



programme
highlights

County
Hall

CASTLE DRIVE

Official Visits

Visiting Lord Mayors of Liverpool and Wirral

Visiting the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress of Liverpool (7th July 2001)



It is indeed our great honour to have this invaluable chance to visit the Liverpool Town Hall. (One of the oldest buildings in Liverpool, opened in 1754). We had a short meeting with the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Councilor Gerard P. Scott. JP KHS and the Lady Mayoress Mrs. Ann Scott.

The Lord Mayor and his helper Steve introduced to us the history of Liverpool as well as that of the old Town Hall. They explained the functions of each of the room in the Hall during the tour and we were all amazed by the beautiful furniture and decorations. The crystal chandeliers, the pictures, the sculpture and ceramics were so very unique and elegant. We went into the Council Chamber where the councillors have their meetings and make decisions. We have spent the whole morning in the Town Hall and we were all very impressed by the hospitality of the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress. Lastly, we presented a traditional Chinese plate to them as a token of thanks and gratitude.



Visiting the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress of Wirral (11th July 2001)

The Cultural Night was the first time we met the Lord Mayor of Wirral, Councilor John Cocker and the Lady Mayoress. Yet, after the enjoyable evening, we were able to meet the Lord Mayor once again in the following morning! We had a tea party together in the Mayor Parlour in Wallasey. It seemed that each and everyone of us was so keen on knowing more about the place where we spent the two weeks in! We spoke of everything about Wirral, from the government system, recreation of the people to the weather of this lovely place. At the end, the Lord Mayor put on his red silk cloak and took pictures with us. To express our heartfelt thanks, we presented the souvenirs to him and enjoyed the tea party together.



Visiting Mr. Chris Rice, the Director of Education and Cultural Services (Wirral) (12th July 2001)

On July 12, we were very honoured to visit Mr. Chris Rice by whom we have been told a lot about the education system and the counseling services in Britain. The interview began with a discussion on the challenges that the education department in the place is facing. Surprisingly, we are having similar situation in Hong Kong! Many teenagers lose their interest in studying and they eventually commit crimes. Thus, the local government is now putting more effort to provide more alternatives for these students to further develop their working and communication skills. In recent years, there has been a drastic growth in vocational study programs. That includes Accountancy and some other professional courses. However, Mr Rice mentioned that the public acceptance of these qualifications have been the greatest concern in the place right now.



Regarding the curriculum for the country, it is originally determined by the central government. Primary schools focus on literacy (grammar, vocabulary etc.) while a balanced school life and vocational programs are encouraged in secondary schools. Apart from these, courses concerning personal, social as well as interacting skills are established in secondary schools for students. Also, the curriculum emphasizes on the creativity of students in the country. This is, perhaps, the greatest difference between the education systems in Britain and Hong Kong.

Though time was limited, the meeting was indeed inspiring, especially for the students in HK who are now experiencing education reform. We should learn to be more creative and to think independently.



Visiting the Wirral Multicultural Centre (12th July 2001)

The concept of the Multicultural Centre for Wirral began in 1986 when Chinese and Vietnamese residents wanted help with interpreters in order to access statutory services. The Multicultural Centre stands on Education Department Land. Mayor Gordon Paterson laid its foundation stone in July 1992 and the building opened in September that year with Irene seconded by Education as the administrator of the Centre.

The principles on which the Multicultural Centre operates are to promote intercultural harmony, value cultural diversity and respect for the individual regardless of language, race and religion.

The minority ethnic associations have used this Centre for a variety of activities such as Luncheon club for Chinese pensioners, English language classes, mother-tongue teaching, youth club and activities for cultural festivals.



Visiting Liverpool John Moores University (10th July 2001)

On 10 July, we went to Liverpool John Moores University, which used to be a polytechnic. Now, it is the fifth largest university in the United Kingdom. We visited the School of Law and Applied Social Studies, and the School of Health and Human Science. Eileen Neuman, the Programme Director of Youth and Community and Social Science, received us in that morning. She had also given us a brief account on the education system in the U.K.

As most of us were tertiary students, and the others would receive tertiary education in the coming years, we were devoted to learn more about the tertiary education in the U.K.



The two top universities in the U.K. were The Oxford University and The Cambridge University, which have been very famous all over the world. Since Industrial Revolution, there had been more universities such as The University of Manchester, The University of Birmingham and The University of Liverpool. In 1970s, polytechnics provided vocational training and they started to get the university status in 1990s. From late 1990s until now, there has been a battle for funding between old and new universities; research and teaching.

How about the secondary education? Eileen and her colleague, Dr. Nickel Adams, gave us some information. In 1960s, 40% of secondary students studied in grammar schools, while the other 60% studied in secondary school and technical college. At that time, there was a lot of manufacturing industries. They needed skilled labour, but not highly educated people. However, since industry has become technical, professional people are needed. The change of job market has driven the change in education system. Moreover, education can help students to get status in society. Everyone should have equal educational opportunities. So, more opportunities have been provided to those 60% students in secondary school or in technical college.



We can use a phrase to conclude our visit to Liverpool John Moores University - "Students should learn to be, not learn to do." This is also one of the aims of education.

Visiting West Kirby Grammar School For Girls and Wallasey School (4th July 2001)

In order to have a better understanding in the educational system of UK, we were divided into two groups to visit the West Kirby Grammar School For Girls and the Wallasey School on 4th July.



We had a tour around the West Kirby Grammar School For Girls, followed by a meeting with the head teacher Miss Erskine. She mentioned that the school emphasized on the creativity of the students. For

example, they are allowed to design their own menu in the cookery class. Also, the artwork of the senior students is exhibited to inspire and encourage the junior ones.



During our visit in Wallasey School, we found that the school has comparatively less focus on examinations, but pays more emphasis on working in a collaborative manner with students.



After the tour, we have a deeper understanding towards the UK's campus life through a tour to their classrooms and we learned a lot from them through our discussion.

Workshops and Cultural Exchange

Visiting Youth Centres

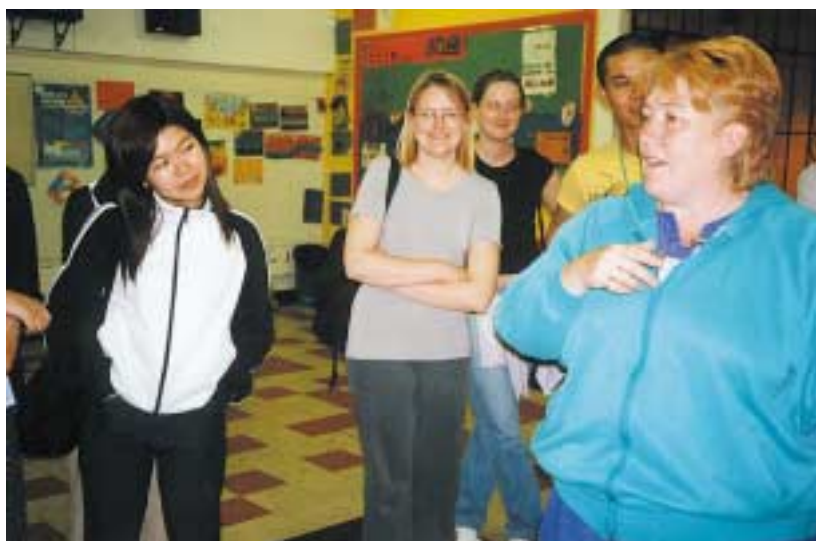
We visited Moreton Youth Centre in the evening of the 3rd July and the Cellar Youth Club for Deaf Young People on 9th July. During the visit, we could appreciate the operation of the youth centres. We also had a chance to join in the activities and interact with the youths in the centres. It is beneficial to us since it could enhance our understanding on the youth service in UK.



Visiting Moreton Youth Centre (3rd July 2001)

In the evening of 3 July 2001, we visited Moreton Youth Centre in Wirral. The Centre is run by the UK Government for both sexes of normal and disabled people. Clubs in the Centre are organized by the volunteers. Motivation for the voluntary workers comes from a sense of satisfaction. The Club aims at giving the youth a better lifestyle, despite their desperation in school. Usually 14-15-year-old people join the activities there. Around 35-40 teenagers go to the Centre each evening and usually there are more people coming on Fridays. The Centre undergoes many projects in different themes such as smoking, art, sports, etc. It also provides some recreational activities such as playing pool or basketball, dancing, making clothes and watching TV. In UK, there are some common youth problems such as drug abuse, insufficient parental care, crime and violence, having unsafe sex, dissatisfaction in school and so on. To

alleviate the problems, the youth club provides interest groups to help them get recognition apart from academic studies.





Visiting the Cellar Youth Club for Deaf Young People (9th July 2001)

We also visited the Cellar Youth Club for Deaf Young People in the evening of 9 July. We were received and introduced by Karen. Every week the centre provides different kinds of activities such as workshops to arouse the youth's awareness of drugs and alcohol. It also offers assistance to the homeless youngsters. For example, bathing and

laundrying are free for those young people. The centre also provides some facilities for the youth. The youngsters can talk among themselves in the coffee bar. Multipurpose rooms are for members to have meetings or gatherings. They can play basketball and table tennis in the gym. During the visit, we had an exciting basketball match with the UK teenagers in the centre. That was really enjoyable!



The visits were precious chance for us to know more about the youth service and get in touch with the youngsters in UK. The experience we gained was invaluable.

Workshops (Cultural differences and Drugs and Alcohol)

We attended two meaningful workshops during the trip. They were about the cultural differences and the drugs and alcohol issue.

Workshop on Cultural Differences (5th July 2001)

We had the workshop on the cultural differences in the garden in front of the Ivy Farm. In order to keep everyone relax, the presenters, Miss Debbie Dawson and Miss Jan MacDonald began the workshop by playing a game called "Parachute" with us. We all enjoyed it. After that, we started our discussion. The UK group and the HK group discussed the similarities and the differences between the two places which in-



cludes the three main issues, the school or employment, the family and the leisure. We found some similarities between the two places, like the education systems are quite similar; the divorce rates are both increasing. Undoubtedly, there are some differences, like the UK people frequently play sports during their leisure time while the Hong Kong people like to see movie and sing karaoke rather than playing sportsgame. Through the discussion, both of the groups knew more about the cultural differences and the related legal laws about the two places.

Workshop on Drugs and Alcohol (11th July 2001)

Another workshop was about the drugs and alcohol issue. Miss Margy Ellard and Miss Lyn McCormick guided the HK group and the UK group to discuss the drugs and alcohol issue.



The focus was mainly on the legal law of using drugs and alcohol in UK and the disadvantages of taking them. First, we completed a questionnaire, as well as a discussion during the workshop. After the

discussion, we knew more about the properties of drugs. Both of the groups enjoyed the workshop very much. This followed by a case study.



Entertainment

Chester (9th July 2001)

A day we spent in Chester

This day, we visited Chester. Here is the Roman Walled City of Chester. We walked along the city wall from East Gate through Watch Tower to West Gate. We passed the Roman Garden, which showed the fragments of the Roman Building and the Roman Hypocaust (Roman system of under floor heating). We visited the Chester Roman Amphitheatre, which is the largest Roman amphitheatre in Britain. It was used for entertainment and military training. There, we also met a group of students led by their teachers and also a soldier dressed tour guide!



It is time for us to go to the Chester Visitor Centre to get more information about Chester! There was History of Chester Exhibition Gallery, cafe and souvenir shop too. We all sat down and enjoy a cup of coffee!



That day was a special day because Professor Shek arrived after lunch on the bank of the River Dee. He joined us to have a cruise on the River Dee to appreciate the beauty and character of the city.



When we were visiting Chester Cathedral, a father approached us and guided us for the walk in the Church. The Church has over one thousand years of history. It was built in Norman Style. We were very happy to learn the story of Sincere. In Latin, cere means marble with wax. Sincere means marble without wax and implies not pretending to be perfect. It is true that we should be genuine and not pretending to be good when we are not really that good, because God will know what is the truth.

Birthday celebration of Peter (3rd July 2001, 4th July 2001)

There was a very special event happened on the 4th of July during our trip which is not in our itinerary - Peter's 21st Birthday. Both the Hong Kong delegates and the UK delegates had prepared something very special for him. Let's see what happened:

"Once upon a time there was a pub, where we celebrated someone's birthday. Remember how we decorated his birthday card, and asked him to guess whose lips in the card...

It was Peter's birthday, we thought it never end, we sang and drank together on that night. We took many photos; he received a birthday cake. He truly treasured that very special moment ~

La ~ la la la la-la.....



There were two celebrations for his birthday. The first one was on the night of 3rd of July. We went to the pub near Arrowe Park and presented Peter a 'very' special birthday card – with all our lips on it (including the boys' and Michael's).

The second one was the celebration by the UK group after the dinner on his birthday. The UK group presented him a nice birthday cake and a 'Key to the 21'. He was very happy and it was definitely one of the most unforgettable birthdays!!!

Liverpool Football Club (5th July 2001)

One of the highlights of our programme was the visit to the Liverpool Football Club (LFC). Outside the LFC, there is the Bill Shankly Memorial Gate with the name of the club's anthem 'You never walk alone' on the top and the Hillsborough Memorial, which is to dedicate the life of 96 supporters died in an accident in 1989.





We had joined the guiding tour and thus had the chance to visit the dressing room and the bathroom of the players. Everyone was excited to see Owen (his shirt) in the dressing room.

Just like the football stars, we walked through the player entrance to the football field. After a brief history by our guide, we proceeded to the LFC Museum and the souvenir shop. The museum has four full-sized European Cups displayed with match shirts, newspapers and memorabilia from the winning matches that capture the excitement of those record-breaking days. And we all bought some nice souvenirs from the shop!

Alton Towers (6th July 2001)

Another highlight of the trip to England was the visit to the largest theme park in Europe - Alton Towers. If you like going to Ocean Park in Hong Kong, you will certainly like this exciting place. With 500 acres of parkland and over 125 attractions, the UK group and we had spent an exciting and enjoyable day there. The Oblivion is one of the newest rides of the park and it is the world's only vertical drop roller coaster. The drop is of 60 meters long and the roller coaster runs straight underground at a maximum speed of 110 km/hour. Other great and exciting rides include the River Rapids, Corkscrew, and Runaway Train. There is a great "Spider" in the 'Forbidden Valley' as decoration with a red river nearby. How horrible is this place? Inside it there is a "Nemesis" on which you are just like flying in extremely high speed. Some of us who



could not afford the exciting rides went to Haunted House, the cable cars. There are also beautiful grassland and pond with swans for us to take photos. The two groups played together, screamed together and enjoy every moment with one another!



Home Stay (7th July 2001, 8th July 2001)

Our unforgettable home stay and our lovely host families

The exciting day of home stay comes! We shouted on 7th July. We were divided into five groups, vis-



iting five different

families, with Amy going to Ellie's home, Caecilia, Connie, Michelle, Noel and Ronnie going to Kate's home, Carol, Sharon and Stella going to Emma's home, Cherry and Peter going to Andy's home, and Philip and Raymond going to Gary's home.



We brought with us some souvenirs with Chinese wordings and our photo albums, which were made of wonderful and memorable pictures, with description, at our different ages. Dedicating our efforts to making the photo albums, we hope that they would know more about our family, childhood, school life, hobbies, travelling experience, etc.. The next day, some of us went to the Outlet Village, some of us went to Southport, and some of us went to Manchester. Our activities included shopping, eating, visiting, etc.. Staying overnight and spending a day with our host family, we became closer and know more about one another. But...

"The exciting day of home stay goes by. Why does the time for us to part with our host families come so quickly? They are so kind and nice that we hope to stay with them for a longer period." We said on the 8th July.

Staying with them let us know more about the similarities and differences of the habits and lifestyles between the UK and HK people. Having discussions with them not only improved our English speaking skills, but also enabled us to exchange with them our different views on cultural differences. Mutual understanding was then further enhanced.



We were really very happy that we could meet with an enthusiastic reception, touching us to the hearts. How could we forget our lovely home stay and host families! Let us once again express our cordial thanks for their care and kindness which would stick into our mind forever!

International Evening (10th July 2001)

International Evening includes three parts which were shown by Slovenia Group, UK Group and HK Group. We were the last group to present in that night. We arrived at 6pm at the Belvedere Centre in Wallasey which is near Ivy Farm. Then we prepared for our show the six sections: drama, making Chinese lantern workshop, Chinese calligraphy workshop, singing the song "Those were the days", preparing Chinese food and a video about HK. Furthermore, we published a booklet about the content of the international evening.

Firstly, a group of young girls and elderly group of the Slovenia group danced with a popular song separately. Then they presented their poems about their feelings during the period of exchange programme in dancing movement.

Then, the UK group wore their smart clothes to present the trends of UK. The presentation



split into different sections by year, e.g. 60s', 70s', 80s', 90s' and now.

Finally, it was our show time! Our aim of the show was to present the Chinese culture to the foreigners. So, we had a drama about the preparation and celebration of Chinese New Year. It involved ten group mates to cast the story. Especially, we invited God of Fortune to be a guest performer and he gave many red packets to our guests. Actually, he was one of the ten group mates. Also we had prepared some Chinese food (lin zi) for them.

The second section was a workshop presented by Amy about Chinese handicraft Lantern. The workshop included inviting ten guests to make a lantern from twelve red packets.



Chinese calligraphy workshop was the third section presented by Stella. She taught the guests, especially the Mayor of Wirral to print an animal which is well known all over the World, Panda.

Also we had prepared a song called “Those were the days” for a long time. It was a really touching song, which can describe our feelings in those days.

Those were the days

*Once upon there was a tavern,
Where we used to raise a glass or two.
Remember how we laughed away the
hours,
And dreamed of all the great things we
would do.
Those were the days, my friend,
We thought they'd never end,
We sing and dance forever and a day;
We'd live the life we choose, we'd fight and never lose,
For we were young and sure to have our way.
La la la.....*



Maybe our singing touched the Mayor. He also sang a song “Those the hard day” with a guitar. Slovenia group and our group were a dancing partner with the Mayor. We were sure that everyone did enjoy the Mayor performance!

Then it was the time to have dinner. We had prepared two Chinese foods for them, and the Slovenia group did so. The food was sweet and sour pork and chicken with potato. We made the food for few hours with limited sources. So the food must be very delicious! During the dinner we made friends with the Slovenia group and learnt some Slovenians. Also we exchanged our email addresses and took lots of photos.

One - Anna

Two - Da Wak

Three - th ree

Finally, we presented our video show about the view of HK. It includes many scenic spots e.g. the Peak, Stanley, the Victoria Harbour and the Airport. We devoted lots of efforts to this video because it can truly show the situation of HK.



In the end of the international evening, we were difficult to tears apart. Emotionally, we did not want to finish the good time that we have tasted. But we knew that we would communicate through email. We are deeply impressed that the technology can shorten our distance.

Farewell Dinner (12th July 2001)

A Farewell dinner was held in a Chinese restaurant called King Dong restaurant, located at the China Town of Liverpool, at the night before we left. Charles and Karen have ordered some Chinese dishes for us, for example, the spring rolls, the sweet and sour pork and the green pepper and beef in black bean sauce. They all tasted good and were competeable to those in Hong Kong's restaurants.

During our dinner, we shared the pictures we had taken in U.K. and recalled our memories of these 14 days tour again and again. We all have enjoyed our dinner so much but we did feel a bit upset because we were going to leave the day after.

Before we finished the dinner, Professor Shek representing the Hong Kong group had expressed our gratitude to Charles, Karen, Margy and all the U.K. delegates for their warmth reception and presented some souvenirs we have prepared to them as a gesture of thanks. They were some stationery sets, calculators and pens from the Commission on Youth as well as a Chinese tea set with tea.

After that, it was so surprising that the U.K. group has also prepared some souvenirs for everyone of us. We all loved the T-shirt with the word 'Wirral' on and the book which had lots of fantastic pictures of countrysides of England. We then left the restaurant and enjoyed our last night in Ivy Farm.

