

TYR

The Young Reporter

by HKBU journalism students since 1969

Urban exhaust hits 40 degree Celsius
Wet markets opt to drop cents
Night bustle in Yau Ma Tei fruit market



Interview with Ma Si-hang

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Editor's Note

In early March, I have tasted the life as a professional journalist when I took part in a week-long reporting trip on National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference organised by The Hong Kong Journalism Education Foundation. It is really a tough task for a fresh journalist to report on such a vast national meeting.

Standing in front of The Great Hall of the People and braving the cold, I tried to recognise faces familiar to me amid five thousand members of NPC and CPPCC – a sea of people that I have never encountered.

Since I have not done enough preparation, all I could do was to follow other journalists to conduct interview, and asked them about interviewees' identity afterwards. But for most of the time, local journalists responded, "I don't know".

Journalists in the Mainland show profound knowledge in political issues, and they can recognise political figures well. They often spend much time discussing over Premier Wen's work report with NPC and CPPCC members after the meeting.

For Hong Kong journalists, they seem not to be interested in reporting on mainland policies – but more on celebrities' updates, including Olympic Champion Liu Xiang, who is also a member of the CPPCC.

One of them complained to me that he was sick of finding out the shopping habit of Hong Kong NPC and CPPCC representatives, including how much they spent on barber and clothings in Beijing. But his boss told him to continue.

I was told by my boss to wait for Mr Donald Tsang and Mr Tung Chee-wah to go to visit a hospitalised CPPCC member. Some media allocated two journalists and two cameramen each to wait for the two leaders, which means half of their reporting teams in Beijing. We have waited for the whole afternoon and ended up being banished by security guards. No one was able to interview the duo, but their visit was on the main cast of news report. But in fact there were many national meetings in the afternoon – under this circumstance, most of them were absent from local audience and readers.

Of course, "proximity" dominates when we judge the news value of the above events. But if local journalists know more about China policies, more in-depth reportings are expected. .

Simpson Cheung Wai-ming
Chief Editor

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ENVIRONMENT

Nuisance-causing urban exhaust hit 40C

BY ALAN KWOK

The hot exhaust fume emitted from The Westwood shopping mall in Shek Tong Tsui hit 40.3 degree Celsius - 13.3 degrees higher than normal air temperature, creating unhealthy impact to the escalator users nearby.

An escalator linking Shek Tong Tsui to Pok Fu Lam is just opposite to the back of the shopping mall.

People travelling on the escalator feel a head-on blow of hot exhaust air from the heat exchanger of the shopping mall.

"Everytime I use the escalator, I can feel the hot air. It is very uncomfortable, especially during summer, and I don't like it. Even they have installed a glass to block the hot air, the situation is still the same," said Ms Chan Ka-man, a graduate from The University of Hong Kong who used to travel to her residential hall by the escalator.

Shun Tak Holdings Limited, which manages The Westwood, did not make any response before *The Young Reporter* went to the press.

The Young Reporter also measured the temperature difference of exhaust fumes in various districts. It ranged from 1.9 to 3.8 degree Celsius (see the table).

"Businessmen may not have a sense of social responsibility," Ms Gabrielle Ho Ka-po, project manager of Green Sense, said.

"They only care about their own indoor ventilation without being aware of the effects of the exhaust on nearby residents," she said.

Ms Ho said these problems usually occur in old districts with poor urban planning by the government in the past - that has improperly mixed commercial and residential land use within the district.

"As some residents have lived there for a long time, they may have been used to it and tolerating the problems" Ms Ho said.

"But some do not realise that it's their right to voice out," she said.

The high density of the city development is also accountable for the heat trapping among high-rise buildings.

"Hong Kong is a special case. With narrow gaps between tall buildings, exhaust fumes cannot be emitted from the roof into open space for adequate dilution," said Dr Kot See-chun, senior consultant of department of mechanical engineering at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

He added that high proximity of buildings creates street canyon effect.

According to a study of Friends of the Earth (HK), a street canyon is a deep narrow



The temperature of the exhaust fumes emitted from heat exchanger of The Westwood shopping mall hits 40.3 degree Celsius on March 1, 2010.

valley formed in a street between two rows of tall buildings, causing exhaust fumes not to be dispersed easily.

The gas trapped in the air may also threaten the environment and people's health.

Dr Kot said the gas may contain sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and toxic particulates.

Aerosols with fine oil droplets from soot and oil mist emitted by kitchen exhausts are proved carcinogenic.

Legionella, bacteria causing Legionnaires' disease, may even be found in emissions of water-cooled air conditioning systems.

According to Article 12(1)(g) of Chapter 132 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, the emission of air either above or below the temperature of the external air from the ventilating system in any premises is a nuisance.

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) may issue a nuisance order in accordance with Article 127 requiring a person to abate the nuisance or to do what may be necessary to prevent the recurrence of the nuisance within the period specified in the order.

In the past two years, the FEHD received a total of 1,600 complaints about ventilation

exhaust systems. Among all, only 15 nuisance orders were issued.

The FEHD advised people to dial 1823 to file their complaints about heat nuisance.

CITY'S HOT SPOTS

Hot fumes in our city usually come from three sources: chimneys of power stations, factories or hospitals, kitchen exhausts from restaurants and heat exchangers of air conditioners.

TYR measures the temperature difference between exhaust air and the surrounding air.

Kitchen exhausts at Bute Street in Mong Kok: 3.8C

Ngau Tau Kok Road in Kwun Tong: 2.9C

The hanging garden on the 2nd floor of Kwun Tong shopping mall APM: 1.9C

EDITED BY CONNIE WAN

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Wet markets opt to drop pennies

BY MINERVA CHENG

Voices from wet markets urge the government to remove cents from circulation, as the bank surcharge for exchanging cent coins is affecting their business in the long run.

The government stopped minting 10-cent and 20-cent coins since 1997, as it has been phasing out in Hong Kong.

Octopus cards are commonly used to make small-value purchases in places including fast food outlets, supermarkets, department stores, car parks and cinemas. But the store-value cards are not used in most wet markets.

Ms Chu, who sells soy products in Fa Yuen Street Market, refuses to accept cents because she said shoppers did not want to get them as change.

She posted a notice which said “No 10-cents or 20-cents” outside her stall. As for 50-cents, she would still take them if customers gave her.

“I would earn \$10 less for every hundred if I take those cents and exchange them with banks,” she said.

The Hang Seng Bank charges \$2 per sachet for exchanging coins. Customers have to pay a minimum of \$50 service charge or 2 per cent on deposit amount for every 500 coins or above deposit per day.

The Bank of East Asia exchanges cents with customers at \$1 per bag. They also charge each customer at least \$50 or 2 per cent on deposit amount for 300 coins or above deposit per day.

Ms Chow, who owns a grocery store in the same market, does not take 10-cents and 20-cents from customers for similar reasons.

“What’s the point of taking cents? No one likes them. Shoppers don’t want them while banks have imposed service charges. Cents should be abolished,” she said.

When settling the \$2 change, she once tried doing it with four 50-cent coins, but her customer was discontented with it.

According to the Coinage Ordinance, customers shall not use merely 10-cent, 20-cent, and 50-cent for payments less than \$2.

It is a commercial decision for sellers on whether to accept cents as payment, according to a government statement.



Some stores in wet markets do not accept 10- or 20-cent coins.

However, some customers found this statement inconvenient to them.

“The government should either have legislation to compel shopkeepers to take cents or simply remove the cents from circulation,” Ms Lee, a frequent shopper at Sai Wan Ho Market, said.

She was annoyed with stacks of cents she had at home. In her daily practice, she would save the coins for transportation. She suggested the government to get rid of 10-cents and 20-cents in no time.

Ms Wong, an owner of a fruit juice shop, receives large amount of loose changes from her business every day.

She said, “I hope shoppers would give fewer cent coins for the sake of our business - the surcharge for coin exchange is hurting our business in a long run.”

She, therefore, tries to use up the coin cents in public transport or stalls in the wet markets that accept cents.

However, she felt that there are not many shops willing to take coins as Octopus cards are common nowadays.

“I just hope the government could do something with these unpopular coins,” she said.

EDITED BY EDITH TSANG

HEALTH

Massage regulations in China face obstacles



Photo: Connie Wan

Cupping therapy in the mainland is popular among Hong Kong people, despite injuries being frequently reported.

BY VERA CHEN

National regulations on massage standards are difficult to apply in the mainland, said the National Technical Committee of China, despite injuries have been frequently reported.

Some Hong Kong residents, filed with the Consumer Council of Hong Kong in 2009, alleged that they suffered from burn injuries when receiving cupping therapies in the mainland.

A customer got burnt and blistered on his back after received cupping. The wound was infected after pricked with a needle by the massagist, according to the Council.

National Technical Committee 483 on Health Care Service of Standardisation Administration of China announced in July last year to set up national standards on the healthcare service in this year the earliest.

It would require massage parlour owners in the mainland to meet national standards on qualification of masseurs in order to get a massage license to run the business.

Now not many massage therapists or practitioners in mainland China are qualified like Ms Yu Qiu-ping.

Practising massage for 15 years, Ms Yu,

40, serves about 50 customers a month in a massage parlour in Shenzhen.

She said she has not taken any tests for certification but only learned the basic skills in a massage college.

She was then employed as a masseur by just answering a few simple questions on acupuncture point positions without any tests on massage techniques. Also, her boss never asked her for relevant certificates.

Ms Yu explained that masseurs were not like doctors - they just had to know the positions of acupuncture points to practise massage.

"I've never got complaints from my customers," she said.

To some customers, an official certificate proving the standard is pointless on evaluating the quality of service.

Mr Lee Chun-chung, who receives massage in the mainland twice a month, said, "Even though some of the masseurs are not qualified, they can still get the certificate easily in the mainland by spending some dirty money."

He also said he seldom requests for neck or waist massage because he is worried about getting injured due to their unprofessional practices.

Mr Wang Wei-qing, Secretary General of the National Technical Committee of China,

said some massage practitioners were not willing to receive any kind of training because they think the fundamental principles of traditional Chinese treatments like massage and cupping are relatively easy to acquire.

He said now the crux of the problem was that it was difficult to standardise the training format for a certified massage therapist.

"It's a complicated process to regulate the industry as the sanitation, environment, and workers' qualifications are now all in mess."

He added that hair salons often hired unqualified people to offer massage therapies, which may easily lead to injuries.

Shifting the therapies to hospitals is considered a way out to guarantee the service standard.

However, Mr Wong said that if they did so, the whole clinical service would be under great pressure as there have been currently not enough experienced and qualified massagists in hospitals.

Now, there is no official statistics on the number of qualified practitioners in the mainland.

"It's like a blank sheet of paper," Mr Wang said. "It's hard to put forward the regulation if we even don't know how many of them are regularly practising massage."

EDITED BY SAMSON LEE

HEALTH

Centralised system promotes organ transplant

BY YOYO SUN

The number of organ transplants hit a record high last year following the set up of a centralised organ donation register.

A total of 141 patients received new organs and restarted their lives last year. The donation rate also increased from four donors per million inhabitants in 2008 to six donors per million inhabitants in 2009, according to statistics from the Hospital Authority.

Dr Chan See-ching, secretary of Hong Kong Society of Transplantation ascribed the success to the government's effort to popularise the understanding of organ donation and the gradual change of people's attitude towards organ donation.

In November 2008, the Department of Health has set up Centralised Organ Donation Register system for prospective donors to register voluntarily.

People who wish to donate organs after death can go online and fill out the register form.

The completed forms will be stored in a central database which facilitates authorised persons from the transplant team to go and match a potential donor anytime.

Ms Doreen Cheung Siu-kam, a senior nursing officer at the Center for Health Protection under the Department of Health, said some 40,000 people had registered through the Centralised Organ Donation Register at the moment.

She said the register allowed easy and efficient management of donors' information and make it a convenient process for the prospective donors to register.

There is no age limit for organ donation and people can donate seven organs and tissues at most when they register.

Doctors will evaluate the condition of the organs when a prospective donor passes away and determine the feasibility of organ donation.

The performance of organ transplantation will be based on a combination of factors, such as the types of organs and tissues that would be donated and the donor's physical condition at the time of death.

Even with the recent success, there is still a big gap between Hong Kong and many western countries.

While Hong Kong had six donors per million inhabitants in 2009, countries like Spain had 34 donors per million population and Austria had 24 donors per million popula-

Department of Health
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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Collaborators
醫院管理局 HOSPITAL AUTHORITY
香港器官移植協會 HONG KONG SOCIETY OF TRANSPLANTATION

Organ Donation

CENTRALISED ORGAN DONATION REGISTER
Internet Registration

Registration Form - Online Registration

Registration Form - Download

Withdrawal Form - Online Registration

Withdrawal Form - Download

Over 40,000 prospective donors registered through the online system.

tion. And the problem of shortage of organs for transplantation is still pressing with more than 2,000 patients waiting for donated organs.

According to the Hospital Authority, there were 95 donated kidneys, the most needed organ in Hong Kong, when 1,602 patients were on the list waiting for kidneys, while 500 were for corneas, 100 for livers and 10 for hearts in 2009.

"Many patients have suffered and died while still on a waiting list. For those patients with failure of vital organs such as hearts and lungs who cannot wait long and get support by other means, an urgent transplantation is their only chance of survival," Dr Chan from the Hong Kong Society of Transplantation said.

Dr Chan said the barriers to organ donation still exist. Many families refused the request of organ donation after their beloved ones passed away because they want to remain their intact bodies.

Dr Gung Kin-hang, a doctor who works with the Central Health Education Unit in the Department of Health said doctors would pay full respect to the donor's body and observe every detail to maintain its physical appearance.

"People shall consider it this way - organ donation is offering the opportunity to turn a family's tragedy into a gift of life to others," he said.

The second obstacle is that people are unfamiliar with brain stem death.

Dr Chan said once patient have been con-

firmed brain stem death he is already medically dead. But many Chinese families still hold the hope that the patient will wake up one day, but organ donation should be actively considered once a patient is considered dead.

Other hindrances include the lack of consensus within the family, indifference of people, and doctors' approach to the bereaved family.

The support from society is equally important. The Department of Health, in collaboration with Hong Kong Medical Association and Hong Kong Transplantation Society organised several organ donation campaigns in the past to increase the awareness of organ donations.

In 2008, the "World's Biggest Walk" attracted more than 1000 people in Hong Kong and started in tandem with 109 places all over the world.

Dr Gung said the Department of Health would arrange a series of activities in primary and secondary schools, including e-card and poster design, composition contests and talks. Mobile visits take place in various housing estates, shopping centres and public areas to provide educational resources.

"I hope through these promotions Hong Kong people can understand the importance of organ donation," said Dr Gung, "you have the power to change someone's world by being a donor and to rekindle lives of other people."

EDITED BY EDITORIAL BOARD

FEATURES



Zas. K

A pen is more than just a pen

BY SARAH LAI

“I like to spin my pen when I’m writing. I didn’t know before that pen spinning could have professional competitions,” Mr Chan Wan-zung, a university student, said. “I can hardly believe there’re shops selling special pens for pen spinning now.”

Started in Japan last century, pen spinning is known all over the world.

Participants from more than ten countries have taken part in the Pen Spinning World Cup in 2007.

Since pen spinning has become professional both in skills and instruments, selling special pens for this has become a lucrative business.

One of the few professional spinning pens is Pen’z Gear (above HK\$100) with the centre of gravity in the middle, produced by Japanese toy maker Tomy Co. in 2008.

But as it is too expensive for many local pen spinners, some choose to buy ordinary pens and then modify them into suitable pens for spinning.

A type of pens Chan Sheung Kee Book Store sells is perfect for transforming into a spinning pen, with its suitable centre of gravity and weight.

The pens directly imported from Japan once a month have attracted mostly secondary school students at the age of 13 and 14. Many of them spend about \$100 in total every time on the pens.

Ms Li Wai-kuen, a staff member of the Book Store, said that the shop started to sell this type of pens three years ago, with many of their customers asking for it in the shop.

Hong Kong’s tryout for this year’s Pen Spinning World Cup on January 16 attracted around 100 participants all over the world.

“Pen spinning became popular in Hong Kong two years ago. The recent international

competition has attracted many people to come and buy pens for spinning,” she said.

“Some people from mainland China spent thousands of dollars to buy the pens because they can hardly find them in their hometowns.

“I also met a customer from America who spent more than \$10,000 to buy the pens,” she said.

Mr Lee Zung-yu is a form one student that has started the hobby for a year. He usually buys the pens every one or two months.

“The pens I buy cannot be directly used for spinning. I always combine two pens together to make a desirable one,” he said.

Over the Internet there are people selling self-made pens that can be spun directly without making any modifications.

Mr Dickson Hsu, a form five student, has been playing pen spinning for two years.

He said when he started pen spinning, there were very few spinning pens sold in Hong Kong.

Some people ordered pens from countries like Korea through the Internet and sold them in Hong Kong at a very high price, so he tried to order those pens by himself.

Since the postage is hundreds of dollars every time, he found that gathering people together to share the cost would be much cheaper. Therefore, he started selling spinning pens about a year ago.

Now he is selling both the imported pens and his self-made pens on the Pens Trading Board, a forum for pen spinners.

He said the selling price of his pens range from \$10 to more than \$100 - that he can earn \$400 to \$500 every month.

For many people, pen spinning may only be a habit. But in a pen spinner’s hand, a pen is an indispensable tool to play a series of complex spinning tricks. A pen is not only an instrument for writing anymore.

EDITED BY JOYCE KOON

How to make a spinning pen:



Materials:

- Muji sign pen (with core removed) x 1
- Pilot G-2X pens x 2
- Wire cutter x 1



1. Unscrew the caps and remove the grips and from the Pilot G-2X pens. Cut each grip into halves.



2. Fix a cap from Pilot G-2X on each tip of the Muji pen with one of the cut grips.



3. Done!



Yau Ma Tei fruit market - living heritage at night

BY THOMAS YAU

“Hey look, this kid can’t even tell which is a lime!” Laughter breaks out among a group of fruit vendors when I fail to distinguish this fruit from lemon. This is one of the many little things I have encountered in the Yau Ma Tei fruit market.

Before I go there, my mum warned me: “Don’t take photos there, people there are um, rough...” Her worries are grounded. ICAC stormed a drug trafficking gang based in the market back in 1977, who bribed the police in exchange for protection.

But in my two visits to the market, there are security guards stationed, CCTV installed and people here are quite talkative. The most dangerous thing here is rushing trucks in Reclamation Street next to the market and forklifts in the offloading zone.

Started in 1913, the Yau Ma Tei fruit market is the oldest fruit market in the city.

A typical day starts at 9 pm when numerous trucks start to offload different fruits from different countries in an offloading zone next to the market. Workers start to move the fruits - often in two to three feet high - by trolleys to different “Lan”s (fruit shops).

In a sense my mum is right, people here only wear pants and topless with tattoos on their backs. Sometimes they yell at me when I block their ways with my camera and tripod.

“Are you taking photos and put’em on Internet, kid? I bet those foreigners must be amazed by how we work here,” says one of the workers in the offloading zone, “In an in-

ternational city we’re still doing our business by our own hands.”

After midnight, most workers finish offloading most of the fruits to different “Lan”s. Then shop owners and their crew start to work.

“I’m a student reporter from *The Young Reporter*, do you mind if I...” “No! No! We just started to work, don’t bother us, get lost!” A man turns me down while he is moving several boxes of Sunkist oranges.

From midnight to 3 am, that is the quietest moment in the fruit market. Some people are taking a nap while some are just anticipating the rush hour to come.

Following what they do in front of their “Lan”s, I am also napping - on a footbridge nearby.

It is half past three in the morning, vendors are shaking the abacuses to attract bargain hunters.

“Nothing here has a fixed price. Thirty years ago we didn’t even utter a word, we just make deals using our abacuses”, says Mr Chan, owner of Chan Kan Kee.

“The back of the abacus is sealed and we never shout the price out, therefore our competitors will not know our offers,” he adds.

Mr Chans shares his lives with me, “I’ve been running this business for more than 30 years. At first I just helped to move stocks, later I began to sell fruits on my own...”

He has taught me many things, from how to use abacus to the history of fruit market.

After chatting with Mr Chan, I wander around the market.

“Twenty four dollars per box for these papaya. C’mon, I only sell the top ones.”

“Hey, I saw Chow Kee only sold those Sunkist at 20,”

“But somewhere else sold them at 15!”

The entire market is filled with conversations like these and clicking sounds of the abacus. I am nearly hit by trolleys that are in a hurry to carry fruits to retailers.

I end up in pumping into Mr Yang Dung, a 76-year-old man who has been in his business for over 50 years.

He remarks in his clear voice cheerfully, “When will I retire? I never think about it. I will keep working until... I don’t know...”

Every day he always wake up at the midnight, work until dawn, and then yum cha... (go to the teahouse).

The place is becoming quiet again while the sun is rising - most buyers and sellers finish their dealings.

Like many other old places in Hong Kong, the future of the fruit market is fluid.

“The competitions from the mainland and supermarkets greatly affect our business. We’re still here because our products are originated from many places - not just from Mainland,” says Mr Cheung Chi-cheung, vice president of the Kowloon Fruit and Vegetable Merchants Association.

“The government talked about relocation, but they don’t agree on moving all shops altogether. That’s not fair,” he adds.

I leave the fruit market at 6 am. Trucks in Reclamation Street are replaced by taxis and minibuses that carry people to workplaces.

For people in the market, that is the end of a day.

EDITED BY MAVERICK LI



(Top left) 02:16 am - An abacus is a traditional Asian calculating tool commonly used by the vendors.

(Top right) 03:40 am - A vendor takes a nap after offloading the fruits.

(Bottom) 04:30 - Every “Lan” (fruit shop) is packed with bargain hunters.

FEATURES

SOCIETY

More heritage tours needed to cater enthusiasts



Architecture tours, organised by HULU Culture, guide participants to explore old buildings around West Kowloon, including Tin Hau Temple, Methodist College, and other nostalgic blocks.

BY CANDICE WONG

With the increasing concern over heritage preservation and the cultural legacy of Hong Kong, cultural and heritage tours become another choice of leisure for all walks of life in town.

Three days after open application, West Kowloon Cultural Tour got its quota full with over 400 applicants, leaving more names in the waiting list for possible extra tours.

The West Kowloon Heritage Tour also received positive feedback.

Both tours comprised the Cultural and Architecture Tours in West Kowloon program.

In organising the program, the Commission for Heritage's Office of Development Bureau cooperated with HULU Culture and the Hong Kong Architecture Centre respectively. Both tours are conducted every Saturdays afternoon.

From December 2009 to February 2010, the cultural tours took about 20 culture-enthusiasts each group to walk around old shops which are still operating traditional Chinese business in Shanghai Street, such as the Gan Ming Framing and Man Wah Tailors.

The architecture tour was held from January to March 2010, guiding participants to explore and appreciate old buildings around West Kowloon, including Tin Hau Temple, Methodist College and other nostalgic blocks. All tours are free of charge with guides.

"Most of the participants are locals, not foreign visitors, including 'post-80s', form two or three students and families with kids," said Mr Simon Go Man-ching, one of the tour guides.

"I believe they treat the trip as a time for reunion and education of old culture for the next generation," he said.

Besides the Cultural and Architecture Tours in West Kowloon, HULU Culture has been holding a variety of trips in recent years to let Hong-Kong people explore the community and re-understand their culture.

In the beginning of this year, HULU Culture led trips to Sham Shui Po, and now it focuses on the Central and Sheung Wan district.

Without any fund from government, HULU Culture charges \$50 per tour.

"The tour fee is just the donation for the company to support the program. Actually there are not many expenses on the tour and

we never think of the making money," said Mr Go, also the project director of HULU Culture.

Some participants agreed that tour fee is acceptable for them.

"I think \$50 is not expensive, but worthy enough," said Mr Xavier So Tsz-kin, 21, who joined Mr Go's tour to Central and Western District last year.

"You can see Mr Go knows the store owners very well. He likes to let them speak out their stories rather than himself providing background information to us," he said.

Another participant, Ms Christy Wong Shuk-yi, 21, was inspired by the trip but prefers to pay back in another way.

"I actually fantasise to spend one summer in the old stores doing volunteer work there to spread what I've got to others," she said.

Similar tours by HULU Culture will be held in April and May, whereas the government has yet no clear plan for the next tours.

"We have no concrete details now and we have to see whether the objectives and details are fit with other NGOs", said the representative of Commissioner for Heritage's Office.

EDITED BY MILEY LI

FEATURES

TRAVEL

York: a tour back to the old times

BY CATHIE GUO

When most of the small towns in England are still asleep in a Sunday morning, the city just a five-hour ride from London is an exception. York, a small heritage city in Northern England, is packed with crowds from all over the world soon after the sun rises.

York was founded by the Romans in 71 AD and then captured by the Vikings in 866 AD. Located at the confluence of the River Ouse and Foss in North Yorkshire, this walled city has a significant position in the nation's transport system.

The walk from the bus station to downtown is popular among visitors to start off a

day trip, as the city's medieval walls enclose the centre of the city. The wall has been defending the city since Roman times and York enjoys more miles of the intact walls than any other city in England.

The city centre is half an hour's walk from the medieval walls where most of the sites of interest are located compactly. Pass through the Coppergate Shopping Area, and be stunned by the magnificent Clifford's Tower standing in the middle of an open space. The Tower is a stone quatrefoil keep built on top of a Norman motte. It was the site of a massacre when many of York's Jewish communities were burnt to death during a clash back in 1190. Today it becomes a high point overlooking the whole city.

Walk down from the Tower and the York

Castle Museum is the place to explore. Displays include recreated rooms like a Victoria parlour and a Jacobean dining room, showing people the lives of the Romans and the Vikings back in the ancient times.

During lunch time, the smell of Yorkshire pudding spreads miles away. It is a local delicacy that visitors cannot miss. The pudding was first introduced in 1737 and has attained wild popularity even until today. It is a British lunch staple made from batter and often served with roasted beef and chicken.

The York Minster is a ten-minute walk from the Tower. When the sun shines on the Great West Window, the flowing tracery of the later decorated gothic period reflects the history of this second largest Gothic cathedral in northern Europe. It is a perfect place for visitors looking for some tranquility.

In the book *Walk Around the Snickelways of York* by author Mark W Jones in 1983, he introduced a collection of small streets and footpaths in the city of York and named them Snickelways. The Stonegate is the kind of street covered with cobblestones and with overhanging timber-framed buildings, some dating back as far as the Vikings.

At the end of the street, an endless queue appears every afternoon for the famous British Afternoon Tea in front of the Betty's Tea Room. With sandwiches, scones, cakes and pastries on a tiered stand, it always takes more than an hour for people to drink the traditional English tea and enjoy the sunset of the city in York. It is the best moment of the day, together with a taste of the year 1919.



The Clifford's Tower stands high and beautiful in the middle of an open area.



York Castle Museum provides visitors a vivid view of its history.

TRAVEL TIPS:

1. A good time arrangement is necessary if you want to have the afternoon tea at the Betty's. It always takes half an hour's waiting for a seat.
2. The old city's access is foot-only, and many of the sights are only a short walk between one another.
3. There are many ghost walks that run throughout the year during the evenings start from 6 pm.

OTHER ATTRACTIONS:

1. Jorvik Viking Centre
2. National Railway Museum
3. Treasurer's House
4. Castle Howard
5. Barley Hall

EDITED BY PHILA SIU

COVER STORY





Ma steps down to a wider road

Former gov't bureau chief Frederick Ma Si-hang shares his life with *TYR*

BY ALAN KWOK

“Why do we treat our youngsters in this way?” The Commercial Radio phone-in programme *On a Clear Day* received an unusual call from a former government official on June 15 last year who sobbed when talking. “Why do we hurt them? It is a sorrow of Hong Kong people.” The call hit *Apple Daily*’s front page next day.

The topic being addressed was about Christian Zheng Sheng College, a drug rehabilitation boarding school. It was seeking to relocate to a larger campus in Mui Wo, but received strong opposition from local residents.

“We should be in a society with kind tolerance and give chances to the youngsters to correct their wrongdoings,” said Professor Frederick Ma Si-hang, the caller, in an exclusive interview with *The Young Reporter*.

Resigning from the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development for health reasons in 2008, Prof Ma earns four “part-time jobs”, with three of them relating to young people. He gives lectures at the School of Economics and Finance of HKU as an honorary professor, shares Christian testimony and hosted a radio programme to share his thoughts with youngsters.

“I wish my six-year experience in the government can be a good role model of the youngsters,” he said.

“I had no dream”

Prof Ma has a typical “Hong Kong story”. Born in 1952, he grew up in a poor family as a mediocre – if not lazy – student. “I always carried ladders with me back home and was blamed by my mother,” he said, referring to being graded “H”’s at school.

He awoke in secondary four, after he found that he could be ousted if his academic results showed no improvement. “My mother always told me, ‘If you don’t study well, you will be a beggar.’” He galloped and entered

The University of Hong Kong with majors in economics and history in 1970.

Prof Ma’s family of six lived in an apartment of about 100 square feet. They had to share their washroom and kitchen with other residents. His father passed away when he was a high school student, leading his mother to work long hours to support the family. “I had no dream,” he said. He just wanted to get a job to support the family so that they could live better.

He taught at four schools to fend for his family when he was an undergraduate. “Poverty is a sinking whirlpool, but also a motivation for advancement,” he said. “I wished to escape from this whirlpool after education.”

“Post-50s” = “Post-80s”

Apart from the part-time jobs, Prof Ma participated a lot in student activities. He represented the faculty of arts in the Senate of the university. “So I stood for election when I was in university,” he said. “It was a direct election.” He also took part in the “Diaoyutai Movement” over the sovereignty dispute of Diaoyutai Islands between China and Japan.

“Truth be told, I think there is no difference between ‘post-50s’ and ‘post-80s,’” said Prof Ma, a member of the so-called “post-50s,” commenting on the sizzling topic of young activists. “I still remembered that when I studied in the university, my schoolmates and I concerned a lot about social issues. We would cry out for the ‘Diaoyutai Movement’ and other unjust issues in the society.”

Prof Ma, however, stressed that he was not a leftist in the university. “Some of my schoolmates were leftists. Mr Ching Cheong, for example, was a leftist,” he said, referring to the well-known journalist being jailed by the Chinese government five years ago. “I was a moderate.”

Like many youngsters at that age, Prof Ma loves The Beatles’ songs, a sign of rebellion at that time. But he got no talent in

Photo: Sybil Kot

COVER STORY

music. "I tried to learn to beat drums. But I failed," he said. "I tried to join amateur music competition. But I was eliminated when I just stepped on the stage."

Prof Ma did not perform well in exams and graduated with third class honours. But he said he never regretted participating in so many student activities. "Otherwise my university life wouldn't be that brilliant and colourful and I couldn't meet such a large network of friends," he said.

Hello, Minister!

After graduating in 1973, Prof Ma's life and achievement seemed to be marked by three opportunities and coincidences. The first one came with his first job. He aspired to work for Cathay Pacific. "I never travelled abroad before I graduated. The furthest place I had been to was Macau," he said. He wished to work for the airline so that he could get free trips. He got an interview but by chance his successful application to Chase Manhattan Bank was received earlier than Cathay's offer of a second interview. "I couldn't wait at that time. My family relied on me," he said.

Prof Ma started with the salary of \$1,600. "My salary could buy eight square feet of an apartment at that time," he said. "Nowadays, university graduates earn ten times

more than we did, say \$16,000, but they can probably buy three square feet only."

Three years afterwards, he got an opportunity to be relocated to the New York's headquarter. He then worked in London and Toronto. "I was so lucky as I had the chance to look around the world by my job with the bank," he said. He met Ms Linda Wong Pui-kee, his secondary schoolmate, in Canada. They got married in 1979.

Prof Ma's family returned to Hong Kong in 1990. Then the second chance in his life came up. He and his wife planned to send their two daughters to a good school in Canada. "But it could receive one of them only," he said. Meanwhile, one of his friends encouraged the family to come back. He worked for Kumagai Gumi (HK), a listed construction and property development company. He later re-joined the Chase Manhattan Bank as Chief Executive of Private Bank and then joined PCCW in 2001.

Then the third chance in his life emerged. Mr Antony Leung Kam-chung, his HKU classmate and the former financial secretary, asked him to join the government in 2002.

"Antony later told me he didn't expect me to say yes with the reason that it was a good chance to contribute to the society," said Prof Ma. He gave up the annual salary in excess of \$10 million. "I would like to serve Hong Kong," he said.

Prof Ma was appointed as the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury. During his term in office, Hong Kong was recovering from the 1997 financial crisis. The markets were gloomy.

Perhaps what most Hong Kongers remembered Prof Ma, apart from his cousin, local actor Mr Eric Tsang Chi-wai, was the penny stocks incident in summer 2002, leading to a selling climax of shares as investors panicked all at once.

Prof Ma, who took up the post just a month ago, said in the Legislative Council that he did not have time to read the documents of the incident. His support rating plummeted from 53.8 to 39, according to the Public Opinion Programme at HKU.

"How can you say this? You have to know it even you don't have time to read," said Mr Albert Ho Chun-yan, legislator and chairman of Democratic Party. "But his bowing and smile immediately made people forget his stupid responses."

Mr Ho, an HKU law alumnus of 1975, said Prof Ma—though specialising in finance—was short on experience in politics.

"He is never a qualified politician as he lacks a vision and insight into a long-term reform," he said. Mr Ho, however, said Prof Ma was smart and flexible and appreciated his optimistic and outspoken character.

"His relation with legislators is not bad," said Mr Ho. "He knows how to handle interpersonal relationship diplomatically."

Prof Ma agreed that good interpersonal relationship was important in a society where people work as a team. "A politician has to be open-minded and is willing to communicate with people. Then the chance of being successful is bigger," he said.

Prof Ma got baptised in 2003, when he found that the pressure of working in the government was very heavy. His wife, who established Citywide Renewal, a Christian charity organisation, told him to pray with her every early morning to seek help from God. "At that time, I can feel the power given by God," he said.

Fat Ma, Fit Ma

In 2008, Prof Ma was diagnosed with blood vessel tumours in the brain. "I had the so-called three 'highs': high blood pressure, high cholesterol level and high triglyceride," said "Fat Ma", a moniker of Prof Ma which media coined.

His doctor said he could get a stroke if he worked under heavy pressure. He quitted the government, exercised hard, played golf and travelled. He has lost about 20 pounds from his peak weight of about 200 pounds. "I got rid of the three 'highs' when having body check last month," he said delightfully.

Now he always tells youngsters to treasure their life. "Life is like a juggler and the balls in his hands," said Prof Ma. "We have four balls in our hands: career, wealth, health and family. The first two are made of plastic which you can pick them up if they are dropped. But the latter two are made of glass which will be smashed if not handled with care."

Hello, Prof Ma!

After the resignation, he became an honorary professor at the School of Economics and Finance of HKU and hosted a radio programme "Hello, Prof Ma!" to share his thoughts with youngsters.

"I think he gives me a feeling of honesty," said Ms Christine Kwok Chun-yan, who co-hosted the programme with Prof Ma. Ms Kwok, 23, first met Prof Ma at a high-table



Frederick Ma

Prof Ma says his wife (left) and himself do not put much pressure on his two daughters (centre).



Prof Ma graduated from HKU with third class honours.

dinner of HKU. The psychology student said Prof Ma was impressed by her opinions on social problems and China's politics.

"Perhaps he saw his past from me," said Ms Kwok. She added that Prof Ma was very circumspect. "He knows I was a fan of Sammi Cheng Sau-man by my ringtone," she said, referring to the famous Cantonpop singer. "He thus bought Sammi's book and asked her for an autograph and a few words for me when they met in a dinner."

Prof Ma now enjoys his life under low pressure and does not see a chance of returning to the government. He measures out his limits. "Pressure is defined as high demands, lots of restrictions and little help," he said.

Prof Ma said when he worked in the government, he had high expectation on himself and faced restrictions by the scarce resources and supervision of the legislative body and the media. But he could obtain little help.

Prof Ma became the Chairman and Non-Executive Director of China Strategic Holdings last November, 17 months since he left the government, provoking conspiracy theory that his resignation paved the way for returning to the business field.

While America International Group is making a deal with China Strategic Holdings to sell Taiwan's Nan Shan Life Insurance Company, he said he was not busy in handling the job simply because he is "non-executive."

"Unlike the government job, the pressure of this job is little," said Prof Ma.

Prof Ma encouraged pressurised Hong Kongers to work harder. "Don't be discouraged and blame others when encountering problems. You could be treated unjustly. But it doesn't matter," he said. "Don't mind to get a beating. Stand up and keep it up!"

EDITED BY SIMON YIU



Photo: Sybil Kot

Prof Ma calls for more tolerance to young people. "I was born in Hong Kong. I love this place. I hope to see a forgiving and harmonious society," he says.

- 1952** born in Hong Kong
- 1973** graduated from The University of Hong Kong with a degree in economics and history and joined Chase Manhattan Bank
- 1979** married Ms Linda Wong Pui-kee
- 1990** resided in Hong Kong after working in New York, London and Toronto
- 2001** became Executive Director of PCCW
- 2002** joined the government as Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
- 2007** appointed as Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
- 2008** resigned from the government for health reasons
- 2009** became Chairman and Non-Executive Director of China Strategic Holdings

INTERVIEWS

Amateur rules track with six years of strive

BY ANDY AU YUENG

As I walked out into the large courtyard football ground surrounded by a tall cement spectator stand and the classroom block, I encountered a bunch of young chaps who were lifting weights here and running about there. I looked for a more prominent figure, someone with a bit of authority, the coach. I saw no one coaching there, nobody was yelling at the athletes, pointing them to places or statuesquely overlooking their training performances.

Then someone called my name from the far side of the court. I looked over and saw a young-looking, dark-skinned, light-built athlete in a bright yellow jersey jogging his way towards me. I was going to ask him to bring me to the coach before he spoke, "Hi! I am Manson." Then I realised I have got the right man.

Mr Manson Kwok Man-chun is not your average sports coach. He is only 24 but has been in the sports for six years. He sacrificed all his personal time to coach his mother school's cross country and athletics teams and brought them division one promotion after six years of struggling in lower division.

It all started in 2002 when Mr Kwok first took an interest in long-distance running.

"I was neither the most enthusiastic, nor a very good runner back then," he said.

He suggested the school the prospect of training their students for the sport. "Everyone believed that it was impossible in this area. I guess I am ahead of the curl...I want to prove to my forerunners that I can make something happen here," he said.

And with only two years in the sport, Mr Kwok founded the school's first cross-country team along with its first athletics team. And as soon as he had signed up for the job, he realised how hard things could be to get something from nothing.

"There weren't any students who have experience on the events", he relished times at the beginning. "I was like a scout looking for talents on the street. I saw somebody ran and I'd walked up to him and told him, "You've got potential, come and try running with us!"

He found it hard to work as a one man band at the beginning. "I looked for training venues. I am responsible for all of the events, from running and jumping to pushing and



Manson Kwok

Mr Manson Kwok holds the overall championship of cross country team which earns his team the entrance ticket to the division one.

throwing. I need to manage the morale and I still need to find time for my own training."

And he still does. Holding the stopwatch at hand, he is still managing the team in the course of the interview. "Be there early on Thursday! Be there at eight!" As the head coach, he still runs the errands of the teams. "Are you training? Good! It is going to be very tough next year in Division One. Give it your best!" he encouraged his athletes.

"I want to prove to my forerunners that I can make something happen here."

Mr Kwok is now coaching around 60 athletes. They have two to three weekly lessons, with two to three hours each. They have extra trainings two months before competitions.

Speaking of the greatest challenge in coaching, he did not find it on the tracks, but from the athletes' parents instead. The teams were found so devoted in training they could not focus on the academic results.

For the parents' peace of mind, Mr Kwok took his multitasking to the next level by offering his athletes supplementary tuition on their studies. With all that work to juggle with his two hands, Mr Kwok found it hard to strike a balance.

"Opportunities are not always there for you, and it is up to you to grasp it when it comes. If you tell me to look back, I don't think I would do much better with my studies if I hadn't managed the teams," he said.

He managed to enroll for an undergraduate degree in sports and recreational leadership at Hong Kong Baptist University in 2009, while all his former classmates have

already graduated.

Now the teams have a taste of the harvest Mr Kwok and themselves brought with their constant hard work and devotion. Both the cross-country team and athletics team secure Division One promotion this year after six years of fighting in the lower division.

Team members do not need to hesitate when the opportunity comes to them to comment on their coach.

"He is a devil, on the training ground that is. But he is the greatest friend to the whole team off the track," said Kan Hei Chun, 15, a member of the athletics team.

"He made us run 400m intervals one after another at nine degrees Celsius with just two minute of rest in between. Other athletes may not have to do that, but Mr Kwok made you succeed in it," said Lai Ho Nam, 15, another member of the team.

"Watermelon", as Mr Kwok's teammates call him, works part-time for money to spend on shoes for his athletes, equipments and celebration after competitions. When he works, other coaches, who are also alumni of the school, take his place.

"Yes, Watermelon is sick. He had this journal in which he kept details of every runner's performance, and he would offer individual feedback to them which at times really encourages the boys," said Mr Ramon Lee Sze-ho, one of the assistant coaches.

Mr Kwok said everyone close to him pondered, "Why don't you think for yourself first?" And when he told me his plans for the future, you will soon see why.

"I have always wanted to be a certified coach. I want to come back and teach here at St. Louis." You get the idea.

EDITED BY SIMPSON CHEUNG

Writer widens interpretation of positivity

BY VIVIAN CHUI

Focusing on the computer, Ms Christina Wong Ming-yan, the 31-year-old author was hurrying to finish her article which will be published in the coming Hong Kong Book Fair in July.

Like most writers, Ms Wong has abandoned pen and paper and used computers to get her stories done. She types fast. Only the keyboard tells the secret – the Braille on it shows the writer is visually impaired.

Ms Wong's vision was affected by German measles when she was eight months old. Although she was once able to see when she was three to eight years old, her optical nerves were injured again. Since then the girl sees nothing anymore.

Yet, the drawback does not blind the writer from capturing and depicting things happening around her. As a story teller, Ms Wong likes to travel and uses the experience as materials for her stories.

Ms Wong is known as a singer, a composer, a writer, a music teacher and also one of the Ten Outstanding Young Persons in 2008.

"I like to communicate with people from different nations," she said. As a fearless traveller, Ms Wong has been to India, Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, etc.

Yet Ms Wong was not always as independent as she is now. In the past, she was an introvert who disliked talking to others. "I seldom talked when I was small. It was really a difficult task," said Ms Wong, who is now a frequent speaker facing people from all walks of life in the public.

The turning point was when she decided to study in Australia at the age of 14.

"I was the only Chinese studying in the school. When I didn't know the direction, I just had to ask others. I talked to my roommate to 'bribe' her into accompanying me to the canteen," the girl opened up her heart in the experience.

"I tried nearly everything such as skiing, horse riding."

"I tried nearly everything since then such as skiing, horse riding, etc. My brother even allowed me to drive as long as it is a straight road ahead," said Christina. The experience



(Top) Ms Wong was selected as one of The Ten Outstanding Young Persons in October 2008. (Below) The books written by Ms Wong since 2004.



aboard was a successful transformation. She had become braver and more confident.

"I am not worried. You cannot worry too much about this girl," said Ms Wong's mother, showing confidence to her daughter.

Her family is a great support for the writer. "As a freelancer, they will not ask whether the job will bring you wealth or not. As long as you have potential in the industry, they will support you."

Ms Wong and her family are now running a business to promote life education. They organise various events including talks, workshops, performances and singing classes.

"The idea is to promote positivity and teach others how to face problems," said Ms Wong, who is a role model to spread positive messages herself, "we will compose songs

for clients, for commercials as well as weddings sometimes."

With her brother and cousins as colleagues, Ms Wong said she enjoys working with her family. "We will not hate each other after arguments," she said, "but sometimes we just cannot separate working and private matters," she laughed.

Coming through a long way, the writer has her own belief in life. "You never know when you are going to die. That's why I treat every day as if it were the last and I sleep early every day in order to keep myself healthy," she said.

"Life is short, just do something meaningful," she added.

EDITED BY LUNA LAU

REVIEW

Comic-turned-movie puts classical music on the map again

BY MINI LI

No matter you are a classical music novice or a serious music enthusiast, passion and determination inside every musician's hearts still impress you. In Japanese movie *Nodame Cantabile: The Final Score*, when the conducting baton is waved, music sparks with laughter and tears.

The first part of the drama spin off has premiered on March 4 in Hong Kong and the second part will show in May. The movie acts as sequels to the popular TV drama *Nodame Cantabile* aired in 2006 and 2008, which won the best drama, best leading actress, best director, best music and best title song in 2007 Japanese Drama Academy Awards.

The story is about the growing of two genius musicians Chiaki (played by Hideki Takeuchi) and Nodame (played by Juri Ueno). Chiaki, who is the winner of a reputable international composition contest, faces a new challenge of leading an old and poorly-managed orchestra. Nodame helps Chiaki with his orchestra management. The concert turns out to be a success while Nodame is held up in her roads for shadowing, leaving hint for the next movie.

The movie is about classical music, a rarity for Asian production. The joy and sadness in the movie are derived from the growth and struggle of musicians. It is enriched by pieces of classics by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig Von Beethoven and Frederic Chopin which is tuneful for everyone - music lovers and ordinary people.

The movie is also the first movie in the world that was allowed to film inside the spectacular Goldene Saal in Vienna, which is famous for its acoustics and is one of the three finest concert halls in the world.

We saw the growth of ex-piano student Chiaki in the drama series. He overcame



plane-phobia, then studied conducting in Paris and finally made his mark. This time he faces his biggest challenge and stomps the road that his teacher Franz Strezemann who had walked through. Pianist Nodame and clarinetist Kuroki were among the best in Japan, but they came to realise it is a much bigger world than they thought.

Japanese movies do outstanding job capturing human nature with their delicate description of human relationship and excellent mood setting. *Departures*, the Oscar winning best foreign-language movie even makes Japanese movie shines in the international film world.

The portrayal of the sweet, implicit and "kuso" (very funny but sometimes mischievous) romance between talented conductor

Chiaki and messy pianist Nodame presents traditional Japanese affection in a cartoon way which gives freshness to audiences on TV and now a bigger screen.

Friendship and romance act as the melody of the movie and some "kuso" fighting plots between the couples Chiaki and Nodame are ornaments which make audiences burst into laughter.

People of all ages are recommended to watch, jokes may not translate well into Chinese and English at times, but you can still feel the passion of those characters, laugh and cry with them. Besides, it is wonderful to watch some good cinematography with great sound effect in the cinema.

EDITED BY KELVIN CHAN

TYR'S SELECTION

It's break time!

We know how it feels to have classes after classes, assignments after assignments, occasional tests and exams in your jam-packed schedule already filled up with so many activities and work. Stepping into the hectic season, TYR invites you to take a break amid your work and live it up! Here you'll see cute and yummy Rilakkuma snacks, choco hamburgers and rum cake chocolate. Not to forget is the soda drink with Daruma san on it!!

Have fun, recharge yourself and treat your buddies!

a. Lotte Specialite Rum Cake Chocolate



b. Bourbon Every Burger Choco Snacks



c. Rilakkuma Caramel Corn



e. Kimura Japanese Soda



d. Rilakkuma Biscuit Stick



The above items are from Okashi Land (a/b), Taste (c/d), Log-On (e).

OPINION

Are you already getting outmoded?



Take a look around at your laptop, desktop, I-pod, Blackberry, Kindle, fax (if you haven't tossed it away along with your pager) and ask this: Am I accumulating material that will be important – even crucial – in years to come, but which is already becoming inaccessible thanks to multiple platforms and rapidly evolving technologies?

The ability to create and store information is expanding, but the new technologies that make this expansion possible may also be rapidly outstripping our ability to keep those materials in forms that are not only safe over time, but also easily retrievable.

For journalists, archivists, librarians, historians, academics, and governments, this is becoming a major headache with serious consequences and a growing price tag.

Until the last few decades, the world's knowledge was largely stored in books and manuscripts. Then, information created on paper began to be kept using technologies that some readers of this article may have never seen – microfiche, for example. In brief, materials were being copied, essentially using photo-based techniques, with the result that more information was stored in smaller forms requiring less space and, hence, lower cost. But once copied, the originals were vulnerable to being tossed away, and many were.

These newer copying means have rapidly given way to digitalization, but in some ways that's worsened the problem. It's the old chicken-talking-to-duck issue: Any number of different software have been used, many incompatible. Some systems and programs, once fairly widespread, have all but disappeared (how many still work in DOS? PFS Word?) All too often, newer software cannot successfully retrieve data in its entirety (or even at all) from earlier versions of the same software from the same developer.

Consider your own correspondence: How much is in text-message form on different phones you've owned? And how many of

the messages have you transferred from one phone to another, or from SIM card to SIM card? How much of that material could someday be the stuff of a memoir, or a biography, or a historical account? What are you writing today that will be history tomorrow?

If journalism is history's first page, how can we write that history as accurately and fully as it should be if we are denied access to source materials by technological change? Against what will we check the accuracy of our individual and collective memories?

How much of what you'll need will be in Facebook, LinkedIn or Buzz? How much will be on different hard drives? Will storing materials on separate hard drives or CD-ROMS help? Maybe. But even into the late 90's, people were storing data on floppy discs – anybody's machine run those?

Will today's various platforms exist and be available when we need them in five, 10 or 20 years? (No less worrisome: Will we then find that what we wrote and what others wrote to us has become someone else's property? Go ask Google.)

My own experience may help put the issues in relief. I was among the first freelance journalists in the US to work on a portable computer. It was such an oddity that I was often asked questions like: "Without getting too technical, what is a modem?"

My first computer was a TRS-80 (aka "Trash-80") from Radio Shack. When its memory was at maximum capacity, it held 62K. I couldn't dream at the time of ever needing more. I still have it, along with original tape machine on which my data were stored, as well as the portable floppy drive that eventually replaced it. There are still stories in there that I don't want to throw away but can't get out. Since then, my home has become a museum of outmoded technologies – a flock of mutually incomprehensible chicken and ducks – none of which I can throw away without losing my work.

Working in radio, I also have work stored on reel-to-reel tapes, cassettes, digital tapes, mini-disks (MDs) and in MP3 format. Some recordings have historical value. That means that around the world, broadcasting stations, archives also must turn into museums of technology to maintain their capacity for data retrieval, or risk losing some material forever.

Will hard disks endure as long as the Dead Sea scrolls did? Hard to say. But I wonder what future archeologists will do when they uncover ancient CD-ROMS buried in the sands.

Francis Moriarty is 2nd vice-president of the Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong, and senior political reporter at RTHK.

Letters to the Editor

Be a green example

The seriousness of global warming is widely understood. Millions of people are at risk from the coastal flooding due to the rise of sea level. About 20 to 30 per cent of plant and animal species assessed so far are likely to be at higher risk of extinction if increases in global average temperature exceed 1.5 to 2.5 degree Celsius. The global average temperature already has increased by about 0.74 degree Celsius over pre-industrial levels. If we do not go green, the earth will be ruined very soon.

First of all, you should set up a green model to influence your family members. Use less electricity by reducing the use of computers and turning off the TV completely, don't use stand-by mode. On top of that, you should classify and recycle paper waste and use both sides of paper before recycling them.

Moreover, you can ask your mother to use local ingredients to cook since transporting produce locally can save fuel which lowers substantial amounts of carbon dioxide emissions accordingly. Also, you can suggest your parents that using e-billing is more convenient and environmentally-friendly. During holidays, you and your family can join a tree planting activity because trees can absorb carbon dioxide and reduce the effects on global warming. This activity can also encourage family unity.

Apart from setting up a green example to your family, you should also influence your friends. You can do green activities together like swimming along the beaches and cycling. Furthermore, you should recommend that your friends bring their water bottles as it can reduce carbon emissions and reduce waste and pressure on landfills. Having vegetables is actually environmentally friendly. Rearing cattle releases high amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Replacing meat with vegetables several meals a week not only reduces carbon emission, it also translates into a healthier lifestyle.

The current situation is critical. Although our lifestyles may not be green enough, it is better be late than never. From today, let's start our green lifestyle.

VIVIAN LEUNG

Hong Kong True Light College

Write to us and you could win an English novel from Bookazine. Send your letter with your full name, address and phone number to tyrej@hkbu.edu.hk.

EDITORIAL

Cases of university student suicides: red alert

BY LUNA LAU

University students has left an image of immaturity in the eyes of Hong Kongers in the past month, after consecutive cases of them committing suicide.

Ironically, the deceased mostly acquired degrees in the three famed universities, namely The University of Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. One of the deceased students was even studying in a postgraduate programme.

Their deaths are indeed a misfortune to their families and the society. But the repeated cases over years also make us wonder the reasons behind.

Is the pressure from school really killing our younger generation even they have reached a certain education level?

People generally perceive that the deceased students were mentally fragile and had low self-confidence, making them incapable of coping with the upcoming difficulties, eventually step onto the road of no return.

What's more, the relatively higher education background of the deceased students did

not translate into better ability to command their emotions and pressure, while they are supposed to be well educated and understand the value of life more than the ordinary.

This type of young people is stereotyped. The public may think students nowadays in general do not have the ability to master stress and manage their emotions because they face fewer obstacles during their growth.

On the contrary, some university students understand the obstacles well enough that they often consider too much when facing problems.

Some early birds know the importance of getting a job soon after graduation, so they try their best to produce a "good-looking" resume by joining different internship programmes and taking up posts in academic societies throughout their university lives. Some know the importance of appearance so they spend time keeping themselves look smart and pretty.

They pack their schedule and intangibly load pressure on to their shoulders just because they get a full picture of society with the materials picked up from their parents, professors and the society.

Challenges nowadays are usually played

up by the older generation in Hong Kong, exaggerating them to push the younger harder to achieve better results. This is unlike western cultures that students' paths and careers are up to their choice and they enjoy more freedom during the student lives.

Hong Kong students' effort to make themselves stand out from the crowd has caused them most of their precious time and energy. Some neglect their real needs. Little time is left to ponder their past performance and adjust future directions and schedules accordingly. They rush towards the goal. They omit other noteworthy components on their journey. One day they crack up and think they have lost everything when encountering a problem.

Of course this is not a must, not a trend and not a case for all. Nevertheless, families, schools and the society should notice these repeated cases are not unrelated at all. The deceased students are not born to be self-abased and incompetent.

Students are also advised to take themselves into account when they are considering their future. After all, the one they should always be responsible to is exactly their very selves.

TYR is now available at...

All universities and other tertiary education institutes

Olive Cafes

Shop G41-G44, G/F, City Landmark 1, 68 Chung On Street, Tsuen Wan

Shop G4, G/F Grand City Plaza, 1-17 Sai Lau Kok Road, Tsuen Wan

Hong Kong Reader

7/F, 68 Sai Yeung Choi Street South, Mongkok

TC2

G/F, 106 Portland Street, Mongkok

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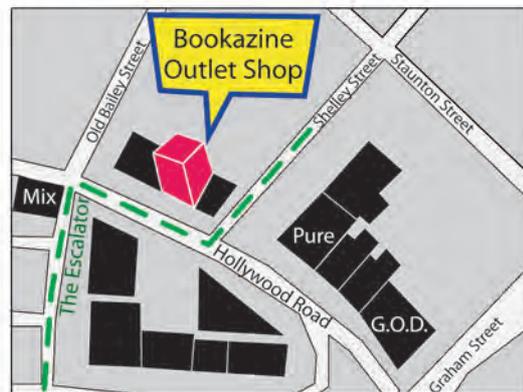
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China's New Dream City

Tianjin has been recently ranked as the most livable city in China, surpassing Beijing and Shanghai, in The Economist's World's Most Livable Cities 2010. The criteria for this ranking include social stability, environment, education, health care, public transport and recreational facilities.

With the proximity to the country's capital, and its ports located on the Bohai Gulf in Pacific Ocean, Tianjin has been a city of both strategic and cultural importance.

While the city's new buildings reached a record height, and the European-styled old town being conserved and renewed, Tianjin has become a city of great economic potential and international competitiveness, and after all, an ideal place for living and investments.

| TEXT & PHOTOS BY SYBIL KOT
| EDITED BY IRENE HUANG

1. Can he manage to finish it?
2. Jiefang Road and its British architects.
3. Traditional Chinese pavilion often seen in parks or gardens.
4. Be careful!
5. A mix of old and new.
6. Almost every household owns a bicycle.
7. The carriage is a legacy of the British concession territories.
8. The church attacked by Chinese riot during the Tianjin Massacre.
9. A woman makes dragon beard candy.



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