

## Dr. Chau Cham-Son -- A Rotarian of Life Long Scouting

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Dr. Chau Cham-Son (周湛燊博士), OBE, CStJ, *HonLLD (Liverpool)*, BA(AS)(HKU), JP, (23 August 1932 - 9 October 2023), was a senior Rotarian of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong (香港扶輪社) holding the classification of “Building and Development”. Chau served as the Club President in 1991-1992 after his retirement from the British Crown Colony Hong Kong Government civil service in 1990 as the Director (General) of Buildings and Lands.

Chau was the Chief Commissioner of the Scout Association of Hong Kong (香港童軍總監) from 1985 to 1996. He was the second member from the same Rotary Club to serve such post. The previous one was Lo Ching-Kan (羅徵勤太平紳士), MBE, JP, who was the Colony Commissioner of the Boy Scouts Association-Hong Kong Branch (香港童子軍總會) from 1963 to 1973. Lo was the Club President in 1976-1977, and later the Rotary International District 345 Governor-Elect in 1987-1988. Regrettably, Lo died of serious illness a couple of months before he could assume the office on 1 July 1988.

The two younger brothers of Chau Cham-Son were Rotarians: (1) Peter Chau Cham-Chiu (周湛樵), BBS, MBE, QPM, CPM, President 1994-1995 of The Rotary Club of Hong Kong Island West (香港西區扶輪社); and (2) Patrick Chau (周湛煌), President 1988-1989 of The Rotary Club of Hong Kong Northwest (香港西北扶輪社).





*1946 – The 15th Hong Kong Scout Group, Wah Yan College, Hong Kong.  
Can you identify who is the newly invested Boy Scout Chau Cham-Son in this group photo?*



*1946 – Boy Scouts of the 15th Hong Kong Scout Group, Wah Yan College,  
explore the British army trucks deployed in the Hong Kong Island after the Pacific War.*



*1950 -- Scout Rally in the Hong Kong Football Club Stadium*



*Hong Kong Scouts Contingent at the Pan-Pacific Scout Jamboree held between 29 December 1952 and 9 January 1953 in Greystanes, New South Wales, Australia.*

## A Rotarian of Life Long Scouting

The second son of Rotarian Sir Tsun-Nin Chau (周竣年爵士), Kt, CBE, JP (formerly Active Member of Hong Kong Rotary Club; Honorary Treasurer and then Vice President of the Boy Scouts Association-Hong Kong Branch), Chau joined the Scout Movement in 1946 as a Boy Scout at the age of 14. He became a Scoutmaster in 1949 for his alma mater, the 15th Hong Kong Scout Group of Wah Yan College, Hong Kong (香港華仁書院--香港童軍港島第15旅). He was appointed Assistant District Commissioner in 1957 and was promoted to Victoria City District Commissioner (維多利亞城區總監) in 1962.

Following father's footsteps, he had been Honorary Treasurer and Deputy Chairman of The Scout Association of Hong Kong (香港童軍總會). He also was Chairman of Campsites and Properties Committee between 1978 and 1984. In 1977, Chau was appointed an Unofficial Justice of Peace for Hong Kong by Hong Kong Governor Sir Crawford Murray MacLehose (香港總督麥理浩爵士). Chau became Chairman of the Executive Committee, the Scout Association of Hong Kong (香港童軍總會執行委員會主席) in 1983 and also chaired the Headquarters Building Management Committee in the crucial period during the fundraising, planning and construction of the 25-storey Hong Kong Scout Centre.

In 1985, Chau was appointed by the Chief Scout, Hong Kong Governor Sir Edward Youde (香港童軍總領袖、香港總督尤德爵士) to serve as the 11th Chief Commissioner of the Scout Association of Hong Kong, a post he held for the next 11 years until 1996, leading a total membership of over 50,000 children and adults.

During his office as the Chief Commissioner, Chau streamlined the organization of the Scout Movement in Hong Kong. His greatest legacy was the erection of the 25-storey Hong Kong Scout Centre---one of the largest, most advanced and well-equipped Scout headquarters in Asia---providing the Association with a meaningful foundation for its development to be financially self-sufficient. The Scout Association being one of the major executive bodies of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (愛丁堡公爵獎勵計劃) (DEA), Chau was also to serve as Vice-Chairman of the DEA Council in Hong Kong.

Out of Hong Kong in The World Organization of the Scout Movement, Chau served in Asia-Pacific Region (APR) Regional Committee from 1986 to 1992. He was conferred the Organization's "Bronze Wolf Award" in 1990. The Bronze Wolf Award is Scouting's highest honour. It recognizes the outstanding service, commitment, and contributions of volunteers to the Scout Movement and is the only award presented by the World Scout Committee. Later, Chau was elected a member of the World Scout Committee (1993-1999).

Besides the Bronze Wolf, Chau received the Gold Lion Award from Hong Kong in 1986; the APR Medal for Meritorious Contribution in 1986; and the APR Award for Distinguished Service in 1995. Chau received also other awards from the United Kingdom and Thailand.

Chau co-founded the APR Scout Foundation in 1992. By making the first contribution

he became its first Foundation Member. The Foundation envisions the growth of quality Scouting in member countries and strengthening self-reliance. On the other hand, Chau was a Baden-Powell Fellow of the World Scout Foundation.

Chau carried on to serve as a Vice President of the Scout Association of Hong Kong since his retiring from the post of Chief Commissioner in 1997. He was also a holder of Long Service Medal with 4 stars signifying he had served faithfully for no less than 55 years as an adult leader of the Hong Kong Scouting.

### Other remarkable services to the community

- (1) St. John Ambulance Association and Brigade is a partnering organization to the Scouts, and to whom provides first aid training and examinations. That was a good reason for Chau to sit in the Council of the Order of St. John in Hong Kong (香港聖約翰議會). In recognizing the valuable services contributed by Chau, he was decorated in 2002 Commander of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem (C.St.J.).
- (2) Since 1989, Chau had been a steward of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club (英皇御准香港賽馬會董事). From 1998 to 2002 he served as the Jockey Club's Deputy Chairman responsible for charitable projects in particular. There were two projects worth mentioning during Chau's tenure: (i) The first one was the initiated proposal to establish the Jockey Club Centre for Positive Aging (香港賽馬會耆智園) by the year 2000. This was not an ordinary elderly home, but the first special facility for Alzheimer's patients in Hong Kong. This project was the Jockey Club's response to the rapid aging of Hong Kong's population and could be said to be forward-looking. (ii) Another project was in 2001 the establishment of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Institute of Chinese Medicine (香港賽馬會中藥研究院) with an investment of HK\$500 million, allowing universities and medical institutions in Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland to cooperate in promoting the development of traditional Chinese medicine.

### The Career City Planner

Certainly, Scouting was not Chau's major profession. Chau was a pioneer in Hong Kong's town planning and instrumental in establishing a fully-fledged town planning office in the 1980s laid the foundation for the modern concept of urban planning. He retired from the British Colonial Hong Kong Government in 1990 as Director (General) of Buildings and Lands after 30 years of public service. He was also a Fellow Member of the Institute and the first registered professional planner.

Chau attended Wah Yan College, an eminent Roman Catholic Jesuit school for boys in Hong Kong, and later graduated from the Hong Kong University (香港大學) in 1956 with a

Bachelor Degree in Architecture. He was qualified as a Registered Architect, and then undertook in 1957 post-graduate studies at the University of Liverpool, United Kingdom, and also the University of Melbourne, Australia, and qualified as a Registered Town Planner.

Chau has been described as “instrumental in establishing a fully-fledged town planning office in the 1980s with the modern concept of urban planning”. In recognition to his remarkable services, Chau was appointed in 1987 an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) by Queen Elizabeth II, United Kingdom. In 1994, Chau was conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*, by the University of Liverpool, United Kingdom. For more descriptions on Chau’s “vocational service”, it is better to read the Citation given by the University of Liverpool. The full text is transcribed below:



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* LIVERPOOL

Chau Cham-son, OBE  
Alumna 1957 (Civic Design)  
Honorary Degree, Doctor of Laws, 1994  
Citation

Chau Cham-son belongs to an old and respected Hong Kong family who, for several generations have played an active part in public life: both his father and his grandfather were members of the Legislative Council. He was educated at Wah Yan College and then at the University of Hong Kong where he graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Architecture in 1956.

After completing his professional practical experience, he came to Britain in 1957 and studied in the Department of Civic Design here in Liverpool, qualifying as a planner. Apart from a year studying tropical architecture at Melbourne University in Australia, he has spent the rest of his career as an architect/planner in the Government’s service in Hong Kong.

In 1960, when he first joined, the Government was involved in reclamation work in the Central business district. Mr. Chau went on to become Senior Planning Officer, then Chief Planning Officer. Step by step, he was able to establish a town planning office, which has responsibility for the development of the New Territories, and in 1986 he became the first Director of Buildings and Land.

Hong Kong has a unique history of economic and physical expansion and is one of the most vibrant and exciting cities in the world. During much of this period of dramatic expansion and, ultimately of world-renowned architectural achievement, Chau Cham-son

has been an increasingly important figure in the whole process of planning and development. It is significant that the foundation of his career was here in Liverpool.

He is a member of the Architectural Association in London, the Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors of the United Kingdom and of the Hong Kong Institute of Architecture. He is a Fellow of the Royal Town Planning Institute and of the Hong Kong Institute of Planners. He retired in 1989 and has since then been able to increase his long standing interests in community work. He has been involved with the scouting movement since 1946 and is now the Chief Commissioner of the Scout Association of Hong Kong and a member of the Asian-Pacific Regional Scout Committee. Chau Cham-son has been honoured many times by the scout movement. In addition, he is the Vice-Chairman of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Council and a member of the St. John Ambulance Association and Brigade.

His educational interests include the Vice-Chairmanship of Li Po Chun United World College and he is a member of the College Council and Board of Governors at Lingnan College. Since 1989, he has been a steward of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, which is renowned in Hong Kong for its social and community projects, created with the profits from the principal sporting passion of the Hong Kong people.

Chau Cham-son has been a Justice of the Peace since 1977 and he was honoured by the Queen ten years later for his contribution to the life of Hong Kong when he was made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

We, in Liverpool, honour him for all these reasons but for one significant additional activity. Liverpool certainly made a strong impression on Chau Cham-son in a professional sense, but he has also spent a considerable amount of his time and energy in recent years in developing the Graduate Association of which he is now President. Universities cherish their alumni: graduates are ambassadors around the world. Hong Kong has a significant group of successful Liverpool graduates and nowhere is there more affection for the University of Liverpool and its achievements. Nowhere, too, is that affection channelled so effectively into positive actions. The Graduate Association has acted as a focus for practical schemes to raise money which will fund more students from Hong Kong to come and study in Liverpool. Regularly, senior members of the University are invited to lend their support by their presence at the imaginative, well planned and financially very successful events which Chau Cham-son and his colleagues initiate. The result is a warm and developing relationship between Hong Kong and Liverpool which is an example to other parts of the world and a challenge to use here to cherish what has been done and to use it as an example for Liverpool graduate Association elsewhere.

In truth, such organisations only succeed by the charisma and energy of individuals in their own countries. Chau Cham-son is one such: without his affection for Liverpool and his own university, without his time and energy so willingly given, this great and immensely

useful enterprise would probably never have happened.

We honour a man who has a great affection for Britain and for Liverpool, who has valued greatly the education he received here and whose belief in the wide value of education has led to the practical initiatives which are strengthening the bond between this University and Hong Kong. Of such things are the verities of one civilisation shared with another.

Chancellor, in the name of the Senate and the Council of the University, I present to you Chau Cham-son for admission to the degree of Doctor of Laws (*honoris causa*) on this University.

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*19 July 1995 -- Dr. and Mrs. Chau Cham-Son at a cocktail reception held at the BP International Hotel. The Hotel is being the guest house of the Hong Kong Scout Centre which was designed by Chau in 1983.*



*香港童軍中心暨龍堡國際酒店 The Hong Kong Scout Centre cum the BP International Hotel*



*5 November 1995 -- Hong Kong Governor and Chief Scout Chris Patten, accompanied by Dr. Chau Cham-Son, Chief Commissioner, The Scout Association of Hong Kong, are encircled by a group of award-winning Scouts at the Annual Scout Rally held at Mongkok Stadium.*



*28 October 1989 --- Mr. Chau Cham-Son, OBE, JP, Steward of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, officiates the opening ceremony of the Jockey Club Tak Wah Park in Tsuen Wan, New Territories. The Park, designed in a traditional Chinese garden with lake, was built by a RHKJC funding of HK\$8 million.*

The life-long Scout, Hong Kong Rotarian Dr. Chau Cham-Son, OBE, CStJ, LLD, JP, passed away on 9 October 2023, at the age of 92. Here is the obituary notice published on the newspapers:

**OBITUARY**

**DR. CHAU CHAM SON (周湛燊博士)**  
**OBE CStJ LLD JP**, aged 92 years, beloved husband of CAROLE, devoted father of CALVIN and CEDRIC, father-in-law of YVONNE and IVY, loving grandfather of SOLOMON, CYRUS, HADRIAN, STEPHANIE and SABRINA, passed away peacefully on 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2023.

Vigil will be held from 5-9 pm on (Friday) 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 at the chapel of Hong Kong Funeral Home, 679 King's Road, Hong Kong.

Funeral service starts at 10 am on (Saturday) 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2023.

In lieu of flowers, the family welcomes donations to 「Chau Cham Son World Jamboree Fund」 as an expression of sympathy. Cheque payable to “Scout Association of Hong Kong”.

先夫  
**周公湛燊博士**  
OBE CStJ LLD JP

痛於公曆二零二三年十月九日早上  
 壽終享年九十二歲 遺體奉移香港殯  
 儀館治喪 謹擇公曆十月二十日(星  
 期五)下午五時於該館設靈翌日十  
 月二十一日(星期六)上午十時大  
 殮十一時辭靈 隨即出殯 擇吉安葬  
 於香港仔華人永遠墳場 哀此訃

**妻 周莫慧霞**

孝男 嘉弘 媳 幸綺穎  
 嘉碩 方寶寶 泣告

孫男 堯軒  
 堯鏗  
 堯熙  
 孫女 凱盈  
 凱薇

**聞**

恩辭花園，所有帛  
 金將撥捐「周湛燊  
 世界大露營基金」，  
 支票請寫「香港童  
 軍總會」

親屬繁衍 恕未盡錄

治喪處：香港殯儀館  
 電話：二五六一五二六八  
 地址：香港北角英皇道六七九號

