Interview with Mrs. Doris Ho

Mrs. Ho studied at DGS from 1952 to 1956 and left after Form Four. Her three daughters, three sisters and numerous cousins are all old girls. She had served as Chairman of the Diocesan Girls’ School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and as President of the Diocesan Old Girls’ Association (DOGA). Since 1985, she has been serving as Supervisor of the School to the present day. She is currently the Vice-chairman of the Fundraising Campaign Committee as well as a core member of the Building Sub-committee.

Q: How does the redevelopment project enable the school to provide a better learning environment? How is a balance achieved between the inherent constraint in funding and the provision of the plan for an ideal school?

A: As you know, IT changes constantly everyday. So in terms of IT, the new campus will be better prepared for future development and upgrades. Secondly, it will also provide more space for different activities to take place. For example, there will be a bigger space for different activities to take place. For example, there will be a bigger sports field for athletics training and a bigger library for students to study in. As DGS girls are multi-talented, we feel it our responsibility to further hone their skills. Money is of course a perennial issue when there is so much to do. The School Council has asked us to plan for the future. As a result, although we might not get what we aim for from Day 1, we are always able to add in new facilities as needed as more funding becomes available.

Q: Some of the architectural elements or internal designs have a long history and form an important part of our students’ memory about DGS. Will any of these elements be retained in the new campus? If yes, how will the old essence be incorporated into the new designs?

A: I personally would like to have the stone wall kept. Although it is a very special feature of the existing school, the stone wall is not practical in the sense that it can be easily knocked down and the stones erode. The wall will not stay. There will no longer be any balloon lights in the Hall either, because the design of the hall is very modern so the lights will not fit. We will keep the blue façade with the School Crest, so that the essence of the plaza will be maintained. The brass bell is also worth retaining. It might be kept somewhere in school, probably in the small museum inside the library. Some of the trees will be maintained as well, such as the big tree at the gate. In fact, it is the essence of these DGS “landmarks” that we want to capture. Parents and girls should not expect a replica of the present school at 1 Jordan Road. What I would wish to experience is that the DGS spirit can be essentially maintained through the
generations. Actually, as DGS girls, we should be proud that our school spirit is very different compared to other schools in Hong Kong. DGS and DGJS have an integral bond and our junior school students often look up to the Senior girls. Therefore, to highlight this special bonding, the architect has designed a “DNA spiral” staircase. The junior school girls will be running up one spiral and the senior school girls will be walking down another and they will be able to see one another as they travel up and down the stairs. This helps in further enhancing this special school bond.

Q: Is the redevelopment of the school campus more worthwhile than preserving the traditional and cultural heritage of DGS?
A: The culture and heritage of the school will not be forsaken. Sometimes, we are too focused on hardware and forget about the spiritual element. The project is all about helping- as in our school motto of Daily Giving Service. The architects have noticed the benches outside the classrooms, where students sit and exchange ideas with one another, and discuss matters with their teachers. They will incorporate that into the new design since this is a special feature of the DGS education. There will be spaces for benches outside classrooms. Meeting areas with tables and chairs will also be incorporated so that all the spaces can be fully utilized.

Q: How can students contribute to the redevelopment or the decanting?
A: We hope that not only students, but teachers, School Council members, parents and other friends of the School will look forward to helping out in this project. This is truly a unique experience that will only happen once in our lifetime. There might be some obstacles along the way but we as one big family will try to resolve them. Students will learn and gain life-long experience from this exercise. As such, students should not expect the new school campus to be exactly the same as the present one, in fact, they should learn to adjust to the new learning environment. Ideally, they should maintain a positive, wholesome attitude as the process will be ongoing for a long time. Prefects and Upper Form students should take the lead by listening to suggestions and comments, and try to resolve issues as they arise in a sensible and timely manner. This is surely a learning process for all.

Q: What difficulties have the redevelopment project encountered?
A: Raising funds, especially during this period of financial turmoil, is extremely difficult. The financial world is so unpredictable. In light of this, people may be more reluctant to contribute, yet this does not imply that the project will be put on hold. We will carry on as scheduled. We will try our best to resolve the problems and set priorities. It is also challenging to seek the Government’s assistance for funding. However, the Government provides funding for primary and secondary schools separately. DGS is a school that has no boundaries between the junior and senior section. A lot of coordination and work

Mrs. Ho explains her vision of the project at the interview.
has been done to fulfill Government’s requirements. Time management is another issue. We also foresee challenges in operating the school in a normal manner once decanting takes place, to ensure that learning is not interrupted. Generally speaking, as the banner in the School Hall says “Dare to Dream”, it is essential that this new school campus will not just be meeting the needs of DGS girls in 2012 but well beyond that, for at least another 50 years.

Q: What criteria were considered when determining the composition of the Building Sub-committee?
A: The most important criteria is that all committee members should have at heart a genuine love and understanding for the school. They should believe in the philosophy of DGS even if they have no connections with DGS, like Mr. Wen. Professionals in the building field are also chosen to point out the potential problems and pitfalls that the school may encounter in undertaking a project of this magnitude.

Q: What new facilities will be provided for students to relax?
A: There will be more spaces by the stairs and in the corridors. A new DOGA place will be built, and there will be a lot more areas for students to relax and have lunch.

Q: Where does the inspiration of the architect come from when designing the outlook of the new school campus?
A: Well, in truth, the architect’s inspiration is to provide the best possible environment for the DGS education to continue well into the 21st century. The School wanted a design that could meet students’ operational needs as DGS girls are multi-talented. Therefore, the architect’s brief is that the School be provided with the best facilities to develop their potentials. We hope that the new campus can uphold the DGS spirit and set the flames burning brightly for the many years to come.

**School Redevelopment Project and Decantation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Events</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2008</td>
<td>Teacher work sessions and meeting with architects on detailed design of rooms and venues</td>
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<td>Visit to the Kowloon Tong Club on the swimming pool design</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultation session on solar panel technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 2008</td>
<td>Presentation of school design to School Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 2008</td>
<td>Kick-off meeting on school relocation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation of school design on FTA-AGM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct-Nov 2008</td>
<td>Preparatory meetings on school relocation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visit to the Hotel School</td>
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PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

A photography competition was held in October and November on the theme “Memories of No.1 Jordan Road”. Students and parents from DGJS and students from DGS were invited to capture their impression of the school campus in pictures. A total of 18 winning entries were chosen by two adjudicating panels for the senior and junior schools respectively.

Photography Competition Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DGS</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Forms</td>
<td>Katie Wong (3Y)</td>
<td>Claudia Chu (3U)</td>
<td>Ashley So (2U)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Yvette Kong (4X)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent-Child P.1-2</td>
<td>Leung Ming Sau (1B)</td>
<td>Dorothy Tan (1C)</td>
<td>Tiffany Yip (1A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Child P.3-6</td>
<td>Chloe Morales (4B)</td>
<td>Chloie So (6C)</td>
<td>Annessa Chan (3C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student P.3-4</td>
<td>Chloe Morales (4B)</td>
<td>Jae Lamb (3A)</td>
<td>Margaux Huey (4C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student P.5-6</td>
<td>Leung Ka Wei (6B)</td>
<td>Clemence Yung (6C)</td>
<td>Ariel Ng (5B)</td>
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Lower Forms

1st—Katie Wong (3Y)

2nd—Claudia Chu (3U)

3rd—Ashley So (2U)

Upper Forms

1st—Yvette Kong (4X)

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Student P.5-6

1st—Leung Ka Wei (6B)
2nd—Clemence Yung (6C)
3rd—Ariel Ng (5B)
READ-A-THON

Following in the footsteps of the first Read-A-thon in 2007, the second Read-A-thon was held during the summer holidays. This year, 708 students participated raising $983,942.60 for the school redevelopment project. On 5 November, the top class fundraisers P.6B and F.1U were treated to pizza parties, and top individual fundraisers were awarded book vouchers.

DGS QUEST

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNFAILING SUPPORT

- Funding required: HK $380 million
- Contributions + pledges: HK $193 million

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