

The Anniversary Tour to London 2011

Welcome to the first assembly of the new school year! I welcome in particular the new teachers, the Form 1 boys and Form 6 students who joined in September and for whom this is their first assembly at SPC.

It has been a long time since the Hall was closed for renovation last June. There are still a few jobs to be completed and some specific items to be added and these details will be carried out in the near future. It is our aim to have the Hall fully operational by Speech Day on the 2nd of December.

I imagine that you have been disappointed not hearing my talks at assembly on Monday mornings! However, you must have been pleased to see that I continued to write a weekly address and that they were uploaded onto the College website each Monday afternoon. If you have not had an opportunity as yet to read these talks you can still find them on the website!

Last week we were very fortunate in hosting five students and two teachers from Trinity Pawling School in New York State. Trinity Pawling is a boarding school for boys located about 100 kilometres to the north of New York City. Earlier this year Mr. Ryan, Miss Chan and six of your classmates spent a week at Trinity Pawling and returned with wonderful experiences and many memories from their trip. Last week was our turn to extend this warm hospitality.

Last week's visit was also a first for our College in that it was the first time that we have provided homestay to our visitors. It was wonderful to have SPC families put up their hands and offer to have a Trinity Pawling boy stay in their home. This extremely generous offer made their visit more meaningful as each American boy experienced family life in Hong Kong. Such experiences would not have been gained if they were staying in a hotel. My sincere appreciation goes out to these SPC families and to the other boys who served as buddies during their stay. I hope that the day will come when homestay is common place when students from other countries visit our College.

Our school has a global classroom programme that is second to none in Hong Kong. In the weeks ahead, our teachers will be preparing tours and activities for next Easter and summer holidays. There is one tour, however, that has already been entered into the College calendar and that I would like to bring to your attention this morning.

The College will commence its 160th Anniversary celebrations in September 2011. As a lead in to these festivities it has been decided to hold a special tour to London in July 2011. The tour will depart Hong Kong on the Friday evening of the last day of the school year and last 12 days. While the tour will focus on the College Choirs it will also include special elements relating to religious studies and history.

We are making arrangements for the Choir to sing at three of the great Churches in London. The first performance will be at Southwark Cathedral on the south bank of the River Thames. Southwark Cathedral is one of London's oldest churches and located next to London Bridge. It looks somewhat similar to our own St. John's Cathedral in Garden Road where we hold a heritage service each year for the boys in Form 2. The second famous church is St. Martin's in Trafalgar Square. The well-known English nursery rhyme, Oranges and Lemons, mentions the bells of St. Martin's. The third location will be the centre of the Anglican Church in London, St. Paul's Cathedral. This mighty church dominates the skyline of the old City of London and is truly an amazing building. It was the church in which our fifth Principal, Bishop Hoare, was consecrated.

These three churches are in close proximity and represent the heart of the Anglican Church in London. The idea of building St. Paul's College in Hong Kong was born in London. By visiting these churches you will better understand the history of the College and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui. By seeing these churches you will marvel at the dramatic architecture. By singing in these churches you will have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, one that will never be forgotten.

Of course, the tour will include more than just singing. A short distance away from the churches is China Town, the Tower of London, the London Eye, the Shakespearean Globe Theatre and many more exciting highlights. We shall also be organising a day trip out of London to Cambridge or Oxford. Finally, no SPC trip to London would be complete without a visit to one of the Premier League football stadiums, probably Chelsea or Arsenal.

The 160th Anniversary Tour to London will involve not only current Choir members as an invitation will be extended to Old Boys of any vintage to join the Choir for this celebration! Parents may also wish to be in London at this time to hear their sons or daughters sing. I also hope that some members of the Chinese Orchestra can join the tour as some of the performances will feature Chinese music.

Mr. Fu, Mrs. Ng and Mr. Leung will provide details of the tour in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, start thinking about London 2011, the year before the London Olympics.

Dr. J. R. Kennard

Post Script.

Depart Hong Kong on Friday 8 July 2011

Return Hong Kong on Wednesday 20 July 2011

Any Old Boy who wishes to join the Choir please contact Mr. Raymond Fu directly (2546 2241 or mail@spc.edu.hk)