

Dr. Wilson Wang Tze-Sam, OBE, JP

President 1959-1960 Hong Kong Island East Rotary Club

By Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian)

1 April 2015



Dr. The Honorable Wilson Wang Tze-Sam (王澤森), OBE, *HonLLD (CUHK)*, BSc(Eng) (*HKU*), JP (1918 - 1998) was an Active Member of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong Island East (香港東區扶輪社), and later served the Club as President in 1959-1960. He was better known by the public as the Founder, Proprietor and Supervisor of a chain of high quality private secondary schools named as New Method College (新法書院).

Though Wang was an educator, he was a Hong Kong public servant to serve as an Unofficial Member of the Hong Kong Urban Council (香港市政局) (1961-1970). He was also recognized for his contributions to legislative and community by serving as an Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council (香港立法局) from 1967 to 1975, including an initial appointment period from December 1967. Holding a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from the University of Hong Kong (香港大學) after attending St. Stephen's College (聖士提反書院), Wang pursued a career in education while earning honors as an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and Justice of the Peace for his civic roles. Notably, he later chaired The Hong Kong Award for Young People (香港青年獎勵計劃), reflecting his commitment to youth development.



The Story of Wilson Wang Tze-Sam

Early Life and Education

Wang was born on 27 April 1918 in Swatow (*Shantou*), Kwangtung (*Guangdong*) Province, Republic of China (中華民國廣東省汕頭). He was educated in the British Crown Colony Hong Kong at the St. Stephen's College, and later earned his Bachelor of Science

Degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Hong Kong in 1941. He married Madame Li Ming-Tsun (李名珍) in 1946 in Chungking (*Chongqing*) (重慶), the Provisional Capital of China, and had four sons.

Educational Institutions Founded

It can hardly be denied that Hong Kong's phenomenal economic success over the years after the Pacific War (1941-1945) must be attributed to the magic formula of "timeliness, geographical advantages and solidarity" (天時-地利-人和), as the Chinese saying has it. More specifically speaking, Hong Kong's ever-increasing industrial output could not have been achieved without its quality human resources. As a man with clear and admirable insight, Wang set himself the task, as early as in the 1940s, of developing human resources and paving the way for economic expansion in Hong Kong.

Wang had since his early childhood been fascinated with the Hoover Dam, which was then one of the engineering marvels. In fact, he had set his sights quite early on a career in hydroelectric engineering. And indeed, things did turn out the way he wanted. Soon after he graduated from the University of Hong Kong in 1941 majoring in electrical engineering, he joined the Hong Kong and Whampoa Dock (黃埔船塢). But Hong Kong soon came under the Imperial Japan's aggression and occupation. Wang was forced to move to Kweilin (*Guilin*) (桂林) in the Mainland, where he continued to work in the same field at the Materiel Commission. Upon his return to Hong Kong in 1948, however, it dawned upon him that tapping the human resources was more urgent than developing hydroelectric power. At that time, a large number of immigrants poured from the Mainland into Hong Kong, many of whom were school-age children. On the other hand, there were not sufficient regular school places available that could absorb them all at once. Moreover, many adults were determined to learn English language in order to enhance their competitiveness and facilitate job hunting. So, there was the market demand. Wang thus went into language education and soon established his own school.

Wang began his school business in 1949 by operating the "New Method English Tutorial Day & Evening School" (新法英文專修學校) at Electric Road, North Point, in the Hong Kong Island (香港北角電氣道). One year later, the School was moved to St. Francis Street in Wanchai (灣仔聖佛蘭士街).

The next year in 1951, Wang established his first private secondary school in the name formally as "New Method College". Its stated mission was "to recognize each student as an individual" (培育學生思考創造能力，適應社會轉變，履行公民責任。)

In 1952, the first campus was opened at 101 Caroline Hill Road, Causeway Bay (銅鑼灣加路連山道 101 號), with the first privately owned independent school building. In 1953, the College's standard met the requirements of the Hong Kong Examinations Board and became the first private school to partake the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examinations. In the same year, the College students were also to take the University Entrance Examinations.

In 1956, Wang acquired a piece of land on Caroline Hill Road to extend a new branch. The progress went on. In 1963, 1966, 1969 respectively, 3 more new campus were established at (1) Prince Edward Road, Kowloon (九龍太子道); (2) Tai Hang Road, Hong Kong Island (香港大坑道); (3) Man Fuk Road, Kowloon (九龍文福道). Up to this moment, the 4 Colleges plus the English Tutorial School day and evening classes together were able to provide the capacity for nearly 20,000 students annually.

In the early 1990s, the New Method group of colleges provided more than 6,000 junior secondary school places for the Government's allocation, in cooperating with the Hong Kong Government's implementation of the "9 years' free primary and secondary education" scheme. Approved by the Education Department in 1997, New Method became the first private school to participate in the Direct Subsidy Scheme.

The College's development reflected Wang's background as university engineering graduate, blending practical skills with academic rigor to serve a growing urban population seeking alternatives to traditional elite schooling. By supervising operations as proprietor, Wang ensured the institution's emphasis on discipline, sports, and holistic student development through innovations such as a competitive selection system, scientific management of teaching, institutionalized extra-curricular activities.

The College complexes were all air-conditioned for classrooms. Teaching facilities included IT classrooms, language laboratories, indoor and outdoor sports fields, indoor swimming pools with heating, and multi-purpose halls, etc. The College also provided school bus services for students. In the extra-curricular activity sector, the College was very active in sponsoring youth groups.

When the Interact Club (扶輪少年服務團) program was first launched by Rotary International in 1962, New Method was one of the earliest sponsoring schools.

(One of the Interactors later grew up to become movie actor and producer Alan Tang (鄧光榮) who first joined Rotary in 1986 as an Active Member of the Rotary Club of New Territories (新界扶輪社). And then he carried the extension mission to become in 1989 the founder and Charter President of the Rotary Club of Channel Islands (離島扶輪社) in Hong Kong.)

No doubt, there were also other uniform groups such as Scouts, Girl Guides, Red Cross, Road Safety Patrols, etc. In the sports field, the College cycling team and the gymnastic team were equally remarkable.

During some forty years, the College had expanded considerably, boasting several campuses in Hong Kong and Kowloon, and providing comprehensive education ranging from kindergarten to primary school, secondary school as well as matriculation courses, with both arts and science streams. Regrettably, the New Method group of schools and colleges were closed in 2012 due to a chronic decrease in enrollments.

Leadership in Tung Wah Group of Hospitals

Before joining Rotary, Wang was already active in promoting medical services as well as many forms of social welfare through the organization of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (東華三院) (TWHGs) ---an institution founded in 1870 to provide medical care, education, and community services to the underprivileged Chinese population in Hong Kong. He first joined TWHGs as Director (總理) in 1954-1955. The next year, he was elected Principal Director (首總理) of the Group (1955/1956/1957), and then Chairman of the Board in 1957-1958 (丁酉年董事局主席) overseeing its operations amid its expansion of hospitals and schools. During his tenure, there were:

- Kwong Wah Hospital Nurses' Quarters: New nurses' quarters were established at Kwong Wah Hospital (廣華醫院) in 1957. This led to the closure of the original quarters on the first floor of the main building and allowed for more standardized and centralized nursing training.
- Expansion Planning: By 1957, the TWGHs was finalizing plans for the major redevelopment of Kwong Wah Hospital, which officially commenced in 1958 to meet the rising medical demands of the Kowloon population.
- Tung Wah Hospital Upgrades: Construction was ongoing for two new wings at the original Tung Wah Hospital (東華醫院) in Sheung Wan (上環), a project that was eventually completed in 1958.
- Service Diversification: During this decade, TWGHs shifted from a purely medical focus to a broader social service model, establishing primary and secondary schools and formalizing systematic social welfare services.

Wang's involvement reflected a commitment to public welfare, aligning with the TWGHs' historical role in addressing social needs without government funding in its early years. It must be pointed out that back in the 1950s before compulsory education was implemented in Hong Kong, TWGHs had already taken the initiative in setting up six primary schools and providing free education for young children. The Group's budget also grew from one hundred million Hong Kong dollars in the 1950s to one billion in 1990, of which over one hundred million actually came from private donations. Over the years, Wang had indefatigably served on the Group's budget committee.

Following father's footprint, Wang's youngest son Eddie Wang (王定一), BBS, joined the TWGHs Board of Directors in 1997, and was gradually promoted to Chairman in 2005-2006 (乙酉年董事局主席). In commemorating the remarkable services rendered by Wilson Wang, TWGHs named 3 of the welfare agencies after Dr. and Mrs. Wang:

- 1987 -- Wilson T.S. Wang District Elderly Community Centre (王澤森長者地區中心)
- 2005 -- Mrs. Wang Li Ming Tzun Tsuen Wan Neighbourhood Elderly Centre (王李名珍荃灣長者鄰舍中心)
- 2009 -- Wilson T.S. Wang Centre of Integrated Health Management (王澤森上醫館)

Service to The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Apart from his work at New Method College and the TWGHs, Wang also devoted both time and energy to tertiary education and, in particular to The Chinese University of Hong Kong (香港中文大學)(CUHK). From 1959 to 1972, Wang personally supervised the continuing developments of the United College of Hong Kong (香港聯合書院), located at Bonham Road (般咸道), in his capacity as Vice-Chairman of the College Board of Trustees. In the late 1980s, Wang had been paying special attention to medical education. Besides sponsoring the [Distinguished International Professorships] at the University, Wang had made special contributions to the establishment of [Visiting Professorships in Surgery and a Conference Fund] for the organization of the annual international surgical symposium.

Wilson Wang practiced what he preached. He had founded schools, promoted sports, encouraged academic exchange, and contributed generously to charities. Apart from these, Wang also participated in the Colony's administrative and legislative work. In recognition and appreciation to Wang's long time remarkable service to the benefit of the Hong Kong community, the CUHK conferred upon Wang the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*. The ceremony was held on 15 October 1992 at the 44th Congregation which was officiated by the University Chancellor, Hong Kong Governor Mr. Chris Patten (香港總督彭定康).



香港中文大學

第四十四屆頒授學位典禮

榮譽法學博士王澤森先生讚詞

香港工商業在近四十年來的發展成績卓越，這固然有賴天時、地利與人和，但香港生產力之增長，與發展人力資源關係最為密切。王澤森先生高瞻遠矚，早於五十年代即致力開拓香港的人力資源，為工商界開闢一條穩健發展的途徑。

王先生自幼讚佩美國胡佛水壩工程的偉大，立志從事電機工程，而對水力發電工程尤為嚮往。一九四一年在香港大學修畢電機課程，旋即進入黃埔船塢服務。香港淪陷後，王先生赴桂林，加入資源委員會，工作性質亦與電機有關。一九四八年返港之後，王先生深感發展人力資源的重要，認為要促進香港繁榮，須先培養人力。於是改而從事語文教育，成立語文補習班，並於三年後以有限資源創辦新法書院，四十年如一日，如今新法書院校園分佈港九，提供完整的中小學教育，由幼稚園、小學、中學，以至文、理預科一應俱全。

王先生熱愛運動，尤擅長長跑與網球。中學與大學時代曾參加校隊出賽。王先生有感於東方人體力不如西洋人，於是躬親參與各種運動之推廣，曾任東華體育會會長，以及南華體育會會長。王先生又創辦香港單車協會、香港業餘體操協會，培養不少成績優秀之體育精英，厥功至偉。

一九五五至五七年間，王先生膺選任東華三院首總理，全面推廣醫療服務與社會福利，且從此與東華三院結下長久的善緣。東華三院的慈善事業規模宏大，成就有目共睹。早於五十年代，政府未實施義務教育之前，東華三院已率先創辦小學六間，提供免費教育。而東華三院每年之預算亦由早期之一億元增至一九九零年之十億元，其中一成以上全賴社會善心人士募集。王先生恆常熱心奔走，呼籲各界善心人士共襄善舉，此外，王先生多年來積極參與該院預算的編製工作，熱忱不減。除慈善事業外，王先生亦抱著服務社會的熱忱，參與市政局（一九六一年至一九六九年）與立法局（一九六八年至一九七五年）之決策與執行工作。

王先生除興辦新法書院與致力服務東華三院外，亦澤及大專教育，而香港中文大學受惠尤深。一九五九至七二年十三年間，王先生肩負聯合書院校董會副主席之職，有關院務的興辦與發展，均躬親處理，勞苦功高。王先生近年對醫學教育尤為熱心，贊助香港中文大學設立傑出國際講座教授之外，特捐助外科學系邀請訪問教授和舉辦國際會議之經費。

王先生身體力行，自費辦學，推動體育，贊助慈善，促進學術交流，並參與地方行政與香港之立法工作，對香港貢獻良多。本人謹恭請監督先生頒授榮譽法學博士學位予王澤森先生。

一九九二年十月十五日

Public Service and Politics

Out of his school business, Wang was very active in services to the community through various sectors. In 1961, Wang was appointed Unofficial Justice of the Peace for Hong Kong (香港非官守太平紳士) by Hong Kong Governor Sir Robert Brown Black (香港總督柏立基爵士). In the same year, he was also appointed by Governor Sir Robert Unofficial Member of the Urban Council (香港市政局非官守議員) until 1969. Later, Wang was appointed by Hong Kong Governor Sir David Clive Crosbie Trench (香港總督戴麟趾爵士) to serve the Hong Kong Legislative Council as Unofficial Member (香港立法局非官守議員) from 20 December 1967 until 18 June 1975. Some other public appointments that Wang was member:

- Education Board in 1958–1960 and 1964–1965
- Hong Kong Housing Authority since 1961
- Library Advisory Committee since 1961
- Working Party on the School Medical Service in 1962
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award Committee since 1962
- School Medical Service Board since 1963
- Working Party of the Education Commission since 1964

Legislative Council Tenure

Wilson Wang was appointed as an Unofficial Member of the Hong Kong Legislative Council on 20 December 1967, with his formal service commencing on 10 January 1968 and concluding on 18 June 1975. As an appointed member during the colonial era under British administration, his role involved providing non-official perspectives on legislation, often drawn from his background in education and community leadership, without direct electoral accountability. During his tenure, Wang actively participated in debates on social and educational matters. In a 1969 session, he addressed challenges in aided primary education, emphasizing the need for expanded access and resource allocation amid Hong Kong's post-War population growth and urbanization pressures. His contributions reflected his professional expertise as an educator, advocating for policies that supported school infrastructure and teacher training to meet rising demand, though specific legislative outcomes directly attributable to his interventions remain limited in official records. He was present in key sittings, such as those in 1968, contributing to the Council's review of government bills and budgets.

Wang's service ended in mid-1975, coinciding with broader reforms in Hong Kong's governance structure, including the introduction of elected seats in district boards and eventual partial democratization efforts. No public controversies or resignations marked his tenure, and he transitioned back to private and charitable endeavors thereafter.

Social Services

Wang had been a sports enthusiast since he was young, doing particularly well in long-distance running and tennis. He played for teams representing both his school and his

university. Wang was also fully aware of the handicaps Orientals were under in physical stamina, and hence saw the need for the promotion of sports. He was, at different times, President of Tung Wah Athletic Association (東華體育會), and also South China Athletic Association (南華體育會) in 1959-1960. Moreover, Wang was the founder of Hong Kong Cycling Association (香港單車聯會) in 1960, and Hong Kong Amateur Gymnastic Association (香港業餘體操協會) in 1965. The two associations have over the years produced many talented gymnasts and cyclists, and Wang must be given credit for their success.

Wang also had sat on educational-related positions. Such as:

- Chairman of the Hong Kong Private Anglo-Chinese Schools Association (香港英文私立學校聯會) for several occasions in the 1950s and early 60s.
- Member of the Aberdeen Technical School (香港仔工業學校) Executive Committee in 1957-1963
- President of the Hong Kong Boy Scouts Eastern District Council since 1962
- Director of the Victoria Park School for the Deaf (啟聲學校)

The Wilson Wang Water Sports Centre at St. Stephen's College in Hong Kong was established through his donation of HK\$500,000 toward the construction of a new swimming pool facility, completed as part of a broader fundraising effort that raised over HK\$1.3 million via a 1981 walkathon. The Centre, named in his honor as an alumnus and College Council member, was officially opened on 26 November 1982 and has served generations of students for aquatic training and recreation.

Honours

In recognition to his outstanding services, Dr. Wilson Wang Tze-Sam had been decorated 2 times by Queen Elizabeth II, United Kingdom:

- 1958 – Badge of Honour
- 1971 – Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.)



The 4th New Method College located on Man Fuk Road, Waterloo Road Hill.