



Suzanna Siu
1952, F5
Former Engineer
Former Quantity Surveyor

Share your sparkle wherever you are

The story of how Ms Suzanna Siu became a Paulinian is a testimony that SPCS has always been a beacon of education for girls in Hong Kong. With passion and talent in mathematics, the young Suzanna dreamt about receiving a university education. However, there was a problem. St Clare's Girls School where she was studying only offered classes up to Form 4. With support from her family, she applied to join the Form 5 class at SPCS and broke the glass ceiling successfully.

"There was only one class in Form 5, consisted of 20 to 30 students," said Suzanna. "As a new Paulinian, I became friends with Helen Lo, who was a tomboy, and Esther Kwan, who was also a transferred student like myself. She later became a head nurse at Queen Mary Hospital. I found my fellow classmates to be a group of confident young ladies with good manner."

Instead of oxford-laced shoes, Paulinians at that time wore a pair of black shoes and white dress as their uniform. A croissant-shaped cornet was part of the sisters' habits. The school's most popular sports was baseball.

"After completing Form 5, I was admitted by the South China University of Technology and became a structural engineer," Suzanna said with a smile. "There were only five girls in the civil engineering programme!" She worked in Shanghai for 7 or 8 years before returning to Hong Kong and worked with several prominent architects and engineers, including Peter Pun, OBE, JP who designed and built one of the earliest flyovers in Hong Kong.

"We did not use computer in our work then. Once, I was introduced to a computer which required an entire room to house," Suzanna recalled. "We used large slide rules made in Japan to help with calculation." Fortunately for Suzanna, gender was not an issue in her career although the field of civil engineering was male-dominated. She was paid the same as her male counterparts and had no trouble in holding meeting at construction sites. "The workers would be more civil when a woman engineer was around," remarked Suzanna.

"I later became a quantity surveyor and had to visit various construction sites, including Oi Man Estate and Wah Fu Estate. I had to travel from Hong Kong Island all the way to Shek Kong Fire Services Training School," said Suzanna. "I enjoyed driving alone and filled the long hours by listening to the radio. My favourite hosts were Yu Tsang and Albert Au."

Suzanna's long and successful career is accompanied by a loving family. Now aged 82, she is a proud grandmother of five lovely granddaughters.

Written by Vivian Lai (1991, F5)