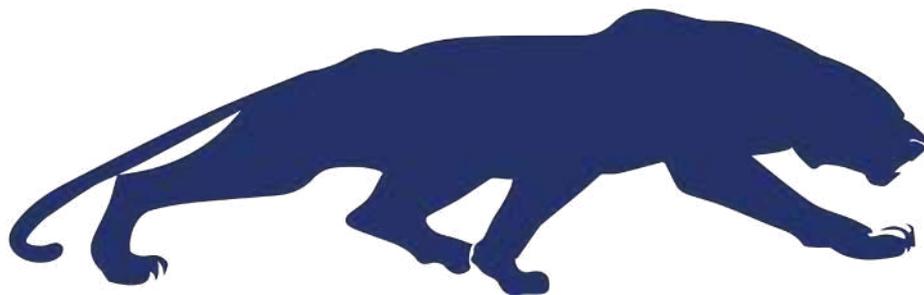


ISKL selamannya

55



Celebrating 55 Years Young!



ISKL Panther Pride

Celebrating 55 Years Young with our Malaysia-inspired ISKL Pewter Panther and Gold Panther.

Purchase your panther to take home and your name (or one nominated by you) will be added to our beautiful 55th Anniversary commemorative plaque at ISKL.

Help us lay the foundations for the next 55 years at ISKL.



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ISKL Selamanya

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*Once a Panther,
Always a Panther*



I've been thinking a lot recently about the things that bring me joy (it's infinitely better than focusing on the opposite) and it has become apparent to me that it is very rarely, in fact, things that make me happy. Almost always, the sources of my joy are people and experiences. As ISKL celebrates 55 years of international education, it is without a doubt the people who have been part of our community and the wealth of experiences that make our school so special.

Moments of joy do tend to come with the assistance of technology these days; silly conversations with my grandsons in Australia spring to mind, along with the wonderful emails from Alumni that prompt me to check my inbox immediately upon waking each morning.

Another such wonder of technology was our first Virtual Gala Reunion, Night of the ISKL Notables, in December. Alumni from across the globe, and spanning every ISKL decade, came together for a night of celebration and memories. I hope you enjoy reading all about it (page 4) and that you will join our next event.

We tested our technological capabilities as well when we live streamed the very first Future Ready: Alumni Black Box Conversations (page 24) in September. This first Alumni careers forum focused on the Medical Sciences and included three wonderful Alumni panellists working and studying in the field, along with our star Alumni host, Hezril Asyraaf ('13).

Over the past 18 months as Director of Development and Alumni at ISKL, I have come to know many of our alumni around the world and right here in Kuala Lumpur. Hearing their stories and finding out more about ISKL's history and culture are some of the best parts of my role.

Very recently, digging deeper into our history to put this 55th Anniversary issue of Selamanya together, with people like Emily Salim, Kevin Gaw ('78) and Tobey Ishii Anderson ('72), has only confirmed the deep affection and pride so many have for our school and the great joy being part of it continues to provide for so many Alumni.

In this issue, we'll take you back to ISKL's birthplace, the Istana (page 18), share our history timeline (page 12), and showcase some of the wonderful work happening on the new Ampang Hilir campus today (page 26). I'm sure you will relate to Toni Mullen's fascinating exploration of Third Culture Kid identity (page 8), with insights from ISKL Alumni students and faculty.

Once again, my sincerest gratitude to Ayesha Zulkifly ('06) who on top of working as an intern teacher in the Middle School, and getting married (congratulations!), found time to design this issue of Selamanya. Ayesha also features in our article about campus updates (page 26). What a talent!

Happy reading and remember, Selamanya means "forever" in Bahasa Melayu.

Once a Panther, Always a Panther!

Lynette MacDonald
Director of Development and Alumni Engagement

Night of the ISKL Notables



A pianist, a poet, an opera singer, a storyteller and a dancer. The Night of the ISKL Notables Virtual Gala Reunion served up a smorgasbord of talent to delight the worldwide audience. The annual ISKL Alumni gala reunion in December is always a hit with those alumni able to be in Kuala Lumpur for the event. However, with the pandemic changing the way we're able to get together, this year for the very first time Alumni from around the world, from Australia to Europe, Singapore to Canada, had the chance to take part. Despite the very early or late starting time for many, Alumni from every ISKL decade joined in the fun.





“ This is your home. This is a safe place that is always open and welcoming for you.”
Rami Madani

Alumni, Kirstin Chavez ('87), a world-class opera performer wowed all gathered with a section of an aria from her renowned *Carmen*. Despite it being just after 5am in Salt Lake City where Kirstin is based, her incredible talents were on full display. Kirstin's last performance at ISKL was a very special recital at the ISKL Ampang campus back in 2007, gracing the Robert B. Gaw Theatre stage.

More Alumni talent followed, with Tobey Ishii Anderson, Class of 1972 and Faculty Alumni, as well as a dramatic storyteller, sharing some favorite anecdotes about life at ISKL's first campus, the Istana. Tobey started school in Grade 6 at ISKL in our very first year, 1965, and we were privileged to hear her firsthand account of the old campus.

Revealing Our ISKL Notable Who's Who

As host and emcee for the event, I must admit it was quite fun to dig up interesting tidbits and clues for the "Who Am I?" quiz that revealed our Notable guests. Who would have thought that our first Notable, ISKL's Head of School and concert pianist, Rami Madani, was at age 22 named McDonald's employee of the year in Lubeck, Germany?

One by one, the Notables were revealed, with each then

performing live. Rami set the mood with an excerpt from Erik Satie's *Gymnopédie* played on his home electric piano - not quite the ISKL grand piano, but his passion and skill shone through from his living room venue.

Rami was followed by our Notable 2, Grant Venables, ISKL High School International Baccalaureate English Literature teacher, and an accomplished poet, who drew the virtual audience in with a very evocative recital of one of his own poems. There was rapt silence as ISKL



Join our Alumni Community to reconnect with old friends, join a club, read the latest Alumni news, and share your own news and photos.

www.alumni.iskl.edu.my





Last, and definitely not least, ISKL’s own Karen Palko was revealed as the fifth Notable. After 38 years at ISKL, Karen’s passion for the community and dance shone through as she took us through 20 hip hop moves from the 80s.

To the Decks!

The Who Am I? was just the start of the fun. The next part of the evening was a nod to the ISKL High School tradition of the decks where students across the generations have hung out with friends, with the Senior Deck being the final prized destination.

Each of the Notables hosted a “deck” and all attendees were whisked away (thank you Zoom!) to virtual “decks” to share their special mementos and memories in an ISKL Show & Tell. There were prized ISKL t-shirts, jackets and patches, old yearbooks, and even some of the very earliest editions of the Fishwrap, ISKL’s first student newspaper. As host, I was able to flit between the “decks”, checking in on some wonderful discussions. Jumping into Grant Venables’ “deck” I discovered that one of

our attendees, Michael Dixon II (‘97), had a name that Grant recognized from the record boards that still bear his Track records almost 25 years since his graduation. Impressively, Michael maintains the IASAS records for High Jump, Long Jump and Triple Jump, along with the ISKL record for the 400m Hurdles.

Over on Karen Palko’s “deck”, Ron Simpson (‘82) was amazing the group with his collection of old ISKL publications, including the Fishwrap, true gems from the 1970s and 80s.

Truly Malaysian Finale

The evening concluded with an extra special finale as former ISKL Singer, Julius Lim (‘95), led a rendition of Negaraku, Malaysia’s national anthem. With Kirstin Chavez chiming in, it was a beautiful and thoroughly Malaysian way to wrap up a very special evening.

In his concluding remarks, Rami thanked all of our amazing notables, and ISKL Alumni guests who joined the event from around the world and reminded them, “This is your home. This is

a safe place that is always open and welcoming for you.”

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way we all do many things, not always for the best, but this worldwide virtual gala reunion gave us the chance to reach our ISKL Alumni family in a new and fun way. While we hope to have events on campus again soon, this is a new addition that’s likely to become its own annual ISKL tradition.



Lynette MacDonald,
Director of
Development &
Alumni Engagement

Do you have reunion plans? Is there a virtual get-together you would like some help to orchestrate? We are always here to support our ISKL Alumni students, parents, faculty and staff to plan reunions of all types and sizes.

Let us know how we can help by emailing us at alumni@iskl.edu.my.

First Grade Wisdom



Living in another country and culture, even for a short time and whether as a child or adult, often has a profound and lasting impact on the individual. Former ISKL Director of Alumni, Toni Mullen, was a Third Culture Kid (TCK) who chose an international teaching career as an adult, and who now finds herself back “home” in the US. Toni shares her story and explores the complexities of the TCK identity.

“I spent one year at ISKL in first grade and it changed my life forever.” This simple sentence was uttered by ISKL alumni, Scott Fulmer ('80), during one of my first years as Director of Alumni at ISKL. Little did I realize then how accurately his comment described my own overseas experience.

As a youngster, I spent two and half years in Bogota, Columbia, at Colegio Nuevo Granada in grades 1 through 3. This was followed by a four-year stint at the American School in Japan in grades 6 through 10. My ASIJ experience, I believe, prompted me to pursue an international living experience for my own family decades later.

My husband and I, both educational professionals, took a two-year leave of absence which turned into a 21-year stint. Our two sons, aged 4 and 5, accompanied us to share our adventures in Bangkok, Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur where they graduated in 2005 and 2006. Then we finished our adventure with two years in England.

My response to Scott Fulmer is that moving overseas practically changes one's DNA creating a renewed perspective of the world and redefining one's interactions with people. ISKL alumni, David Watson ('75), offers this insightful definition: “We are children and then adults who grew up with a different look at the world with less blinders allowing us to look beyond a circle of 50 miles and an ability to adapt much quicker to new situations.”

More specifically, Terry Factor, an administrator who worked in international schools in Ecuador, Thailand, Mexico, Doha and Turkey details his experience, saying, “...It's sorta like being

able to view the world from the international space station (not quite that expansive a view)... one can appreciate what the “world” is; what role geography has played in the growth and development of civilizations; the process of colonization and history in general; geopolitical events and crises.”

of Growing Up Among Worlds” (2002), as “a person who has lived in - or meaningfully interacted with - two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during developmental years.”

But it doesn't end there. The nebulous definition extends to

*“We are children and then adults who grew up with a different look at the world with less blinders allowing us to look beyond a circle of 50 miles and an ability to adapt much quicker to new situations.”
David Watson ('75)*

Fluid, Inclusive Definition

During my time as the Director of Alumni at ISKL, I had the opportunity to discover and research the term “Third Culture Kid”, originally coined by US sociologist Ruth Hill Uusem in the 1950s and brought to public attention in “Third Culture Kid” by David Pollack and Ruth Van Reken (1999). The original definition, “A third culture kid is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside their parents' culture” has broadened to include children who move from one locality to another even within their own country, as in from downtown New Orleans to a Los Angeles suburb, adopted children who feel the impact of integrating into a new culture and even the adjustment to be part of a blended family.

TCK is now interchangeable with the term Cross-Cultural Kid (CCK) further defined by Ruth E. Van Reken in “The Experience

include the grown up (or adult) version, the Adult Third Culture Kid (ATCK) who has lived for significant periods of time away from their native culture. According to Van Reken, it also includes bi/multi-cultural/ and/or bi/multi-racial children, children of immigrants, children of refugees, children of minorities, international adoptees and children whose parents have moved in or among various subcultures within that child's home country, also known as “domestic” TCKs.

My Way

As we TCKs and ATCKs develop, some similar characteristics also emerge, such as being adventurous, adaptable, perceptive, tolerant; yet, misunderstood, confused, uprooted, within complex relationships that change and are nomadic, but craving stability. (Kendra Sand, TEDxMileHigh, 2020, “Third Culture Kid Characteristics: An Embrace of Dichotomy”)



Left: Toni about to leave on her first expat adventure to Bogota, Colombia.
Below: The Mullens back in the U.S.A.



Tod, our youngest, explores his own feelings upon returning to the US, “I did feel misunderstood, but I wasn’t entirely able to express that to people because they didn’t understand or want to understand in most instances. You feel less a part of your past since it’s not a place you can easily go back and revisit. It’s not like when people go back to their hometown for the weekend and catch up with their friends and family - I wasn’t able to fly back to Malaysia every weekend when I was homesick.”

Everyone’s journey is personal and realization of this previously undefined identity can evoke many emotions. Tony Storey’s (’74) journey began after he reunited with his old ISKL friend, Peter Doornbos. Tony explains, “Together we found the ISKL alumni page and started to contact old friends. Not long after we started, Kevin Gaw (’78) who was researching for his graduate studies, used the Alumni list at that time to send out a questionnaire on TCK. First time I’d heard the term. As I sat at home

answering the questions with tears welling and pouring down my face, I began to realize that I was actually OK. Other people must be like me and the results of that survey bore the data to be true. It was so easy to say yes to every question, that’s me, yes I do, Oh, my God I’m OK!”

Today, the availability of resources, both hard copy and on-line, has exploded to address questions and provide insight from preschool children to mid-life travelers and beyond. Tips for moving abroad and repatriating abound.

Emotional Ebb and Flow

In actuality, I have repatriated three times: at the age of seven, at fifteen and, for the final time, after a 21-year stint abroad in a combination of Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Egham, England. Each time I needed to reflect and find my balance to work through lingering anger and even distrust.

When I was seven, I had a challenging time fitting into a

suburban Connecticut school resulting in a playground scuffle with classmates who did not believe my “overseas” story. Even my teacher questioned the validity of my story. My world and life experience was, simply put, broader than my peers and some adults.

During home leave before my junior year, we were unexpectedly transferred back to the US and I now recognize that I was seriously depressed that entire year. After being involved in countless activities in Japan, my junior year in Connecticut was spent watching TV.

As an adult, repatriation was our choice to be closer to our sons who were in university. One would think I might have acquired some “coping” skills given the number of times I had repatriated but, even today, I can be smothered in discomfort.

Rebecca Factor, PE. Administrator (Ecuador, Thailand, Mexico, Qatar and Turkey) shares a similar feeling, “One thing I am uncomfortable

with is when I feel we are the 'evening show.' We recently met a group of friends of our friends. After our friends introduced us and told them we lived and worked overseas, this group of retired professionals were amazed and dumbfounded at what we had done - 'You actually took your young children to Quito? Weren't you scared? How many times did you move? What did you eat? How did you communicate? Did you always

While he wouldn't change his experience, my son, Tod (Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur '06) is like so many TCKs when he says, "Do I wish I could have grown up differently? Probably not. I think it's better this way if the alternative is growing up in the same city your whole life. There are pros to that though; I'm envious of friends who have childhood friends they keep in touch with and/or see when they 'go back home'. I don't

in their home countries, while others are in school positions around the world. These Zoom conversations have helped us expand our pandemic social boundaries a little bit each week, in a safe manner."

Tapping the Keys... Connecting the Dots

While abroad, I established deep friendships that have lasted more than 50 years. It takes dedicated energy to maintain friendships around the world, but it is so worth it. I have attended, organized and crashed many reunions with former classmates, colleagues and teachers. Of course, this accessibility has exploded due to rapidly changing technological advances and the growing recognition of the alumni family. These have all allowed me to stay connected with like-minded people who share my "changed" DNA.

A major highlight of my alumni director days was hosting the 2009 reunion for "the kids" from ISKL's first campus. For many of them, it was their first return trip to Malaysia and they were unfamiliar with the "TCK" term. For some, it was a revelation. Among them, Peter Doornbos ('74) who reveals, "Isolation of the pre-Facebook days didn't enable us to share our challenges and concerns with each other. Listening to my classmates (during a 2009 reunion in Kuala Lumpur) tell their stories hit me like an express train and changed my life from then on. Reading more about TCKs was a journey with tears and soul searching, but liberating."



Toni Mullen,
Faculty Alumna
and former
Director of Alumni

"I always think, this time I'm going to join in and become part of that community, try and throw down roots. It never works."
Peter Doornbos ('74)

have electricity and running water? Weren't you lonely? Aren't you happy to be back? Was it dangerous?"

Living the life of an expat and then repatriating to one's home country is a highly personal journey, yet there exists commonalities that bind us. The process can evoke a deep sense of loss in the immediate and the long term. Another characteristic is that while it is expected, it also erupts unexpectedly to often catch one off guard.

A sense of loss can be easily identified. "I missed the interaction of "like minded" colleagues...It was hard to share those experiences with people who did not travel or were not interested in exploring "global" conversations you had with your students who came from all over the world and the colleagues who had a different understanding of being a world citizen," explains John Smith, ISKL MS PE ('96-'98), Athletic Director ('98-'05).

A sense of loss can be confusing and/or become an irritation.

really have a home and I think that contributes to a perpetual identity crisis that stays with me. I have no 'roots'."

Peter Doornbos ('74), a New Zealander who studied at ISKL, returned to New Zealand, but now resides in Sydney, Australia, concurs, "I always think, this time I'm going to join in and become part of that community, try and throw down roots. It never works. I always feel different from others, not belonging. I always feel I am from another planet and I'm watching others live their lives but not feeling enough commonality to join them."

However, repatriating can be eased given the family assistance of other TCKs/ACKs. Patty Sands, ISKL Theatre Manager from 1998-2003 elaborates, "Since resettling in North Carolina five months ago, we have spent recent Friday evenings during this pandemic reuniting with our ISKL buddies from the early 2000s via Zoom calls. Some of those friends have also resettled

ISKL 55 Years

Fifty-five may sound like middle age, but for ISKL, it's really the new 25! Our more than half century of teaching, learning and community building has been filled with wonderful moments, big and small.

1965 (September)

ISKL's first home is the Istana (Palace) on Jalan Maxwell with a grand total of 48 students and nine teachers.



1966-1967

ISKL Faculty and students.



1968-1969

The first yearbook is called "Sekbangsa" (One Nation) but is renamed the following year to "Harimau" (Tiger).



1960s



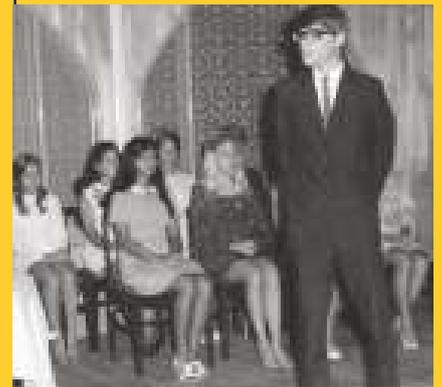
1966-1967

Students vote to adopt the name "Panthers" for sports teams.



1967 (July)

ISKL's first graduation ceremony takes place on the lawn of the Istana.



1969

The National Honor Society inducts its first 16 members.

Young

1970-1971

Student government sponsors UN Week to celebrate diversity at ISKL. This event evolves into ISKL's annual International Festival.



1978

The PTA is formed in 1971 and donates money towards the purchase of ISKL's first computer in 1978.



1979

ISKL publishes its first community newsletter, the "Friday Flash"



1970s



1976

Ampang campus opens.



1978

ISKL establishes the first Southeast Asia Forensics Tournament.



1979

The first Malaysia Week takes place and was originally called Intersession.

Our Leaders
ISKL Heads of
School across
the decades.



Robert
Fendley
1965 - 1968



Albert
Chudler
1968 - 1970



Robert
B. Gaw
1970 - 1978



Gail
Schoppert
1978 - 1983



Joseph
Kennedy
1983 - 1986



Ronald
Dowty
1986 - 1987

1980

ISKL initiates one of the first school-wide special needs programs in Southeast Asia.



1982

The first IASAS competition takes place.

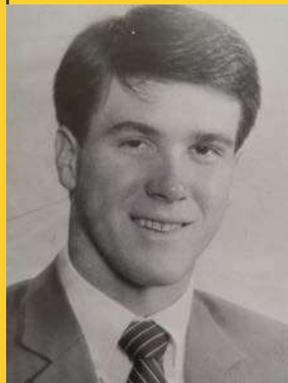
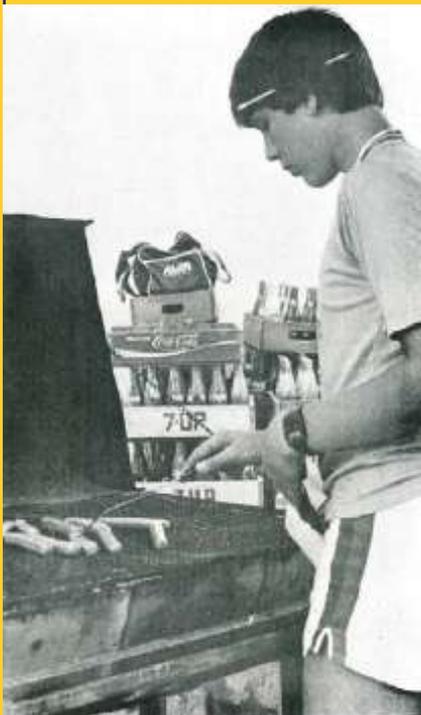


1988

ISKL hosts its first Model United Nations (MUN) conference debating issues such as nuclear-free zones, the AIDS crisis and the Iran-Iraq War.



1980s



1986

In 1986, Derek Haight graduates as ISKL's first lifetime student having enrolled in 1973.

1982

Panther Athletic Club (PAC) is created to enable students to play a role in earning money to support IASAS activities. The PAC Shack tradition starts with students selling food and drinks.



1989

ISKL becomes the first school in Malaysia authorized to run the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP).



Dexter Lewis
1987 - 1989



Dick Krajczar
1989 - 1996



Barry Farnham
1996 - 1999



William Powell
2000 - 2006



Paul Chmelik
2006 - 2013



Dr. Norma Hudson
2013 - 2019



Rami Madani
2019 - present

1992

Melawati campus opens. First day of school at Melawati.



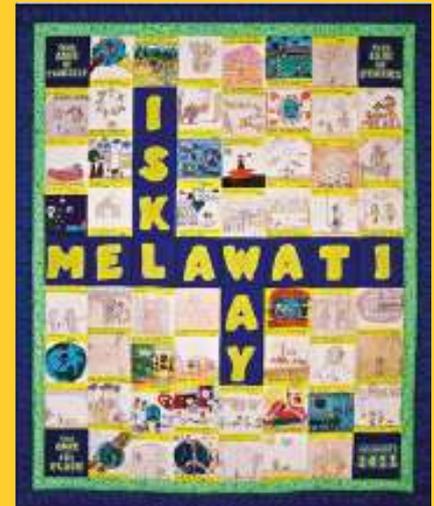
1994-1995

First Mission Statement and Core Values are developed.

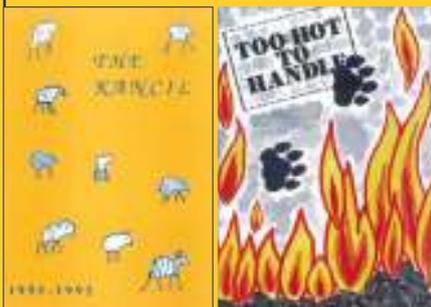


1997

The "Melawati Way" is introduced in Elementary School.



1990s



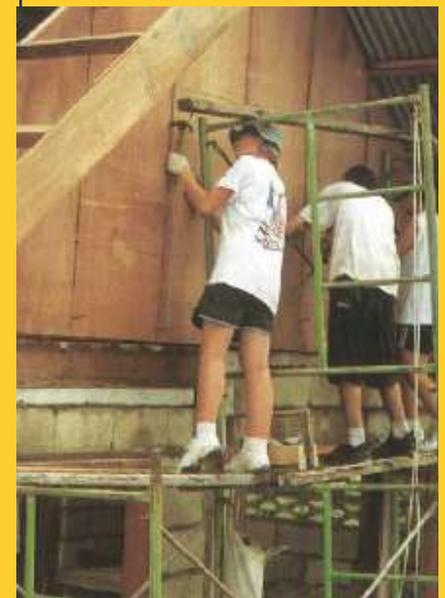
1992

Elementary School publishes its first yearbook, "Kancil" (Mouse Deer). Middle School publishes its first yearbook, "Monyet" (Monkey) in 1997.



1997

The haze is so bad 400 students and 40 teachers leave Malaysia and study online, making ISKL a pioneer in distance learning.



1998

The first Habitat for Humanity build takes place and is part of a pilot service learning initiative for High School students.



1966-1967

The ISKL crest is designed by members of the Student Council. The tiger and crescent moon represent Malaysia. The scroll and book stand for learning and the globe represents diversity.



1982

The ISKL crest is revamped. The crescent moon disappears and the standing tiger begins to resemble a leaping panther.

2002

The first alumni reception is held and ISKL's Alumni Association is launched.



2002

First IB Diploma Scholarships are awarded to Malaysian students.



2009

The first Global Action Program (GAP) takes place.



2000s

2003

The "Red Hat" community service/ leadership initiative is introduced in Grade 5.



2008

A new Mission Statement, School-wide Learning Results (SLRs), and Core Beliefs are launched.



2001
In 2001 the school crest is incorporated into a logo and in 2007 the mortarboard replaces the caliper.



2019-2020
The first ISKL Alumni crest is launched in 2019, featuring the ISKL panther and founding year, 1965.

2012
ISKL becomes the first recipient of the Eco-Schools Green Flag in Malaysia.



2017
Life Centered Education (LCE) is launched serving students with a diagnosed intellectual or development disability.



2018
Ampang Hilir Campus opens. After 27 years apart, all three divisions are once again united.



2010s



2019
ISKL Varsity Rugby and Varsity Touch team wins Gold at Season 2 IASAS Championships.



2015
ISKL celebrates its 50th anniversary.





“...this joyful activity was unfortunately ended by the administration...after a student fell and cracked some ribs in the gutter.”
Kevin Gaw ('78)

Kevin Gaw Class of 1978 & son of Head of School Robert B. Gaw

We would sneak through the fence near the badminton court and swing on some jungle vines, high over the rain gutter (this joyful activity was unfortunately ended by the administration [ahem, my Dad] after a student fell and cracked some ribs in the gutter). We would catch sand lions under the canteen, slide in the mud during rainstorms (and then get into trouble with the administration, ahem, my Dad again), and try to catch

snakes and giant (super scary) centipedes along the perimeter. There were “secret” passages (sort of – remember – I was 9 when I got there) to explore and entire worlds to discover.

The Istana itself was an architectural wonder for us kids – with its grand staircase inside, multiple entries, “escape routes,” and plenty of hiding places (translate – after school games of kick the can and such). There were also many “risks”: sharp rusty corrugated roofing, falling facades and ceilings, rickety outside stairs and cobras,

to name a few. The big soccer field was through a fence, past a broken-down old house, down the hill, and across a small lane. It was on this field under Mr Daniels’ coaching, we played soccer, rounders, and other sports. After school I flew gliders off the opposite hill with friends and rode bikes down that hill, too, at breakneck speeds.

If you were to listen to the current Zoom calls with classmates from the early years (the Istana years), so many fun stories can be heard. Besides stories of all the typical school

Istana Days



“Istana” is Malay for “palace”, a word that conjures up images of grand facades, opulent interiors and manicured gardens. ISKL’s first campus from 1965-1975, in the old Istana on Jalan Maxwell, was by all accounts far from the stereotypical image; a rather modest, slightly dilapidated, colonial building. It was, however, the birthplace of the famous ISKL community spirit and identity, and the cherished place where so many memories were made. What was life like at the Istana? Three Alumni who roamed its rooms, gardens and beyond, share their memories...

kid antics, scrapes, and tall tales, you’d also hear how the unique learning community of ISKL cemented into us so many positive values and perspectives. Intercultural development, appreciation for differences, celebration of others, a sense of kinship with new arrivals, a love

for Malaysia, an appreciation for diverse foods (are Malaysians the original Foodies?) and traditions, cross-age and cross-cultural learning, looking up to older students as role models, pride in learning and speaking Bahasa and writing in Jawi, and much more. We all remember the Old School with such affection.

Leslie Muri Faculty Alumni

There were many peculiarities about school in the Istana. I remember in Peter Hadwen’s sixth grade class he sat at his desk under a large golf umbrella for quite some time. His teacher was Nancy Lambeth, who has passed away.

To explain, there was no air conditioning in the bedrooms that became classrooms, but there were fans. The building was old and so had very high ceilings and the fans hung quite



Left: Science class ('68)
Above: Kevin Gaw Senior year

far down from the ceiling with long shafts, which had a sort of a bowl or cup to cover the point where the shafts attached to the fan hook at the ceiling and the wires were connected. The bowl in Peter's classroom had become dislodged and no longer touched the ceiling, there being about a two inch gap between the edge of the bowl and the ceiling.

A family of birds took advantage of such a safe place and built their nest in the bowl. At potty time, the birds just perched on the edge of the bowl and let go. So the golf umbrella was to protect the kid underneath from a direct hit. We had birds flying in and out of our classrooms quite regularly as the windows and doors were always open.

Tobey Ishii Anderson Class of 1972 and Faculty Alumni

My sister, Patti, and I were driven to Jalan Maxwell on the first day of school and saw the "palace", the Istana. Each room had a private bathroom with a bath! What a school! This was 1965.

The 6th grade classroom was on the top floor. What impressed me about my classmates was how they were so welcoming. They were used to the coming and goings of friends. I'm sure we have experienced that being at international schools.

*Right: The Walls
icecream man (circa '68)
Below: Tobey Ishii
Anderson Senior year*



“ We had birds flying in and out of our classrooms quite regularly as the windows and doors were always open.” Leslie Muri



*Left: Student
Government ('68)
Above: Leslie Muri
(circa '76)*

Sports Day was organized by Mr Al Daniels and the events were held around the beautiful Istana grounds. Outdoor assemblies held on the badminton court had us dripping in sweat while listening to the monkeys and hooting gibbons in the jungle. The Walls ice cream man was waiting for us by his motorcycle during break time. His hand would drop into the cooler while the dry ice smoke drifted down the sides of the box. We were always ready for a Cornetto to cool down.

It was a special day when the Senior Lounge arrived. It was a metal trailer with an air conditioner. What a great place to escape from class!

The social gatherings were so special, especially the Sadie Hawkins dance. We moved the heavy library tables around to make a dance floor. Mrs Beryl Lau would help us with the decorations. We had an amazing school rock band headed by Russell Sun and they would play the latest Bee Gees songs.

Mrs Mahendren made sure we knew how to light the bunsen burners in the lab. It took me several matches to light mine. It's a wonder the wood structured room didn't catch on fire! Now the ISKL campus has become state of the art. However the Istana days brought us a unique experience of adaptation and creativity that will always be a part of me.



Kevin Gaw ('78), Leslie Muri & Tobey Ishii Anderson ('72)

Istana photo courtesy of Mike Radway ('72)



To celebrate turning 55 Years Young we're compiling our ISKL 55 for 55 and we want to hear from you. Please share your:

#ISKLMagicMoments | #ISKLHopesfortheFuture
#ISKLChangingtheWorld | #ThingsWeLoveAboutISKL

We accept your selfie-style video (1 minute maximum), short text or poem, photos or art - be creative!

Send your contribution to alumni@iskl.edu.my by April 16, 2021 to be part of the ISKL 55 for 55 countdown on May 5, 2021.



May Peace Prevail

They could be mistaken as obelisks from the Asterix comic books, however, the two white poles with words inscribed on their sides in four languages situated in the gardens of the Ampang Hilir campus are, in fact, ISKL's peace poles.

Peace poles originated in Japan. The horrors and devastation witnessed in World War II led Mr Masahisa Goi (1916-1980) to dedicate the rest of his life to a search for peace. He founded the World Peace Prayer Society in 1955 – a pacifist, nonprofit, nonsectarian peace movement, now recognized as an NGO by the United Nations. Mr Goi understood that the thoughts and actions of every individual influence the destiny of all living things on our planet. He believed as people were moved by the prayer, “May peace prevail on earth,” to live and act in the spirit of those words, they would help bring about peace and harmony for all of humanity. This message of peace was displayed in Japan on handcrafted poles, planted in the ground. The first peace poles outside of Japan began to appear in 1983.

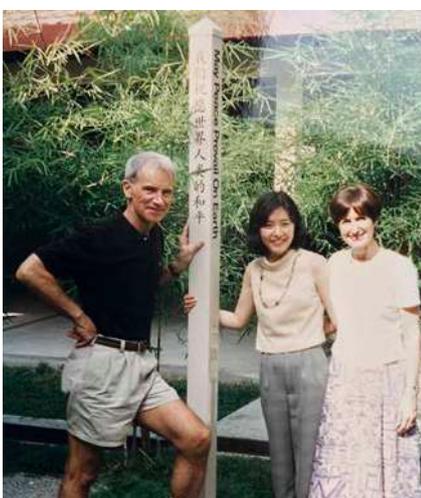


Our poles do not date back to 1983, nor were we the first school in Malaysia to plant a pole! Our friendly competition, Mt Kiara International School, planted theirs in 1995. The ISKL community became involved when Middle School humanities teacher, Ms Gloria Lubon Rayberg (now Wallace), learned of the World Peace Prayer Society and the Peace Pole Project from friends at Mt Kiara. An ISKL Japanese parent, Mrs Keiko Yamada, offered a peace pole to ISKL through Ms Wallace. With the support of Dr Barry Farnham, our head of school, Ms Wallace wrote a proposal to the school board, requesting one pole for the Ampang Campus. When the board reviewed the plan they thought this project important enough to plant a pole on each ISKL campus and two were commissioned.

The dedication of our poles was calendared for November 6, 1997, coinciding with United Nations Day and International Fest. Who could have predicted that November 1997 would see the worst haze crisis and severe drought ever experienced in Malaysia? The haze began in August, becoming worse each day. Eventually many ISKL families left Malaysia temporarily for health reasons. Always adaptable in a crisis, ISKL became one of the first schools to go ‘on-line’ for students scattered around the world. On-line at that time certainly didn’t mean Zoom meetings! Academic work was sent by email attachment with teachers checking in with students to follow up, again by email. Not an ideal teaching/learning situation!

Despite the haze, invitations to the dedication ceremonies were sent out informing guests of the significance of the peace poles: “ISKL is planting these peace poles in line with our school’s mission to educate our students ‘to be responsible world citizens.’ These peace poles can be inspiring reminders that peace on earth begins in the hearts and minds of each individual, especially young people.”

As planned, on November 6 we did dedicate our peace poles and celebrated with a scaled-down International Fest. We had the honor of planting the second



HoS Dr Barry Farnham, Mrs Keiko Yamada, and Ms Gloria Lubon Rayberg (Wallace)

and the third poles in Malaysia. Both poles displayed the prayer, “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in the four languages commonly in use in Malaysia – Malay, English, Tamil, and Chinese. There were ceremonies on both campuses – held in the theaters due to the haze. Special guests had been invited; amongst them were Mrs Masami Sainoji, the daughter of World Peace Prayer Society founder Masahisa Goi, Mr Hiroo Sainoji, President of the World Peace Prayer Society, and Mrs Keiko Yamada, our ISKL parent and Member At Large of the World Peace Prayer Society.

For a number of years our peace poles were rededicated during our United Nations Day/ International Fest celebrations. As time passed, the people initiating this project moved on to new jobs in other places. Though, in recent years we have not rededicated ourselves to the ideals these poles represent, we can once again remember the words of our then head of school, Dr Barry Farnham, remind us of their significance:

“May each of us who daily pass this symbolic peace pole be reminded by its simple yet eloquent message that, regardless of our age, sex, race, color, creed or national origin, we are called upon one by one, to go forth, hand in hand, as apostles, as keepers, as makers, and as lovers of peace, to ensure that, indeed, peace does prevail on this earth during our lifetime. Nothing more is demanded of us. Nothing less is expected.

May Peace Prevail on Earth.



Emily Salim,
Faculty Alumni

“ *These peace poles can be inspiring reminders that peace on earth begins in the hearts and minds of each individual, especially young people.* ”





Left: Student Government ('68) Top Leslie Muri ('00)



ISKL Alumni take centre stage to share their knowledge and experiences of working and studying in the Medical Sciences.

What does it take to become a doctor or medical researcher? What personality types are best suited for these roles? And what will jobs in the medical sciences look like in the future? Those are a few of the questions tackled in the ISKL Future Ready: Alumni Black Box Conversations held in September 2020.

ISKL Alumni's first talk show-style careers forum featured our own alumni in the Medical Sciences sharing their education and career experiences, plus some insider tips, with host Hezril Asyraaf ('13) who is now a producer/presenter on Malaysia's business radio station, BFM 89.9.



From top left, clockwise: Hezril Asyraaf ('13), Yu Ern Hsueh ('17), Dr Elena Azizan ('05) and Dr Hana Aziz ('98)

Ready

This first forum featured an all-Malaysia lineup including Dr Hana Aziz ('98), Dr Elena Azizan ('05) and Yu Ern Hsueh ('17). It was recorded in front of a physically distanced audience of Grade 10 students at the Robert B. Gaw Theatre. The panel provided a range of expertise and experience of university and professional life and choices.

Dr Hana Aziz is a general practitioner at the Malaysia Social Research Institute clinic, providing care to the refugee community registered with the UNHCR. Hana earned her medical degree from the Asian Institute of Medicine, Science and Technology and is currently studying for a Masters in Public Health. Dr Elena Azizan is a Research Lecturer at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Medical Centre, and has recently received a major grant for Covid-19 research related to her field. Elena was an IB scholar who went on to receive a Bachelor of Pharmacology at Leeds University, then a Postgraduate degree in Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Cambridge. Yu Ern Hsueh is in her final year of a Bachelor of Genetics at Queen Mary University of London.

Masterfully led by Hezril, the panel shared their experiences of choosing subjects in High School, finding the right fit university, and navigating the many choices

that present themselves when deciding a career path. While their personal experiences differed, the strong message was that there is always an option for moving ahead. Elena's advised, "Don't quit. Change. You can always use whatever you have in the past to move forward. If you feel that it isn't for you, make a change and work towards bringing that change about."

Hana sums up the feelings of our panel saying, "It was such a good idea to not only have speakers from different fields within the biomedical sciences, but also that we each represented different stages in our career paths.

"If there was one takeaway message I hope the students will take from the event," Hana continues, "it is that no journey is perfect. In the process of reaching your goals, you will be faced with a lot of challenges and at times you may even fail. But failure is part of the process and you need to accept them and learn from them."

Take a look at the video of the event on the News page atalumni.iskl.edu.my.

Would you like to be part of a future Black Box Conversation? Do you have experience and wisdom to share? You don't need to be in Malaysia to take part and we're keen to build our library of careers information for alumni and students. Contact ISKL Alumni at alumni@iskl.edu.my.

“If there was one takeaway message I hope the students will take from the event, it is that no journey is perfect.”
Dr Hana Aziz ('98)



Watch Us Grow!

There is even more reason to visit the Ampang Hilir campus now with the addition of beautiful new alumni-created artworks and lush green community spaces to enjoy.



“It has never been more important for us as a community of learning to embrace the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. ISKL is here to transform conditions for ourselves, for others and for the environment. We have the ability and responsibility to empower our students to develop their passions and competencies, along with their understanding of what the world needs.” Rami Madani, ISKL Head of School.

While we have had limited access to the Ampang Hilir campus over the past year because of the pandemic, the important process of making our new “house” feel like a “home” has begun in earnest. With the assistance of some very talented ISKL Alumni and the school’s Facilities and Gardening team, the modern structure continues to be enhanced and imbued with ISKL and Malaysian history, culture and charm.

Our Welcome Walls

All visitors to ISKL, along with the 80 percent of students who ride the bus to school, are now greeted each morning by the bright, vibrant ISKL Welcome Walls; a 90 meter mural, in two sections, along the school’s main spine. Designed and painted during the summer break in 2020 by Ayesha Zulkifly, Class of 2006 Alumni, and now Middle School substitute teacher, the



vast mural speaks to ISKL's place and history.

Ayesha says, "ISKL's campuses have always been surrounded by a natural landscape with lush jungle in our backyard and the Klang Valley mountains hugging the community and bringing us closer together. As the Ampang Hilir campus emerges and settles into its new location, we honor elements from the memorable old campuses that remind us of

ISKL's legacy in Kuala Lumpur and beyond."

Those elements include panthers peering from the undergrowth, a wau kite, turtles and dragonflies, along with the ISKL blue and yellow and School Learning Results (SLR) colors.

Ayesha continues, "I was so thrilled to be able to leave a legacy at ISKL. To be able to help bring the memories, the

warmth and welcoming of the old campuses to our beautiful new setting. I was really honored."





Growing Green

Just like all makeovers, deciding where to start can be the biggest challenge. For us, the two main entrances to the school seemed logical. At the Middle and High School entrance, students and teachers are now greeted each day by dense jungle walls covering three sides of the Sustainability and CAS Office. It's a fitting location, with the walls now forming a living, growing reminder of the importance of the natural environment to a sustainable future. Over in Elementary, green walls at the entrance have been specially designed with little people in mind. Plants for the lower sections were selected for their scent and texture; encouraging students to touch and explore.

Our new Community Edible Garden at the campus amphitheatre, right at the heart of our school, has flourished despite the extended campus shutdown. Planted largely with Malaysian native species such as Bunga Kantan, Daun Kadok, Lengkuas (Galangal) and Pudina (Mint), the garden was designed by Harbir Gill who spent six months at ISKL working with teachers and students as a Sustainability Consultant.

Known affectionately by all as Mr H, Harbir says, "Even though the time students and teachers have had on campus has been short, it's been amazing to see how the garden has brought the community together. I've seen the Indonesian cleaners stop to smell the Kemangi (Lemon Basil) which is one of their most prized culinary herbs, teachers drop in to grab some herbs or sweet potato leaves for dinner, and students researching native insect species or harvesting for their weekly market stall. The garden has also acted as a bit of a catalyst for other ideas for the campus. I am constantly being stopped by teachers, students and staff wanting to share their ideas for projects, both here on campus and at home."

The Community Edible Garden is more than an outdoor learning space for students and a place for staff and faculty gardening enthusiasts to get their hands dirty. It also provides a link to Malaysian and South East Asian culture through the plant species selected. All community members are welcome to plant, tend and harvest from the garden and, once full campus access is available, we will invite our alumni in KL to enjoy and use the garden as well.





Clockwise from far left: Elementary entrance, Community Edible Garden, Mr H with students, and Sustainability & CAS Office



Campus Artistry

There's no denying the Ampang Hilir campus is vast; in fact, more than half a kilometer from entrance to exit gate! Being brand new, it's also sometimes challenging for visitors to find their way around. That's where ISKL Alumni, Amanda Soo ('20) comes in.

During Amanda's internship with the ISKL Development and Alumni Department over the summer after her graduation, she undertook a very special project, to create a beautiful and meaningful campus map to adorn a wall nearby to the lift used by most people visiting

campus. Amanda's design draws inspiration from her ISKL experience, taking the viewer on a journey of discovery like that of a butterfly emerging from a chrysalis. She uses images from nature and ISKL, including koi fish, hibiscus flowers and turtles, to tell the ISKL story and guide our guests through the campus. The result is a stunning and captivating artwork that draws on ISKL's culture and community spirit, and which is also a very practical guide to the campus.

These projects were made possible through our community's generous donations to the ISKL Development Fund. alumni.iskl.edu.my/supportus



Panther News

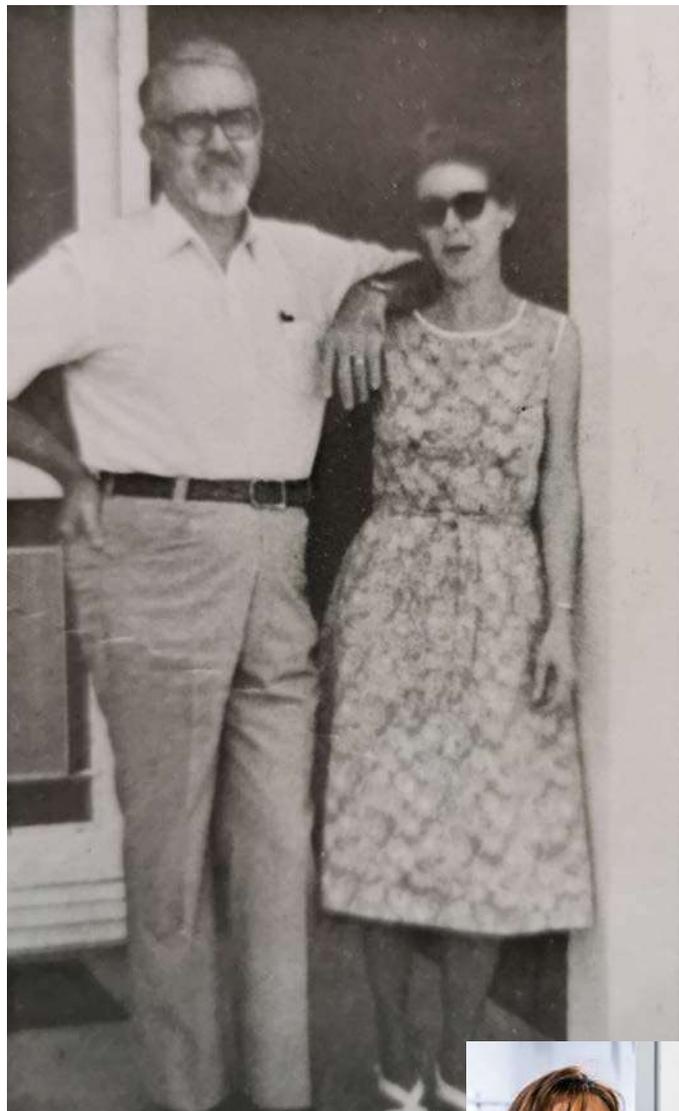
ISKL alumni around the world are making their presence felt in a broad range of professions, in the Arts and through volunteering to make a difference in their communities. Here is a selection of our Panther news both on and off campus.

“The Keys” Remembered

ISKL has a new classroom plaque, dedicated to Alex and Virginia (Ginger) Chavez who taught at ISKL for a decade in the 1970s and 80s. The plaque was commissioned by Tim Chavez ('84) with contributions from other ISKL Alumni who knew the couple from the time.

The Chavez family arrived in Kuala Lumpur in July, 1977. It was Alex and Virginia's first overseas teaching post, and they had both previously been professors at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. Music and theatre soon became a focus for the pair. Mr Chavez taught music, guitar, and chorus to all levels, and sponsored the Audio-Visual club. Mrs Chavez taught AP English, British Literature to High School students, and sponsored the Pan-Thespians of ISKL. They directed the Fall plays and Spring musicals together and were known as patient, nurturing educators.

Fittingly, the plaque has been installed at the HS English Classroom of Caroline Tan ('87) who was first taught by Mr Chavez in Grade 3 and describes him as her “hero”. She was also taught by Mrs Chavez to whom she attributes her love of English.



Above: Alex and Virginia Chavez (circa '87)
Right: Caroline Tan ('87)



ISKL Legal Eagles

Congratulations on a momentous year for the Gibson family with both Sabrinne ('11) and Kareem ('10) being sworn in as Attorneys in the US. Sabrinne's swearing in took place in January at the Washington D.C. Court of Appeals and she officially became Sabrinne Gibson Esq., Attorney at Law. She is now working as a Labour Relations Associate with Michigan Medicine. Kareem Gibson Esq. JD (Juris Doctor cum laude) was sworn in to the Michigan Bar in November.



Above: Sabrinne ('11) and Kareem ('10) Gibson

Alumni will remember the Gibsons who were ferocious Piranhas and still hold many of ISKL's swimming records. For the record, here are their records:

Kareem still holds the 200m, 400m and 800m Freestyle, as well as 100m Breaststroke and 4x100m Freestyle relay, plus 4x100m Medley Relay records. Sabrinne holds the 50m Freestyle, 100m and 200m Backstroke and 4x50m Freestyle Relay records.



Hanging With the Masters

Haffendi Anuar, Class of 2004, won the prestigious Vivien Leigh Prize 2020 for his work "Family Archive (Midday) II & III". The accolade means this work, and one other of his, is now hung at the Ashmolean Museum at the University of Oxford alongside, among others, Michelangelo.

Haffendi chose a typically Malaysian subject for the artwork; the traditional Malay male sarong called the "kain pelikat" and the work centres on themes of national, cultural and personal identity.

Now studying a Masters of Fine Art at the Ruskin School of Art at Oxford University, we are very proud to say that Haffendi was ISKL's Artist in Residence in 2017-2018. During that time, he worked with students from across all divisions to create the beautiful artworks at each of our divisional offices.



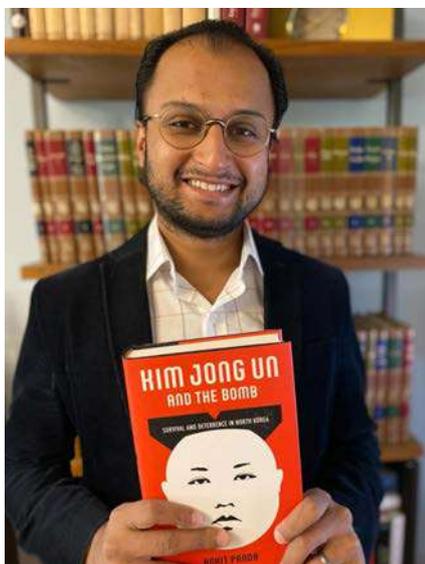
Above: Haffendi Anuar ('04) at ISKL
Top: Haffendi's "Family Archive (Midday) III"

Alumni in Print

Ankit Panda ('08) is no stranger to being in print. As a widely published writer, his work on defence and nuclear policy and the Asia-Pacific region has appeared in the New York Times, the Washington Post and the South China Morning Times, to name but a few highly regarded publications. However, in 2020 his first book, *Kim Jong Un and the Bomb: Survival and Deterrence in North Korea* was published by Hurst Publishers/Oxford University Press.

Ankit is a Stanton Senior Fellow in the Nuclear Policy Program at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace as well as host of the Asia Geopolitics podcast at the Global.

Although originally from India, Ankit lived in Belgium, France, and Jordan before moving to Malaysia for high school. He says the time in Malaysia strongly influenced his interest in the Asia-Pacific region. His ISKL teachers were also influential. Ankit notes that Grant Venables (HS English) and Richard Martin (HS History) were early influences for him as a writer and thinker. After ISKL, he went on to Princeton University where he gained a Bachelor of Arts.



Overcoming Adversity, Achieving Excellence

The latest batch of ISKL graduates, our Class of 2020, had some pretty big obstacles to overcome as the Covid-19 pandemic, not the least of which was finishing the year studying virtually and with huge amounts of uncertainty about how their work would be assessed. Ultimately, students were able to complete AP examinations, but the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) decided to rely on students' previous assessment and course work to calculate their results.

Despite all of the challenges, the cohort's results were outstanding. Here are the IB and AP results in a nutshell:

- 95% of our IBDP candidates passed, taking our 29-year pass rate to just over 96%
- ISKL's average IBDP score was 34 points
- 22 students earned a bilingual IB Diploma
- 38 students scored the maximum AP score of 5, and an outstanding 63% of students scored a 4 or 5

Special congratulations to Yeongseo Lim and Tanmay Gupta who were two of the 141 students worldwide to achieve a perfect IB score of 45 points.

Clockwise from above: Yeongseo Lim and Tanmay Gupta ('20), Lisa Phinney, Ankit Panda ('08)



Gotta Do Good

No sooner had she wrapped up her tenure as ISKL PTA Co-President than Parent Alumni, Lisa Phinney, was taking on a new volunteer role. Finding herself in the US for a little longer than expected after settling daughter Maya ('20) in at Elon University, Lisa put her hand up to help the American Red Cross in New Orleans following Hurricane Zeta. Whether building a strong ISKL community, or helping to rebuild a region ravaged by natural disaster, Lisa is the sort of person who always gets the job done, with her Panther Pride on display, naturally!

In Profile: Patrick Jonsson



Who would have imagined, seeing Patrick Jonsson ('02) perform with his punk rock band, Punksoxx, in the Battle of the Bands, that he would one day receive an EMMY nomination for a film score he composed? His teachers, probably!

Patrick, who was born in Sweden but moved to Poland then Malaysia as a young child and spent 10 years at ISKL says, "I always thought the music teachers at ISKL were great teachers. I had many, and learned so much from each of them." He singles out Lou Davey for seeing something special in him, and his IB music teacher, Jeff Taylor, continuing, "He was a brilliant musician and very gifted teacher. I learned a lot from him and learned some really good foundations which prepared me for Berklee College of Music."

Patrick now lives in London with his wife Lucia, also ISKL Class of 2002. He recalls being a little "naughty" in his pursuit of music at ISKL saying, "Between classes during our free time I would visit the music rooms to borrow a guitar to practice. It wasn't really

allowed at the time, as you had to be in one of the guitar classes in order to use their instruments (which makes sense), but I would pick the lock of the cabinet and pull out a guitar to play and then return it after - I would always give the excuse that the cabinet had been left open so I grabbed one, but then always had to hand it back as soon as anyone noticed. It was most days of the week that this happened, so eventually everyone got annoyed enough at me that they just allocated me my own guitar which they kept in the office so we didn't have to go through that dance all the time."

Like most successful musicians, Patrick's success did not happen overnight, but rather through taking every opportunity to learn from others and develop his skills. He explains, "When

I arrived in London I actually started working in a recording studio for a few years, where I learned a lot. I was recording bands and various artists on a daily basis and learned so much about songwriting and production which I continue to try to take with me on my current journey. That's also where I met Orlando, the director of *Virunga*."

Patrick wrote the score for *Virunga*, which was nominated for an Academy Award, and went on to receive an EMMY nomination for his score for the Academy Award winning film, *The White Helmets*. These days, online streaming services provide a flourishing source of work and his stirring compositions create the atmosphere and support the storyline of series such as *The Alienist* and *Black Earth Rising*.

Finding the right "palette" of colours and sounds and exploring the larger motifs and themes of each story is the role of the score composer, and make the work both challenging and rewarding. Patrick explains, "I hugely enjoy the discovery process early on when everything feels new, and then the final part of the process when we are able to involve orchestras, musicians, orchestrators, mixers, etc. I always feel that collaboration and good communication is the key to making any film and any film score work."

While he describes himself as a shy person who doesn't particularly enjoy performing, Patrick did take to the stage after the release of his album *Suddenly We Looked Like Giants* (2018). However, he says, "It is truly something special to play with/for people. But my favourite musical moments are definitely when I'm exploring tonalities or sonics in my own space while working to picture."

In Memorium

Brenda Lynn Recknagle Inskip (1967 - 2020)



Former ISKL Elementary School teacher, Brenda Lynn Recknagle, passed away in her home in Lacey, Washington, on February 18, 2020.

Brenda taught at ISKL from 2008-2012; three years as a Grade 5 teacher and for her final year in Grade 3. Colleague Alan Ward who is still at ISKL teaching Grade 4, remembers, "Brenda joined ISKL with her husband Brian and children Rex and Phoenix. She taught in grade 5 and added much to the team. She was a whiz at incorporating technology into her lessons and connecting with her students."

Close friend and former colleague, Judy Irving says, "She (Brenda) was so brave as she fought her battle against cancer with so much dignity. Brenda was my good friend and a friend to many. Her passing is a huge loss to children from around the world who would have

benefited from her teaching. She has touched many, many lives. Students will remember a teacher who loved, encouraged and ran with them! She lived fully with joy and love. She will be remembered for her love of life and adventurous spirit!"

Brenda attended Western Washington University, earning a Bachelor of Arts and Masters in Educational Technology. Following four years at ISKL, she continued her international education journey at the International School of Riau in Duri, Indonesia, and Walworth Barbour American International Schools of Israel in Even Yehuda.

Brenda is survived by sons, Rex ('21) and Phoenix ('25).

David Buck (1944 - 2020)



David Buck, ISKL High School Principal from 1979-1984, passed away on October 24, 2020. He was 76 years old.

Many ISKL Alumni students, parents, faculty and staff will fondly remember David and his wife Patricia (Patti) who taught

HS Humanities, along with their son Joshua ('89).

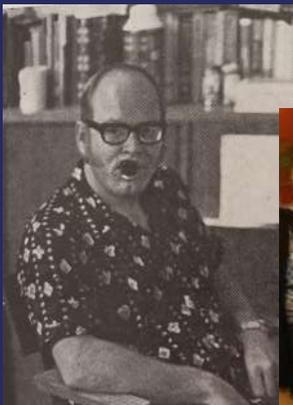
David started his career in finance, but soon discovered a passion for education and, during his 30-year career in teaching and administration, worked in schools in the USA, Asia, Europe, Africa and South America. Five of those years were spent at ISKL.

There have been many tributes to David on social media including this very personal one from former ISKL High School Administration, Patricia Victor. Patricia remembers, "David Buck was the first High School Principal I worked for as his secretary in the early 80s at ISKL, Malaysia. Patricia Buck was one of the first teachers in

the HS Humanities team when I joined ISKL in 1979. Patti was such a wonderful and caring person in the team. After one year I took David Buck's offer to work for him as his secretary. He was a great Principal. I got married that same year and the following year I had my first baby... my son. David and Patti were leaving ISKL that year. I knew I was going to miss them tremendously so I named my son David after David Buck. I love David and Patti for the care and love they gave me and also to everyone they worked with. I enjoyed working with David Buck at EARCOS as well. David, you will be missed by many."

David is survived by wife Patricia (Patti) and son Joshua.

Sid Stewart (1940-2021)



Sidney (Sid) Stewart was an ISKL Counsellor, Deputy Principal and then Principal from 1970 to 1973. He passed away on January 17, 2021, in Orlando, Florida. In his first year at ISKL, the Senior Class of 1971 honored Sid by dedicating the Harimau yearbook to him in appreciation of his “enthusiastic support and interest in our activities and your whole-hearted enjoyment of life.”

Sid studied at the University of Montana and San Jose State University. After ISKL, Sid went on to teach in Brazil at the American School of Belo Horizonte and retired to Orlando, Florida, USA in 1994.

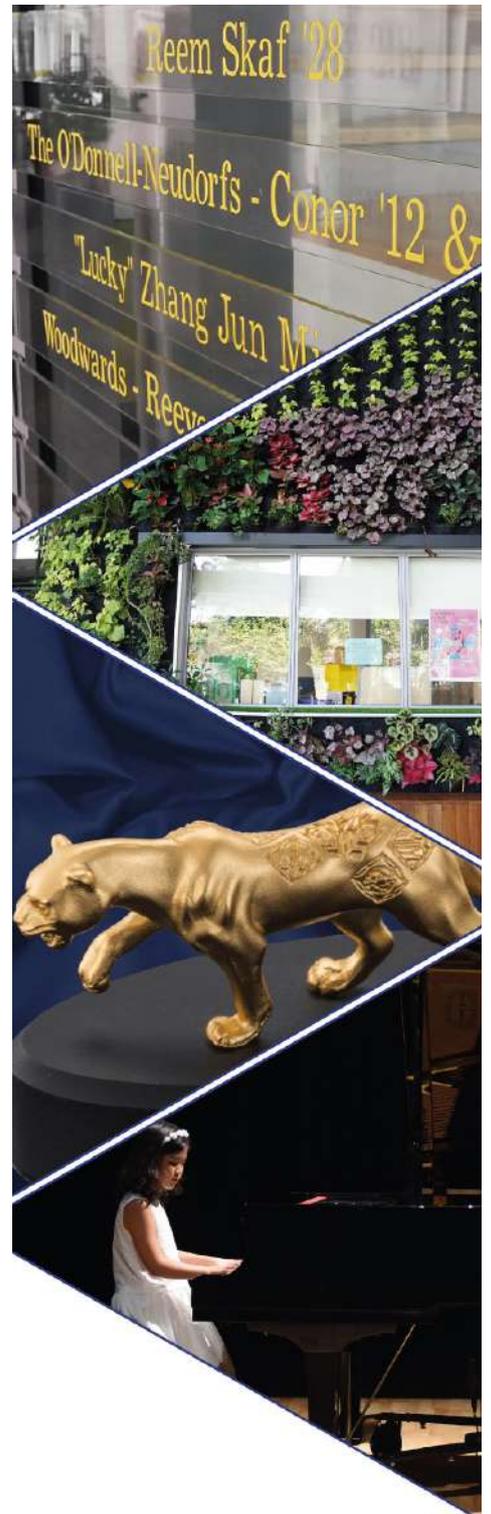
Stuart Helble ('75) pays tribute to a man he greatly admired: “Sid cast a long shadow over decades of service that touch thousands of kids that grew into us. In today’s vernacular he was “an influencer”, in the best sense. Straighten up, be your best, look towards the future, do good.

“After the Nashville/ISKL Reunion...I asked him who he would have liked to meet in history (no relatives or religious leaders). He thought a moment

and said FDR, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 32nd president of the United States. He wanted to know how FDR felt with his infirmity, polio. Sid also had to overcome this road block in life and I think we can all agree that that grit and perseverance is part of why we admire him so much. So I’ll think of him now sitting in on FDR’s traditional daily cocktail hour, FDR with martini, Sid with bourbon, swapping stories and suggestions into the night. Thank you for your advice, your legacy lives on.”

Cathie Timotheou ('72) recalls a man of great humanity: “Sid. A legend. The person who opened my eyes to the humanity in each one of us. I became a psychologist because of his psychology lessons. The group therapy gatherings he gave us at each other’s houses. The adult who always stood around the school during break open to any kid who wanted to talk to him. Just knowing he was there if I needed him was just so wonderful. Just there to be heard and feel safe.”

Sid Stewart is survived by his wife Vicky, son Sean and daughter Amy.



There are many ways to leave your legacy at ISKL and help lay the foundations for our next 55 years.

*Once a Panther,
Always a Panther*



By the (Year) Book

A yearbook isn't just any old publication. It's a time capsule, an historical record and a treasured keepsake of school days in often distant lands. And behind every yearbook, there is a team prepared to give their all to capture the year that was. John DeNicola shares the challenges and triumphs of leading the Harimau yearbook team at ISKL in the '80s and '90s.

From 1985 to 1993 I was the yearbook advisor for the ISKL Harimau and oversaw the publication of some 2,500 pages during my tenure. During those eight years, yearbook students and I tried out an assortment of creative things in the yearbooks with a range of successes.

One year we put a sequence of images on the page marks so that when the pages were flicked it looked like a cat walking or a horse galloping across the bottom of the page. One year a foldout was tried that was also the play marquee for a theatrical production performed that year. Another year we made a magazine insert for the elementary school. On one occasion when the year's theme was "It's All an Illusion" the book

was filled with optical illusions that former students tell me they continue to discover years later.

Despite these joyful and imaginative experiences, the making of yearbooks also came with a whole host of hardships and difficulties. At the beginning of each year there was always the dream of producing a Columbia Press Association Gold Crown book that was loved by all who viewed it and one that produced a substantial profit. During the course of each year, this vision began to tarnish as compromises were made to keep up with the persistent deadlines that involved completing approximately two pages a day for every day of the school year.

Starting a yearbook is much like going after Moby Dick in a small rowboat and having the confidence to bring along the tartar sauce. Yearbook students and advisers alike deal with a host of problems on a daily basis. Students complain

that their friends have more photos than them. People don't want their picture taken and then complain that the images used are less than satisfactory. Coaches of successful teams want more coverage and their record glorified while coaches of unsuccessful teams don't.

I found myself constantly battling the tendency for students to take photos of just themselves and their friends and it was also frequently difficult for me to get students to cover organizations and events that they were not personally interested in.

However, there were occasions that produced a high degree of interest. For example, one day just after lunch a boy rushed into the yearbook room and yelled, "Hey DeNicola, there is a naked guy in front of the school." Two girls who shall remain nameless immediately jumped up and said, "We're on it." I asked them upon their return what they thought of the experience, wondering if the



“Starting a yearbook is much like going after Moby Dick in a small rowboat and having the confidence to bring along the tartar sauce.”



Harimau Staff 1988-1989

The SPTA placed a full page ad in the yearbook with an inscription on only half of the page which said, “Half Page but Full Sentiment. Congratulations to the Class of 1992.”

guy was insane, drunk, on drugs, or emotionally distraught. One of the girls gave a response which will live in my memory for the rest of my days. It was, “Well, I’ve seen better.”

Recalling the many yearbook difficulties, the one that sticks out as the ultimate challenge was that of the senior page. As the school population grew, the yearbook became larger until the size approached 400 pages. Something had to be done to reduce what was becoming an impossibly daunting task.

For years each graduating senior received an entire page to record memories, their signature, quotes, candid photos along

with a formal portrait. Given that many yearbooks from other schools only had a senior portrait, reducing our seniors to a half page in the 1992 yearbook didn’t seem outlandish and this act alone reduced the size of the book by more than 60 pages.

Well, I received vitriol from all quarters; students, faculty, parents, and advertisers. The SPTA even placed a full page ad in the yearbook with an inscription on only half of the page which said, “Half Page but Full Sentiment. Congratulations to the Class of 1992”.

At times it was too much to bear, but I persisted with the belief that it was the right course of

action. I have not seen recent ISKL yearbooks, but I imagine that each graduate now receives a half page or less with few knowing of the controversy surrounding the elimination of the full page, so long ago.

During the course of my teaching career, I have helped produce about two dozen yearbooks at four different schools, the first of which were at ISKL. I sometimes reflect on what those yearbooks might have been but I also take pride in being part of something bigger than I was. Making yearbooks is a lot like jogging. You frequently hate it when it is happening, but feel a sense of contentment and pride when it is over.



John DeNicola,
Faculty Alumni
(His own
yearbook photo,
1967)

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