



The Gateway
Hong Kong Lasallian Family Bulletin
June 2010
Twenty-fourth Issue

Welcome



The old rhyme referring to typhoons goes:
June too soon
July stand by
August you must
September remember

So far this year the rhyme holds good but we will surely get a lash over the Summer.

The feature on Brother Anthony Knoll takes up quite a few pages in this issue. This indicates that he was quite a man though the man himself would have difficulty agreeing.

In Chinese communities throughout the world, the month of June is associated with the 'Dragon Boat Festival'. In this issue we look into its origins.

In Catholic culture, June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a symbol of his immense love for us all. As Lasallian teachers we are reminded "to touch the hearts" of the students confided to our care.

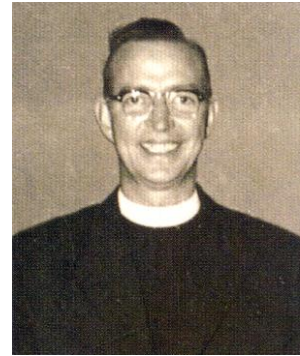


The Gateway is going to take a break for the Summer. We hope to be back, firing on all cylinders, in September.

Brother of the Month:

Brother Anthony Knoll 1916-1981

Brother Anthony was born in Toronto on the 28th October 1916, the youngest boy in a family of eight. He was called John at baptism. Both his father and mother were Catholics and were of German extraction.



While John was still very young tragedy struck the family with the death of his father. His mother worked heroically to bring up a young and large family. She never gave way to discouragement and managed to keep the family together through thick and thin. Her selfless devotion and strong faith were not lost on her children.

Young John received his Primary schooling at St Helen's, Toronto, and it was here that he had his first contact with the De La Salle Brothers. He particularly admired a Brother Clement and they developed a lifelong friendship.

In 1931, at the age of fifteen, John asked to join the Brothers' Juniorate and was accepted. Here he shone both at studies and sports. Ice hockey was his forte but he sustained a serious knee injury which often came back to haunt him in later life. His surplus energies now went into his studies and he became a star pupil.

In 1934, at the age of eighteen, he entered the Novitiate and on the 3rd of September received the Brothers' robe and rabat and the new name of Stephen Anthony. In future he would generally be known as and called Brother Anthony. He adapted well to Novitiate life, to the periods of silence, prayer, reflection and manual labour.

After completing his Novitiate he made his first vows on the 4th September 1935 and moved to the Scholasticate for further formation and studies. Here he made remarkable progress and soon gained admission to the University of Toronto. He enrolled in the university in the fall of 1936 and soon began to make his mark.



Suddenly, a complete change of prospect came into play. In 1937 a higher superior made a strong appeal for volunteers for the missions in what was then called the Far East. Brothers Anthony and Lawrence Spitzig were among the volunteers and were selected. They were hurriedly put on a ship for Southampton. They survived a mighty

Atlantic storm and after arriving in England were sent to the Brothers' Scholasticate in Inglewood, Berkshire, to sit for the Oxford School Certificate. This they passed without difficulty and by August 1938 they were again packing their bags for the long voyage to the East.

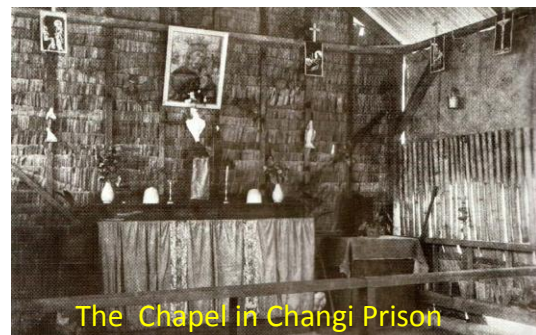


They passed through France en route to Italy and on the 22nd September they boarded the Conte Biancamano at Naples. Twelve days later they steamed into Singapore and to their first taste of the Far East. Brother Anthony was posted to St Joseph's Institution, a prestigious Lasallian school in the heart of urban Singapore. There was a Community of about 20 Brothers. Rising was at 4.30am and lights out at 9.15pm. The time between was filled with spiritual exercises, teaching and marking scripts, and games. Brother Anthony taught Standard 3, taught all subjects and had no free periods. His gentle and even disposition ensured that he got on well with the boys.

What unfolded on the morning of the 8th December 1941 would soon turn everything upside down. The Japanese bombing of Singapore had begun. On government instructions the Brothers and teachers tried to run the school along normal lines in the new year. It could not and did not last and school was formally closed at the end of January 1942.

The school was converted into a military hospital and the Brothers had to spend a lot of the time in the air raid shelter they had constructed on the ground floor. Gradually the Japanese bombardment intensified. The din was appalling, the buildings trembled, the air was stifling and the heat suffocating. Surrender by the British came on the 15th February.

Brother Anthony was one of the first of a group of "enemy aliens" marched off to the notorious Changi prison. The prison was built to accommodate 600 but during Brother Anthony's stay the number rose to 4000. At first he performed a variety of tasks until he was asked to look after the old, sickly inmates. Some were bedridden or handicapped and many were emotionally traumatized. Brother Anthony fed them, washed their laundry, waged an ongoing battle against bugs and mediated in endless disputes. Food, or rather the lack of it, was a problem for all.



The Chapel in Changi Prison

About mid 1944 the inmates at Changi were transferred to a more open-style camp in Sime Road which had been formerly used as an emergency RAF barracks. Brother Anthony immediately set up a ward for the old people in his care. He also found time for teaching the camp boys, for learning chess and for a little gardening.

The biggest problem continued to be the shortage of food and by now Brother Anthony was very emaciated. He took to eating frogs or toads but developed a painful body rash and lost his appetite. Malaria was to follow and he was reduced to a skeleton. Throughout his ordeal he somehow retained his calm and gentle ways as well as a sense of humour.

Liberation came in August 1945. Brother Anthony and Brother Lawrence Spitzig were among 500 civilians taken aboard a troop ship heading for the UK. From there they boarded the Queen Elizabeth 1 for the trip to Canada and to a rapturous homecoming. Brother Anthony, however, was still critically weak and needed a year's convalescence before heading back to Singapore in late 1946.

At the relatively young age of thirty one, he was now catapulted into the hot seat as Principal of St Joseph's Institution. He pushed ahead with improvements to the school, adding a new science laboratory and upgrading the school field and school library. In particular he had extensive renovation done to the school chapel.



Brother Henry O'Brien was on the staff at the time and had this to say: "I cannot remember that he ever punished a boy; he had a winning way with students; they couldn't but respect and like him."

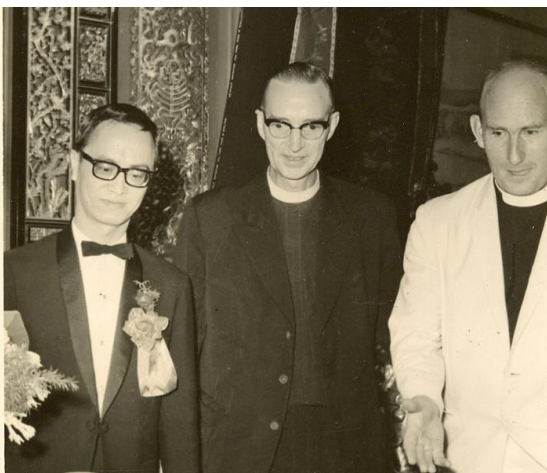
Brother Anthony always had a tendency to overwork. He spent long hours in the school office, carefully checking the progress of each student. This strained his eyesight as well as his general health and after three years at the helm he returned to Canada for treatment and rest. There he decided to continue his studies and successfully completed his degree course at the University of Toronto. At the same time he underwent two separate operations for a cornea transplant neither of which was successful. Eye problems were to plague him to the end.



It was time to return East and in January 1953 he was appointed Principal of another prestigious Lasallian school, this time in Penang, Malaysia. As a result of the war bombing, St Xavier's Institution had to function in attap sheds ringing the playing field. There was enormous pressure from stakeholders to rebuild the school. This required ongoing fundraising activities.

Brother Anthony threw himself into the task in hand and by early 1954 occupation of the rebuilt school was possible. But the pressures of work and his frayed nerves yet again began to take their toll and he had to return to Canada in 1955 for further rest and treatment.

Then, in July 1956, after a year's rest and recuperation, he was posted to La Salle College, Kowloon, Hong Kong, where he would spend the remaining 25 years of his life. Even at this late post war stage the College was "in exile" in Perth Street, courtesy of Her Majesty's Government which requisitioned the grand old school building in 1949, using it as a military hospital. From 1949 to 1959 the school had to function in hastily constructed hutments.



Despite the less than comfortable conditions, Brother Anthony was happy to be back in the classroom. He preferred to teach the weaker pupils and lavished on them his time, energy and affection. He could be seen correcting their written work up till midnight and he became a role model for all. Many of his so called weaker pupils entered university and blossomed in life and never forgot their old mentor. He did not forget their spiritual development either, attended baptisms, recruited for the rosary crusade

and was a devoted spiritual director for one of the junior praesidia of the Legion of Mary.

One of his students at the time puts it like this:

Brother Anthony always came into class well prepared and gave his lessons slowly and clearly. He was especially nice to the slower students. I remember one hasty homework I handed in and was afraid he would really get mad, but he looked at it, trying hard to find some merit, and...at last, said softly, 'Not famous!'

Brother Anthony was a humble, gentle, spiritual person. He would lead us in morning prayer and then give a short chat on a Christian topic. I was baptized during that period, as were some of my other close friends.”

Another pupil at the time reminds us that Brother Anthony never raised his voice. He could often be seen in the classroom preparing his lessons. Perhaps because of an old wartime injury, he wrote slowly on the blackboard. To compensate for this and so as not to waste time, he would fill the blackboard in advance with notes. His pupil also reminds us that, besides teaching English, he also taught History. Strangely, he never spoke badly about the Japanese or about the way he was treated. In this way, his students, who knew something about what he had suffered, learned a great lesson in God’s love and the power of forgiveness and their hearts were touched.

Once, when in hospital, he was visited by a not too well off pupil who brought along three roses and a card. Brother Anthony was delighted and introduced the boy to the doctors and nurses saying:”This is my student” and at the same time requested a vase for the flowers. The pupil never forgot the incident. Indeed, Brother Anthony himself had a phenomenal memory for his pupils, past and present, and kept up a lively correspondence with them. He would never fail to reply to a letter.

Throughout these years his major hobby was taking long walks in the countryside. His invariable companion was Brother Paul Sun, Principal and Founder of St Joseph’s Anglo Chinese School. The two developed a deep friendship and for a few years Brother Anthony even went to work in St Joseph’s to help his old friend. He acted as Vice Principal for Brother Paul besides taking on a full teaching load of English and Religion. Brother Michael Curtin places their friendship in perspective:



“Brother Anthony and Brother Paul Sun are notorious in our Colony for their long, long walks. When I was young, at the end of the silent film, Charlie Chaplin appeared on the screen walking away from the audience down the road leading away to the horizon until he disappeared. I believe Brother Anthony’s idea of Paradise is walking down the corridors of eternity, arm in arm with Brother Paul Sun, having a glorious time.”

However, the long-term effects of the war years and incarceration in Changi prison began to surface again. Brother Anthony suffered dreadful hallucinations, persecution

complex and horrid nightmares. This went on for some time before a suitable drug was prescribed. He never lost his addiction to smoking, however, which he saw as a way to soothe his nerves, frayed by his war experiences.



The Brothers knew that his eyesight was deteriorating, not helped by the long hours he spent correcting his students' scripts. In 1977 it was therefore decided to take him off formal teaching and to put him in charge of the school library. There he was at home among his beloved staff and students. The books were treated tenderly, like old friends, and would be meticulously examined, repaired and returned to their original library slots.

It was at this time that La Salle College was on the move from its original grand old building to a gleaming new, fully endowed facility. Brother Anthony took complete charge of the library transfer, including determining the entire layout which has remained basically unchanged to this day. He personally trained all library staff and initiated a total overhaul of the books including cataloguing, accessing, recording and labeling. He insisted on exact measurements of labels, and this for over 15000 books. Scotch tape was never to be used on loose pages; white glue was the way to restore evenness of the spine. At times he looked like a surgeon, wielding a scalpel-like knife to cut and separate before the books were lovingly restored to health.



As he approached retirement and because of his personality traits, it is not surprising that he earned for himself the nickname "Grandpa". Another image his pupils retained was of 'the man in white' since he wore the white robe or white suit frequently. Indeed, he was also wearing the white robe when he passed away.

The year 1981 was going well for him in many ways. The major move from the old school library to the new had been successfully completed. His sisters from Canada had paid him a welcome visit. He had at last fulfilled one of his passions in life, attendance at a concert in the City Hall.

Although he had felt faint once or twice, the end took everyone by surprise. He had been knocked down so often but had always bounced back. It was holiday time. He was up as usual to join the Community in morning prayer, placed his host on the communion plate before Mass, and, not feeling well, left the chapel for his room and

did not return. At breakfast Brother Raphael, suspecting something might be wrong, asked Brother Thomas to check his room. Brother Thomas found him lying peacefully on his bed in his white robe, face calm and hands by his side. Even his shoes were placed neatly at the foot of the bed. It was the 28th of July 1981. The next day he would have completed 25 years in Hong Kong. The gentle, kind, soft-spoken Brother had slipped into eternity.

By coincidence the 28th was also the day for the distribution of the Hong Kong School Certificate results, results which would determine who could or could not proceed to Form 6. Brother Anthony in his time had prepared many a pupil for that important exam.

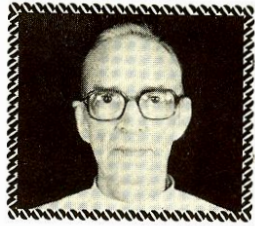
The funeral took place on the 30th July and attracted a large gathering of mourners, many of them weeping openly. Brother Raphael Egan delivered a moving tribute, saying in part:

“Successful and efficient men often seem hard to replace, yet the gaps they leave are surprisingly quickly and adequately filled. But lovable people are never replaced; they linger in our hearts, in our thoughts, in our prayers. Let us give thanks to God for the witness Brother Anthony bore to divine realities.”

Brother Anthony's Postings:

St. Joseph's Institution, Singapore	1937-42
Wartime Internment in Singapore	1942-45
St. Joseph's Institution, Singapore	1946-50
Studies in Canada	1950-52
St. Xavier's Institution, Penang	1952-55
La Salle College, Hong Kong	1956-72
St. Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School, Hong Kong	1972-75
La Salle College, Hong Kong	1975-81

In Your Prayers please
remember



BRO. ANTHONY KNOLL
Born Toronto, Canada
28 Oct 1915

Died La Salle College, Kowloon
28 July 1981

R.I.P.

— x —

JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH
Eternal Father, I offer you
the most Precious Blood of
Jesus Christ, in all the Masses
being offered all over the world
or that will be offered for the
soul of your servant Amen.



Family Updates

Past and Present

The Old Boy Past Presidents and Current Committee members of La Salle College held their annual dinner gathering on the 14th May 2010. This year there were three special features, namely, the marking of the retirement of Principal Wong Yen Kit, the introduction of the Principal designate Brother Steve Hogan and the honouring of the two old boys recently affiliated to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, Mr. Arnaldo de Oliveira Sales and Mr. Nicholas Ng Wing Fui. In this respect the gathering was an historic occasion and was warmly appreciated and enjoyed.



Visit of Hong Kong Football Champions



On the 18th May La Salle College hosted the owner, manager, coaches and players of premier division side, South China. This season South China are champions for the 4th consecutive year. The officials and players were especially keen to try out our new 4th Generation turf and the overall verdict was favourable. As part of the process the coaches and

players demonstrated some moves and skills for our school team members. Some of the players have iconic status in Hong Kong. A wonderful time was had by all.

Principals Conference

The most recent Lasallian Principals' Conference took place on the 10th June 2010. Besides the usual weighty matters discussed, we had the pleasure of welcoming three new Principals to be. They will take up their posts on the 1st September. At the same time we bade farewell to four of our current Principals who have long borne the burden of the heat and the day. They are seated in the front row and from left to right are Mr KK Sze of Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College, Mr Wong Yen Kit of La Salle College, Mrs Millie Tam of St Joseph's Primary School and Mr CH Leung of St Joseph's College. May their retirement years be blessed with happiness and peace.



Four New Principals

Come September, four of our schools will have new Principals at the helm. We wish them every success in their important leadership ministry.



Miss Caroline Chan
St. Joseph's College



Miss Rosanna Chan
St. Joseph's Primary School
AM



Mr. Lee Ting Leung
Chan Sui Ki (LaSalle)
College



Brother Steve Hogan
La Salle College

Asia Pacific Lasallian Educators' Conference (APLEC)

APLEC Hong Kong holds three plenary meetings a year while in between the members are involved in a number of projects for the welfare of our Hong Kong Lasallian Family. At our recent meeting on the 12th June 2010 we had the pleasure of the company of Brother John De Cruz and Eric Amaladas who came from Malaysia to share their inspiring insights into the what, who, why and how of Lasallian Formation.



Hong Kong Lasallian Formation Team

Our Hong Kong Formation Team has been busy over the last few months collecting Lasallian Formation materials as well as giving presentations in our schools. By all accounts, these presentations had gone down well with our staff. They have compiled a large resource file for each school. They have also learned much from their sharing with Brother John D'Cruz and Eric Amaladas.



Confirmation

This is Confirmation season and quite a number of our Primary School students received the sacrament and became little 'soldiers of Christ'. With the help and the strength of the Holy Spirit, they will now spread and defend the faith by word and action, as true witnesses of Christ. The ceremony took on a nice balance of seriousness and joyfulness and was presided over by Bishop John Tong. The newly confirmed were happy to tuck into tasty refreshments afterwards.



Au Revoir Brother Joseph

Brother Joseph Hung will be saying goodbye to us at the end of July. He is returning to Vietnam for a year of formation before making his final vows. He will be missed by staff and students of La Salle Primary School who fondly nicknamed him 'Brother Jou San' (that is Brother Good Morning in Cantonese). We hope he will return to us in due course.



Oriental Flavour: The Dragon Boat Festival 端午節



Google image

On the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, which often falls in the Gregorian calendar month of June, Chinese communities throughout the world celebrate the Dragon Boat Festival. Families gather together, eat traditional rice dumplings and enjoy watching dragon boat races.

In fact the origin of the festival goes back to the activities of a great patriotic poet, Qu Yuan, (340-278BC or 343-290BC), who took his own life on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month.

Qu Yuan served in the court of Emperor Huai of the Chu State during the Warring States period (475 - 221 BC). He was a wise and erudite man. His fight against corruption antagonized other court officials. They said a lot of bad words behind his back. The Emperor dismissed Qu Yuan and eventually exiled him. During his exile, Qu Yuan did not give up. He travelled extensively, taught and wrote many patriotic poems, still hoping to be recalled to serve his country. However, the Emperor whom he trusted was killed and his successor had no time for Qu Yuan. In despair, he took his own life by throwing himself into the Miluo River (in modern-day Hunan). He was aged 62.



Legend says that after the people heard he had drowned, they were greatly dismayed. Fishermen raced to the spot in their boats to search for his body. Unable to find it, they threw rice dumplings, eggs and other food into the river to distract the dragons and serpents and prevent them from eating Qu Yuan's body. Since that time, people began to commemorate Qu Yuan through dragon boat races and eating rice dumplings, on the anniversary of his death, the 5th of the fifth month. After almost two thousand years, this festival is still celebrated by Chinese people throughout the world. This shows that history makes the final judgment on those who really love their nation.

Qu Yuan wrote poetry lamenting the state of his country. His laments took the form of political allegory expressing his grief and censuring his ruler. Here is one of the poems written during his exile.

To the Cloud Lord Qu Yuan (BC332-296)

Translated by Prof Shiu-loon Kong

Perfumed in an orchid bath you appear on view
Your clothes brilliant in varying hues
With fleecy locks you race to reach unlimited heights
In colourful splendour you skilfully paint the morning sky

Your many radiant faces thrive at high noon
Your whiteness pure and bright to match
that of the sun and moon
Along your side the dragon glides in formidable attire
Your wandering movements so free in spirit we admire

In silvery drops you descend on mother earth in rain
On wind's wings you rise ever so high again
Seeing all continents at ease in a single sweep
You float across the four seas to survey their deeps

To show my longing for you I could but sigh
My heart belongs to you however high you fly



九歌 雲中君 屈原 (前 332-前 296) 江紹倫譯

浴蘭湯兮沐芳 華採衣兮若英
靈連蜷兮既留 爛昭昭兮未央

謇將憺兮壽宮 與日月兮齊光
龍駕兮帝服 聊翺遊兮周章

靈皇皇兮既降 焱遠舉兮雲中
覽冀洲兮有餘 橫四海兮焉窮

思夫君兮太息 極勞心兮忡忡

Blast from the Past

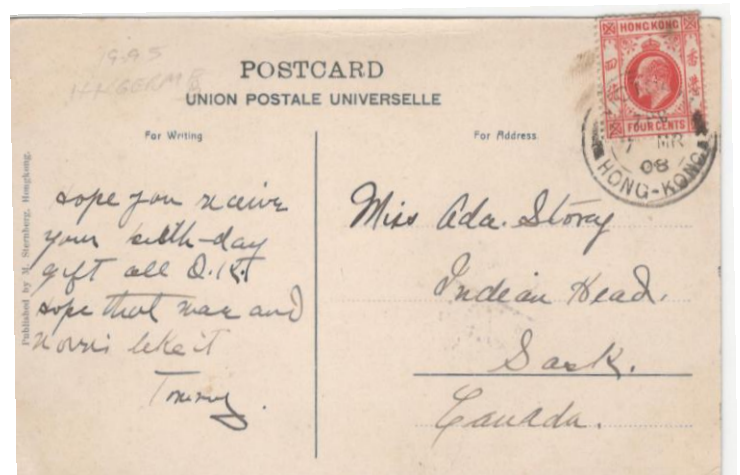
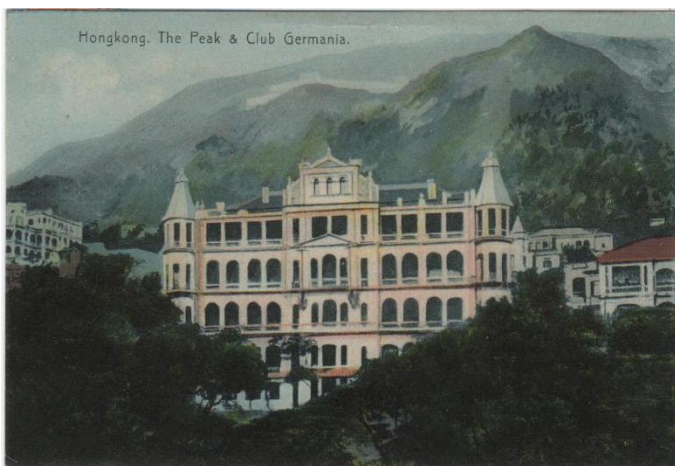
Brother Aimar Sauron was the Director/Principal of St. Joseph's College from 1914 to 1931 apart from a break between 1921 to 1923. He was always on the lookout for improving the learning environment for the students. And so it was that in 1918, when the opportunity presented itself for the Brothers to acquire a piece of property of their own, he did not miss it. The property in question was the Club Germania at Kennedy Road.

This splendid building had been built by the German community in Hong Kong. It was opened on the 31st December 1902 and was regarded as one of the finest club premises in the Colony. When the First World War broke out, the premises passed into the hands of the Custodian of Enemy Property who sold it with its commodious grounds to the De La Salle Brothers. The story goes that if Brother Aimar could have laid his hands on \$5000 more Hong Kong dollars, he could have acquired an extra block of land extending as far as the Peak Tram Railway.

The front of our featured postcard shows something of the beauty and grandeur of the Club while the stamp at the back is a four cents one of 1908, King Edward VII reigning.

The Club Germania served St. Joseph's College well until the early 60s when the demand for places was such that it had to be demolished.

The old Club Germania holds a fond place in the history of St. Joseph's College and in the hearts and minds of those who passed through its portals.



St. Joseph, our well beloved patron, pray for us.

St. John Baptist de La Salle, pray for us.

Live Jesus in our hearts, forever.