

World Choir Games in Riga

Reflections from DGJS Diocesan Riga Choir Members

The DGJS Diocesan Riga Choir ("DRC") was awarded the Gold Medal in the Champions Competition Category C1, Young Children's Choir, of the World Choir Games held at the city of Riga, Latvia in July 2014.

The trip was a memorable one for all of our members. Here are some of their thoughts and feelings.

Chong Sum Yip

I enjoyed the parade in the Old City. We walked down the streets of the town, waving our flags and singing to the people sitting there watching us. The people waved at us too!

After the competitions, we went sightseeing and on boat trips. I found it fun to sail on a boat on a beautiful day, playing cards with my friends and looking at the wide sea. The sightseeing trip in Sigulda and the zoo were also great.

All in all, the trip to Riga was a great experience. I wish I could go there again!

Olga Kwan

The DRC has gone beyond the boundaries of an ordinary choir. Through the ten days of living together, we have bonded as a family, a family that I will always take pride in being part of.

Not only have we bonded with each other, but we have also bonded with the world. As I write this, endless memories flood my mind. I'm sure that no one in the trip can forget the human waves we made as we waited for the results in the stadium, or the exchanging of tokens, made invaluable because of the friendship they symbolise.

Nicola Yeung

We were very honoured to represent Hong Kong as one of the participating teams. On the day of the competition, we were all in high spirits and also quite nervous as we knew that it was an international competition and the competitors were all accomplished musicians and had consummate skills. We did our best and learned from this experience.

Riga is a very musical town. There was a parade and all the people gathered on the streets to listen to music and enjoy themselves. We were part of the crowd and we were even filmed and were on TV!

Natalie Chan

I have learnt about the importance of teamwork and focus. Although during our rehearsals we struggled at times to ensure that every single one of us was focused, we shone on the stage and showed our DGJS spirit. This trip has inspired me to continue my musical journey throughout my life.



School Exchange Programme and Education Tour: Singapore

Reflection from Chloe Shieh

In July 2014, twenty DGJS students (including me) went on a six-day Singapore Educational Trip. It was one of the best experiences DGJS has ever given me. We went to many different places, such as Sentosa, the SEA Aquarium, the Singapore National Museum, the Peranakan Museum, the Night Safari, Gardens by the Bay... however, my experience at Singapore Chinese Girls' School (SCGS) was definitely the highlight of my journey in Singapore.

SCGS is one of the top girls' schools in Singapore. We were lucky enough to be able to visit their school and experience life as an SCGS student for five days. We woke up every day at 5:30 am as school started at 7:20 am. Every one of us was well received by our SCGS "buddies". We had lessons in a classroom with no air-conditioning and just a few fans. I learned how incredibly fortunate we were in Hong Kong to be able to learn in air-conditioned classrooms and that we should never take things for granted. The school canteen was quite possibly the best place in SCGS. There were so many different varieties: noodles in soup, sushi, salad, fried noodles... it was basically a food heaven for us!

Although we stayed in Singapore for only six days (which I think was too short because we had no chance to go to Universal Studios), we learned so much about the history and culture of Singapore as well as its modern developments. There are a number of things which left an indelible impression on my mind as to how Singapore, as an island state with a much smaller area than Hong Kong, could make such great accomplishments.

Singapore has very limited water supply. At the Marina Barrage and NEWater Plant, I learned about the four national taps of Singapore: local catchment, imported water, NEWater and desalinated water. NEWater was the most interesting because it involved turning waste water into clean water. I was amazed by how the Singaporean government had the vision and energy to develop such a technologically ingenious way to "get" water and how technology can transform "dirty" water into ABC (Active, Beautiful, Clean) water using an eco-friendly way.

At the DNA Learning lab, I learned about forensic science and the concept of DNA, and also solved a real crime using DNA testing. It even stimulated my interest in being a forensic expert and I will try to work very hard to turn that into reality.

What connects the visit to these two locations in my mind is that they both epitomise how Singaporeans and their government value the importance of knowledge. Singapore and Hong Kong have very similar backgrounds: we were both former British colonies; we were both occupied by the Japanese during the Second World War and we were both very small and have scarce natural resources. The Singaporean government places a lot of emphasis on knowledge and cultivating the interest of Singaporeans in acquiring knowledge. The water technology is the result of years of research, and the DNA Learning Lab arouses young people's interest in science. At SCGS, I also felt the keenness of my fellow classmates in learning. As young Hong Kong citizens, we should value education and research, as it is only through having a knowledgeable population that Hong Kong can maintain its competitive edge in the world and in Asia.



Visit to Gardens by the Bay with our SCGS Pr. 6 "buddies" on our last day



A farewell photo at the school's foyer



Enjoying local delicacies at the SCGS Canteen



Museum guides from SCGS took us through the Peranakan Museum

Reflection from Sharon Chau

When I look back at the photos I took from my exchange trip to Singapore, I can't help but smile to myself. The happy but swift memories of this rewarding experience float immediately back into my mind and linger until the moment I sleep...

On the first day of our exchange program, I think no one woke up at the time we were supposed to; the wake-up call was at 5:15 a.m.! Anyway, we had a pleasant surprise in store for us. When we arrived at Singapore Chinese Girls' School, our old buddies were waiting at the gate even though they had to take their exams! We were very touched and exchanged information about how we were doing, and also that there was no air-conditioner in their school. Then, we met our new buddies who, despite studying in a grade lower than we were, were actually more mature! After their morning assembly, we headed up to their spacious classroom to have lessons, which included interesting discussions.

The next few days in Singapore passed like a blur! Everything was so fast and our schedule was so packed. Our daily schedule is as follows: morning, lessons at SCGS; afternoon, lunch and visit to the Singapore landmarks; night, dinner and back to the hotel. We visited lots of fun places like the Night Safari, Sentosa, Luge and Skyride etc. and enjoyed ourselves immensely. The only flaw was the burning, stubborn weather, which made us all sweat a lot. However, it did not affect any major things except for the complaints we made about the stench of one another.

From our visit to Singapore Chinese Girls' School, I was most impressed by our buddies' friendly manner towards us. To them, we were not merely exchange students, but also new friends. From their curious faces to warm welcomes, we felt like we really belonged and were not just outsiders. They showed us around, introduced their friends and teachers to us and played with us all the time during the one-hour recess.

I will forever cherish the memories of this trip and remember my buddies, who taught me to be friendlier towards people we are not familiar with, and also to appreciate what we take for granted, like air-conditioners. Bye, Singapore! Bye, buddies!

Netball Club Training

The School organised a Netball Club for the Pr. 5 and 6 girls last year. The Club conducted their meetings during lunchtime and the activity was offered to the girls for free. Netball is a team sport that has been played for many years in the senior school.

We had the pleasure of inviting the Senior School netball team coach, Mrs. Anna Yuen, to lead the girls in this extracurricular activity. Mrs. Yuen is not only an old girl, but also a qualified coach accredited by the Hong Kong Netball Association. Members of the DGJS Netball Club enjoyed learning the game and had a lot of fun through the game activities.



Primary Two & Three Mural Painting Project

We have completed another washroom beautifying project. The Primary 3 washroom is now decorated with colourful paintings. The theme of the mural paintings revolves around the 4Rs—reduce, reuse, recycle and recover. We aim to highlight the importance of protecting the environment through this aesthetic educational programme.

The mural painting workshop was targeted at the Primary 2 and 3 girls, with the aim of stimulating creativity among our girls and equipping them with better painting skills. Before the mural painting workshop, all Primary 2 and 3 students contributed design ideas for the mural painting project during Visual Arts lessons. Each of them created a drawing under the theme of the 4Rs. Sixty students were selected to participate in the mural painting workshop. Since most of the Primary 2 and 3 girls were new to painting or did not have any painting experience at the time, some of the workshops were based on basic painting skills. Students learnt to do research, develop a draft, enlarge their drawings to scale and polish their wall painting skills. Girls did a mural painting trial on big canvases before they painted on the washroom walls. Their experimental work is now displayed on L1 opposite to the lift. Although the painting is not a masterpiece, girls are happy to see their work displayed.

Since our girls seldom had a chance to create large scale collaborative artwork and paint on walls, they were very excited about the mural painting project ever since they were selected to participate in it. Most of the feedback from the girls was positive. Girls enjoyed the activities they did during the workshops and found the skills they learnt valuable.

