

A REPORT BY THE STUDENT AMBASSADOR

STEPHEN WONG

The student ambassador scheme co-organized by the Past Students' Associations of Wah Yan, Kowloon and Wah Yan, Hong Kong has been launched since 1990 and this was its second year.

To many Wah Yan students, the School ambassador seems to be an unfamiliar figure and his only task is to take a trip abroad and have fun for a couple of days. In fact, his main function is to act as a bridge between the school and all the past students. And I am honoured to have the opportunity to serve as the school ambassador this year.

In order to fulfil my duty as a bridge between the past students and the school, I have begun to attend the past students' meetings since late December last year. There we exchanged much of our feelings about Wah Yan and I was impressed by their enthusiasm for their Alma Mater. Being a member of the Student Association, I was engaged in organizing a function for both the present and past students of Wah Yan. On 29th March, the Union Day involving teachers, parents, students and the past students was held. Thanks to all organizers and helpers for making the Day so meaningful.

After that, it came to the highlight of the Scheme, the visitation to the past students abroad. This year we, Patrick Lee from Wah Yan, Hong Kong and I, were assigned to visit the past students in England and Singapore. It was an innovative arrange because this year we were not merely visiting the past students in two cities, but in two countries. Because of that, our schedule was compact and we were told to take a good rest during the flight. Nevertheless, we were excited and we fulfilled our duty as ambassadors even on the plane ! We contacted a New Zealander sitting beside us and shared about our own schools. At the end of the flight we exchanged

our addresses and promised to have correspondence.

Our task began on 16th April at dawn when Stephen Loong, the president of the P.S.A. in the U.K. and Dennis Chung welcomed us at the Heathrow Airport and took us to the apartment of a past student, Michael Cheng. After we had settled down and refreshed ourselves, it was still early in the morning, we began our trip round London where we visited the Covent Garden, the University college of London, Greenwich and the China Town of London. On that night, we had our official dinner with the past students. It was really amazing that most of the past students were still undergraduates in universities. except Dr. Tony Daroza who was a retired doctor. However, there was no gap between us and we shared freely on our life in Wah Yan and I updated them with the most current news happening in Wah Yan College. They were eager to hear about the news and wanted to send their warmest regards to all the priests and teachers who had once taught them.



Trafalgar Square

On the next day, we continued with our site-seeing in London where we visited the Trafalgar Square, the River Thames, the Big Ben, the Hyde Park, the Buckingham Palace, etc. There were so many things to see. London is a city of all things. That night, we went to watch an opera, the Phantom of the opera, which was breath-taking. Watching opera, as told by the past students, is a common social activity in the British society. Then, in the coming days we packed our knapsacks and went around England to visit the past students in different universities. First we went to Cambridge where we lived with Chau Ka Lok, a past student who is doing a Ph.D. there, then Coventry, where our president Stephen Loong lived and Birmingham, Strafford and finally Oxford where we visited Dr. Paul Tam who was a reader in the Oxford University.



Exchange of Souvenirs

During our trip in England, we visited many universities and had many interactions with the past students there. We were lucky to have a chance to have a taste of life in universities in Britain. I found that the life of a university student is tough especially when you are studying abroad. You have to know how to get along with your hallmates and how to adapt a new way of living. You have got to be independent and friends play an important role in our life then. It is worth-knowing that they have formed a vast Chinese society which involved most of the Chinese students in the U . K . It provides students with normal social activities and helps you to adapt your life to a new environment. Frankly speaking, studying abroad had no less pressure than studying in Hong Kong as they said. They have to work overnights in order to finish their projects and the competition is keen.

When we talked about the Wah Yan boys studying in the U.K., they told us that fewer and fewer Wah Yanites are coming and they find it difficult to gather them together as Britain is so large, while the students are so scattered. May God bless all of them in their living and their studies.

After the seven days' trip in England, we went to Singapore. There were big contrasts between the two countries in many aspects. Firstly the temperature was extremely low in England where we often dressed like a snowman, while it was dull hot in Singapore with a temperature of 37°C. Secondly, the buildings are old and classical in London, whereas Singapore is full of new and high technology architectures. Even the past students are quite different. The past students in U.K. are greenhorns when compared with the past students in Singapore where most of them have established a career in Singapore.

On the first day we arrived at Singapore, we were astonished by the enormous house where we lived in. The host, Allan Choy and his family treated us with hospitality and we had a feast in a hawker centre where we tasted many local Singaporean food.

On the next day, we began our site-seeing, with two high school students who used to study in Wah Yan, Hong Kong. We visited the Raffles Junior College which was much like our schools, and the zoo. Then, we visited Sentosa, a famous tourist attraction in Singapore, with another past student, Desmond. It was a coincidence that Desmond was a Christian and we had a good chat on the religious affairs in Singapore and found that many students have a set back in their own religion after they have entered society. And he said that we, especially the Catholic students should treasure the time in Wah Yan and be serious in pursuit of the Christian spirit.

Finally on the night before we left, we had an official dinner with the past students there. They have a large membership and it was funny that most of them were accompanied by their wives so it was easy to feel the strong familihood among them. After dinner, Patrick and I gave a short speech and to thank them for taking care of us. Then we sang the school hymns of the two Colleges before we left. On the next morning just before we left for Hong Kong, I attended a mass in a Jesuit Church. However, it was a pity that I could not meet Father Reed's brother owing to the lack of time.



Dinner with Past Students in Singapore

Last but not least, I hope to express my heartfelt thanks to Fr. Deignan, Uncle Ching, Mr. Frank Miu, Stephen Loong, Dennis Chung, Allan Choy and Alan Wong and all others for their help and guidance. And I wish all Wah Yanites a brilliant future !