



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015



Happy New Year 2015

About this newsletter

This newsletter is aimed at providing an electronic platform for communication among La Salle College old boys residing in North America. However, it shall not be used as a tool to promote any personal agenda. The editorial board therefore reserves the right to review and edit all submissions to ensure that no inappropriate contents appear in any issue of this newsletter. The editorial board also reserves the right to reject any submission that is not in line with the objective of this newsletter. Please send all your communications to editors@lscobaedm.org.

To subscribe to this newsletter, please email (with subject line: subscribe) to newsletter-lscobaedm.org-subscribe@lscobaedm.org.

Newsletter Committee comprises of the following members:

East Coast (USA)	Christopher Tse (1965), Peter Lai (1967)
Edmonton	Calvin Chan (1971)
San Francisco Bay Area	Ephrem Fung (1976), Ambrose Lee (1998)
Southern California	Eddie Shek (1985)
Toronto	Felix Leung (1985), Kevin Kwok (1988), Jimmy Chang (1966)
Vancouver	Victor Leung (1977), Richard Choo (1977)

Reminders

East Coast (USA)

Sunday Dim Sum Lunch

Date every Sunday
Time noon
Venue Asian Jewels Seafood Restaurant
133-30 39th Avenue, Flushing NY 11354
Tel. 718-359-8600
Contact dimsum@nylscoba.org

Edmonton

Monthly Dim Sum Gathering

Date Jan 9, 2015 (*please note dates changed to 2nd Friday in December and January*)
Time noon
Venue Urban China Restaurant 潮樓大酒樓

Super Bowl Party

Date Feb 1, 2015
Time 3:30pm – 8:00pm
Venue Finnagan's Bistro Bar & Billiards
Contact billshwong@shaw.ca

San Francisco Bay Area

Bimonthly Lunch gathering

Date Feb 7, 2015 (1st Sat of every other month)
Time 1:00 pm- 3:00pm
Venue Cooking Papa Restaurant
1962 W El Camino Real,
Mountain View, CA 94040
Contact sf@lscoba.com

Southern California

Monthly Dim Sum Gathering

Date every first Sunday
Time noon to 2 pm
Venue Empress Harbor Seafood Restaurant
111 N. Atlantic Blvd., 3/F, Monterey Park

Vancouver

Badminton Night

Date: Every Monday
Time: 8 pm – 10 pm (2 sessions)
Venue: Richmond Pro
130-5800 Minoru Blvd, Richmond
Cost: \$5/session (i.e. \$10/2 hour)
RSVP vlfun@shaw.ca by every Friday



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015

Chapter News

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

December Luncheon 2014

Ambrose Lee (1998)



George Lau (1967); Joseph Kwok (1961); Frank Lo (1966); Ambrose Lee (1998); Robert Chao (1966); Chris Ngai (1977); Ephrem Fung (1976)

"It was a lunch with lots of laugh."

7 Bay Area LaSallians got together on Dec 6th (Sat) at ABC Seafood Restaurant in Foster City for our Chapter's last luncheon in 2014.

Thank you all for coming! It had been a great lunch!

The SF Chapter would like to wish all the Bay Area LaSallian Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Yours in La Salle,

LSCOBASF (Bay Area) Chapter

The pictures will be posted on our official facebook webpage: www.facebook.com/lscobasf



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015

Southern California Chapter

La Salle College Old Boys' Global Reunion 2014 August 7 – 10, 2014 at Southern California

Charles Tsang (1983)



Over 300 old boys and their families from all over the world gathered at Los Angeles from August 7th through 10th of 2014 to participate in the 2014 LSCOB Global Reunion. This was the second time since 2005 that the Southern California Chapter of LSCOB hosted the OBA Global Reunion at the Pacific Palms Hotel and Resort in the City of Industry, California. The theme for this year's event was *"Advance leadership, accept challenges, and achieve excellence"* (引領向前、逆難而上、同臻卓越、成就未來.)

Majority of the participants arrived on Thursday and were greeted by the local hosts. We formally kicked off the event on Friday morning with the World Conference at the hotel meeting room – a perfect opportunity for the overseas old boys to learn the latest about our alma mater. Brother Steve Hogan, the current school principal, provided a lot of updates about the school to the audiences and shared with us the foreseeable challenges that our school is facing under the new education system; while Mr. Leonard Chu (83'), the incoming OBA President, and Mr. Lester Huang (77'), the current Chairman of La Salle Foundation, also took the opportunity to share with the audiences about their visions, upcoming work plans and projects of OBA and LSF. At the Conference, Leonard also announced the formation of Overseas Network Group, a new subcommittee of LSCOB, to strengthen the bond and linkage among all overseas chapters.

We started the Saturday morning at the soccer field as usual – old boys from Bay Area, New York/East Coast, Toronto, Vancouver and Hong Kong get together for a series of fun-filling soccer game. Bro. Steve, along with two retired LSC teachers, Mr. Randy Woo Ho Wai and Mr. Victor Lo Si Tak, presented the medals to all players after the game. There were a few old boys who managed to



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015

recharge a lot faster - they spent the afternoon at a nearby badminton court for a round of badminton game before sunset. Lasallians never say die!

Sunday was the busiest day throughout the whole Reunion – 20 golfers gathered at the LPGA Eisenhower Course inside the Resort to have their last round of golf game before departure. Another group of about 40 old boys went with Bro. Steve to attend the Sunday Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in downtown Los Angeles. They were greeted by Archbishop Jose Horacio Gomez. Lasallians always try to do something more – this year, we added bowling challenge to the program. A group of 13 bowlers get together for a round of bowling with Bro. Steve after the Sunday Mass.

We concluded the reunion with a grand finale dinner on Sunday evening. We filled the restaurant with over 300 old boys and their families to have a fun evening with wine, music and dance. This year, we were fortunate to have Lam Che Ho (2008) to play violin solo for us. He is currently a professional violinist performing in New York. It happened that was the day of his birthday, Bro. Steve led us to sing "Happy Birthday" to the birthday boy. It was not often to have the honor of having school principal to sing happy birthday to you, right? Two other Southern California old boys also performed for us that evening: Mr. Robert Lee (66') brought his band group and volunteered to sing a lot of oldies throughout the evening. Mr. Ronny Mok (2003) who was a saxophone instructor in California, played a few songs with Robert as well.

The organizing committee would like to thank all those who participated and contributed to the success of Global Reunion 2014. The event could not be successful without your support and active participation. We are looking forward to seeing you all again in 2016 at Toronto, Canada.

For pictures of the Global Reunion 2014, please visit:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/lscobasc/collections/72157647449256257/>

Special Contribution

**"Lifelong Career of an Educator from Shanghai
to Paris and Hong Kong- Dr Walter Wou."©**

Thomas Yip (1967)

Career in Education:

- ★ French Teacher, La Salle College, Hong Kong from 1958- 1975 and concurrently Lecturer at the Hong Kong Baptist College from 1969-1975
- ★ Senior Lecturer at the Hong Kong Shue Yan College from 1975-1977
- ★ First principal of Yu Chun Keung Memorial School (余振強紀念中學) 1975-1996

Interview: 22 June 2005

By: Thomas Yip

Photos: Internet downloads unless otherwise stated.

In this article Dr Wou, now retired, reminisced over his happy moments teaching the small but colorful "French Class," which was a microcosm of the international community at La Salle. Sadly, this community has diminished in size and diversity over the years, but its importance in rendering an international perspective over the years cannot be overlooked. Much of our heritage, as well as that of Hong Kong, owes much to the confluence of racial and cultural interactions.

Dr. Wou also offered his insightful pedagogy, which formed the backbone of his successful career. His lifelong pursuit of excellence and truth culminates in a unique set of concepts and beliefs that may well be the blueprint for future generations of educators.



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015

1. My background.



The Bund – the infamous Shanghai waterfront in 1930's. It's also the icon of East meeting West and the most westernized and vibrant metropolis of the then China

I was born in Shanghai in 1930, a time when China was in extreme turmoil. I lived in the French Concession and there I witnessed the cycles of regime changes; from the rule of the French in cohorts with their Vietnamese underlings, to the occupation by the Japanese, the return of the Kuomintang and finally the establishment of the Communist Government.

I finished my senior high school grade 1 (高中一, or the equivalent of Form 4) in 1946. My intention was to join the air force, but was stymied by my stature and age. This instigated me to train in boxing and bodybuilding. These two disciplines improved my health and fostered my self-confidence.



Collège Saint Ignace—now renamed Xuhui High School (上海市徐匯中學). A secondary school founded in 1850 by the Jesuits.

In 1947, I entered Aurora University in Shanghai (震旦大學). Not having completed my senior years of high school, my knowledge of subjects like mathematics and science was poor. My major was Chinese language and literature, with a first minor in French and a second in English. In my final year at Aurora in 1951, my grades were excellent: 98% in French and 87% in English.



The Shanghai Aurora University in the earlier days.



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015

2. First coming to Hong Kong in 1951.

With the help of a Chinese Jesuit who had been my teacher at the *Collège Saint Ignace*, I was admitted into Sorbonne (Paris University) to read for my doctorate. The French Consulate General in Shanghai no longer issued visas to foreigners. I had to be smuggled to Hong Kong by way of Macao on board the ferry "Fat Shan" (佛山輪), to enable me to obtain a visa for France. I arrived in Hong Kong with only HK\$2 in my pocket. Fortuitously, I had in my possession a few bespoke suits made by Shanghainese tailors and I pawned them to the thugs for HK\$300. This seeded my "snake money." A further HK\$1,500 was lent to me by the relative of a former classmate. Thus, I was able to acquire a 4th class ticket on a French liner bound for France.



The Fat Shan Ferry Pier, Porto Interior in Macao early 1950's.



3. Arriving France.



Sorbonne campus where intellectuals converged - itself French poetry in motion; liberal education in action.

When I arrived at Marseille, I had only US\$20 left and that was to be my five loafs and two fish. With no other financial resources available, I had to rely on part-time menial jobs to sustain myself for the ensuing six years and three months. From the second year onwards, a modest French government bursary augmented my income.

This impecunious predicament was just the beginning of my ordeal. To my chagrin, I realized that I could not converse in French. This handicap was equally applicable to my English skills, which I discovered on a later visit to England. My immediate remedy was to



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015

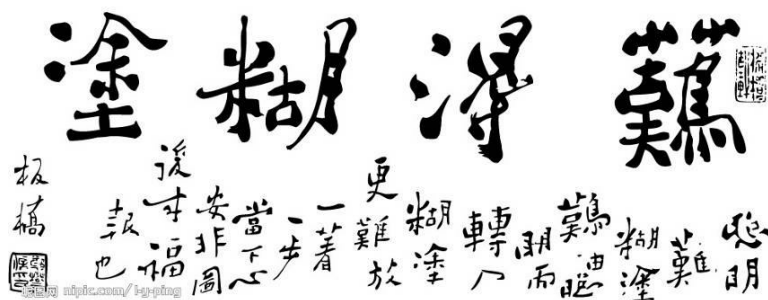
attend the cinema, one whole day at a time, watching the same film over and over. I was able to understand perhaps 30% of the dialogue the first time round, 60% the second and 80% by the end of the day.

Linguistics aside, real world knowledge was another problem. I was always impressed by my French friends with their vast knowledge over a wide range of subjects. For example, a student in the French language would argue eloquently on social science subjects like politics.

Paris in 1950's. It's always had her unique culture, and its café culture is but one.



I ascribed my inaptitude to the woefully inadequate curriculum and poor teaching I received at Aurora in Shanghai. But ordeals could often bring out the best in a man, and I strived to overcome my shortcomings. This attribute served me good stead during my student days in France and also in the later years when I taught at La Salle. My main doctoral thesis at Sorbonne was based on the life and works of a Qing dynasty Chinese scholar (楊州八怪之一, 鄭板橋). There were two supplementary dissertations: the romanisation of the Chinese language and a comparative study of Western abstract art and Chinese calligraphy. I worked arduously and received my degree with honors in 1957.



*Ambiguity was not something
Monsieur Wou would easily agree
to even up to now.*

I was offered a teaching post at a tertiary institution in Taiwan. By then I was already married and had a young daughter. We were travelling to Taiwan on an Italian liner when my family fell ill. We were off loaded in Hong Kong where we became stranded.

4. Second time in Hong Kong.

I learned through the grapevines that an English school (La Salle College) was seeking to replace a recently deceased teacher for the French language. He was Brother Cassian Brigant who had been knocked down by a bicycle, and died shortly after. Brother Felix Sheehan was at the helm and he was a desperate principal. His first remark to me at the interview was: "You're sent from Heaven." It's 1958 at the Perth Street campus, and that was to be the cusp of my teaching career at La Salle.



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015



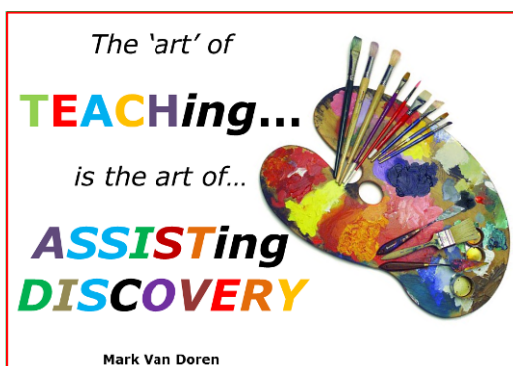
Staff at Perth Street- mid 1950's. Dr Walter Wou - Top Row 1st from R. Happily, six of them are still around.

5. Teaching at La Salle.

Preparing the teaching material for my first year (1958) was extremely hard going, as there were no standard teaching materials. Class sizes ranged from 15 – 25 in Forms 1 to 5, and 2-10 in Form 6. Students were mostly of Portuguese, Indian, American and Eurasian descent. There was also a sprinkle of Chinese. Most had a better command of English than I but their ability in French was very varied. Except for a few from Vietnam, most Form 1 students had no prior exposure to the language and thus their course began with phonetics, whereas those in Form 6 were taught more advanced use of the language as well as literature. My first batch of Form 6 students included Marciano Baptista (who joined the Jesuit order and later headed Wah Yan College, Hong Kong) and Basil Lim (who later became a senior police officer). Throughout the years, results maintained at very high standards – passing rate in public examinations had been 100%; credits and distinctions were not uncommon.

I had had no formal training as a teacher. I derived my teaching method from personal experience. It is my conviction that good teachers have innate qualities that cannot be effectively taught. A good teacher must exude authority that is constantly felt by the students. This is achieved by maintaining persistent eye contact, failing which would invite students to daydream or read out-of-class materials. As a student, I was guilty of both transgressions and thus I painstakingly ensured that none of my students lapsed into inattentiveness.

Discipline in the classroom. Label me a benevolent despot if you wish. I consider the demands I made of my students as fair and reasonable, though I insisted that these must be followed to the letter. For example, failure to hand up assignments automatically elicited punishment. However, errant students were allowed to choose their own poison, which included: writing lines, meeting with the parents or a mild form of corporal punishment involving a smack on the palm. Most students opted for the last mode, humorously dubbing it as “Lucky Strike.” Even now, when I meet up with old students, we enjoy a good laugh over these episodes.



What is a “Good Teacher”?
Who’s your most memorable teacher?
Why?



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015

I subscribed to the Chinese saying “四兩撥千斤”(“*Leveraging*” in modern parlance) whereas I shunned “一分耕耘一分收穫”(“*An ounce of your harvest is a result of an ounce of what you sow*”). I put the former axiom into practice by motivating students to quest for knowledge. My role was to provide the guidance. I insisted on students preparing ahead for their classes. I would only teach them when they encountered problems that they could not resolve by themselves. I readily admitted to not knowing an answer whenever such situations arose. Thereafter, I would seek the proper solution for them. I strongly believed that spoon-feeding was self-defeating and would only fail to educate.

In 1965, Brother Casimir Husarik was installed as the principal. I was required to take over the Form 7 French class, which he had hitherto taught. It was a race against time, as there were only less than eight months remaining to the A-Level Examinations. My conclusion was that the best strategy forward was to first instill the necessary confidence students must have in themselves as well as in me. I reminded them that I was a good teacher and that invariably they will do well under my tutorage - “名師出高徒”(“*A Famous Teacher Breeds Good Students*”). Secondly, in the event that they achieved a distinction in the examination, they would most certainly gain entrance to university. This in turn should be seen as a key to future success in life. Thereafter, I devoted my time to teaching them studying methods and left them to do the actual studying themselves. Of the four students who sat for the examination, two received distinctions and the other two good passes. Brother Casimir was astounded and enquired how I was able to produce such results in such short span of time, whereas it had always eluded him.

6. My success Formula?

To my mind, a teacher is charged with two indisputable duties: to impart knowledge and to help students pass examinations. Both aims are not necessarily congruent. The act of acquiring knowledge is a lifetime preoccupation; whereas sitting for an examination only spans a fleeting moment. In preparing students for examinations, I pointed out the important parts of the curriculum that they must be conversant with. I constantly made them aware that they alone were the authors of their success. When it came to teaching literature in the higher forms, I helped them develop a framework that essentially enabled them to systematically analyze their own work. I discouraged learning by rote. In my later years, I advised younger teachers against spoon-feeding and promoted the viewpoint that students should be made to teach themselves.



Like their forerunner Mateo Ricci, the later Jesuits adapted themselves to local cultures before transforming their flocks in China.

Christian education exhorts that one should “love and care” for one’s students. I espoused this virtue whole-heartedly, as I have both received and given in such spirit. I benefited from the advice given by a former teacher in Shanghai, a Communist party member who was a very famous writer. In view of my undesirable family background (my father was a factory owner and thus deemed as a capitalist) he urged me to go overseas. This would not have been possible had it not been for the magnanimous assistance bestowed by the said Chinese Jesuit teacher. Although he was inapt at teaching, he had a great heart. I always strived to repay such kindness by helping students in need.



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015



Inauguration of the Christian Brothers Schools Sports Association in 1974 to celebrate the centenary presence around the corner at the HK Govt Stadium.

1st President: Br Alphonsus Breen,

*1st Chairman: Br Thomas Lavin.
Officiating: Governor Sir Murray MacLehose (middle), Sir Robert Rodriguez (SJC OB) Br Patrick Tierney.*

1st row on spectators stand: Mr Henry Lau & Dr Walter Wou.

7. Dividends at La Salle.

I also learnt much from the Christian Brothers. It was evident that students showed more respect to them than to lay teachers. The reason lay deeper than the fact that they wore habits. It was a natural response to the love and cares the Brothers genuinely felt for the students as well as their devotion to the vocation. Lay teachers often lacked such total dedication as among other things; they had their own families to cater to. The difference was further magnified as some teachers merely viewed teaching as a job.

Both Brothers Felix and Raphael were well versed in the art of job delegation. They were excellent administrators as well as leaders. Brother Felix was upright, stern and strict. He would patrol his beat three times daily. Brother Raphael was a wise man, and he was concerned with only the macro issues. So long as you were popular with the students and got good results, he would allow you a free hand. He did not have to leave his office to realize what was happening in the school. I emulated these qualities when I became principal of YCKMC in the 1980's.



Dr Walter Wou teaching debate –a gift of the gap reinforced by gestures at the right moments. Rote or inspiring teaching? The answer is on the students' faces.

I derived much job satisfaction teaching French at La Salle, though towards the end of my tenure, I was offered a number of other challenges. Brother Raphael invited me to lead the debate team, comprising Victor Tung, Peter Barnes, Michael MarÇal and Ricky Rozario. We were placed first in the inter-school competition. Brother Raphael was very pleased by the result and treated us to dinner at a Shatin restaurant. He presented me with a new challenge. He wished to test if I could employ my method of continuity, teaching a language that I was not totally proficient at - I was to teach English for a class throughout for five years. After two years this experiment came to an abrupt end, as in 1975 I left La Salle for YCKMC where I was headmaster for the following 21 years.

My assessment of La Salle students is that they were relatively outspoken and more rebellious. French class students were privileged by the size, which allowed more interactions with the teacher. Some of the students were rowdy, but nevertheless they were all a joy to teach. The cream of the crop was of course outstanding, but even the seemingly less brilliant ones possessed potentials; all they required was more coaxing. After a long career in education, I am thoroughly convinced that each and every student if taught by the proper method will become an upright and useful citizen.



北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Jan 2015

In the 80's, I ran into a student whom I had taught in the 60's, near the Peninsula Hotel. He is now a very prominent member of the legal profession. Upon seeing me, he said: "*Bonjour Monsieur!* You're one of the few teachers I can still remember and respect. May I have the honor to give these to you?" Thereupon, he proffered the half a dozen cakes he was carrying. The cakes added a few pounds to my weight, but more importantly, it was most gratifying to know that all my toil was not in vain. It was a crowning moment in a glorious chapter in my career.



Garland from a Judge

8. At Yu Chung Keung Memorial College.

I tried hard to replicate the same teaching method and philosophy employed at LSC. The teachers were provided with a set of aims and objectives, but were otherwise given a free hand to teach as they thought fit. Advice was available but only when it was sought. Students were encouraged to debate and required to address the school on stage. Community service was mandatory. At first some parents resisted this liberal approach. Also, it was difficult to convince hidebound members of the teaching staff. The fact that some students came from more traditional families did not help matters. The result fell short of that at La Salle. Nevertheless, I enjoyed my years as Headmaster.



The Wou's are more than a family but a clan. Taken on Father's Day, 2014.