For~Ever~Green Gala, a joint fundraising effort by MCS and MSS, was held on September 6 at the Granite Club. It was attended by close to 400 people. Those included Maryknoll alumnae, teachers and Sisters. An astounding number of people donated even though they could not attend. A record breaking US$65,000 was raised.

Every Memory is Sweet, This Enchanting Gala Night

The preparation for the For~Ever~Green Gala began in the summer of 2002 and went through many high points as well as challenges. The joint effort was a splendid blending of the MSS and MCS talents and dedication, resulting in record high funds raised from Toronto, North America and Asia. However, SARS did pose a real dilemma back in April. On the Tuesday preceding the previous scheduled gala date of April 30th, it was apparent that we could not hold the Gala as planned. After much agonizing, the Organizing Committee decided to postpone instead of cancel. This decision turned out to be a wise and happy one on the evening of September 6th.

The day started way before 6pm at the Granite Club. Volunteers from MSS and MCS turned up mid-morning to start the decoration of the hall and tables, and the display of silent auction. It went on at a steady pace to 5pm when the sound system was set up and sound test of the performers took place. Then all of a sudden at 6pm, the greedy attire disappeared, replaced with beautiful coiffure and gorgeous gowns, and the guests started pouring in.

You talk about beautiful people! Close to 400 people attended the Gala. Most of them were lovely Maryknoll alumnae gathered to see old friends, teachers and of course, our beloved Sisters. From MSS, Sister Virginia Flagg, Sister Mary Lou Tsefu and Sister Ann Carol Bednarek came from NY and LA to cheer us on. From MCS, Sister Joan Delaney, Sister Teresa Leung and Sister Earnest Chung came from Chicago, NY and Hawaii. And there were alumnae from all over this continent and even from HK who flew in for this special occasion, including one Emerson from Vancouver.

This warm, relaxed and elegant atmosphere continued throughout the evening. Abigail Tsang Kui (MSS) and Linda Fong (MCS), the chair and co-chair delivered their welcome speech. Then Kathy King of MCS gave a moving speech on behalf of the President Sponsor (an anonymous MCS former student), followed by an equally heartfelt response from Sister Ann Carol. Kathy’s address actually moved quite a few members of the audience to generously donate substantial sums that evening. Sister Joan led grace and we began a lovely dinner from the Granite kitchen interlaced with plenty of lively conversations and picture taking.

The entertainment started with a flute solo by Shirley Cheong (MCS) followed by solo singing by Christine Cheung (MCS). Both are accomplished performers and raised thousands for the cause. Then we were treated to the graceful performance from Ontario dance champions Loowey Yu Lee (MCS) and Dr. Sai-Ping Lee. We, particularly the ballroom dancers, watched with abated breath as Dr. and Mrs. Lee waltzed and tangoed on the capacious dance floor. It was a lot to try to live up to after that but the MSS Executive Committee made a successful attempt. The Committee created the song Those Maryknoll Days with new lyrics to the tune of Those Were the Days. Fritz Tse wrote the ingenious Chinese lyrics which fitted perfectly with the English lyrics. It was a fun performance with song-along from the audience. This was followed by a brilliant piano duo performance from Andrew and Brandon Kwong (sons of Shirley Tsang Kwong, MSS). However, we saved the best for last – all six Maryknoll sisters performed Edelweiss together. The appreciative audience spontaneously came up to offer flowers to the Sisters!!! Sister Mary Lou concluded by thanking us all for our support and raising thousands for the cause. Then we were treated to the graceful performance from Ontario dance champions Loretta Yu Lee (MCS) and Dr. Sai-Ping Lee. We, particularly the ballroom dancers, watched with abated breath as Dr. and Mrs. Lee waltzed and tangoed on the capacious dance floor. It was a lot to try to live up to after that but the MSS Executive Committee made a successful attempt. The Committee created the song Those Maryknoll Days with new lyrics to the tune of Those Were the Days. Fritz Tse wrote the ingenious Chinese lyrics which fitted perfectly with the English lyrics. It was a fun performance with song-along from the audience. This was followed by a brilliant piano duo performance from Andrew and Brandon Kwong (sons of Shirley Tsang Kwong, MSS). However, we saved the best for last – all six Maryknoll sisters performed Edelweiss together. The appreciative audience spontaneously came up to offer flowers to the Sisters!!! Sister Mary Lou concluded by thanking us all for our support and raising thousands for the cause.

Throughout the evening, the Organizing Committee heard only words of joy and appreciation. One of the Sisters said it’s the best Gala she has attended and that view was echoed by many. Perhaps Marie Theres Le Kow said it best “I have never seen so many people trying to hold back happy tears. And that atmosphere lasted from start to finish.” One non-Maryknoll participant, as an unbiased observer said “if we are to give a score for a survey, it will definitely be a 10 out of 10. From the food to the service, from the choice of club to the performers, from the arrangement to the reception, everything is top rated and professionally executed. We would like to congratulate the Organizing Committee in making this event so successful despite the long delay due to SARS. That usually means more headache, more challenges even from start to finish.” One non-Maryknoll participant, as an unbiased observer said “If we are to give a score for a survey, it will definitely be a 10 out of 10. From the food to the service, from the choice of club to the performers, from the arrangement to the reception, everything is top rated and professionally executed. We would like to congratulate the Organizing Committee in making this event so successful despite the long delay due to SARS. That usually means more headache, more challenges even from start to finish.” One non-Maryknoll participant, as an unbiased observer said “If we are to give a score for a survey, it will definitely be a 10 out of 10. From the food to the service, from the choice of club to the performers, from the arrangement to the reception, everything is top rated and professionally executed. We would like to congratulate the Organizing Committee in making this event so successful despite the long delay due to SARS. That usually means more headache, more challenges even from start to finish.” One non-Maryknoll participant, as an unbiased observer said “If we are to give a score for a survey, it will definitely be a 10 out of 10. From the food to the service, from the choice of club to the performers, from the arrangement to the reception, everything is top rated and professionally executed. We would like to congratulate the Organizing Committee in making this event so successful despite the long delay due to SARS. That usually means more headache, more challenges even from start to finish.” One non-Maryknoll participant, as an unbiased observer said “If we are to give a score for a survey, it will definitely be a 10 out of 10. From the food to the service, from the choice of club to the performers, from the arrangement to the reception, everything is top rated and professionally executed. We would like to congratulate the Organizing Committee in making this event so successful despite the long delay due to SARS. That usually means more headache, more challenges even from start to finish.”

The spirit of Maryknoll came through loud and clear from everyone who attended, donated or volunteered. In particular, an astounding number of people generously donated even though they could not attend the Gala. We achieved record breaking funds of over US$65,000 and had a great time doing it. Thank you all for making this Gala such a sweet memory.

by Mary Chung

Want to know more information, please visit the website: http://www.mssalumnae.ca

Christmas Party

This year we have the honour to introduce our new MSS principal, Ms. Veronica Ma, to all the alumnae members. At the same time, do not miss this opportunity to catch up the latest news with your fellow classmates. Please note the details of the party.

Date: December 5, 2003 (Friday)
Time: 7:00 PM
Venue: Hong Kong Jockey Club, Chater Room
(Shan Kwong Road Club House)
Cost:
Adult: HK$350.00 per head
Children/ Student: HK$280 per head

For further photos and video clips of the night, please visit http://www.mss.edu.hk/students/index.htm.