of very rowdy girls!



Back L-R: Sian Tauw, Gladys, Joan, Anne, Serene, Sing Chee, Pauline, Catherine, Ling Fong, Caroline, May Yue, Elsie, Katherine, Cynthia
Front L-R: Dawn, May Lan, Hsiu Yun, Siew Tuan, Bee Lay, (unidentified friend), Vivien Goh

Contact

If you want to reach your friends from the Class of 64, contact Vivien Goh at vgoh@pacific.net.sg

The Makings of A Night To Remember

Class of 1987 "20 Years On"

Ada Fong pens a most amusing call to action for her class reunion. Read on!

Hello Class of 1987,

Hard to believe how time flies. It's been 20 years since we left MGS!

There can't be a better time than this landmark year 2007 – as MGS celebrates her 120th anniversary and we celebrate our 20th – for us to take time out to *Remember* the special memories of those MGS school days. It's time to *Reunite and Renew* our ties with friends whom we've lost touch with over the years, and to *Reflect* on how our time in MGS has helped us Master, Grow & Serve in our lives.



What about these prefects of ours?

Founder's Day Dinner 2007 is the time for this class reunion. It looks set to be a celebration that's filled with fun, food and friends! Amazingly, we've managed to gather 64% (135 girls) of the Class of '87, and as of end February, more than 19% (26 girls) have said that they intend to attend the dinner.

Building up towards this momentous occasion in July, we thought the Alumnae Association would be a great platform to start reconnecting with the Class of '87. So here goes....



*"With loving hearts & joyous song we sing to MGS....
Down through the years,
our memories will keep a
loving place..."*

® Do you wonder what she's doing now?



Is she a make-up artist now, a stylist, or is she nursing other parts of the body?



Did these girls end up as sick chemists or part of some CSI team?

"For friendships made and pleasures shared...."

The Ups ↑



and Downs ↓



of School Life!

*"In work and play, for honours won...."
"Today our hearts confess the debt we owe, the
love we hold for our dear MGS!"*



"Today our hearts confess the debt we owe, the love we hold for our dear MGS!"

SCHOOLS SPORTS SCENE: METHODIST GIRLS' SCHOOL

IF swimming in Singapore schools is synonymous with Anglo-Chinese School then, it should also be associated with Methodist Girls' School (MGS).

Ever since it was founded in 1887, MGS has been the top girls' school in Singapore in swimming. At last year's National Schools' Championships, MGS swimmers dominated the competition to storm home with the 'B' and 'C' Division girls' titles.

Powered by national swimmer, PATRICIA CHUA, 14, MGS' 'C' Division swimmers also set new records in the 4 x 50m freestyle and medley relay events. Patricia also established a new mark in the 200m freestyle at the same meet.

On their swimming successes, the teacher-in-charge, CORINNE WEE said: "I think it is due to the fact that the school has had a long tradition in the sport since its inception in 1887. As a result of this, students who join the school are driven with enthusiasm to excel in swimming. Thus, there is never a shortage of good swimmers in MGS."

The present coach of MGS, WEE MOH NAM added: "At present I am training a total of 60 girls from the school. They train at the Shaw Pool on Tuesday and Thursday for about two hours a session. I drill them in stroke and endurance training and occasionally, I make them undergo physical and weight workouts. At the moment, there is no potentially talented swimmer but I am confident that if they are willing to sacrifice and train

MGS Remains Top in Swimming



MGS' 'star' swimmer — Patricia Chua

harder, there may be the possibility of top swimmers surfacing in the near future."

MGS' swimming captain MAVIS CHEN remarked: "The chances of the School retaining the 'B' Division title looks bright but we might come under stiff opposition in the 'C' Division. Nevertheless, I am confident that the girls will do their best."

The school is also one of the few schools in Singapore that has actively encouraged the sport of synchronised swimming. In fact, the number of par-

ticipants has grown over the years.

The sport, which was introduced by a number of 'old' girls has seen MGS as the pioneer school in Singapore in synchronised swimming. MGS has performed it at various events like their 20th Annual Swimming Meet and at last year's National Schools' Swimming Championships.

MGS not only excels in swimming. Over the years, it has also emerged as Singapore's top girls' school in squash. Since 1981, MGS earned for itself a reputation in the sport and for four years running, the school emerged champions in the 'B' Division category and runners-up in the 'C' Division.

In last year's tournament, MGS took second place in the 'B' Division but captured the 'C' Division title for the very first time.

Apart from these two sports, MGS participates in netball, basketball and athletics. However, the school did not fare too well in last year's competitions. Nevertheless, the school's students displayed sportsmanship in all the games they participated in.

With this attitude and spirit from both the students and teachers, MGS will remain as one of Singapore's more successful schools in the field of Extra-Curricular Activities.

1985 NATIONAL SCHOOLS RECORD

Swimming
'B' Division — Champions
'C' Division — Champions

Squash
'B' Division — Runner-Up
'C' Division — Champions



Contact

If you want to reach your friends from the Class of 87, contact May Tan at may@tapestry.com.sg or handphone: 9791 3059

Blest be the ties that bind

Class of 1990

Writing for the youngest group of 'old girls' among our collection of reunion stories, Lim Hsien Jer recounts a gathering with a difference!



Reunions are strange affairs. We like them because they give us a reason to get together, eat and chat. We avoid them because they remind us of how much we've aged. I remember reading about them in newsletters. Most times, I skip the verbosity and just look at the pictures and think: "Waahhh, so old!" or scrutinize to see if there are any faces (of teachers!) I recognise and calculate their age.

Contact

If you want to reach your friends from the Class of 90, email Choo Oi Yee at oiyee@mac.com

So, here's another piece about a reunion. A different sort of gathering, I suppose, from what

we usually read about. No high-class restaurant, no fancy country club, just a bunch of girls sitting in the school canteen engaging in the timeless favourite hobbies of snacking and chatting!

It was 16 years ago when we last ran down corridors in our white-and-blues. Sixteen years later, at the age of 32, we met again, some with toddlers and huddles in tow, on June 10th 2006 at the school canteen at Blackmore Drive. (Thank you Ms Kon for the kind permission!)

For most of us, it was our first visit to the new campus since we hailed from the Mount Sophia era (Sigh!). It was great fun exploring the campus, reading signboards, pondering over verses boldly inscribed on the walls and chatting with the security guard to convince him that despite our scruffy casual look, we're legitimate old girls who once walked through the portals of this grand institution.

We had a small crowd and plenty of food that day. (Thanks to all who brought contributions!) More importantly, there was a distinct sense of camaraderie amongst the girls as we filled each other in on what's been happening in our lives and marveled at how we all seem to have preserved our youth remarkably well! (It helps to attend reunions dressed in casuals. Makes us look 10 years younger!) We met old friends from across the classes – Arts 1, 2, 3 and Science 1 and 2 as they used to be known in those days. We flipped through pages of old school magazines and reminisced about our carefree student days, where as long as you turned in homework on time, you'd be allowed to laugh, giggle, shriek (discreetly and with decorum, mind you) as you wished. Ah, how we miss those days.....

As with all memorable journeys, the trip was as enjoyable as the destination. Thanks to our classmate, Weixian, whose out-of-the-blue email prompted this whole endeavour, a few of us began a "reach-as-many-as-you-can" quest. Through the massive emailing process which spanned approximately six weeks, I for one, was greatly touched by the response of all my classmates, who took time to retrieve 'bulk' mail from their 'spam' folder and hit the reply button to say "Hi!" to long-lost classmates.

A special "Thank you" to Sherry, Iris, Wendy and Serene for helping to gather lost sheep. Thanks Oi Yee, for being our Alumnae liaison and Iris, Patsy and Sheryl for the wonderful photos.

We had a great time that afternoon. As we packed up and left that day, I felt a deep sense of belonging to this school, which has educated me from the curious, wide-eyed years of primary school to the rebellious, maturing and self-discovering years of secondary school. And as my 5-year-old always says, "The best thing about school is FRIENDS!" and I'm sure glad I made lots of them. Thanks gals for the memories! Till our next reunion, blest be the tie that binds!

MGS is No. 1!

Most of us already know from the newspapers that MGS is the top secondary school in 2006, based on last year's O level results. MGS was one out of only two schools who produced four top scorers – the most from any one school – for these exams. But we'd like to blow our horn once again, and congratulate the four girls who did the school proud with their excellent results of 9A1s.

They are among the top 25 out of almost 38,600 school students who took the O levels last year. They are:

Melissa Chu Minhui
Kelly Kwan Ruixin
Mun Weilin
Judith Quek Shumin

Congratulations and our best wishes for your future!



Mount Sophia Revisited

After 35 years away, Teresa Lim revisits the old school in a bittersweet walk down memory lane.

Last July, back on holiday to Singapore, I went to look at the old MGS on Mount Sophia, carrying with me the weight of 35 years of nostalgia.

I have lived away from Singapore since 1980, with the last 14 years in London. I used to be a journalist and then a stockbroking analyst. I am now a housewife, picking up after two boys, aged 18 and 13. This last has been the hardest job.

My husband came with me on this little excursion down memory lane, but our sons point-blank refused: going to Mummy's old school was going to be "lame" at best, deeply uncool at worst. I wasn't too disappointed. It would be nice not to have squabbling teenagers in the back of a taxi, interfering with my private reminiscences.

There was so much I remembered about the old school: "Follow the Gleam" (was it Hymn 232?) sung at top volume during chapel; the mythical Oily Man of the Primary School loos; awesomely aptly named rock buns produced during cookery classes in the Science block; and Mrs. Tham's highly popular civic service lessons where she taught us table manners!

In my mind, MGS is forever bathed in sunshine and sitting proudly on its own hilltop. Its main gates are flanked by fences covered in a riot of wild Honolulu, and a train of cars is inching through them in the mornings with a cargo of schoolgirls.

It was therefore something of a shock to see the lovely old school now empty and ageing, and awaiting demolition. The buildings were all smaller than I remembered, though the clock tower still looked handsome. We couldn't get past the locked gates, so we stood outside peering in, and took a few photographs. Despite a little sadness, I was glad to have seen it before every vestige of it was removed.

A week later I was walking, for the first time, up Blackmore Drive to the present MGS. It was thrilling to see its new premises, and on a road properly dedicated to the name of its founder. Mount Sophia was not named after Sophia Blackmore, but for Sophia Hull, wife of Sir Stamford Raffles.

I am compiling a family history of sorts and was trying to find out more about my great-aunt Fanny Law, a pupil of the school some time between 1908 and 1915. Miss Blackmore would still have been the principal then. I was hoping to look through the school archives to find a record of my great-aunt's name.

School staff were a little nonplussed when I arrived, asking to look at the archives, and said no. Turning away in disappointment, I had the good fortune of bumping into my former teacher and some-time neighbour, Mrs. Raymond Ong. She very kindly took me off to look at some old copies of our school magazine, to see if I could find anything relating to the time when my great-aunt was a pupil.

I did get hold of some useful background. But there were other gems, like this nugget from an official address to the school in 1952.

When speaking on the educational programme of the mission schools, the Hon. Mr. A. W. Frisby said:

"When you educate a boy, you educate a man; when you educate a girl, you educate a family."

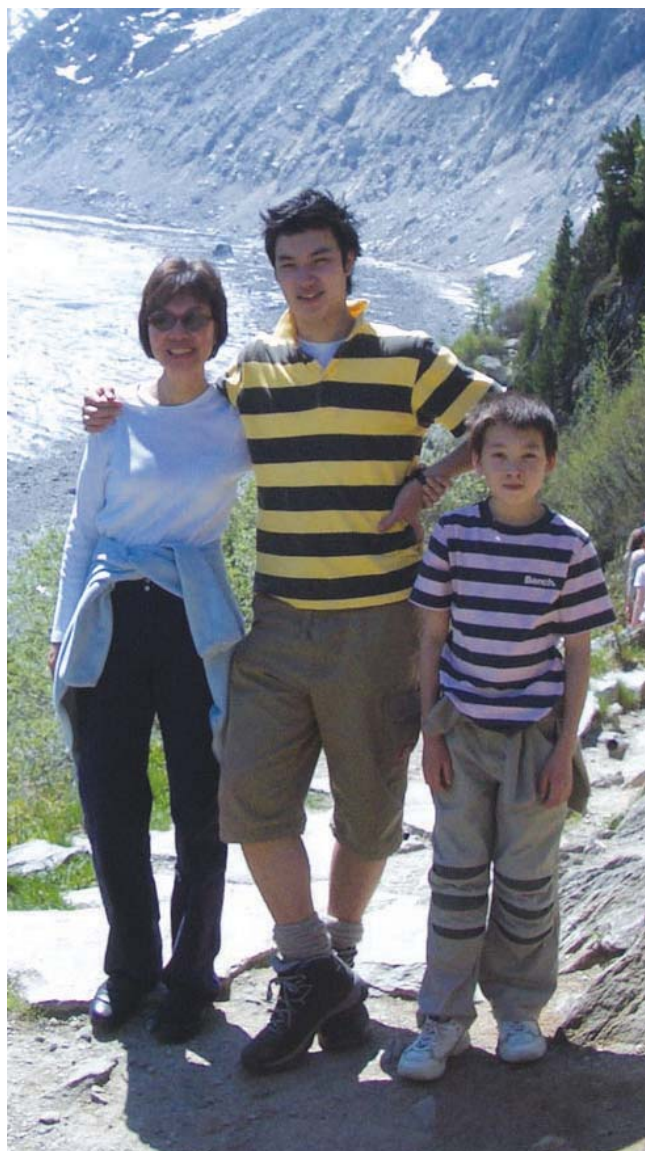
(At the opening of the Mary C. Nind Wing of the Sophia Blackmore Memorial, Methodist Girls School, January 18, 1952)

His words may sound a little archaic, but it is hard to disagree with their sentiment. Mothers leave a strong imprint on their children. The education at my school has been a strong, strong, influence on me, and it has informed the way I bring up my children. So, whether my sons like it or not, there's a little bit of MGS in each of them!

And I see it in the many MGS friends with whom I am still

in touch -- like Lye Puat Fong, my bridesmaid 21 years ago, now a high flying professional with a multi-national who, despite the pressure of time, is a dedicated mother and friend. Whether as successful career women, ladies of leisure, housewives, mothers, wives or filial daughters, MGS girls live their lives with empathy, commitment and generosity, all the values of our education.

I walked out of MGS feeling proud. There is no sense in looking back. The old site may be gone, but the tradition clearly continues. And the new buildings, with their own checkpoint and security guards, are impressive. Blackmore Drive is broad and green and, yes, the sun was shining.



Contact:

Email Teresa Lim, Class of 1970 at
tseawar@aol.com