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Interview with *Mr Mark Lo*

ST ANDREW'S JUNIOR COLLEGE'S (SAJC) PRINCIPAL



Mr Mark Lo, SAJC's newly-appointed Principal, is no stranger to the St Andrew's Family. He had spent his Primary and Secondary School days at St Andrew's Junior School (SAJS) and St Andrew's Secondary School (SASS) – even the current SAJC campus is not foreign to him, as it used to house the Secondary School. "I still remember the Prefects' Room when I was a prefect myself, but it has now been turned into a toilet! Also, the current SAJC General Office and Music Café used to house the canteen. The school hall, however, is still where it is today." Mr Lo recounted.

Coming to SAJC is hence, in his own words, to 'continue where he had left

off, though not as a student, but as a staff member'. This however, is not Mr Lo's first time helping a school – he had previously led Anderson Secondary School and had also taught in another Junior College. Said Mr Lo, on the distinction between Secondary School and Junior College (JC) students, "The challenges and needs of Secondary School students are a lot more diverse; teachers have to cater to students with various learning and behavioural needs. However, such challenges are rarer amongst JC students, and the learning needs are more similar as they are mostly within the top 20-25% of each O-Level cohort."

Still, being posted to a different school has always been an opportunity for him to look at things from a different lens, and to add-value to the College by continuing the good work of his predecessors.

"As a Principal, I would describe myself as an inclusive and broad-minded person, in that I'm very open to ideas and suggestions on how to do things better. Of course, as staff members of the College, the focus of our actions is centred on the needs and well-being of our students. We are all here to ensure that they have the best learning and growing experience."

Indeed, as generations of Saints will eventually further their studies in universities and take on jobs in various sectors of the economy, the education they gain at SAJC is nothing but crucial. All in all, Mr Lo envisions SAJC to be a College of choice for students; one that gives our students a distinctive and memorable experience. He encourages students to be the best they can be, and be good servant leaders, which he believes is a tradition of the St Andrew's Family. He also would like teachers to feel that they have helped to nurture the next generation of students who would become useful citizens.

To quote Mr Lo, "I think for any teacher, the biggest joy would be that his/ her students have not only made good of themselves in life, but also made a positive impact on others. I hope our teachers will be able to see the fruition of their many years of work for their students."

Business matters aside, we also asked Mr Lo a few questions on his personal likes. Of his favourite character of his favourite movie, Star Wars, Mr Lo had this to say, "The R2D2 Droid. It is very cute, yet eccentric!"

By Edric Wong (15A02)



OPEN HOUSE 2016

THE SAJC OPEN HOUSE 2016 WAS HELD ON 12 JANUARY – A DAY WHEN THE COLLEGE OPENED ITS DOORS TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN A BID TO SHOWCASE THE VARIOUS HIGHLIGHTS OF A SAINT'S LIFE.



There was a palpable sense of anticipation in the air as visitors streamed into the College as early as 8.45am. After receiving a warm reception and collecting their goodie bags, visitors were taken on various tours around the school grounds by our very enthusiastic Saints, who donned feathery halos above their heads!

Each Co-Curricular Activity (CCA) had their own booth on campus which displayed their accomplishments and collective experiences. Athletes showcased their physical prowess through play-offs at the field while the different clubs and societies danced, played instruments and penned poetry. Guests who visited the booths were met with friendly smiles and many stopped to ask questions and engage in hearty conversations.

One of the highlights of the day was the CCA Runway, where representatives from each CCA strolled down the runway in different costumes and displayed different talents, and they were received with cheers erupting from the audience.

What was most heartening was the fact that many SAJC Alumni took the opportunity of the school's Open House to return to their alma mater and visit former teachers and old friends. When the familiar Orientation song, "Shake It!",

blasted through the speakers, many Saints, both past and present, jumped to their feet and gathered together for a mass dance. The energetic beats pumped up the atmosphere of the day and was an electrifying display of school spirit.

While the ultimate aim of any Open House is to attract potential students, SAJC's Open House was distinctive in how it was a reunion of old friends, who joined their hands and hearts together to present the College as it truly is – a home for the Saints, and one family unbroken.

By Naomi Leow (15A04)





What Orientation *Meant to Me* 2016

SAJC's Orientation through the eyes of an OGL

The Orientation programme at the start of the school term is a major event in the school calendar that new students often anticipate eagerly – and this year's Orientation, Inceptum 2016, was no exception. In preparation for Inceptum to initiate our new Saints, both teachers and student leaders spent months planning and poring over every single detail of the programme, to ensure that the various events would run smoothly.

The challenge of being an Orientation Group Leader (OGL), like for every other student leader, was having to juggle various logistical and administrative responsibilities while taking care of the emotional well-being of the new Saints. We were tasked to facilitate bonding between people whom we had only just met, and this was particularly challenging for me as my OG comprised a widely diverse group of people from different schools and backgrounds. However, through ice-breakers such as "Whacko" and various group activities, it was apparent that people from such diverse backgrounds could still come together and forge close friendships. As I saw different juniors opening up to each other, I was hopeful that the vision of the College as 'One Family Unbroken' would be realised for yet another batch of Saints.

This Orientation experience left a great impact on me as an OGL as it helped me, and all those involved, to grow in servant leadership. We learnt that it is important to care for everyone, and to keep an open mind by listening to the opinion of others, regardless of how deeply etched our own ideas are. Many times, we were amazed at how we became better versions of ourselves simply by first serving each other – the essence of real leadership.



Through Inceptum 2016, I was given the chance to be an integral part of the JC1s' experience and it is an experience I am deeply grateful for. More importantly, I hope the juniors will be able to take over the baton next year and continue our College tradition of making SAJC home. (#makeSAJChome)

Up and On!

By Ethan Koh 15S17

RELEASE OF THE A-LEVEL RESULTS

The Class of 2015 streamed into the hall, with many exchanging hugs and greetings with each other. The elation at seeing old friends and teachers was palpable; however, a sense of anxiousness and tension remained in the air. The release of the A-Level results started off with a few administrative matters. Following which, our Principal, Mr Mark Lo, shared that our College had done well overall, attaining 95.3% passes in 3 H2 subjects as well as General Paper, above the national average of 93.1%. The hall broke into a thunderous applause of happiness and joy as the announcements continued with the top classes and scorers who had performed well in their A-Levels.

We had the privilege to interview two students who achieved the perfect score of 90 rank points, namely, Bai Yingzhi of 14A05 and Eve Dana Ng of 14A06, as well as the President of the 37th Student Council, Kenneth Teh of 14S16, an all-rounder, who excelled in both his academics and Co-Curricular Activity (CCA).

Describe how you are feeling right now.

Yingzhi: It was unexpected but I'm extremely thankful for everything!

Eve: I was very overwhelmed and even burst into tears!

Kenneth: I expected myself to do better. My class average has always been quite high and I felt compelled to do well. On top of that, as the President of the Student Council, there was even greater pressure to perform. Honestly, I feel like I underperformed and am a little disappointed, but I am still happy.

Can you tell us more about your academic journey?

Yingzhi: In JC1, I was always underperforming, and in JC2, I was involved in the JC1 Orientation as an OGL, and my results suffered further. However, as I did better for my Block Tests, it became easier for me to do well as I felt that I could do it. During the Preliminary Examinations, I was very tired of studying and was just overwhelmed by the amount of revision I needed to cover. By the time I reached the A-Levels, I just tried my best!

Eve: In JC1, I did not do really well. I was very weak in Economics, and needed tuition for Math and Physics. In JC2, it was a gradual process for me and I started work from the start of the year to ensure consistency.

Kenneth: My academic journey was rocky as it was hard to adjust to JC life. I did not enjoy studying in my Secondary School days; however, in JC, I discovered that studying with my friends worked well as a strategy in improving my academic performance. Once I liked what I was doing, I started to do better. In JC2, due to the JC1 Orientation, my results took a dip but I continued to work hard!



Bai Yingzhi (14A05)



Eve Dana Ng (14A06)



Kenneth Teh (14S16)

What was most helpful in terms of what the College or teachers had done to help you in your preparation for the A-Levels?

Yingzhi: I think the study environment in school was good for me as I did not find the environment at home conducive for studying. I also felt that the Night Study Programme helped, knowing that your teachers are with you.

My teachers really pushed me to realise my potential. When I saw how much effort the teachers were putting in just to help us, I too felt compelled to put in as much, if not more effort in my studies.

Eve: I think the Night Study Programme helped a lot; it was a very conducive environment to study in (with the air-conditioned venues and being allowed to dress down) as it forces you to sit down in the hall and just study. The Principals occasionally came around to give out little treats, and it showed their care for each of us.

All my teachers helped me, all of them really pushed me, encouraged me and they told us that we could do it. Such words of encouragement really spurred me on.

Kenneth: The jokes that my teachers told in class really helped to keep tutorials alive, making me more interested in lessons. They were also prepared to go out of their way to help me academically, especially if I had questions to ask. They were really committed to helping us students.

Do you have some revision tips or words of encouragement for the graduating cohort this year?

Yingzhi: Don't skip lectures and consolidate regularly to hasten the revision process. When things get tough, don't give up and keep reminding yourself of the end goal.

Eve: Mind maps help for revision! Also, study with a friend to reinforce concepts. Go for consultations!

Kenneth: Pace yourself, keep the end in mind and never give up!

After witnessing the successes and joy of those who did well, I believe that we too have the potential to achieve the same success at our A-Levels. It was truly inspiring to hear what our seniors had to say about their road to success and I am sure we are inspired to work hard for the A-Levels too! Let us put in our best and never give up, especially for the graduating cohort this year. Up and On!

By Ho Yong Hwei
and Ng Wen Ni (15A06)



Friendship Week 2016

Friendship Week seeks to provide an enriching and meaningful experience for all Saints, promoting better bonds in the newly-formed JC1 classes, strengthening friendships amongst the JC2 students, and creating opportunities to improve relationships between new and existing Saints alike. Our Friendship Week booth sported a photo-booth, where Saints could take photos with their friends to commemorate their friendship, as well as purchase balloons for their friends or classmates.

Prior to Friendship Week, the Saints Advocate visited our beneficiary, Simei Care Centre (SCC), to learn more about mental illness and some of the stereotypes the psychiatrically-disabled may face on a daily basis. I was pleased to see that the condition of many of these mentally-disabled patients was improving, and some even made a full recovery! As such, this event was particularly meaningful for me as their performance and the sharing of their testimonies deeply inspired me, and I'm sure it inspired everyone else as well.

Overall, I felt that the Saints Advocate worked well together as a team, helping and supporting one another by giving constructive feedback and lending a helping hand where needed. Our performance on the first day might have been a rather bad start to Friendship Week as we did not manage to garner sufficient attention and were not doing well in terms of sales figures; however, we did not let these issues get to us. We persevered and stayed behind after class to make changes to the booth and the arrangements in the hope of attracting more attention from the student population. We persisted and sales started to improve.

It was also a learning experience for me, personally, as I was in charge of filming and editing the video for Friendship Week. Even though I had

no prior experience in editing videos, I took it as an opportunity to learn and widen my portfolio of skills. It was heartening to see the level of commitment as a team, as everyone was present during the entire filming process regardless of whether they were involved in acting. On top of that, the process of planning and execution of Friendship Week eventually went rather smoothly because we all did our individual tasks well and provided support to one another. I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to work with my team of Advocates for Friendship Week 2016.

Even though the preparation period for Friendship Week was during our holidays and Milestone Assessments period, I'm glad we managed to lend help to a worthy cause that we all advocate.

*By Kartheegeyan s/o Mahandra (15S08),
6th Saints Advocate*





Singapore Canoe Marathon 2016

The St Andrew's Junior College Canoeing Team has had the tradition of participating in the Singapore Canoe Marathon since 2007. Although it is our ninth year competing in this marathon, the rigour of the competition still remains. A total of 27 JC2 members of the SA Canoeing team competed in this gruelling race, where participants had to traverse both land and water for distances ranging from 15km to 28km.

Our Canoeists had to paddle around iconic landmarks, such as the Merlion and Marina Bay Sands, before carrying their boats over a 200m portage distance. In spite of the physical demands of the race, our Canoeists were heartened that they were not in this alone, with their teammates and seniors cheering them on and providing them with food and water at the feeding lanes.

Undaunted by the erratic weather which alternated between blistering heat and wet and windy conditions, our Canoeists managed to overcome the odds and completed their races. Notable mention goes to Ng Yangzhi from 15S14, who clinched the top 10 position in his C1 Men Junior Category in the face of fierce competition from the many quality competitors, as he only had a mere 10 months to master his paddling competencies from scratch.

Although the team did not make it to the podium this time, we considered ourselves winners as it was the first time we completed the race against stiff competition. This experience not only gave us greater insight about our strengths and weaknesses, it also exposed us to the wider canoeing community in Singapore. More importantly, the journey from training to competition bonded us closer together and we are confident to take on the future challenges at the National Junior Canoe Sprint Championships and A Division Competition. Up and On!

By Mark Tan (15A01)





ODAC

trip 2016

The Outdoor Activities Club set out on an ambitious trek in Hong Kong last year. In spite of our weekly training with 7km runs and numerous sets of stair-training prior to the trip, the 100km that laid before us at the beginning of the trek was still a daunting challenge.

The first day of trekking covered around 34km, and was 3 of the 10 stages of the MacLehose Trail. They were perhaps the most difficult of the entire journey as the early stages of the trail hugged the boundary of the High Island Reservoir. For most parts of the day, we trekked up and down the undulating terrain of the hills and valleys, lined with the first of two hundred small, wooden, distance-markers that surrounded the entire trail. Shortly after noon, we caught the first glimpse of the beautiful, sun-drenched Long Ke Wan Beach and the surrounding coastlines.

Hastening our steps, we descended from the hills to a small, quiet village by the beach for a simple lunch of fried rice before we continued with the trek. By the time dusk approached, fatigue and strain were already weighing on our bodies, particularly our legs, and we had only completed 2 of the 3 stages for the day! 10km of trekking in the night laid before us. The chill of the evening in Hong Kong's early winter had begun to set in, but it was actually a welcome relief from the heat of the

day and it energised us for the night trek. Following a short break, during which we stretched and rested our legs and chomped on what remained of the rations that we carried with us, we started the night trek as the sun set behind the hills.

The second day of trekking was nowhere easier than the first. We hiked on the ridges of hills, bracing the sun and strong winds, and descended seemingly endless stone steps. But it was a memorable experience as by day, the exhaustion we felt was often broken by the spectacular views the hills offered. By night, we explored war relics that were preserved in commemoration of World War II with our headlights.

On the third day, we trekked up Needle Hill (532m), Grassy Hill (647m) and Tai Mo Shan, the tallest hill of Hong Kong, standing at 957m, just several metres short of what mountaineers would consider a mountain. The extended trek along a scenic and wind-swept ridge before the summit of Tai Mo Shan offered a panoramic view of Hong Kong, extending to the neighbouring city of Shenzhen.

The last day of the trek was the shortest and easiest, although it was still a sizeable distance of 22km, which consisted of a stretch through the Tai

Lam Country Park, the flat, paved paths that snaked through the Tai Lam Chung Reservoir, as well as parks hugging Tuen Mun town. Four days of good trekking over 100km culminated upon our arrival at the two hundredth distance-marker, where we broke into applause, congratulated each other and took numerous photographs to celebrate the completion of the trek. Our sense of relief, accomplishment and satisfaction was palpable.

While the many beautiful vistas and experience of Hong Kong's most varied and finest countryside will forever be etched in our minds, the personal journey for each of us was by far the highlight of the entire trip. During our trekking journey, we had gotten to know each other better and forged a deeper camaraderie as a Co-Curricular Activity group. In struggling with our own aching legs, painful blisters, bruised toenails and exhaustion, we had come to understand our own, as well as the struggles of others a little more. Summoning our will to complete each day's trek, we were quietly satisfied with the display of mental strength.

We all sought to complete 100km from the start. Some of us succeeded, some of us failed; but at the end of the day, we all grew, and that was what really mattered.

By Michelle Quek (16A02)





trip to Vietnam

OVERSEAS SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAMME (OSLP)

A group of 26 students embarked on an OSLP trip to Phong Thanh Commune, Vietnam, from 22 November to 5 December 2015. During this trip, we served the community and learnt more about Vietnamese culture.

One of the first things we did as a team was to help build a library for the children in the commune. We made concrete from scratch, transported bricks and laid them to erect walls for the library. Some of us were slow to learn the skills as we had no prior experience in construction work, but the good-natured local workers at the site appreciated our amateurish efforts and guided us with utmost patience. In spite of the intense physical labour involved and the scorching weather, we persevered with our tasks, believing that the fruits of our work would benefit the community at large in the long run.

We were also given the opportunity to conduct lessons in a local school – teaching English language,

shapes, and basic hygiene to Primary School students. Due to the language barrier, we had to come up with innovative ways to capture the children's attention and explain concepts in a way they could easily understand. This was met with varying degrees of success but the beaming smiles of the children at the end of the day was a joy to witness and motivated us to give of our best in the classroom. The sparse classrooms and lack of teaching materials made us appreciate the array of technology and facilities we have in our College – a sobering reminder of our privileged lifestyles. Yet, it was also heartening to observe how, despite the rudimentary facilities available to the local students, their enthusiasm for learning was unbridled.

What was truly humbling for us was the seemingly menial tasks we were involved in, taking turns to stay behind in our dormitory to do housework for the rest of the team. We worked hard in preparing

meals, cleaning bunks and washing toilets. For many of us, this was the first time we did any form of household chores! We were met with different challenges such as facing cuts in water supply which sometimes stretched for more than four hours. Such incidents made us realise afresh the myriad conveniences that Singapore has, such as clean, potable water, which we often take for granted.

Overall, the OSLP was an eye-opening and deeply enriching experience as it enabled us to appreciate infinitely more the lives we have in Singapore. With a greater appreciation for what we have, we are inspired not to take these comforts for granted, but instead create opportunities to give back to the community in ways both big and small.

By Ng Wee Teck (15S03)





Hockey

National Junior League 2016

The SAJC Hockey boys and girls took part in the Under-19 National Junior League (NJL) organised by the Singapore Hockey Federation. The games were played during the weekends from January to February 2016. With strong support and guidance from our Co-Curricular Activity teachers, coaches and captains, the teams did well in the games. The games were essential to the players in terms of experience for the upcoming A Division Championships and in personal growth. Most of the players had no prior competitive experience in Hockey. Furthermore, they had to juggle the strenuous commitments of balancing academic work and the weekend games.

The girls competed against schools such as Anglo-Chinese Junior College, St Theresa's Convent, Millennia Institution, Innova Junior College and Anderson Junior College. The games braced them physically and mentally for the A Division standard of play, and taught them never to underestimate their opponents. Through determination and hard work, the girls managed to achieve an overall second place.

The boys played against teams that were of a higher calibre, such as the Singapore Khalsa and the St Andrew's Alumni. Though the boys did not manage to win most of the games, they gained invaluable experience and made significant improvement to their skills. The boys hope to be able to apply the skills learnt on and off the pitch, and ultimately clinch the Gold medal in the A Division.

All in all, the tournament provided an excellent opportunity to build and foster greater camaraderie within the teams. It also allowed the players to evaluate their standards in terms of skills, communication and fitness, in comparison to the other teams. It gave them an idea of what to expect in the upcoming A Divisions, and it served as motivation for the players to achieve greater heights.

Both teams are determined to do SAJC proud by clinching the Gold! Up and On!

By Sherri Chan (15S03) and Rohan Thomas James (15A02)





UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

Model United Nations Conference



The Model United Nations (MUN) Club took part in the United Nations Association of Singapore MUN (UNASMUN) Conference held in December 2015. Our MUN members prepared extensively for this exciting event. This, of course, entailed thorough research prior to the conference as well as lobbying with the other delegates throughout the conference.

The conference began with an opening speech by Professor Tham Seong Chee, President of the United Nations Association of Singapore. He stressed the importance of the United Nations (UN) as a platform for international coordination on crucial global issues, and delved into Singapore's role in the UN. This was followed by the address by His Excellency Suh Chung-Ah, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Singapore. The Ambassador's address provided insight to the demands of a diplomat, and reiterated the value of our young delegates understanding the dynamics of diplomacy. Subsequently, the delegates broke into their councils

and mingled with their council members and Chairs. Our delegates were assigned to the various councils across the board, some of which were not the usual UN councils. Such interesting councils included the League of Nations (the international organisation replaced by the UN), World Health Organisation, and even a Crisis Council!

Prior to formal council debate, the Chairs provided delegates with an informative short refresher on the respective issues as well as a question and answer session to deepen understanding on the topics. What followed was an enthusiastic debate on the first council topic, interspersed with 'unmoderated' caucuses for blocs to corroborate stances. UNASMUN also invited several guest speakers with expertise on the specific topics of each council. These speakers included Mr Phua Chao Rong, Founder and President of Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, who spoke to the Disarmament and International Security (DISEC) and the League Of Nations (LON) councils about disarmament and international cooperation, as well as Ms Sylvia Lee, Founder and Director of EmancipAsia, who addressed the Human Rights Council (HRC) on tackling the issue of human trafficking across borders. The sharing supplemented the council debates by further highlighting the concerns our delegates were addressing.

Subsequent days saw the impressive progress made by each council in their second topics, evidenced by our members' engagement in fierce debate as well as the fruition of several comprehensive resolutions. Finally, UNASMUN 2015 came to an end on the fourth day. The Chairs and delegates congratulated each other on the success of the conference, and celebrated its end with a dinner and dance after the Closing Ceremony.

All in all, UNASMUN 2015 saw our members improving their MUN skills by thoroughly representing their countries and their respective stances. They also enjoyed the priceless opportunity of coming together with other delegates as a council and forging meaningful friendships!

By Ashleigh Megan Fernandez (15A07)





The Environment Club

At SAJC's Environment Club, we aim to raise awareness and understanding of environmental issues among our fellow Saints, and encourage them to do the right, environmentally-responsible, things. These aims are reflected in the two most recent College-based projects the Club has undertaken.

The first was the 'No Waste Days' Campaign in October 2015. This campaign was jointly organised with the National Environment Agency as part of a national drive to reduce food waste in the country – currently amounting to the volume of 600 Olympic-sized swimming pools a year. Saints were encouraged to pledge their commitment to reduce food waste on Instagram. The most participative Civics Group was 15S13, followed by 15S17.

The second, and ongoing initiative is the 'Keep Singapore Clean Movement @ SAJC'. The Keep Singapore Clean Movement is led by the Public Hygiene Council in its national bid to make the country a clean one. In this project, Saints will undertake a cleaning and maintenance routine for their homerooms. Keeping Singapore's environment clean and its public hygienic is really everyone's responsibility, and it all begins from the immediate things concerning us: our homes and our school.

By Edric Wong (15A02)



Xperience Pharmacy 2015 @ NUS

Heading out for an educational camp may not be a common choice for most students, but for several JCs, Xperience Pharmacy 2015 (XPharm) was the highlight of their holidays.

XPharm is an annual initiative by the NUS Pharmacy Department which aims to educate Junior College students on the nature of the pharmacy industry to help them make more informed choices after their A-Level Examinations.

XPharm 2015 provided ample opportunities for students to gain deeper insight into pharmacy as a career, by introducing them to professionals in various sectors of the pharmaceutical industry – commercial, clinical, communal and academic. It definitely helped many to see that a career in pharmacy is not limited to a job behind a counter as there are in fact a range of exciting careers to select from. Students also took part in lab practical sessions where they learnt to make different forms of drugs such as calamine lotion and anti-diarrhoea medicinal syrup. Though the practicals mainly consisted of combining specific amounts of chemicals and stirring the mixture, it was not an easy task to ensure that the final product was homogenous.

Continuing in the spirit of learning through fun and games, XPharm organised an afternoon of station games to help the different Orientation Group members get to know each other better. Some games managed to weave in hints of pharmacy, one of which required groups to decode amino acid sequences and solve a puzzle!



Throughout the camp, many friendships had been forged and countless unforgettable memories were made. By the end of XPharm, many of us had come to see pharmacy in a new light.

If your interest lies in understanding human biological systems or organic chemistry, you should definitely give Xperience Pharmacy @ NUS a go!

By Nicole Leong (15S10)



St Andrew's Hall organised a special tour on 5 December 2015 for 38 students who had just arrived in Singapore to embark on a new academic journey. The purpose of the tour was to help foreign students assimilate into life in Singapore and also interact with fellow hall-mates who had themselves also recently arrived in Singapore on scholarship. We were divided into groups of mixed cultural backgrounds to explore the island-state – one which we would be calling home for the next few years.

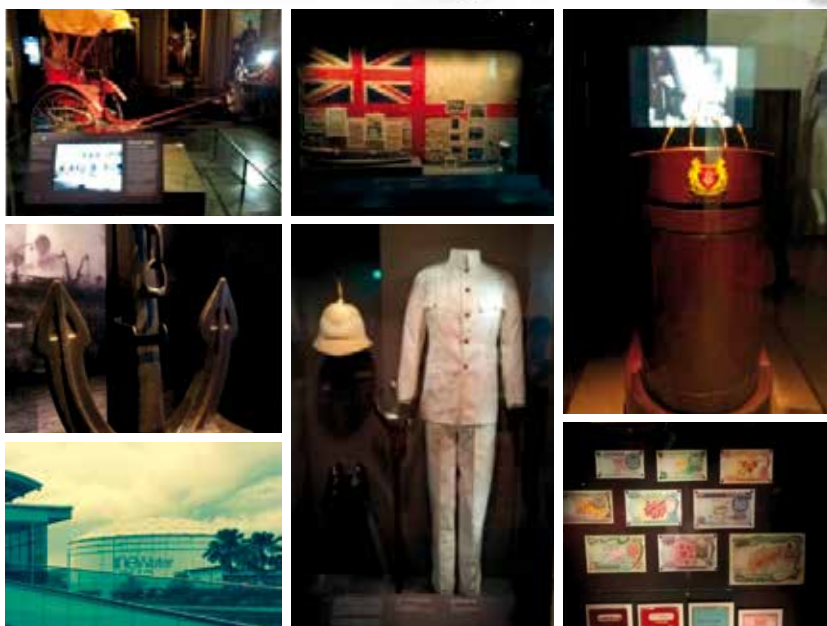
To start the exhilarating journey, we first made our way to the Singapore River where we were captivated by its glistening waters and the magnificent skyline. Our group went around taking pictures as we wandered around the iconic Singapore Merlion, gazing at the breathtaking sight of this mythical creature spewing water from its mouth. Amidst posing for pictures, we found time to traipse to a nearby ice cream stall, purchasing cooling treats that were perfect for the sweltering Singapore heat.

After a morning of sightseeing, we headed to Lau Pa Sat for lunch where we thoroughly savoured the piquant taste of local food. We also could not resist the various local desserts from ice kacang to goreng pisang even though we were stuffed! With full stomachs and feeling very satisfied, we carried on with the tour with renewed energy.

Our next stop was the National Museum of Singapore – a truly captivating repository of the country's culture and history. As we explored the Singapore History Gallery and viewed the galleries featuring each decade in Singapore's history, we could not help but feel as if we were time-travelling! In fact, the interactive experience afforded by the museum allowed visitors to take in various aromatic or pungent smells, ranging from velvet-scented leaves to the cough-inducing pollution in the Singapore River! We were all utterly mesmerised by the displays and installations at the galleries, including the evolving fashion and furniture reflecting the lifestyles of the people in the past, informative videos, rich paintings, exotic sculptures and even preserved specimens of animals. The wealth of knowledge that we acquired as a result of the museum experience made us agree unanimously that this was the highlight of the tour.

Our final stop was the NEWater Centre in Changi, which showcased how water is recycled in Singapore. The guide at the centre gave an eye-opening explanation of the water shortage situation in Singapore and explained how undrinkable water is recycled to potable water through a complex process that involves

First Impressions of Singapore *Singapore Through the Eyes of Foreign Students*



microfiltration, reverse osmosis, and UV-disinfection to eradicate it of all harmful micro-organisms. The end result is drinkable water that surpasses even global standards for clean water! Understanding the process made us amazed at how prudent Singapore is in its use of water and how far-sighted its leaders are in implementing ways to boost its water supply to ensure the continued peace and security of the nation.

The experiences we gained during this one-day tour helped us glean an insight into the tiny island-state that is Singapore. We were indeed fascinated by the different aspects of Singapore and impressed by all who have played a part in shaping Singapore to what it is today. Indeed, there is so much to Singapore that we as foreign students look forward to discovering during our stay here.

By Exceline, Pearl & Janice (New Sec. 3 Student Residents at St Andrew's Hall)



ECONOMICS LEARNING JOURNEY TO SYDNEY 2015

A group of 18 students and 3 teachers embarked on an Economics Learning Journey to Sydney from 25 November to 3 December 2015. The objective of the trip was to provide students with the opportunity to see the workings of Economic concepts in real-life situations, as well as to heighten their analytical and observational skills through visits to both large and small firms, dialogue sessions with organisations and authorities, as well as through a school-exchange programme with St Luke's Grammar School.

Students were also given a glimpse into the workings of the public transport system in Sydney, as well as how the monetary policy works in real life, through a visit to the Reserve Bank of Australia. Students participated in discussions with experts on the various policies used in these areas to gain a better understanding of how these policies can be applied in the real world context. Beyond gaining valuable economic lessons, valuable life skills were also imparted through the various activities.

By SAJC Economics Department



CULTURAL IMMERSION TRIP TO GERMANY 2015

FOR GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND ARTS STUDENTS

The sky was still dark in the morning when all 27 of us landed safely in Munich Airport. Despite the biting cold and the freezing rain, our eagerness to explore Germany was not dampened. We set off the minute our tour bus arrived, and headed toward our very first location - the Nymphenburg Palace. And so began the first day of our trapeze through some of the most spectacular sites in Germany. At Nymphenburg Palace, we were awed by the grandiose murals on the ballroom's ceiling, and we experienced an odd sense of bliss to be in the exact room Mozart once performed in. The rainy weather persisted throughout the day, which aptly primed our hearts and mood with an air of sombreness as we approached the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial. Some of us teared as we walked around the vast pebbled compound, being reminded of the cruelty of the Nazi regime that led to thousands and thousands of innocent lives lost in the very camp we stood in.



On the second day, we took a tour to the Deutsches Museum. There, we learnt about the changes of transportation technology, from the invention of the wheel, to the locomotives and to the modern high-speed trains. Our day continued with a visit to the Neue Pinakothek Art Museum, where the majority of us benefitted a lot as our lovely tour guide taught us the different ways we could analyse pieces of art. On top of that, we got to enjoy one of Van Gogh's sunflower paintings!

We were happily greeted by snowfall the next morning when we set out for Dresden. Along the way, we dropped by Nuremberg to learn more about World War II history, which was particularly exciting for the History enthusiasts among us. The following day saw us travelling through the countryside to the Elbe Sandstone Mountains. Although the ride there was long, we were rewarded with the beauty that the majestic mountains had to offer. Our fingers were all stone cold either from taking pictures or making snowballs hundreds of metres above sea-level, but it was worth the pain!

When it came time to visit the Volkswagen Factory in Dresden, we were so excited as it is renowned for its transparent exterior design. After the visit, many of us were already dreaming of owning a Phaeton of our own someday. Our visit to the Militär Historisches Museum was equally educational, especially when we finally found out how the term 'trench coat' came about. The subsequent meeting with Dresden's City Council was also a highlight for most Geography students as it was our very first experience listening to how geographical knowledge can be applied in real life. Additionally, the teachers kindly took us on an exploration of Dresden's historic city centre, where the famous Frauenkirche lies. It gave us an appreciation of Dresden in its entirety before we had to leave for our next destination - Berlin.

Although we reached Berlin late in the evening on Day 6, we managed to squeeze a three-hour tour around important landmarks, such as the Brandenburg Gate, the Reichstag Building, the exterior of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the location where Hitler committed suicide (which is now a carpark) and the East Side Gallery, with great help from our guide, Mr. Lewis. After a long tiring night, we headed back to the hotel, with great anticipation for our visit to SAJC's partner school, Romain-Rolland Gymnasium, in the morning.



Over the next two days, we spent most of our time bonding with our German buddies, and had the chance to attend classes with them. Although all the lessons were conducted in German, we had no problem enjoying the time as we got to witness how interactive they were in class. To be honest, many of us were initially worried over whether we could actually bond with our German friends who were younger than us. But their friendliness in welcoming all of us broke the ice almost immediately. There also seemed to be no significant language barrier as they consistently tried to communicate in English with us. This made all of us really grateful as the effort they were willing to put in made our trip much more meaningful, and it had certainly made us look forward to their visit to SAJC in May next year! Believe it or not, our German buddies are actually the ones counting the days now till they see us again back in sunny Singapore.

All in all, not a single second spent in Germany was wasted; and it was not because our itinerary was packed, but because every second - whether we were in museums, up in the open mountains, taking pictures of our delicious pork knuckles or enjoying our time at the Christmas Market - had been meaningful and memorable. It was definitely a trip all of us will forever remember.

By Lee Wai Ben (15A07)





Literature - TDP Trip 2015

In November last year, 19 of us from the Humanities Scholarship Programme (HSP), Science Scholarship Programme (SSP) and Literature classes set off for a 10-day adventure in England. While not quite the trip we had signed up for because of changes to our programme that had to be made due to the tragic events in Paris, the itinerary nevertheless offered us plenty by way of introduction to some of the iconic cultural, historical and educational sites of England as well as the opportunity to spend time with our British counterparts during an immersion at our partner schools – Gumley House Convent and Sir John Lawes Schools.

For many of us, this trip was the furthest, and longest we'd been away from home. But in that short time, we had the chance to explore places and sights previously only seen in travel magazines and on television. The Stonehenge was even more amazing up close and personal, and other places like Stratford Upon Avon, Bath, Epping Forest and Thaxted had a tranquil beauty and quaint charm that we had never before experienced, especially not in fast-paced, high-rise Singapore.

Oxford, Cambridge and meetings with the St Andrew's Junior College alumni were valuable opportunities for us to learn about tertiary education in the UK (and our seniors even gave us useful A-Levels study tips). The school immersion gave us a little taste of an education system and youth culture different (yet in some ways similar) to our own. There were also many new friendships made. At the risk of sounding cliché, the trip was a precious experience that has helped broaden my horizons and opened my eyes to the larger world outside of Singapore.

By Seraphina Tang (15A06)



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