

Milestones



Dr Robert Tam 譚益芳 (BA 1930; Hon DSocSc 1998)

Dr Tam passed away on March 29, 2004 at the age of 103. A true believer in education and its power to change lives, Dr Tam has been a stalwart supporter of the University for the better part of a century.

... Quietly, Dr Tam was an exemplary supporter of education, a true lover of books and learning.

His circumstances were quite modest when he entered the University, but he thrived here and attributed much of his success in life to his experiences as a University Arts student. In his words, here he spent some of his happiest years and forged some of his most enduring friendships. He then pursued a long and distinguished career in the banking and financial sector, where he was mentor to many and was intimately called "the headmaster".

He never lost his appreciation for the importance of learning. He once said, "The Libraries have a key role to play in the education and training of new graduates and support for such a central institution is support for the University as a whole ... everyone, including the Hong Kong community, benefits from a strong University Library."

Dr Robert Tam was a friend of the Libraries and education.

He will be greatly missed, but his influence will continue to be felt by the generations of students and teachers who read the books which are his gifts and legacy to academia and Hong Kong.



Dr Tam as a student (4th left), and the cast of a play performed at the Inter-Universities Sports meet of 1930.

Renee Tsang 曾香桂玲 (BSocSc 1973)

Mrs Tsang passed away on April 1, 2004. She was, at the time of her death, Senior Assistant Registrar heading the Academic Services Section of the Registry of the University. She worked for her alma mater from 1977 - 1987 and from 1992 until she passed away.

Her many friends throughout the University mourn her passing and will greatly miss this thoughtful, gentle, patient and talented administrator.

Professor Wong Yung-chow 黃用諷 (Hon DSc 1968)

An elder statesman of the Department of Mathematics and of the University, Professor Wong Yung-chow, passed away on May 13, 2004 at the age of 91.

Professor Wong was the main figure in building up the HKU Department of Mathematics into what it is today since 1948, he served actively for near to three decades until he officially retired in 1976 but continued to keep in close contact with the Department as Emeritus Professor. He was the Head of the Department from 1948 - 73, the Dean of Engineering from 1950 - 53, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor from 1963 - 66.

During his long and fruitful career spanning six decades as mathematician and educator, he touched many lives and exerted a lasting influence on the academic careers of many.



Dr Catherine Joyce Symons 西門士夫人 (BA 1939; Hon LLd 1978)

Dr Symons passed away on June 11, 2004 at the age of 85. She was a tireless participant in Hong Kong's public life, in the field of education, social welfare and in the battle against corruption. She served as a member of the Legislative Council in 1972 and was the second woman in the Executive Council in 1976.

"Dr Symons taught and headed DGS for 32 years in an era when Hong Kong's economy and population was growing rapidly. She was remembered fondly as being creative, bright, well educated and learned in a broad spectrum of topics. Dr Symons personified the essential qualities of the British style – upfront, honest and assertive. Classes were taught in both languages with special emphasis placed on the mastery of the English language. Under her, strength, assertiveness and elitism through achievement became predominant characteristics of DGS girls.

Dr Symons gave her girls a voice at a time when a woman's voice was weak. She taught them to be strong and challenge stereotypes. She gave them the freedom to discover their gifts and to seek their callings. She challenged them to extend their excellence beyond the classroom. When her girls heeded her call and rose to unfathomable heights, she reminded them to come down and be servants. She taught them that achievement is empty if they do not help those in need. She taught them to have the courage to change and to face change with courage.

As her girls follow her for more than three decades, passing the torch from generation to generation; the calling of a DGS girl becomes clear: challenge yourself daily and give daily. Dr Symons will live on as a beacon to all."

by **Ronnie Cheng 鄭基恩** (MEd 2003; EdD candidate)

Dr Louis Tao 杜秉祺 (CertEd 1974)

Dr Tao passed away on March 23, 2004 at the age of 59.

He joined the Faculty of Education in 1987, having previously taught at Diocesan Boys' School for sixteen years and at the Chinese University of Hong Kong for three years. A highly-regarded figure in the field of education in the sciences, particularly physics, he made significant contributions internationally, to the Faculty and to the local education community.

He was well-loved as a colleague, well-respected as a teacher, and highly esteemed as Associate Dean (from 1989 - 1992). His ground-breaking series of secondary school physics textbooks and his active participation in many educational bodies won him wide acclaim.