

APRIL 2014 ISSUE 11



READ ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

Book Week 2014

JIE JIE DAY

Paying tribute to domestic helpers

RCHK WORLD

TO SEEK TO STRIVE TO SERVE



Holly Brown

COFFEE • GELATO



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For thousands of years, libraries have been playing a vital role in civilized societies throughout the world for education and research. They are bastions of knowledge and centres for inspiration. The digital age, however, poses significant challenges to this venerable institution, and questions are being asked as to whether libraries would fade into insignificance.

While such a fear is not without justification, there are reasons to be optimistic. In the case of Renaissance College, the Library and Information Resource Centre will continue to play a central role in the learning experience of our students. As Head of LIRC Andrea Walker points out succinctly, the teacher-librarian staffing model at RCHK helps “to support the inquiry and research based focus of the IB curricula.”

In addition, the college is aware of the importance of being responsive to the needs of the college community. As such, there are reviews of the LIRC collection and the addition of new resources. This renewal process enables us to stay on top of things and stay away from the dustbin of history.

As an IB school and a community-oriented education institution, we take service projects seriously. The annual Walk for Change helps us to sustain a variety of worthy projects in South East Asia. On the other hand, Jie Jie Day is a unique event that allows us to pay tribute to domestic helpers in a very special way.

From time to time, we learn from the news that some maids suffer ill treatment from her employers. These cases remind us that domestic helpers are sometimes in a very vulnerable situation, and that their service to their employers and the wider-community are often ignored. Therefore I salute our students, parents and teachers for taking action to recognize these forgotten members of our society.

Thanks to everyone who contributed stories and photos. Without your support, we wouldn't be able to celebrate the RCHK community in such a colourful way!

Jerome Yau
Editor

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Welcome to the latest issue of *RCHK World!*

In today's interconnected world one can access information in the comfort of home. While the information era could make libraries seem obsolete, they are as relevant today as ever. In fact, libraries continue to play a significant role in education especially here at Renaissance College.

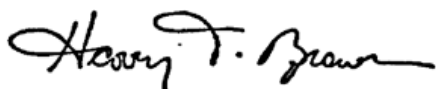
In this issue you will find a feature story about our library, called the LIRC, and a reflection written by Andrea Walker, RCHK's head librarian. Ms. Walker is a founding member of RCHK and over the past seven years she has been working tirelessly to make the LIRC relevant for our students. As she pointed out clearly in the article, our library helps "to support the inquiry and research based focus of the IB curriculum."

Ms. Walker has also been taking a pro-active approach in harnessing the power of the digital age. Under her leadership, our teacher librarians act as a bridge between resources and the college community. They also help raising awareness of reading and literacy by motivating students to read through different events.

As you've seen in the past, community service is a core element of the learning experience at RCHK. Our students often go beyond the minimum requirements for service and action projects. You'll read about one of the many extraordinary events, Jie Jie Day, in this edition.

Jie Jie Day is a student-inspired tribute to domestic helpers started three years ago and unique to RCHK. The Jie Jies (domestic helpers) are invited to have a relaxing afternoon here at school enjoying food and entertainment prepared by our students and parents. The goal is to recognize the tremendous contributions these extended family members have made to our community. Moreover, the action taken by the students echoes the values and ideals that the school promotes – diversity, inclusiveness and respect.

Stories and photos published in this magazine highlight what continues to make RCHK truly exceptional – our people. Please take a moment to turn the pages and celebrate with us the achievements of our students and staff.



Dr. Harry Brown
Principal



Tennis whiz kid #1 in Asia



Year 7 student Adithya emerged as the new number one tennis player in Asia in the U14 age group (Asian Tennis Federation U14 Circuit) by winning both the back-to-back tournaments in singles and doubles at the Qatar ATF U14 Tennis Championships in March 2014. This is an important milestone for Adithya as she will go down in the history books as one of the youngest players to reach the number one ATF U14 ranking at the age of 12 years and 3 months.

Without a doubt, all her hard work, sacrifices and commitment have paid off, as her dream and goal of being Asian U14 number one has been realized.

Adithya displayed a very strong performance against all the top Asian juniors winning all her matches with big margins and consolidated her top position with 1,863 ranking points, taking a huge lead of 1,032 points ahead of the number two ranked Korean top player.

Last year she won all her USTA tournaments in California, USA and several other tournaments in Asia.

Adithya's next goal is to get prepared for the ITF Junior world ranking tournaments next year onwards upon fulfilling the specified age requirement of 13 years.

In recognition of Adithya's outstanding performance at a younger age, three countries have already confirmed the offering of the wild card entries for the ITF (18 & U) tournaments in their countries.

Adithya is happy that she could bring honour to her motherland, tennis academy, school and family.

During the Easter holidays, Adithya also took part in another ATF U14 tournament in India.

Scan or logon to
atf.tournamentsoftware.com
for Adithya's latest results.



Flying fish wins multiple medals

4RL student Jessica Cheng achieved great results in the 2014 Hong Kong Age Group Short Course Division Swim Meets. Jessica competed in the 8 and under age group and won three gold and two silver medals. In addition, she achieved the HKASA Division 1 standard for age 10 and under in the 100m fly and 100m individual medley events.

Her results are as follows:

- Gold medal in 100m fly (1:26.03)
- Gold medal in 100m backstrokes (1:29.89)
- Gold medal in 50m backstrokes (40.26s)
- Silver medal in 100m IM (1:27.7)
- Silver medal in 50m fly (40.9s)

Young singer receives award

Nathan Hui of 5PT has received an award for "Outstanding Performance in Opera Hong Kong Children Chorus." Out of approximately 140 chorus members, 16 individuals were selected for this special honour. The awards were presented on the stage of Y-Theatre, Youth Square, at the conclusion of the OHKCC Annual Concert on March 15, 2014.

Nathan first applied for a place in OHKCC when he was eight years old. Following his successful audition, he began to attend weekly training sessions led by experienced vocal coaches. The coaches soon discovered Nathan's strengths and encouraged him to be a role model for his peers. In this nurturing environment, Nathan was able to build self-confidence and develop leadership skills. At the same time, he made new friends and widened his horizons.

In addition to weekly singing classes, OHKCC members attended several extra rehearsals before each public performance. After a whole year of perfecting and memorizing songs in various languages, Nathan was delighted to appear on stage in his Rococo-style costume. Now he eagerly looks forward to another fun-filled year of rehearsals and concerts!



New achievement in Taekwondo

Congratulations to Martin Chan of 1JF who was awarded the Taekwondo Green-Blue Belt on January 19, 2014.

Hard work pays off

Year 10 student Jonathan Leung spent lots of hours practicing his extremely demanding violin repertoire for the 66th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival and his efforts paid off handsomely. He won first prize in the Open String category.

Congrats and well done!



Audrey Yip



Shevaun Yip

Siblings pass piano exams

Congratulations to sisters Audrey Yip of 3JD and Shevaun Yip of 5RS who passed the Trinity Grade 4 and Grade 8 piano examination respectively.

NEWSMAKERS



Pianist on a triumphant note

Congratulations to Year 7 student Matthew Cheng who won first place in Grade 6 Piano Solo in the 66th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival. The piece Matthew played was Sonatina in C major, op. 151, No. 4, Introduction: Largo Maestoso, and Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo by Anton Diabelli.

Second place in music fest

Congratulations to Year 9 student Misha Mah for winning second place in the 66th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival in the Female Vocal Solo Foreign Language 14 and Under category.



Richard Cheung

Musically talented brothers

Congratulations to Year 7 student Richard Cheung who won two awards in the 66th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival:

- First place in Graded 7 Violin Solo
- First place in Grade 6 Graded Piano Solo

On the other hand, Richard's brother, Daniel (3IS), achieved high scores in the ABRSM Grade 1 Piano Examination and was invited to perform in the ABRSM High Scorers' Concert in March 2014. Well done and keep up the good work!



Daniel Cheung

Future football stars

5BD students Ryan Lee and Heifield Leung and 5MH student Kiros Chong are the elite members of the ChelseaFC Soccer School (Hong Kong)'s U10 team. They represented the club in the Tai Tam JFC 2014 Lunar New Year Cup and won the U10 Plate.

They were also chosen to represent the club to compete in the Mundialito 2014, which was held in Portugal in April 2014. Mundialito, nicknamed World Cup for Kids, is a FIFA recognized tournament and is held annually for youth players of the best football clubs from all over the world.



From left to right: Kiros, Ryan and Heifield



We love sports!

Siblings Ho-Hei Lam (3DF) and Ching-Hei Lam (1MH) are keen athletes and recently achieved good sporting results

Ho-Hei has been practicing Taekwondo for five years. Recently, he passed the Red-Blue Level II Belt promotion examination held by the Hong Kong Youth Taekwondo Association.

In addition to Taekwondo, Ho-Hei is a member of Team U10, Sham Shui Po District of the Hong Kong Football Association since 2012. He and his teammates recently won the bronze medal in 4v4 Futsal Cup, organized by the Hong Kong Futbol Trend.

Meanwhile, Ching-Hei has been learning Taekwondo for one and a half years and she recently attained the Green Belt level.

Well done and keep up the good work!

Gymnast wins fifth place

Well done to Year 10 student Joyce Yau who participated in the Hong Kong Artistic Gymnastics Open Novice 2014 competition on March 2 and grabbed fifth place all around. She competed in three events – floor, beam and vaulting – against 33 gymnasts.



Photo courtesy Ricky Fung, sportsoho.com

LEARNING 360

Year 7 Science Fair

American theoretical physicist Richard Feynman once said, "Science is imagination in a straitjacket." Many scientists, including our Year 7 students, would argue that science actually promotes imagination.

In the annual Year 7 Science Fair on April 8, students applied their knowledge of physics, chemistry and biology, and came up with a wide variety of projects that they proudly displayed to teachers and parents. Science teacher James Gills explained that the purpose of the fair is to encourage imagination and experiment. While each project had to be pre-approved by the teacher, students were given a free hand to work on their projects. Imagination and experiment aside, students also had the opportunity to hone their communication skills, as they were required to explain their projects to visitors and answer questions from teachers. All in all, the fair helped students to learn science in a fun and interactive way.



Visual Arts Scholarship Exhibition

By Rasita Kartarahardja, Year 12 Visual Arts Scholar

The Visual Arts Scholarship Exhibition this year was different from previous years. For the first time, we had the chance to raise funds for SP@RC.

The theme was "Identity." This was a great opportunity for 12 visual arts scholars to creatively explore and express the theme. This also gave us the chance to learn and practice new techniques, and use our imagination to put together a piece of art.

We covered different topics. All the artworks that were showcased at the exhibition were interesting and very different from each other, displaying a variety of styles, use of media and subjects, such as watercolour paintings of Hong Kong, Banksy-style stencil graffiti, anime drawings and paintings, photography conveying the idea of identity and more.

Apart from our own individual pieces, we also made a collaborating piece. It was a combined doodle that was drawn on a large piece of wood covered in paint. With marker pens, we all doodled on it during our free time in school. This piece was also used to promote the exhibition and was displayed in the exhibition on the opening day.

Through silent auctioning, each of us sold one piece, and together we raised a total of HK\$8,700.



Young band members raise funds for children with special needs

On January 11, students from different ESF schools joined together and shared their musical enthusiasm in The ESF Got Musical Talent show to raise funds for children at the Jockey Club Sarah Roe School.

Among these young musical talents, bands, duos and soloists, Icy Starlight was the youngest band, which was comprised of five Year 7 girls from RCHK (Allie, Daphne, Megan, Renee, and Tiffany). They performed *a cappella* on several pop song. Their first shot won an overwhelming response from the audience.

“It was truly a memorable and exciting moment,” said Tiffany. “We have spent two months preparing for the show. We have overcome a lot of difficulties along the way from selecting the songs as well as in mixing, arranging and practicing. But with the support and courage of our members, we have created something from a scratch. It was a wonderful experience that gives us confidence. Now we are looking forward to our second performance.”



Students take action against plastic use at RCHK

A group of Year 6 students who attended the recent ESF Plastic Free Seas Conference have made a model of a black-faced spoonbill bird out of some of the plastic cutlery that is being used in our school.

After initially showing the model during the Year 6 assembly, these students combined with the RCHK primary environmental club, would now like to send the model on a tour of all of the primary hubs. The intention is to raise awareness about the alarming amount of plastic cutlery that is being used at school.



LEARNING 360

International Schools Choral Music Festival

By Cynthia Lam, Year 12

The foggy weather and high pollution levels in Beijing did not affect the International Schools Choral Music Festival (ISCMS), which was held in February 2014. The 7th ISCMS ended up with joy and crazy applause for the passionate musicolics.

Seven music lovers from RCHK – Cynthia Lam, Misha Mah, Kevin Kim, Miguel Borje, Mina Lee, James Koo and Angel Wong, led by Mr. Goldring, along with 300 other students from all over the world travelled to Beijing to attend the 7th International Schools Choral Music Festival (ISCMS) from February 19 to February 23. ISCMS is an annual music festival that draws music talents from different cultures with diverse background together to collaborate, inspire and motivate each other.

Within these five days, we underwent intensive and professional music training and rehearsals were from 9 am to 6 pm everyday. Everyone had to endure sore throats from singing, sore arms from holding or playing the music instruments, and sore legs from standing endless hours singing. Though we were all exhausted after the rehearsals, we felt contented and united learning with talents from all around the world. We performed two well-known classical pieces – Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* conducted by Shane O'Shea and Mussorgsky's *Night of Bald Mountain* conducted by Robert Hasty; also premiering Gordon Yam's (Jenkins award winning composer) *Rise of the Trolls* and Christopher Tin's *Temen Oblak*. The music was captivating and I felt very honoured to perform such meaningful music pieces on a spectacular stage, the theatre in the Forbidden City. ISCMS has given me the opportunity to sing in a huge choir, accompanied by a virtuosic orchestra, in such a prestigious venues; also presenting us with unique challenges for example learning the basics of enunciating text, or even singing in a foreign language that we can't even pronounce properly, and going beyond our ranges in singing for example reaching the "high Bs" for soprano singers. These challenges are what make the four days of rehearsals so valuable and inspirational.

I am sure all participants in ISCMS enjoyed and learned a lot. What impressed me the most was meeting and dining with Tin. He told us his life story as a composer, and how his "never give-up" attitude made him succeed. He was well prepared all the time awaiting for any opportunities that was given to him. He composes music for films, video games, commercials, and TV shows. His talents, endurance and determination won him two Grammys for his composition for the video game *Civilization IV*, *Baba Yetu*. His story of success is thought provoking, motivating young adults to work hard for their dreams. In ISCMS 2014, we premiered his new piece *Temen Oblak*, which was inspired by Bulgarian music. Another good experience I had was taking piano master classes with Helen Lin, a professor from The Juilliard School. She is one of the best pianists in the world, and her advices were really useful and I felt that I have improved so much as both a pianist and a musician.

Moreover, learning and performing with people from around the world was priceless. I met people from Mongolia, Abu Dhabi, Beijing, etc. They were talented and passionate about music, and it motivated me to keep on improving so that in the future, we can share and create music together. The experience only gets better each year with more music, more friendships and more inspiration. Therefore it is fair to say that ISCMS has given us the opportunity to develop deeper into music and inspire us through the talents we've come across from all schools.

ISCMS is a memorable experience that everyone who participated will never forget. I am sure that all of us have learned a lot and have grown as a musician. Here I have to make use this column to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Goldring for organizing this whole trip, accompanying us, singing with us and taking care of us! I would also recommend music lovers in RCHK should go and experience ISCMS in the coming years.



Reflections from Chess Club members

Joey Wong, 6CV

I can't believe our results!!

Renaissance A team ranked seventh out of 60 teams. It is the best we have ever done. Though our team did not get a prize but Kai-Hei won third place in Board 2, and I won fourth in Board 1. Our Team B got 23rd place and this is encouraging, as all of them have no tournament experience.

Although this time we were unable to get a team prize, as leader of Team A, I think that the result is very good.

As I will go to the secondary school next year, I hope passionate chess players will join the Primary Chess Team and help bringing the Champion Cup back to the college next year!



Andria Wong, 5TH

On March 9, our school went to a chess tournament in South Island School. The tournament was exciting and fun. Renaissance College had two teams: A and B. Team A is more skillful than Team B. I played for Team B. We competed against many other schools. Members in Team A competed against school teams that were stronger than those faced by Team B.

The first game was hilarious, as we had to play against ourselves, that is Team A against Team B. I had to play against Kai-Hei Fong, who was in Team A. He was one of the best players in the primary school section but I almost beat him. How crazy was that!

Rounds two to five and round seven were rewarding. Even though I lost in the end, but I learned more about chess tactics. Although I was the second best player in Team B, I expected to lose, as I had no experience in competing publicly.

Fortunately, there was a change in the sixth round. The player competing against me was arrogant and made a careless mistake in the middle of the game. That was how I won this round. I felt extremely happy after than match.

Jobert Leung, 6CB

After the event, we all felt happy at the end of the day and we left with better knowledge on how to play chess. There is a saying: "The less you know, the more you learn from your experiences." I hope that this is true for us!

I got 5.5 points (the 0.5 point was a draw), which was more than I expected myself to win during my first time in an official tournament! Not bad for my first try!

Markus Fung, 5TH

In the primary chess tournament on March 9, I got very nervous, and did careless moves and mistakes. I was also very excited and I lose to some people that I shouldn't actually lose to, but I still feel very happy about the competition!

At the end, Team A ranked seventh and Team B ranked 23rd. It was a happy and joyous day!

FEATURES

Book Week 2014

Book Week is all about reading. We celebrate this event each year to highlight the importance of reading and the joy of stories. We celebrate the creativity of great writers and their stories as we encourage reading for pleasure and learning. We share favourite and popular authors and illustrators.

This year's theme invited students to "Read Across the Universe." The word "universe" comes from the Latin *unus*, meaning "one," and *versus* meaning "to turn" and can be defined as all that exists, in other words, all the planets, galaxies, stars and moons; energy and matter; intergalactic space and voids. In this context, the library is the universe full of many stories. When we attempt to read across the universe, we are being challenged to read widely and prolifically across the many genres and categories that include our print and electronic collections.

Highlights of the week include:

Book Fair

Dymocks and King Horn were on campus to provide an exciting array of Chinese and English fiction and non-fiction titles for students to purchase.

Author Visits

Alex Scarrow talked to Years 6 to 8 students on his Time Rider series and their historical settings. He also conducted a creative writing workshop with a select group of students.

Liz Million had a draw-along-with Liz session with Year 1 to Year 4 students. One of the picture books by Liz was also available for sale.

Parade

Primary students dressed up in universe-themed costumes and paraded on the basketball court, followed by an assembly in the PAC.



The role of libraries in digital age

Throughout the world, libraries are seen as bastions of knowledge. But the dawn of the information age poses serious challenges to libraries, as people question whether they are relevant in today's world where one can easily access information with the click of a mouse. RCHK World talked to Head of LIRC Andrea Walker and two teacher librarians (Shirley Chan and Dianne McKenzie) about this issue, and they are confident that libraries will not become obsolete.

1. What role do teacher librarians play in helping the younger generation to understand and use the Library to extend their learning?

Supporting Inquiry and Research at RCHK. To support the inquiry and research based focus of the IB curricula, RCHK has committed to a teacher librarian (TL) staffing model to maximize the benefits of combining an educator and information manager in one. Tls at RCHK combine curriculum knowledge, teaching strategies and learning styles with knowledge of resource management, information services, information access and information technology systems. RCHK has three

Tls to support the three programmes offered, PYP, MYP & DP. They are ably supported by three library assistants who provide clerical support and allow the Tls to teach both inside and outside the library without interruption to library services.

2. This year's Book Week theme was "Read Across the Universe," students were encouraged to make use of a variety of resources. However, some would say in the digital age, students can gain access to knowledge online. Does this mean libraries are becoming irrelevant in the Internet Age?

21st century access to information. Tls at RCHK provide a conduit between resources and the school community. They evaluate resources for selection and inclusion. They direct students and staff to relevant resources and help them to understand how best to use them. Resources include print and electronic such as databases and specially selected websites that can be searched via a subject search in the online catalogue. Electronic resources are available 24/7 and from anywhere in the world. This is one area where school libraries have changed over the last decade. A lot of research is done online as it is fast and often more up to date than print



FEATURES

books can be. TLs need to ensure students have access to the most reliable and up to date information and need to support students in accessing the technology available to them. Working together with classroom teachers TLs are able to teach information skills and content in the context of the units of inquiry. Students are learning how to learn and access information to solve and understand authentic problems and issues. Working face-to-face with students allows the TLs to teach information literacy skills – defining research questions, selecting and evaluating sources, avoiding plagiarism and documenting sources. RCHK has adopted one referencing style across the college, APA and supports and teaches its correct use with the assistance of EasyBib, a tool that helps students organize their research more effectively.

3. RCHK has been organizing Book Week since its inception. What value does it bring to students?

Staying relevant. Throughout the year, TLs raise awareness of reading and literacy by having fun with literature, motivating students to read through author visits, reading competitions such as Battle of the Books (BOB) and running Literature Circles. These activities vary according to age and stage of students. Book Week, celebrated annually, provides an opportunity for a college-wide focus on reading. This year the theme was “Read Across the Universe” which was used as a metaphor to challenge students to read widely and prolifically across the many genres and categories that include the print and electronic collections.

4. Why do we think this is important?

Exposure to books and reading helps extend students experience and knowledge of life; discover themselves in literature and therefore learn to understand more about themselves, other people and the world. Reading stretches the imagination and improves problem solving ability. Dr. Seuss couldn't have said it

better when he stated – “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.”

As well as providing access to the best electronic resources, TL's at RCHK promote and use social media as a tool for connecting with students and extending learning outside the classroom. They use Facebook, Goodreads, Pinterest, Twitter and Youtube.

5. How do RCHK libraries keep up with new technologies?

Making a difference. Through professional development opportunities and a strong Librarian network in Hong Kong, staff work hard to keep up to date with new digital developments and curriculum changes, embedding skills to access & evaluate the best information. The focus is on just in time connections, skills and culminating projects such as the Year 6 Exhibition, the MYP Personal Project and the DP Extended Essay. TL's strive to create order from an information glut, encouraging quality versus quantity and the transformation of information into deeper understanding.

5. Will RCHK libraries continue to add more digital content for the community? If so, can you give us a preview on what we would see in the near future?

Future Developments. TLs are constantly reviewing print and electronic resources and staying relevant by responding to the needs of the RCHK community. We continue to add new resources and are looking at digital asset management next year. The aim is to make more resources such as audio and video content available online. We continue to develop and expand our e-book collection and explore e-reading devices for greater sharing.



Looking back, looking forward

By Andrea Walker, Head of LIRC

“To build up a library is to create a life. It’s never just a random collection of books.” – Carlos María Domínguez

Students at the centre of our lives – school at the centre of learning and the library at the centre of the school. That was the vision that got me on board at RCHK. The words resonated with my beliefs about kids and schools, and the huge difference an information hub can make to both.

We didn’t have time to worry that we only had 7,500 books in the start-up collection, we had layout designs to plan, new resources to locate, furniture to order and a new library to create – a library ready to serve students across the three programmes of the International Baccalaureate. Renaissance College an IB World School was about to be born.

We worked off paper, on 2 and 3D images and poured through literally thousands of resources to support the new programme identity of the school. We talked with the architects, the boss, with teachers, parents and kids – everyone had their part in the creation.

We worked to fill the space ordained for the library at the centre of the rapidly climbing structure in Hong Kong’s Ma On Shan. Our job was to bring the centre to life, to what Paula Poundstone described as the truth of libraries, that they, “are raucous clubhouses for free speech, controversy and community. Libraries can never be shushed.”

To move to RCHK was like moving into a new home – full of promise and potential. It was clear as we unpacked books onto shelves that we had a big job ahead. Opening with 900 students and scantily spread resources, the library had arrived at Ma On Shan at the same time as the IB.

We grew with the school in terms of resources and innovation, running a flexible schedule before it was the norm in many International schools. We were the first school within our system to have a teacher-librarian rather than a librarian; as a “through train” school, we’re still the only school to have a team of teacher librarians – dedicated respectively to the PYP, MYP and DP.

In the first six years RCHK grew to 2,100 students. Such rapid growth created enormous resourcing needs and that was the main focus in those early years.

Databases, books, DVDs audiobooks, magazines and e-books were specially selected to meet the curriculum and recreational needs of the school community. We expanded our staffing from one teacher librarian and one library assistant to three teacher librarians and three library assistants. To handle the demand for resources more efficiently and extend borrowing to Chinese language classes we installed a self-check machine in 2012. We constantly redeveloped spaces to best meet student needs. In 2009 we added a new circulation counter, security gates and entrance to the secondary library.

While a well-stocked library is critical, the second most important focus was on creating an appealing space, one that catered for individuals, small groups and classes; and that contained cozy and comfortable spaces and seating to enhance learning. We provided ample charging outlets for laptops, and LCD screens that alternate between book trailers and news/sports channels to keep kids apprised of happenings in the world beyond.

We work closely with teachers across the college to teach information literacy skills in the context of research tasks. We are always ready to collaborate on interdisciplinary projects while scaffolding instruction of complex research skills. We encourage the integration of technology tools and use social media as a way of connecting and extending learning.

My time at RCHK has been nothing but exciting. We currently hold over 55,000 resources in a beautiful open space, the job however is never, nor should it be, complete – we had a library to create, and we continue to make improvements in response to technology and student needs.

Editor’s note: Andrea Walker is a founding member of Renaissance College. She will leave RCHK at the end of the current school year, and RCHK World wishes her the best of luck in her future endeavours.

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Terry Fox Run grows bigger in HK

A much bigger Terry Fox Run (TFR) is coming to Hong Kong in November 2014.

Renaissance College has been organizing TFR as a school-based event since 2009. From a humble beginning, TFR has grown steadily over the years and is now a college-wide event that includes both the primary and secondary students.

Last year, the college teamed up with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and several Canadian university alumni associations to host a community run in the evening, and we had the honour to have Ian Burchett, Canada's consul general in Hong Kong, to officiate the opening of the community run.

With a large presence of Canadians and Canadian companies in Hong Kong, it was no surprise that the community run was well attended, as the TFR is one the most popular community events in Canada, and participants can enjoy a quintessential Canadian experience honouring a great national hero of Canada while fundraising for cancer research in Hong Kong.

The combined school and community run raised a total of HK\$223,000 – an impressive amount considering that it is almost the same as the aggregate funds that the college has raised between 2009 and 2012.

For the 2014–15 school year, the TFR community event will be expanded to include more people and other ESF and international schools. In recognition of this great community spirit and efforts, the Terry Fox Run Foundation has officially named the event as Terry Fox Run Hong Kong!

Please mark your calendars for November 7 and 8, as we walk and run to search for a cure for cancer.

Terry Fox Run 2014
School Run: November 7
Community Run: November 8



Ian Burchett with Dr. Brown and community run participants



Joyful Fruit Day

On April 2, RAPT and the Nutriagent Team hosted the annual Joyful Fruit Day in RCHK. Many parent volunteers were involved in preparing fruit tarts, crepes, muffins, and healthy smoothies. This event was a great success because of the many helping hands behind the scene.

Jie Jie Day

By Carol Paterson, C&S Coordinator

The RCHK community prides itself on its mission of developing global citizens who strive for excellence, and building a culture that promotes peace and democracy, values diversity and works towards a sustainable future for all. Nothing encompasses this philosophy more than our annual Jie Jie Day celebrations (Domestic Helper Appreciation Day).

On April 4, 300 helpers arrived at RCHK to be met by Year 2 students presenting them with a welcome flower. They were then ushered into the Performing Arts Centre where they enjoyed food, drinks, games, hand massage, instant photography in a photo booth and entertainment for the next two hours.

Students were involved in every facet of Jie Jie Day from cooking to serving, minding children, ticketing, collecting donations, advertising and cleaning. They were absolutely phenomenal in their commitment to make our helper community feel like kings and queens for a day.

We were honoured to have representatives from the Filipino and Indonesian consulates along with the general manager of A.S. Watson Group (HK) Ltd., our major sponsor.

The helpers were overwhelmed by the donated prizes including reconditioned computers, iPads, mobile phones, sporting apparel from Intersports and many more raffled items. Every single helper took home a goody bag containing donated items from PARKnSHOP and the school community.

One of helpers, Annabelle Malicdem, was so overwhelmed and quoted as saying: "You made us very very happy and we really enjoyed ... the foods are beautiful and the entertainment ... of course also the prizes. Thanks to RCHK ... all the sponsors especially Mr. Peter [Johnston] and all the students who volunteer that special day. God bless everyone!"

Jie Jie Day has been going at RCHK for three years now, and every year it is a huge success and one of the most anticipated events in our calendar. The students' commitment to making this day special for these very important people in our community not only demonstrates their generosity but the true meaning of internationalism.



Cub Scout wins prestigious award

Year 7 student Jordan Ng recently won the Golden Bauhinia Award, the highest award that can be achieved by Cub Scouts in Hong Kong.

Jordan started participating in the Scouting movement in 2008, and has since advanced from a Grasshopper Scout to a Cub Scout. In the past few years, he took part in various kinds of challenging activities and competitions that required courage, patience, stamina, dedication and perseverance.

Well done and congrats!

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Walk for Change 2014

On April 11, every teacher and student took part in the annual Walk for Change to raise funds for Special Projects @ Renaissance College (SP@RC). This year, the goal was to raise HK\$350,000 to sustain our work with these projects, as well as expanding the range of our support to those in need.

Some of the projects RCHK is involved in include:

Service in Sabah

The donation was spent on purchasing a water tank and installing it.

Working alongside their Bilit village homestay members, RCHK students worked to construct a water tower for a local family. Families in the Bilit village use rainwater collection tanks as a sustainable and principal way to bring running water into their homes. Starting with an empty piece of land, students dug holes, built support structures, mixed cement by hand, and completed the project with the rainwater collection tank on top of the tower. From swinging hammers to mixing cement by hand, students each experienced something new while strengthening their bond with community members.

United World School: Ratanakiri

The money raised has been used to build and maintain schools in this impoverished area of Cambodia.

Renaissance College specifically supports the school in a village called Padol. This year our students visited the village school and provided lessons for the students, and experienced the life of the villagers in this rural area, which is far removed from their lives in Hong Kong.

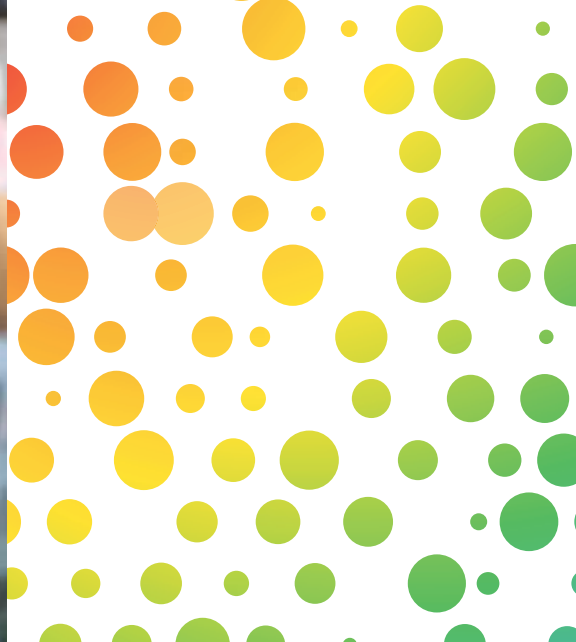


Flag-selling under rainstorm

By Marrisa Mak & Anushka Purohit, Year 9

March 29 was a memorable day of our flag-selling event led by school social worker Ana Chan and two of our students leaders: Anushka Purohit and Marrisa Mak. We were lucky to have had an awesome team from different year levels who put in their best effort to earn the donation as much as possible by selling flags. We also surprised ourselves and are mighty proud to have sold all the flags out within two hours. The heavy rainstorm couldn't stop our spirit of helping others. We raised a lot of money that will go to the orphanage, Sheng Kung Hui St. Christopher's Home.

Flag Day was an amazing experience for everyone of us. We not only felt the generosity of the Hong Kong community, we also learned more about the people in need in our society. We hope that donations could colour up the lives of the kids at St. Christopher's Home.



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THE ARTS

Workshop with Lucy Parris

By Daniel Stiensmeier, Year 12

On January 16, we had visiting artist Lucy Parris come in and teach us about lino reduction prints. Parris is a British artist working in Hong Kong, creating beautiful watercolor works and intricate lino reduction prints, which are a type of print, where final artworks are created by printing several layers, in different shapes and colours.



We also had the pleasure to look at a collection of print artworks that Parris had brought along with her. Parris draws inspiration from the lively and colorful Hong Kong environment, much like how we are currently doing in our art unit, "Environments." While she was here, she showed us her techniques and gave us useful tips for our own print creations.

By the end of the workshop, we were all left humbled by Parris's attention to detail when creating the delicate prints. We had all gained much more knowledge on lino printing after the workshop, ready to dive straight into our own lino prints. Overall the workshop was a great experience, and it gave us the inspiration and skills to recreate our own artworks.

Visit to Fo Tan studios

By Daisy Ho, Year 12

This was our first time attending the Fotanian Open Studios. Many of us have heard of this exhibition but have not actually attended it before, so our art teachers, thought that it would be a great learning opportunity for the Year 12 cohort to go to the exhibition this year, and maybe even be inspired by some local artists.

The trip itself was rather interesting. We spent a few hours at the exhibition and visited many local artists. Many of the artists that we had the honour of visiting were all very talented. The artists' setup of their art studios were also very unique, which made us realize just how presentation can impact on the perspectives of artworks as a whole.

One of the galleries that stood out for us was a local artist by the name of Sim Chan. He explored the urban architecture of Hong Kong. Most of his works were drawn from a bird's eye view angle, and the effect of this were very visually stimulating and stunning pieces.

This was one of the most eye opening experiences for our art class, as many of us were inspired by the local artists and learned that anything is possible if we put our minds to it.



Street artist works with VA scholars

By Robyn Beese, Year 12 Visual Arts Scholar

Having such a fresh perspective from an experienced professional artist was so inspiring. When we first began brainstorming our ideas for the piece, it became obvious that Cath Love knew exactly what would work and what wouldn't. This ultimately made her a reliable punchbag for our crazy ideas. She absorbed our visions, consolidating all our creativity into a single solid graffiti design. But when it finally came to the physical use of spray cans, we were intimidated by such an alien medium.

I think it's fair to say we were in awe of her professionalism and perfect graffiti execution. I also think it's fair to say we were terrible in the first attempts at the basic lines and shapes. It's harder than it looks. Cath made it seem so easy, moving with liquid fluency and flare. But, like anything, practice makes perfect. The more we practiced with basic shapes and colours, the more confident we became. It made us laugh how Cath continuously told us to "move with the can – be the can." In the end, we produced some pretty unique and powerful pieces, reflecting all the distinct artistic personalities in the scholarship group.

Graffiti is a rapidly growing art form, rich in culture and urban style. It's earning its place in modern society as we speak and is no longer classed as criminal vandalism but as an established art media. This is why it was such a pleasure to share this great experience with the other scholars and learn from Cath Love. I think it's been a great introduction to graffiti and I'm certain we can't wait to try it again!



Visit to Jane Lui – pronto printing workshop

By Rainbow Tse, Year 12 Visual Arts Scholar

In late November 2013, the Year 12s took a trip to Fo Tan to attend a workshop by Jane Liu, a printmaking artist. We were all very eager to learn about printmaking, as many of us didn't have much experience with this type of media. In this workshop, she introduced to us simple techniques of printmaking, and taught us a bit about lithograph and pronto plates.

During this period when we visited Liu, we were exploring the "Environments" unit in art. We each prepared our very own digital composition of a Hong Kong environment and produced a simple print during the workshop. The greatest aspect about learning from an artist and going to a workshop is that we learn much more than just the basic technique. We gain knowledge on the artist's style, their intention behind their artwork, a few more tips and tricks when we are able to see the artist demonstrate her work process and printing.

Liu has a unique art style, using a combination of materials to create textures in her prints, she often creates multiple layers in her artworks increasing the depth and complexity of it. Liu also told us that the concept of a piece is important, and many of her pieces are inspired by Hong Kong.



Creating a mural

By Sandy Leung, Year 13



By using the artwork created by Renaissance College's little Year 1 artists, a wall by the Year 1 Hub was decorated with an assortment of beautifully vibrant insects and leaves surrounded by natural scenery. With the style based on Henri Rousseau's artwork, a famous painter known for his Naïve art, the final piece embodies the simplicity and creative talents of our children. A group of secondary art lovers led by Ms. Sameera Pelham and Ms. Claire Brookes collaborated to plan, assemble and produce the final piece. The piece could be said to suggest how individual beauty is emphasized by unity. If you have some time, feel free to drop by the playground near the Year 1 Hub where it is on display!

Express Fest

By Claire Brookes, Head of Visual Arts

This year students from Year 3 and Year 4 had the opportunity to explore the proportions of the human body and the work of Alberto Giacometti. To start off their two-day workshop students made paper manikins so that they could explore pose and movement. Shortly after learning about the proportions they "broke the rules" and drew freely with charcoal in the style of Giacometti's figures. Day two mainly involved building the armature with pipe cleaners and then covering their sculptures in tin foil. The students also had fun exploring the shadows made by their sculptures and recording them with a black marker. Students presented their work on stage by displaying their artwork, striking a "pose" and a short iMovie video, capturing the highlights of the two days – Thanks Mr. Lee and the EAs and parental helpers that supported us along the way.

Basic screen printing

By Nicole Ma and Glenda Chung, Year 9

Screen printing is a unique form of art which is stimulating and pleasurable. It is suitable for artists and beginners to experiment with a different variety of styles and ideas. Ink is pulled across a mesh screen and through a stencil onto a paper or other materials using a squeegee. It allows individuals to reproduce the same imagery if desired. Experimentation is also possible, especially when ignoring registration and randomly overlapping shapes. Over the course of three months, we managed to deeply understand the techniques and basic concepts of screen printing; plan as usual, but you'll never quite know what effects have been achieved until the screen is lifted.



Year 6 field trip to arts museum

By Merry Hamilton, Primary Visual Arts Teacher

During the Year 6 visual arts unit of inquiry (UOI), under the transdisciplinary theme of “Where we are in place and time,” Year 6 students visited the Bonds of Memories exhibition at the Hong Kong Museum of Art. The central idea for the UOI was “Through exploring arts across cultures, places and times we can make connections to contemporary art.”

The visit allowed our students to inquire into both traditional and contemporary Chinese art in an authentic manner. The students viewed a variety of modern Chinese art as well artwork with a rich historical background. The museum docents provided an interesting and informative commentary on the context and techniques used by the artists and were able to answer the students questions.

The exhibition was particularly engaging as it also told the true story of Wan Qingli, a professor and artist imprisoned with master artists during China's Cultural Revolution. The students reflected on their experience to create their own art, using a personal story or memory. They created their work using traditional elements of Chinese art such as ink, text, poetry and symbols but have used these elements in a contemporary way.

Hong Kong Shadow Puppet Theatre inspires Year 4 students

By Merry Hamilton, Primary Visual Arts Teacher

Under the transdisciplinary theme of “How we express ourselves,” Year 4 students have recently been inquiring into how “different cultures use stories to explain similar ideas.”

A collaborative approach between the disciplines of music, LIRC, Mandarin and visual arts made this a very rich learning experience for the students. It engaged them through different learning areas, enabling them to make connections between their own and other cultures.

Students tuned into the UOI by watching a performance by a traditional Hong Kong Shadow Puppetry Theatre. In visual arts, this was followed up with a workshop on how to create and use Chinese Shadow puppets to tell stories and perform for an audience.

The students learned a lot about the history of shadow puppetry and Chinese story telling. They then created their own shadow puppets and scenery to retell some favourite traditional Chinese tales.

The stories were narrated and filmed in the Red Door Studio which was a highlight for many of the students. The videos were a great way for students to share their learning. Well done Year 4!

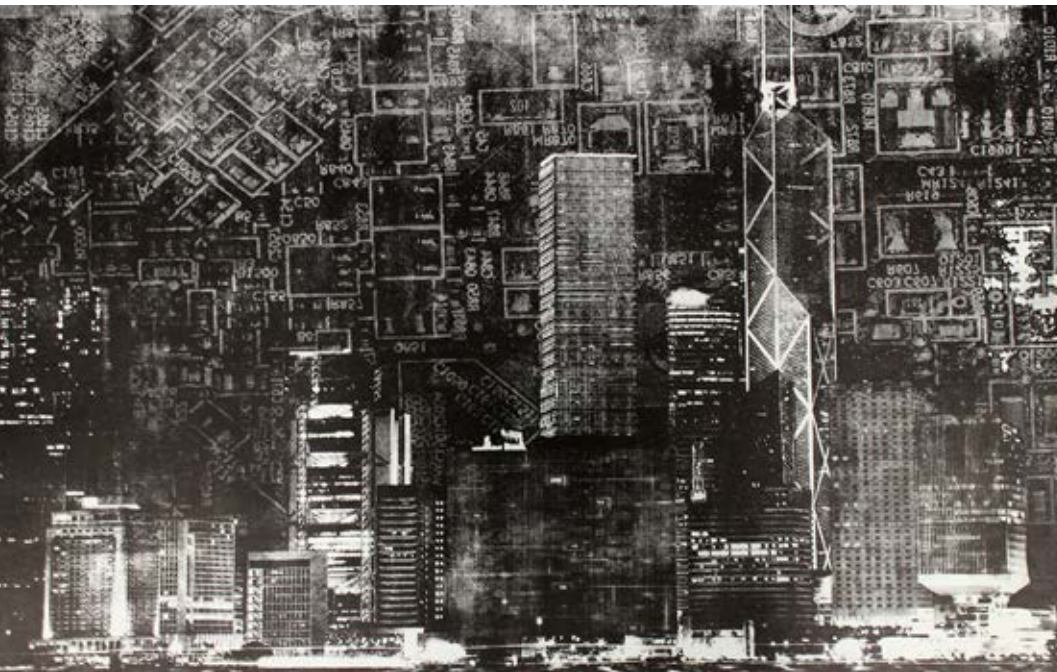


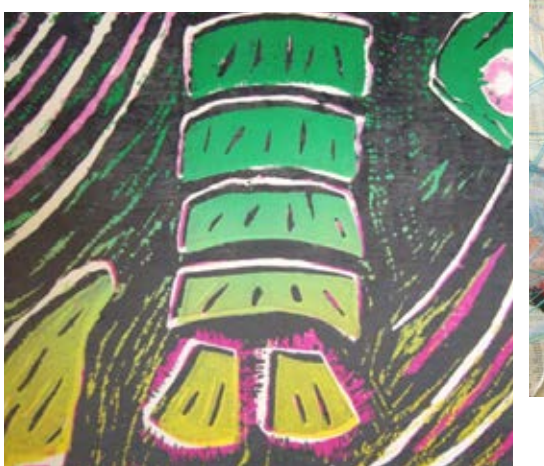
PRIMARY GALLERY





SECONDARY GALLERY





SPORTS

Athletics Carnival 2014

By Tim Ross, Athletics Director

The annual Athletics Carnival was held on March 28. There is no doubt that the carnival was one of the most eagerly anticipated house events on the secondary school calendar. It was a wonderful opportunity for our secondary school community to come and celebrate the athletic prowess of our students.

Along with the many outstanding achievements on the track, we should also recognize our student cheerleaders who spent hours practicing and fine-tuning their performances.



The race for house bragging rights was very close for much of the day, but in the end there was a clear runaway winner, Ming House! Their dominance of the Athletics Carnival now stretches to six straight years!

Many thanks to all the secondary staff for all their hard work running events and assisting in the stands, to the parents for coming to support their children, and to the students for embracing the day and competing hard.

House Results

1. Ming – 2,427
2. Song – 2,120
3. Qing – 2,101
4. Tang – 1,520

Black Kites D-grade rugby

By Steve Faire, Rugby Coach

Over four Tuesdays in February and March the Black Kites U 12 D-grade rugby team have competed in games at King's Park, Kowloon.

After a difficult first week of results against higher graded teams, the team displayed great commitment to their trainings and towards each other with significant improvements made over the following weeks. The highlights of the season were getting winning results against traditional rugby heavyweights, Australian International and KGV. We also picked up victories against CIS, Harrow and Sha Tin College.



Captain Renny Morgan very ably led the team with his decision making and kicking game. The dangerous backline of Jordie Faire, Tom Morgan, Ryan Ballesty, Jake Key, Beau Paterson and Jasmine Hallworth got better every week and were able to piece together some very exciting tries.

Our forward pack leader Harold Yick led the way for an outstanding and hardworking pack consisting of Pei Tsun Yip, Flynn Leader, Alan Clayton Alsop, Joe Cotton, Justin Chung and Jaren Yeung.

As coach of the team I have been most proud of the camaraderie the team have developed, with some of them now having played together for a few years now.

On behalf of team I would like to thank Dave Ballesty for his assistance, the RCHK First Aid Team, and the very supportive group of parents who came along during the season.

Primary Sports Day

By Sandra Gordon, Primary Sports Coordinator

On March 21, all primary students participated in the annual Primary Sports Day.

With the weather being cooler this year the conditions were perfect and students were full of energy throughout the day.

Year 4 to Year 6 students started off first with slightly more athletic based activities including the high jump and long jump. However they also participated in other activities, such as the hop sack races and tug of war. House spirit was at its height when playing "Mister Messy" and students were trying to fight for the last beanbag.

The Year 4 to Year 6 sports day also included championship races over 100m. Leading up to the event, students from Year 4 to – Year 6 were time trialled and the fastest eight boys and the fastest eight girls competed in this event.

Our Year 1 – Year 3 students had their turn in the afternoon. The excitement was tangible as students entered the stadium. After some house cheers, the students went off to their first station and participated with great team spirit and enthusiasm.

Activities included the chicken throw, parachute games and relay races. With the support of many parents and secondary students our lower primary students fought hard for their house until the end of the day. They all went home tired but with big smiles on their faces. Well done to all our students, and a big thank you to everybody who supported this day. Last but not least below are the points the students worked hard for throughout the day.

Qing took first place with a total of 4,254 points, followed closely by Ming with 4,009 points. Tang came in third place with 3,952 points and Song in fourth place with 3,446 points.

The Spirit Award went to Ming.



SPORTS

Cheong Lee Inter-school Equestrian Challenge

By Leigh Thomas, Equestrian Coach

On March 14, RCHK took part in the Cheong Lee Inter-school Equestrian Challenge. This was the first time that the college sent a full team to this prestigious event.

All the girls had to memorize and ride a very complicated dressage test. This tested their ability to keep the ponies straight, balanced and forward in walk, trot and canter.

They also had to complete a tricky jumping course of eight jumps each about 60 cm high. They were marked on style, rhythm and balance and use of arena space, among other aspects.

All the girls did exceptionally well and remained focused and calm throughout.



The top three scores were calculated for the dressage as well as for the jumping. RCHK took first place, with KGV junior team coming second and GSIS coming third.

All the girls took a part in contributing to the success of the team with their great rounds.

Individual places were: Gabby Thomas 1st in dressage, 2nd in jumping. Elizabeth Holden, 3rd in dressage and Constance Hsiah 5th in jumping.

Zoie Montgomery-Pinto is to be commended for completing her first course ever of 60 cm. She showed remarkable bravery and commitment when completing her round. She embodies the true spirit of the PYP learner profile trait: risk-taker. Well done everyone!

RCHK retains tennis trophy

By Nicholas Georgiou, Tennis Coach

On a warm spring day, the Girls A tennis team successfully defended the trophy they won last year. After winning all of their matches in the group stages, RCHK were the number one seeds and, on paper, were strong favorites going into the finals. However, with all four finalists fielding full strength teams, the girls knew that they would be severely tested.

After brushing aside CDNIS in the semi-finals, the girls faced an extremely strong HKIS team in the final, where two of their players are currently highly ranked in Hong Kong, and defeated an ICS team in their semi-final match where one of their players has two world ranking points on the senior professional women's tour.

After Adithya and Jasmine both played phenomenal tennis to record straightforward victories in their respective singles, the girls had a real battle in the doubles. After a nail biting finale, the girls recorded an overall victory by 16 games to 14. Congratulations to Adithya Karunaratne, Jasmine Chan, Agnes Lee, Christy Young and Trisha Deswani for their performance in the finals. I would also like to thank Angie Lee for her contributions in the group stages.



ACAMIS swimming

By Kate Nankivell, PE Teacher

On March 20, 18 Black Kites swimmers along with Mr. Molnar and Miss Nankivell departed for Nanjing, China to attend the 2014 ACAMIS Swimming Championships. The team was a young team but what they lacked in years they made up for in energy! We arrived in Nanjing to a perfect day with clear blue skies and sunshine and embarked on some sightseeing of the Qinhuai River and Confucius Temple. Students enjoyed trying some of the local street food and meandering alongside the river. Following this, they enjoyed a delicious feast of pizza and pasta to prepare them for the two days of competition ahead.

With a solid programme of heats and finals in most events, our students came to understand the importance of eating correctly and resting between events (although it did take a while for this "light-bulb" moment)! Everyone performed extremely well with some impressive personal bests (PBs) being recorded by many of our swimmers. Phoebe Mak set the pool on fire with a full on programme of events starting with the 200m freestyle where she finished 1st place, almost 50m ahead of second place! Sean Woo and Matthew Cheng also performed well on day one, both bagging finals spots and eventual places in the finals. Holly Hou, Hilary Lo, Cody Chan and Harold Yick put in strong performances as did Geoffrey Ng, Ryon Lo and Chun-Hei So. Wyatt Leung, Martina Frascchetti, Ho-Wang Yeung and Brian Chan also swam well and earned us valuable points with the final or near-final finishes. Sean Linn, Joshua Tang, Daniel Tong and Harvey Ho performed well against some tough opposition but gave 100% for the team.

Day two saw Ryon Lo hit his straps in the 100m butterfly where he took gold in a very strong swim. In a mighty feat, Ryon managed to achieve the same time for the second 50m as he did for the first! Matthew Cheng again performed well as did super-fish Phoebe Mak who continued to impress on the ACAMIS stage. Despite only being 12 years old but competing in the 13-14 year age group due to restrictions on numbers, Harold Yick qualified for the 100m freestyle final as did Cody Chan who eventually placed third in a nail-biting finish that saw him get in by 0.06 seconds. Harold was one of four of our swimmers who selflessly swam up for the good of the team. Others included Chun-Hei So, Seann Lin and Geoffrey Ng.

Eventual standings saw us fourth over 10 schools in the boys team competition, sixth over 10 schools in the girls competition and sixth over 13 schools overall. For teams with less than 20 swimmers, we were awarded first place. This is a real achievement and honour for the team and something that would not have been possible without every single swimmer giving 100% each and every time they went in the water. This and the fact that some swimmers as I explained above, were willing to test themselves against bigger and stronger opposition by swimming up an age group. All of these things contributed to the eventual team success.

On an individual level, Phoebe Mak won the 9-10 years girls division and Sean Woo came fourth. In the 11-12 years competition, Hilary Lo placed eighth and Matthew Cheng, Ryon Lo and Ho-Wang Yeung placed fourth, fifth and 13th respectively. In the 13-14 years girls competition, Holly Ho came ninth and in the 13-14 years boys competition, Cody Chan came fifth and Harold Yick came seventh.

After competing we visited Purple Gold Mountain for a scenic stroll before departing for the airport and back to Hong Kong. All in all it was a fantastic tour where everyone was able to work together to achieve something quite special. It was awesome to see the camaraderie amongst our own team members and with swimmers from other teams. On behalf of Mr. Molnar and the team, I would like to thank the parent cheer squad who travelled to Nanjing for the competition and the ACAMIS parent group as a whole, for their continued support of the RCHK swimming programme.

A new life in Brum

By *Chloe Blay, Class of 2013*



My time so far at the University of Birmingham has been an amazing experience. Although at first it was hard missing family and friends, I soon met some lovely people who, of course, were going through similar emotions. I feel really lucky with the course I'm on, as I am constantly interested in my lectures and reading materials. The best part is learning about one

subject that you are deeply interested and focused on, and going into more depth than you would in high school. The workload is a lot more manageable than the International Baccalaureate, and I feel I have been able to manage my work better because of the preparation the IB gives you in time management. I quickly learned that in order to settle into university life, it is great to immerse yourself in all activities you can, and don't forget that everyone is starting the same experience as you.

Thinking back to a few months ago, what was most important to me in making my final UCAS choices was to remember that there are other factors involved in your decision, not just the points needed. Although the points offers can be good estimations of the esteem of the universities, ultimately you need to choose a course you're going to enjoy for three years, in an environment you're comfortable in. I really wanted to do creative writing, and so I definitely made the right choice in the end!

Editor's note: Chloe Blay is majoring in English with Creating Writing at the University of Birmingham.

Studying in an international university

By *Nate Norman, Class of 2013*

Since coming to Jacobs University I've met a range of different people, and because we're all more or less living together, I quickly befriended many of them. IB has prepared me to deal with the stress that comes with college, even though IB was not nearly as difficult. Choosing to study at a really international university was a good choice as it has provided me with a more interesting and enjoyable university experience, both in a social and an academic sense.



Settling in Bristol

By Eleanor Wong, Class of 2013

Being at university so far has been both challenging and awesome. I am living in Bristol, one of the oldest shipping ports in the United Kingdom, and I am studying business at the University of West England. It is quite different when compared with high school. I have more freedom, which also means that I need to have better time management. I don't have to attend too many lectures, but I certainly need to do a lot of preparation and revision to stay on top of my studies. Also, being away from my home and family is another challenge. I appreciate the importance of making friends with my flatmates and classmates regardless of their background, because they help me a lot. I am lucky to have met many good friends here already. I am particularly fortunate to have been allocated university

accommodation, which gives me better environment to settle in easier. Being in the UK for a while, I have learned to be more independent in managing my time and to cook for myself. I believe I have settled in quite well in the UK. It seems that all of a sudden I have grown up and capable of taking care of myself. I think that is quite an achievement!



Alums gather in London

The second RCHK Overseas Reunion was successfully held on Jan. 15, 2014 in London, UK. Twelve alumni came to meet the principal, Dr. Harry Brown, and shared their latest experience with each other. Dr. Brown also took the opportunity to update them the latest development at Renaissance College.

"The students are all doing remarkably well and were so excited about seeing each other and trading uni war stories which were all too funny. We are so fortunate, maybe even blessed, to work with such delightful young people," said Dr. Brown.

The gathering lasted for over four hours and all in all everyone had a good time. The next Hong Kong reunion is scheduled for August.



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for the latest updates.

The Travelling Teacher

By ESF Alumni News

A school trip to Indonesia gave Christian Romano a passion for combining teaching with travel – something the Renaissance College graduate is building a life around.

When Christian Romano first moved to Hong Kong from southern Australia, he didn't enjoy the experience. "It was humid and smelled different. I was 15 and uprooted from my comfortable life in sleepy Adelaide," he says. Christian comes from a large, tight-knit family – his grandparents lived just down the street from him – so it was a shock to learn that his parents had decided to move all the way to Hong Kong, to work at Discovery College (DC). "It was the first time I had ever been on a plane," he recalls.

Five years later, things have changed. "If you ask me now if I want to go home, the answer is no," says Christian, who works as an educational assistant at DC. His time in Hong Kong has inspired a love for travel and teaching – two unexpected passions he has managed to combine. "I want to travel the world and teach, in Asia, Europe, Africa, America," he says. "My parents kind of regret bringing me here – they say they've created a monster."

It's a big world

Christian and his twin brother Adrian were faced with a one-hour commute every morning from their home in Discovery Bay to Renaissance College (RCHK) in Ma On Shan. (A younger brother, Justin, stayed closer to home at DC.) Despite that rough introduction, RCHK grew quickly on Christian. "The approach to education was different to my school in Adelaide – teachers were engaging and passionate about their work," he says. "If they're not passionate about it, you can tell."

One year into his time at RCHK, Christian was introduced to the Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) programme by its coordinator, Kathryn Bignold. Students had a choice to do community work for a week in Hong Kong or abroad. Adrian went to build houses in Cambodia; Christian decided to teach in Indonesia. He and eight other students, along with two teachers, flew to Medan, in North Sumatra, and then set out by car to their school in a rural village. "It was meant to be a 10-hour ride but it was actually 18 hours. The roads were in terrible shape," says Christian.

The school was rudimentary. "It was basically just a room with a blackboard," he says. "All the kids showed up on their own motorbikes which was strange to see because they were only 10 years old." Christian taught them English along with football and volleyball. "The kids were just so full of life. They appreciated all the little things in life in a way that is different to kids in Hong Kong."

After he returned to Hong Kong, the Indonesia experience took a few weeks to sink in but it set the one for Christian's future. After graduating from RCHK, he planned to take a gap year but instead he was offered the chance to be an educational assistant at DC, working one-on-one with Year 1 and 2 students who need some support with their learning. "I just got out of school and now I'm back in," jokes Christian. "But I love working with children and I can save, which gives me a chance to travel."

Christian says that as the oldest among his cousins in Australia, he is used to being around younger children. "The challenge is instruction," he says – learning how to be easy-going and helpful while also maintaining discipline.



Christian Romano
Graduated from Renaissance College in 2011
2011–2013 Education Assistant, Discovery College

Teaching in Africa

Working at DC has given Christian ample time to travel around Asia and Europe, but he especially wanted to visit Africa. "My trip to Europe last year was great but it was very self-focused," he says. This time, he wanted to do something useful. Along with his friends Charlie Bilton and James Hirst – both 2012 graduates of West Island School – he found an internship through an organization called African Impact that gave him the chance to work in a rural Zambian school for five weeks. Every morning, Christian woke up at 6:45 am in Livingstone, the nearest town, and drove for an hour to Mwandu Community School.

"It was deep in the bush," he says. "All you would see in the village was the school and a water tank." Some students had to walk eight or nine kilometres to reach the school, often with no shoes and little clothing, despite temperatures that dropped to seven degrees in the morning. Even with those hardships though, Christian says his students were the most eager and well-behaved he has ever seen. "You have 30 kids just looking at you with their big eyes – I couldn't believe how keen they were. I'd ask them what they do when they get home and they would say, 'Oh, I'll study maths.'"

Christian taught Year 5 students, who ranged from nine to 14 years old – "It depends on how academic they are," he says. With the help of the Zambian curriculum, he prepared his own lesson plans, and there were after-school activities like a book club and conservation education. "It's massively rewarding. You teach something for weeks, and once it finally sinks in and you see the kids have that eureka moment – it's just awesome." Christian says he learned as much from his time teaching in Zambia

as his students did. "The last week I was there, I was a much better teacher than in the second week."

Christian's work was supplemented by contributions from Discovery College. "The students really worked to establish a connection between themselves and the Mwandu Community School," he says. "One hundred kilogrammes' worth of donations have been sent to Zambia from the DC community. I was humbled by this response and very grateful for the support."

On the road

Teaching in Zambia only gave fuel to Christian's travel bug. Livingstone is not far from Victoria Falls and some of the most spectacular natural environments in southern Africa, so at weekends, Christian would go kayaking and bungee jumping. He also went on lion walks with the help of his housemates, who were working at an animal sanctuary. "The lions had been injured so they were nurturing them and they were very calm. You could even touch them. You just have to be firm. Don't kneel, because that's a sign of submission." Animals that most people only ever see at the zoo were commonplace outside Livingstone. "There were giraffes and elephants everywhere. Once, we were having dinner outside and a couple of rhinos strolled past. It was surreal." In July Christian will be heading to Prague to undertake a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) course. After that, he hopes to continue on from his experience in Africa by travelling and teaching children all over the world.

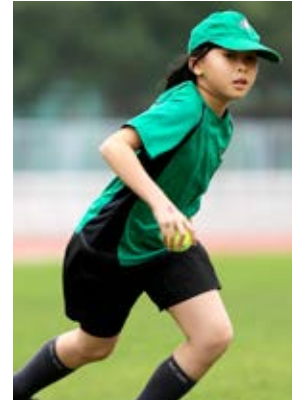
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