



HWA CHONG JUNIOR COLLEGE  
1974-1984



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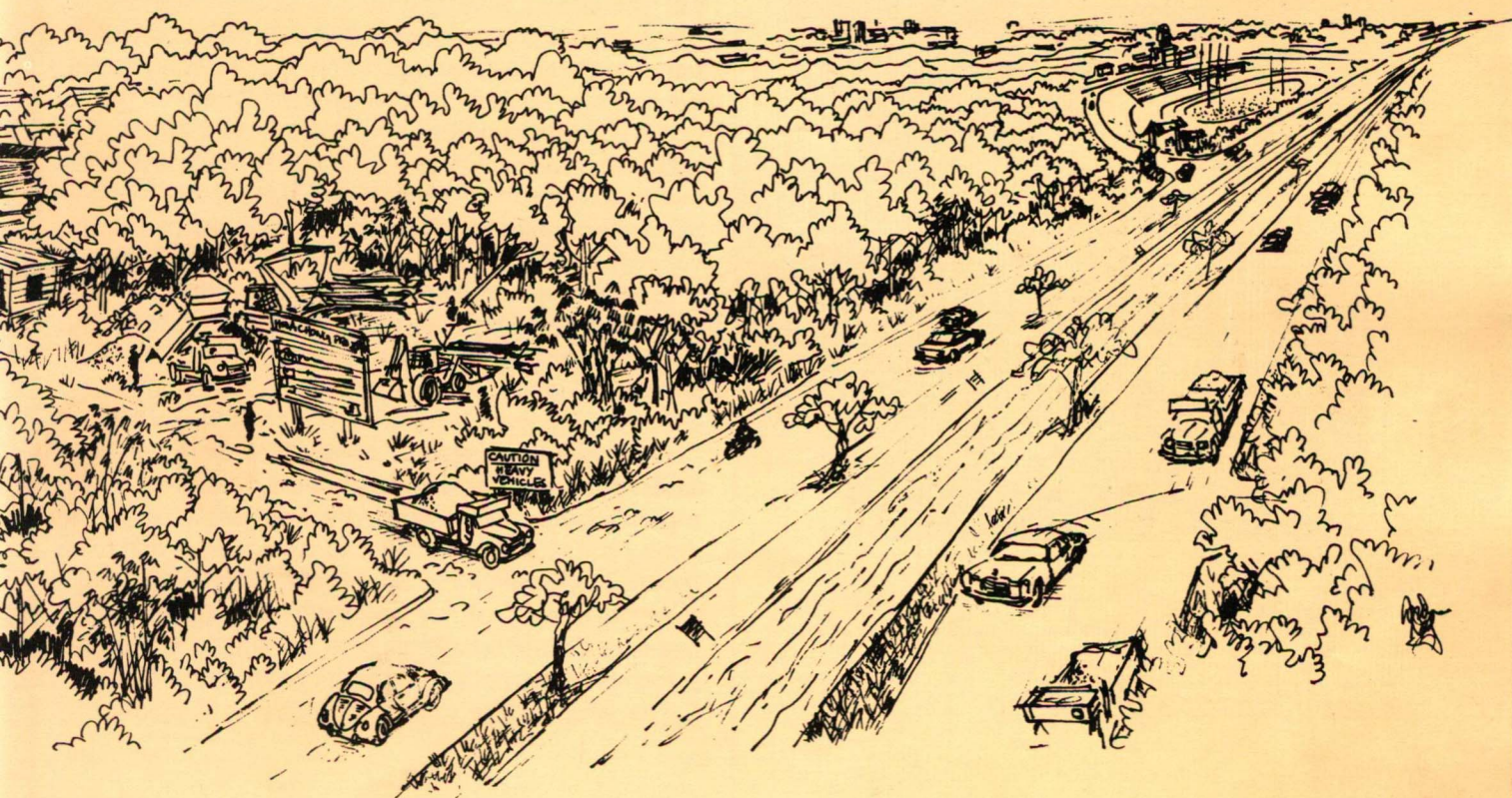
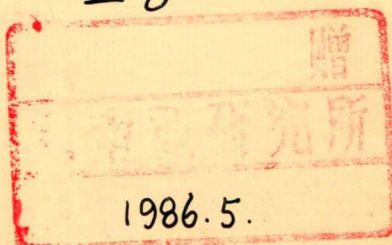


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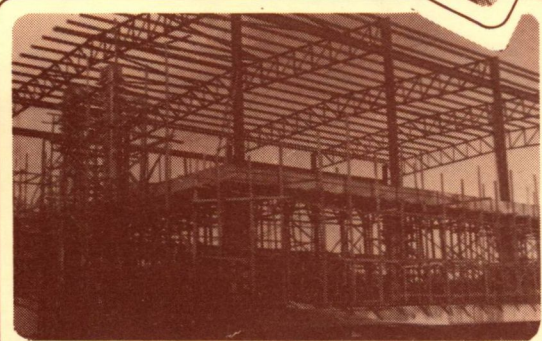
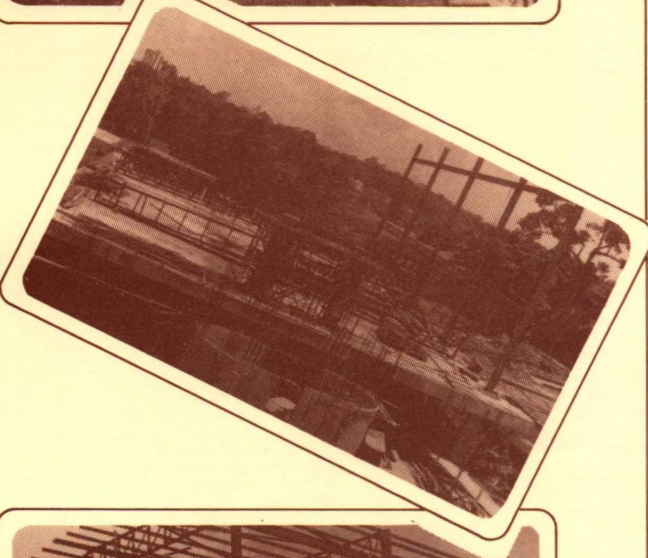
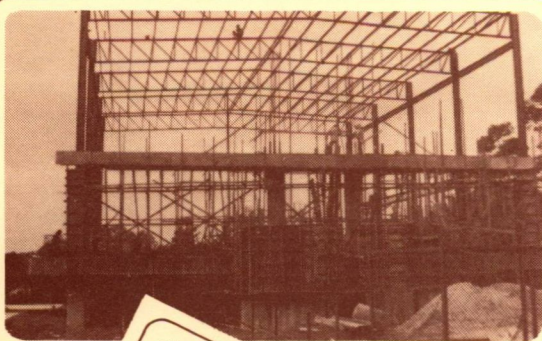


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# THE BEGINNING



## *Grappling for a beginning*

It began a long time ago...

Hwa Chong was born a decade ago to its great surprise... without a body to house the two hundred odd pioneers who took up benighted first residency. Not to be deterred, we moved on from National Junior College to the University of Singapore for a disembodied six months.

Meanwhile, the government of the land, feeling an urge to better our minds, would have built more schools but for the want of a few dollars more. Public spirited members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce chipped in with decidedly philanthropic amounts of money and some acreage was donated from the Chinese High School grounds.

Contracts were handed out and famed experts called in. Among them came Goh Hock Guan Design Team Architects. Mr. Kim Li Chee, chief architect of that self-same team, pondered over the monumental task at hand — to preserve a distinct Chinese identity within the confines of a functional modern piece of architecture, i.e. Hwa Chong, or using precast fins and grilles with oriental imprints to adorn the building.

If you haven't noticed, the grilles which span every floor of each wing of the college say "Hwa Chong" over and over again.

He didn't stop there. The whole design was innovative and a breakaway from the traditional staid school building so often cloned over the island. The plaza with its central circle and radial spokes combine to give a powerful focal effect connecting the two wings of the college. The two lecture theatres were designed aboveground for better natural ventilation. When the air-conditioning breaks down again, we should all send a prayer of thanks to Mr. Kim for his foresight.

Now the engineers were called in. The earth was tested by the soil people (humans, surely) and it was found to be composed of medium to stiff clay with a bearing capacity of two tons per square foot.

Here comes the hitch — we didn't have enough money to do piling. The budget was \$3.3 million, and costs were rising. So guess what, the college was built without piling. Instead, the engineers used strip footing below ground level designed within a bearing capacity of one ton per square foot, adequate and within safety limits. But the staggered feature of the classrooms posed a problem due to the uneven spread of pressure, and during construction, constant survey readings had to be taken to determine settlement rates. Differential settlement did occur. Now, we might even have made it as the Leaning College of Timah, but for the fact that later settlement was more constant all around.

The ends of the main building were supported by



cantilevers. But it seems that this technique did not prevent the structure from a slight tilt. It is visible if you care to descend to the field and observe the ends. The building is perfectly safe, of course.

An interesting point to note is the use of extremely long span girders to support the two lecture theatres. The girders measure 18.29 metres and take point loads from the secondary and tertiary beams from the L.T.s. You may think about that next time there is concerted stamping of feet up there.

Haw Par building had already been standing when the college building began to grow. It existed as part of the Chinese High School. Construction work did little to mar its facade, but the interior was renovated extensively.

Just some interesting notes: Carrier water-cooled package system units are used in the library; the main fire alarm is connected to the Bukit Timah Fire Station; electrical power is supplied from low tension 200 amp PUB main supply with two duct risers (whatever that may be); and the Radio Active Lightning Preventor prevents mishaps during thunderstorms.

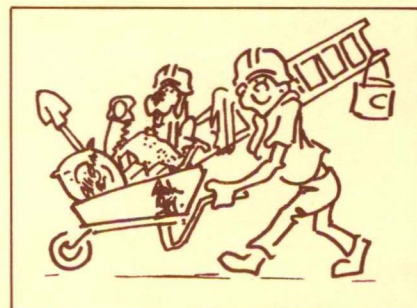
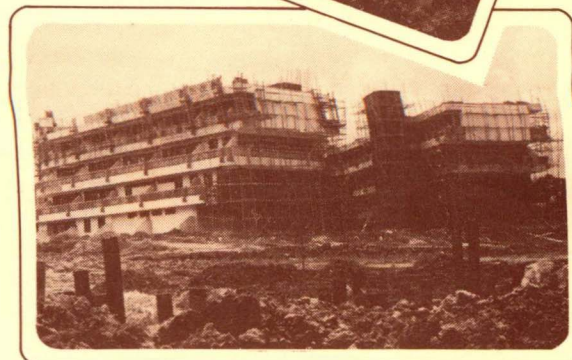
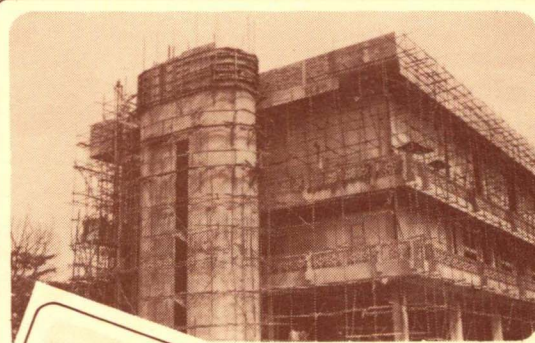
Labour shortages forced slowdowns, but the main building was completed by the middle of 1974; and the students jilted their huts at the University to come home — or half-home, as it was. The canteen block had not been completed, and would not be for some time more, but food was sold in the Forum on a temporary basis.

Reminiscences from one of the Chinese teachers confirms that there really was a Roof Garden on the fourth floor of the college (she's been here since the first day). She especially recalls the Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations in the Garden. Under the auspices of the full moon, lanterns were hung and students and staff alike would make merry in the night's cool. Unfortunately, it has become a thing of the past, making way for another floor of classrooms. This was part of a general expansion project where the library extension was added and plans for the new hostel were unveiled (August 1980).

There have been plans for another new extension to our college. The empty plot of land beside Haw Par Building has been targeted as the probable site for a Science Tower, where all things scientific and computer-ic will be.

So far, nothing has gone beyond talk. If they do build the Tower we might even do away with the fourth floor classrooms and get the Roof Garden back (wishful thought).

Recent highpoints include the opening of the new Hwa Chong Hostel completed at a cost of six million dollars. It takes boarders from Chinese High, National Junior College as well as from Hwa Chong.





## IN RETROSPECT



Hwa Chong Junior College was founded in January 1974, in the premises of the National Junior College. The College building was still under construction, and hence was not yet ready for occupation. The first batch of Hwa Chong teachers and students had to put up with the inconvenience of functioning on shared premises. In March, they shifted to the former Bukit Timah Campus (the present Institute of Education), and it was only in June that they were eventually able to settle down in the College we have today, and pen the first page of the history of Hwa Chong.

Initially there was much to be done, but the students undertook the difficult and often strenuous tasks in their stride. There was, for instance the job of moving all the furniture from their previous classrooms at the Institute of Education to the new College. To solve the problem,

students formed a human chain from the Institute of Education to Hwa Chong — a stretch of 1.5 kilometres — and passed the desks and chairs from hand to hand. There was also much cleaning to be done, blackboards to be put up and footpaths to be dug. Although these activities were coordinated by the Students' Action Committee, all the other students put their hands and heads together and worked with admirable zest and spirit. They handled almost every aspect of school life, including designing the College uniform and running the school canteen. Consciously or otherwise, the Hwa Chong spirit had infused into them, and this spirit was to continue to live on in future generations of Hwa Chongians.

The second academic year saw HJC vigorously engaged in sporting activities. Having ironed out their initial problems of getting the College

started, the students now channelled their energy into producing formidable volleyball, badminton, basketball, cross-country and table-tennis teams. In every inter-school tournament, the entire college turned up to give their moral support. The teachers were just as enthusiastic in such activities, and this helped to forge a unique camaraderie between staff and students.

The leaders behind Hwa Chong's successful formative years may be said to be Mr. Lim Nai Tian, the first Principal and Mrs. Lee Phui Mun, who was Vice-Principal all the way till November 1983. Their charisma and dedication to their jobs did much to influence the College, setting trends and standards to be followed by subsequent generations. Mr. Lim introduced 'chit-chat sessions' to break the language barrier between English and Chinese-medium students. He was at home with one





and all, and even obliged by leading the then popular "Worm Dances".

Mr. Lim left HJC in 1976. Mr. Wu Tsung Kan became the next father figure in the College. A significant transition was soon evident. Now fairly well established, Hwa Chong began to show her prowess not only in the sports area, but also started to carve a name for herself in terms of academic achievements. The tradition of maintaining academic excellence is still being upheld today. Numerous cultural and social activities were introduced: Hwa Chongians dabbled with lantern-making, Chinese Calligraphy and kite-flying. They attended Social Nights and shouted themselves hoarse in the first cheer-and-cheer-song competition.

The Students' Council, formed since Hwa Chong began functioning in the College premises, now diversified its services and became more active than ever before. They organised the Moon Cake festival that year, and constructed a huge rocket for the occasion. They also ran the Students' Activity Centre, where students could enjoy a quiet chat, have tea breaks and browse through the day's papers. A branch of the Council providing games services came up with the brilliant idea of loaning carrom boards and chess sets to interested players. They even organised annual carrom competitions — a practice still continued and growing in popularity today.

The period between May 1979 and June 1980 saw two changes of

Principals. Mr. Wu Tsung Kan retired and was succeeded by Mr. Lim Kim Woon in May 1979. Our present principal, Mr. Bernard Fong joined the College in June 1980. In the latter five years of Hwa Chong's history, several 'firsts' occurred. In 1978, the technical faculty of the College performed even better than the Science faculty in the GCE 'A' level examinations. This had never before happened in the annuals of the College, and was merely evidence of the high standard that Hwa Chong was able to maintain in education. Also, for the first time ever, a senior prom night was organised and held in the school auditorium where second year students could meet and enjoy each other's company for the last time before each went his or her own way. The Students' Council had its first ever female president, and the cheerleaders of Hwa Chong finally had pom-poms to make their cheering even more spectacular.

Several amenities were also added: the lecture theatres, hitherto rather stifling on warm days, finally had air conditioners, and library hours were extended to 10:30 pm for the convenience of students during the examination period. And yet, a few cherished things had to be sacrificed. The students' activity centre had to make way for the installation of generators to provide electricity for the lecture theatre's central air conditioning system.

In 1979, a feature unique to Hwa Chong, had to make way for progress as plans were made to replace the roof garden with an extra floor of

classrooms. That year also saw a massive fund raiser: a concert performance by the Vienna Opera Orchestra, who came to Singapore at the invitation of the Management Committee of HJC and the Chinese High School.

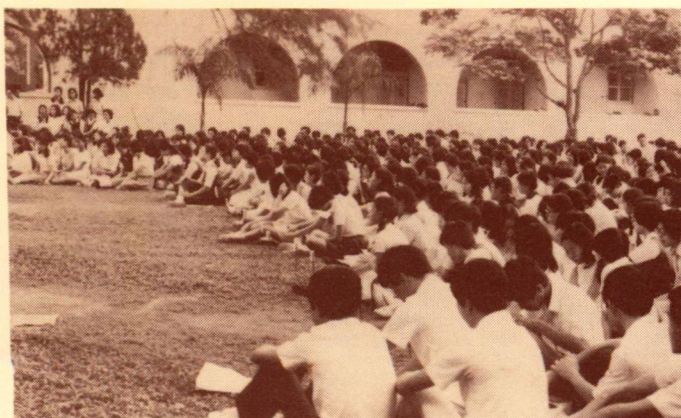
In 1980, yet another feather was added to Hwa Chong's cap when the Ministry of Education chose it to be the centre for two prestigious scholarship schemes: PROMSHO (Pre-University-cum-Overseas Merit Scholarship for Humanities in Oxbridge) and SALUTE (Scholarships for Advanced Level and University Studies for Teaching of English). With the addition of these two schemes, the influx of scholars and specially trained tutors added a new dimension to the intellectual and social quality of the school. Indeed, new meaning was added to the word 'education.'

In 1981, the fourth floor classrooms were officially opened. For the next three or four years, preparations were made for a variety of projects to be undertaken. A health and fitness club was set up in the Haw Par Building at a cost of over ten thousand dollars. The fully air-conditioned extension library was opened in late 1981, and at about the same time, the ground breaking ceremony for the Hwa Chong hostel was held.

In 1982, the College opened its doors to the first batch of SAP (Special Assistance Plan) students and a second female president was elected. The central library was renamed the Jing Xian Library, after Chen Jingxian,







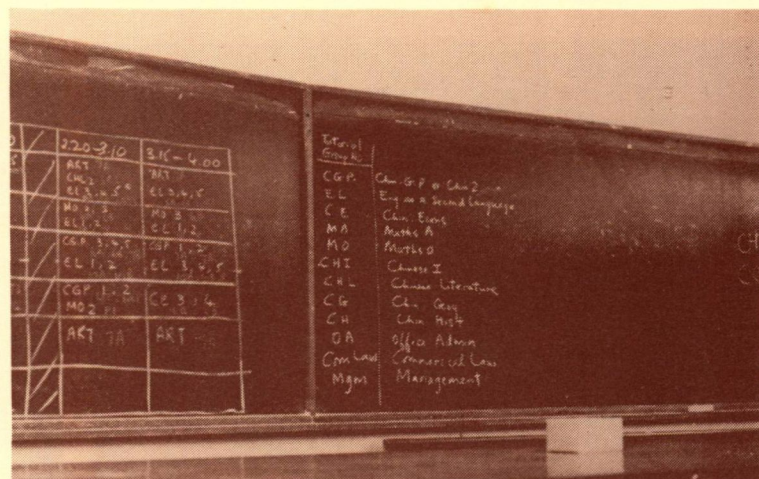
in honour of the father of Mr. Tan Keong Choon, Chairman of our Management Committee. The technical faculty was dissolved due to its low intake of students, many of whom were taken into the special vocational institutes and the Polytechnic.

1984 has been a year full of successes. The College created

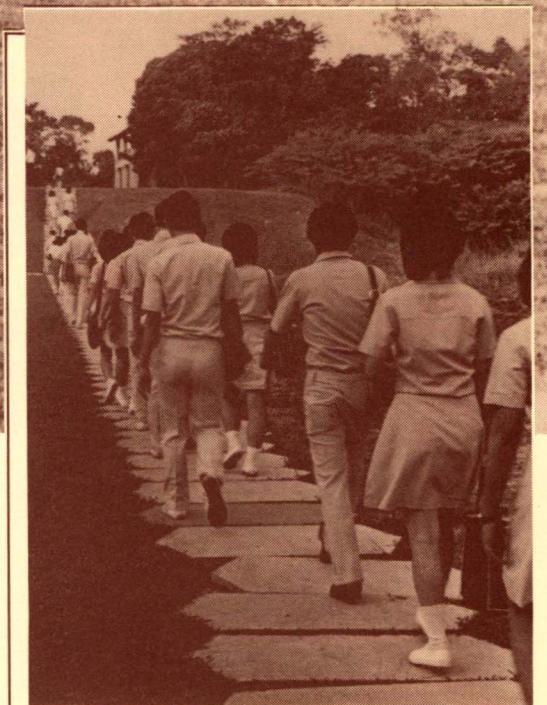
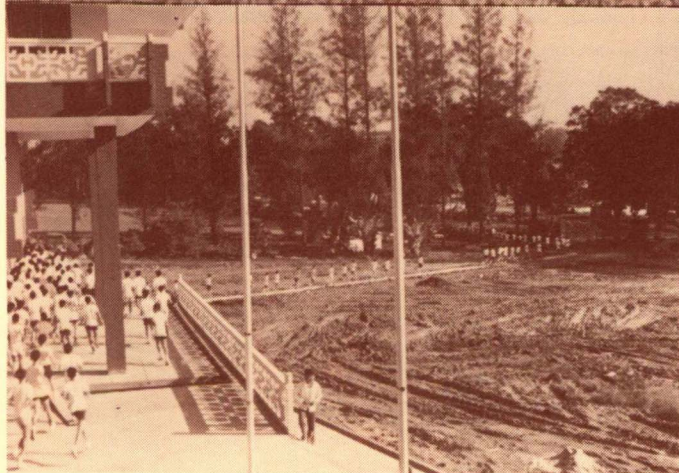
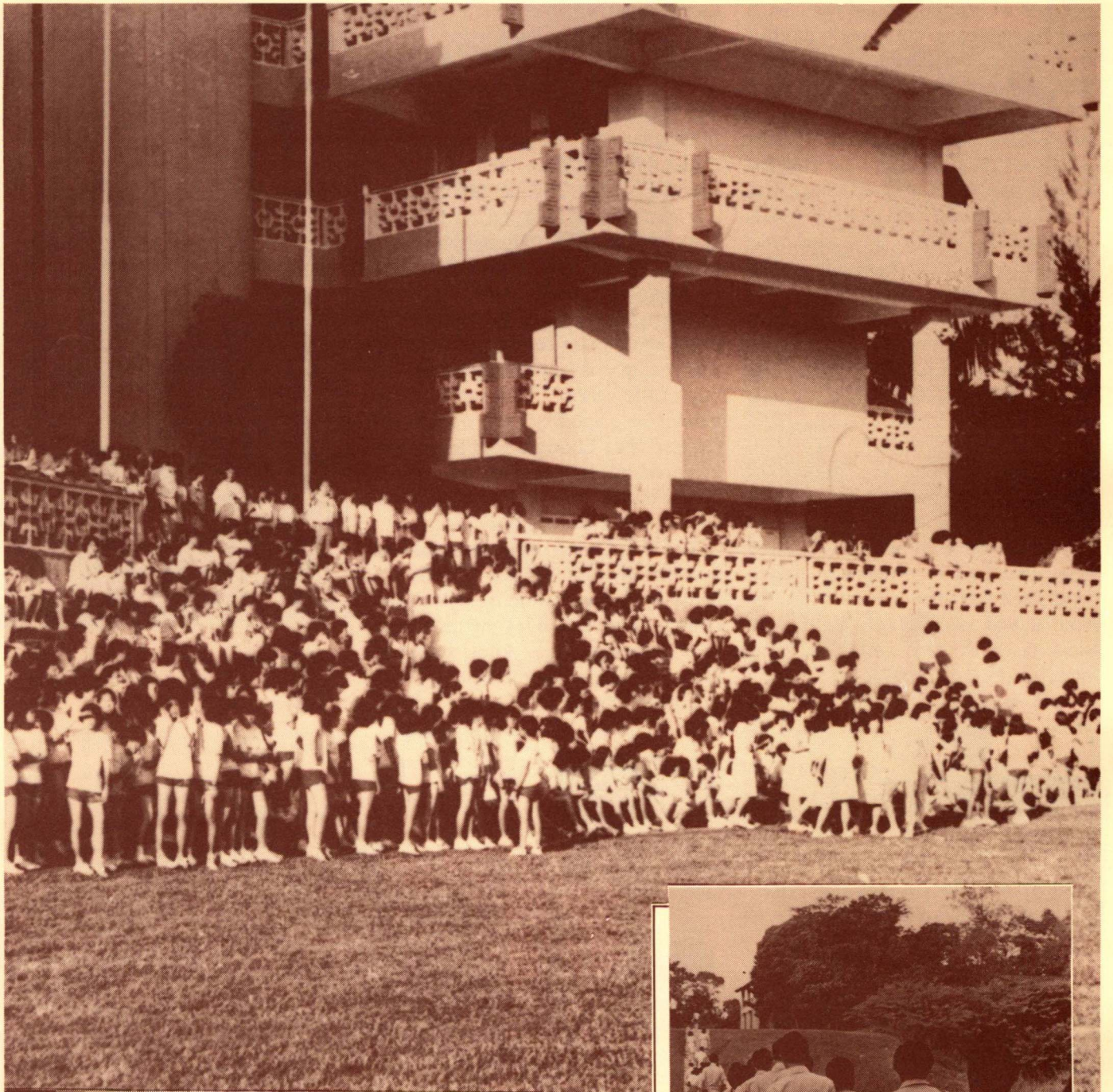
national history by producing a record of 81 students with 4As in the A-level Cambridge examinations. The PROMSHO students graduated with flying colours, and each of the faculties of the College: Science, Arts and Computer Science, produced a President's scholar each, a feat so far unmatched anywhere else in Singapore.

And so, we have seen the first ten

years pass fleetingly by us. The successes of Hwa Chong are, to say the least, anything but trivial, and yet, it is not for us to dwell excessively on these. That is not Hwa Chong. What is Hwa Chong is to look upon our achievements with humble pride, knowing that we will continue to uphold the College motto: Towards Progress. And so, happy 10th Anniversary, Hwa Chong.









# THE HWA CHONG SPIRIT

When we started, we did not have a real home that we could really call our own: at NJC for the first six months, then to the Bukit Timah Campus of the old University of Singapore. So when it was time to shift to the site where we are now, everyone chipped in their part to set up the College and to help it through its teething years. Thus the love shown by the pioneering batches of students was what was then known as the Hwa Chong spirit.

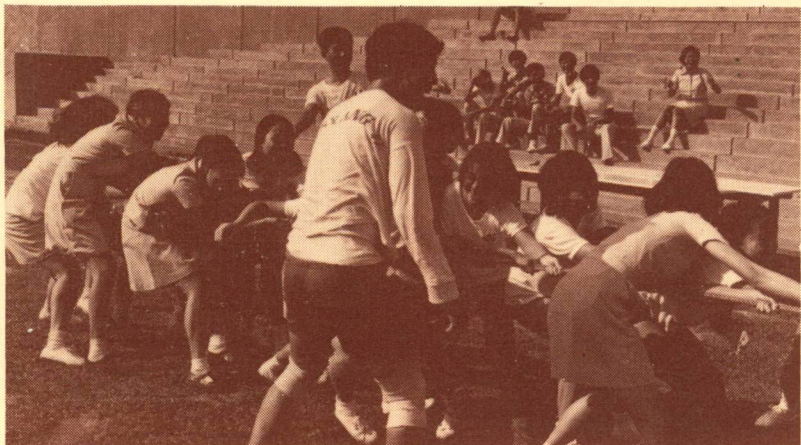
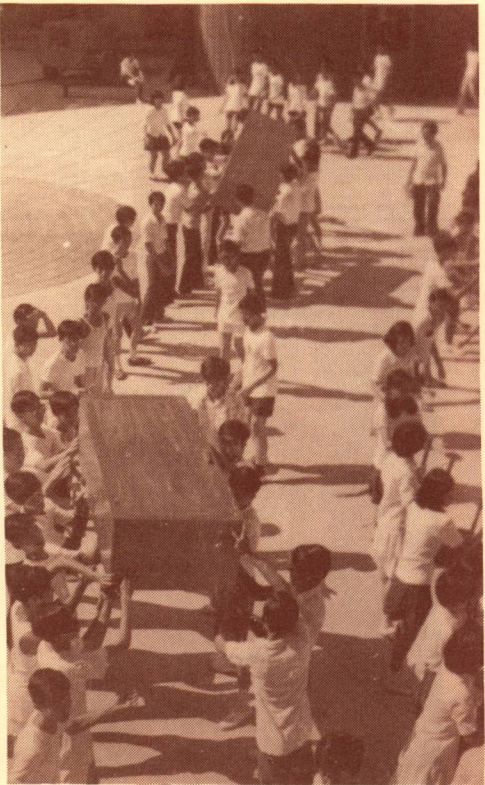
In the next few years, the spirit evolved into a drive to establish a reputation for the College. Being Singapore's second College (after National Junior College), the motivation to succeed was very strong indeed. This determination prevailed in all aspects of the school. Whether it was sports or studies, the students had to fight hard to rid themselves of the label "underdog" that had automatically associated itself with the school from the time it was established. We had to work twice as hard, and had to be twice as good in order to succeed.

And succeed we did. In recent years, the spirit has manifested itself

as striving to maintain the excellence and reputation that has come to be synonymous with the school in the short span of 10 years since its founding. And so it should be, for the fruits of labour which we are now enjoying must continue to be there for future batches of Hwa Chongians to reap.

It is good to think of the Hwa Chong spirit at a time like this. Perhaps one might say that a true school spirit is to be found only in the much older institutions, where the love and pride for one's alma mater lasts a life time, and true meaning is lent to the phrase "old boy of the school". This sort of thing cannot be gained by hard work alone (or else Hwa Chong would long have achieved it!), but requires the patient hands of time to cultivate it. And yet, we can see it already budding....

The Hwa Chong spirit: intangible yet supremely manifested, subtle yet fierce. We know that such a spirit must change with the tides of time, but more importantly, we know that it is like a coastline: ever changing, and yet, always there.....







"...HWA CHONG spirit ??"

"OH! JUST SOMETHING  
THAT CAUSES LECTURE  
THEATRE DOORS & WINDOWS  
TO OPEN & SHUT BY  
THEMSELVES!"





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 Honorary President  
 Mr. Lien Ying Chow



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 郑仓满先生  
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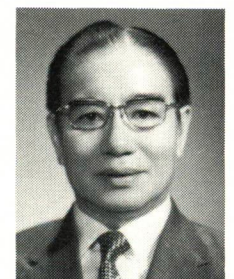


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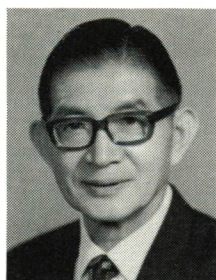
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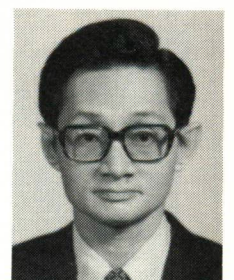
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副学监：  
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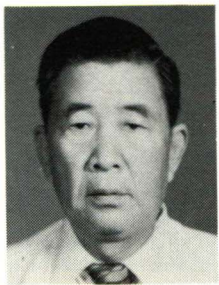
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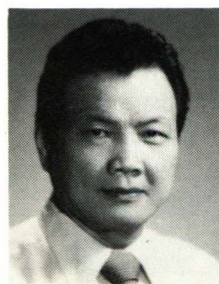
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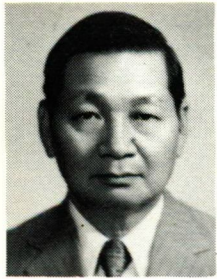
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Mr. Ong Sing Chiat



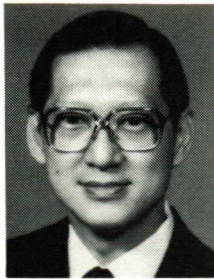
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Mr. Goh Choo Eng



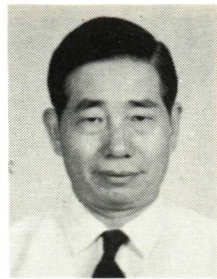
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Mr. Ong Chin Chio



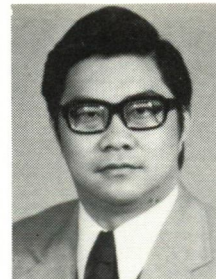
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Mr. Tan Sin Eng



董事：  
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Mr. Wu Tsung Kan



董事：  
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许木荣先生

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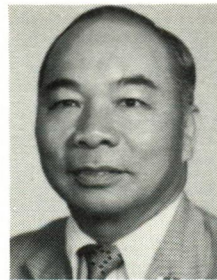
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Mr. Ung Gim Sei



董事：  
林廷高博士

Dr. Lim Heng Kow



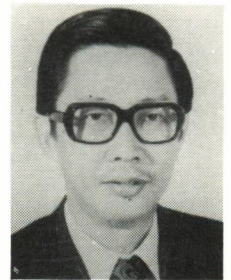
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张荣先生

Mr. Cheong Wing



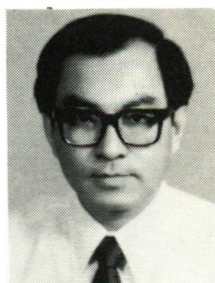
董事：  
李福鸿先生

Mr. Lee Fook Hong



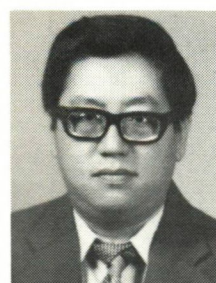
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杜财顺医生

Dr. Toh Chai Soon



董事：  
徐光志医生

Dr. Chee Kuan Tsee

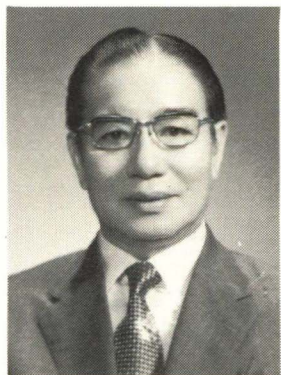


董事：  
胡名正先生

Mr. Oh Bin Cheng



## 创业维艰 ——访华初及华中董事部主席陈共存先生



为了进一步了解学院创办的艰苦过程，我们特地拜访了华中及华初董事部主席陈共存先生。陈先生首先和我们谈起学院的创立背景，他说：一九七〇年二月，教育部长王邦文先生约了总商会几位董事前往教育部开会，以商讨政府要筹建十间初级学院的事。根据政府估计筹建一间初级学院约需花两百二十万元，为了协助政府实现这个百年树人大计，王部长希望我们发动募捐运动，然后政府以一元对一元的方式资助。但我们认为由于商会募捐对象及范围有限，若要筹办十间初院的话，不论时间与能力方面都很难办到，所以就建议只筹建一到两间，其他则交由宗教团体或个别学校去负责。在会上王部长还认为第一间政府辅助的初级学院可以建在华中校园内，由华中董事部负责筹建。经过一番讨论后，双方同意商会负责筹募两间初院的款项，同时推选孙炳炎先生为筹委会主席。

陈主席追忆他被推选为华中董事会主席时说：当时我不敢接受这个重担，我的顾虑主要有四个：一、我是生意人，对办教育根本是外行。二、当时听说政府要征用华中部份校园作为初院的院址。三、据说当时华中董事会经济情况欠佳，有人建议变卖部份华中校园以充经费，本人当然不同意这项事。四、想起过去华校学潮频仍，心有余悸。后来与王部长再次开会时，他对我说那些顾虑其实都不成问题。因为第一、教育专业的问题由教育部负责，因此责任不重。第二、他向我保证政府并不准备征用华中的土地；至于学潮的问题更不必担忧。华中董事部可保持原状负责筹建初院。经王部长解释后，我终于接受了主席的职位。

在谈到学院校舍的建筑时，陈主席指出：学院于一九七二年敦请教育部长林金山先生主持奠基礼，工程破土动工后即逢世界性通货膨胀，百物腾涨，第一个建筑承包商倒闭，工程

停顿下来，第二个承包商接办后，也宣告倒闭，结果由担保人孙炳炎先生协助完成，但是工程已延迟一年多。完成时总共耗费五百六十多万。

一九七三年校舍尚未竣工，但为什么董事部却决定在一九七四年开课呢？陈主席说：据我们估计学院主要校舍的建筑将在一九七四年六月左右完工，为了争取时间，我们决定在一九七四年一月开课，这也同时可起督促作用，在形势所迫下，承包商不得不倾全力以完成工程。

在谈到筹办开课的情形时，陈主席极力推崇林乃田先生，他说：教育部提出好几位人选让我们考虑，最后我们决定礼聘林乃田先生为院长，后来经事实证明我们的选择是正确的。由于林先生的努力，为华初打下了巩固的基础。

接着陈主席告诉我们他对教育的看法，他认为学校乃培养国民的最重要机关，它的理想在于为国家培养优秀人才，同时保留我们的传统文化。

陈主席极其重视本身的传统文化。他说：在新加坡这个环境，英文固然重要，但它只是一种工具，最重要的还在于培养人的思想及传统文化价值观。他认为：

母语在商业及其他地方的运用价值不太大，但是它有它的传统价值和历史价值。我们希望同学们不只是会读和写英文，同时也要具有传统优越文化的根基。母语的價值不全在应用上，更重要的是一个人的修养，如何培养他做个好国民、好子女、好父母。

陈主席最后谈到学院的未来的发展，他说：华初在过去十年的发展是非常迅速的，在学术与课外活动方面的成绩是有目共睹的，我不必在此重复，但我们必须紧记：创业难，守成更难的古训。我们不仅要巩固现有的成就，同时应该百尺竿头更进一步，以使学院在建国的千秋大业中负起更大的责任。



## 回首，在十年后 ——与林乃田先生一席谈



当我要去访问林乃田先生时，心情是兴奋的。

高一那年，在迎新周时就在礼堂里看到林先生的名字，知道他是华初第一任院长，却一直不曾看过他，想不到反而在毕业后得以和他攀谈，也因此得知了许多关于黄城的往事，许多我一直很想聆听的故事。

那是一个雨后的黄昏，林先生特地在下班后留在办公室内，等候鄢老师和我。开始谈话时，玻璃窗外的蓝天尚未暗下来，在静谧的会议室里，林先生讲述了他出任华初院长的经过。

在出任华初院长之前，林乃田先生已于教育界服务多年，他曾是国家初级学院的教师，当过该院数学科主任及训育主任，处理行政的工作。一九七二年，他被调任德新中学校长。不久，政府与民间筹办另一间初级学院，并且决定把院址定于广大的华中校园内，因此取名华中初级学院。林先生告诉我，他在知道自己受邀出任华初院长时。经过一番考虑后，他答应了，因为他认为那是一项富有挑战性及充满意义的工作。

在问及他被筹委会选为院长的原因时，林先生微微一笑，说道：“我也不十分清楚，也许是那几年我在教育界较活跃的关系吧。”

一九七三年中，林先生就以准院长的身份，督建院舍，物色教师，七四年一月，学院就正式开课了。

“开始时，真的是困难重重。教师是从不同的学校来的，我在一时间不可能找到太多合适的老师，幸好大部份的教师都很合作，其中有几位元老还是自愿前来的呢。”林先生一边说话，一边回想着昔年的事：“建筑工程受阻，倒是一个令人头疼的问题，七四年开学时，工程尚未完成，我们只好向国初商借课室，三个月后，又搬到当时的新大去，直至六月，才



算可以正式在自己的校舍里上课。”

“这样搬来搬去的，不是很麻烦吗？”

“的确很麻烦。记得我们搬迁时，桌椅、杂物，连图书馆的书本在内，样样都得亲自动手。好在全体师生合作，大家的士气都很高。同学们在那样搬来搬去的情况下，学习情绪依然不受影响，可谓难得。”

“对了，第一次招生时，反应如何呢？”

“还不错，人数比预期的还多，其中一部份是当时在国初收生名额满了之后前来报名的。另一方面，由于华初予人一个华校背景的印象，也因此吸引了不少华文源流的优秀学生。”

林先生讲话时表情十足，时而微笑，时而严肃。当我问他在出任第一任院长之前，对学院存有什么理想时，他认真地说：“任何办教育的人，都会有自己的一套理想。华初的背景恰好和我的理想相吻合，提供了我一个实现理想的机会。我当初立下了一个目标，就是要建立一个良好的学习环境，帮助学生发挥潜能，使他们思想成熟，以造就一羣国家需要的年轻人。值得一提的是，在实施双语教育的同时，我格外强调东方传统价值观的培养，学院里的课外活动，尤其是节日庆典，学院都注重文化色彩，例如庆祝农历新年，中秋节和端午节等。这些对华校生来说是具亲切感的，对英校生来说却是新鲜的，也是吸引住他们的学院特色。”

从上面的问题，我又想起另一个问题问他：“你当初要塑造的华初学生，是什么样子的呢？”

“华初是华校气氛较浓的一间学院。在过去，华校生给人们的印象是保守而用功。这种特点有坏处也有好处。在华初，院方给予学生很大的自由，学院里的活动总是鼓励学生们主

动参与，通过各种参与工作，让同学们发挥自己的潜能。你知道吗？华初的院服，院歌，院训，都是由第一届的学生参与设计，创作，大家共同拟定的呢！”

林先生继续说：“我理想中的华初学生，应该用功，肯干，具有独特思想，有主见而不盲从，了解传统文化的优点，并且能够与群体合作。大多数的华初学生在毕业后，办事时自己都有信心，而且能充满决心地去做。”

接着，林先生又告诉了我一个故事：有一次，林先生遇到一位学生家长，该名家长以充满惊异的口气对他说：“我真佩服你们学院的老师，他们到底是用什么方法，使我的女儿在思想上有了那么大的改变呢？”

原来，该名家长的女儿原是非常洋化的一个学生，对于母语和母族文化并不重视，但是，在华初求学两年以后，竟变得对中华文化有浓厚的兴趣了。不仅如此，还对自己的文化感到自豪，据那名家长说，他的女儿后来到外国念了很多年书，结果回来后仍然喜爱中华文化，他认为，那是华初为她打下的基础。

今年是华初十周年院庆，是回顾的时候，也是前瞻的时候，在结束我的访问之前，我请林先生告诉我他对华初的期望，他说：“华初已经建立起一个可以让学生受真正良好教育的环境，这种环境是多年来在各方面的努力下建立起来的，我希望今后的院长，老师，以至学生，都能齐心合力地维持并发扬原有的良好校风——尤其是在发扬传统文化方面。我想，只要每一个人都朝着创院时的理想努力，这一点是不难做到的。”

走出林先生办公的大厦外，我发觉天色已完全暗黑了。一天又将近过去了，然而，对百年树人的教育大业来说，路，永远没有尽头。