



read our minds...

How can I start writing my reflection? ...I am so lucky and happy to have a chance to join the International Youth Exchange Programme 2000-2001 this year. Here I have prepared a song "Those were the days" for you. All the words written are really from the bottom of my heart. The melody is the same as our song presented in the international night presentation. Hope you all enjoy this song I write and remember our great time spending together!

<Those were the days>

1. *One month before we went to Wirral
There were so many things we had to prepare
We introduced our Hong Kong by video
We shared our Lunar New Year by drama*
- * *We were so excited to leave our Hong Kong
We looked forward to the day to Wirral
We prepared everything
For drama and research
We tried our best to prepare for the trip
La la la...*
2. *At the end of June we went to Wirral
Where we stayed visiting for twelve days
Remember how we spent the time together
We had made lots of great friends to treasure*
- @ *Friends from Hong Kong, Wirral, are like a family
We sing and dance and laugh for everything
We like to share with them,
They like to stay with us
Our friendships grow from day to day!
La la la...*
3. *We visited Wirral, Chester, Liverpool
We liked to go to Alton Tower
Remember how we rode on the Namesis
And flew from here to there like a big bird
Repeat @*
4. *The day we left our friends from Wirral
We had to go back to our homeland
We recognized the time flying so fast
And we cried for missing our friends
Repeat @*
5. *When we came back to our Hong Kong
We had to prepare the report and video
I learnt a lot in video editing
It also recalled my great memories
Repeat @*



Amy

Time flies. It is hard to believe that the 14 days did pass so quickly. Certainly, this is one of the best things that happened to me this year. I am so very honored to be chosen as the youth delegate representing my homeland to visit Britain. Of course, it is indeed a memorable and gratifying experience.

From the numerous preparations of the programme, to the successful as well as cheerful presentation in the Wirral Youth Centre. I have learnt a lot from all other members of our team. The experience was indeed educational and exciting. It provides me with precious opportunities to work and coordinate with outstanding students from different universities and institutes. The trip does widen my horizon and turn me into a more mature girl.

After two months of busy work with all members, I have built up a valuable friendship with each one of them. We sweated, we strived and we laughed. On top of these, we have met a very sociable and amiable group of friends from UK. The ten UK delegates undoubtedly very much enrich our stay in these 2 weeks. I am deeply moved by their warm reception and hospitality. Since then, I have found that communication can be effectively conducted between different cultures. This is perhaps the most valuable thing that I have learnt.

Last but the least, my heartfelt gratitude shall go to Charles (the very nice guy that I have met in the first day), Karen, Margy, Michael and Prof. Shek for their patient guidance in the programme. And, I should here express my appreciation and thanks to the research group on history and the professional video-editing group who have kindly excused me partly from the job during my examination period. Thousands of thanks and loads of luv!

*With the sweetest Memories of all,
Caecilia*



The summer of 2001 is the most enjoyable time that I have ever had. This is my honour to participate in the International Youth Exchange Programme. The trip was memorable and extraordinary. The happy days I spent in Wirral were always in my mind.

Arriving at Wirral, I was immediately impressed by its pleasant environment. I will never forget how fresh the air was, how comfortable the sunshine was and how gentle the winds were there. The time spent in the Arrowe Country Park was fantastic. The mass games, the workshops, and the night trip... all activities in the park were full of pleasure.

The International Youth Exchange Programme is also a golden opportunity to broaden my horizon. Meeting the Director of Education & Cultural Service, I could learn more about the education system of UK. The visit to the youth centres and multicultural centre enhanced my understanding of the social welfare in England. We were grateful to receive the warm reception from the Mayor of Wirral. The excellent architecture of Liverpool Town Hall and Liverpool Cathedral amused me very much. The tour of the historical Roman walled city "Chester" was interesting, too. Among the activities, the most invaluable experience I gained is from the home stay. It is a prime chance to practise the real British life-style.

Everything in the programme was marvellous but what I treasure most are the people. I enjoyed working with my Hong Kong group mates. We cooperated with each other smoothly throughout the programme. The warm hospitality of the Wirral group also impressed me very much. Charles, Margy and Karen were friendly and helpful. Chatting and playing with the UK group were full of joy. The friendship that I have built up with the HK and UK group mates were rooted in my heart. The warm reception and loving kindness from the host family were also unforgettable. The time staying with the host family was delightful.



I would like to thank for the nomination from the Hong Kong Girl Guide Association and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service. I should also thank the Commission on Youth and the Home Affairs Bureau for organizing this programme. What's more, thanks should be given to the people who contributed to the trip, especially Prof. Shek, Mr. Man, Charles, Margy and Karen. All of them gave me a lot of lovely memories.

*Best Regards,
Carol*

This summer is very special for me. While Hong Kong was still the British colony, I already longed for visiting this elegant and classical country. Now, I can fulfil my dream!

When I just arrived at Wirral, it gave me a strong feeling because the environment is very natural: numerous red brick houses, grassland and livestock. When I met Charles, Karen, Margy and the UK delegates, their kindness ensure a wonderful trip for me already.

The 14-days' trip was not only memorable, but also broaden my horizons. Nothing can be better than the picturesque scenery in the Wirral Country Park and the grand Liverpool Town Hall!

I must give my deepest gratitude to the 13 Hong Kong delegates. Although we came from different background, we share the same goal to promote our beloved homeland. I will never forget those days which we struggled together!

At last, I have to say thank you to Prof. Shek and Michael for their guidance in the programme. I fully achieve the aim of the programme to widen my scope of vision and build up my network internationally. This is a perfect experience for me to promote our culture and I learn a lot of things which can't be learned from the textbook!

Cherry

Those were the 14 days...

I remembered the funny jokes made by a very nice handsome gentleman called Charles at Ivy Farm...



I remembered the warm reception by two beautiful and kind ladies called Margy and Karen...

I remembered the smiling faces on every friend I met in Wirral...

I remembered the most exciting kitchen-attack after every breakfast and dinner...

I remembered the fantastic songs sang by Cllr. John Cocker, Mayor of Wirral, during the International Evening...

I remembered the scary morning I woken up by Jake (Kate's dog) at Kate's house...

I remembered the big green grassland and fresh air at Arrowe Park...

I remembered the tears and blessings from our friends in Wirral when we left Ivy farm and at the airport...

These 14 days' memories will always in my heart...

Connie

As I said in the interview, "This is not a chance for fun, for travelling, but this for me to broaden my mind, to feel the culture!" We visited many place in Wirral and Liverpool. Also we had a day spent with Wirral friends and his family. Indeed, i do so!

I am attracted to the programme because it offers new exciting opportunities, which I could not get by myself. My character is always to try my best and face challenges happily. I am eager to gain character-learning experience of life, so I know that it is not very easy to be accepted in this programme so I am sure that I will value the opportunity highly.

In the past 12 days we did many things and those things were very meaningful. It was really a good time for me. But the most impressed me that was our relationship between HK group even with UK group. We not only shared our life style even our happiness and sadness too. It built up in July but i think it'll never end.

We can do many things to experience our life. But I chose to experience with you (my HK group and UK group) for 12 days, I'm surely to say "It's worth to do!!".

Ester



England is a very beautiful place. The two weeks time I've spent in Wirral is really unforgettable. I can still remember how we have been mad taking pictures every where at any time. I can remember the smell of the meadow in the Arrowe Park, the crystal clear water in the pool and the blue slide where little kids played. I can remember every little joke we cracked. The laughter of pure happiness sounded like chimes, which constantly rang in my memory. I can still remember the day we went to Alton Tower. The excited expression on everyone's face, I could still see!

I remember how we laughed away the hours and went to bed without worry. I remember the order "OUT OF MY KITCHEN" of a nice old man. I remember how we gave each other big hug everyday. Our love and respect for each other have brought us a long way and I do treasure our friendship. I thank the UK delegates and my group full-heartedly and hope this will go on and on.....

Michelle

In this exchange programme, we have prepared a song for the international evening, it was "Those were the days" and it can perfectly tell you what I am thinking right now. I still remembered how we laughed away the hours during our trip in U.K. with the friendly U.K. delegates. "Those were the days my friends, we thought they never end, we sing and dance forever and a day.....". Although we have gone home, we all will never forget our friends and the charming Wirral, and I believe the friendship between Hong Kong delegates and U.K delegates will be everlasting.

I thought the so-called "exchange tour" was, in point of fact, the same as the tour organized by a travel agency primarily but I found myself was wrong soon. I am sure I will never be able to meet the Mayors, the government officers of U.K, visit the youth centers, exchange the ideas with youth there and experience the live of British family by joining travel agency. I found myself was so lucky to be one of the delegates and have this memorable trip that some people may never experience.

I should thank my school and the Commission on Youth for giving me this valuable opportunity to participate in this exchange programme. This has not only widened my horizons but also given this unforgettable experience to me. The beautiful scenery, the smell of the meadow, the soft wind and the gentle sunshine of Wirral will always be in my heart forever and ever.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Charles, Karen, Margie, my host family and U.K. delegates for their warmth reception. I do love you all and I can't wait to see you again.

Noel

P.S: Charles, I did tell my parents that I have met a kind and handsome old man in England! >~



At the very beginning, I was not confident to be chosen as a delegate of this programme, because there were so many applicants. When I knew that I was chosen, I was so happy to tell my family and friends because I was sure that I would learn something from it.

I needed to attend two interviews, one is held by the Hong Kong Institute of Education, and the other by the Home Affairs Bureau and the Commission on Youth. These two interviews allowed me to practise my interviewing skills.

After being selected to be Hong Kong delegates, we should started to discuss about our trip immediately. We needed to produce a video, do a research, prepare for the cultural presentation and attend different meetings. Although we were nominated by different schools, universities and institutes, we have been familiar with each others.

There were many visits for us, including official receptions with the Mayor of Liverpool and Wirral, and visit to the Cellar Youth Club for deaf young people. When I go travelling by myself, I won't have the chance to visit these organizations and people. However, I did that in this trip.

The most unforgettable event in the trip is the home visit. Raymond and I went to the home of Gary, who is an English delegate. His mother Chris was so kind that she brought us to visit her relatives and have a day-trip in Southport. She even came to visit us again in the last day of this programme. We sang the song "What ever will be, will be". When I was just a little boy, I ask my mother, what will I be? Will I be handsome? Will I be rich.....

Phillip

After looking at our fantastic pictures in this report, you may exclaim "What a wonderful trip!" I do gain a lot of great memories from the trip, including the demanding but challenging pre-tour preparation, the sweet stay in Wirral and of course, the post-tour work and gathering among the HK delegates. Remember we all stationed in WanChai for days to work for the presentation? Remember we went to different shops to search for the souvenirs and props with our sweats? Remember the night we gathered in the airport excitingly? The delicious meals that we had in the Ivy Farm? The big grassland in there? I remember the meetings we held in my room. I remember the yellow bus. I remember the visits (especially our suits and high-heel shoes>0<!), the cultural presentation night and the night walk in Ivy Farm. I remember the smiling faces of Charles, Margy, Karen and the UK group. I remember how our group work together. I remember a lot. All these stuffs are all incredible. And I won't forget the nice co-operation among us during the trip.

*Dear friends from HK and from Wirral,
I will remember you,
Will you remember me?
Remember the good times that we had?
Don't let our life pass us by.....*

With very best wishes,

Ronnie

I am glad that I was chosen as one of the youth Hong Kong delegates of the International Youth Exchange Programme 2001-2002. The fourteen days trip gave me an unforgettable experience in my summer holiday. It's my first time to visit England and the trip really broadened my horizon and also enriched my life experience.

I was very excited to learnt that I could go to England, not only because it was free of charge (hehe ^.^), but also I was become a 'Hong Kong Delegate'. Before the trip, we only had about one month time to do all the preparation. We needed to prepare a cultural presentation, research about HK, a video tape introducing HK and so on..... Although we were very busy, we could still demonstrate our team spirit and finish the tasks before we go. I can still remember the one-day 'sightseeing of the HK Island' to take the video and also our singings during rehearsals directed by our singing teacher Miss. Ronnie Lui!!

On the first day we arrived, we took a walk in the Arrowe Park. I was fascinated by the environment of the park, large green grassland, flowers and the fresh air. It was very refreshing and a good place for relaxation. Also, it gave me a good impression of England.

We had visited many places in these 14 days, for example, the Mayor of Liverpool and Wirral (also met the Mayor of Chester!), the Liverpool Football Club, the Alton Tower and also 2 grammar schools and the John Moores University. Through these visits, I had broaden my vision and also learnt more about the educational system and cultural differences between England and HK.

Most importantly, I had the chance to interact with the friendly UK delegates who accompanied with us during the whole trip. I think they are 'very' kind and amicable and I am thankful to their efforts of being with us and preparation of our programmes. I think both of us (HK & UK) had paid tremendous efforts in this exchange programme but the HK group seems not very good at the 'kitchen fight'.

I would like to thank a very nice man - Charles, Karen, Margy, all the UK delegates (especially Andy and his parents, for the home stay), Professor Shek and Michael Man for your efforts paid in this exchange programme. Also, I must thank every member of our team for the excellent teamwork spirit and I have learnt something from each of you.

Peter

After returning to Hong Kong, I still could not help thinking of the enjoyable and memorable days when I was in Wirral. This exchange programme was an invaluable and unforgettable experience for me to broaden my horizons, make friends and improve my English, and those were the days I would not forget.

When being informed that I was selected as a delegate of Hong Kong, I was happy but worried. I was worried through lack of experience of joining exchange programmes. Fortunately, the adequate pre-tour training and meetings enabled me to co-operate well with my partners. Thank you for selecting me as a delegate!

In this programme, we played a lot of problem-solving games. What would you do if a cup filled with water, but with holes at the bottom, was put on your head? You may refuse to do so. However, we did enjoy it. Achieving the aims of the games is more important. I love these games because they were held not only to strengthen our friendship and relationship, but also to help us develop the qualities essential for leading a meaningful and successful life.

The green colour and refreshing air made a great difference between England and Hong Kong. Walking on the soft grassland and looking at the lively trees and flowers in Arrowe Park, I felt like having a dream. I admire the people there for their eagerness to help and friendly face.

The day of the home stay came! Philip and I stayed at Gary's home. The cordial reception and eager faces of our host family gave us a homely feeling. I was deeply impressed by Gary's mother's treasuring up the souvenirs we brought her. On that night, we gave them our photo albums. They listened with all their minds, expressed their feelings and told us their experience, deepening our understanding and cementing our friendship and relationship. I must be thankful to her for introducing to us her kind relatives, with whom we exchanged addresses and became friends. What a wonderful home stay!



An eighteen-year-old boy melted into tears. It was I who could not help shedding tears of gratitude twice. On the evening before I left Wirral, Gary's mother, together with her relatives, came to Ivy Farm. Hugging and saying goodbye to one another, we burst into tears. Time, why are you slipping away so quickly? The second bursting into tears was predictable when Margy and Charles sent us off.

During the flight to Hong Kong, I thought about the delicious meals prepared by Margy, Karen and Charles, the visits to the Mayors, schools, youth centres, workshops, museums and Cathedrals, our different roles in the International Evening, the refreshing river cruises, etc.. Those were the days I would treasure up in my memory!

The devoted reception and care of Margy, Karen and Charles, the co-operation of the Wirral and Hong Kong partners, Professor Shek, Michael, Wirral, Ivy Farm, the yellow and white buses, the itinerary and the exchange programme, all contributed to "Those were the days"!

Whole-hearted thanks and love,

Raymond

I can never imagine the kindness of the UK delegates and coordinators, Charles, Karen and Margy.

They treated us as not only their guests, but also their friends. In early morning when we were sleeping, they prepared the breakfast for us. When we went sightseeing, they drove us there and played with us. Sometimes, we had some formal visit, or seminar, they also went with us and attended the boring session. They prepared all the meals, accommodation, programme, visits for us. After a whole day programme, when we were taking bath, taking rest, taking a walk nearby, they still had to prepare the programme of the coming day. They were very patient to wait for us when we were crazy about shopping. What's more are Emma and her family. They prepared the Chinese meal for welcoming us, took us to bowling and church. We shared our night with our photo albums. I miss them very much.

At last, I want to thank the people we met. They may not know us, or just saw us at once. But they also greeted us with smile and were willing to deal with us this troublesome Hong Kong group.



Sharon



If you ask me what is the most fantastic memory in these 14 days, I will definitely answer "PEOPLE". Few people will stay with us for the whole life, but every acquaintance has the power to change the rest of it. Of course, it would be exaggerating to say that Charles has created a newborn self for me, but indeed, people in the Ivy Farm do impose a remarkable impact on my heart. Every meal they prepared for us, the "kitchen attack" happened every morning, the constantly changing cover design of the menu.....just too subtle to be noticed but the most dedicated to be felt. Their lovely smiles, gentle touch, considerate thought and attentive arrangement leave me with uncontrollable laughter and unexplainable tears. I am not sure whether I'll still remember their faces and names 10 years ago. Definitely, however, the sun of the Ivy Farm will always shine upon me.

*Recognizing my reflection has gone too sentimental, so I better stop here. Here are few lines in my favorite song "Perhaps Love": **"Perhaps love is like a resting place, a shelter from the storm. It exists to give you comfort. It is there to keep you warm. And in those times of trouble, when you are most alone, the memory of love will bring you home."** Brothers and sisters, you'll never walk alone, as my memory of love will be with you, always and always.*

*Tons of Love,
Stella*