

大概是因為在孟華遊蕩了十多年之故，在這數年裏，常被問及孟華的過去。問的通常是前期行政的方略、教學課程的演進、校務人員的變遷等等。雖然每次都是千情萬願的望能傾盡所知，奈何學校歷史實在太悠久、談話的時間亦太短，經常話至半途就要停止。正是說的人意猶未盡、聽的人更是不知所云。現謹借校刊一角，在這學期終結之時，與各家長好友筆談孟華的歷史。閒話休提，請君細聽。

各位看官，話說在六零年末期，孟郡是一個頗為幽靜的郊區。九號公路沒有林立的銀行、超市，七十九號公路上沒有頻密的交通燈，五二零號公路是一條沒有柏油的石子路。眼見的是疏落的房舍、鬱蔥的樹木點綴著大片的玉米田和薯田，耳聞的是鳥語蟲鳴夾雜著偶爾飛馳而過的汽車聲。在這清幽的環境裏，住了六十多戶中國家庭。此群老中多是受聘在附近的專業人仕，生活舒適規律，平日上班，週末不外是買菜、剪草、上教堂，閒時到唐人街買書報雜貨。有機會碰上了，話題除了衣食住行外，就是擔心家裏那些寫外文、說夷話、看洋書、吃蕃茄的兒女們，不知萬水千山外祖國家鄉的語言文化、風俗習慣。自家自教則是本地薑不辣，必是弄至打兒罵女、悲劇完場。

在一九七一年，住在 Holmdel 附近的老中，首先創立宏德中文學校 (Holmdel Chinese School)。最初借用 Redbank 一所托兒所，只有一班學生，到後來搬至 Lincroft 裏的一教堂上課時，已有五班學生。宏德中文學校的主要宗旨，是以多認識中國的文化和傳統為重。與此同時，七十年代的乒乓外交大行其道，喚醒了封閉經年的大陸文化和簡體字，而由耶魯大學編制的簡體字中文課本更是當時得令，成為各高等學府的教材。家長們有見及此，為兒女們未雨綢繆心切，故此學校是以簡體字為標準，教材與校務都是自由發展。

兩年後，Freehold 附近的幾家父母在初步研究後，就定期在其中一家的土庫開班授課，讓別人的媽媽教自己的兒女。這所只有三班學生的私校，如此這般的上了幾個月課後，發覺土庫不敷應用，沒有適合的作息地方，亦為提供場地的家庭帶來很多不便。於是父母們再接再勵，決定找地方開鑼創辦中文學校。首先想到的是借用Freehold的公立小學，奈何當年的Freehold校委非常反對借出學校。數度奔波、幾番申訴皆徒勞無功，結果要出動律師在校委會細陳法案後，一所定名為福利柯的中文學校(Freehold Chinese School)終於在一九七四年Freehold的Barkalow小學內成立，學費訂為廿五元，與宏德中文學校一樣採用簡體字授課。因為是小本經營，所有教、職員均屬無薪階級。學校亦成為鄰近老中的交流中心，大家高高興興的過了幾年暢快的日子。

一九七八年，部份宏德學校的家長要求以繁體字上課，也有家長不願兒女們重新學習新字體，於是不同的教學觀點與分歧的字體意見，使主張用繁體字的家長離校他去。在此機緣巧合之下，福利柯和宏德兩所中文學校決定合而為一，在七九年將名字改為孟華中文學校，並搬到地方較大的Marlboro小學。這所當時被視為親中的學校，共有六十多個學生。分班制度沿用顏色來替代數目字，即是分有紅、藍、黃班等等。起先採用簡體字及耶魯拼音，短期後加入羅馬拼音。

到八一年時，校務設有正副校長、教務、文書等職位，繼續以簡體字上課。只是當時的老中多來自台灣，繁體字自是較受歡迎，因此學生人數開始下跌。八三年重開繁體字注音班，舞蹈組開始成為文化課程之一。惟是學生人數不足，只餘五班學生，學費增至六十五元仍是嚴重缺乏經費。媽媽們努力頻賣春卷雲吞籌款，只是赤字依然，八五年時校方已作解散打算。

看官們莫憂！正是柳暗花明，與此同時孟郡新房子如雨後春筍，引來大群新遷到來的老廣。而天下父母同此心，不望吾家兒女懂“之夫者也”，但求能說句：你好嗎？於是經過大半年的討論商議切磋後，在八六年四月，孟華加開粵語組，成為新州第一所有雙組課程的中文學校，收取學費九十五元。國語組的簡體字班因缺乏學生被取消，同時起用數目字作班級制度，粵語組人數較少，只分大、小兩班。國語組選用華語課本，粵語組課本購自加州的亞美雙語中心。教員每課可獲廿元車馬費，其他人等仍逗留在無薪的階段。老師在學期第一天可多拿廿元雜費，盈虧自負！年度新年晚會則在Brookdale社區大學舉行。

在日起星移、寒來暑往間，學生不覺已達三百人。每星期六，國、粵、英、閩、邑語齊飛。家長會活動更是百花齊放，計有太極、籃球、縫紉、國畫、講座、健康舞等等。八八年，國畫班成立；學校重新修訂律例，校務組織漸趨專業，各司其職。國語組注音授課代替了式微的羅馬及耶魯拼音。八九年為了平衡開支，學費增至一百四十元。九零年時兩組系統劃一，同樣以華語讀本上課，班級除了一至十班之外，另有幼兒班、特別班及成人班。語文與文化課并駕齊驅，演講、書法、國畫與舞蹈班大放異彩、聲名遠播、各領風騷。孟華蹤跡遍及美東各類文化交流、學術研討活動。同年夏天，與新海中文學校成功合辦第一屆孟郡夏令營。校中瀰漫著一片說不盡的繁華盛況！

九一年學生人數驟然超越四百，教室不敷應用，因此於同年九月再度遷移到現今校址。九二年的孟華已無異於一普通小學，校務繁雜瑣碎、應接不暇。九三年時，工作人員在運作方面各持己見、百口說百話。部分行政人員有意將學校劃分為國、粵兩校而導致意見分歧，校務臨近癱瘓。在九四年初，堅持分校的家長終於退學，另行組織全國語授課的中文學校。

孟華雖受打擊而步伐未停，仍繼續在各方面上改進。九五年校務部調整行政結構、重建律例，教務部實行積分換禮物制度、提高學子學習興趣，同時加強圖書部門、便利家長及學生借閱。國語組開始跟隨美國大學的標準，特別班及高年班以漢語拼音上課。第一期的校刊《新聲》亦於同年十一月面世。翌年，除了創立專為八年級以上學生而設的進修班，還使用電腦操作順利輸成孟華資料庫。九八與九九年更兩度勇奪新州校際演講比賽總冠軍。每年在禮堂舉行的新年晚會更是城中盛事，常有政要名人自動請纓求作座上賓！

行文至此，無限感慨，卅年人事、數翻更替離合！孟華雖幾歷風霜，始終屹立不倒、繼續茁壯。環顧附近的中文學校，每有孟華培育出來的校務及教員。想到孟華的枝葉在霜雪過後、能隨風覓地生根，發揚海外中文教育，亦應感榮焉！

吾自八六年稍一不慎、被推進中文教育的洪流後，隨著孟華的起落而浮沉，翻滾中亦頗能自得其樂。眼看一雙兒女先後成長離校，自己也半賺半騙地獲得大批各路英雄好漢的友誼，更可在舞文弄墨、強佔篇幅。百般好處，莫道福不澤吾家耶？有云：前人種樹、後人乘涼。請諸君在孟華樹蔭下閑聊看報時（此刻也），謹記抽空加入澆水行列，齊來灌溉出更茂盛的桃李。

〈後記〉：

- ① 特別感謝劉清三校長、何天林校長、陳美老師、何妙瑩女士、胡幼惠女士及路汝傑先生的幫忙，提供了很多孟華初期的寶貴資料，文中如有錯錄或手誤敬請原諒。
- ② 有關粵語組課本選擇之演變，因篇幅有限未能盡言，有機會再續。
- ③ The English version of MCS history will be printed in the next issue.

# 孟華回顧 MCS Timeline

黃博勤老師  
Mrs. Ophelia  
Seeto

1960's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monmouth County Chinese population: 60 families,</li><li>• No big supermarkets, no Chinese grocery stores,</li><li>• Rt. 520 was a stone covered dirt road with 1 traffic light.</li><li>• The Yale University published Chinese Textbooks using Simplified Chinese characters and “Yale pronunciation”, were commonly adopted by colleges.</li></ul>
1971	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Holmdel Chinese School was formed,</li><li>• Lessons that held on Saturdays in a Red Bank Nursery school with one class, using simplified Chinese characters with emphasis in culture and tradition.</li></ul>
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Freehold Chinese School was formed,</li><li>• Lessons held on Saturdays in one of the founding families' basement with 3 classes, also used simplified Chinese characters.</li><li>• The only enrollment requirement: toilet trained.</li><li>• Holmdel Chinese School moved to a church in Lincroft, school size increased to 5 classes.</li></ul>
1974	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After numerous difficult negotiation with the Freehold Board of Education, Freehold Chinese School successfully moved to Barkalow Elementary School.</li><li>• Tuition set to \$25 for books, and all staff are on a pure volunteer basis.</li></ul>
1978	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents who requested for the Traditional Chinese character left Freehold Chinese School to form a new Chinese School</li></ul>
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Freehold Chinese School &amp; Holmdel Chinese School merged to become <b>Monmouth Chinese School</b>, and moved the school site to Marlboro Elementary School. Unlike the Freehold Bd. of Ed, Marlboro welcomes the Chinese school with open arms.</li><li>• School size: 60+ students, with classes named after colors instead of numbers, e.g. red, blue, pink, yellow etc.</li><li>• Curriculum: mandarin classes, Simplified characters, Yale pronunciation &amp; roman pronunciation.</li></ul>
1981	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enrollment started to drop because of the unpopularity with Simplified character teachings.</li></ul>
1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Re-introduced teaching the Traditional characters.</li><li>• Dance was introduced in the cultural program. Tuition: \$65.</li></ul>
1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School size: 44 students, school finance in serious trouble. School board was planning to close the school for good.</li><li>• Around the same time, Monmouth county Chinese population increased many folds because of the booming real estate industry.</li></ul>
1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Cantonese session was added to Monmouth Chinese School, thus prevented the school from closing down, and made MCS the first NJ Chinese school with a dual curriculum.</li><li>• Tuition: \$95. School size jumped to 75, four Mandarin classes &amp; two Cantonese classes. Mandarin classes were identified by numbers whereas Cantonese classes were simply called “big” &amp; “small”.</li><li>• The annual Chinese New Year party was held at Brookdale Community College.</li></ul>
1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School size: 200+ students.</li><li>• PTO activities included: Taichi, sewing, basketball, painting, seminars, aerobic etc.</li><li>• Painting was also introduced as part of the cultural program. Mandarin curriculum: Zhuyin replaced Roman &amp; Yale pronunciation.</li></ul>
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School size: 300+ students. Tuition: \$140.</li></ul>
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standardize textbooks and class naming structure for both the Mandarin &amp; Cantonese groups - Kindergarten, 1 through 10, Adult, and Special class.</li><li>• Held the 1<sup>st</sup> Monmouth Summer Camp with Jersey Shore Chinese School.</li><li>• MCS students began to shine in painting contests, calligraphy contests, writing contests and dance exhibition.</li></ul>
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School size: 400+ students. Relocated to Dugan School.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuition: \$150</li> </ul>
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talks about splitting the School into 2 began to surface.</li> </ul>
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents insisted on dividing the school into 2 - Mandarin &amp; Cantonese, left and formed a new Chinese School</li> </ul>
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School administration re-structured and the school bylaw ratified to reflect the new structure.</li> <li>• Library broadened. Award system and the Newsletter were debuted in the same year. Mandarin curriculum modified to include Pinyin for the senior classes.</li> <li>• Tuition: \$170.</li> </ul>
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrichment class for senior students was added to the curriculum structure.</li> <li>• The school database and handbook were computerized.</li> <li>• Tuition: \$190.</li> </ul>
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twice the Grand prize winner of the Annual NJ Chinese School 's speech competition.</li> </ul>
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website established.</li> <li>• MCS New Year party tickets were in high demand among local politicians &amp; officials.</li> </ul>