

KOWLOON kindergarten

By HIX

They sat there soberly, in ordered rows, in their little white suits and dresses, paying strict attention to their work, and none to the two visitors who had tiptoed in and taken seats in a far corner of the kindergarten room.

Education is serious business in Kowloon, just a short ferry ride from Hong Kong. The private kindergarten, catering to the upper middle class, has a waiting list of 300, and admission is by examination. If a child has not put forth effort in the pre-school for three-year olds, he is not considered for the kindergarten, and doors close silently upon his future.

The public schools are crowded, customarily running two sessions. It means a whole lifetime to have a child admitted to the kindergarten adjacent to St. Mary's convent school.

Barbara and I had visited schools wherever they were open, during the trip to the Orient, with emphasis on kindergartens and pre-schools. With her qualifications as a kindergarten teacher of long standing, she was able to gain admittance where visitors normally are excluded.

We had only a few hours before taking the plane from Hong Kong to Tokyo, and we made the most of them. We could do our last minute shopping in the basement of the hotel, and we could use the extra time for visiting another school.

A whirlwind foray on the small specialty shops yielded everything we needed, necessities such as embroidered house coats, Chinese caps with tassels, yardages of Chinese silk, and freed us for the visit to a school.

"Where is the nearest school?" we inquired of the taxi driver. The nearest school was St. Mary's convent. The taxi deposited us at the door.

"Could we visit the kindergarten. It started with the first grade, and the first grade would not be in session until after lunch. The receptionist was regretful.

"Is there any other school fairly close at hand? We are anxious to visit a kindergarten. We will not disturb the children, we will simply sit silently and observe."

The receptionist escorted us to a waiting room and laid the matter before the Mother

Superior. Veiled glances were cast upon us as we sat there, feet discreetly side by side, backs erect, hands folded across our pocket books, a picture of decorum.

"They're wondering how they can get rid of us politely," Barbara whispered, "they don't want to offend us, but we are an embarrassment to them. Maybe we better back out quietly."

Armies of school children, all in uniform, marched past the waiting room, eyes lowered, step muffled. Schooled in discipline, they never cast a glance in our direction.

The receptionist returned, unruffled. The Mother Superior was on the way, and she would decide whether information as to kindergartens could be divulged.

"We are getting the gate, but it is going to be a very polite gate, one which will not precipitate an international incident," we decided in the same poker-faced whisper.

But not so. The Mother Superior, white robes billowing about her ample figure, came down the stairs, while small girls froze in their tracks on the landing.

The Mother Superior beamed. She would not only tell us where we could find a kindergarten, she would take us there. If she took us herself, she amplified, there was a good chance that we would be admitted.

She took us, by the hand, down the steep stone steps in front of St. Mary's, around the corner and across a piece of pavement where construction was going on and footing was precarious, bouncing along, happiness radiating from her every motion, around another corner, up a crowded side street, and to a solid carved teakwood door, with a bell placed high above the reach of small fingers.

She pressed the bell. A small peephole opened, and the keeper of the keys made a cautious inspection.

After a seemingly interval, there was the clashing of bolts, and the massive door opened to admit the Mother Superior. There was a whispered colloquy between the two women. The Mother Superior turned to us, "You will be permitted to visit," she beamed, and was off, back to her duties at the Convent. We thanked her pro-

fusely and stepped inside.

The door keeper introduced us to the supervisor, a slim young woman who had been educated at Columbia University for her exacting tasks in her native city. She explained that she usually refused visitors, even those whom the parish priest recommended, but that she was delighted to welcome another kindergarten teacher to observe.

The small black-haired dolls continued making neat entries in their work books, ideographs matched up with English words, working in both languages. As each one finished, she delivered her work book silently to a teacher's aide, took her lunch box, and seated herself on a bench with her fellow students.

"It is so important for these children to make good marks and pass on to the next grade," the teacher whispered. "that sometimes I do something I am a little ashamed of. I study the examinations which have been given in the past few years, so that I can give special work in what seems to be the most important. Their whole future lives depend on it."

"How do you weed out the children who apply for admission?"

"Probably the same way you do it in your own kindergarten. We cannot waste time on retarded children, or children who are not able to concentrate. Some of these children will go on to enter diplomatic careers or the professions. There is no chance for the laggards here. There are other schools where such children can learn everything they need to know. This school is for the elite, sons and daughters of leaders in the community. We are sorry that we cannot accommodate everybody."

We asked if we could take pictures of the children.

"I think they would be delighted. But take them all. Don't leave anybody out. It is a question of fate."

We took pictures, catching the old woman with the mop who continuously kept the floors spotless, bent over and oblivious to everything except her work. The children regarded us with solemn eyes, sitting with hands folded. Flash bulbs popped and the dolls blinked.

We passed into the next room, where children were enjoying their recreation period after their morning of intensive work. Each child had a frame, and in it was fitting little pieces of brightly colored plastic to make a picture of his own design.

"Would you like a peep at the three year olds and the babies?"

Of course we wanted to see the babies. There they were, in an adjoining building. The same decorum prevailed, even down to the smalls in the nursery.

All of the babies have to pass rigid test before being permitted to enter the next level of education. If they should

Linda Rowett has degree

Linda Anne Rowett of Dallas was awarded the degree of bachelor of science in physical therapy by Ithaca College at the school's 74th Commencement Exercises.

Miss Rowett will complete the requirements for her degree at the close of her clinical practice in New York City this summer.

As an undergraduate, she was an honor student, the recipient of traineeship-scholarship grants during both junior and senior years, from the federal government's Vocational Rehabilitation Administration.

She was elected a representative of her residence hall to the Student Congress, and is a member of Pi Theta Phi, national professional physical therapy fraternity.

She is the daughter of Mrs. Walter T. Rowett, 95 Columbia Ave., Dallas, and the late Mr. Rowett.

awards day at Dallas High

The Annual Awards Day program was held by the Dallas Senior High School in the school auditorium on Friday, June 13.

Opening exercises were conducted by Richard Sheldon, president of the Student Council. Catherine Wilson provided organ music.

Awards recognition were made to qualifying students. Announcement was made of special honors bestowed on several students.

Professional engineering awards were made to Jeffrey Eyet, Vincent Roman, William Braddy and Philip Scott.

John C. Fleming completed the Summer Science Training program at the University of Iowa.

Elizabeth Eckman and Anne Wentz received Creative Arts Honor Awards in the art division of the National Poetry Press.

Vera Balshaw was first in the Fourth Year French test, American Association of Teachers of French. Diane Thier received honorable mention.

Certificates of Acceptance for poetry manuscript were given to Deborah Fader, Valerie Edwards and Gail Morris; for essay manuscript, to Sandra Barakat, Lindsey Sherwood, Jerry McDonald, Linda Doughton, Phillip Scott.

Judi Blase won first prize in the Rotary Fall Fair Art exhibit last September. She also won a commendation in the 25th School Traffic Safety Poster contest.

Joan Nelson was honored as the 1968 Homecoming Queen. Suzanne Kozick was Miss Unico representative.

Carol Crawford was winner of the D.A.R. Good Citizen Contest.

Junior Prom Queen this spring was Virginia Jenkins. She was also chosen as representative in the contest for Queen of Lehman Horse Show.

Deborah Hartman will be in the Miss Seventeen Contest sponsored by Lazarus.

Rotary Fall Fair Princesses and Princesses last fall were Anna Marie Arcuri, Patti Hughey, Craig Churry and David Jenkins.

Christine Demmy will go to Belgium and Cheryl Casner, to Brazil as Rotary Exchange students. Charles LaBerge and James Pichert will go to Dallas Rotary Club Leadership Training Camp.

Warren Boyes won the VFW Voice of Democracy contest. Charles LaBerge was chosen third and Gwen Kloeber, sixth in by the Luzerne County Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Finalists of N.M.S.Q. tests were Vera Balshaw, Brian Beard, Cheryl Casner, Joan Domnick, Marguerite Futch and Vincent Roman.

It was also announced that Dal-Hi Choristers were finalists in the Festival of Music.

Over 50 students won commendations for test results of N.E.D.T.

Gregg Shorthand awards were given to 15 girls. Student Council Key Awards were given to 48 students.

First prizes in the Hallmark Art Contest were awarded to Joseph Phillips, Carol Neyhard, Stephen Crispell, Judi Reggi, Judi Blase and Herman Otto won second prizes and Kathy Prendergast, Charlene Bird and Elizabeth Eckman won third prizes.

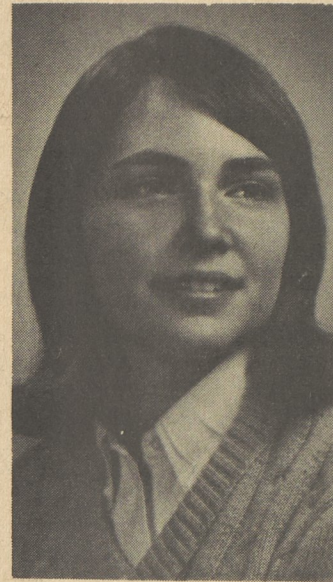
Students receiving recognition for perfect attendance this year were James Roth, Charlene Bird, Robert Brown, Lorene Daring, Jeffrey Gruver, Gwen Kloeber, John Krivak, Clark Switzer, Christine Rubino, John Engler, Kenneth Engler, Sandra Gordon, Harry Owens, Sterling Wagner, Catherine Wilson, Carol Kaleta and Jocelyn Strunk.

represents senior class

Miss Nancy Covert, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Allan J. Covert, Ferguson Ave., Shavertown a member of the senior class at Nesbitt Memorial Hospital School of Nursing was recently elected Representative of the student Nurse's Association.

At present she is on her psychiatric affiliation at Danville State Hospital where she was elected to represent Nesbitt Hospital on the Student Council.

dean's list student



PEGGY REESE

Miss Peggy Reese has been notified that she has been placed on the Dean's List at Bloomsburg State College.

Miss Reese, a junior, is also a member of the Kappa Delta Pi, an honorary society in education. Individuals are invited to become members of the society by vote of the chapters in consideration of high academic records and professional attitudes.

A 1966 graduate of Dallas High School, Miss Reese is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis J. Reese, Franklin Street, Dallas.

films at library

By MRS. MARTIN DAVERN

Something new has been added to the popular pre-school story-hour at the Back Mountain Memorial Library which is held every Wednesday morning at 10:15 a.m.

On the first Wednesday of each month, instead of the usual story-telling, films made from some of the best of the children's picture books are being shown.

Among the films to be shown are "Andy and the Lion" by James Daugherty; "Curious George Rides a Bike" by Hans Rey; "Frog Went A-Courtin'" "Make Way For Duckling" by Robert McCloskey; and "Mike and Mulligan and His Steam Shovel" by Virginia Lee Burton.



Firemen Paul Sabol of Trucksville goes slithering into the pool of water after a bulls-eye ball slinger hits the magic button. photo by Saffian

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