

## **St. Paul's College Primary School**

*Address given by Dr. John Kennard at the Opening Ceremony of the new SPC PS campus at 777 Victoria Road, Pokfulam, on Saturday 9 November, 2013.*

Archbishop Paul Kwong, Dr. Arnold Cheng and members of the College Council, Mrs Yvonne Chan, invited guests, teachers, parents, friends and particularly boys. Welcome to this very special day - the official opening of the new St. Paul's College Primary School in Victoria Road.

Today is a significant day in the journey that St. Paul's College has taken over the past 162 years. That journey has taken the College and its Primary section from Tit Kong to Bonham Road and from Hill Road to Pok Fu Lam.

The end product that we see today is the result of many years of determination, commitment and an unfailing belief that the outcome would be achievable and most importantly would serve the needs of future generation of St. Paul's College boys.

In this regard I acknowledge the vision of my predecessor, Mr. Timothy Ha, as Principal of the College and Supervisor of the Primary School. Mr. Ha understood that the College needed more space and improved facilities if it was to achieve the expectations demanded of a Direct Subsidy Scheme school. Yet our move to this location would not have been possible without the benevolence of St. Peter's Primary School and the support of the Education Bureau. Acquiring this green site, initially ear-marked for St. Peter's, to build a new school has been a win-win outcome for St. Paul's College Primary School and for St. Peter's Primary School. It has enabled St. Paul's to provide a modern facility that is in line with our DSS mission yet allowed St. Peter's to remain in Hill Road and acquire the premises that we vacated to renovate and refurbish. Both schools shall flourish as a result.

Yet no journey is without difficulties. This was a problematic site to develop. The slope of the land, the proximity of Victoria and Pok Fu Lam Roads, and the discovery during the piling stage of an underground stream, challenged the endeavours of the contractors and the fortitude of College managers. Yet I am sure you would agree that overcoming of such difficulties was well worth the additional time taken to reach that date of completion.

This is a fine school building in every way. It was apparent to me from the outset that we had an excellent architectural firm and designer working for us on this project. The design was bold, innovative and responsive to the demands of a new age of teaching and learning. With input on the part of the College we were able to make subtle changes to the design that enabled us to deliver the product that we wished to see and that incorporated unique features that encapsulated the spirit of St. Paul's College.

It is difficult for me to name all the individuals and parties involved in this major development from the vision and strategic-planning stage, through the construction stage, to the delivery and outfitting stage. Their number ran into the hundreds. As Supervisor of the SPC Primary School, I thank you all.

However, it would be remiss of me not to thank the Headmistress of the Primary School and her team. This project has been a 'labour of love' for Mrs. Yvonne Chan. Yet at the end of the day, Yvonne Chan has the Primary School that she always dreamed of acquiring; a bright, modern, warm and welcoming space waiting to receive the eager minds that shall be the future of St. Paul's College. Parents, current and future, can be assured that your sons are in good hands.

We have built a wonderful school on solid ground. Our foundations are cemented in 162 years of tradition. However, we have not forgotten that "We build our School on Thee, oh Lord." Ours is a school of the Church, as it has been since the arrival in Hong Kong of our Founder, the Reverend Vincent Stanton. Today, the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui continues to provide that spiritual guidance and shine the light that illuminates the pathway we must take on our next exciting journey.

God Bless you all.

Dr. John Kennard