

THE BREEZE

No. 50

St. Michael's Association

June 2017

Meet Our New President of St. Michael's Association! Satoru Hamada

Thanks to the previous president Keyji Johnsen we have been able to enlarge our scope. I feel happy that I can address the readers of The Breeze as a newly elected president of SMA. There are several good reasons for being happy.

This summer our beloved school will start the last phase of renovations. Outside walls facing Tor Road and the former Kitano Shogakko will be resurfaced to prevent rain water from seeping, whereby the buildings which had been antiseismic-proofed two years ago will not deteriorate. Furthermore, a new stage will be installed on the third floor with updated lighting.



Also I am happy that the 70th Gala Ball was so successful with some 140 attendees. We all had such a lovely time that we can hardly wait for the 80th. I am also tickled pink that 'The Breeze' which started in 1969, with Irene Cads, Satoru Hamada, Seiichiro Kaku and Shoran Yang as founding members, has continued till now. The name 'The Breeze' comes from Japanese 'KAZENO KOE.' We all look forward to hearing from you. -Satoru Hamada-



Why not Share your Happiness and Support St. Michael's!

PayPal

Births, marriages, graduation, new jobs and other special occasions all fill us full of joy and happiness. Sharing your good news multiplies its benefits for your happiness and longer-term life satisfaction, so the next time something good happens to you, don't keep it to yourself!

Whenever you feel like sharing your happiness, you might want to share it with St. Michael's by making a donation. Your love and support for the school will help St. Michael's continue to provide an excellent education for many years to come, in a safer and better-equipped building.

Making a donation is even easier with our **PayPal** account – go to the school webpage and click ‘Share Your Happiness’ in the right-hand column. There you are! All you need to do, then, is click on the link at the bottom of the page! Please wait for another few seconds after making a donation. A page will appear for us to thank you and for you to share your reason for your happiness if you wish!

GRADUATION 2017

GRADUATES 2017



Congratulations to the Class of 2017

Houcheng He
Louis Hirai
Dylan Javeri
Rajiv Khemaney
Hirofumi Muramoto
Tony Murayama
Roger Pinsard
Kai Robinson
Vir Rohera
Sophia Swain
Hina Tsukima
Ryosuke Umeda

Congratulations to the Graduates! It is that time of the year once again when SMIS says goodbye and good luck to the Year Six. This year, while some of the students will be staying in the Kobe area, there are some who will be moving away to places as far as Osaka, Tokyo, Australia, and New Zealand. We would like to remind you that distance will not matter; they will always be part of the SMIS family. We wish them all the best at their new schools and welcome them to the Alumni.

The Head Boy (Tony) and Head Girl (Sophia) had this to say at their Graduation: *In Hyogo, there are many international schools, including ours. This school is smaller in size, but is open to all sorts of people and has a huge heart. It has been a home to some of us for eight years, and we will always remember it. We would like to share our thoughts of this school.*

Every year we have been here, we have acquired knowledge, developed new skills and deepened our understanding. This school is a very open place where we can grow, work and learn together. We have learned to use the seven values to help our friends and family.

St. Michael's has a very international curriculum. We have been here for many years and have enjoyed every moment. We would like to thank all of the teachers who have taught us, although they aren't all here now. As we leave the school, we will take with us many happy memories of our time here.

In our journey at St. Michael's we have learned a lot of things. Our knowledge in language has grown, we have had new experiences, and had lots of fun. As we grow older SMIS will always have a place in our hearts.

Congratulations to Kenichi and Renri!

Kenichi graduated in March and Renri, in June, after having studied very hard. All of you who spent some time in the ELS should know what the Final Examinations entail! Translation, Structure, Composition etc. etc. A heart-beating moment just before you meet an external conversation examiner! Kenichi and Renri are now free from all these!

ELS Graduate 2017

Congratulations to...



Kenichi Chabata



Renri Fukushima

Staff 2017

At the end of December 2016, we bid farewell to Mairi Fraser, who moved back to Scotland after being in the Early Years as a teacher and Early Years' Coordinator for 4 and a half years. As her first article as an alumni, here are Mairi's thoughts and memories of SMIS and Kobe.

In the summer of 2012 I arrived in Kobe a week early to give myself time to settle in and was welcomed by James and Darlene Grimsby. I remember watching the summer fireworks show on one of my first nights in Kobe. As part of a new management team in a new country, Mr Grimsby was a great support to me and my colleagues. He also advised me on arrival that the Kansai St Andrew's Society was short of Scots and introduced me to the group which was the start of what was to become my 3 years as Chieftain of the Society. Quite a number of the members were also part of the St Michael's community in one way or another.



In my 4 years at SMIS I saw quite a few changes, Early Years became a unit, the inquiry-led International primary curriculum approach and the use of technology to support learning became increasingly embedded across the curriculum, supporting the

children of SMIS in becoming 21st century learners. We welcomed great new teachers to the team who have done a great job building on the work of those who went before them. The English language school went from strength to strength and was continuing to add numbers of students to the St Michael's community.

Some of my most striking memories are regarding the continuity St Michael's has with its past and its place in the community of Kobe. I was lucky to have joined the school when 'Michan' was still working there and her smile brightened my days. It was very moving to see her take the stage at the cathedral in the anniversary service for 70 years, representing the earlier days of SMIS and I was glad to get to see her again at the 70th gala ball. Miss Lynva Davies will be a name known to many a SMIS alumni and she was a great source of stories of past events and characters and became a good friend. Mrs Makino initiated us into the history of St Michael's when we first arrived and her passion for learning and for the future of SMIS was inspiring. She was a great help to us negotiating aspects of Japan which could be difficult with no knowledge of the language, and also to some great places to eat delicious Japanese food! Among parents it was lovely to hear some introducing themselves as proud alumnus of SMIS and see their pride and pleasure at their children now attending the same school that they did.

SMIS Bazaar was a great fixture in the SMIS year and I think the food was a great draw for people in the wider community of Kobe. I got to indulge in some of my favourite cuisine, in particular Korean and Chinese; and of course getting to taste delicious Indian vegetarian foods that I would never have got a chance to eat in a restaurant. I was fascinated to find out about the history of the Indian community in Kobe and learning more about the Jain and Sikh religions. After leaving SMIS I went travelling for two months in India. The first part of my travels was a food tour indulging my love of spicy food from Delhi up through Rajasthan down through Mumbai and on to Goa. I then spent a month in Goa studying Yoga and its philosophy before heading back to a new job in very rural Scotland, where I hope to see some of my SMIS friends as visitors.

-Mairi Fraser- June 2017

***Saying goodbye to Mairi** also meant that we welcomed another staff member to our SMIS family. Ama deGraft Johnson joined us in January as the Early Years' coordinator and teacher. Junko Kashiwagi also joined us from January as the Facilities Manager.*



I am originally from London, England, where I completed my undergraduate degree. I spent three years teaching in the UK, one year in Year One and two years in Year Two. In 2012 I moved to Sydney, Australia, and I began working in a preschool and spent four years teaching children from the ages of three to five.

Japan has always fascinated me, particularly the food, culture and the cherry blossoms. I was excited to have the opportunity to live in this country when I accepted the position at St Michael’s. Kobe is a beautiful city and having lived by the sea for the past four years I was happy to know that I would still be surrounded by nature, having both the mountains and the sea nearby.

I was warmly welcomed into St Michael’s by all the staff and they have helped me to settle into life here by inviting me out to eat, going on walks and even watching rugby games! The families have also been very welcoming and the positive home, school, community link is what makes St Michael’s a lovely environment to work in.

As a self-confessed foodie, Kobe is abundant with restaurants and I often like to eat out during the week. I recently started Japanese lessons and I’m slowly gaining confidence but I still have a long way to go to be able to read a menu!

I am looking forward to exploring more of Japan. I am going to Okinawa, Hiroshima and Miyajima over the Summer with my mum who is very excited to visit. I am also hoping to visit Nagano in October with some friends. There is so much to see and do in Japan and I am excited to discover as much of it as I can.

- Ama deGraft Johnson-



Hello, my name is Junko Kashiwagi. I was born and raised in Akashi. However, I spent many years of my adulthood in the United States. I lived for the most part in Massachusetts and had a family there. I moved back to Akashi about 3 years ago and sent my son, Lucas, to St. Michael’s International School. We both loved St. Michael’s from the very beginning. It had an amazingly friendly atmosphere. Now, I feel extremely grateful and fortunate for having the opportunity to work here. In my free time I enjoy reading books and also taking bike rides with my son on the coast line of Akashi.

- Junko Kashiwagi-

EVENT

Alumni (SMA) Party 2017! By Karla Aljonaid, Helen McPherson and Lynva Davies

We had fantastic fun this year at the Annual Alumni Party. The playground opened at 4 pm for reminiscing about past 4-square battles and champions, as well as playing a few more rounds and finding out who is the



new Alumni champ. At first the opponents were hesitant but soon it was “Game On.”



The food preparation began soon after and the kitchen was abuzz with activity and conversation. The traditional okonomiyaki grills were fired up by Sayuri and Avani to prepare meat and vegetarian okonomiyaki. A new treat this year was crepes, which were a big hit. Of course, no party is complete without the tables of delicious salads, samosas and other foods to dive into while enjoying the company of friends, some of whom we haven’t seen since we left SMIS. It was a great time to catch up on the latest news.

After a few words from our new SMA Chairman, Satoru Hamada, a lively Bingo game began in earnest. The prized candy bars were quickly won with more laughter and the conversation resumed.



The eventful evening wound up with a drawing for the door prizes, a 70th Year Anniversary mug and a SMIS T-shirt, along with the “Match the Door Number” draw for the decorative flowers. Abundant smiling faces were a beautiful conclusion to our party.

SMIS continues to hold a place in the hearts of students, teachers, parents and friends from both the ELS and the IS. They come back and begin to remember their days and friendships like it was yesterday. We have always had a good turnout from the ELS but it was wonderful to see so many younger alumni join us this year and those numbers keep increasing annually. Look carefully at the group photo: who do you recognise?



Bazaar 2017!

“This is the best Bazaar!” said someone. Yes, it was! The wonderful weather, delicious foods, lively lip sync music and the people coming back from many generations made our Bazaar very special again!



SMA Gatherings

Sannomiya Gathering!

Nine ELS graduates enjoyed the annual get-together with Mrs Makino and myself on 14th January at a beer restaurant in Sannomiya. Scott Cham, Cindy Taru, Itsuko Ikeda, Ayame Makino, Nachiko Oda, Henry Suzuki, Tom Fujita, Peggy Nonaka and Mickey Watanabe showed up.



As soon as we met, our minds went back to those good old days nearly 40 years ago and we couldn't stop talking about former teachers, classmates, various events and episodes. Everyone had fun eating, drinking, reminiscing and laughing.

This gathering usually takes place in January when Tom Fujita, an Orix Buffaloes interpreter, can join. Anyone is welcome! - Hiromi Kishi (Akasaki)-

Kobe Gathering!



Isao (Irwin) Tanaka and his wife, Aki, from London met Satoru Hamada after a gathering with Kobe-based Alumni members on 7th April.

Graduates of 2016 Gathering



The graduates of 2016 gathered in May to say good-bye to Amogh Atwe, who is moving to Mumbai.

Obituary

Mrs Jasmine Penarroja passed away in London on 11th May, 2017. Jasmine worked in the IS as an assistant teacher. She is survived by her husband, Marcel and son, Teo.

May her soul rest in peace!

Upcoming Event!

London Gathering 2017!

Come and Join us!
Sunday 30th July

Meet at Tavistock Hotel at 5 pm
London Tavistock Square

Please send us a photo of your gathering, small or big, with St. Michael's family members! Let us know where it is and who you are! Wouldn't it be exciting to see SMIS global network getting larger and larger?

Donating to the capital campaign!

SMIS 70th Project Fundraising now stands at ¥13,019,203. We still have some way to go to fund the hall renovation. Every little helps!

The easiest way to donate is by bank transfer; however, donations can be made in cash or by cheque. St. Michael's has special tax dispensation status (*tokuzo*) that allows us to issue tax receipts for gifts over ¥5,000. Gifts over ¥5,000 are now eligible for tax deductibility under the special designated tax status (*tokuzo*) that St. Michael's has received.

Download The 70th Project Gift Form and return electronically to 70thproject@smis-mail.org or direct to the school using the address below.

<i>By Bank Transfer</i>	<i>By Cheque</i>
Account name: Gaku Sei Mikaeru Kokusai Gakko Bank Name and Branch: Mizuho Bank, Kobe Branch 490 Current Account: Futsu Koza Account number: 1609993	Cheques should be made in yen and payable to Gaku Sei Mikaeru Kokusai Gakko and sent by post to the following address: St. Michael's International School 3-17-2 Nakayamate-dori Chuo-ku Kobe 650-0004

St. Michael's Association

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