

Wishing all happy holidays and a fabulous new year!



THE RAFFLES WAVE



**RAFFLES
GIRLS' SCHOOL**

*Nurturing Daughters
of a Better Age*



"Four years passing by, now this chapter's almost over. Take a look around you. What do you most treasure? The people and the memories, the good times and the bad. Now you've faced the darkest nights, you can face the road ahead..." - We're On Our Way, lyrics from the batch song by the class of 2015. Click [here](#) to view photos from Graduation & Farewell Assembly by the RGS Photographic Society.

FAREWELL ALMA MATER 2015



The theme of 'Throwback' inspired the wardrobes of some of the girls, taking us on a blast to the past with the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Mr Pacman and the pesky little ghosts, and the Teletubbies. Make us proud class of 2015! Go forth and continue to make a difference in society, and strive to create a better age for all. Filiae Melioris Aevi! Click [here](#) to view photos from Farewell Alma Mater by the RGS Photographic Society.

ACHIEVEMENTS

*For more Achievements, please click [here](#).

Singapore Amazing Machine Competition 2015

A team of RGS Year 1 students emerged as overall Champion in the Secondary (Year 1-3) division at the Singapore Amazing Machine Competition (SAMC) 2015. In line with SG50 celebrations, participants were challenged to find creative ways to form the message 'SG50' and students Coco Liu, Suan Enhui, K. Sarvesha and Ramachandran Praveena did so by coming up with a machine with a portrait painted on wood panels, that upon a series of chain reaction, will flip and reveal another portrait in the telling of the Singapore story. Click [here](#) to watch the machine in action!

Environment Challenge for Schools

RGS Year 3 students Toh Yan Ling, Julina Seet, Sharmayne Lim Zhiyu, Lim En Li Coco, Lim Jia Min, Yeo Ke Xin, Tan Su Yin and Valerie Koh Hui Yi took part in the Environment Challenge for Schools and clinched the Merit award for their project 'The Bottlement', which is an idea to turn polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic bottles into 3D printing filaments in hopes of reducing plastic waste and recycling the bottles into another form of economically viable plastic.

The students also had the opportunity to showcase their project at the NEA Clean and Green SG50 Environment Fair, held from 30 October to 1 November 2015, and were able to present their ideas to notable guests such as Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean.

LENDING A HELPING HAND

This year, partnering Central Singapore Community Development Council (CSCDC), RGS embarked on her maiden Staff Community Engagement Programme. The slew of activities planned throughout the year saw about 100 RGS staff members taking time out of their hectic schedules to volunteer at activities such as educating the public on hand hygiene at Tan Tock Seng Hospital and providing an afternoon of fun and entertainment at the Institute of Mental Health.



For Painting Smiles, staff from the Mathematics department contributed by adding colours to common spaces in hopes of brightening up the lives of the less fortunate.

TWICE THE JOY!



Alumnae (and their little ones!) dressed in RGS and Singapore colours took the opportunity to capture memories of the fun time during the party with props specially prepared at a photo booth.

The RGS Chapter and RGS Alumnae jointly organised the 'RGS Celebrates SG50 Tea Party', an occasion that brought together alumnae from different batches back to RGS for a joyous double celebration of Singapore's golden jubilee and a rekindling of friendships forged through their RGS days.

RETURN OF THE SUPERHEROES

Superheroes took centre stage this day as students showed appreciation to their teachers who have powered them through the year with their tireless dedication.



Besides entertaining performances and touching tributes, special awards segments also saw some teachers bestowed with titles such as 'Ms Optimistic Woman' (Ms Syazwani Amrun) and 'Captain Care Bear' (Mr Wong Chee Yeb), where they walked away with an official superhero cape.



In the first of a series of RGS Staff Awards to be given out, teachers Mr Choo Boon Hwee and Mrs Rachel Pang were both recipients of the Caring Teacher Award. Look out for a separate publication (in 2016) in honour of the various recipients of the RGS Staff Awards sharing their thoughts and journey in education!

PORTRAIT OF A RAFFLESIAN THE TRUE-BLUE RAFFLESIAN



Last month, RGS bade a bittersweet farewell to one of our beloved members of the Rafflesian family as she embarked on a new chapter in her life. For someone who is a self-professed quiet and timid person, Mrs Shirley Tan is loud in her actions of giving unstintingly to the RGS cause and bold in dispensing wise advice from which many of us have benefitted. As her remarkable 39 years at RGS come to a close, we speak to Mrs Tan as she reminisces about her RGS adventures and pens down exciting new beginnings on the next page of her life.

A Trip Down Memory Lane

"I joined RGS in August 1976 as a Trainee Teacher and was assigned to take the pre-u level Literature in English. After my probation two years later, I was officially appointed as a teacher. I was in charge of the track and field and netball CCAs and back then, I was also the House Mistress of Tarbet! In 1988, when RGS adopted the Head of Department (HOD) model, I became HOD English and Literature. After that, school gradually became a routine, and I found myself in a bit of a rut. Then in 1999, I was offered the appointment of Deputy Principal, which really gave me my second wind, and in 2006, I became Senior Deputy Principal."

Adventures At RGS

"This is a school where, as an educator, you can live out your beliefs and convictions about education, teaching and learning, as well as be true to your own discipline, which in my case, was English and Literature, and in later years, Philosophy for Children. I've had the good fortune of having had principals who understood what it meant to lead a school like RGS. In addition, I've also had colleagues who were very clear why RGS was for them and so they would do what it takes to be part of the school and to meet the needs of the RGS girl. I had the pleasure of being in the midst of interesting individuals, passionate ones, and most of all individuals with a wonderful sense of humour, ranging from dry wit to side-bursting 'crack-you-up' types. There was so much energy in the school! We were very much a family. School events such as Sports Fest, Swim Carn and Founder's Day were all simple affairs but with great spirit."

I remember too, during the first decade of my service as a form teacher, I had my girls over to my house for class parties annually and they would also visit during the Lunar New Year. When I was newly married, these girls would come over to my apartment to help me prepare food for these gatherings. It was a great bonding time for the girls and I, and as a result, some of these girls came to know my husband quite well too."



Mrs Tan in her early years of service with her colleagues in the Physical Education department. Can you recognise her?



"My mother is a good cook. I apprenticed with her, but not by choice (I'm the only girl in my family). However, I'm now reaping the benefits. Some of my favourite dishes to prepare include Ayam Buah Keluak, Sayur Chap Chye, Curry Devil, Bakwan Kepiting and Kueh Pie-Ti."

The Calling Of An Educator

"As teaching gave me my life's vocation, RGS gave me 'my voice'. As I grew professionally, my beliefs and conviction about education became intertwined with what RGS stands for and its role in the larger scheme of things, especially with regards to nation building. I have given unstintingly in my efforts for the RGS cause and I would say I am one of her enduring champions despite of not being a Rafflesian (in a sense that I'm not an alumna of the school). In serving RGS, I have involved even my family so that I can be more effective in harmoniously integrating my professional and personal life."

PORTRAIT OF A RAFFLESIAN THE TRUE-BLUE RAFFLESIAN

Life After Retirement

"I'm most looking forward to embarking on 'mindfulness' practice, story-telling, exploring the use of picture books as a pedagogical approach and community engagement."



"I would not be where I am today if not for the compassionate RGS girls in my classes and CCAs, great professional companions (colleagues, both EOs and EAS) and principals who had great faith in me and who knew how to lead a school like RGS."

Words of Advice

"Being a teacher-educator is a vocation/calling; it is about 'being'. It is a total package, so either accept it or walk away, because there is no such thing as 'half measures'. As such, the work is never 'done'. So teacher-educators must learn to look after themselves and their well-being. A sense of self-efficacy is essential to the quality they bring into their role."

Hopes And Wishes For RGS

"RGS continues to be a trail-blazer in the field of education and a truly world-class institution for females (who hold up half the sky; and on some occasions, more than half). In making the big leap into a brand new location in a few years' time, RGS will be a vibrant and welcoming campus that is an exciting learning space, bringing diverse people together in search of learning for the common good."

Thank you Mrs Tan for your tireless dedication to RGS and for 39 years of nurturing daughters of a better age. We wish you all the very best in the next chapter of your life. Happy retirement!

Most Proud Of...

"When RGS became independent in 1993, the school took up the invitation to be part of a Philosophy for Children pilot led by Dr Lim Tock Keng. Of the five schools in the pilot, RGS was the only one that not only continued beyond the pilot, but also built on it and made it part of the core curriculum, which has survived till today as part of the curriculum of the Raffles Programme. I'm also very proud of the strong professional and learning development culture here in the school. Since I've joined RGS, my colleagues and I have independently prepared materials to meet the needs of the RGS girls. As such, collaborative professional learning was a habit cultivated as part and parcel of the RGS professional culture. When we became independent, the newfound financial resources then enabled us to strengthen this as a signature experience for any teacher who joins the school."



"Nothing beats the feel of togetherness when we assemble at the amphitheatre..." - Mrs Tan on one of her favourite RGS school traditions.

*We give thanks for our friends.
Our dear friends.
We anger each other;
We fail each other.
We share this sad earth, this tender life,
this precious time.
Such richness. Such wildness.
Together we are blown about.
Together we are dragged along.
All this delight.
All this suffering.
All this forgiving life.
We hold it together.*

- Michael Leunig

A poem picked by Mrs Tan to sum up her RGS journey.