Speech Day

It was a pleasant evening on 12th January 2012 when guests, parents, teachers and students assembled for Speech Day - the very first one held in the new campus. The whole school community was graced with the presence of the Hon. Chief Justice Geoffrey Ma and the Hon. Madam Justice Yuen as our Guests of Honour.

Hon. Chief Justice Ma’s humorous, insightful address to the graduates was truly memorable. He shared with us his experience as a secondary student at Diocesan Boys’ School, and how he was inspired to transform himself, and pursue excellence in academic work. It was hard work and gratitude that shaped his life story; there was no short-cut. He also urged the graduates to be ready to embrace and reflect on failures in life, even when our instincts would naturally say otherwise.

As prizes and certificates were handed out to each prize recipient, our state-of-the-art auditorium was filled with joy and pride. As Mrs. Lau reminded us at the commencement of the evening, this annual celebration of individuals’, groups’ and teams’ remarkable achievements is more than a prize-presentation event – it is an occasion for everyone to reflect on the past year’s work and give encouragement to each person who has put in effort during the past academic year.

This night was a particularly memorable occasion as Bishop Thomas Soo, JP, who has served tirelessly as the chairman of the School Council over many years, was presented with a token of our appreciation and gratitude by a member of the Junior School to thunderous applause.

With the school hymn echoing in the auditorium as the Speech Day came to an end, we were reminded of God’s countless blessings bestowed upon us, and our duty as a member of this DGS family. With Reverend Menear’s closing benediction, students and graduates alike left the auditorium feeling inspired, reinvigorated to be women of excellence.
Humanities Symposium

On 24th April 2012, 24 girls from S3-S5 set off for the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia, for the 5th Humanities Research Symposium for Youth (HRSY), held at Bond University and hosted by Citipointe Christian College (CCC), Brisbane, under the theme “Technology and Freedom”. They were accompanied by Mrs. S. Lau, Mr. M. H. Au and Mr. A.

The HRSY is a tri-national event that is jointly organized by CCC, Hwa Chong Institution in Singapore, and DGS. Along with their counterparts from the two other countries, our students wrote research papers on topics in Literature, Geography, History, Economics and Social Studies, gave presentations on them, attended those from other schools, listened to esteemed keynote speakers, participated in dynamic debates and forums, and experienced Australian culture through excursions to places such as the Australian Outback Spectacular, a show that incorporates trick horseback riding, horseracing, cattle-rearing, sheepdogs rounding up sheep, pyrotechnics and a model helicopter into a story about the iconic Australian racehorse Phar Lap.

Aside from being intellectually stimulated, the girls got a chance to have fun with their peers as well. Through group activities including Talent Night skits and The Amazing Race (on-campus style), they let their hair down – sometimes literally after having been in their school uniforms all day – and got to know their newfound friends better. The Green Challenge ropes course at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary allowed students to get closer to Mother Nature while stretching their physical limits hanging high above the ground on flying foxes and Tarzan swings.

Throughout these diverse activities, international exchange was constantly taking place. In the research paper presentations, students had the opportunity to learn from the strengths of the two other schools. DGS girls were praised for their quick thinking in the Q&A sessions, the Hwa Chong boys displayed their omnipresent sense of humor while the Citipointe students showed creativity by donning costumes and wigs, or making the entire History presentation a Mythbusters show. Students from all three schools also gathered in the dormitory common rooms after the activities each day, learning more about the lifestyles of the other two countries and developing a stronger bond.

This symposium focused on “Technology and Freedom”. A lot can be gained from exchanges using technology and the internet, but the consensus amongst everyone was that nothing can ever replace the experience of face-to-face dialogue with delegates from other nations through the HRSY. As we sang during the Closing Ceremony, we felt that the friends we made at HRSY “will always be with us, like a handprint on our hearts.”
J.B. Petit High School Interview

India experienced a taste of school life in Hong Kong. Accompanied by a F.2 ‘buddy’ from DGS, they went to lessons in the morning and special activities, such as orchestral and photography workshops, in the afternoon. After school, they visited different attractions in Hong Kong with their host families in order to learn more about Chinese culture.

Girls from J.B. Petit High School were chosen as exchange students based on their potential and ability. Their accompanying teacher, Mrs. Maya Shetye, firmly believes that “cream always rises to the top.” They sent a mixed group of bright students, hoping each would learn and grow from the exchange experience, just as DGS hoped that her students would benefit from interacting with their Indian friends.

During the visit, the girls from J.B. Petit High School shared the details of their school life in India in morning assembly. The DGS girls were impressed by the hardworking J.B. Petit girls’ academic activities, and their Variety and Entertainment programme, which allows students to don casual wear on Fridays, was also a source of great discussion.

What the girls from J.B. Petit High School found most startling were the similarities between their school and DGS. Both schools were established by British women in the year 1860. Like DGS, a well-rounded education is emphasized at J.B. Petit High School, where students are heavily involved in extracurricular activities such as debate, football and choir. Even our teaching methodologies proved similar: Mrs. Shetye described DGS and J.B. Petit as “twins separated at birth.” The greatest difference, one student joked, is that DGS girls do not have Hindi or Yoga in their curriculum!

The Indian students were delighted with the warmth and hospitality they encountered, and thrilled by the sights of Hong Kong. All the students agreed that they had enjoyed themselves here at DGS. To them, this exchange trip was enriching, fascinating and all about learning.

Perhaps the heart of this shared learning experience was summarized best by Deena Mazji, one of the students from J.B. Petit High School: “What we do and the way we think is the same at home. We’re all the same.”

The Aim Game

Orison Swett Marden once said “All who have accomplished great things have had a great aim, have fixed their gaze on a goal which was high, one which sometimes seemed impossible.” Every sport instills in its players discipline, endurance and sportsmanship. Archery is no exception. Unlike other sports, archery requires intense concentration and a persevering ‘backbone’—a strong-minded and collected character.

Archery is not a new sport. Established in 2010, the DGS Archery Team is one of the youngest flourishing sports team in school. With the movement back to the redeveloped campus at 1 Jordan Road, our team is able to enjoy the archery facilities at the fully-equipped multi-purpose tennis court. Located on the top floor of the former SIP building, the outdoor archery field is well-ventilated, airy and bright. Team members now enjoy shooting at brand-new foam targets. They also have sizable lockers at school in order to store their bows and arrows. Most importantly, travelling time is saved so that it can be fully utilized on actual archery training.

Our members participated in the 160th Anniversary Archery Invitation Tournament held by St. Paul’s College on 5th November 2011. We were able to engage other archers from fellow schools to compare our form and capabilities. This motivated our team to strive harder for improvement in preparation of the Inter-school Archery Competition.

Consistent with our school’s spirit ‘Dare to dream, go for the goal, strive to succeed’, team members trained hard throughout the year to put in their best performance in the Inter-school event. Our team competed with more than 120 other players at the Wong Chuk Hang Sports Centre on 21st May 2012. The morning session proved quite challenging as it was the first archery competition for some of our players. Nonetheless, our team went all-out and was placed third overall. A Grade was placed third, B grade 5th, and C Grade second.

With the use of an exclusive archery field on school grounds, our team will set its eyes on higher goals, play better and accomplish more in the year to come.
DGS Auditorium Inauguration Concert

To commemorate the official opening of the DGS Auditorium at 1 Jordan Road and to share the fruits of our labour in the 64th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival, the Auditorium Inauguration Concert was held on 3rd April, 2012. By God’s grace, the concert was a great success, and the whole DGS family - parents, teachers, old girls and students alike - enjoyed a beautiful night of love and music.

The concert began with a Ribbon-Cutting and Cake-Cutting Ceremony which was attended by School Council members and honoured guests. Our School Supervisor, Mrs. Doris Ho, then addressed the audience, thus beginning of the evening’s events.

The evening consisted of spectacular performances by all DGS music groups: the School Choirs, the Mixed Choirs, the School Orchestras, the School Band, the Guzheng Ensemble and the Chinese Orchestra. The DGS Senior Choir and Percussion Bands, despite their young age, gave masterful renditions of their pieces. The Diocesan Graduate Singers, too, through a song named Blessing (祝福), expressed heartfelt sentiments for their alma mater, and inspiring current students to continue pursuing musical excellence.

Towards the end of the concert, all choirs in the Diocesan family, accompanied by the School Orchestra, entered the Auditorium to stage a joint performance of Bless This House. Through this piece, the musicians showed their sincerest gratitude towards the school for the Auditorium, which will house countless memories to be treasured for a lifetime. All members and friends of the school joined in heart and voice while singing the School Hymn. A warm address by our Headmistress, Mrs. Lau, marked the end of the Auditorium Inauguration Concert.

This evening would not have been possible without the efforts of many: our Headmistress, Mrs. Lau, for her unwavering support in our musicians; our Music Director, Mrs. C. Cheung, for her enthusiasm in bringing out the best of our girls; our conductors, Mrs. C. Chiang, Miss G. Chiang, Mr. W. H. Chu, Mr. R. Cheng, Mr. Victor Tam and Miss Cindy Chen, for their professional guidance; our parents and teachers, for their love and kind understanding; and last but not least, our audience, for taking the time to support our musicians and show their best wishes to the Auditorium, and to the School.
Debate

There are those who say debate is for the egotistical – it is reserved for those who love the sound of their own voices. Others claim that it is the epitome of waffling, rhetoric and pure bluffing. For the team facing La Salle in the Grand Finals of the 27th Sing Tao Inter-School Debating Competition on the 11th of May at Queen Elizabeth Stadium, it is also the culmination of months of hard work, research and frantic scribbling.

Opposing the motion “The Hong Kong government should seek NPC amendment of the Basic Law to deter pregnant Mainlanders from giving birth in Hong Kong”, the DGS team comprising Natalie So (S.5U), Jessica Yung (S.4W) and Tiffany Ip (S.4Y) battled it out against an experienced team from La Salle College. Whilst the proposition came up with a passionate plea for the government to safeguard Hong Kong’s resources, DGS presented their arguments about the sanctity of the Basic Law and tried to inject a sense of proportionality and reality into the debate, where emotions were running high.

The younger debaters participated in the SCMP Debating Competition 2010-11 and were the Champion after over six rounds of intense competition. In the Hong Kong Junior Schools Debating Championships, Nicole Liu (S.3U) and Vanessa Ma (S.2U) were ranked sixth in terms of speaker rankings, and DGS also reached the Quarter-finals of the Interschool Debating Competition before bowing out. The next round of the SCMP Debating Competition has started, and the Secondary 1 and Secondary 2 debaters have also achieved commendable results.

Thanks must be given to our alumnae and teachers-in-charge who have tirelessly gone over and scrutinized our cases. We would also like to thank Mrs. Lau for her continuous support for the House of Debate throughout the year.