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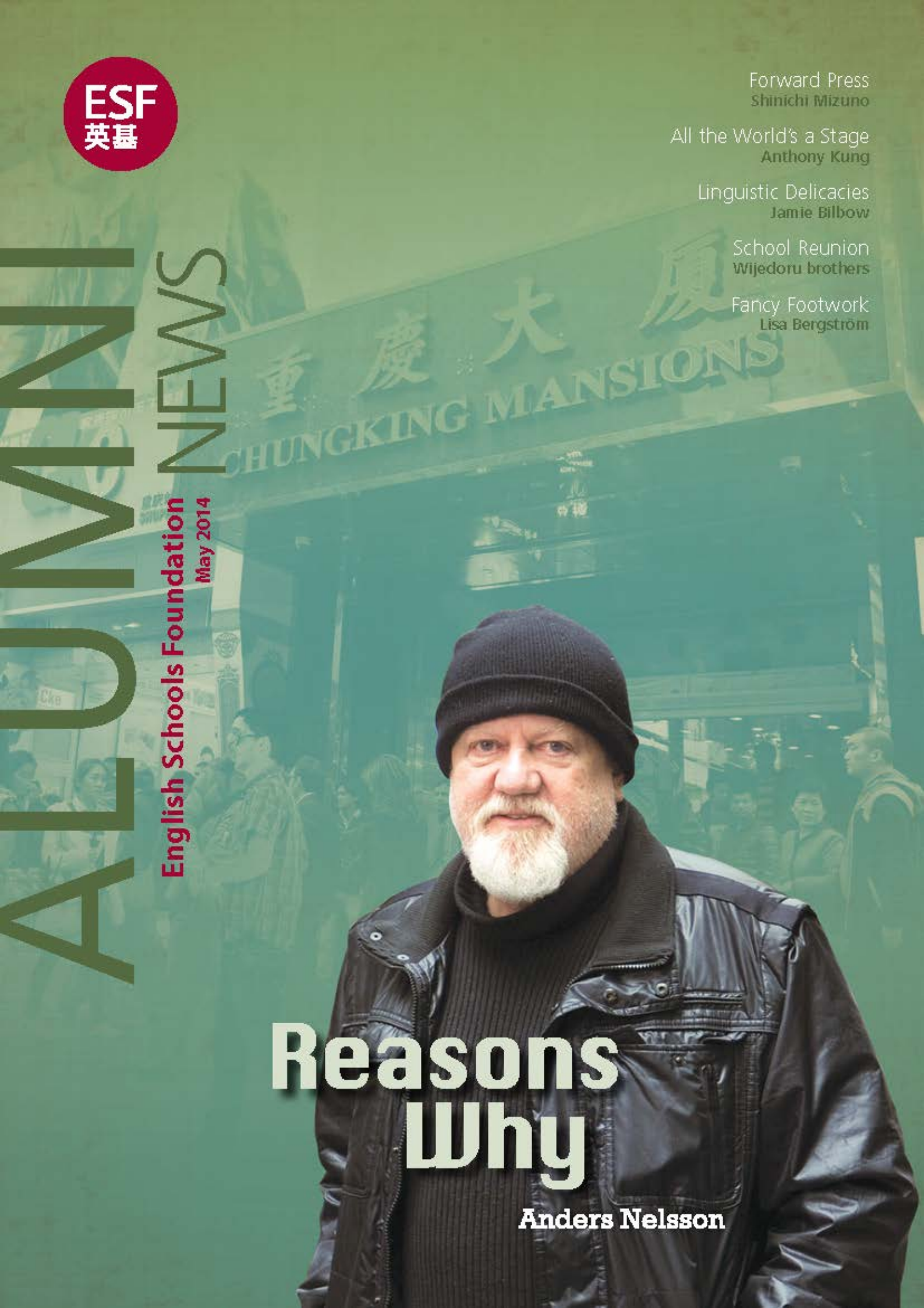
# ALUMNI NEWS

English Schools Foundation

May 2014

## Reasons Why

Anders Nelsson





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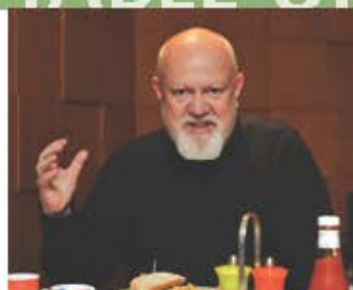
# FOREWORD



KGV has a fine tradition of producing pop stars; in recent years Alisha Budhrani has been a prominent member of Blush and a few decades ago Michael Hutchence established INXS as one of the world's great bands. But the first to tread this path to fame and musical success was Anders Nelson in the 1960s. His continuing commitment to performance and contribution to the Hong Kong music scene is admirable and he has also maintained a strong interest in his old school.

Ed Wickins  
Principal  
King George V School

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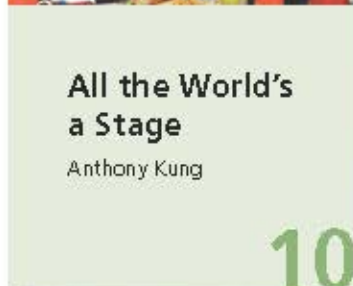
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Anders Nilsson was standing inside the waiting lounge at Kai Tak Airport, confronted by 300 crying girls.

"Anders, I need you, don't leave me," pleaded one girl. "Come back, Anders, I love you," exclaimed another. One fan tried to cut off a lock of his hair. "I never expected this," he told a reporter.

Nearly 50 years later, Anders reflects back on the day as he finishes a sandwich in a Tsim Sha Tsui café. "Fans are paid today, but in those days, everything was genuine," he says. It helped that, by the standards of 1960s Hong Kong, Anders was doing something almost unimaginably cool: playing original pop music in a band. "The local radio stations were very sedate," he recalls. "They played Sinatra, and maybe something close to rock and roll like Pat Boone melodic but not so exciting."

Born in California to Swedish missionaries, Anders moved to Hong Kong in 1950, when he was four years old. When he turned 10, his parents gave him a transistor radio as a birthday gift. "It was about the size of a

shoebox," he recalls. He tuned into the American military radio stations that broadcast around the region. "I heard rock and roll for the first time. The American stations played Little Richard, Chuck Berry and Elvis. I almost feel I levitated, it was so exciting."

He was particularly taken by Elvis. It was summertime and Anders was staying with his family, at a holiday retreat on Cheung Chau. "I had no idea what Elvis looked like," he says. So he took a ferry into town and went to the one place he would be sure to find a photo of the American singer: his barbershop, which was across the street from St. Teresa's Church on Prince Edward Road. "I looked through the magazines and there was a cover with Elvis, with that hairstyle and everything. My hair wasn't really long enough to get the full effect, but I asked the 'sifu' if he could give me that kind of look—which he did, with the help of some Brylcreem."

Elvis inspired Anders to finally pick up the guitar he had been given years earlier. He was very tall for his age and the older kids at his school, King George V (KGV), allowed him to play in their bands. They performed in

the school hall on Friday afternoons. They were good musicians — but not too good. By the late 1950s, the British teddy boy subculture had spread to KGV. Anders and his friends walked to Mongkok after class to have their school uniform altered by a tailor. Pants were tightened, ties narrowed, skirts shortened. "That got us into trouble," he remembers.

In 1963, Anders and five friends formed the Continentals, one of a handful of bands that made up a small pop music scene in Hong Kong. Others included Teddy Robin and the Playboys, and Robert Lee and the Thunderbirds, all of which performed in the jaunty style of the British "beat music" that was popular at the time. "It was cooler to sing in English," he says. "The music that was in Cantonese was either opera, or there were Western songs that had Cantonese lyrics. They weren't translated, they were mostly irrelevant lyrics." The most famous of these was the Beatles' *Can't Buy Me Love*, which became *Hang Fai Di Lah* — "Walk, faster!" Until Sam Hui came along in the 1960s, English was the Hong Kong pop singer's language of choice.

Tsim Sha Tsui was the heart of the 1960s scene. "A lot of my growing-up days were spent in Chungking Mansions," says Anders. The now notorious building was a trendy place when it opened in 1961. In the basement, there was the Bayside Club, where bands performed at afternoon "cha mou", or tea dances. Upstairs was Orbit Records, which had a record bar that stocked singles shipped from the UK. "It was so called because it was built like a bar and there were headphones so you could listen to the singles."

Orbit released the Continentals' two singles, *I Still Love You* and *I Think of Her*, and Anders worked for the label after school. "I was a gofer, an office boy," he says. "I even had to go to the pier at Canton Road and collect boxes of singles. They weren't big enough shipments to hire a truck so I would hire a rickshaw, put the records in the back and run alongside as the rickshaw puller delivered them to Chungking Mansions."

# Reasons Why

*It was 1965. Through some bureaucratic mishap, he had been ordered to return to his parents' country of Sweden to fulfill his national military service. He was the leader of one of Hong Kong's most popular bands, the Continentals.*

“I've done anything and everything I wanted to do.”

## Anders Nilsson

1958 – 1965	King George V School
1963	Bass and vocals, The Continentals
1973 – 1976	Producer, composer and artist with EMI. Band was called "Ming"
1976 – 1979	Artist & Repertoire Manager, EMI (HK) Ltd
1979	Established The Melody Bank and The Entertainment Company
1989 – 1992	Managing Director, BMG Pacific Limited
1992 – 1997	Managing Director, The Media Bank
1997 – until now	Own group of companies: Anders Nilsson PR/ Anders Nilsson Music/ Anders Nilsson Productions
2005	Started new concept band, INFINITY
2006 – until now	became director of Music Sales (HK) Limited, Music Sales (Asia) Limited and Hao Hao Music Sales Limited



A woman with brown hair and blue eyes is the central figure. She is wearing a necklace, earrings, a ring, and multiple bracelets. Her skin is decorated with large, soft pink and yellow floral patterns. The background is a light, airy space with more floral motifs.

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The tea dance lounge in the basement of Chung King Mansions has now turned into a local-style restaurant.

When he was 17, Anders' parents were transferred to a new job in Penang, but the young musician didn't want to leave. His father offered to pay his school fees if he stayed, but warned him he would have to earn his own money for everything else. "I think he wanted to frighten me into going along, but he didn't know that from playing for those tea dances, I was making more money than he was making. I just said, 'Okay, I can manage.'"

Even as he played with the Continentals, Anders was exploring the other facets of show business. He noticed that one Nathan Road club, the Golden Phoenix, had no MC during its evening show. "I offered my services for three meals a day," says Anders. "I would do my homework, get dressed up in a suit and tie and do my MC work."

Soon afterward Anders was summoned to Sweden to fulfill his national military duties. "It was a mistake," he says. Somehow, his name made it into the service list despite the fact that he had never lived in Sweden. He arrived for duty and lasted three months. "I wasn't completely fluent in Swedish. And I talked in my sleep in a mixture of English, Swedish and Cantonese, and the other soldiers thought I was — possessed." It didn't take long for him to be discharged for being useless.

Anders returned to Hong Kong and continued to perform, this time with a band called the Inspiration. In 1973, he founded another band, Ming, and landed a three-year contract with EMI Records. Some of Ming's hits included *Never Coming Home* and *Reasons Why*. But he soon decided that he didn't want to sing past the age of 30. "At the Golden Phoenix, there were has-beens, singers from the 30s and 40s who had been popular in America and England and had really fallen on hard times, travelling around the world

working in nightclubs," he says. "I saw them backstage, taking various pills and drinking alcohol to build up the confidence just to go on stage. They would come back off, take their wig off and drink more. It was sad and frightening. It made me decide I didn't want to go down that road."

Instead, he turned his attention to the backstage dealings of show business. In 1976, he disbanded Ming and became an A&R manager for EMI, eventually launching his own production company, the Melody Bank; and a talent agency, the Entertainment Company, which managed stars like Rowena Cortes, Louis Castro and Ellen Ng Ha-ping. Along the way, he wrote for local newspapers and performed in more than a dozen films and many TV series, usually playing some variation of the "evil gweilo." In 1972 he landed a part in *Way of the Dragon*, saw him playing a tough guy opposite Bruce Lee — whom Anders knew through Bruce's brother, Robert, who was a fellow singer.



KGV offered no Chinese language instruction when Anders was a student; in fact, speaking anything other than English was not allowed, as Anders and his brother discovered when they were caught speaking Swedish and forced to write "I will not speak Swedish" five hundred times on a blackboard as punishment. Anders managed to learn Cantonese through his friends in the music scene. "I just absorbed it," he says. But his one regret is never learning to read and write Chinese.

That's about the only regret he has. In recent years, Anders has relaunched his musical career, performing regularly at Grappa's Cellar. "I've done anything and everything I wanted to do," he says. He gives a lot of credit to his adopted home. "Hong Kong is open. You don't need credentials, you just need to prove yourself. People say Hong Kong used to have a can-do attitude — but it still does." ●



Dressed in a blue shirt with a bauhinia on the sleeve — the emblem of Hong Kong's national golf team — 20-year-old Shinichi is currently on a two month break from university in Japan. He's about to leave for India where he will represent Hong Kong in the Bonallack Trophy, a tournament that pits 12 of Europe's best players against 12 of the best in Asia.

"It's the first time anyone from Hong Kong has taken part," he explains. "We always play against each other competitively and we're good friends. I want to learn from them and see where my game is at."

By most standards, his game is pretty good. Born in Japan, Shinichi moved with his family to Discovery Bay (DB) when he was six years old. When he was 12, his dad joined the Discovery Bay Golf Club because he thought it would be a nice place to take the family at weekends. Shinichi was smitten the first time he played the game. "I always liked baseball and I found some similarities with golf," he laughs. "I just liked hitting."

Shinichi liked it so much he began training seriously. Neither of his parents were avid golfers and compared to most sporting prodigies, he was a late starter, but the West Island School student quickly made up for

lost time. Only a year after taking up the sport, Shinichi entered his first competition. "Of course I finished near the bottom," he says. But one year later, he won his first junior event. "I thought it was just a fluke, so I worked hard to rank up."

It helped that Shinichi has always been athletic and so he quickly developed the necessary skills. "Lower body is really important in golf and my strength is having a stable lower body and not getting tired." At West Island School, his favourite class was physical education, taught by Richard Lant. "He's such a funny guy," says Shinichi.

Golf was always on the youngster's mind. "When I held a pencil in class, I would hold it like a golf club." Every day after school, even after running cross-country or playing basketball, Shinichi would take the ferry back to Discovery Bay and head straight for the driving range. "I would get back to DB at 6pm and play until 8pm," he says. He didn't often talk about his passion with friends. "Golf is not really a cool sport. I was embarrassed — until my face started appearing in magazines."



Shinichi and his coach, Brad Schadewitz

After winning his first junior tournament, Shinichi was scouted by Hong Kong's national team coach, Brad Schadewitz, who helped him train for the big leagues. By the time he was 17, Shinichi was competing against some of the top golfers in the world and the South China Morning Post described his rise as "nothing short of meteoric."

The rising star was helped along the way by his younger brother, Shinya, who caddied for him at the 2010 Hong Kong Open. "I thought I'd put him on the bag because it'd make me more relaxed," says Shinichi. Shinya tried his hand at competitive golfing but has given it up to focus on his studies at Discovery College.

Shinichi, on the other hand, is planning to play golf professionally. He is studying at Doshisha University in Kyoto because it has a good golf programme. "I met the coach and really thought he could bring my game up," says Shinichi. He is currently working on improving his putting and chipping. "I'm a decent ball striker but I'm weaker on the green."

Keeping his cool on the course is another goal. "The pressure gets to me all the time. No matter what, my heart is racing," he says. But he goes out of his way to make friends with his competitors. "I don't want to be cocky. I want to be relaxed and confident."

There's always something to improve — which is precisely what Shinichi likes about golf. "I don't like wide, open courses," he says. "I'm not a big guy, so I think a lot when I'm out there. I know I have to get an advantage over other players through strategy rather than distance, so I like narrow, tricky, windy courses. I like difficult conditions."

He continues: "In golf, you rarely hit a perfect shot. So when you do hit one just right, it feels great. And that's what drives you to practice even harder." ●

"I know I have to get an advantage over other players through strategy rather than distance. I like difficult conditions."

#### Shinichi Mizuno

2005 – 2012 West Island School  
2008 – 2012 Hong Kong junior team member  
2009 – now Hong Kong men team member  
2013 – present Doshisha University in Sport Science

## Forward Press

*It's a warm spring day at Discovery Bay Golf Club and Shinichi Mizuno is practicing his swing.*

Some might consider Anthony A. Kung's career path an unusual one. After graduating from South Island School (SIS) in 1984, he studied to become an aerospace engineer, end up working for a multinational IT company. And now, aged 48, he has embarked on a new career as a film and television actor.

"I get bored easily, so if I stay in one spot for too long — in one city or in one job — I'm looking for other things," the Dallas, Texas resident explains. "I'm just very curious. We all have this curiosity as children but it gets killed off when we become adults. Mine never died. The funny thing is though, my relationships are the exact opposite — they tend to be long-term."

Born in Hong Kong to a Filipino mother and a Shanghaiese father, Anthony attended Rosaryhill, a private Catholic school on Tai Hang Road, before his family moved to Taiwan for a year. When they returned, his parents enrolled him at South Island School.

"I went to an American school in Taiwan and my parents initially intended to enroll us back into a Chinese school, but we were a little late for advance registration so they turned to ESF," says Anthony. "My mum was so worried I wouldn't get in. I remember sitting in the headmaster, Mr Taylor's office, and my mum was so nervous. When he asked me my name, my mother answered for me. I looked at her and said, 'Mum, I know what my name is!'"

It didn't take long for Anthony to blend into his new environment. "Going from a Chinese school to South Island was a freeing experience," he recalls. "All of a sudden I got to meet people from all over the world and I could talk to them using English, as I did at home with my parents. Growing up, his mother had



always ensured that Anthony and his siblings spent time outdoors, and he took to sports eagerly. He was on the inter-school teams for tennis, basketball, cross-country running, athletics and swimming.

Academically, Anthony found he was interested in what he calls "the technical stuff." He lived on Braemar Hill and would often stand on the balcony, watching the planes taking off and landing at Kai Tak Airport. He thought about becoming a pilot, but on discovering that his nearsightedness ruled him out, he decided to become an aerospace engineer. "I thought, if I can't fly myself, maybe I should understand how these machines fly instead."

That led Anthony to study engineering at the University of Southern California. (He was joined by his entire family five years later when they immigrated to the United States.) He felt lucky. "I got to pursue what I wanted to." But there was a major setback after



Anthony (second left) in the Hollywood movie, G.I. Joe

graduation when he discovered that foreign nationals were barred from working on military projects for reasons of national security. Anthony felt dejected but he says he tries not to dwell on the negative side of things. "Back when I swam for South Island, I never expected to be beaten. I thought, I'm the best, I can win this." He started looking for jobs in the fast-growing technology field, eventually finding a position with Electronic Data Systems (EDS), which at the time was second largest IT company in the world.

# All the World's a Stage

*South Island School alum Anthony Kung has given up a tech career for acting — and he has never been happier.*

**Anthony Kung**  
1978 – 1984 South Island School  
1984 – 1988 University of Southern California in Aerospace Engineering

“To me, acting makes my daydreams real. I get to play a drug dealer, a priest, a businessman.”

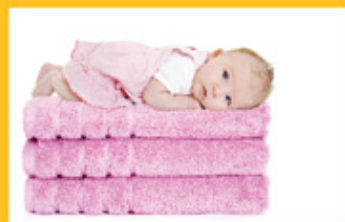




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Anthony stayed with the company for 15 years, working in Sacramento, Hong Kong and London, with sojourns in Sweden and South Africa, before settling in Dallas, where EDS was headquartered. "I wanted to go somewhere that felt like a frontier. Dallas, Texas was just such a place. It's a huge city and I felt that I had room to explore." But despite the wide open spaces, Anthony's job felt constricting. "It got to be very routine. In my mind, I was like, 'Is this it? This is life? I'm going to do this until the day I die?' It wasn't really challenging, exciting or different. I wanted to live a life, not work to live."

"I get bored easily, so if I stay in one spot for too long — in one city or in one job — I'm looking for other things."

When EDS was acquired by Hewlett-Packard, Anthony was made redundant. He took it as a sign that he should reshape his life in a radical way. That's when he decided to become an actor. "It was a long-dormant dream," he says. He remembers watching school plays at SIS and feeling the urge to join the action on stage, but he was too shy to even ask how to participate. When he was younger he spent a lot of time daydreaming. "To me, acting makes my daydreams real. I get to play a drug dealer, a priest, a businessman. Role plays that I once performed in my head I now get to do in front of the camera."

It didn't take long to find acting work. A friend introduced Anthony to a casting agency and he sent them his CV and headshot. "That was on Thursday and I got booked on Friday. I thought, it can't be that easy, can it?"

It wasn't. Like any actor, Anthony has faced his share of rejections and dry spells. "You've got to have a thick skin because nine times out of ten you will be turned down," he says. But in three years of acting, he has been remarkably successful. He has landed principal roles in more than 30 commercials and appeared in more than 15 film projects and four big-budget Hollywood productions. In his most recent role, on the TV comedy *Family Business*, he plays a laundry owner recruited by the mob to clean up after murders. He describes the show as a cross between *The Sopranos* and *Arrested Development*.



Anthony says that the reason he has been able to make a living as an actor is because he never allows himself to be sidelined. The American entertainment industry is a notoriously tough place for ethnic minorities and Asian men in particular. George Takei, who played Hikaru Sulu in the original *Star Trek*, has decried the pervasiveness of "white-washing" in Hollywood. "It's hard to think of a single Asian-American whose name can get a project financed," Sulu remarked in an interview last year. Jackie Chan is one of the few Asian actors to have made it in Hollywood. This has led to Anthony calling his upcoming book "Stop Calling Me Jackie!"



Anthony's new book — "Stop Calling Me Jackie!"

Undaunted by industry practices, Anthony has been able to convince directors of smaller scale projects to rewrite roles for him; turning a Russian spy into a Chinese one, for instance. "I joke about it sometimes. I'll say, 'Hey, if you ever need an Asian,' and point at myself. If people see that you don't take yourself too seriously, they relax."

It took Anthony's mother and father some time to accept his new career. But that changed last summer when he flew to Los Angeles, not just to visit his parents, but to invite them to a film festival which was showcasing a movie in which he starred. The film, *New Year's Resolutions* won the "Best Write of Passage" Film award.

"Now I wake up every morning and figure out what I am going to do that day. It's always different," he says. "And I get excited about it." ●



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#### Club Med Bali, Indonesia

Long one of Club Med's family-friendly resorts, this tropical paradise is undergoing a lavish makeover in time for summer with a Zen Pool and a new all-day dining Specialty Restaurant serving traditional and contemporary Indonesian fusion cuisine. Due to open in autumn, a happy nature-themed family space will enchant youngsters.

#### Club Med Kabira Beach, Japan

This award-winning ocean paradise's panoramas are made more breathtaking by a balmy year-round climate and crystal clear waters. So get set to experience unforgettable delights like riding a buffalo-drawn cart, learning scuba diving or crewing a glass-bottomed boat in Kabira Bay before tucking into traditional Okinawan cuisine.

#### Club Med Phuket, Thailand

Famed for its warmth, Thai hospitality enters a new era at this ever popular Club Med resort. Here, you can spend lazy days by the new Quiet Pool before feasting on delicious Thai fusion cuisine from chefs trained by the renowned Blue Elephant Group or enjoying great music and lights at the resort's convivial oval bar.

#### Club Med Bintan Island, Indonesia

Cocooned beside a private white sand beach just 55 minutes by ferry from Singapore and ideal for visiting the twin cities, this tropical Eden rewards visitors with a wealth of attractions. Chief among them are flying trapeze lessons, one of the Asia's finest golf courses, a superb spa facing the South China Sea and alfresco eaterie specialising in seafood where the only sounds come from the waves.

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Jamie Bilbow had been selling hummus on the streets of Beijing for three months before he got in trouble with the “chengguan” — China’s notorious law enforcement officers. “Right or wrong, a Westerner selling food on the streets of Beijing does gain some interest,” says Jamie, a bearded, charismatic 25-year-old graduate of Sha Tin College (STC).

How Jamie ended up selling hummus requires some explanation. Born in the UK, he grew up in Hong Kong and was bitten by the Chinese language bug while at university. One day he was chatting with a Colombian friend in Beijing about how hard it was to find hummus in the city. His friend offered him his tricycle — the same kind of pedal-powered cart that itinerant vendors use to hawk food on the streets of the capital.

After customising it, Jamie began cruising the city’s wintery streets, inventing his own versions of the sing-song calls that Beijing hawkers use to advertise their wares. “Old people came by to chat,” he says, and he entertained them with traditional Beijing rhyming verse.



run-in with the “chengguan” he started having second thoughts about being a street vendor, especially as so many other hawkers were struggling to make a living. “It was never meant to be a business thing, and I realised I shouldn’t be able to sell stuff if others are not allowed to.”

“I started cooking when I was six and I’ve always had an interest in learning languages. This was a perfect way to combine the two.”

People took to Jamie’s strong, garlicky hummus but as his reputation spread, he began to experience a backlash. After his

The hummus cart proved to be the first in a series of ventures that combined food and language. These days, Jamie has no shortage of projects that keep him busy. He runs a Western food workshop in Beijing, hosts a CCTV travel show and he recently returned to STC to share his experience of learning Mandarin. Despite first encountering the language at school, Jamie missed the opportunity to study it at when he was young.

“Chinese was optional and I took theatre, arts, food science and Spanish instead,” he says. “Back then there was a stigma attached to learning Chinese.” In his final year at STC, Jamie was planning to study Spanish and business at university until his teacher Lee O’Leary thought he should consider learning Chinese. Jamie applied and was accepted into a four-year programme at Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London.

First though, he wanted some real-world experience, so he deferred his admission by a year and moved to Shenzhen. “I wanted to be immersed; to put a context to the language learning,” he says. He signed up for a Chinese class at Shenzhen University and made an effort to get out and practice. Taking misunderstandings in his stride was part of the learning process. “The exchanges you have can shape the way you learn,” he explains.



Jamie’s tricycle in Beijing.

“I started cooking when I was six and I’ve always had an interest in learning languages. This was a perfect way to combine the two.”

Jamie Bilbow  
2007 – 2011 BA Chinese & Management in University of London, SOAS  
1999 – 2006 Sha Tin College

# Linguistic Delicacies

*Jamie Bilbow blends food and language as the Sha Tin College graduate follows his twin passions.*





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Jamie's new book — *Welcome to all foodies: Chef Jamie's Western Classics*.

His time in Shenzhen put Jamie “ahead of the game” when he arrived at SOAS but it also gave him a lot of bad habits. “I was cocky. I got high marks at first but then there was a big drop.” A similar thing happened after the second year of studies, which he spent on exchange in China: “I’m still working on my tones” he says.

By now Jamie was eager to leave the classroom and plunge back into the real world. Within weeks of finishing his exams in London, he was back in China. That’s when food came into the picture. Jamie had considered a career in cooking but his father warned him against it. Culinary ambitions have always run parallel to his linguistic exploits — even while he was studying at SOAS. Jamie worked part-time in London restaurants and he also completed a short stint training chefs in Pyongyang, North Korea. And when he finished his course in Shenzhen, the budding entrepreneur worked for six months in the kitchen at Marco Polo Hotel in Hong Kong.

“The best way to pick up a language is to learn through your hobby and your passions.”

After his hummus adventure, Jamie opened a Mandarin-only cooking workshop making French, Italian and Spanish dishes with local ingredients. Part of the focus was on teaching Chinese people the basics of Western cooking techniques but he also used the workshop to test out fusion creations. His most successful efforts included a berry and crème brûlée version of Beijing-style yogurt, dark chocolate ice cream with Sichuan peppercorns and malt powder and most popular of all, chocolate banana “youtiao” doughnuts.

When he visited STC late last year, Jamie made “youtiao” and used the cooking process to teach vocabulary. “The best way to pick up a language is to learn through your hobby and your passions,” Jamie explains that he always watches football with a Chinese commentary: “I’d be watching the game anyway, so I might as well turn it into a learning exercise.”

Chinese has become a mandatory subject since Jamie studied at STC. He worries however that students still don’t have a vested interest in learning Chinese, given that most of them lead their day-to-day lives in English. “It’s up to parents and the school to build interest,” he says. “They should realise that learning a language can be fun. If you can supplement it by doing something you already love, it suddenly isn’t so hard.”

Jamie practiced what he preached with his cooking workshops. They were a form of cultural exchange that helped people dispel many of the myths and preconceptions surrounding Western food in China. If students do not like a dish he tells them there is no harm in adapting it to their taste. “There needs to be some kind of bridge that helps people understand what they’re eating,” he says.

Jamie applies the same philosophy to his latest ventures. He is working on a CCTV travel and cooking programme (to be aired in 2015) that sees him hunting for ingredients in Yunnan. In each episode locals teach him how to prepare an ingredient their way and he teaches them his way. Jamie has also published a 50-recipe cookbook for Chinese foodies interested in trying Western dishes. And recently he moved back to Hong Kong to begin a master’s degree in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language with the goal of becoming a fully-qualified Mandarin teacher.

“It’s a lot to put on one plate, but all the ingredients work together,” he says. 🍷



Two decades after their graduation, the Wijedoru brothers are back at Sha Tin College. Each is wearing a polo shirt: Sugath in red, Lalith in green and Thusith in black, with a red emblem.

"We've come in our house colours," says Thusith. He and Sugath were in Scott House while Lalith was a member of Hilary House.

"There was really strong inter-house competition in things like sporting events," says Sugath.

"I was mortified, because normally siblings get put in the same house, but they were Scott red and I was Hilary green," says Lalith. "They would always joke and say I was adopted."

Though the brothers all trod the same path through Sha Tin College, graduating in 1989, '93 and '95, respectively, they ended up in remarkably different careers. Thusith is a sports photographer in Sri Lanka, Sugath is a solicitor in Brisbane and Lalith is a doctor in London. But they do share one thing in common. "Our father was a bit of a repressed socialist, and both



The Wijedoru brothers with their geography teacher, Mr Tony White (left most)

our parents have always been concerned with social justice," says Lalith. Each brother has continued to fly the flag in some way or another: Lalith specialises in treating infectious diseases affecting children in developing countries; Sugath works at a firm that advocates for the rights of individuals in relation to workers compensation, employment matters and human rights issues; Thusith is involved in a project that promotes children's cricket in the north of Sri Lanka, which is still recovering from a 26-year civil war.

Originally from Sri Lanka but based for years in Japan, the Wijedoru family eventually arrived in Hong Kong. Mother, Damayanthi was a doctor and her late husband Bernard was a civil engineer. They lived in civil servants' quarters in Caldecott Road, not far from Kowloon Reservoir. "At the time it was very easy for expatriate families to live in a bubble," says Lalith. "We were not one of those families. Our mother spoke fluent Cantonese, and our father could read Chinese well based on his knowledge of Japanese characters. The rest of us could converse with and understand local people. We were more integrated."

That was also true at Sha Tin College, where the brothers say the diverse setting helped give them social confidence. "Being an international school, a lot of our friends' jokes were politically incorrect," says Lalith. "My school friends called me 'ah cha' and 'hak gwai', which is really not polite. But it was a form of endearment. And people who grow up with that become comfortable in all kinds of different environments."

"It helped us think outside of the box," says Thusith.

"All of us are people people," says Lalith, adding that it wasn't necessarily the academics at Sha Tin College that helped him most in his life. "It was the stuff outside the classroom. When I look back, I think about the sport, the music, the houses and the rivalries. These types of things are really important."

The brothers have fond memories of class trips to Paris and Nepal, and annual school camping holidays that taught them about Hong Kong history and culture. (At the time, ESF schools followed a British curriculum and there was no Chinese instruction whatsoever.) But they are quick to point out the role that teachers played too. "I had some really inspirational teachers at ESF," says Lalith. When they finished school, Damayanthi made a point of thanking the brothers' teachers. "They were quite surprised," she says.

Thusith was the first to graduate which meant he had the daunting task of being the first of his parents' sons to forge his own path. When he told them he wanted to become a professional photographer, his father was appalled. "He just wouldn't accept that his son would be a photographer," says Damayanthi.

**Thusith Wijedoru**  
1984 – 1989 Sha Tin College  
1989 – 2006 Videographer and photographer in commercial TV production  
2006 – present Photographer

**Lalith Wijedoru**  
1991 – 1995 Sha Tin College  
1995 – 1997 International School of Beijing  
1997 – 2003 University College London, MBBS (Medicine)  
2008 – 2009 Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, MSc International Child Health  
2003 – present Doctor in Paediatric Accident & Emergency Medicine

**Sugath Wijedoru**  
1988 – 1993 Sha Tin College  
1994 – 1995 Anglican Church Grammar School, Brisbane  
1996 – 2000 University of Queensland, Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy  
2001 – 2003 Articles of Clerkship  
2003 – present Solicitor

Thusith  
Wijedoru

Lalith  
Wijedoru

Sugath  
Wijedoru

## School Reunion

Three brothers return to Sha Tin College and reminisce about its impact on their lives.



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"You can imagine the stereotypical South Asian parents — they would prefer more traditional careers such as accountancy, medicine, or law for their children," says Lalith.

"Their father only relented after Damayanthi found Thusith an apprenticeship position at a family friend's videography and photography company in Sri Lanka. It wasn't an easy job — "I got my boots dirty," says Thusith, he started his career in commercial TV production and then finally move to photography, after he documented the aftermath of the 2006 tsunami in Sri Lanka."

"He was never convinced, but he accepted it," says Thusith. "And he was very proud," says Damayanthi.

Lalith may have chosen a more conventional career but he went about it in an unorthodox way. "Everything that was expected of me, I have done the opposite," he says. Rather than doing a science research degree, he took a year off to run for student government and manage the student union. "It was a totally different skill set, so when I finally moved into clinical practice I was miles ahead in terms of dealing with people, dealing with conflicts and dealing with emotion."

Sugath was originally torn between wanting to be a journalist or a lawyer so he enrolled in a dual degree programme at the University of Queensland. He decided he preferred law. "I liked the logical reasoning behind it," he says. "And people say I like being right." His brothers chuckle.

These days, Thusith and Lalith often return to Hong Kong, either for work — Thusith was here to document the Rugby Sevens — or to meet up with old classmates. Sugath is more rooted in Australia; before the most recent visit, he hadn't set foot in Hong Kong for more than 10 years.



Thusith working as sports photographer

Sitting in the teachers' lounge as the lunch hour bustle eases, the brothers reflect on how their old school has changed. Thusith marvels at the computers and other technical equipment now available to students. Sugath notes that some things, like the school hall, have remained the same.

Lalith mentions another thing that hasn't changed: the school's ethos. "The good thing about Sha Tin is that even though some things were regimented — tuck in your shirt, always be on time — it was actually quite liberal. It was small and personal. For that I'm grateful." 🍷





"It's really crazy," she admits, "but I decided a while ago that I can't say no to any opportunity."

That sense of adventure has defined Lisa's life since coming to Hong Kong from Sweden at the age of 12. "When I first arrived it was pretty dramatic. I didn't like it at all." She studied at another international school and struggled to fit in. "When I lived in Sweden I was very sporty. I did gymnastics, horse-riding and football," she says. "And then I came to Hong Kong and all the girls were really proper, they collected stickers and played tag. In Sweden, girls and boys fight together, and we were outdoors all the time."

Her mother noticed Lisa was unhappy and suggested she take up dance. One day, as they walked past a performance in Stanley, she took some flyers and signed Lisa up at the dance studio. It was a revelation. "I really enjoyed it. I've always liked to move and I like music." She switched to a larger dance studio and began taking classes in jazz and funk dance. "Most of the other dancers were from Hong Kong and I made friends and started to understand the culture. That's when I started to like Hong Kong more."

By that time Lisa had switched to Renaissance College (RCHK) and was delving even more into dance. At RCHK, she won an IB performing arts scholarship. She credits drama teacher Angela Liu and former vice-principal Grant Rogers for supporting her ambitions. "Mr. Rogers said that if I ever opened a dance studio, he would invest in it, but I haven't been in touch with him yet," she says, laughing.

I was really embarrassed, but when I finished, he told me I was really brave.

**Lisa Bergström**

2013 – 2014 Established Lisa B. Academy of Jazz  
2012 – 2013 New York Broadway Dance Centre  
2008 – 2011 Renaissance College

Lisa likes dance because of its versatility. "I started because of the physical aspect, but I stayed with it because of the artistic side. There are so many different styles of dancing: you have the hip hop scene, which is crew-based with competitions and cool moves, and then you have ballet which is very technical and detailed. And then in the middle you have contemporary — my favourite — where you mix different styles and techniques."

Dancing came naturally to Lisa but getting on stage still requires courage. Her first solo performance didn't go very well. "I was taking a street jazz class and wanted to challenge myself," she says. "The music started and I knew the choreography but I was so nervous that I just blanked. It was a big class with 30 people in front of me — 30 good dancers." The teacher guided Lisa through the routine. "I was really embarrassed, but when I finished, he told me I was really brave."

When Lisa began working as a dance teacher at the Sonia Herron Academy of Jazz in 2008, she realised that dance could be a viable career. She didn't relish the idea of plunging straight into university after graduating from RCHK. Instead she applied to train for six months at the Broadway Dance Center in New York, with the intention of eventually going to the University of Sussex to study geography.



"When I got there, I realised six months wasn't enough, so I deferred university for another year. It was definitely a challenge. You realise how inexperienced you are, how many other great dancers are out there and how hard you have to work." That work extended beyond dance practice: "I learned about things I didn't even know you had to study, such as the history of dance." Like any artistic practice, being a good

dancer means learning everything you can about it. "You have to go back to the roots, so if you want to be a really good hip hop dancer, you have to learn about house, popping, free styling, etc."

Being in New York certainly helped. In her spare time, Lisa watched dance showcases like *Sirens After Dark* and *Broadway Underground*. "It's casual, improvised and tickets are cheap. Everybody just goes to watch and get inspired," she says.

But New York is expensive so Lisa decided to return to Hong Kong, where her father still lives. (Her mother has returned to Sweden.) She resumed teaching at the Academy of Jazz when she was unexpectedly asked

to take over at the Tsuen Wan studio "I like to watch different students and discover what each of them needs. You really have to change for the students — you can't expect them to change for you," she says.

Lisa's students, who range from 16-month-old children to adults, dance for the fun of it. "Some are reluctant to begin with but after a few weeks they grow to really like it." She teaches jazz because of its emphasis on fundamentals, along with pop, hip hop, funk and musical theatre but ends each class with a freestyle session. "That's when you can really see who likes it."

Hong Kong has a lively dance scene but Lisa says it is stymied by parents who don't see dance as a viable career path. "There are some really good hip hop dancers, but a lot of them don't have a good relationship with their family." Luckily that was never the case for her. "My parents have always been very supportive about dancing," offering advice and financial support, she says.

But if there's one thing Lisa has learned from her experience, it is to take charge of each opportunity that arises. "It's really only up to you — no one else can do it," she says.

# Fancy Footwork

*Lisa Bergström knew she wanted to be a dancer but she never expected to be running her own studio at the age of 20.*





A photograph of three women in an art studio. One woman stands on the left in a striped shirt and dark apron. Another woman sits on the floor in the center, smiling, wearing a patterned top and dark pants. A third woman is in the foreground on the right, looking towards the camera, wearing a grey and white striped sweater. Large paintings of pink flowers and abstract colors are in the background.

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## JOCKEY CLUB SARAH ROE SCHOOL JAZZ FESTIVAL



The Hong Kong "Jazz Family" Fest 2014 was a great success. The fund raising event organised by Jockey Club Sarah Roe School (JCSRS) took place at Grappa's Cellar in January and raised HK\$300,000. The money is earmarked for the development of an independent life skills room and an expressive arts space to meet the needs of children at JCSRS. The event featured an illustrious roll call of names from the local jazz scene, including Howard McCrary and Eugene Pao as well as performances from Rhian Anderson, a Year 12 student from KGV and Fusion 5. To add to the entertainment there were also auctions and lucky draws.

## STC ALUMNI REUNION 2014



The Sha Tin College Alumni Association held their annual reunion on Saturday, 19 April 2014. The full day event saw former students take part in ball games and campus tours followed by lunch, drinks and snacks. Alumni enjoyed the opportunity of renewing old friendships and making new ones.

More than 100 alumni and their families attended, with a particularly large delegation from the class of '94 who were celebrating 20 years since graduation. Classmates flew in from Australia, UK, US, China, Vietnam and Singapore for the occasion. In her welcoming address, Senior Leader Jane Parry reiterated the importance of the alumni community and thanked the Alumni Association for their help in promoting networks.

Special guest, Tony White will be retiring this year after 27 years of service and those in attendance were full of praise for his teaching skills as well as his willingness to referee a volleyball match between the classes '94 and '04. Alumni also thanked current students for guiding the campus tours and taking photos.

Sha Tin Alumni continue to go from strength to strength with reunions celebrating 10, 20 and 30 years since graduation.

## RENAISSANCE COLLEGE LONDON REUNION



The second RCHK Overseas Reunion took place on January 15 2014 in London. Twelve alumni met up with Principal Dr. Harry Brown to share their news and experiences. Dr. Brown also took the opportunity to update those present on the latest developments at Renaissance College.

"The students are all doing remarkably well and were so excited about seeing each other and trading uni war stories which were very funny. We are so fortunate, maybe even blessed, to work with such delightful young people," said Dr. Brown.

The gathering lasted for over four hours and everyone had a good time. The next Hong Kong reunion is scheduled for August. Please go to the RCHK Alumni website ([alumni.rchk.edu.hk](http://alumni.rchk.edu.hk)) for the latest updates.

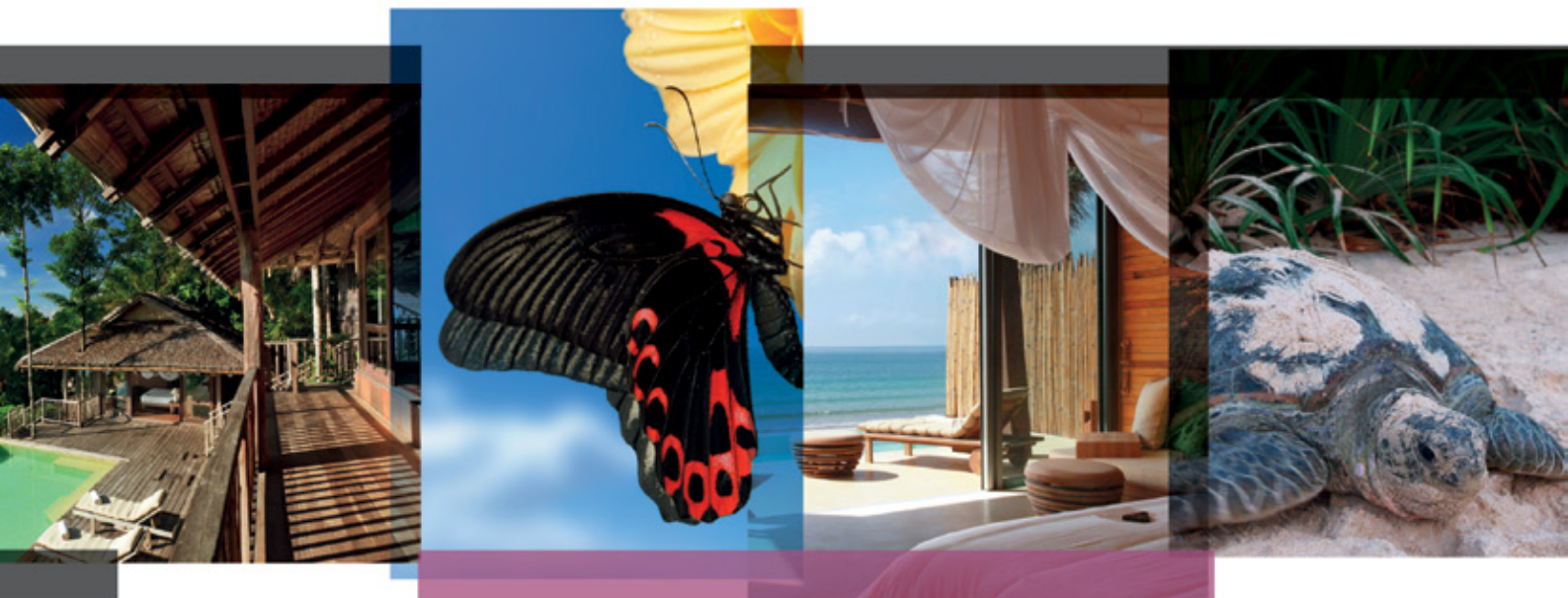
## SOUTH ISLAND SCHOOL LONDON REUNION



There was a convivial atmosphere at Ye Olde Cock in Fleet Street on the 29 January as Principal Graham Silverthorne welcomed alumni spanning several decades. Several faces reappeared from our first gathering but the highlight was the arrival of a large group from the Class of 1986 — some meeting up for the first time since their schooldays. Stories were shared including some relating to former staff and one or two escapades that the teachers never found out about! Several alumni from this group have subsequently visited us in Hong Kong and taken a nostalgic tour. One or two have even made some business links with the school, which is a really positive development. Everyone who visits is asked to tell their story and we have captured some great video footage which we will be making into a video.

For alumni who are living in or visiting Hong Kong, the school now has The Space, a perfect venue for reunions. We also have sporting facilities available including our indoor pool, sports hall and rooftop astroturf. Contact us at [saps@mail.sis.edu.hk](mailto:saps@mail.sis.edu.hk) for more details, or to arrange a visit.





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