

Hong Kong Island West Rotary Club

Home for Typhoon Wanda Disaster Victims in 1962

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In late 1962, the Rotary Club of Hong Kong Island West (香港西區扶輪社) built a Rotary Village that provided homes for typhoon-stricken families. Covering what was formerly a barren hillside on Mount Davis (摩星嶺), the Village (*see photo*) provided permanent housing for 64 families, a total of 337 persons, all were victims of the 1962 Typhoon Wanda.



Typhoon Wanda was the most intense tropical cyclone on record in Hong Kong. It was the 59th disturbance in the record-breaking 1962 Pacific typhoon season, forming in August from east of The Philippines. Typhoon Wanda reached peak winds of 175 km/h (110 mph) in the South China Sea, and it made landfall on Hong Kong on September 1, producing gusts of 261 km/h (161 mph) which, in combination with a high storm surge, damaged thousands of huts and left 72,000 people homeless. Wanda left a total of 434 deaths, and it is estimated that an identical typhoon striking today would cause HK\$2.6 billion (US\$335 million) in losses.



Rotary International President Nitish C. Laharry (*Calcutta, India*) (*first left in photo*) inspected the Village during his presidential visit to Hong Kong in spring 1963. President Laharry said that the Village typified Rotary at its best and urged the Club to follow up its US\$50,000 project with personal service to the homeless. This Rotary Village Project was written in the 1962-1963 Annual Report by George R. Means, General Secretary of Rotary International. The Rotary Club of Hong Kong Island West was awarded “Project of the Year” during the District 345 Conference held in Taipei (臺北).