Singapore School for the Deaf
SSD Newsletter
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Contents
SSD News Desk Pg 1
Principal's Message Pg 2
Annual Games Day Pg 3
Volunteers Pg 4
Meet the Parent's Session Pg 5
MSSL Opening Ceremony Pg 6-7
Prize Giving Day Pg 8
Pupil's Contributions Pg 9
What's New in SSD? Pg 10
Graduating Classes / Local Signs Pg 11
Celebrations Pg 12

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Principal’s Message

Singapore School for the Deaf saw a number of changes in the year 2000. Although we were sad to lose two of our teachers, Mrs Geraldine Ang, who has gone abroad to pursue further education and Mrs Theresa Chew, who has been transferred to Boon Lay Secondary School to serve as a Resource teacher for our Secondary students, we are compensated as we welcome our new staff.

We are glad to have Mrs Evangeline Monteiro, our new Nursery/Kindergarten supervisor, who has graciously stepped into the position left vacant by Mrs Geraldine Ang. Another new staff we are blessed to have with us in the year 2000 is our ever enthusiastic Mr David Lee Boon Hiang who is now undergoing teacher-training at National Technological University. We are grateful to have a new Social Worker, Miss Elaine Lee Lee Yun, who like a breath of fresh air, has undauntedly initiated a number of projects with our volunteers. Miss Jeanette Javier, our new Speech Pathologist who arrived last August, has not only settled into the school but has become a mentor to a number of our younger teachers in the area of speech therapy. We are blessed with a number of relief teachers who not only came to teach for a brief period, but have left us with fond memories and lasting friendships.

Some exciting and colourful events in the year 2000 made our lives so much more enriched. The official opening of our Multi-Sensory Sound Laboratory, the Annual Games Day and the Annual School Camp are just some of the many events that have opened up new learning opportunities for both the children and the staff in the school. These events were enhanced by the spirit of giving and volunteerism as various generous people and organisations spontaneously stepped in to offer not only their services but their precious time and resources.

Celebrations in the school such as National Day, Teachers’ Day and Children’s Day have been opportunities for the building of stronger bonds not only amongst the children but also between the staff and the students.

Our children have been entertained by a number of organisations, schools and the institutions who not only put up shows for them such as dances, puppet shows, motorcycle skills demonstration and mime but also played hosts to our children by planning and sponsoring outings to the zoo and other places of interest. These activities have indeed enriched the lives of our deaf children whose learning experiences have been extended beyond the classrooms as a result. I would like to put on record our thanks, especially to these three generous organisations in the year 2000: the Singapore American School, Singapore Technologies Kinetics Ltd and the Republic of Singapore Air Force.

The school is more than grateful to all our regular volunteers, our generous sponsors and the parents whose names I am unable to list here due to space constraints. On behalf of the children in the school, may I thank you for your continuous support and faithful service without which we would not be able to function fully throughout the year.

Credit should also be given to our extremely caring and loyal teachers, whose diligence and unceasing sacrifices in their efforts towards creating a meaningful learning environment, demonstrate the true spirit of S21- that every one of our children matters.

Mrs Ang-Chang Kah Chai
Principal
I don't care how I look, we just have to win.

Boy, am I having fun.

Wheeee...

Easy does it.

Champion House receiving their trophy from Guest-of-Honour, Mrs Polly Aida Eu.

Don't be too happy Blue house. It ain't over till it's over.

Come on! You can do it!
Our school has been very fortunate that volunteers from schools and organisations have come forward to lend services not only in kind but in deed as well. A long time volunteer of the school, Singapore Technologies Kinetics Ltd, has been our sponsor for IT equipment in the past. However, since last year they have also started with helping to maintain the school by doing various projects, like the painting of murals in the Nursery block and doing landscaping work on the school’s front porch.

The Singapore American School is another group that started out with us in 1999. Their first contact was fortnightly visits where they would communicate and play games with our pupils. These visits not only helped to improve their students’ Sign Language skills but also gave our pupils a chance to interact with foreign students from a hearing school and thus pick up social skills, as well as information about the lives and culture of these students. In November 1999, our Primary Five and Six pupils were invited to the Singapore American School for a day of fun and games. We were also treated to a tour of the new school, which included the Pre-School, Elementary and High School buildings.

Early this year they proposed that they repaint the playground equipment. This was met with much enthusiasm on the part of the Fourth Graders and their parents as well as staff and some high school students. They spent two Saturday mornings sand-papering and repainting the equipment. They have also proposed to build playground equipment for the Nursery, which should be ready by the end of this year.

The school is grateful to them and to our many other individual volunteers who gave up their free time to help the school in one way or another. Theirs are the extra pairs of hands that keep the school growing and going without whom many projects would have to be abandoned or put on hold.

Mrs Barbara D’Cotta-Ang
The annual get-together of teachers and parents at the Singapore School for the Deaf took a new format this year. The school had invited a panel of speakers who addressed various issues of interest with the parents.

Besides having the Principal and the Speech Pathologist share concerns of the school with the parents, Mrs Jenny Ho, Executive Director of the SADeaf, was also present to advise on SADeaf services for clients. Parents were informed firsthand on some benefits of being members of the SADeaf. Mr Nick Lim, a parent of one of the pupils in the school, urged the other parents to be more involved in volunteering their services to support the school programmes. Mr Bobby Chng from the City Harvest Church was also at hand to inform parents about his Church's voluntary Home Tuition Programme.

Another important guest speaker was Miss Kessler, Administrator of the Vocational School for the Handicapped, who gave an informative briefing regarding the BIZLINK Induction Programme being conducted at the VSH during the vacations. Parents of our graduating students had a clearer picture of available options for their children who would be expected to complete their Primary School or Pre-Vocational Programme at the end of this year.

Mrs Ang-Chang Kah Chai
MSSL OPENING CEREMONY
12th July 2000

Mrs S R Nathan admiring some of the school's displays as she was escorted around the school.

Mrs Ang Tuan Seng welcomes the First Lady, Mrs S R Nathan.

And MSSL is finally officially opened.

One of the four demo lessons

Let's take one picture for the album.

Check out the welcoming party!

Here's my autograph
The Multi-Sensory Sound Lab or the MSSL is a special audio system that amplifies sound through loudspeakers, while transforming these sounds into vibrations that can be felt by the body through a special "floor" and can be seen by means of colourful visual displays.

The MSSL was officially opened by Mrs. S.R. Nathan, the patron of our SSD, on the 12th of July 2000. The MSSL was donated by CITIBANK and the Straits Times, who were introduced to our school by the National Council of Social Service. The MSSL in SSD is the first of its kind in Singapore and S.E. Asia. However, children in U.S.A. and elsewhere have used such rooms in the education of the deaf for more than 10 years.

The first MSSL was the result of a question posed by a science teacher at a Secondary School for the Deaf in USA, who asked, "How can I teach my deaf students what sound is if they cannot hear?" Although originally developed to teach the science of sound to deaf students, the design and uses of the MSSL have expanded over the years. It is now used for physics, science, auditory training, speech therapy, parent education, outreach, expanding awareness about hearing loss, music appreciation/instruction, music therapy, physical therapy, dance instruction and performance, and relaxation activities for normally hearing and hearing impaired people alike. In the Singapore School for the Deaf, the Sound Lab is also used for hearing test and evaluation as the MSSL is built within a sound proof environment.

SSD students are very fascinated with the new MSSL. They look forward to the various visual displays and enjoy the "sound" from the "moving floors" during their auditory and speech sessions. One of the most successful outcome is the increase in the number of students who are able to say the "s" sound using the floor panels, luma sound light column and the laser as visual cues. In addition, remarks such as "It was the first time I heard my heart beat", "I can feel the (ocean) waves" and "I can hear my voice" are commonly heard in the room.

The MSSL is an engaging and "perception enhancing environment" for education of and about deaf and hard of hearing people. The applications of this exciting technology are as limitless as the creativity of the teachers, who seem to enjoy the MSSL as much as the students do.

Mr Vasudavan Govindasamy
The School’s Annual Prize Giving Day was held on 17th November 1999. We were privileged to have Mrs Letty Lim, a volunteer of the nursery, as our Guest-of-Honour. The event lasted for an hour and a half and began promptly at eleven in the morning.

Guest, parents, teachers and pupils were able to feast their eyes on the Art and Craft Exhibition too. In addition, the Primary 6 pupils put up their Social Studies projects via the computers. These projects were based on ‘The Founding of Singapore’ and “Our Pioneers”.

Mdm. Juli Anna getting the children ready for their performances.

Quack! Quack! Quack! My little duckling quacking away.

Parents feasting their eyes on the colourful art pieces.

Social studies projects were done on the computer.
My Incredible Experience
By Erika Levi
Pri. 6EM 2-2

I was very thrilled and nervous when I was chosen to represent Singapore at Paralympics Swimming Competition. I often think about going to Malaysia to experience an incredible Southeast Asia Meet. I stayed there for one week so I had plenty of time to play games and talk with my team mates. There, I learned about the fighting spirit and teamwork.

When the competition was coming nearer and nearer, I became more nervous. I often hear speculation that Sarawak is very strong. "Am I going to win any medals for Singapore?" I asked my Mama. She is very understanding and know how I felt. She advised me to think positive and say within my heart "I can, I can, I can do it".

I could remember all of my events but I shall only tell you two out of my four.

During my Backstroke event, I started at the right time but the other swimmers were not ready and did not jump. I wasted my energy because I gave all my strength until half of the pool. At first, I was so angry and felt so silly. But in the end I felt very proud because I won almost 15 metres ahead of the second swimmer. This is due to my Mother's and also my team's encouragement. All my friends applauded and congratulated me.

Then I had to swim the Butterfly stroke. Halfway, the rival swimmer from Sarawak was 3/4 metre away from me. Slowly, I felt tired and heavy. Luckily I saw my team cheering for me. Miraculously, I felt that I had gained a new strength. I swam as if a shark was chasing me. Although she finished first and I came in second place, I was proud because I shaved about 2 seconds off my best personal record.

I also cheered for all my team mates. I noticed that my team was the only one among the other teams who cheered.

I won three gold and one silver medals. I realised that my team and I were like a flock of birds which was always happy for my team. I also realised that we had a very high fighting spirit and never looked on the dark side. I --

A SPECIAL EVENT IN MY LIFE
By Cherie Chen
Pri. 6EM 2-1

One Day, my sister and I woke up in the morning and we were pleasantly surprised. My parents bought a new Christmas tree and many presents. They called out to us and said that we could decorate our new Christmas tree. We also had a beautiful golden star to put on the tree.

My mother was asked to prepare a turkey. I thought about the wine and soft drinks. I had help from my aunt, who arranged for the caterers to bring food to our home.

On Christmas day, I helped in the kitchen. Then I arranged the drinks, cutlery and food on the dinner table. I was busy. My sister put up the decorations in the house and arranged the gifts under the tree. My father was Santa Claus. He had a bright red costume, a long white beard, boots and a fluffy pillow for his stomach. We were all excited and thrilled to have Santa in our home.

When our guests arrived, they all wished each other a "Merry Christmas". We exchanged presents and shook hands. All the children had sweets and chocolates to eat. These treats were packed in stockings and given out by my father - Santa Claus.

At the end of the dinner party, we took photographs with Santa and said good night to all. The party was a success and it could only think of going to sleep. I did not even have the energy to unwrap my presents.
Early this year, the school witnessed the transformation of the two computer laboratories into one that any other schools would envy. The Ministry of Education had all the computers in the labs, classrooms, staff room and office wired up for networking and accessing the internet. Besides this, we received twenty-six 500-MHz computers and matching tables and chairs. With the generous fund from MOE, we purchased fourteen colour printers and scanners to complement the computer systems. These new hardwares are also supported by the new softwares for both teaching and learning purposes. All these new additions are indeed a dream come true for the school.

Mr John Chan
Local Signs Of Deaf Kids
By Ms Catherine Low & Mr Dennis Tan

"Very much like the hearing Singaporeans speaking English, our deaf kids in school also have their own brand of signing. This adaptation of the English Language, however, does not hinder their language ability, but instead spurs them to be more expressive, creative and innovative in sign language."
CELEBRATIONS
2000

NATIONAL DAY

TEACHERS’ DAY

CHILDREN’S DAY

SUBZERO