

# IN TANDEM

JANUARY 2015

## A Baba-licious Time!

P6 GRADUATION  
NIGHT

CLASS OF 2013  
INTERVIEWS

8  
QNS  
WITH  
JON CHUA

In Tandem is jointly published by The  
Fairfield Methodist Schools Alumni  
Association and the Fairfield Methodist  
Schools (Primary & Secondary)

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**The Alumni Association  
Committee (Class of)**

Diana Chee (1972)  
Kelvin Ong (1989)  
Cho Pei Lin (1994)  
Low Guat Tin (1962)  
Felicia Foo (1976)  
Wong Soo Chih (1980)  
Lo Wei Pin (1980)  
Chua Wei Wei (1990)  
Joseph Guo (1997)  
Zhan Yanxin (1997)  
Raymond Lim (1998)  
Goh Sheow En (1999)  
Tan Lay Kwan (2002)  
Joel Tan (2005)



# A Baba-Licious Time! Founder's Day Dinner 2014

We had a great BABA-licious time at Founder's Day Dinner 2014! Hosted by our Alumni Joshua Tan (of Ah Boys to Men fame) and Alumni Steven Chia (Presenter at Channel News Asia), the night was further studded with stars like Alumni Elaine Chan (Music Director of NDP2013) and Broadway Beng Sebastian Tan! We also had great performances from staff of both Primary and Secondary Schools. See you at 2015's dinner!





Founder's Day Dinner 2014





## Interview with Gracia Leong (Sec4B/2013)

Gracia (middle of picture) posing with her close friends

### **Overcoming the Odds**

Gracia is an optimistic and creative student who strives to do her best in everything she does. As the Social Department Head of the Student Council, she was involved in the planning and execution of the Secondary One Orientation 2013. As the President of Journalism, she worked closely with her team and made important contributions to the Fairsian Times and the Fairfield website. Gracia was also a member of the Red Cross Youth where she was part of the team that achieved the Excellent Unit Award (Gold) and the Community Service Award (Gold) in 2011 and 2012. As the best all-round girl who excelled in both her studies and her Co-Curricular Activities (CCA), Gracia received the 2013 Carrie Kenyon Award.

### **How did you feel when you collected your results?**

To be honest, I was completely shocked and in an utter state of disbelief! I had never envisioned myself obtaining such wonderful results, and my heart was so filled with gratitude to everyone, especially God, for without whom none of this would have been possible.

### **Are there any key people whom you owe your success to?**

I am especially thankful and eternally grateful to my family, especially my mother and sister who accompanied me on the day the O- Level results were announced. They were the ones who comforted me when I was panicking over how I could not remember what I had learnt, or how I thought I had messed up that paper, or just feeling worried.

I would also like to thank my beloved teachers, who were a fantastic source of strength and motivation. My teachers were caring, understanding, loving and simply amazing. They taught me about life and about chasing my dreams, which were beyond the curriculum. My teachers strongly believed in me and my batch, and never gave up on anyone of us!

Lastly, I would like to thank my friends. They were the ones who encouraged me to stay back and study when all I wanted to do was to return home to my bed, and the ones who cheered me up when I felt like giving up, as they reminded me of the end goal.

### **How did you manage your time between your commitment towards your studies and holding key appointments in your CCAs?**

Juggling two CCAs, Student Council and studies was difficult. However, I firmly believe that it all starts with yourself.

Having the tenacity and determination to fight for what you want, whether it is winning a competition or obtaining an A1, is essential for success. Passion is also another factor needed to juggle all assigned responsibilities. I had the passion to serve



the school through the Student Council, the passion to serve humanity through Red Cross Youth, and the passion to write articles through Journalism. When push comes to shove, the thing that keeps you going is why you are doing what you are doing, and that intrinsic motivation.

A practical way to manage all these responsibilities is planning and managing your time very well. I forced myself to meticulously plan the topics of specific subjects I wanted to accomplish everyday, making sure I worked on different types of subjects on any one day like doing an Additional Mathematics paper and writing a Social Studies essay, so as not to exhaust myself with too many content heavy subjects. This proved to be extremely helpful.

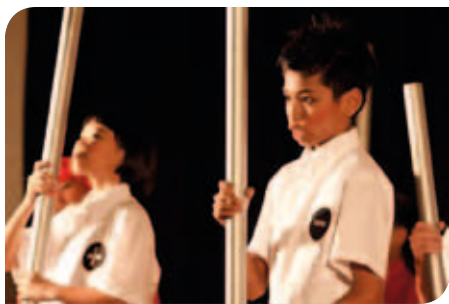
I also find it rewarding to be able to cross off the topics that had been covered which helped me to clear my revision easily. Being realistic is also important, as if you have a competition on that day, how likely is it that you are willing and able to sit down and read your textbook?

### **How did you manage to conquer the obstacles that you faced in life?**

If you do not know me personally, I was born with cleft lip and palate, which meant that I had a hole in my upper palate, and my upper lip was not fully fused when I was born. As such, my speech was hindered, and I had to attend speech therapy sessions when I was younger. This undoubtedly made me feel insecure throughout my entire life, and I lived most of my primary school days in self-pity and hatred. However, that changed when I was in secondary school, as I got to know the Lord and realised it was just a birth defect. Knowing of God's love and desire for me changed my life, and is the main reason why I am filled with motivation, as I believe that in doing the very best I can, I am giving all glory to Him, and acknowledging His hand and works in my life.

### **Do you have any advice for the 2015 batch of Sec 4/5 students?**

Work hard, and do not give up. Keep fighting, and do not allow anything to hold you back. A friend of mine encouraged me by telling me that some people take a longer time than others to learn the same concepts, yet at the end of the day, the examiners are not going to know how long you take to study, but about what you are able to deliver on your examination script. I hope this encourages anyone who feels that they are not 'as smart' as the others, and are flustered because they just don't seem to understand the relevant concepts and need more time to do so. I need you to know that you are capable, and you just have to press on. It truly is worth it. All the best!



### ***A Dramatically Focused Student***

Rino was an active member of Fairfield Drama where he served as President in 2013 and was involved in the planning and execution of many drama performances. He also discharged his duties as a Student Councillor with pride and efficiency. A confident speaker, Rino was the Master of Ceremony for the 2011 National Day Celebrations, and the emcee for the 2013 Multi-Ethnic Celebrations as well as the 2012 Sec 4/5 Thanksgiving Service. In all these events, he used his candour and wit to great effect to add life and humour. Furthermore, Rino had the honour of hosting the Arts Presentation Showcase during the Singapore Youth Festival National Concert 2013. As the best all-round boy who excelled in both his studies and Co-Curricular Activities (CCA), he received the Miss Lim Geok Kheng Award.

### ***How did you feel when you collected your results?***

When I entered the lecture theatre to collect my results, I was really nervous but excited at the same time. I was hoping to do well enough to get into the Polytechnic Foundation Programme, and was pleasantly surprised when the teacher mentioned my name amongst the top students from my class.

### ***Are there any key people whom you owe your success to?***

My family constantly supported and encouraged me through the stressful and crucial year. My classmates were also always there to add some humour during and after lessons. My friends from Fairfield Drama helped to relieve my stress and make CCA sessions fun and enjoyable.

Furthermore, my loving and caring teachers willingly sacrificed their time to educate us without expecting anything in return. Besides teaching us what we needed to learn from textbooks, my teachers imparted moral values, made lessons fun and different every single day and did their best to ensure that we understood everything they had taught.

Most importantly, God has always been there to provide me with the strength to fight through this challenging battle. He helped me face my fears and made me who I am today.

### ***How did you manage your time between your commitment towards your studies and holding a key appointment in your CCA?***

At the start, it was a little difficult for me to cope with my studies and CCA at the same time. However, ever since I created a timetable and kept strictly to it, I realised that it was not as difficult as it seemed to be. It also ensured that when I was doing one thing, I kept to it until I had completed the task.

It was most stressful for me during the Singapore Youth Festival period as we had drama rehearsals almost every day after school until late in the evening. When I reached home, I would feel really restless and not want to do anything. However, I managed to overcome that feeling and made sure I focused on my work and revision when I got home. It was hard to deny 'sleep' but I figured that I did not want to regret not studying and revising, which might cause me to do badly.

### ***Do you have any advice for the 2015 batch of Sec 4/5 students?***

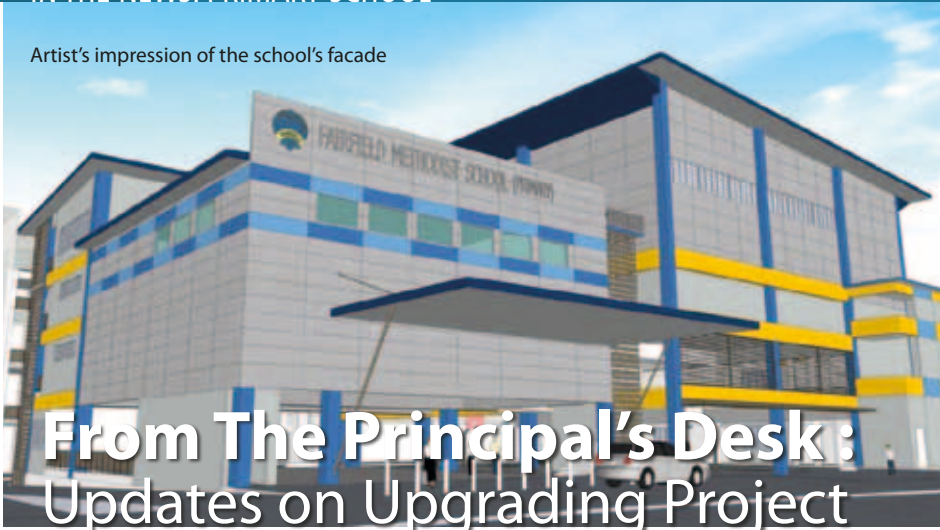
"You are enough. You are so enough. It's unbelievable how enough you are."

-Sierra Boggess

Just remember that you will reap what you sow. You have the potential to do well and attain excellent results. Continue to revise your work and plan your time wisely. Study hard and never give up!! All the best for your examinations!!



Artist's impression of the school's facade



# From The Principal's Desk: Updates on Upgrading Project

*"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labour in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain." Psalms 127:1*

The new wing of Fairfield is a testimony of God building His house. Although the construction team had laboured hard through 2 years from 2011 to 2013 to make plans to build the extension according to our finite human minds, God had His own plans. A surprise discovery of the exact location of a 64-way cable under our Covered Play Area in November 2013 turned all our plans awry and we spent the next 4 months assembling a new alternative design that we would not have otherwise thought about. Indeed, unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain. After piling works started in May 2014, we give thanks to God that the construction of the new wing has gone on smoothly and we are back on track to completing the extension by December 2015. Thank you for all your prayers and support.

If you drive by Dover Road, you can now see the buildings taking shape and a new Fairfield emerging. There is still a pressing need to raise the remaining \$1.7 million before the end of 2015. I would like

to appeal to all Fairians, past and present, to give generously to your alma mater. Every drop of water makes a mighty ocean. I wish you all a blessed 2015.

**Mrs Chaillan Mui Tuan**  
Principal, FMS(P)

To donate, please make out your cheques to Fairfield Methodist School (Primary).

- Adopt-a-Brick (\$1,000)
- Adopt-a-Star (\$10,000)
- Adopt-a-Room (\$50,000)

**Leave a legacy either in your name, your class or in memory of someone. For enquiries, please contact the Primary School at 67788431 or [fmsp@moe.edu.sg](mailto:fmsp@moe.edu.sg).**



April 2014: The plot of land (which includes the former Caltex Petrol Station) for our extension



October 2014: The new extension emerging



June 2014: Piling works underway



The Performing Arts Studio and Music Rooms in the making



## Mr Hawazi Daipi visits Fairfield Primary!

We were honoured to have Mr Hawazi Daipi, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Manpower, observing a lesson on 18 September 2014 with our P2 Malay students during his visit to Fairfield. The lesson was conducted using The Trail Shuttle application on iPads to provide an opportunity for students to engage and interact with each other using the Malay Language.

During the lesson, Mr Hawazi joined the students in their quest of identifying fruits available at the Outdoor Experiential Learning area by solving a series of riddles.

After our lesson, Mr Hawazi shared with us that he was impressed that we had integrated the use of ICT in a regular lesson and that the students seemed to enjoy themselves. He also mentioned that the department has taken a good approach to develop the lesson based



on the 5E model (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate and Evaluate). Lessons incorporating the 5E model will have positive effects on a child's engagement in learning. Through hands-on activities, students get to collaborate and learn to be self-directed learners which will in turn encourage them to learn beyond classrooms.

We were also thankful to Mr Hawazi for sharing insights in how we can prepare our students better for life.

*Contributed by  
Mr Abdul Hadi Bakar,  
Malay Language Teacher  
Fairfield Methodist School (Primary)*



5F can't wait to start their sale!

# CHARITY SALE: Fairsians raise funds for adopted charity



Popsicles, anyone?

Finally on 12th November, the long awaited charity sale arrived!

The aroma of popcorn and candy floss filled the air as students of all ages were wearing huge smiles on their faces at the sight of their favourite foods and games. Most items, especially snacks were sold quickly as students waved colourful streamers cheerfully, in a bid to promote their items. The toy called water babies was a big hit with the lower primary students as well as Nerf gun games.

Preparations for the charity sale started as early as Term 1. All the Primary 5 students were involved. Each class choose a beneficiary that they would like to help. Next was the planning for the sale of merchandise and the marketing of it. Some classes decided to design and craft the products themselves. What was sold included hand-made cards, rainbow looms and hama beads.

Beyond the conceptualisation of the products, Primary 5 students designed

posters and hung them around the school and boards to promote their items. Most classes adopted a direct marketing approach by visiting all classes from Primary 1 to Primary 6 to sell their wares and generate interest and attention.

Although the charity sale was a hectic event, the students found it thoroughly enjoyable and memorable as they owned each and every part of the process! Every Primary 5 class will appreciate the true meaning of the event even more when they proudly present their donation cheques and items to their adopted beneficiaries next year.

*Contributed by  
Novia Loke and Megan Wee (Pri 5G)  
Fairfield Methodist School (Primary)*



Students trying many ways to peddle their wares.



Sale of candy floss by 5E students.



Even teachers are avid shoppers.





# 126th Founder's Day Graduation and Thanksgiving Service

On 1 August 2014, the 126th Founder's Day Graduation and Thanksgiving Service was held in the Chen Su Lan Hall. The Fairfield Choir kicked off this service with a brilliant rendition of a medley of songs, including 'Wade in the Water' and 'The Prayer'. Mr. Varian Cheong then led the Call to Worship, before Reverend Barnabas Chong gave the Opening Prayer.

After Mrs. Tan Ming Hui and Fairfield Secondary's Alumni Band led the school in the songs of praise, Mrs. Joni Ong, the Chairman of Fairfield's Board of Management, shared memorable personal experiences of her life in Fairfield, which included the various ways in which her caring teachers greatly impacted and shaped her life. She also expressed her deep admiration and great respect of all Fairfield teachers in spending much time and effort to continually mould the lives of all Fairisians, including the award winners. After Reverend Dr. Chong Chin Chung gave thanks for Fairfield's rich history and origins, Mr. Victor Owyong, Principal of Fairfield Methodist School (Secondary), gave an encouraging speech to highlight the school's recent achievements. This included the wonderful news that Fairfield received the Best Practice Awards in Teaching and Learning, Character and Citizenship Education, Student All-Round Development, Staff Well-Being and Development, as well as Partnership. Furthermore, Fairfield affirmed her autonomous status, and was conferred the prestigious School Distinction Award. All these were made possible due to the efforts of all, with the Fairfield teacher as anchor in

creating positive school experiences and the building of the Fairfield family experience among staff, students and the larger Fairfield family including all parents, the Board of Management, the Fairfield Alumni Association and Fairfield Primary in growing school affiliation and pride. It was indeed great news to accompany the celebration of Fairfield's 126th birthday, as everyone in attendance applauded Fairfield's remarkable accomplishments, hence adding much excitement and delight to an already joyous occasion.

Moreover, Fairfield recognised the achievements of the 2013 Secondary 4 and 5 batch of students with a prize-giving ceremony, where all book prize winners went on stage to receive their well-deserved prizes, much to the admiration and delight of the audience, who gave them a rousing applause.





In addition, everyone shared a nostalgic moment as a video showcasing a plethora of photos was played, which highlighted the memorable events and activities the 2013 Secondary 4 and 5 batch of students participated in, as well as their various achievements during their 4 to 5 years in

Fairfield Secondary. This provoked a flood of wonderful memories, which was further encapsulated by Ms. Chong Yun Xin, the 2013 Head Councillor, who spoke to show her deep appreciation of the numerous opportunities the school had provided her with, and how she was very proud to be a Fairsian. She also learnt the importance of having a pure and honest heart in her 4 years in Fairfield Secondary, and how with a good heart, all of us can indeed bring joy to the people around us wherever we go. This indeed emphasised the importance of values education which Fairfield has imbued her with.

A strong sense of unity was indeed palpable with all voices resounding as one, further highlighting the warmth of the Fairfield Family Experience.

Happy 126th Birthday Fairfield!

*Contributed by  
Shanyl Ong (Sec 1A)  
Fairfield Methodist School (Secondary)*





# Fairfield's Basketball's Achievements



**Fairfield Basketball's 'C' Division Boys Finished Second in South Zone Basketball Championships 2014**

In the recent Inter-School South Zone Basketball Championships 2014, Fairfield Methodist School (Secondary)'s 'C' Division Basketball team emerged as First Runner-Up. On their way to the finals, the 'C' division basketball team had defeated powerhouses like Raffles Institution and Peicai Secondary School.

On the day of the Inter-School South Zone Basketball Championships Finals, many Fairsians and parents, together with our Basketball team, made their

way to Yio Chu Kang Sports Hall to support the 'C' Division boys. The unity amongst all Fairsians and everyone related to Fairfield was palpable. On the court, the boys displayed incredible fighting spirit and tremendous tenacity against Catholic High's basketball team, and eventually finished in second position.

During the prize presentation, the 'C' Division Boys' team received their medals and the first runner-up trophy with pride and grace, as they had done Fairfield proud.

Also, in 2014, we received great news that three of our basketball members

had been handpicked to play in the prestigious Southeast Asia Basketball Association (SEABA) Championship.

We wish the Fairfield Basketball team even greater success in the near future!





## 8 Questions With... Jon Chua

In this issue, In Tandem caught up with Jon Chua, who is part of The Sam Willows, at last year's Founder's Day Dinner and sat him down for our "8 Questions With..." The Sam Willows' rise to fame was described by The Straits Times as "meteoric". They released their self-titled debut EP to great acclaim in 2012 and amassed more than a million views on their youtube page with more than 15,000 subscribers. In 2013, they played 6 international music festivals in 8 months and in 2014, they went on a maiden tour of KL and were part of the Georgetown Festival in Penang.

### 1. Your full name, year of graduation and class.

Jonathan Chua, Class of 2006, Sec 4B.

### 2. What were your CCA in school?

2003-2006: Basketball  
2005-2006: Guitar Ensemble

### 3. Best memories of Fairfield?

I was not the brightest and most well behaved student back then. I remember choosing to play soccer and basketball over doing my math homework. But the teachers never gave up on me or my peers. My fondest memory was the B Division South Zone Basketball competition in my Sec 4 year. We trained for months, and were leading in the final qualifying match. We ended up losing marginally and I remember crying my heart out with the team. For the next couple of days, I remember everyone in school from teachers to students to HODs, giving words of encouragement. Fairfield is a great place.

### 4. Most memorable teacher?

Mr Ezal Sani. He was my History and Social Studies teacher back when I was in Sec 3. I

remember sleeping in class once, and he walked over to my table and kicked it. Of course, I woke up in a shock. And he just smiled at me. I paid attention for the rest of the class.

### 5. When did you first become interested in performing/singing?

I picked up the guitar at the age of 12 during my PSLE year. Music was not a very big part of my life in secondary school initially as I was more into sports. It was only in Junior College (ACJC) when I started performing more and becoming more exposed to the arts.

### 6. Tell us more about your work now. What does it involve?

I belong to a 4-piece music group called The Sam Willows. We write and perform our own music internationally across different platforms. Our music is a mixture of pop-folk with melodic guitar-hooks and 4-part harmonies. I play lead guitar and sing in the band.

A day in the life of The Sam Willows can vary depending on the time period. If we're not in the studio recording and writing music, we'll be travelling for promotional shows or touring concerts locally or overseas.

### 7. People say it is difficult to be a musician in Singapore. Does it pay your bills and what are your long term plans?

I think the difficulty of being a musician is similar to the difficulty of any other skill-based occupation. It takes years to hone one's skill as a musician just like how it takes years to study to become an engineer or a lawyer. The difference then would be the stability of job. However, there are musicians who play

regularly at bars or restaurants that gives them this sense of stability. However for me, it is a day to day risk being a recording artist. I am lucky to have a great team supporting the band in terms of administration as well as financially. I do not know whether I will be an artist forever, but definitely long term plans include me being in the music industry for as long as I can. I love music far too much.

### 8. Any words of wisdom for your junior Fairsians?

Dream big, and work towards it. If people do not laugh at what your dream is, then your dream is not big enough.

\*\*You can find Jon here: [www.facebook.com/thesamwillows](http://www.facebook.com/thesamwillows) twitter (@jonchua\_tsw) Instagram (jonchua\_tsw)

