

IN MEMORY OF

1931

2020

PROFESSOR

TUNNEY F. LEE



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

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In Memory of Professor Tunney F. Lee

We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of our Founding Chairman, Emeritus Professor Tunney F. Lee (李燦輝榮譽教授) Hon AIA HK, Hon FHKIA, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on 2 July 2020, at the age of 88.

An eminent educator, Prof. Lee was professor emeritus and former head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In 1991, he started a new Department of Architecture at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), which became our School of Architecture today. The curriculum reflected his values and philosophy, with an emphasis on buildings as part of the human habitat, which made the Faculty of Social Science the most appropriate home for the Department. By the time Prof. Lee retired from CUHK and returned to the US in 1998, the fledgling

programme was already fully accredited by the HKIA, ARB and CAA.

Born in Taishan, Guangdong Province, Prof. Lee emigrated as a child to the US, where he attended Boston Latin School and received his architectural degree at the University of Michigan in 1954. As an aspiring architect, he had worked for late masters Buckminster Fuller, Marcel Breuer and I.M. Pei. Later, as an esteemed urban planner, he served as Chief of Planning and Design at the Boston Redevelopment Authority and Deputy Commissioner of the Massachusetts Division of Capital Planning and Operations.

His decades of teaching and research had focused on the process of community-based design, studying from neighbourhoods in Boston and downtown

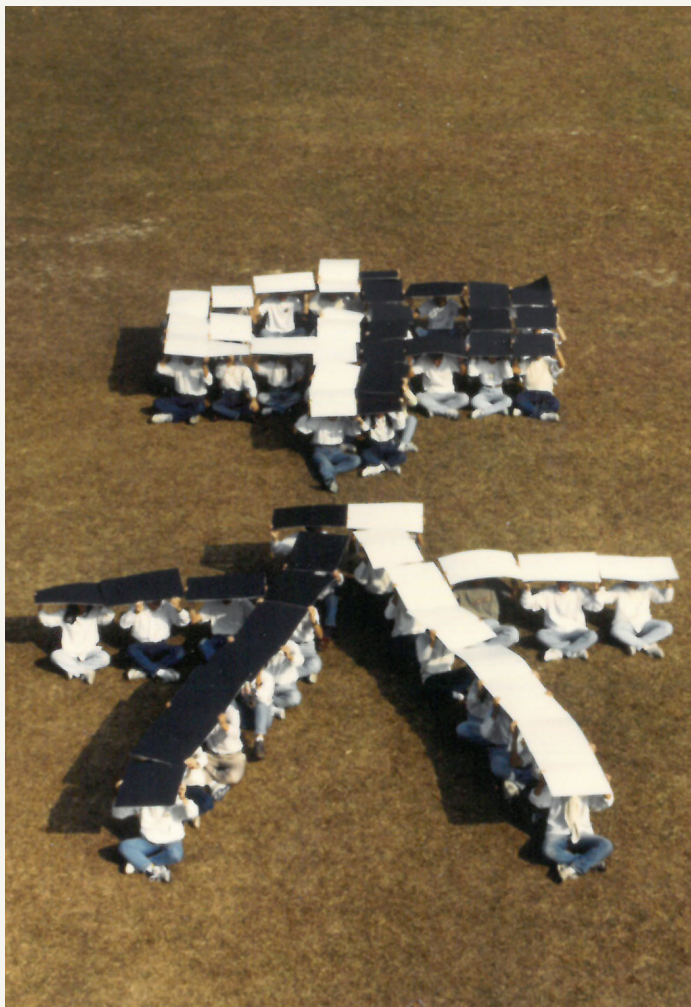
Santiago, Chile, to sustainable residential development in Shanghai and the Pearl River Delta, China. More recently, his Density Atlas project—an online resource to compare urban forms—was created as a planning tool to understand the implications of population, building footprints and urban design in residential densities across the world.

In recognition of his outstanding contributions and lasting legacy to our architectural community, Prof. Lee was elected as Honorary Affiliate Member of American Institute of Architects Hong Kong and Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Architects.

Truly inspiring and much loved by generations of students and colleagues, Professor Tunney Lee will be remembered most for his pedagogical vision, personal charm and generosity, as well as abundance of wisdom in his various roles as architect, planner, educator and leader. He will be greatly missed and our heartfelt condolences are with his family in Boston.

School of Architecture,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Students made the Chinese characters representing CUHK in a first-year graphic design class in 1992 to demonstrate the order of symmetry. (Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



From the Lee Family

When our parents told us they were moving to Hong Kong in 1990, we were surprised—but not really shocked. Our father was excited and energized by the prospect of building a new Department of Architecture at CUHK, and both our parents were looking forward to reconnecting with Asia via Hong Kong.

The years they spent in Hong Kong were extraordinarily rich in friendship, professional growth, and experiences. They reconnected with old friends and colleagues, as Tunney assembled his Dream Team of teachers and scholars. They made wonderful new friends, many of whom stayed in their lives for decades. They explored all that Hong Kong had to offer—amazing food, horse races (and the Jockey Club), island day trips, and shopping (!).

We all benefited from their new adventures—in hearing their stories, sorting through our mother's enormous suitcase full of odd designer (or faux-designer) treasures and other bargains on their trips home, and in taking the opportunity to plan fabulous family vacations in Asia—Malaysia, Bali, Cambodia, India ...



(Photo courtesy of Thea Lee.)

For our father, the years in Hong Kong were tremendously happy and rewarding. He took the opportunity to rebuild professional connections in China and Asia, and he reveled in the ability to create something new, to realize his vision of teaching and learning. He never tired of investigating and drawing lessons from Hong Kong's city planning, transit, and public housing policies, which he often held up as examples of practical solutions to high-density living.

Our entire family has kept Hong Kong in our hearts as a place of adventure, enduring friendships, and fun. We send our love and shared condolences to the CUHK family, with whom we were proud to share our parents for many years.

Thea, Kaela, and Dara Lee

So Long, Farewell

In Memory of the Teacher we all Loved (Professor Tunney F. Lee 1931–2020)

It was a routine, busy workday in early July 2020 when the sad news of the passing of Professor Tunney F. Lee spread from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Hong Kong. While we mourned the loss of a teacher we all loved, the idea that we should organize a memorial service to honor Tunney's life surfaced. This suggestion was quickly shared among various alumni groups, and within two days, an organizing committee led by the first group of architectural graduates and representatives from every cohort admitted during Tunney's tenure at CUHK was formed. The School of Architecture and the Chinese University Architecture Alumni Association have also promptly agreed to co-organize the memorial events.

Tunney F. Lee assumed the chairmanship of the Department of Architecture at CUHK in 1990 upon invitation from the then vice-chancellor, Professor Charles K. Kao. The department admitted its first cohort of students in the summer of the following year after Tunney's arrival. Tunney built the curriculum from the ground up, recruited a brigade of passionate,

quality teachers and supporting staff, and successfully obtained accreditation status for our bachelor's and master's programmes from various professional organizations in the subsequent eight years. Although reaching retirement age, Tunney insisted on remaining in CUHK until he witnessed the graduation of the first Master of Architecture class in 1997, and made sure the department would operate smoothly after Hong Kong returned to Chinese sovereignty. After all his goals had been accomplished, Tunney retired from CUHK in 1998 and returned to the United States.

Back then, we were too young to fully understand the magnitude of the tasks ahead of Tunney. We were clueless about the difficulties of starting a new department from scratch, and to make matters worse, he was making this happen at a time when Hong Kong's destiny remained uncertain. In our ignorant eyes, Tunney might not fit the typical image of the head of an academic department. He, for one, dressed too casually, as he wore jeans and a checkered shirt, often paired with a baseball cap, and the thick lenses of his eyeglasses made us wonder if he had read too

many books. Nevertheless, his casual outfits made Tunney exceptionally approachable and likable—like the friendliest grandpa one could have. But once you had a chance to talk to him (and he was very easy to talk to), you would be awed by his wisdom and broad knowledge, and quickly knew you could learn something from this soft-spoken man. Tunney's wife, the amiable Irene, was always around to offer her comfort and encouragement to students who were over-stressed from studying or confused about their projects.

However, as we began planning for Tunney's memorial service, it became clear how little we truly knew about him. The Tunney we know, first and foremost, was the admirable founding chairman of our department. Our encounters with Tunney were mostly confined to CUHK's campus, but we never knew Tunney before he came to Hong Kong. Tunney was a teacher we all looked up to, but we had no idea that Tunney was as a father, a friend, a co-worker, and a boss. In preparing for this memorial service, we had the chance to talk to various people who crossed paths with him in different stages of his life. From them, we learned of the other sides of Tunney that we, as students, do not usually get to know. The more we discovered, the more we admired his devotion to CUHK and architectural education as a whole. Although we do not know everything about Tunney's life, we are grateful that he spent eight years

of it building a new school for us. We are proud to have been a part of Tunney's innovative time in Hong Kong, which, as we all know, was just a small part of Tunney's colorful life.

Because of Tunney's impact, those who graduated from CUHK came together this summer to organize a memorial service in his honor. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, we had to give up our original plan to host a gathering at the CUHK campus. Still, we made every effort and mobilized all our alumni connections to contact as many of Tunney's co-workers and students as possible. Many of them now reside all over the world, and we have not seen them for over a decade. We organized online interviews with our overseas teachers about their encounters with Tunney, but these interviews almost always turned into friendly chats that went on for hours, as we were so eager to dig up the past and update each other with our current lives. This memorial service for Tunney gives us a chance to reconnect with members of this big CUHK family.

We are grateful for Tunney, not only because he established an architecture school that became the starting point of our careers, but because we all had a wonderful time studying at the very school he created. Tunney built a learning environment where we were encouraged to be adventurous and to respect each

other's differences. He assembled a team of passionate teachers who genuinely cared about us, and despite having a short history and a small student population, the department had an energetic, supportive, and intimate atmosphere that fostered strong bonding between teachers and students, as well as close friendships between senior and junior students. We owe all of this to the man who laid the firm foundation of our school. We miss Tunney as much as we miss our good old days in CUHK.

While organizing the memorial service, we also took the opportunity to collect stories about Tunney from various parties and made them into a book. This memorial book represents our efforts to record the formative years of the department under the leadership of Tunney, the immense influences of Tunney on the people around him, and our appreciation for his remarkable job at CUHK, without which our careers may have been driven in completely different directions. In Part I, "**Tunney's Vision**," we present Tunney's vision of architectural education at CUHK, based on an old interview of Tunney and Professor Leng Woo. Part II, "**The Founders**," includes reflections from the earliest team of teachers who joined Tunney's adventure to establish the department in Hong Kong. These teachers arrived at CUHK in 1991, witnessed the start of the department, and played a massive role in shaping

its direction. Part III, “**The Successors**,” presents the tributes from the former heads who inherited Tunney’s job at CUHK at different times, as well as faculty members recruited by Tunney between 1992 and 1998. These people were essential in expanding our school into its present-day scale. Part IV, “**The Unsung Heroes**,” contains insights from the supportive staff who helped Tunney put together an administrative office, a computer lab, a model-making workshop, an audio-visual division, and an architectural library. They are the men and women who remained backstage but provided tremendous backup to both students and the department over the years. Part V, “**Friends in the Industry**,” shares the tributes from local architects and professionals who have been supportive of our school ever since its establishment. They are not only acquaintances of Tunney, but also friends of the School of Architecture, CUHK. Part VI, “**Alumni under His Wings**,” collects the notes of appreciation from CUHK graduates who studied under Tunney. The memorial book concludes with an epilogue written by Prof. David Dernie, the current Director of the School of Architecture at CUHK. At the end of this memorial book, we reprinted a farewell letter written by Tunney in 1998 when he retired from CUHK. This was Tunney saying goodbye to the school he founded.

As we bid farewell to Tunney, we hope this memorial book serves as a small gift to the great man who paved the way for countless careers, and to his daughters, who unselfishly shared their parents with us. Goodbye, Tunney, and thank you for everything.

Organizing Committee of the Memorial Service for
Professor Tunney Lee

SO LONG, FAREWELL



01

T U N N E Y ' S V I S I O N

At the age of seven, Tunney Lee first saw Hong Kong from the deck of a ferry when his family fled from his hometown of Taishan, Guangdong, to North America in 1938, in order to stay away from Japanese invasion. Tunney was therefore raised in the United States, and he eventually began a teaching career. However, in 1990, he accepted the invitation from The Chinese University of Hong Kong to establish a Department of Architecture which would later become the second architectural school in town.

Unlike most architectural schools, which were often affiliated with a faculty of arts or science, the Department of Architecture at CUHK was established under the Faculty of Social Science. Tunney believed that architectural education should focus not only on teaching technical and problem-solving skills, but on developing a robust set of commitments to people and the environment. To him, buildings were a part of a human's habitat. Tunney designed a curriculum that reflected his human-centric values for the architectural programme at CUHK.



He has successfully mobilized his long experience in the US to develop a unique architectural climate that is rare in fast developing countries like Hong Kong. For this, and for his many other achievements through his career, he has become one of the most important voices in the architectural community of the Pacific Rim.

—

Fumihiko Maki on Tunney Lee's contributions to architectural education.
Cited from the CUHK Department of Architecture publication, *ISSUES* (1998).

Vision and Mission

A Conversation with Tunney Lee and Leng Woo, 2016

I thought it was really important that, from the very beginning, students learn something about building, something in full scale—not a drawing, not a model—to learn to link the building with the drawing, the model, and the representation, so you don't fall in love with drawings or fall in love with the plan.

Prof. Tunney Lee

As part of the CUHK School of Architecture's 25th Anniversary celebration, the Chinese University Architecture Alumni Association (CUAAA) invited Professor Tunney Lee and Professor Leng Woo for a dialogue on the history of the school, its pedagogy, and Tunney's views about the current state of architecture.

Date: 11 April 2016

Place: Professor Tunney Lee's office at MIT,
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TL: Tunney Lee

LW: Leng Woo

The Birth of a New Department

LW: How did the Department of Architecture at CUHK get started?

TL: In the late 1980s, the Hong Kong government did a manpower study, and found out that universities were not training enough architects to cope with the building boom Hong Kong was going through. So, they decided to fund the founding of a new department. First, they asked the University of Hong Kong (HKU) to double their enrolment. HKU, and Eric Lye in particular, said it would be better if we have another school to give more variety and different kinds of opportunities for the students, and for the architectural culture in Hong Kong. The government asked the universities to compete and make proposals for the new department. CUHK did that and formed a committee with Professor John Tarn¹ and HKIA members. James Kinoshita was a member of the group. James was at the graduation ceremony at MIT in 1989 or 1990, and he asked me to consider it.

It was a great opportunity to start a new school at a time when China was just beginning to develop and Hong Kong was further developing from its first boom. The idea of setting up a new architecture department was very attractive. Besides, that was my cultural region, the Pearl River Delta. I didn't speak Cantonese, but I spoke

Upon the recommendation of the Architecture Academic Advisory Committee, Prof. Charles K. Kao, the then Vice-Chancellor of CUHK, invited Prof. Tunney Lee to start a new department of architecture. (Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



a sub-dialect of Cantonese. I thought I understood the culture well enough, and I was very excited about how this region was going to develop. And so I put a group of faculty together, and year by year, it grew. In fact, I asked you to become one of the first people to come to Hong Kong. Why did you come to CUHK?

LW: I was working as an architect back then in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I was actually quite happy with my work at that point, but I thought there was a change in direction on the craft and learning of



*Celebrating the inauguration of the Department of Architecture in 1991.
(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)*

architecture, and the opportunity at CUHK allowed me to get closer to Asia where I came from originally (Singapore). I was quite interested in China—although my interest has changed—and overtime, I got to be more interested in Hong Kong itself. But I thought it was a good opportunity to look at architecture in a different place after the various experiences I had. And of course, there was the excitement of starting a new school which was quite important.

On Pedagogy and Learning

LW: Coming back to the school, perhaps you can say something about the pedagogy, the starting point of the school. How did you decide the direction for the school, or the kind of expectation you had for the students?

TL: The act of an architect making a building is very different from other intellectual pursuits, which are methodical in one way, from step A to step B, and so on. Architecture is very different. Architecture is one of those fields in which you have to find the answer by proposing a possible solution, testing it, and then doing it again and again. Pedagogically, Hong Kong students, and most students in the world up to that point, learned to solve multiple choice or essay questions. Part of the teaching is to learn how to do this reiterative process of searching and not having a single right answer.

Furthermore, Hong Kong students are urban kids, and they never build or make anything. I thought it was really important that, from the very beginning, students learn something about building, something in full scale—not a drawing, not a model—to learn to link the building with the drawing, the model, and the representation, so you don't fall in love with drawings or fall in love with the plan. That was the idea of bringing in the making of something in a group, such as the early

bamboo structure project, where students formed a team to build a platform of five feet high to hold all of them with the fewest materials possible. We introduced Hong Kong tradition by bringing in bamboo masters to show students how to lash bamboo poles together. You can think of a few others of this kind of project.

LW: The Treehouse and the Cave Project was one of the best I can remember. Students were quite excited about building a structure to carry as many students as they could. I recalled at one point I walked past a cave in the morning. I could see feet sticking out! Obviously, the students spent the night there to experience the space.

The Changing Role of Architecture

LW: Coming back to the issue of pedagogy, there has been a lot of changes in the society in the past 25 years. Do you see a changing role in architecture in the current world?

TL: We saw a fantastic growth in China and Hong Kong in the last 25 years. However, this resulted in building at a rapid rate without thinking about the environment or the social consequences. Now the Chinese expansion is stabilized, and the attention has shifted to how to make better cities. This goes back to architecture because the function of architecture is to improve people's lives. Whether it is a school, housing, an office, a place for productive activity, or as a way of elevating one's spiritual or

cultural life. Those are functions of architecture. As part of the problem of growth, we are seeing an excess in architecture, as exemplified by the Chinese premier who said, “No more weird architecture.” It was a reaction to the state of architecture. With modern technology, you can make a building that twisted upon yourself. Why not? It could be done!

But now, one begins to question the excess of money. We start to think about how to make a city better, how to integrate rural people into city life. China is not the first country to go through this and can learn from other countries. Architecture has a big role in it. It has to be part of the movement to create more humane, people-centered building. Not just for real estate developers or ignoring the environment. Big changes are coming, and climate change is real. Architects need to learn to work with city planners, and some architects can become city planners who can go beyond economics or social sciences.

Future Direction

LW: You touched upon a very important point about the present state of architecture—the excess of society. We see a lot of excess around us, in Hong Kong, China, and around the world. Do you have some advice for the school where the teaching itself could go?

TL: A lot of it depends on the faculty—it has grown and has become more diverse. How do you teach the subject? What kinds of studio topics are given? How do you frame the studio topics? What do you want to accomplish with this? There is room for exploratory design architecture but we need to pick the right building types for that. Some of the most exciting buildings are theaters and museums, but there are many other things around social topics, such as how to design a school? How to design housing?

I would say, my observation is that Hong Kong has a lot of good architecture of that kind—Hong Kong was much better off than China in that regard, and China is just beginning to do that. Look at the community center and aquatic complex—they are terrific because people enjoy the complex! And architecture makes that work! Hong Kong public housing has really changed over the years, and they (the Hong Kong Housing Authority) have made some really interesting, slow incremental progress. Twenty-five years ago, they took one building type and repeated it. Now they pay more attention to the site, the circulation and air ventilation. We have to look closely at those public buildings in Hong Kong, which are underappreciated. They are good stuff. Now there is even more good stuff that could be learned. You should actually go see people use the building. Do more analysis of the existing buildings to see what works or what doesn't work and so on. Lots to do!

Tunney Lee discussed his view of architectural education with Leng Woo. The interview took place in 2016 at Tunney's office at MIT. (Image captured from the video footage of the interview.)



Special thanks to Cynthia Ting (B.S.Sc., 2007), who helped film the meeting.

-
- I Professor John Tarn served as member of the Architecture Academic Advisory Committee at CUHK as soon as the committee was established in 1988. He took up the chairmanship of the committee from 1992 to 2002. Under his able leadership, the committee guided the launch and brought about the phenomenal growth of the architecture programme in CUHK. Professor Tarn has been External Assessor of the Department of Architecture since 1990, contributing tremendously his expertise to the department.

02

T H E F O U N D E R S

After arriving Hong Kong in 1990, Tunney assembled a small teaching team of four members to help establish the new department. These earliest recruits (to whom students nicknamed “the Big Four”) had all known Tunney before joining CUHK. Joseph Wehrer, a Professor Emeritus at the University of Michigan, was a long-time friend of Tunney; the two studied architecture together at Michigan, and Tunney persuaded Joseph to join him in Hong Kong. Both Leng Woo and Brian Sullivan were former students of Tunney at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; they were experienced architects before being invited by Tunney to teach in Hong Kong. Andrew Li first met Tunney when he was a student at the Harvard Graduate School of Design; he applied to work at CUHK after discovering that the new department would be headed by Tunney. The team was excited by the challenge of starting a new

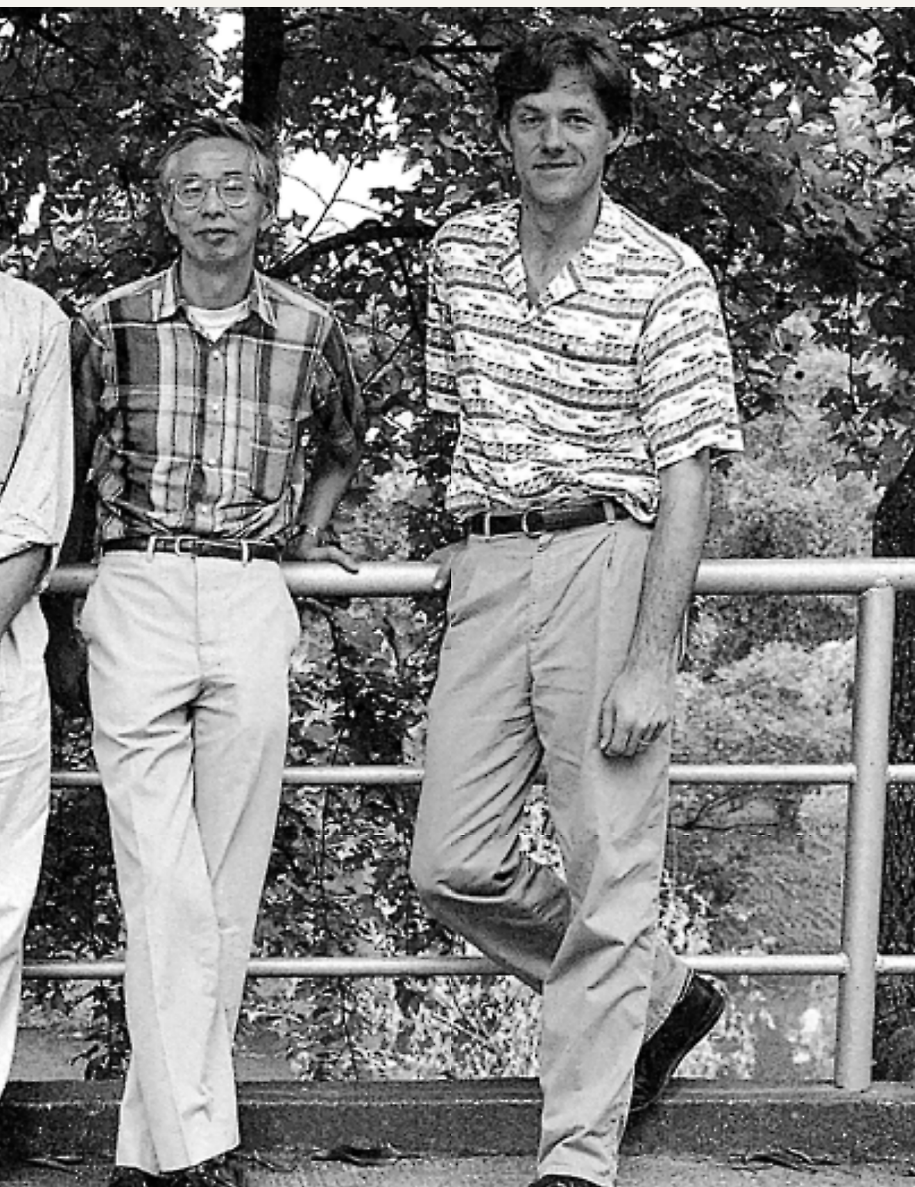
department from scratch in Asia. They occupied a temporary office in the Chung Chi Chapel, and from there, they planned the creation of the Department of Architecture.

In September 1991, the department admitted its first batch of students. It was temporarily housed on the top floor of the Elisabeth Luce Moore Library, where offices, a studio, two shared classrooms, and a small computer laboratory were set up. When the department admitted its third batch of undergraduate students in 1993, the library floor was too small to accommodate three classes of students together. As a result, one of the classes was relocated to the Music Center, a tiny, two-story building vacated by the Music Department.

(All photos in Part II, III, IV, V, & VI are provided by the author of individual tribute, unless otherwise specified.)



The five founding members of the Department of Architecture (from left to right): Leng Woo, Andrew Li, Joseph Wehrer, Tunney Lee, Brian Sullivan.
(Photo courtesy of Information Services Office, CUHK.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Andrew LI

[untitled]

Writing about Tunney has been surprisingly difficult. In the weeks since he died, I've had too many thoughts to organize. In the end, I've decided to focus on a few things that affected me directly and still seem important these many years later.

First, of course, he hired me

At the time, I had worked as an architect, which I liked until I didn't, and had taught architecture, which was challenging until it wasn't. So to help create a brand-new school, with someone like Tunney in charge, was a teacher's dream.

So, in the summer of 1990, I was at Gnomon Copy in Harvard Square copying my resume for my application to teach with Tunney. I was planning to go to MIT and drop it off at his office, but when I walked out the door, there he was, standing right on the sidewalk, talking to someone. After he finished, I introduced myself and asked whether he had a moment. He said he had to get to MIT for a meeting, but if I'd like to take the bus with him, we could talk there. Of course, I said yes, and had



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

my first interview on the Dudley bus. After subsequent interviews in more conventional settings, I got the job, and it was indeed a teacher's dream.

After he hired me, he had faith in me

In the early years, students felt free to express themselves to Tunney, even though he didn't teach any of them. (Definitely the Tunney effect!) Once there were a number of complaints about me. I think I had made a lot of logistical changes without consulting the students

or keeping them informed. The way he handled it was typical. He took the students' complaints seriously and showed them to me. But he also did not criticize or berate me. We concluded—more likely, he guided and I concluded—that I should admit to the students that I had messed up. I apologized to the students, and some of them were kind enough to say that they knew I was doing my best. Of course, apologizing was the right thing to do, but Tunney got me there without making me defensive or upset.

Another example came when I was in charge of admissions. He told me there was this Mr. X who wanted to make a donation and whose son had applied for admission. Did I think we were going to admit Junior? I checked and said no. He said fine. Tunney wanted me to do my job and gave me no pressure whatever. We didn't admit Junior, and I never heard about the matter again. I don't know what he said to Mr. X, but I don't think we got the donation.

Not only did he have faith in me; he actively supported me

After a few years at CUHK, I asked Tunney whether he thought I should do a Ph.D. Almost before I finished the question, he said yes. So I prepared to apply to MIT, which was starting a program in computational design. At the same time, I was also up for substantiation

at CUHK, so I was essentially asking CUHK to substantiate me and then immediately release me for two years.

In the event, CUHK said yes, and it can only have been because of Tunney's complete support. MIT also said yes, at least in part because of Tunney's enthusiastic letter of recommendation (which, in his typically straightforward way, he had given me a copy of).

There is a lot more to say, but this should give an idea of how much I owe Tunney.

Andrew Li

A TRIBUTE FROM

Brian SULLIVAN

Remembering Tunney—“Build Habitats that Support People”

The First Year—Building the Vision

Thirty years ago in 1990, Tunney Lee was hired as the first Chairman of the new School of Architecture. There is a great story here as to how the School was conceived, started and grew—“like a tree” as Tunney would say—to the model program it is today. Tunney may have started out by asking “Now what?” I know his wife Irene was wondering how they could move into the new world of Hong Kong and Asia and it pull off. But in Tunney’s mind, building a new School of Architecture shouldn’t be that different than planning and building a new community. When he taught Site Planning at MIT he would stress that the first steps in the process would include: identifying ‘**Who do you talk to?**’; to set up a community participation process; to develop empathy for the end users; to be a good citizen; and among many other steps, to make sure you have a community based design. His process included incorporating and “integrating context, form and technology into environments that will make more



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

beautiful and healthier habitats for people.” I call this his **‘Humanistic and Integrated’** vision for design.

I believe Tunney followed that approach here at CUHK. When he came on board in the fall of 1990, he probably started by asking ‘Who do you talk to?’ This led to his reaching out to Hong Kong’s professional community, to the AIA and RIBA, to the educational community at CUHK and HKU and to others. He shared his vision of a **‘Humanistic and Integrated’** themed architectural program and sought input on how to implement this in Hong Kong. It was important to Tunney to make this vision for the School clear from day 1 to everyone in Hong Kong and beyond. He

also shared how CUHK's Architecture School would complement yet differ from HKU's. This vision is why he was hired by CUHK and why the School was placed in the Faculty of Social Science.

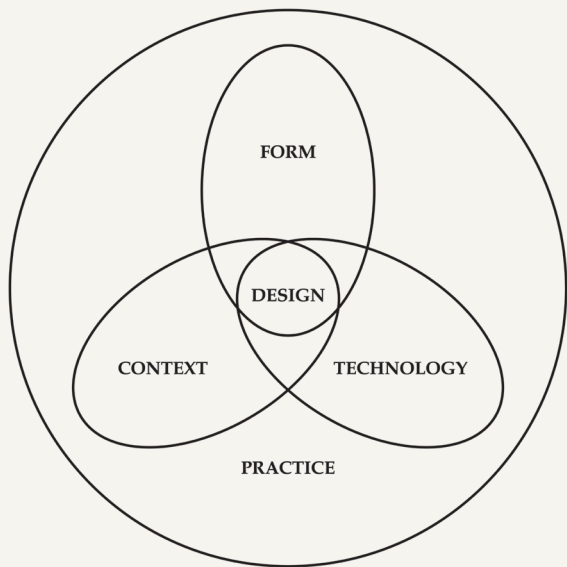
The First Staff

One of Tunney's first tasks in the fall of 1990 was to find and hire the first four faculty members. However, by the time they arrived in January 1991, Tunney had already made enormous progress on his own establishing the School's future place in Hong Kong's community. The first four faculty members of the School included: Joseph Wehrer (Uncle Joe), who had recently taught at the University of Michigan's School of Architecture and knew Tunney from Tunney's studies at Michigan; Leng Woo and I—both practicing professionals who knew Tunney while attending MIT in the late 1970s and during our subsequent careers in Boston; and Andrew Li who learned of Tunney while studying at Harvard. While eventually Tunney would build a diverse faculty with many specialists to support the B.S.Sc. and M.Arch. programs, he wanted the first four to not only bring a variety of professional experience, but also to be flexible and ready to do **whatever it took** to get the department ready for fall classes—only eight short months away! I still am amazed we made it. The five of us were temporarily housed in the basement of the

Chung Chi Chapel where we would meet almost daily to address the many tasks underway. Luckily Tunney kept a clear list in his ever present small note pad that he stored in his shirt pocket.

Building a Curriculum

The foremost task was to develop the four year B.S.Sc. curriculum that reflected Tunney's '**Humanistic and Integrated**' vision and to then determine what the first year courses would be and who would teach them. That



was when the diagram on the previous page was first drawn. One of Tunney's key goals was to make sure that the studio and non-studio courses were closely coordinated. This required us looking closely at how studio projects—the “Design” portion of the diagram—would draw on and integrate “Form,” “Technology” and “Context” lessons taught in the other core classes such as history, technology, human activities and more. The Bamboo and Cardboard studio exercise was a classic example of mixing technology, context (Chinese tradition of Bamboo scaffolding and Opera Houses) and form—all while ‘practicing’ in a full scale hands-on exercise. Tunney loved this project and even brought in a ‘Bamboo Master’ to teach the students how to tie bamboo together!

(Photo courtesy of Gary Yeung.)





(Photo courtesy of Vitus Man.)

A Place to Teach

But I am getting ahead of the story. Before we could even hold classes we needed a place to teach them. With only 8 months in hand we needed to design, build and furnish the design studios and offices for the incoming class in our temporary home on the upper floor of the Chung Chi Library. One cool element of the first studios was that they were located adjacent to our offices! This allowed faculty to be available almost any time of the day (good and bad.) But it also allowed us to create a family like bond with the first year students. It was both exciting and fun while also offering an opportunity to closely monitor how the first year was going. However, recognizing that the Chung Chi Library space could

only meet the School's needs for two years, we also needed to start planning for a permanent home. It was around this time that we started working with CUHK for the School to be housed permanently in the new Wong Foo Yuan Building which was under design at that time.

Picking Our First Class

Simultaneously we set about selecting our first incoming class of around 42 students. When we arrived in January, high school students were already submitting applications to Hong Kong's universities. CUHK's new architecture program was one of their options. With the help of the University's admissions staff, we needed to quickly figure out how we would make selections from the many applicants. Again consistent with his **'Humanistic and Integrated'** vision, Tunney insisted that we balance our student selection between 'Science' and 'Arts' students because he strongly believed it was important to train students for a wide diversity of jobs within design, development, planning and other related professions.

After the five of us reviewed and ranked every application, we created a shortlist of around (I think) 200 candidates. Being new to Hong Kong and unfamiliar with the actual students, we decided we would need to interview all of the final candidates. This



Our first students in their first studio!

proved to be quite an adventure. The interviews were set up with 4-5 students sitting at one table across from 2-3 faculty members. The students were asked to talk about why they wanted to become an architect and then each one would answer the same series of questions posed by the staff. We asked questions about their thoughts on famous buildings in Hong Kong, on Public Housing and more. We would evaluate the students not just on their answers but how they thought about the issue or other intangible qualities. At the end of each interview we snapped a group Polaroid of the students to assist us in connecting our interview notes to the actual students. This was our first exposure to Hong Kong students, giving us a small glimpse of who we would be teaching in the fall. It was also the first opportunity for Joe and

I—the only non-Chinese speaking staff—to gauge if there would be any communication gap when we started teaching. After the interviews were completed, the five of us sat down with the goal of selecting the first class (though we were reminded last week that a few students escape having to be interviewed!) While tedious, this application process was really fun and well worth the effort. I am not sure if it is feasible today, but in the first years of the school it really helped us to better understand the students and to also identify some candidates who had not stood out in the initial paper applications.

The Architecture Library

In January 1991 Tunney assigned me the task of building the **Architectural Library**, a collection of books, magazines, slides, maps and other related teaching resources. By the time I left in 1997, we had purchased over 20,000 books including many important Chinese ‘antique books’ and subscribed to hundreds of Chinese and English language magazines. We also purchased and catalogued an enormous slide collection to support architectural history and other lecture classes. Since the internet wasn’t established in 1991 (imagine!), having these materials easily accessible to the students and faculty was critical to increasing their exposure to ideas from around the world. To build the

(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)





Sharing the students' work with outside visitors.

collection quickly, I would spend time almost every day picking out books, magazines and slide collections from lists provided to me by the Central Library staff who would then proceed with ordering and processing the books on arrival (kudo's to the amazing CUHK library staff.) A critical battle Tunney and I fought in the first year was getting the Central Library to agree to keep the architectural collection completely separate from the Main collection. At first it was proposed to keep the collection in the Chung Chi Library, but we argued that the diversity of the architectural collection would result in the books being buried within the main

collection and thereby making student access difficult. This logic was finally accepted leading to our collection initially being kept together in one area at Chung Chi Library and CUHK agreeing that the School would have a separate Architectural Library in the new Wong Foo Yuan Building! Importantly, Tunney also created an Architectural Librarian position early on to help manage and build the collection. Nowadays, with the power of the internet, I am not sure how much the students or faculty use the Library collection. But in the early days, I was proud to see every student with piles of books scattered on their desks!

The First Year

These are just a few of the stories of what it took in 1991 for Tunney and many others to get the school started. But Tunney set the tone for all of us. He encouraged us to be sensitive in our teaching of students by emphasizing it was our role to teach to their individual skillset and to help them find their unique paths in the professional world. He watched closely to make sure that the curriculum remained humanistic and integrated and he loved jumping in with ideas on what studio projects to teach and how they would connect to our other classes. He was always friendly and supportive with the students and they knew he had their back. He praised them for being the School's pioneers,



recognizing how hard it must be not to have a chance to learn from upper classman. He coached us to hold ‘Design Reviews’ not the more negative sounding ‘Jurys’ or ‘Critiques.’ He was always inquisitive and analytical about all things and shared those observations with the faculty and students. And he was egoless, instead looking to always support and challenge great things from everyone in the School. He created a big family that year.

At the end of the first year we held an immense celebration, opening the doors to the outside community to come and see the school, our students and their work. Just a pause though, we needed to start doubling our size to bring in the second class of students.



Growing the Program

There are many similar stories to share about what it took to keep the building process on schedule. We needed: new curriculums for each year; new faculty to recruit and hire; new students to admit; new spaces to accommodate the growing school; and finally, the need to focus on achieving accreditation by the AIA and RIBA. But there was nothing like the first year!

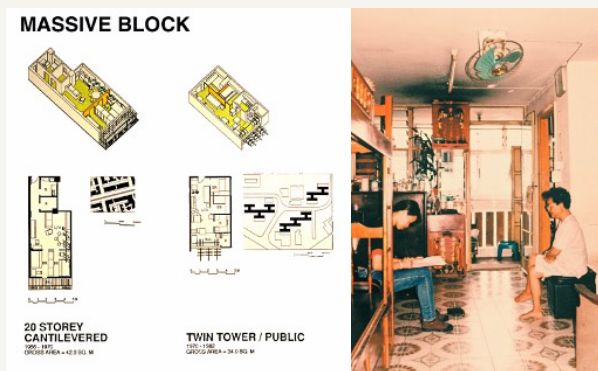
Tunney's Fascination, Love and Fear of High Density/Mixed Use communities

Tunney long had a love for Italy. He first visited there in the 1950s (and married Irene there) and kept returning with family and friends over the years to again partake in the magical Italian urban environments. He loved the

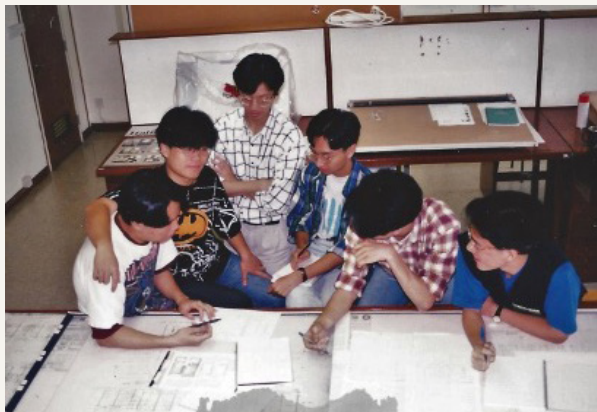
people and families in city plazas, the food and the public places where you ate and the beautiful story of how these places developed slowly over time to the beat of human activities.

Tunney had a similar love for Hong Kong, China and many other Asian communities. When he came to Hong Kong in 1990, while he was focused on building the School of Architecture, he couldn't stop admiring what he was seeing in Hong Kong. He loved the High Density/Mixed use approach typical of the New Towns, Public Housing Estates, and smaller Chinese Villages. His inquisitive and analytical mind kicked into high gear and he couldn't stop sharing his observations with anyone who would listen—his family and friends, the faculty, visitors, professionals from Hong Kong and around the world. He would take visitors to New Towns to point out the mix of low and high income housing with retail and business use, the multi-model transit systems and the extensive open space all contained in a 'hyper-dense' urban approach. And Tunney was intrigued with how this Hyper-dense model supported the Chinese culture.

At the end of the day, what mattered to Tunney is if these places welcomed and supported (Chinese) human activity. In Hong Kong, New Towns could house 1 million people, individual estates 30,000. In China in the early 1990s, whole new cities for millions of people



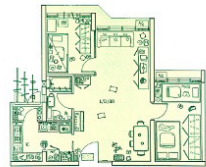
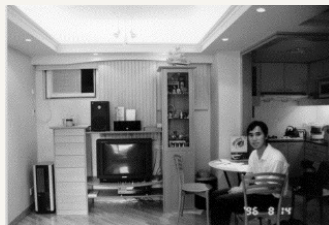
were being built quickly, often with little planning. If mistakes were made—the negative impacts on the people and environment might be unreparable and expensive. Tunney’s **‘Humanistic and Integrated’** approach was not typically utilized in the planning of the new cities being conceived at that time. Tunney believed there were some good and bad examples of hyper-dense communities in Hong Kong and China. He believed lessons learned from studying these environments and how well they supported people could be used to improve future Cities throughout Asia. He envisioned CUHK as a major contributor to this thinking.



Designing for Hyper-Dense Communities —Applied Research at CUHK

A major goal for Tunney was to establish a strong ‘Applied Research’ program at CUHK’s School of Architecture. He envisioned research into hyper-dense models in Hong Kong and China not only as a way for leading to better planning and design throughout Asia but also as a major teaching opportunity for CUHK students who would one day become the designers and planners of those communities!

After the dust had settled from the School of Architecture’s first year, Tunney began to encourage the growing faculty to become actively engaged in applied research, first in Hong Kong but soon in China. He



2-BEDROOM
HARMONY

would suggest research directions and even identify potential funding sources to support the research costs including the employment of students. With each successive year, the research projects grew in scope and range and the department's contacts grew.

Because of my own background in behavioral analysis and experience working closely with residents in the planning of public housing communities in Boston,



Tunney encouraged me to conduct research on higher density housing in Hong Kong. It didn't take much convincing. I too loved the hyper-dense model but wanted to see how it worked for the residents. First, I received a grant to compare and analyze the livability of Hong Kong's different private and public housing types from the 1850s through the present. This work included hiring students to visit existing homes to interview and document how the units were occupied.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

This research led to me being engaged by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) to complete a detailed evaluation of their Harmony series units. My students again visited around 200 units—interviewing residents and thoroughly documenting how they used their homes. The outcome was a series of interior design guidelines for HKHA’s next housing series. I was then enlisted by the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) to complete a similar set of design guidelines based on the study of over 200 HKHS units.

Meanwhile, I was teaching the ‘Activities’ class at CUHK where I introduced students to writing design guidelines

after learning and practicing techniques for observing, documenting and analyzing existing environments. In an advanced class, we applied these skills to writing design guidelines for Hong Kong's Housing Estates after conducting a detailed activity analysis.

These projects then led to a similar study for existing affordable urban housing in China. The study was conducted under the newly established 'A Centre for Housing Innovations' that was set up by CUHK's Professor Jin Yeu Tsou. The rest is history. My time at CUHK came to an end in 1997 while Tunney's dream for applied research at CUHK continued to grow and spread.

Community Planning—Listen to and Support the People

I returned to Seattle to raise my kids and to reengage as a community designer. Community participation is where I started with Tunney in a 'Chinatown' studio at MIT. Tunney was my advisor on my thesis evaluating Rural Black Communities in Maryland (yes, Black Lives Do Matter.) Community participation played a major role in my Public Housing planning in Boston. And here in Seattle I have utilized high levels of citizen participation in the designing and planning of public housing communities throughout the Northwest. I would like to think Tunney would be proud of all my work.

In conclusion, we are here today to remember and honor Tunney, the founding Chairman (or more affectionately, the founding Father/Uncle) of the School of Architecture at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Because Tunney was extremely humble and never sought personal praise, I believe the best manner to honor him is to remember and practice his teachings and beliefs. I know, I have always felt his gaze over my shoulder as I considered how to approach a design problem. I hope his vision has/will have that same influence on generations of graduates of CUHK's School of Architecture.



On a Personal Note

Besides being my professional mentor, I also considered Tunney and his family to be part of mine. I knew him for over 40 years, played poker with him and Irene almost every week for 15 years, and my older daughter Emma's first visitor in the hospital after being born was Tunney's wife, Irene. And the first hospital visitor for my second daughter Maya was Tunney's youngest daughter, Dara. He was a great father, a great friend and he will be missed by us greatly.

Brian Sullivan



(Photo courtesy of Brian Sullivan.)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Joseph WEHRER

Tunney was our long-time close friend and guide to a world with a better future. Seeing the photos of his joyful later years and the appreciation of those who knew him was heartwarming. He led a great life and well-deserved the admiration, love and respect of all who knew him.

His daughters mentioned that they had recently heard Tunney's version of the early days of our friendship in our first year of Architecture. I wish I could have heard it. For me, it was a major change of course. After developing an interest in modern art, and by extension to modern architecture I was determined to equip myself to make a contribution to the development of the modern movement.

Though I had recently married I gave up a well-paying Engineering job that held promise of rapid promotion and asked my new bride to move from Boston to the temporary housing in Willow Run Village (rent \$35.00/month), with a monthly income of \$120.00/per month plus tuition and books from the GI bill. At the school I found myself surrounded by young men whose high school counsellors, seeing that they might have drawing

(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



skills, suggested studying Architecture. I quickly recognized that this skinny Chinese kid was seriously interested in Architecture as a sociological change-agent. He was motivated, capable and enthusiastic and eagerly expressed his judgements. We bonded and stayed bonded for the long run. We both worked with leaders in the field and it was not long before Tunney was playing a significant role in the planning and design of major projects in Boston and beyond.

As much as Tunney's well-earned reputation and contributions in planning and design warrants great praise, his importance as a truly successful human-being means even more to me. He treated all others with respect and taught human values by his example. He freely expressed his love of family and friends and took pride in their efforts. He was a happy man who enjoyed the life he led. Particularly his love of Irene and his three remarkable daughters. They have each in their own way enriched his life as they have shared in so many interesting ways in so many different places and cultures. I think of Tunney as a great father as well as a great scholar and teacher with significant successes in planning and design.

I am thankful that both Tunney and I have had our lives enriched with such capable and caring daughters. When Martha the first of our three daughters was born in our second year of study, Tunney helped out with occasional

child care along with introducing me to Chinese cooking and materials. I have been cooking ever since.

In our fourth year we had a two weeks exposure to a class design project under R. Buckminster Fuller. As summer approached, Bucky had been contracted to design and build a 36 feet dome to house a restaurant at Woods Hole Mass. The project started in Bucky's Cambridge office and components were designed and cut to measure and shipped to Woods Hole for assembly. We lived on-site in a demountable 26 feet dome where we slept, relaxed and held discussed the "state of the Arts". We had our meals at the Woods Hole and more often than not have an hour's swim in the Bay.

Graduation often ends significant relationships. In our case we have maintained contacts despite time and place. Every few years our paths would cross and we'd catch up and move on. More often than not, we would make more or less similar shifts in where we chose to exert our efforts. Tunney's role in the Boston redevelopment led to his being named as the chairman of the Urban Planning department at MIT, imminent. When Tunney visited Ann Arbor to visit Thea in the late 1980s we got together and I first learned about the opportunity in Hong Kong. Tunney asked if I would join him in the adventure. I was intrigued, near to retirement and definitely interested. Somewhat later, I arranged to

stop in at Cambridge while going on to our off-the-grid summer home in Newfoundland when he once again raised the issue and I quickly agreed to sign on to what became a high point in our collaboration.

After coping with faculty politics at Michigan for many years the prospect of starting fresh with a man I admired and most respected was tonic. We easily agreed on the people we hired, the layout of our spaces and the selection of our students and the goals and structure of our program. Within their first week the students had organized themselves as an entity and friendly competitor to the Architectural Program at the University of Hong Kong. They staged dinner meetings and entertainments of students and faculty in the first term and beyond. Morale was high.

Tunney and Irene quickly and naturally attracted a group of multi-talented people from Hong Kong as well as other parts of the world and created interesting and informative social occasions. It was there that Betty and I learned that Irene was such great match with Tunney in this new and challenging position. It was there we came to know more of his accomplished daughters and remain impressed with the roles that each had in that loving family. Betty and I shared vacation travels with the Lee family in Bali as well as other parts of China with Tunney and Irene. Exploring the amazing city of Hong Kong over the four-year period was a joy.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

After settling in San Francisco and still re-modelling, we learned of Irene's serious illness and we were invited to Captiva, Florida. We discovered that Irene had reached a critical phase of a cruel illness and realized that this was our last opportunity to enjoy her presence and say goodbye. We were touched to be with the family and were gratified to see how good people coped with suffering and resolution. Irene and Tunney were amongst the very best. We are thankful for their generosity in sharing those years with us and wish their family all well.

Betty Johnson and Joe Wehrer

A TRIBUTE FROM

Leng WOO

Tunney and CUHK

Tunney was very excited about starting a new architecture department within the Faculty of Social Science at CUHK. Most architecture schools were either associated with a faculty of arts or science or on their own. He felt that a department associated with studies of human society could provide enormous opportunity for learning. He wanted students to design architecture in thinking of people and society. He was impressed with the bamboo theatres of Hong Kong. These structures were architecture that embodied traditional crafts and performance arts. He proposed the “tree house and cave” project. Using cardboard and bamboo, students built temporary shelters, and started a tradition of built projects in the school.

A city’s role in creating an equitable society was important to Tunney. He was teaching subjects in social housing, community development, and neighborhood planning prior to joining CUHK. To him, public housing in Hong Kong had transformed the lives of people, and improved wellbeing of the society. Shatin, Wo Che, and Hang On Estates were among his favorite



projects. Most teachers and visitors had gone on public housing field trips with him as initiation to Hong Kong. In retirement, he was researching on city design and planning relating to people and society. The study of Boston's Chinatown and Density Atlas of cities were among them.

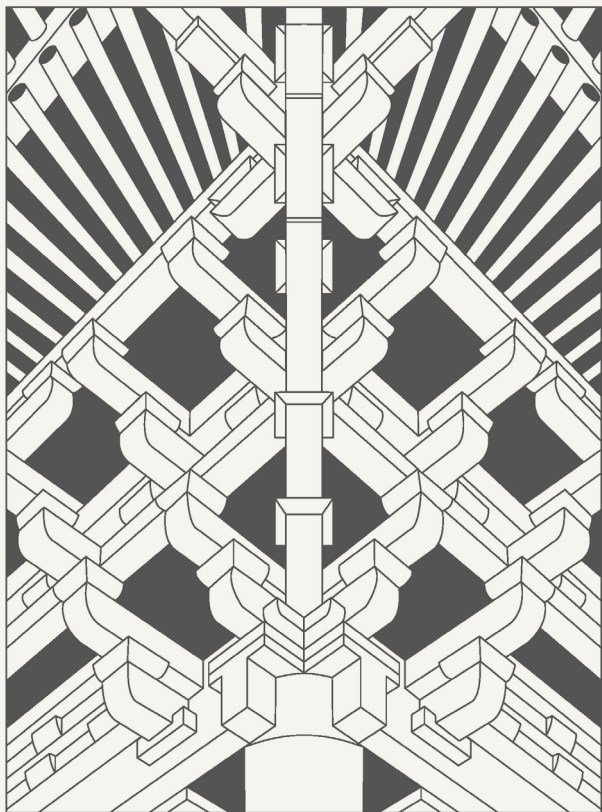


Tunney was very generous with people, be it materials, references, or compliments. I admire him most for his generosity with thoughts. He was curious about many things, and would share what he knew. While he held strong personal opinions, he encouraged questioning and reflection. Studying with him was essentially a self-discovery process. I remembered a young student talking to him while stretching out on the floor in his office at MIT. When Tunney left the room briefly, she said to me, “He is the coolest person I’ve known!” I thought it was the best compliment a teacher could have.

I once asked Tunney about his health. In a pragmatic manner, he noted that he had lived longer than what the statistics had shown. With casual enthusiasm, he said that everyday to him was a bonus, and there was no need to complain. Still, it is sad that he is no longer with us. I still have many questions I would like to ask him. But maybe the answers are already here.

Leng Woo

FIRST CLASS



Prof. Leng Woo designed a dougong pattern to celebrate the intake of the first class to the department. (Image courtesy of Leng Woo.)

中 大 建 築



(Photo courtesy of Tong P. L.)

03

T H E S U C C E S S O R S

From 1992 to 1998, the Department of Architecture continued to grow under Tunney's leadership. Tunney recruited a brigade of faculty members with diverse expertise and backgrounds. In 1994, the department moved from its temporary homes in the Elisabeth Luce Moore Library and the Music Center to the Wong Foo Yuan Building, which was built to accommodate departments under the Faculty of Social Science. Moving to a bigger venue facilitated the opening of the Master of Architecture (M. Arch.) Programme in 1995. After the graduation of the first M. Arch. class in 1997, the department achieved full accreditation from the Hong Kong Institute of Architects for both its bachelor's and master's programmes. After making sure that the department could stand on its own feet, Tunney retired from CUHK in 1998 and returned to the United States.

Tunney laid a good foundation for the department, and after his retirement, he remained an active member of the Architecture Academic Advisory Committee and continued to provide support and advice

to CUHK on the department's development. Since then, several prominent scholars and architects have continued Tunney's job of leading the department. In 1998, Prof. Tom F. Peters succeeded Tunney to become the second Chairman of the department. Afterward, Prof. Essy Baniassad assumed the Chairmanship role of the department in 2000. From 2006 to 2007, Prof. Tsou Jin Yeu served as an acting Chairman of the department. Prof. Puay-peng Ho, who was a recruit of Tunney in 1992, became the Chairman of the department in 2007. Under his guidance, the department changed its status in 2009 to the School of Architecture, and then in 2012, the department moved to An Integrated Teaching Building (now renamed the Lee Shau Kee Architecture Building), which was purposely designed for the learning of architecture. In 2014, Prof. Nelson Chen, who served on several teaching and advisory positions at CUHK since 1992, became the Director of the School. Today, the School of Architecture is led by Prof. David Dernie, who took over the roles and responsibilities of director in 2019.



ARCHITECTURE



A TRIBUTE FROM

Tom F. PETERS

I first met Tunney on my very first visit to Hong Kong in November 1990 where I was attending a Conference on Tall Buildings at the Hilton Hotel that then stood where the Cheung Kong Centre now stands between the old Bank of China Building and the new one that had just opened. He had heard me give a talk and came up to me afterwards and asked whether we could go and have a meal together as he wanted to talk to me about a project he had. So we crossed to Kowloon and went to one of the restaurants up on the third floor of the Star Ferry building. Everything was very new and exotic to me, sounds, sights, smells, still very clear in my memory. When we were seated Tunney began by saying that I had a very unusual name. Although the name Peters, he said, appears to be very common, it in fact isn't, and he asked me whether I knew Stefan Peters in Cambridge Massachusetts. I responded that he had been my uncle. "Why had been?" he asked, and I responded: "He just died last week." Tunney was aghast: "He and his wife Katya are our best friends!" That was the strange beginning to our unusual friendship.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

That was not the end of the conversation of course and he told me about his plans for the new department he had just been invited to create for CUHK, the vision, his interest in the social aspects of architecture and about construction. We talked for hours while the noodle cook came out from the kitchen every half-hour or so like the cuckoo out of a clock and did his demonstration of pounding and drawing out strings of noodles a couple of tables away. Tunney was interested in my thoughts about using technology, especially construction as a design medium. He asked whether I might be willing to act as his consultant in that area. I was delighted and flattered. So few on my side of the world were the least bit interested in what concerned me.

We became fast friends over our common interests and corresponded via that new medium, email. So it came about that I flew from Pennsylvania to Hong Kong several times over the next few years, often with others (Chris Luebke, now “Global Foresight Leader” at Arup, and the well-known MIT pedagogue, Edward Allen, whom I had recommended to the department). We even wrote a report for Tunney with recommendations on how to incorporate technology into the design curriculum.

A few years later, Tunney phoned: “Have you seen in the ACSA News that I am retiring?” he asked. Yes, I had seen the call for applications to his position as CUHK Chairman and Chair Professor of Architecture (as the job was then titled). “You should apply!” “No,” I responded. “Why not?” “Well,” I answered, “as Hong Kong is about to return to China this year, I feel that you need someone who understands China and Chinese culture for that position.” “You’re wrong.” “OK.” And there the telephone call ended.

Three weeks later, Tunney called again: “I see that you’ve not applied.” I found it very odd that the incumbent would be involved in the selection procedure. You see, I had no idea about the concept and culture of “*guanxi*” and how things functioned in Hong Kong or China. “No,” I answered, “I told you that I wouldn’t.” “You’re wrong!” came the response. End of conversation.

Well, a week later I got a call from the university's Vice-Chancellor's office, politely inquiring whether I would mind coming to Hong Kong to interview! Tunney had evidently insisted. I readily agreed because that would mean that I could see Tunney again and the friends I had made in the department. The rest is history, but it shows that special relationship that Tunney and I had developed. He, his wife Irene and I became quite close when I took that position.

The first weekend I arrived he took me for *dim sum* somewhere in the New Territories that lasted half a day. He made me so welcome in Hong Kong and helped me find my feet in a world that was still unfamiliar to me, established connections to architects, government officials, HKIA members, quite a few of whom then became friends (indeed *guanxi*). So I still owe him a lot that I will never be able to repay, my whole opening to the world of Southern Chinese culture for which I will always be so grateful. He was very supportive of my adamant insistence, against some entrenched resistance, that the department open itself to contacts and the profession on the "Mainland" for instance, one of the goals that he had of course not been able to properly establish before 1997. We had our differences in my choice of staffing, but remained close friends nevertheless. He was instrumental in helping the department maintain its separate library as

a research resource. Our mutual respect, concern for the Department, now School, and our friendship has lasted exactly 30 years. The last time we met in person was at the Architecture School's anniversary celebrations in 2013. That's a long time ago. I regret not having seen him since. His memory is very precious to me.

Tom F. Peters

Former Chairman and Chair Professor of Architecture,
Department of Architecture, CUHK (1998-2000)



*A decade flew by! Tunney at the 10th-anniversary banquet of the department.
(Photo courtesy of Gary Yeung.)*

A TRIBUTE FROM

Essy BANIASSAD

Tunney Lee established the architecture programme at the Chinese University in 1991 based on humanist precepts, and unity of all subjects concerned with the design and study of the built environment: architecture, urban design, and landscape design. He conceived architecture as an embodiment of the human civilizing will deeply be rooted in the built manifestations of ordinary life in cities and the history of human institutions. Given this as the foundation of the programme he projected a spirit of free exploration as the approach to deal with it in research and teaching cultivating department with a culture of diversity and open discourse.

Education, for Tunney, was not a process of delivering or receiving information but of nurturing the human inquisitive faculty and formation of self in the process of acquisition of knowledge and the skill in the purposeful application of it centred on design of the built environment. Tunney thus enshrined in the foundation of the programme the requisite attributes of intellectual vitality and professional identity in the advancement of culture and service of community.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

Tunney's generous care and love of the programme was a guiding presence at its foundation and an essential legacy in its continuation. I felt privileged to be entrusted with this legacy in my turn.

Essy Baniassad
Adjunct Professor and Former Chairman,
Department of Architecture, CUHK (2000-2006)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Puay-peng HO

In Memory of Tunney Lee

I first met Tunney when he interviewed me in London for teaching at CUHK almost 30 years ago. My first impression of Tunney was exactly the Tunney I got to know better during the many years working with him. He is amiable as a person but truly sharp in his perception and critical in his stand. To colleagues, students and fellow professionals, Tunney had been most caring and personable. He was determined in his vision but at the same time open to discussion and suggestion. He was unassuming and took extreme interest in all things Hong Kong and China, particularly everything local. From village architecture to bamboo structure, from vernacular rituals to *dai pai dong*.

Tunney was people-centric and consistently engaging with the people of the street and the local community in his broken *Toisan* Cantonese. I was always amazed how he could connect with people instantly. His social consciousness was demonstrated in the choice of hosting the architecture programme in the Faculty of Social Science and the design of the curriculum. He had inspired many of the faculty members to research in the



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

social dimensions of architecture and to collaborate with colleagues from the other departments within the faculty.

Tunney was a true believer in people. He trusted colleagues and students, allowing all around him to develop. Despite my inexperience in teaching architecture in my earlier years with the University, Tunney empowered my fellow colleagues and myself in initiating different approaches to teaching at the

then new school. Efforts that proved to be exceedingly effective include immersive elements such as the second-year field trip to China for experiential learning. Tunney had demonstrated the essential values in architectural education which I had learned and held on to this day. These include 'making' and 'problem-solving' as the means to teaching architecture design, where many projects were planned, such as sketch design and vertical projects. He placed great emphasis in clarity in our teaching with reachable learning outcomes. Tunney was not interested in the abstract, he believed strongly in robust research, which is what we might term as evidence-based learning.

Above all, Tunney was hopelessly optimistic with a positive influence on everyone around him. He was always cheerful and helpful and you cannot find a better mentor than Tunney as you set out on your academic journey, or a more suited leader in a new academic programme. Tunney will always be remembered in my heart as the mentor par excellence, with whom I have had the privilege to share an affectional friendship.

Puay-peng Ho

Emeritus Professor and Former Director,
School of Architecture, CUHK (2007–2013)

Tunney joined the review of the vertical studio, a collaborative project involving students from different cohorts. (Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



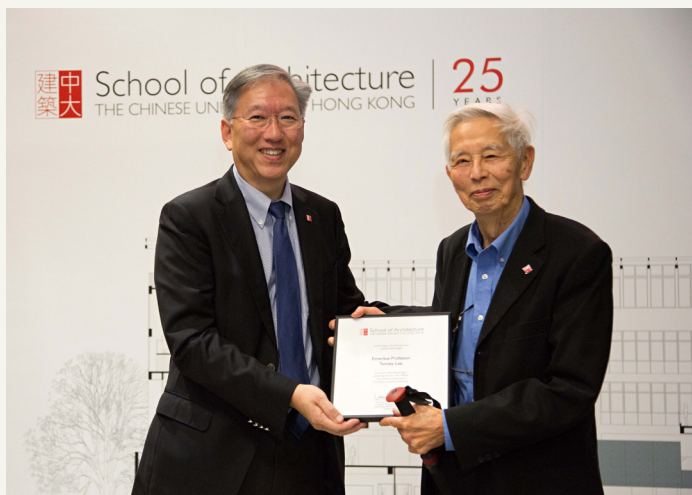
A TRIBUTE FROM

Nelson CHEN

Cambridge, Massachusetts, is widely known as a university town, anchored at opposite ends of the same street by Harvard to the west and MIT on the east. As a Harvard student in the 1970s, I spent considerable time at the opposite end of town at MIT while dating a girl whom I especially admired. (Luckily for me, we have been married for the past forty years.) While waiting around for her at the MIT campus in those early days, I often noticed Prof. Tunney Lee, with his lean and lanky frame, walking by in animated conversations with his students or faculty colleagues. However, I never worked up the courage to try and meet him back then.

Thus, despite the fact that I studied and worked in Cambridge for 15 years, and my wife was at MIT for two degrees, we only met Tunney and his wife, Irene, for the first time in Hong Kong, in 1991, shortly after they had arrived to start up the new department of architecture at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. As the founding chair and professor, Tunney kindly invited me for part-time teaching.

Early on, I once asked Tunney how and when he first got started teaching architecture and urban design. He



told me, with a hearty laugh, that his first class was the best one he ever taught in his career. Everything he knew up to that point in time was jam-packed into that first lecture. He presented brilliant design solutions to several complex problems. But, by the time the next week rolled around for his second class, he said, “Now what? I already taught them everything I knew.” So, instead of trying to provide more answers, he started to ask questions—in the Socratic tradition—in order to challenge his students’ underlying assumptions, to test their ideas, develop critical thinking, generate dialogues and deeper understanding.

Although I never took a course from Tunney, he still taught me some of the most significant lessons in my architectural career. Eventually, I had the privilege to follow in his footsteps to become the director of the CUHK School of Architecture. Whatever insights I shared with my own students during my tenure were often inspired by something Tunney had first discussed with me in those early years. For example, how the greater density of cities in Asia actually originates from its agriculture. Why agriculture? Since rice-growing societies can feed a much larger population occupying the same land area than wheat-growing civilizations—in fact, about 3-6 times *more* people. Or, how more density is actually better than less density in making more liveable and sustainable cities, and why Hong Kong is the leading case study in the world for supporting this thesis.

More than anyone else that I have ever known, Tunney was able to make you challenge your conventional thinking by posing such thought-provoking questions and considering new possibilities. Dr. Jeff Cody, a heritage conservationist at the Getty Institute who taught architectural history at CUHK in those early years, once observed, “Tunney always sees the glass half-full instead of half-empty. And, he says you can fill that glass all the way if you really want to.”

Shortly after both of my parents passed away, over a decade ago, my wife quietly asked me one evening, “Who is there left for us to go to for wisdom?” While we have many friends and family members to talk to for casual advice or opinions, who could now be our “go-to guru” for deep-rooted wisdom? Could I think of, say, three people? Immediately, I responded by naming Tunney and our church pastor. Then, silence ... I could not think of three. “That’s sad,” she said. “No problem,” I replied, “I am going to count double for Tunney.”

Let me end with a brief architectural history lesson about Sir Christopher Wren, whose tomb lies in the magnificent St Paul’s Cathedral that was rebuilt to his design after the London Fire of 1666. When you go to St Paul’s, you will find these words inscribed in the marble floor below the central dome. In Latin, it reads: *Si Monumentum Requiris Circumspice*. Which translates as: ‘To see his Monument, look around you.’

To see Tunney Lee’s monument, I need only to look around at the alumni of this School of Architecture, starting with the pioneering Master of Architecture graduates from the first Class of 1997, and the classes that have followed. While Tunney was not an architect and planner who designed many buildings and cities, he was one who designed and planned new teaching programmes and who built the foundations of future careers for students as well as young faculty members.

While the sun has now set on his lifetime, the sun rises again and burns brightly in his legacy in all of you, his former students and colleagues. Tunney is no longer with us, but he has left behind many gifts of his teachings and wisdom as well as his personal examples of curiosity and optimism, humility and gentleness, compassion and generosity. May all of these remain with you as you go forward in your lives and careers. For all of us, Tunney will be greatly missed and fondly remembered.

Nelson Chen

Honorary Professor and Former Director,
School of Architecture, CUHK (2014–2019)



A tight-knit group of faculty members (from left to right): Puay-peng Ho, Irene Lee (wife of Tunney), Brian Sullivan, Jeff Cody, Tunney Lee, Gu Daqing, Leng Woo, Vito Bertin. (Photo courtesy of Thea Lee.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Jeff CODY

Memorial to Tunney Lee

My life intersected with Tunney's in 1993, when he called me in the US from Hong Kong to ask if I'd be interested in coming to CUHK for a semester, to teach a small seminar and to help organize a symposium about "Twentieth Century Chinese Architecture". We never know when or how our lives will change, and I certainly didn't think about that when I responded "Yes, I'd love to come", but that phone call changed my life immeasurably and it led to many enriching experiences with Tunney, the last of which happened about 2 months ago, when he reached me to ask if I could help an Italian graduate student at MIT whom he was advising. I wrote to the student, saying "a friend of Tunney's is a friend of mine". I couldn't see Tunney's broad smile in the happy email he sent back to me, but I like to imagine that smile as my last direct encounter with him. I'll always carry memories in my heart of his kindness, generosity, wisdom, and grace. Tunney lived a full life of 88 years; is it more than coincidence that his number of years equates to "double happiness" in the Chinese culture he was so proud to be a part of?



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

A good measure of his happiness came from his loving marriage with Irene, his feisty alter ego, who hared his curiosity about all humanity, his love of cities (particularly Italian ones, and even more particularly, Roma!), and his enjoyment of spending time with children of all ages. Back in the 1990s, as CUHK's Department of Architecture sprouted from seeds to become a thriving organism, Tunney and Irene were at the forefront of nurturing that creation. When I arrived—for a temporary 6 months—I marveled at Tunney's vision that architects should use their talents to make life better for all kinds of people (hence its home in the Faculty of Social Science). I was energized

by my fellow colleagues, who seemed excited to be “there are the beginning of something.” Tunney and Irene taught me and my family about the wet market in Wo Che, along with that Estate’s delicious and ever-expanding *dai pai dong*. They showed us where to buy ginger flowers and how to pinch their tops to release their lovely fragrance. They brought my family into the larger family of the Department. They taught us about Hong Kong and where we might explore to find out more about it on our own.

When I returned as a full-time member of the faculty in fall 1995, I was thrilled to see the ongoing changes that Tunney had facilitated. He and I often talked about teaching: what worked and what didn’t, why history was so important to teach in conjunction with design, and how important it was to encourage growing minds about the crucial role architecture should serve in any society. Although Tunney was my “boss”, he increasingly became a friend and eventually a mentor. He valued my opinions about design even if I wasn’t an architect; he believed in me, just as he had faith in almost everyone around him, to do the right thing, to remain positive in the face of discouragement, to keep striving for the best solutions. Tunney eventually invited me to play poker in his flat on Sunday evenings, with him, Irene, and several regulars. He knew how to play really well, including how to bluff. I usually lost, but it never really mattered

because the games always came with lively conversation and a lot of laughs.

When I think about Tunney now, I remember his infectious laughter, his trim body so full of energy, his stories about architecture and Italy and food. As time morphs our world into an ever-different present, Tunney's approach to building, design, cities, China, history, and humanity will—I very much hope—continue to inspire and enrich me. Tunney lives in me, just as he does in all who read this.

Jeff Cody

A TRIBUTE FROM

GU Daqing

Back in 1993, when I was at ETH Zurich completing my doctoral thesis, an American colleague there told me about an ACSA International Conference on Architectural Education in Prague. She asked if I would be interested to attend? I asked my thesis supervisor, Prof. Herbert Kramel, for his opinion, and he said that we should go together. In the end, there was a delegation of five of us: Prof. Kramel, Vito Bertin, Zhang Lei, the American colleague and myself.

By the time we arrived in Prague, the conference had already started. We ran into a room and found seats on the one side of a long table. Sitting next to Professor Kramel, I looked around the room and noticed a Chinese elderly gentleman seated on the opposite side. Purely out of curiosity, I checked the participants list. Only one name sounded Chinese: Prof. Tunney Lee from The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Although his name was unfamiliar to me, I had heard of the university before. Southeast University held its first program accreditation in late 1991, and two department heads from Hong Kong were invited as observers. I had left Nanjing just before the accreditation so did not have



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

a chance to meet these two guests. I realized that this Professor Lee must have been one of them who visited Nanjing.

Soon, it was break time. At that moment, I hesitated whether I should introduce myself when, suddenly, Professor Kramel and Professor Lee stood up and greeted each other warmly. Tunney began to talk about his visit to Southeast University and how much he was impressed by the first-year design foundation course. Professor Kramel immediately introduced me to Tunney and said, “here is the young teacher who designed that program”. This is how I got to meet Tunney for the first time.

Two months later, I received a fax from Tunney asking whether I would be interested to come to CUHK for one term as a visiting lecturer. Once again, I sought Professor Kramel's opinion, and he said I should certainly take up this opportunity. Eventually, this 4-month visit lasted for 25 years! Not only me, Vito Bertin also came to CUHK through Tunney in 1996 and worked till his retirement in 2009. Zhang Lei also taught at CUHK for a term. Even Professor Kramel visited CUHK several times. All these happened because of that first accidental meeting with Tunney in Prague.

Gu Daqing



Tunney with a whole-hearted smile was captured at the Due Day Party (1995), an annual dinner organized by students to celebrate the end of the academic year. (Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Guntis PLESUMS

Remembering Tunney ...

It is with much sadness that I learned from Chung of Tunney's passing. I was unaware of his serious illness and the news came as a shock—there is no way to prepare for the unexpected. I extend my sincere and heartfelt condolences to his family and share in the loss with the very many throughout the world whose lives have been touched by Tunney and his joy for life.

I had so looked forward to again seeing Tunney this June during our trip to Boston to visit family. Alas, travel plans had to be cancelled. We would head to the Chinatown he loved so much, walking and talking through the streets and continuing our conversations over fabulous Chinese food. Tunney took me to a narrow back yard to show me where he grew up. Surrounded by three-story brick walls with no eyes or ears to intrude, he shared a part of his soul with me. I spoke of the Soviet and Nazi occupations of my country, Latvia, of the war, of life as a refugee, of learning the lessons of capitalism laboring on a Colorado farm ... Tunney had so many stories to tell, thoughts to share—and he was a good listener as well.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

On another visit we continued our walks and talks, this time around Boston's government center. While resting on a sunny bench, he did not hesitate to express very strong opinions about specific buildings, architecture, planning ... everything. I very much cherish these special times.

How fortunate I was to be invited to CUHK by Tunney and to have the opportunity to help even a little in building the department, particularly the graduate program and the teaching of structures. What a delight to learn that we were under the umbrella of the social sciences—not engineering, not art, but social sciences.

Tunney was particularly concerned with the human condition and held the strong belief that the purpose of buildings is to support life.

Much to Tunney's credit, there was a sense of community in the department and students were appreciably a big part of it. This is not the case in too many schools. The atmosphere was one of cooperation, collaboration and support. Teaching and school-related activities carried over into social relationships, outings in Hong Kong, trips to the mainland, cookouts and daily discussions over lunch. The department was not an isolated enclave, a bubble, but connected to HK's profession, schools in China and beyond.

I miss this community, I miss Tunney. In one conversation Tunney accepted the fact that after his leaving CUHK everything may change—that is reality. He possessed the vision, conviction and strength to develop and carry out a socially responsible program in architecture. Tunney's legacy will endure.

We will always remember this man—a kind man, generous of spirit, with a passion for life, for teaching, for asking why, for his positive energy, for understanding and caring. We celebrate his many contributions, his talent, his accomplishments—we celebrate Tunney.

Guntis Plēsums

A TRIBUTE FROM

Alfred YEUNG

It is now almost 27 years on the dot since my first association with the School. Easter 1993 certainly proved to be a turning point in both my career and my own personal life when I was invited to return to meet Tunney and his young faculty in the newly founded school.

I was first drawn by Tunney's affability and informality at our first meeting, where I found myself embarrassingly overdressed on that occasion and finding my way on Chung Chi campus in my suit under that sweltering heat and punishing humidity in April was quite a challenge. I was so glad that I didn't have to be in the same attire until attending our students' first graduation ceremony the following summer.

I was awed by Tunney's foresight in placing the school under the Faculty of Social Science from our very first exchange. His ethos, so eloquently put across at that meeting, centred around humanity that was so successfully crafted into the signatory DNA of the school and subsequently underlined the curriculum he devised. I found instant echoes from Tunney's outlook on architecture education with the values I was brought up

with by the founding fathers of the practice that I began my career with in the UK.

I therefore didn't have to think long and hard about the prospect of homecoming in balmy August during my return journey to chilly Liverpool. The rest was of course history and that meeting in Elisabeth Luce Moore Library building certainly had turned a new epic leaf in my life and I am forever grateful for Tunney in bringing me back to my birthplace.

It felt surreal when I, after spending seventeen long years away, was so warmly received by Tunney and his young faculty who themselves must be still finding foot in their new daily life in this city at the time. Those welcoming dinners at *Wo Che dai pai dong*, barbecue parties at the University Boat Club (all so expertly hosted by the effervescent and forever hospitable Irene) served more than warmest possible introduction to this 'new family' of mine that I forever cherish.

Tunney's imprint on the School DNA stretches beyond his profound visionary on architectural education and manifested by the rapport he has cultivated amongst the faculty, staff, students and the alumni community, still evidently alive and kicking two decades after his tenure. Tunney's most remarkable legacy is the lasting bond within the CUHK community, only exemplified by the passion and enthusiasm of the alumni who have worked

tirelessly in organising this very memorial service and the terrific response from past faculty members and friends who are now scattered all around the globe. The flooding tributes are not just great testaments of the respect that Tunney commands but more importantly are reflections of his charismatic persona, his mammoth popularity and the compassion he nurtured in people who has worked with him and within the sphere of Tunney's towering influences over the years. In witnessing what is on display 'Humanity in action', Tunney, you must be smiling in heaven!

Alfred Yeung

*"From all of us!"—the graduating class of 1998 showed their gratitude to the professors.
(Photo courtesy of Ida Wu.)*



A TRIBUTE FROM

Chris LUEBKEMAN

Tunney was a great leader and an absolutely pivotal figure in my career.

I first met Tunney when I was part of the team with Prof. Tom Peters and Prof. Ed Allen to come over to review the Technology Program of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Since the program was new, Tunney asked us to come over to take a look of the curriculum and I think he also wanted us to learn more about CUHK at the same time. He knew it was important to get others' views on how things are progressing. Ed was a colleague from MIT and a renowned educator. He wrote many books on construction and technology for architects. Tom was a professor at Lehigh University who focused on the history of technology and its impact on the language of design. Ed and Tom asked a young person, which was me, one of the junior faculty members at the University of Oregon who created the first on-line architectural technology teaching site, to join them. We came over to Hong Kong where I met Tunney for the first time.

Tunney had a huge, warm and welcoming smile that would come into your hear that lit up his whole face.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

I could also feel his passion. He loved Hong Kong. He loved the School. He loved his students. And, perhaps most important of all, he loved teaching. That was very inspiring for us, as Ed, Tom and I also all loved teaching. It was the first time I visited Hong Kong. We stayed for a week or two. We visited classes, talked with students, talked with faculty and generally took a look at how things were working. Then, a few months later, we sent the report back to Tunney. Tunney wrote back and said, "This is a wonderful report. You have 10 to 20 recommendations on how to improve the program. This is good. So, who is going to come over and help us make these changes?" Both Ed and Tom were quite occupied at that time. "Chris, what about you?" he asked. I said, "Sure!" So, I took a leave of absence from the University of Oregon and came over.

It was really a wonderful, wonderful time. I was amazed at how Tunney was able to curate and choreograph the educational program. I have since lived and worked in many places, and have learned that every institution has its own culture of learning, teaching and working. They are a reflection of the people, place and politics of the moment as well as the philosophy of the institution. Tunney truly understood that. He understood Hong Kong (he had a deep love of Hong Kong), he understood how to teach within the Hong Kong context, and he understood the faculty. There were a few things that I remember very well. One was that all the faculty would get together for lunch, almost every day. It was a way for the faculty to engage with each other in a personal and professional manner. It helped us understand each other and be better colleagues. And for Tunney, it was also a way for him to keep in touch with how everybody was doing. It was a very Hong Kong thing to sit around the table and have meals with family and friends. This is the only university that I have ever taught at where this would happen, never, in any other place. Through this, you really felt that you were part of the family of the Department of Architecture, and you did not feel like you were just by yourself, trying to fight your own fight. This was something beautiful.

I also admired Tunney's ability to walk many lines at the same time. We all have to walk through life and choose our paths, and Tunney had very interesting lines that he walked. He was able to be a leader with vision, but be very open for that vision to be interpreted. He was able to lead and let others follow in their ways. That was a very important task for a great leader to be able to do that. He was able to be warm and loving, and very firm at the same time. You could feel his care; you could also feel his firmness. He could be supportive and helping you to achieve what you wanted to, and at the same time put down very high expectations. I remember asking him for funds to do research on pencil towers. He agreed and said, "I expect you to publish it", with a big smile on his face. I had made the very first architectural website in the world for teaching technology, and the research paper was published there. Tunney liked that.

He was also extremely and deeply committed to the program of success for Chinese University. He had to walk the line of focusing on the success of his developing school and the best interest of his faculty, as individuals. For example, despite his need for growing the technology program, he encouraged me to apply to a position in MIT. He knew that that position would help me be the best version of myself as an educator. I admired that he did encourage me to apply for the professorship in MIT.

Tunney was very committed to his faculty and it was hard to leave such a wonderful leader. The person I went to, my next 'boss', was Prof. Bill Mitchell, who was also a friend of Tunney. Bill Mitchell was also a great visionary leader. They were both special individuals who cared about their institutions and cared about their faculties as individuals.

Tunney and Bill not only shared the way in which they nurtured their faculty, but also their love of cities; they simply have two very different lenses: one was on people and communities and the other was on the digital layer which was to come. This is the beauty of architecture. The education of architects touches on everything from nano-technology to national codes, from human emotions to the physical behavior of materials, from the way people walk down a street to the way in ecosystems support human life. Many intellectual domains are engaged together.

I also remember the great faculty which Tunney had collected at CUHK. It was such a healthy mix in contrast to many schools of architecture which have such strict philosophies, almost like religions. The thing I really loved about CUHK, when I was there, was that I did not feel like it had any kind of architectural religion that you had to follow. I think that Tunney selected for individuals who were passionate about

teaching and wanted to work with him. We together helped the students see different aspects of architecture through their eyes, whether through photography, through sketching, by building bamboo bridges or in the studio. I still keep in touch with some of the colleagues and am proud to have been part of Tunney's CUHK family. Through my time there, Hong Kong became a second home for me.

It was a privilege to have met him, dined with him, laughed with him, argued with him, taught with him, worked with him, and to simply have walked part of our lives together.

We are better because of him.

A partial transcript of an interview with
Chris Luebke

A TRIBUTE FROM

Wallace CHANG

In Memory of Prof. Tunney Lee

Tunney is always my teacher, my mentor, and my friend. To remember Tunney, I would like to recall the three incidents with him ...

1. Bamboo Theatre

The bamboo theatre is a unique Hong Kong architectural treasure. It is created without architects by the collaboration of local communities, musicians and craftsmen. It exemplifies the complexity and richness of Hong Kong culture through its melding of the traditional with the modern.

Prof. Tunney Lee

The brief idea of Tunney cited in the book, *Bamboo Theatre*, has been encouraging me to research and teach architecture since we went on a fieldtrip at the old market in Stanley with Mr. Wong Kam Sing, Prof. Chang Chao Kang and Prof. Tunney Lee in 1992. Tunney pointed to the bamboo theatre there and said, “This is Hong Kong architecture.” I did not understand this not until his setting up of the CUHK Department of Architecture with his three circles—form, context and technology, to define architecture. This time, he taught me about **humanity** in architecture.



2. Zhongshan Charrette

In 1998, Tunney came to me and said, “Would you like to organize a design charrette in the Pearl River Delta?” For me, it was extremely challenging, as it would take organizing skill, personal contact, knowledge capacity, etc. to cross borders, cross disciplines, and cross cultures. I did not know where I gathered the courage to answer him, “Why not?” Then I took up the painful process, but Tunney was so skillful to coach me, to liaise with the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, planning personnel from

the US, so and so forth. He said, “It is important for the Chinese government to learn how to plan the city with democracy in mind.” Again, I did not understand not until I witnessed the process with the result that had really motivated the Chinese planning officials to think differently. This time, he taught me about **democracy** in planning.

3. Foshan Studio

In 2003, when I was in Harvard-Yenching Institute as a visiting scholar, Tunney was inviting me to co-teach with him in his practicum Foshan Studio. Again, I said, “Why not?” This time as a colleague to coach students from different backgrounds was another challenge for me. As colleagues, we planned together, visited the site and discussed with officials and professionals between China and the States. In the studio, Tunney demonstrated to me that there was no generation gap between students and teachers. I then asked him, “How can you do it?” He simply said, “I am young.” This time, he taught me about **empathy** in life.

These three lessons on **humanity**, **democracy** and **empathy** that Tunney gave me over the years have been guiding me through difficulties, uncertainties, and adversities. His influences are beyond words, but simply in his smiles, his gestures and his wisdoms.

Wallace Chang



*No one is happier than Tunney, seeing the graduation of students. Celebrated with champagne blast on the graduation photo-taking day of Chung Chi College, 1996.
(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)*

A TRIBUTE FROM

Antonio LAO

Sad to hear the passing of this great person. It was Tunney who stopped by the Bay Area on his way to Hong Kong in 1995 that we met. It was the beginning of a life changing experience at the University and beyond. I am forever indebted to him for his generosity, sharpness, humor and leadership. We shared our common ancestry as the proud guys from Taishan. His legacy will live among the many talents that he mentored and fostered.

Antonio Lao

A TRIBUTE FROM

Gladys MARTINEZ

A period of inspiration and exploration began as I arrived at the Architecture Department under Tunney Lee in 1997. A highly perceptive educator who cultivated an international vision with generosity of spirit. His readiness to trust me when I proposed the radical elective course 'Micro 3D Design' surprised me—never before taught to students of Architecture—the course involved training students in Precision Engineering using metals at the Industrial Centre of Hong Kong. Five years of unprecedented originality and extraordinary creativity ensued from the students, this has been the highlight of my academic life.

Gladys Martinez

A TRIBUTE FROM

Alex LUI

Tunney passed away in July 2020. The pain and sorrow will linger on and on. Yet we have to come out from feeling depressed, because it would be Tunney's wish for us to do so. He would wish us to continue what he can no longer do, to create a better world for humanity. He was such a person, sensible, rational, compassionate and full of wisdom.

It was my honor and privilege to know Tunney and be close to him for a great part of my life since the late 1970s, straddling from Boston to Hong Kong. He was first my teacher and mentor at MIT. As an architect/planner, he was not like most architects, his concern on design went much further than the object of design itself. Randall Imai, one of his former students said, 'What he did was take our focus away from always creating beautiful objects and try to focus on the purpose of the building and who it was going to serve. It was really egoless architecture.'¹ 'To Tunney, architecture was not an expression of personal talent, but rather a collaborative effort,' Imai added.²

'While describing the Chinese University department he created, Mr. Lee wrote that his educational



(Photo courtesy of Cynthia Ting.)

philosophy centered on “a basic concern for the quality of people’s lives and respect for all those involved in planning and creating buildings, including the people who will inhabit the buildings, coworkers, construction workers, as well as the owners, developers, and fellow colleagues.”³ Tunney’s focus was always on people. How the people might feel, be impacted and respond to the physical environment, space, building, neighborhood or city. When I accompanied Tunney to some great churches in Rome, Wo Che Estate in Shatin, or an old neighborhood in Guangzhou, he was equally intrigued, marveling about the urban spaces created and how people utilize them for all kinds of activities in their daily lives. The social and humanistic aspects of architecture and planning was always in his mind.



(Photo courtesy of Cynthia Ting.)

Tunney was also concerned about social justice and the environment. During the 1960s and 1970s while at MIT, he had led social and environmental movements to put pressure on public policies and large urban developments in the US. “Our role as citizens, I think, is important,” Mr. Lee once said in an MIT roundtable discussion on urban planning that is posted on YouTube.⁴ He added that “we should not be just technocrats building the site. We are citizens as well who care about things like quality and inequity.”⁵

During the 1990s after his retirement from The Chinese University of Hong Kong, during his many joint MIT workshops in Shenzhen, providing training to professional project managers working for developers in China, protection and care about the natural environment were high on the agenda of all developments. Tunney influenced generations of architects and planners not only in the US, but also in China, Hong Kong and elsewhere around the world.

After retiring from The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1998, Tunney returned to MIT and was active in preserving the heritage of his childhood neighborhood, Boston Chinatown. He also worked intensively on the creation of an Atlas showing through multi-layering different aspects of human habitation densities in different parts of the world. In his work about Hong Kong, he teamed up with a research group at Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Hong Kong Housing Authority.

Tunney came from Taishan, a small rural town in south China, which is well known for sending young men to work overseas in America, Canada and Australia. Came to the US with his father when he was seven, Tunney studied at Boston Latin School and graduated from University of Michigan with a Bachelor Degree in Architecture. He met his wife Irene while working

in New York for I. M. Pei. When Tunney was studying in Italy under a Fulbright Scholarship, Irene joined him and they got married in Rome in 1957. Italy had become Tunney's favorite country to visit ever since. Mrs. Lee died in 2001. They had three daughters who took care of Tunney during his sickness. Throughout his teaching years at MIT and The Chinese University of Hong Kong, he has taught and inspired thousands of students coming from different parts of the world. His warmth, wisdom and modesty despite huge contributions to knowledge in humanity and human habitation had won him great respect and intimate love from almost everyone in all walks of life, who came in contact with him.

Alex Lui

1 'MIT Professor Tunney Lee, an Architect, Urban Planner, and Historian of Chinatown, Dies at 88,' *The Boston Globe*, July 5, 2020, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/07/05/metro/mit-professor-tunney-lee-an-architect-urban-planner-historian-chinatown-dies-88/>

2 Ibid.

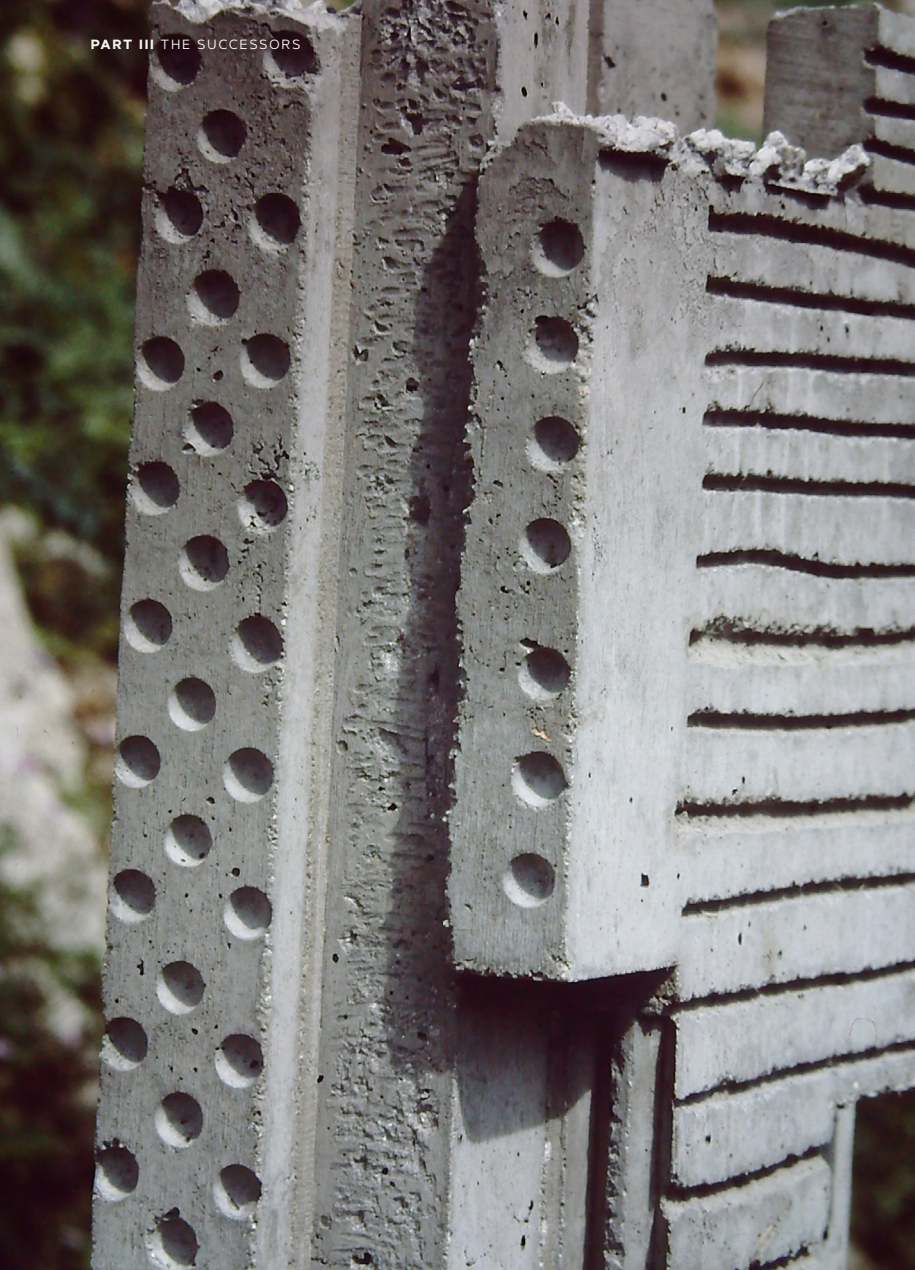
3 Ibid.

4 'The Future of Site Planning,' Youtube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHdqfU4uybl>

5 'MIT Professor Tunney Lee, an Architect, Urban Planner, and Historian of Chinatown, Dies at 88,' <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/07/05/metro/mit-professor-tunney-lee-an-architect-urban-planner-historian-chinatown-dies-88/>

Celebrating the first day of class in 1994, after the department moved to Wong Foo Yuan Building. (Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)





Tunney stressed the importance of hands-on building experience. In a first-year studio project, students made concrete posts to test the effects of various form-works on the concrete. (Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



04

T H E U N S U N G

H E R O E S

When the department was first opened on the top floor of the Elisabeth Luce Moore Library in 1991, it barely had any tools and equipment, except for dozens of used drafting tables kindly donated by the Architectural Services Department of Hong Kong. Tunney Lee recruited a team of four supporting staff members who helped set up the studio and a small computer room. In the next year, with more supporting staff recruited, an audio-visual division was formed, and a small model-making workshop was created alongside the studio at the Music Center. When the department moved to the Wong Foo Yuan Building in 1994, it had new studios, a photo studio, a computer laboratory, an environmental laboratory, and an exhibition/crit room. Tunney also made

sure that a library dedicated to architecture was established to support the teaching and research needs of students and faculty. Meanwhile, a fully-equipped model-making workshop was opened at the nearby Li Wai Chun Building.

The operations of the department and all its teaching and learning facilities would not have been possible without the help of the efficient team of clerical and technical staff, several of whom have served the department from Tunney's time to the present. Although they tend to remain backstage, they were always there to provide immediate administrative and technical support to students and faculty.



Outing with supporting staff and their families.
(Photo courtesy of Annie Lau.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Jeff KAN

It is sad to know Tunney left us! It has been nearly 12 years since we last made contact when I asked him for a favour to be one of my referrers for job applications. He was the same old Tunney that I knew when I joined the department at Chinese University in 1991—helpful, kind, sincere, and humble.

In the early years when the architecture department was still operating in the extension of Chung Chi Library, numerous times I saw him, the department head, taking out the office trash on Saturdays when he left the general office.

Tunney treated everyone with utmost respect and was inclusive, together with his wife Irene, they would invite all the staff for thanksgiving and other parties. Casual conversations, some in the men's room, shaped my memories of this wise man:

“... it's the job of the head to make everyone unhappy ...”
in the context of colleagues fighting over resources;

“... it takes hard work to be one of the world’s top departments ...”;

“... when you wake up in the morning, do you like going to work and love the work ahead or are you struggling and giving yourself excuses of not going to work?”

Tunney was a gentleman in the true sense of the word. It was a privilege and an honour to have worked with Tunney. He will be missed.

Jeff Kan

A TRIBUTE FROM

Leo DAI

Professor Tunney Lee 為人和藹可親，不拘小節，即使身為系主任，他對系內上下都很客氣。特別當我初來中大，幫助教授們成立 workshop 的時候，他給我們很多的支持，亦很放手讓我們作決定，沒有太多設限，所以當時我們的工作都很順利，我們也十分感謝他對建築系的貢獻。

我所工作的地方，跟系內辦公室有一段距離，所以我跟 Tunney 的接觸不是太多。但在系內一聽到他的笑聲，便可立即把他辨認出來，因 Tunney 的笑聲和笑容也很特別，非常和藹可親。
(訪問節錄)

Leo Dai

A TRIBUTE FROM

LAU Hok Fu

Tunney 在任建築系系主任時，我獲兩次升職，所以我很感謝他，得知他離世我十分懷念他。

我跟 Tunney 的接觸不算很多，有一次我在辦公室門外碰到他，我知道當天他要接受一個訪問。可是我遇到一個很尷尬的難題—我發覺 Tunney 的褲子「爆咗味」。我很猶豫應否告訴他，但想到他即將要接見客人，唯有坦白相告。誰知 Tunney 竟說：「我知道呀！等一下我會穿上西裝外套，遮蓋了便看不到。」可見 Tunney 是個不拘小節的人。（訪問節錄）

Lau Hok Fu

A TRIBUTE FROM

Annie LAU

我在 1993 年 8 月加入中文大學建築系，當時 Tunney 是系主任，作為我的老闆，一直至 1998 年他退休為止。Tunney 從不擺老闆架子，是個很平易近人的人，對於下屬很關心和體諒，是個很樂於幫助下屬的老闆。

我對 Tunney 幾個片段特別深刻。首先，每逢見面，Tunney 都會先主動打招呼。所以無論我們當時心情如何，見到他都會立時輕鬆起來。第二，在星期六，我經常會帶同女兒一同上班。我女兒是一個小朋友，每當 Tunney 見到她，他都會變成一個「大朋友」，經常逗我女兒玩和教她做運動，完全不像一個老闆。第三，有好幾次 Tunney 請我們幾位同事到他家吃飯，每次他都準備十分豐富的食物，為了招呼我們花了很大功夫。這些事情，我現在想起還記憶猶新。

有兩件事我一定要多謝 Tunney。第一件事是在 1995 年，當時我在建築系工作了只有兩年時間，但我請求 Tunney 向大學推薦我升職。當 Tunney 了解到我已達到大學晉升的要求，他便毫不猶豫地替我申請升職，讓我在該年獲得晉升。第二件事同樣發生在 1995 年，在 10 月我丈夫心臟要動一個大手術，每天上班前和下班後，我都要趕到葛量洪醫院探望他。當時在辦公室因為一些人事問題，令我工作量十分繁重，加上精神上的壓力，工作得十分辛苦。我唯有向 Tunney 解釋我的情況，向他求助。Tunney 親自介入，幫助了我，使我可以放心照顧我丈夫和女兒。有這樣的好老闆，我很感恩，我會十分懷念 Tunney。（訪問節錄）

Annie Lau



A TRIBUTE FROM

Rico LAI

在我的印象中，Professor Tunney Lee 是一個有國際視野的人，比較高瞻遠矚。他創立建築系時，除了成立了一個 workshop 外，亦開辦了一個 audio-visual division。對於當時的教學來說，是比較嶄新的想法。我負責 audio-visual，剛來建築系時，一切由零開始，但 Tunney 很支持我們的工作，也給我們很多磨鍊機會。尤其當年的器材沒現在先進，如何運用不同器材去教學和做 presentation，他都放手讓我們決定，讓我們獲得很多學習的機會。Tunney 是個很平易近人的老闆。

每當建築系舉辦講座時，由於我要負責控制影音器材，所以通常會站在演講廳的最後方，而 Tunney 往往也坐在會場靠後位置。他總是一邊聽講者發言，一邊拿著一支筆、一本簿在畫畫。有一次，我很好奇他到底在畫些什麼，所以偷偷看了一下，原來他在畫設計草圖。我覺得有趣極了，他真是不折不扣的建築學家，無時無刻都會用圖像記錄自己的想法和創作意念。這給我很大的啟發，Tunney 在工作以外，還會不斷創作。（訪問節錄）

Rico Lai



*Tunney and his supporting team. The photo was taken at the General Office in Wong Foo Yuan Building.
(Photo courtesy of Annie Lau.)*



*The merry couple dancing at the end-of-term dinner party of Chung Chi College.
(Photo courtesy of Thea Lee.)*

05

F R I E N D S I N

T H E I N D U S T R Y

Tunney believed that an architectural school must prepare students to engage in practice. He stressed that design skills must be related to the profession of architecture, as it is an art form that is actually practiced. After he started the department, Tunney invited local and overseas practitioners to advise on the department's development and review students' works. Many of these practitioners

also made room during their busy work schedules to teach courses and lead design studios at the department. All these years, the department has benefited from the tremendous support and help from all of these inspirational pioneers of the building and architecture industry.



Many architects and professionals have provided continuous supports to the School of Architecture. They shared the joy of the School's 25 years of establishment. (Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Lawrence K. CHENG

There are many facets of Tunney's remarkable life that I have only a glimpse of, but the knowledge and friendship that he gave me are invaluable. I met Tunney at MIT in the late 1970s; he was a professor in the Planning Department while I was a student in the Architecture Department. I came from Hong Kong and was interested in the mass production of public housing carried out by the Hong Kong government; and although I never took his classes, he spent time with me answering questions about urban and housing policies. Eventually he was one of the readers for my Master Thesis on the design, policy, and community participation in social housing production.

I got involved in Boston Chinatown as a community organizer and agitator upon graduation in 1980 and got to know Tunney in his role as a community leader. We collaborated on efforts to oppose institutional expansions within Chinatown and pushed for a community led master plan. When Tunney was appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts to lead a State agency and became a public servant, he continued

to advocate for the welfare of Chinatown “behind the scene”. One outcome of this community-based plan was the city’s agreement to allocate one of the few public land parcels in Chinatown for affordable housing. Seizing this opportunity, Tunney, Jacquie Kay and I gathered to discuss forming a grass root group to compete for the development of this housing project. As a result, the Asian Community Development Corporation was formed in 1987 and later was designated as one of two developers. After several years of hard work by everyone, I was fortunate to be the architect for 88 units of all affordable housing completed in 1994—Oak Terrace was the first affordable housing project in Boston Chinatown since the early 1970s.

When Tunney told me that he was starting a new Architecture School at CUHK in the late 1980s, we got together multiple times to speculate on what the curriculum could be that addressed the pressing issues of the time, to envision a new model of teaching and learning about the built environment. I was unable to join him in Hong Kong to teach but did visit him and

Irene at CUHK and saw what he had achieved in such a short time. After Tunney retired from CUHK in 1998 and resumed teaching at MIT, he often invited me to his China studio reviews, and we would frequently discuss over *dim sum* the planning policies and approaches between the US, China, and Hong Kong.

We continued our collaborations on planning and advocacy for Boston Chinatown over the last 20 years, from leading the technical committee of the Chinatown 2010 Plan to organizing community meetings to strengthen Chinatown's future. Tunney was instrumental in directing our attentions during the planning process to reinforce Chinatown's cultural and social organizations, and not focused just on physical planning, to sustain Chinatown as the center for the Asian communities in and around Boston. I have fond memories of our walks to the subway after evening meetings, but always we found a hole in the wall place in Chinatown to eat along the way!

Tunney left behind many legacies, but several standouts in my mind. One is his ability to connect people and I met many architects and planners from China and Hong Kong when they passed through Boston to visit Tunney. Also, I am indebted to Tunney's *Density Atlas*, which I frequently use in my work and in teaching

architecture of urban housing. Lastly, his Boston Chinatown Atlas project will be a model for other urban ethnic communities in the United States to document, explore, and celebrate their histories and futures. Tunney will be missed but not forgotten.

Lawrence K. Cheng

A TRIBUTE FROM

Donald CHOI

I first met Professor Lee in the early 1990s when he was establishing the new Department of Architecture at the Chinese University and I was working on the CLK airport. I met him only a few times and could not say that I knew him well. However, I can still remember his gentle constant smile and his generosity of caring about how young architects could discover their life purpose thru architecture. For me, his humanity and dedication to educating future architects, his passion in community housing, his belief in the architect's responsibility to improve human habitat, have left a lasting mark on me. I am saddened to learn of his passing; I am sure that his spirit lives on thru thousands of students and architects who have been inspired by him.

Donald Choi

A TRIBUTE FROM

Ada FUNG

I am deeply saddened at the loss of a good friend, mentor and comrade, when Alex Lui broke the news to me that Professor Tunney Lee passed away. I truly missed him and the times when we enthusiastically discussed about urban densities and livability in high density compact cities. We shared similar passion and aspirations about cities and their people.

I always enjoyed chatting with Tunney. He was a member of the Building Committee of the Hong Kong Housing Authority in the 1990s. Tunney was a staunch supporter of our public housing policies, strategies, quality and quantity, as well as the people aspects of our public housing in Hong Kong. When he left Hong Kong and moved back to Boston, I missed him with his Architect-Planner's perspective, inspiring, pragmatic and full of wisdom. He truly appreciated our humble work.

Thereafter, whenever Tunney came to Hong Kong in the new millennium, he and Alex Lui would visit me and my colleagues to exchange ideas, whilst he was conducting a global research on urban densities. I gladly showed him our latest planning and design breakthroughs, such as



micro-climate studies, community engagement activities etc. He advocated that Hong Kong had plenty of good experience to share with the world.

Tunney said, “You must come to Boston and talk to my MIT students.” I said I would do so upon retirement, and I did.

On 29 September 2019, I just managed to spend a Saturday morning with Tunney and his friends in Boston, after finishing my meetings in New York and before joining my high school reunion’s cruise trip. We had a delicious *dim sum* breakfast at his favourite “Great Taste” in Chinatown, and a hearty chat about planning



and architecture, housing and Hong Kong. Next, we went for a nice walking tour in Boston on a bright sunny day. He was very energetic and enthusiastic.

Through this walking tour, I learnt a lot more about Tunney. I could vividly see his footprints in downtown Boston. He worked miracles, as a pioneer and leader!

He had always been passionate about city planning, urban design, affordable housing, community building and place making in Boston, speaking to and influencing public officials and the community at large, bringing his ideas to fruition to make things work.



Much more than being a renowned scholar in MIT, Tunney was a mastermind and entrepreneur who had been instrumental in the transformation of Boston. He was the Founder of Asian Community Development Corporation, a not-for-profit organization with a lot of properties and community activities in Chinatown. I saw his footprints in green spaces and Big Dig of

Boston too. The last stop of our tour was a red brick building, which was Tunney's home when he grew up as a kid.

I said to Tunney, "With limited time but fond memories of you and Boston, it gives me the desire to come back and visit you again!" He had a permanent office in MIT as a lifetime professor, and he had excellent connections with his students and former students.

That was a very enjoyable morning, with fond memories of Tunney and his friends in Boston. I did not realize that it was the first and the last time for us to meet in Boston. His research on urban densities was still on-going, something that we had not yet finished.

Sadly we miss Tunney, but I am sure that Tunney will be in spirit with us, always.

Ada Fung

A TRIBUTE FROM

Edward S. T. HO

I first met Professor Tunney Lee in 1990 during the process of the establishment of a new School of Architecture in The Chinese University of Hong Kong. If I remember correctly, I was a member of the Architecture Academic Advisory Committee for the University, and we had an interview with Professor Lee before he took up his post as the founding professor of the School.

As a practicing architect and a graduate of the School of Architecture of the HK University then, I was very excited to witness the foundation of a new school of architecture in HK, and in what new areas of architectural education the new school would offer under the potential leadership of Professor Lee. I was deeply impressed with Tunney's rich background in urban planning and design and his deeply felt vision of what the new school could contribute to the education of a new generation of architects in HK.

I was also a member of the first Accreditation Panel of HK Institute of Architects in the process of accrediting the School as a recognised school for the Institute, and later on as an employer for many of its graduates. Their accomplishments are the heritage of Professor Lee.

Though I had few opportunities later on to interact with Tunney, my recollection was that he was not only a very learned and dedicated educator, he was a very open and genial person, someone who now all of us miss dearly.

Edward S. T. Ho

A TRIBUTE FROM

James H. KINOSHITA

I am very sad to learn from School of Architecture CUHK that Tunney Lee has passed away on 2 July 2020.

It was in the late 1980s that we recommended Tunney to head the second school of architecture that was being created for Hong Kong within the Chinese University. I knew Tunney through my association with MIT and knew of his dedication to education through his role as the head of the Dept. of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. I was happy that he accepted and now to see the successful result of his leadership during his tenure at the Chinese University.

I am very proud to see the quality of the graduates that emerged from the new school of architecture.

I have known him as a very sociable person, very approachable with no formalities. Deeply committed to the social issues of architecture, he was not a ego builder, and I am glad that he instilled these ideals to his students.

James H. Kinoshita

(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

LAM Wo Hei

In Fond Memory of Professor Tunney Lee

I count Professor Tunney Lee as a good friend, a great teacher and a world-class scholar in the field of architecture and urban planning. Let me share with you a few anecdotes about Tunney.

Whenever I encountered a professional problem, the first person I consulted would be Tunney. If I needed the help of an expert in the field of urban design, in campus planning, and in design of specialized medical facility, Tunney would without fail recommend the best firms available particularly from the US.

In 1999, my daughter was about to enter university and she would like to consider colleges near Boston. Tunney and his wife Irene quickly sent us a list of schools to visit. As part of the fact finding tour we were in Boston. To this day my daughter still remembers the excellent lobster dinner at “Legal Seafood Restaurant” with the good professor.

A couple of years ago me and my wife went with Tunney, Alex Lui and Antonio DiMambro to tour Umbria district in Italy. In every hill town we visited,



Tunney would get up early and walk about the area to study how the townsfolk centuries ago designed the street pattern, the public open space and the buildings to overcome the hilly terrain. That was before the advent of escalators and elevators.

At the 25th anniversary of the Chinese University School of Architecture celebration, Tunney was in Hong Kong with a minor foot injury. In spite of the limping, he insisted to go ahead with his visit to South China University of Technology (華南理工學院) with Alex Lui to attend workshops with the students.

Tunney sent me an e-mail in May 2019 on the chapel of the Holy Shroud, Turin, Italy. It was closed when we last visited. The restoration was completed and he suggested another trip to Italy to see this masterpiece by Guarini. I regret now that I did not take up his suggestion.

Although Tunney was a 3rd generation American, he was born in Taishan, China. He told me that his father, and his grandfather, would on reaching the age of about twenty go back to Taishan to find a wife. Tunney was brought into the US by his parents when he was a young boy. His roots were in China.

Lam Wo Hei



Testing the strength of a student-made structure. Can it withstand Tunney's weight?
(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Patrick LAU

Professor Tunney Lee

During the late eighties Hong Kong went through an intense period of transformation of the development in our city. It has become apparent that there is a graduate need of more Architects required to serve our community. The government's decision to establish a second architecture school at The Chinese University of Hong Kong was well supported by the profession as well as the University of Hong Kong.

This gave me the opportunity to get to know Professor Tunney Lee in 1990, being the first director and a few of his colleagues who came from MIT to teach. Tunney, a town planner by profession, had a broad vision for the school and laid down a solid foundation for his future students.

He was a fine elegant gentleman, modest, down to earth and always with a big smile. He explained to me his roots and the concept of being a Boston Man. Little did I know that he had done so much research work for the Boston China Town which was a valuable learning experience for me coming from Vancouver.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

I have great respect of him not only for his contribution to architecture and to Hong Kong but personally as an honest scholar whom I have the fortune to know. He will be dearly missed by his students, colleagues and friends.

Patrick Lau

A TRIBUTE FROM

Nora LEUNG

Today, after more than 20 years, many founding members of the CUHK architectural faculty have gathered here, to remember the life of the great man—Professor Tunney Lee, who first brought us together.

Architectural education and architectural career often lead us to different paths in life. For those who started in CUHK, Tunney has given a holistic beginning with a firm foundation. His mission was to “begin the education of architects who will be aware, responsible, and capable of using creative design process to integrate context, form, and technology into settings that will support and enhance people’s potential.”

In the process of teaching “Local Practice” in CUHK more than 20 years ago, I had the ordeal of having to convey to students all the hard facts of the Hong Kong reality. Tunney never failed to impress me that creativity is still possible, despite all the physical and statutory constraints. I have learned from his positive attitude, wealth of knowledge, and understanding of the world.

Now human beings are facing even more challenges than we had ever faced before; this positive attitude we gained from our education shall give us strength to find our solutions.

Thank you Tunney, we are all very lucky to have known you.

Nora Leung

A TRIBUTE FROM

Anthony NG

It was my first experience to witness the birth of a new school of Architecture in HK. I cannot believe it was 30 years ago. Tunney and I first met a year before the intake of students to the department in 1991. He was always a gentleman, a humanistic scholar who inspired so many people. I was nominated by HKIA to join the Architecture Academic Advisory Committee to monitor and advise on curriculum set up, teaching capacity and other resources, etc. It was since then we had to meet Tunney once every 2 months to review the progress. There was a clear common goal between the school and our professional institute. Everyone was working hand in hand to make sure the setup would match not only to HK but also international standard, paving way for accreditation. HKIA as a professional institute played an important role to facilitate CUHK's Architectural Program's drive for excellence.

For me, it was a moment to treasure working shoulder to shoulder with Tunney. With his determination, the new department was established under the Faculty of Social Science. It was uncharted water for all of us. Tunney coming from US had to work in a system he



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

was unfamiliar with. It was also the first time for HKIA to advise on a new Architectural school setup. As for the Faculty of Social Science, even understanding the need of an Architectural Department was foreign to them. They never had to deal with technical requirements such as space for model making, specification and

space for pin-up panels, etc. Even long operation hours for design studios was an unfamiliar requirement for their management. He always resolved problems humanistically. I admire tremendously the quality in Tunney to be able to pull people together, gaining their trust and support at all levels.

By 1997, I was the chairman of HKIA accreditation visit working with representatives from RIBA, CAA, NCARB. It was a unanimous decision to recognise the performance of the school. However, the success of its accreditation should never be taken for granted. It was unprecedented to have a new school to achieve that level of international accreditation within 6 years of short history. Together with the teaching staff and the students, it was a collective effort and achievement. Tunney of course had played a major role to motivate every single person to do their best for the same goal.

Starting a new school was like drawing on a blank canvas, opening up imagination. I was very impressed and excited by the energy generated by Tunney. The staff and the students were like pioneers, spontaneous and passionate in working things out. The spirit was very high. I was really impressed with their enthusiasm. As a practitioner, it was refreshing to experience that. I felt a surge of energy in me to be part of the school, being there for their design reviews and year-

end assessment. It was also a mutually enlightening experience for me to go on field trips with the students. Up till now, I am still keen to facilitate professional development of architectural students, that is why I get involved with the Wharf Scholarship to offer overseas work experience opportunities to talented graduates. Offering them global exposures and widened perspective is like planting seeds for their long term professional growth.

Tunney, with his dedication to education, conviction to motivate teaching staff and students and his down to earth leadership, was the best person to set up the second professional architecture school in Hong Kong, which I believe, was the greatest achievement of his career. Tunney will be remembered by all of us.

A partial transcript of an interview with
Anthony Ng

A TRIBUTE FROM

Stephen POON

I came to know Tunney in the mid 1980s. He was introduced to me by Dr. John Leung, also a HKU architectural graduate, and a professor of planning at the Queen's University, Canada.

I remember well the day when Tunney turned up in my office in the Housing Department. In his quiet and unassuming manner, he introduced himself as a professor of city planning at MIT and the chairman of a public commission responsible for masterminding the revitalisation of a major part of Boston. His main interest was Hong Kong's experience in affordable housing, and how that experience might be usefully applied to Boston. Little did I know at that time that he would become the inaugural professor of architecture at CUHK. We had had several meetings after that, and in the course of our conversation, I couldn't help but noticed that his approach to architecture and planning was very much social and people oriented. As it turned out, our city's second school of architecture was brought under the umbrella of CUHK's Faculty of Social Science, as distinct from HKU's association with its Faculty of Engineering.



As we all know, Tunney was instrumental to the founding of the architectural school in CUHK. In the preparatory meetings he had with the HKIA, he held firmly to his principles. He was persistent, but never overpowering. The HKIA Council gave him its full support, and eventually assisted him in the safe passage through the bureaucracy.

I represented the HKIA in the school's organising committee in its formative years, and I witnessed how the school grew from strength to strength. With Tunney at the helm, many world renowned architects and researchers, both local and abroad, joined his academic staff. The young school was filled with energy, with students and staff actively participating in the tutorial and crit sessions.

Tunney was a member of the HKIA contingent in the many exchanges we had with our counterparts in the Mainland. There was one occasion which I remember very well. One evening after dinner, we took a stroll back to the hotel. On our way, we walked pass a city square, and there was a group of locals having their evening dance exercise. Within split seconds Tunney and his wife disappeared into the crowd, and before we realised it, they were happily sharing the dance with the locals. That revealed the soft side of Tunney, his care for the people and his respect for the local culture.

Tunney will be truly missed and fondly remembered by his friends, his fellow architects, his academia, his students and the communities which directly or indirectly benefitted from his teachings.

Stephen Poon

A TRIBUTE FROM

WONG Kam Sing

李燦輝教授，建築規劃學人，麻省理工學院 (MIT) 前城市研究及規劃系主任，以及香港中文大學 (CUHK) 建築系創系系主任，連繫東西方，桃李滿天下。

Tunney 睿智博通，又樂助後輩，貢獻良多。縱然李教授內涵「燦爛輝煌」，外在總是謙謙君子，並且簡樸親和，實是楷模風範，深受敬重。

自 80 年代尾，有緣相遇，並同行研究香港「竹棚節戲」的傳統建築，以至探討本地高密度城市建築環境的未來挑戰，遊走於「傳統」至「未來」及「建築」至「規劃」之間的研究學術國度。相識卅載，良師益友，永遠懷念。

Wong Kam Sing

The department invited bamboo masters to teach students how to build bamboo structures. (Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

John TSANG

I met Tunney when I was doing undergraduate studies at the MIT School of Architecture and Planning in the early 1970s, some half a century ago. My focus was mainly on built form architecture but I maintained an interest in urban studies.

Together with Tunney, there were other great professors in the Urban Studies and Planning Department, like Kevin Lynch, Phil Clay and Jack Myers. This tower of knowledge opened our eyes to the beauty and ills of our cities, and teased our brains with the excitement of improving people's livelihood with innovative possibilities.

Besides taking courses with these amazing teachers, I had an opportunity of working closely with Tunney as my advisor on a project during an Independent Studies Period.

Up to the early 1970s, there was no medical facility for the Chinese community even though the Tufts Medical School and Hospital were located right there. Given the language barrier, their age and physical conditions, the vulnerable elderlies were in dire need of an alternative bilingual medical service that was not available.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

I worked with Tunney through the assessment and planning process, and decided to build a prototype clinic. We chose the basement of the Golden Age Centre on Harrison Street as the ideal location.

It so happened that the Director of the Centre, a Boston Chinatown legend, was a childhood friend of Tunney which facilitated the communication process. In a matter of a few weeks, we were able to put up a two room clinic with electricity and running water.

That was the first clinic that catered specifically to the Chinese community in Boston. We served with all volunteer help elderly who frequented the Centre, and were able to provide preventive and maintenance work for a small number of patients. Shortly after that, the South Cove Community Clinic, which is still serving the community to this day, came into being.

Tunney maintained strong ties and interests on a range of housing issues in this small Chinese enclave where he grew up, and we were able to stay in touch and worked peripherally on a few interesting projects.

We met up again in 1990 when Tunney came to Hong Kong, where I had been working since 1982, to prepare for the founding of the Architecture School in The Chinese University. He worked with the new school throughout its infancy, and returned to Cambridge only when it was established enough to stand on its own.

Tunney continued to have a keen interest in the development of the Pearl River Delta region and came through Hong Kong from time to time bringing with him small groups of students working on specific topics. We kept in touch, and had many pleasant meals together.

I am deeply saddened by Tunney's passing. To me, he was always kind, soft spoken and gentle, and extremely

generous with his advice. My wife Lynn and my two children became very fond of Tunney, and we were always looking forward to his visits.

Tunney was a true Chinatown boy, a leading pioneer, a superb teacher and a great friend. We shall miss him dearly.

John Tsang

A TRIBUTE FROM

Rocco YIM

Professor Tunney Lee has always been a fatherly figure. His 'fatherliness' stems not so much from age, but from his personality. He is someone who is loved but not feared, someone who commands respect but does not intimidate, and someone whom you would gladly listen to, persuaded but not coerced.

Tunney has a big vision and a big heart. He has a vision of a brand new architecture school for Hong Kong, one that would not only rival my long-established alma-mater the HKU, but would possess its own identity. The fact that within a matter of years, the first batch of CUHK graduates is already the equal of graduates from any other established school of architecture in the region bears testimony to that vision.

He achieves that with a big heart: a willingness to listen if not necessarily to always heed diverse opinion, a keenness to understand the city and the community the school is meant to serve and above all total dedication to the task that lesser beings would find daunting, if not impossible, to take on.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

When I first met Tunney, without knowing too much about his background and without a clue what he would bring over the ensuing decade, my impression of him is that of a typical scholar in the best Chinese tradition: someone apparently self-effacing but with an intense inner passion, someone who can be visionary and down-to-earth at the same time, someone who would embrace both the future and the present but fuelled by an understanding of our roots.

How true that turns out to be!

Rocco Yim

06

A L U M N I U N D E R

H I S W I N G S

Tunney nurtured generations of architects and urban planners, and he started a new era of architectural education in Hong Kong by building the Department of Architecture at CUHK from nothing. During Tunney's eight-year tenure at CUHK, the department produced hundreds of graduates who became important forces in the architectural industry in Hong Kong and China. Even after Tunney retired and returned to the United States, he took the time to meet his former students every time he visited Hong Kong. Tunney's influence on his students was and is long-lasting.

Once students, now alumni, many CUHK graduates maintain good connections with former teachers and are supportive of the present School of Architecture. Furthermore, the architectural graduates from CUHK established the Chinese University Architecture Alumni Association (CUAAA) in 2007 to promote communication and cooperation among graduates, students, CUHK, and the community. The CUAAA organized networking events, career advisory and mentorship programs, and other community projects so they could use their professional knowledge to serve other students and society.

A TRIBUTE FROM THE

Chinese University Architecture Alumni Association

For many reasons, this is an unforgettable July, in an unforgettable year. On 8 July 2020, the heartbreaking news about Prof. Tunney Lee's passing reached my phone. Although I did not have the luxury of having been taught by him, his cheerful image and many of his stories have been implanted in my brain so deeply that they pop out immediately after I heard of the sad news. Tunney always gave me the warmest smile when we met in the studio, corridor, or crit-room. However, who would have expected that his influence on me would have started from my first day at CUHK to now?

When I had to choose a university and programme for my degree, I betted on the Department of Architecture in CUHK because it was in its 7th year since its establishment, and was therefore a very young department compared to HKU. While many others saw "young" as a disadvantage, I was hoping this fresh environment would be adventurous and full of energy, just waiting to be shaped by everyone in the department,



and I was right! That energy could be found everywhere. The dynamic between teachers and students and between students of different years formed a very cozy community with infinite possibilities. This atmosphere, created and led by Prof. Lee, had a great impact on me and my career.

I believe planting a right seed in the soil is important because the seeds of its fruits will carry the same gene, inheriting from generation to generation. Interestingly, this thought proved to be right when working with a group of enthusiastic alumni as we organize the Online Memorial Service on 12 September 2020. Many images and stories about Prof. Lee were collected through exchanges among alumni, ex-faculty members, and his family and friends. Bit by bit, pieces of Prof. Lee's life

were gathered and formed a puzzle, and it was only after putting all the pieces together that we managed to form a much clearer picture of this pioneer; a man who made immense contributions to the field of architecture in Hong Kong and beyond with this “young” department, now a renowned School of Architecture that we are all proud of. It is also very clear to me that his great love of architecture and sincerity to other people were inherited by all of us.

With these beliefs, the Chinese University Architecture Alumni Association has been trying to establish an appropriate framework that serves as a bridge between the school and our alumni at various levels, in order to pass this precious gene of humanity nurtured by our founding Chairman, Prof. Tunney Lee. His insight, love, and spirit will accompany us and continue to be our source of energy in contributing to our society. Thank you, Tunney.

Wilson Lee
Co-Chairman of CUAAA
(B.S.Sc. 2000, M.Arch. 2003)

E DAY PARTY
大建築系



Toasting at the Due Day Party in 1995.
(Photo courtesy of Phiyona Auyeung.)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Phiyona AUYEUNG

2020 has been a very tough year for all of us. Everything seems to turn upside down as the world unfolds itself with changes day by day. While we are adjusting our lives to the new norm, the sad news came across the ocean from Boston—Tunney, our beloved and respectable founder of our school, had passed away. This is a huge loss, making this tough time even tougher. He was more than an admirable leader for us. He stood for the enduring values of caring and kindness. During this period of mourning and sharing amongst fellow alumni, the fond memories of our old school days have gradually come back. It refreshes our passion, awaking the fulfilling journey that went deep in our hearts. It reminds me how Tunney always brought hope and inspiration to many of us.

As I contemplate, with regret, I was never a model student. I wish I had taken his words more seriously. I could have absorbed more of his wisdom. Bounced around more intellectual ideas with him. Exchanged more questions for my deeper understanding of architecture, urban planning and their meaning to people. As one of the graduates from the first class, I truly believe there were so many ways that Tunney had shaped the school and were also shaping me as a person.



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

Tunney's presence at the school was forever friendly and approachable. He created a very open environment for us to learn and interact. As students, we were empowered to express ourselves and make initiatives to change and contribute. He and Irene were "grand parents" figures to us. Together with the four founding faculty members, Joe, Brian, Leng and Andrew, they adopted us as their first group of students, even though we were totally clueless and troublesome sometimes. Tunney never forced his ideas from the top down; instead he was able to see us as individuals with different strengths. He inspired us to push our own boundaries, giving us confidence in setting our own paths when there was no precedent to follow. We learned to strive when resources were limited. All these were life skills that I would never unlearn.

In 1991, the new department took up the top floor of Chung Chi Library by the lotus pond. It was a humble place by any standard, definitely not MIT for Tunney. But it became our home for 3 years for our undergraduate programme. Through a staircase from an unassuming entrance, there was a studio space at the end of a hallway which could fit our entire class. We were using some old furniture from ArchSD. The first exercise was to define our studio space into 4 sections with those heavy wooden drawing tables. We never stopped experimenting new layouts after that. The adjacent office space was for Tunney and the faculty. Their doors were always wide open for us except after office hours. But sometimes we did challenge ourselves to climb in through the ceiling just for the sake of handing in our late homework. Back then, we already knew: the Ceiling is not our limit. The Sky is! The facilities may have been primitive but we did learn to appreciate what we had. I still remember the day our first xerox machine arrived for the class. It was like a gift sent from heaven. This might sound quite underprivileged. However, quite the opposite, it was indeed our privilege to contribute to building and defining the school during her early days.

Tunney's trio of Architectural Design elements, i.e. Form, Context and Technology, has been cemented in our brains. Nevertheless, his ultimate concern was always the users. Among the classes I could vaguely

remember, the exercise “tree house” designed by Tunney was always my favourite. He shared his passion in traditional construction methods in Hong Kong. We learned to appreciate the temporary bamboo structures built for different purposes at different times of the year. We moved our classroom to the lawn in front of the library. It was our first hands-on experience in building full-scale installations. Tunney had brought the novelty of building a “tree house” from North America to us, the Hong Kong kids who never grew up with that opportunity. It was absolutely playful and the exercise was blossoming. We were charged to define different “form” and space, in an open air “context” using a traditional “technology” to test out structural integrity and public safety. Now as I recollect about it, we were dealing with all the basic concerns for an architect. That was one of Tunney’s orchestrated plans for us.

With his vision and vigour, Tunney had graciously prepared us for everything we needed. Our school was rooted under the Faculty of Social Science implanting the core value of social responsibility in our education. Behind the scenes, he had worked against all odds at the University level for green light to start the Master of Architecture programme, paving the way for our graduation in 1997. Knowing we had no ties to the industry, Tunney had managed to gain support from countless leading practitioners for their invaluable

insights and involvements through our school years, seeing the school through one accreditation process after another. Tunney had built a faculty full of international talents, giving us exposure that opened our eyes to see beyond Hong Kong. I still remember meeting the Accreditation Board in my M. Arch. final year.

I told them that, as graduates from the Department of Architecture CUHK, not only are we ready to serve the local profession, we are also trained to take part in the profession anywhere in the world! I still believe so. Our school might have been small, but we were inspired to think big.

Tunney has dedicated his life to education, architecture and communities. He bonded with so many people around the world. Establishing a new architectural school in CUHK could have been just one of his many profound achievements on the long list. But that was the one mattered to us the most as the school he created had changed our lives in so many ways. I am forever grateful to be his student in that particular spread of time and space. 1991 was a very special year for all of us.

Phiyona Auyeung
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M. Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Aaron CHAN

要不是 Tunney 的決定，我可能永遠不會認識建築設計，也沒有機會在中文大學渡過一段令人懷念的日子。記憶中 Tunney 總是帶着笑容，言談閑逸。跟同學說話時總是敦敦善導，從沒訓斥，亦未曾直接指導同學應如何如何，所談及的不會是問題的答案，而是開啟我們更廣的學術視野和引導我們探索更深層次的道理。我記起 Tunney 曾經召集同學討論風水與建築的關係，當大家都期待教授會給我們上一堂風水課時，教授竟然說他所知的沒有比我們多。回想過來，我從他身上看到什麼是大學教育。可惜我當時思想太幼稚，錯過了許多學習機會。現在如果要我說教授如何的偉大，實在有點慚愧，更是自覺不配。只希望有機會讓我重溫一次教授的點滴，從中明白更多他對我們的期望，未敢浪費教授在我們身上所花的時間和努力。

Aaron Chan

(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Daniel HUI

二十九年前的夏天，一個跟建築學從無交集的工商管理一年生，戰戰兢兢的踏入「牟拉」二樓，參加轉系面試，這便是我與李燦輝教授的首次見面。面試內容都忘記了，但當天這位謙謙有禮，語調溫文的學者容貌卻是記憶猶新。沒有一身黑衣，高不可攀的大師氣焰，感覺更像一個充滿故事的冒險家。

在學期間，漸漸認識到李教授在建築及城市規劃上的超卓成就，更感受到他對人民及建築的熱誠。一代大師對學生卻總是鼓勵，沒有見過他於習作評論會上咆哮或打擊學生自尊，只是用問題引導同學反思，以身作則，成為了我們日後工作的榜樣。

記得自己於碩士一年級時在論文題目上走入了死胡同，李教授於百忙中仍然親自接見輔導。言談間竟然能對自己幾年來學科上的強弱一一道出，為他願意去記著自己的學生深被感動。

告別李教授，感恩有這一位專業上的恩師，更要感激這一位冒險家，及他所帶領的創系老師們，成立中大建築系並開拓了我的思想領域，從而改變了我的人生。

Daniel Hui

(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)



*The first batch of students completed their bachelor's degree in 1994.
(Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Lee.)*



A TRIBUTE FROM

Thomas LEE

Although my memories with Professor Tunney Lee are fading, some unforgettable moments still jumped to my mind:

For a year one student, to learn about everything about the university and the newly established department headed by Tunney was more than exciting. On several occasions in the first few days of our first semester, I was quite surprised to learn that our respectful department head is such a kind, humble and friendly person, often with a smile on his face, even to green students like us ...

At a visit to the Bank of China Tower in our year one study, Tunney demonstrated at the outdoor garden how to admire the masterpiece in a different way: he suddenly lay on the ground, watched up the facade and gave us some hints ...

At a crit session for a year three design project, after receiving valuable comments on my project from other guests, Tunney showed encouragement even though my project was not doing so well ...

My thanks to Tunney were not enough.

Thomas Lee
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Ivan CHUI



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

Looking back the 20 years+ of my career, the architecture doctrines, construction methods, codes, common practice that I learned from school may have been obsoleted, updated and evolved tremendously.

One reminder, however, from Prof. Tunney Lee is timeless: "Architect has the ability to integrate relevant elements together!" This is, irrespective of what my job, my role and my situation is, always encouraged me to seek for an ultimate solution.

Thank you, our most respectable teacher,
Prof. Tunney Lee.

Ivan Chui
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Elizabeth LEE

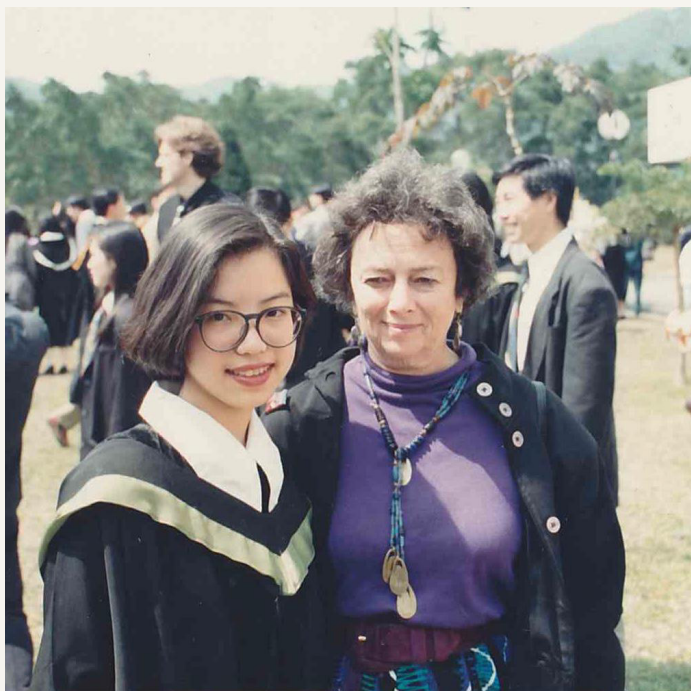
I found this note on my graduation photo taken in 1994 with Tunney, “Thank you, Professor Lee. I find myself more and more in love with architecture.”

Indeed, I knew very little about architecture, before I became one of Tunney’s “first class” students. It was Tunney who inspired us that architecture is neither pure arts nor pure science, but rather, social science. Architecture works for people and it helps to solve social problems. Creativity and functions are equally important, and we were always reminded whether our projects achieved our goals of solving one or more problems. He himself was a role model of this philosophy, in terms of his teaching, his researches, his works and his attitudes.

His values have been proven to be so correct, and has a great impact on how we should take up our roles as architects.

I am proud of being your student, Tunney. You may be gone, but your words are always with us.

Elizabeth Lee
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Sandy LAI



To Prof. Tunney Lee, sparkle from 1991.

Without you, would be without us.

“In the architecture field, we are still learning,” I recall words said by Tunney.

Sandy LAI
(B.S.Sc. 1995, M. Arch. 1997)



*CUHK Graduation Congregation, 1997.
(Photo courtesy of Sandy Lai.)*

A TRIBUTE FROM

Raymond LEE

Miss U, Professor Tunney Lee

A Life to Celebrate

In Memory of Professor Tunney Lee

As you knew, Professor Tunney Lee was the founding chair of our Department. The first time I met Tunney in 1991 while I was graduated from Form 6 toward this extremely fresh department in my perplexed young age. It was exciting but crazy as our chaotic and fuzzy brain made this architectural dream—this mere glimmer first and grew and grew. We trusted Tunney would have his guidance with plenty of freedom for the Department growth to overcome the challenge. In my mind, Tunney was in many ways a funny Renaissance man. In our dream, Tunney brought us out of the Deep Valley like Gandalf of “the Lord of the Rings”. He guided us fight for our fear like Dumbledore of “Harry Potter”—For years, we had spent all our waking hours concentrating our entire energy on doing whatever it took to build from scratch this new department. To celebrate Tunney’s life as to mourn his death, for indeed his life and his kindness are well worth celebrating—it is with sadness—because Tunney was our great fellow,

mentor and professor ... but at least, we shared the same moment together (at earlier period, we stayed at the top floor of “Elizabeth Luce Moore Library” of CUHK together ...). We enjoyed the same dream. Up to this moment, we still kept dreaming in our own different way. Tunney, we miss you.

Raymond Y. C. Lee
(B.S.Sc. 1995, M. Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Vivien MAK

Tribute To Tunney

It has taken me a long time, perhaps too long, to recognize the vast dimensions of influence that Tunney had on us collectively as his students at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. It will take me even longer to fully understand and practice architecture the way Tunney had envisioned.

The loss of Tunney is saddening but organizing a memorial service to commemorate his work in Hong Kong has brought people in several continents together. Never would I expect Tunney's passing to be a second chance to immerse into my architectural education, listen to the professors and look back with fresh eyes and slightly more developed sensitivity at the founding theme of the curriculum created by Tunney which I have unknowingly brought along all these years.

Humanity was the theme. It was about being a good human being and creating cities and buildings to serve people and to house their stories. The rediscovery of what Tunney planted in our education is both touching and satisfying. On one hand it brings back very fond memories of the old days and on the other hand,



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

I fortunately find traces of his theme in my present work. With that in mind, I could finally feel less guilty about not recalling exact words that Tunney had said to me and be more positive about carrying on. Wish I had the maturity back then to admire his wisdom and find out from him what a lifelong career in architecture would truly mean. Wish my recollection of Tunney's teachings had been more concrete and tangible.

The breadth and depth of Tunney's knowledge has been testified by colleagues and peers who crossed path with him. He recruited an outstanding, sincere and responsive faculty who gave their best. He created a learning environment without boundary and left a legacy for the School to have an architecture research library of its own. His courage to introduce competition to a pre-existing legendary school of architecture in town and the subsequent success in graduates being accepted by the industry was remarkable. Tunney was the master mind behind our carefree and rewarding years at CUHK and a visionary who defined architecture as a social science. Yet, our journey with Tunney was only a tiny fraction of his lifelong expedition and contribution to the academia in urban planning and architecture, to communities in Boston, Massachusetts US and elsewhere, and to his loved ones.

The weight of Tunney's achievements and the lightness of his presence is out of proportion. Egoless and down to earth, our Department Head was often seen with a smile, relaxed and ready for a conversation no matter he was coming out from the faculty's room, walking past students on the corridor, or standing by his lecturing colleagues. Students casually and comfortably addressed him by his first name. My husband, who studied at the other school of architecture at that time, vividly remembers the exceptional image Tunney displayed as

he visited their studio in his signature cap and jeans, smiled and waved when introduced, and spoke in his consistently approachable manner. It was not stardom but warmth, generosity and friendliness that made Tunney an outstanding leader.

How fortunate we were to study in a school founded by such a great human being. Thank you, Tunney. I will be forever grateful and proud to be among the first graduates in that extraordinary adventure.

Vivien Mak
(B.S.Sc. 1995, M. Arch. 1997)

香港中文大學崇基學院 建築學系畢業



(Photo courtesy of Ida Wu.)

院一九九四至九五年度 業生團體照



A TRIBUTE FROM

TONG P. L.

Being asked to write something in alumni sharing about Tunney is really a matter to me. I guess it is not about the words but the weight of the related memories to me.

They are just like yesterday's events flashing in my brain. I can still clearly recall the scene, a day in 1991 summer, for the first time in my life I came up to the third floor of the Chung Chi Library and met with Tunney in the 1st class enrollment interview. I was so nervous and thrilled. The odor of the newly furnished fitting-out and its white gypsum board walls of the newly born department was just a new world to me.

Becoming a CUHK architecture student turns a new page of my life ever after ... countless moments of laughter, sweats and repeated songs playing in the studio over and over again for a whole night till dawn ... all the memories in those days are just so beautiful and precious and it is a real honor to be part of the story.

Greatest gratitude to Tunney Lee, the most respected founder and spiritual leader of our beloved school. I am gaining so much from the CUHK architecture



family, which was raised up and enriched by Tunney. I am so proud of being your student. All are just unforgettable.

Tong P. L.
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Cimberly TSUI

With his ambition and wisdom, our respectful and beloved Professor Tunney Lee came all the way from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to Hong Kong and established our architecture department at The Chinese University of Hong Kong in the early 1990s. Being one of the first-generation students, I am very proud to be able to acquire knowledge of architecture under his philosophy and was very fortunate to have many chances to be inspired by his critiques of my projects in the studio.

Our department started with a simple studio and an office located on the top floor of Chung Chi Library of CUHK. Tunney drew up a brilliant master plan for the faculty and strived to realize it with determination. The remarkable achievement—full accreditation of our architectural programmes in 1997, was accomplished by Tunney under an extremely short time frame.

His passion for architecture influenced every student in the school. Our studio was a place of energy, excitement, collaboration and intellectual competition among peers. His charming character and inspiring



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

ideas attracted many talented scholars to join the school. All of them were very devoted to education and the development of the architecture school.

His emphasis on the process of design rather than the end product has been deeply rooted in my life and my career. I will never forget his smile and kindness.

Kimberly Tsui
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Peggy YU & Alvin LO

We remember Tunney's accent and tone, which were gentle and touching.

We remember Tunney's facial expression and body gesture, which were kind and powerful.

We remember Tunney's sketches and illustrations, which were visionary and meaningful.

Pieces of short clips about Tunney stayed in our minds, etched in our hearts. Our time together (back in 1991–1997) in Elisabeth Luce Moore Library, Chung Chi Canteen, Wong Foo Yuan Building in The Chinese University of Hong Kong was the happiest, the most precious. Tunney's visions of architecture will be carried forward by every architect born from his inspiration.

We are the most blessed class nurtured under the leadership of a renowned Head of the School of Architecture in CUHK.

Peggy Yu & Alvin Lo
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Ben YEUNG

Tunney was one of the most respected professors in my architectural education at CUHK. His ideas and vision about communities and people as the key living part of a city had been resonating in his teaching, to which I was then too young to understand its true importance until years later. Synonymous with the characters of his Chinese name, his ideas will continue to become the bright and righteous guide to my career as an architect as well as a caring citizen of my loved city.

Ben Yeung

(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Tina YUEN

As a year 1 student, one could imagine how nerve wracking it was for me to meet with the Head of Department to discuss the topic of vernacular architecture with him. Frankly speaking, we did not have many opportunities to have a one-on-one with Tunney. I was preparing for a student conference and all the instructors advised me to consult him. I was waiting in his room. It was decorated with loads of books, journals, plus boxes and boxes of slides. I was re-collecting all the architectural vocabulary learned so far (which was very limited) and preparing myself for the encounter. However, once he stepped in, his friendliness just broke the ice. No suit, no tie, no shiny shoes. He was so approachable and easy to talk to. He introduced to me the first lesson of vernacular architecture. He showed me some articles and slides that he collected. He was not really trying to teach me. It was more like trying to get me interested in this topic, open my eyes to the learning opportunities and inspired me to dig deeper into it. Despite he was so busy, he guided me through to the completion of my work. My state of mind also



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

changed from anxious to enthusiastic. Looking back, I was really lucky to be able to spend some time with him during my first year in architectural school. Tunney, thank you very much again.

Tina Yuen
(B.S.Sc. 1995, M.Arch. 1997)

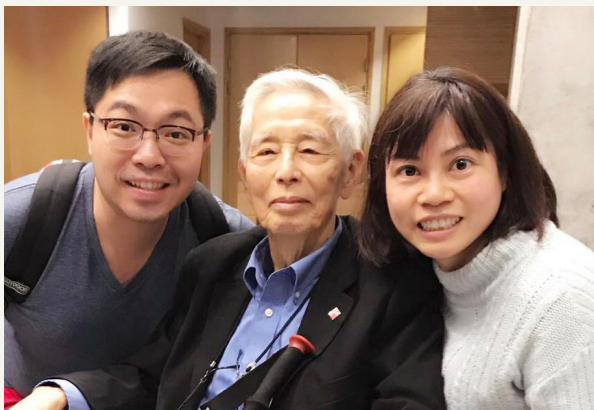
A TRIBUTE FROM

Esther FUNG

The first time I saw Professor Tunney Lee was on the school's open day. He dressed casually and was grabbing a broom to clean the floor before hanging up the exhibits. When I talked with him, I realized that he was the head of the department. He was very relaxed and carried a warm, friendly smile at that time.

Growing up from a grassroots family, my knowledge of architecture was a blank sheet of paper. The only architecture I knew was St. Peter's Basilica. In order to broaden the perspective of students like me, Tunney had arranged different site visits to architectural projects. He had also invited many famous Hong Kong and international practitioners to our school to give talks or to act as critics.

Tunney knew that as urban kids, we seldom made any things on our own, therefore right in the beginning of the study, he brought up exercises to make cave houses with cardboards and tree houses with bamboos. The intent of those exercises was to give us a sense of space in full scale and to enhance our linkage of design on paper, model making and presentation with the real



structure. The project was exciting and it was amazing to see the lightweight structures we built could carry the weight of many students.

In Tunney's perspective, architectural design was a problem-solving process. He emphasized that architecture, human behavior, climate, urban landscape, culture, society, religion and technology, etc. were all interrelated. And there was no single right answer to an architectural solution. Good solution could only be achieved by continuously testing and testing of the possible solutions.

As far as I remember, the projects in our design studio were not any high-rise buildings, which requested only

our calculation of the gross floor area, but community buildings, such as art centers, museums, small houses, etc. situated in different landscapes, such as on a mountain, along the coast or in an urban area, and with different historical, cultural or religious contents.

When I look back, I realize that Tunney's pedagogy has created an educational environment that helped us to think broadly and being sensitive to people and the environment around them. He trusted us, respected our different talents, different interests, never forced his values on us but encouraged us to renew our minds and to break old ideas in our learning.

My last time seeing Tunney was 2017 in 25 year's alumni exhibition of the School of Architecture. As usual, Tunney was relaxed and carried a warm smile on his face. I introduced my husband to him and we took a photo together. This very moment has stayed in my mind. Dear Professor Tunney Lee, you will be missed.

Esther Fung
(B.S.Sc. 1995, M. Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Alfred TZE

To Prof. Lee,

Thank you Tunney. Thank you for your effort to create a platform for me and others to enter the world of architecture. Your patience, humbleness and wisdom had demonstrated that being an architect is not only a job or a career, but a life to keep our eyes and mind open, keep walking to explore and make a difference to the world.

Goodbye Tunney. We will follow your path, wisdom, and your teaching to create a better world.

Alfred Tze

(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Michael FUNG

The life and academic achievements of Tunney give a vivid example of what a great Architect and Educator should be. He never stops learning, thinking and encouraging others.

Tunney was engaging and had great charm. I remember well the big smile and the light in his eyes. He was one of the people that made the environment for young architects at studio so wonderful.

He was a giant. One of his achievements, which I always feel blessed, was his direction to the establishment of the Department of Architecture in CUHK. I consider myself really lucky to have an opportunity to study there.

Tunney inspired us to learn even outside the studio and to make a difference. He connected what he taught to us in a way that made us care. He motivated us to be the best student and person we can be.

A good heart has stopped beating, but a heart that has touched so many lives can't help but live on in those it loved. Tunney lives on in all of our memories, and he'll always be a part of our hearts.

Michael Fung
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Kevyn LEUNG

While we immerse in a pool named “Time, Cost and Quality,” the three words CONTEXT, FORM and TECHNOLOGY have engraved in our hearts since our first class.

Kevyn Leung
(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Michael WONG

感謝恩師 Tunney。節哀順變。

Michael Wong

(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Rex CHUNG

A gentleman, tall, ankle length pants.

Rex Chung

(B.S.Sc. 1994, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Peter WONG

Dear Tunney, thanks for bringing me to the fantastic world of Architecture.

Peter Wong

(B.S.Sc. 1995, M.Arch. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Wendy CHAN

Dear Tunney,

Indeed grateful to you in taking the mission of setting up the Department of Architecture in CUHK, opening new dialogues and perspectives of the architectural field in a new era of Hong Kong.

It's our honor to be your first class of students.

Thank you for spending some prime time sharing your valuable experience with us.

Remember you gave an encouraging statement in supporting our side in a debate exercise, "should skyscrapers be built in China?"

Hope to have the chance to learn from you again. It may be "should skyscrapers be built on Earth?" next time.

Wendy Chan
(B.S.Sc. 1994)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Steven LO

We are very grateful that Professor Lee came to Hong Kong in the 1990s to establish the Department of Architecture at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Without him, we would not have the privilege to become the “first class” alumni there. I still remember his kind smiles and yet serious teachings in our design studio classes—

“Don’t forget to draw
the north arrow on your plans!”

Professor Lee was a visionary leader. He always gave us inspiration and clear guidance in simple words with a strong impact. He was a man of strong passion and never stopped in passing on his knowledge to others both in China and the US. His invaluable contributions will always be remembered by all his students around the world.

Now, may he rests in peace with his beloved wife Irene in heaven. May his soul be with the Almighty Lord and his blessings continue to be with us all.

Steven Lo
(B.S.Sc. 1995, M.Arch. 1997)



Section four students from the first class, 1991.
(Photo courtesy of Phiyona Auyeung.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

CHANG Hoi Wood

遠遠就看到謝昭杰了。走過前面的草地，A 停下來踏一下腳下的實在，B 進門以後，左一袋右一袋爬三層樓梯，C 行入泛黃的走廊，D 經過右手邊的一道門，E 從廁所出來，返回對面的工作室，又要從頭來過，F 把未完的作業用釘一張一張的貼起，靜待審判的時刻，G 收拾細軟，起誓以後不可再犯相同的錯。走廊盡頭，偌大的，高背工作枱間隔出不同的區域，HIJK 討論沒完沒了，LM 在無人的空間中談情，NOPQRS 奏着悅耳的樂曲，並隨着節拍，哼出時代曲，桌下躺着 TUV 早已睡着，最末的小房，垃圾桶內的 W 正等待午夜的降臨，爬水管回來的 X 和 Y 決心徹夜奮鬥，而 Z 卻在這一時刻悄悄開鎖，門推開，頭也不回的離開工作室去了……在這一鏡直落的畫面中，看到年輕的建築學子們的日常生活，而在鏡頭覆蓋不到的虛空後面的更大的虛空中，有那麼的一個人，瘦瘦的，高高的，在微笑着。

牟路思怡圖書館三樓，工作室內的衆人，已是記憶中的幽靈。今天仍活著的我們，惦念他，也惦念我們的青春。當天的我們，已跟這個他一起遠去了。

牟路思怡圖書館，那曾經存在的，如今存在的，和我們記憶中存在的，再不是同一的地方。石屎，粗獷，有 shading device，正門進去前要爬石級，有簷篷，下雨的時候可以站在下面等待，演講室因功能而呈扇形，顯露於外型上。大學一年生，唸建築的，天天生活在這地方，於我們，建築理應是這樣的。



如果記憶是座迷宮，一個建築師的記憶會不會特別華麗。
Tunney 在那些二十出頭的小伙子們的記憶迷宮中，長居下來了。

A 正踏着草地，B 正爬樓梯，C 行入走廊，D 經過一道門，
E 從頭來過……

Chang Hoi Wood
(B.S.Sc. 1995, M. Arch. 2000)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Calvert CHAN

Dear Tunney,

Thanks for bringing us the most beautiful school where we learnt, we get inspired and we set off for our life journey with a dream; the great family of the faculty who we cherished and loved.

Thanks also for your kindness, your smile, your wisdom and charm, your warm support and chats.

We now walk our path with humility; better our work for the community; it is your inspiration that will always be part of us all.

It is our privilege to be your students and you are always in our fond memories.

Calvert Chan
(B.S.Sc. 1997, M. Arch. 1999)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Rex CHOI

Dear Tunney,

The time when you set up our Department in the Elisabeth Luce Moore Library, our space was limited but our creativity was unlimited. I thank you so much for your commitment and dedication to architectural education that makes CUHK Department of Architecture an amazing, life changing journey in our lives, giving us a chance to be an architect in HK.

We will always remember you.

Rex Choi

(B.S.Sc. 1996, M. Arch. 1998)

香港中文大學聯合書院 建築學系畢業



(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)

一九九四至九五年度 業班團體照





(Photo courtesy of Cindy Hui.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Bingram LAI

I never had a close encounter with Tunney but he always struck me as a gentle and calm leader. I do remember vividly once we were both using the men's room and I saw him studying or reading something the whole time and he was completely oblivious of my presence. I have never met a more hard-working and dedicated professor. We are all lucky to have him as the founding father of our department. I'll miss you Tunney.

Bingram Lai
(B.S.Sc. 1995)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Vitus MAN

Like most students, I was shy and scared to speak with teachers, let alone the department head. Yet, I could feel how approachable you and Irene were. I still remember Irene grabbed me at the corridor for a casual but caring chat and your smiling face under thick glasses. The philosophy of the department had been uniquely shaped under your direction and influenced us consciously and unconsciously by the way you treat people. Knowing you have left us, I recalled my memories of five years in the department. It was not easy for a mediocre student, but for sure, it shaped my life in a positive way. Thank you and miss you, Tunney.

Vitus Man

(B.S.Sc. 1995, M. Arch. 1998)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Ivy LEE

In the Memory of Prof. Tunney Lee

Today I recall the memories of you

Of the days when we grew from the soil sustained by you
Through energy and radiating enthusiasm,
Nurturing all with wisdom and life
In times of sun and storm.

Today the seeds have flowered and spread around the world,
And in all those places someone is thinking of you ...

So you may have a rest now,
As our love and thoughts will find their way to you
And keep your flame alight.

With love.

Ivy Lee
(B.S.Sc. 1996, M. Arch. 1998)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Thyne KONG

Dear Tunney,

Your greyish white short hair and the slightly oversized
thick glasses first came into our eyes

That ingenuous smiles, your signature

No one would have missed your devoted sight on Irene
so respectful and loving
projecting warmth and sweetness

Thank you very much
You had started a very open-minded school
You had set all directions
giving us every possibility to develop
with comprehensive support
and your enlightening spirit

Thank you very much
Let us be us

Thank you very much

Love,
one of your many students

Thyne Kong
(B.S.Sc. 1996, M. Arch. 1999)



Alumni brought their families along to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the school.
(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Louie LOUIE

Tunney being the founder and head of the Department of Architecture has always been the kind and venerable figure I admire, while being the second batch of incoming students of the new department. It was after I went to Boston for my graduate studies, living in a city he helped shape, that I gained a whole other dimension of how accomplished he is as an Architect, Planner and Educator.

My life and career would definitely not be the same if Tunney did not take the challenge to found the CUHK Department of Architecture. He opened the door in giving me a strong solid start in my studies to become an Architect. Through friendships and interactions with his colleagues and students from both CUHK and MIT DUSP, his influence on them has continued to spread widely to many of us. Always be kind, be optimistic, be energetic and passionate, and most importantly be socially responsible citizens in creating better places and architecture ...

He was such a knowledgeable and humble giant, active to the end. A brilliant city planner and outstanding

scholar and mentor full of wisdom. He elevated every conversation he engaged in and improved every organization and project fortunate to engage him. He is truly fascinating, and I am grateful for his inspirations. He will be missed ...

Louie Louie
(B.S.Sc. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Grace TANG

I distinctly remember meeting Tunney the very first time at an introductory session for potential undergrads at the CUHK Orientation Day. I was sitting in the room waiting for the session to start, and a casually dressed white-haired man came in to set up the projector. I mean no disrespect here, but being the naïve young student from regimented secondary schools back then, I had thought he was the helper. Imagine my surprise when he turned around and introduced himself as the Department Head.

That speaks volumes on how approachable and friendly Professor Lee is. His introduction left me with an indelible impression not only on how exciting it could be to be an Architect, but also how invigorating the young school is, which I'm lucky to end up being a part of.

The last time we met was in 2017 around the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the department he founded and nurtured, which has since flourished. He was the same warm and encouraging mentor, sharing sage advice and observations. Being one of the

graduates from the early years, I am forever grateful for his vision, inspirations and long-lasting influences on being an Architect.

Grace Tang
(B.S.Sc. 1996)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Carmen TSUI

Professor Tunney Lee was in his early sixties when I was admitted to The Chinese University of Hong Kong. With his grey hair and thick eyeglasses, Tunney looked like a wise old man, an impression which has remained with me to this day. Back then, I did not have the good fortune to be in Tunney's class, so my encounters with him were "outside the classroom" in a literal sense.

I recall one day in spring 1998, Wallace Chang grabbed a couple of senior students, including me, to have dinner with Tunney. He said that Tunney wanted to know what students thought about the programs and our experience studying at CUHK. So there we were, having dinner with the chairman of the department at the Chung Chi staff restaurant. We had a lively discussion; the students, as always, complained about this and about that, but Tunney listened patiently to everyone's opinion. He responded occasionally, but was not defensive in the slightest.

A few days later, Wallace contacted us again. He suggested organizing a student forum that would allow everyone to engage in open and direct dialogue with



Tunney. I was not sure if this idea was Wallace's or Tunney's, but I agreed to become one of the organizers of the student forum—the department's first since it had been established in 1991. One subsequent evening, the entire department gathered in a lecture hall to discuss school matters. I no longer remember the details of that discussion, but I remember how impressed I was that Tunney had taken the time to listen to the students. He was respectful and patient with everyone, demonstrating time and time again what open-minded leadership looked like.

In spring 2001, I was about to finish my M.Phil. and was considering pursuing a Ph.D. in the United States. I was attending the Association for Asian Studies conference in Chicago with my supervisor, Jeff Cody,

and Jeff suggested that I take this chance to visit some schools. Following his advice, I arranged a post-conference school tour, and my first stop was Boston. I was excited about the trip because there was a small gang of CUHK graduates studying/working in Boston at the time, but one of the main goals of the trip was to meet up with Tunney (who had since retired from CUHK and returned to Boston) and discuss my study plan. I emailed him to ask if we could meet, and he quickly agreed.

Tunney asked me to meet him in a bookstore in Harvard Square in the architecture book section—his instructions were very precise! When I arrived at the bookstore, Tunney was already there, reading. We headed to a nearby café, and when we sat down I detailed my study plan and asked Tunney which school he thought was best. We discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each school at length, but eventually Tunney said, “Listen, Carmen. You won’t go wrong with any of these big schools. What you have to think about is the people you want to work with, because after all, research is a very lonely process.”

After saying goodbye to Tunney, I took a walk along Massachusetts Avenue, alone, with Tunney’s warning that research is a lonely process lingering in my mind. I ruminated on whether I was prepared to start this

lonely journey. While I was deep in thought, it began to snow. A thin layer of white began came down from the sky, covering the ground and the buildings around me. To this day, I occasionally reflect on that pivotal afternoon, meeting Tunney, meditating on his words, and walking alone under the snow—it was cinematic and romantic.

I am deeply saddened that Tunney left us forever this summer. I will always remember him as a wise old man with powerful words of wisdom. Goodbye and thank you for everything, Tunney, your words and leadership made a true difference in my life.

Carmen Tsui

(B.S.Sc. 1996, M. Arch. 1999, M. Phil. 2002)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Ida WU

Tunney was the founding chairman of our Department of Architecture at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

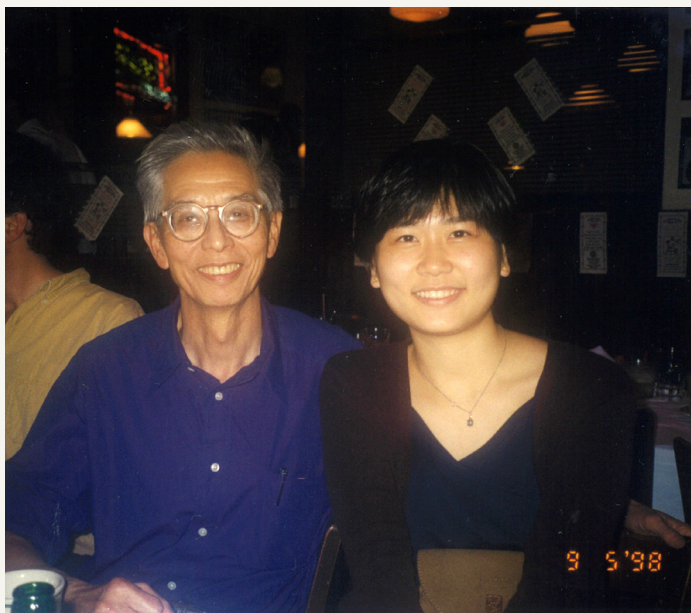
I remember Tunney was always energetic, gentle and strong. He arrived in Hong Kong together with his wife, Irene. He engaged all incredible professors at the time to embark on the challenge of starting a new department. By the time they returned to US, the CUHK programme was already fully accredited.

As a respected mentor and a real inspiration, his legacy will live on in us whose lives and practice he helped shape.

He will be greatly missed by us all.

Ida Wu

(B.S.Sc. 1996, M. Arch. 1998)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Gary YEUNG

記得當年我讀中學嗰陣有機會過對面海睇 design review，但那次嘅經歷令我好困惑：「我真係好鍾意 design，之但係响大學讀 design 就係要咁嘅咩？」😓 後來入咗中大。嘩！發覺呢度成個氣氛好唔同，Tunney 你、Joe、Leng、Brian、Andrew 同其他教授都好親切友善，無論上堂抑或課後，我哋都可以同教授暢所欲言，傾 design 時又鼓勵我哋多嘗試多反思……多謝你建立咗呢個咁自由咁開放嘅 department！

記得當年有同學仔會懷疑呢幾位美國嚟嘅教授究竟了解香港嘅市場？有同學仔會埋怨啲 studio project 唔夠 practical (of coz 唔係我啦 😓)；又有同學仔驚幾年之後過唔到 accreditation (of coz 又唔係我啦 😓)……但係你唔單止唔會教訓我哋，仲會耐心聆聽，包容我哋嘅無知。

又記得當年我哋返嚟讀 M.Arch.，我哋除咗 studio project 之外樣樣都搞，又廁紙又天台又電梯又神功戲院……差唔多反轉咗個 studio，但 Tunney 你看在眼裏，半句也沒有干涉，等我哋放心咁去闖去試。睇返轉頭，當年你將 Steve 同 Vito，光譜上兩個極端放嚟同一個 department，海納百川，成個 studio 百花齊放，我哋真係大開眼界。😊 你嘅領導、你嘅眼光、你嘅胸襟，令我衷心敬佩！orz

我發覺我哋同學仔對你嘅印象唔深，可能係你同一般嘅領袖好唔同，唔會成日行出嚟發表偉論，而係响背後默默咁經營一個開放多元嘅 studio 俾我哋！反而畢業後我參加咗 Wallace 搞嘅中山 design charrette，响旅遊巴上幾次同你嘅交談，對你認識多啱，



你嘅學術造詣同實踐經驗，比我想像中高很多深很多，但你從來唔會將自己嘅睇法強加於我哋身上。之後响 Boston，再之後嘅十週年、廿週年、廿五週年都有同你見面，嗰啲片段我仍然清楚記得。你同 Irene 都經常笑容滿面，同你哋相處真係好舒服。😊

Tunney，能夠認識你，能夠响你主持下嘅中大建築系渡過了五年，確實係一件好幸福嘅事！永遠懷念你。

Gary Yeung
(B.S.Sc. 1995, M. Arch. 1998)



*The treehouse was a memorable project for many students.
(Photo courtesy of Gary Yeung.)*

A TRIBUTE FROM

Virginia FUNG



The photo is blurry, but the memory is clear ...

We are nurtured by your fondness in Architecture.

Virginia Fung

(B.S.Sc. 1996, M. Arch. 1999)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Florence CHAN

When I was a student at CUHK—I thought the world of myself. I asked what I can be, what I want to do, and what the school can offer me. Never a moment did I ask what I can do for the school, what the school was doing for me, or how these all came about. Like a sponge, I absorbed all the new and wonderful things about architecture the school offered.

Two decades later, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to return to CUHK as part time professor, to be able to see the school from a different angle. Very quickly, I learned the importance of prepping for studio class, for what I said during class could have leave an imprint on these youngsters. The most trivial thing on earth still needs care and attention.

If being a teacher could make an impact, what about setting up a school from the ground up? What quality a person has to possess to take up this role. This is what I think it takes to start a school of architecture:

- First and foremost, it requires someone with courage, someone who would embrace challenges, someone who sees uncertainties as opportunities;

- ✦ A leader with clear vision and conviction, who has the power to draw talents to match along with him on the uncharted path;
- ✦ A very charming person who can convince people to get out of their comfort zone and travel across the globe to a foreign environment;
- ✦ Lastly, an optimist who can handle the pressure and responsibility with ease.

As a student of Tunney, I may never know all about him. However, going through the various tributes we received about Tunney in the past months, Tunney was certainly a giant who possessed all the above qualities and beyond. We are indebted to Tunney's courage to take on the challenge to move to Hong Kong, to start a school that we did not even know how to dream about when we were teenagers. His belief in architecture as a discipline deeply rooted in social science was bold and visionary. And thanks to his charm, he brought us all the wonderful faculty members who opened our eyes to a greater world. We are grateful to all his hard work for setting up the school, which I could only imagine

all the pressure he took to himself, but always with his characteristic smile. We are very fortunate to have Tunney paved us the way as an architect and as a world citizen.

Florence Chan
(B.S.Sc. 1997)

A TRIBUTE FROM

Belinda LAW

Before joining Tunney's studio, he seemed to be a very reputable senior, the Head of the Department always busy hurrying through the corridor or talking to the faculties, carried with a calm and smiley face all the time. We, as young students never dared to approach him in case he had something more important waiting for him.

How lucky! That was Tunney's only studio available in CUHK during his last semester here and I can be his student! I was excited and nervous that, working with a master, it must be stressful to squeeze out every potential in every aspect of design. We must be expected to build 10 options every other day, forms and proportions got to be challenged, drawings and models and our scripts must be perfect in presentations.

Instead, I was surprised to find that these are not the priority. Tunney cared about our story, our understanding of the site, our interpretation of context, our comprehension of needs, our holistic response as a result, and our realizable solution to all those questions. In some studios, one may find a "style" of a particular teacher often reflected in his/her students' works, but this never happened in our studio. What form did it



take, how to present our ideas, we were always given a free hand to experiment, testify and express ourselves. One of our classmates recalled, there was one time Tunney had opposite opinions with another critic in a review and there was no consensus. When the student was confused with what advice to take, Tunney smiled, “How nice! You get a double shot while the others only get one!” He embraced differences!

Even Tunney did not teach a lot during his time in CUHK, his belief in pedagogy and his ambition for

the society had been rooted in the school through his passion and persistence which was evidenced by his peers and after comers. Till now, we can see this has become the core value of our school, and everyone of us alumni.

Thank you Tunney, thank you for building us the School of Architecture, thank you for your contribution to Hong Kong, our home.

Belinda Law
(B.S.Sc. 1998, M. Arch. 2001)



Watch out! Puoy-peng! The vertical studio in 1996 required students to build a portable bridge.
(Photo courtesy of CUHK School of Architecture.)



Tunney and the graduating class of 1998 (bachelor's degree) before his retirement.
(Photo courtesy of Belinda Law)





Tunney led a third-year studio in his final semester at CUHK in 1998.
This group of students was lucky to have Tunney as their studio instructor!
(Photo courtesy of Belinda Law.)



A TRIBUTE FROM

Cynthia TING

Tunney is an architect, an urban planner, a social advocate and an educator. But to me, he is like an organic farmer. He treats people around him like precious seeds, preparing them with fertile soil, guiding them to find sunlight and water, connecting them with good neighbours so that they can grow to their full potential. I remember Tunney once said while he was working in New York, he and his wife liked to walk around Central Park. But the conversations with people around there were mostly about which schools their kids went to. They didn't like that idea of comparison and eventually moved to Boston. As he himself didn't define his own success based on other people's opinions, he also didn't give his definition of success to his students. He empowered them to find their own direction and path of growth. Even though all the seeds might look similar at the beginning, he had good insights about their individual strength, and supported them with proper fertilizer and patience to help them find their own character. Below is my story of how Tunney nurtured my personal growth even though I was not his student, but an unknown student working



at the computer lab below his office at MIT, like a seed blow by wind and fall accidentally adjacent to his farm.

During the summer of 2010, I was working on my master thesis at MIT. Like most architecture students, I went to the computer lab of the Department of Urban Planning because it is more spacious. Tunney's office was right above the computer lab. Even though I knew Tunney was the founder of my alma mater—CUHK School of Architecture, I never say hello to him. But Tunney walked past my desk and took the initiatives and asked me, "Why are you still here in the summer?"

He picked up my thesis book and said, “your project site is in Hong Kong, that is interesting!” He asked about my life in school and my thesis. He didn’t talk about himself as a department head at CUHK, but sincerely cared for me, a final year student, who was struggling with her thesis topic.

Even after my graduation, Tunney invited me to join his research team of density atlas and visited his summer house with other students. It was not easy to find a job in the US in 2010 due to the financial crisis. Even though I have only worked with Tunney for a few months, he introduced me to his student—Lawrence Cheng in Boston to better understand the job market and willingly agreed to be my referee for my job applications. He also hired me as a research assistant as well as provided funding for my research of housing in Mexico, while I was working on the job application. During an afternoon conversation with Tunney about the research of density atlas, the human resource manager of a company that I applied to called and wanted to talk to Tunney. I didn’t know what Tunney said about me as I was waiting outside of his office, but I am sure without his support, the firm won’t give me the offer.

After finding a job, it is a blessing to have the opportunity to continue work with Tunney for the density atlas research for a couple of years and organized

an exhibition at the Boston Society of Architect. Tunney has been supportive of different ideas of exhibition, but assertive to his vision of having a clear understanding of density. He also invited me to have *dim sum* lunch in Chinatown and shared his story in Chinatown.

Tunney doesn't only talk, but shows me what humanity means as he sincerely cares and respects everyone around him. I remember he always said hello to the staff who were picking up the trash or cleaning the restroom. He doesn't define individual's values based on their job nature.

I wish I had a chance to say thank you in person to Tunney for being such a wonderful teacher and friend, that I truly missed.

Cynthia Ting
(B.S.Sc. 2007)

E P I L O G U E

The Department of Architecture that Tunney founded in 1991 began in the Elisabeth Luce Moore Library and the Music Center. From there, it has expanded to become today's School of Architecture, is housed in a purposely designed building with state-of-the-art facilities, and has attracted

passionate students not only from Hong Kong but from around the world. We hope Tunney is smiling in Heaven when he sees the development of the school as it approaches its 30th anniversary.

Epilogue

The creation of the Department of Architecture at CUHK has proved to be a significant contribution to the discipline in the region. Since its founding, the School has established a reputation for well balanced, highly skilled graduates—motivated team workers that are sought by the local profession: the then vice chancellor’s pledge to “provide a learning environment for the students to become competent professionals” has certainly been achieved.

The location of the Department within the Faculty of Social Science was visionary—and herein lies the future direction of the School. For never before has the need to reinforce the rootedness of the discipline in the humanities and its connection to the needs of society been more urgent. The imperatives of interdisciplinary solutions to the problems faced by contemporary society put creative thinking—that lies at the heart of architectural design—into new contexts and ever broadening horizons of operation.

In this sense the profession has the opportunity to radically shift, repositioning itself as the locus for spatial practices and design thinking relevant for the

21st century. The seeds of such change are sown in education, where students learn to design with complexity, with data, with future technologies, new concepts of place, with and for humanity.

Like no generation before it, the horizons of operation for our students will be international, taking Tunney's School forward to become renown as one of the very best architectural design schools in the world. We will do this by focussing on the precepts of its founder—by carefully building on our professional relevance, by connecting teaching to our research, and by putting creative design thinking at the heart of all we do.

In 1990 the School was focussed on the city of Hong Kong: by 2025 its reach will be global.

David Dernie
Director and Professor of Architecture,
School of Architecture, CUHK

Goodbye CUHK

A Farewell Letter from Professor Tunney F. Lee, 1998¹

(When Tunney retired from CUHK in 1998, he had written a farewell letter to students and faculty members. This letter is originally published in the CUHK Department of Architecture publication, *ISSUES*.)

Greetings and Farewell

I do not know about a thousand years, rather let me make this morning last forever.

Chu Tun-Ju (A.D. 409)

When we first arrived in Hong Kong in 1990, the Department of Architecture was a mere glimmer in the eye of a committee, an idea barely conceived. The years since seems as long as a lifetime—or alternatively, just a fleeting moment. It feels like a lifetime because for eight years so many people have spent all their waking hours concentrating their entire energy on doing whatever it took to build from scratch this brand new department. It feels like a fleeting moment because the time went by like lightning. And there is so much more to be done.

Above all, it was an adventure rich in challenge and accomplishment, not to mention the inevitable growing pains, disagreements, agonizing reappraisals and “a hundred visions and revisions.”

Looking back on the entire experience, I see all the elements of a mature and dynamic growth. If this department could be likened to the planning of a tree, we see the roots taking hold, the strong limbs, and the blossoms starting to sprout forth. Perhaps the most important thing we learned in this time is the least visible, the most internal: our growth as human beings. We learned something about tolerating uncertainty, facing change, and accepting our own limitations. In the process we have sharpened our capacity for self reflection. I hope we have gained a better sense of what is real as opposed to what is merely flashy and ephemeral.

The fact that the department achieved full accreditation in May 1997 is a major validation of the work we did together. The Bachelor of Social Sciences (Architectural Studies) and the Master of Architecture programmes were given full approval by the HKIA/ARB/CAA Committee for three years. This level of validation is extremely unusual for a new school and we can be unequivocally proud of this achievement.

A curious mixture of fun and earnest work characterized these years, as we carved out a space, a pedagogy, and a conceptual framework. We have constantly striven to define ourselves in terms of craftsmanship and design, and we have always kept vigil on the ultimate purpose: making more beautiful and healthier habitats for people.

By the ancient rill there is a single plum-tree
 That refuses to be imprisoned in garden or park.
 Far away in the mountain depth it fears not the cold

Chu Tun-Ju (A.D. 409)

I want to thank the faculty, those who were here at the inception and those who have since joined us. Your uncompromising giving of yourselves to teaching and research has been remarkable. You have as a team developed an open process for working through conflicts, for cooperating and sharing of ideas. The results are filled with an unusual degree of creative synergy.

I also want to express my appreciation to the students whose amazing vitality, talent and enthusiasm has been an inspiration. You have demonstrated an understanding of the enormous challenges ahead. Your performance over the past few years should imbue you with confidence and well deserved self-esteem.

My time with you has been incredibly rewarding, exciting, and mostly fun. May you all go on to greater accomplishments and to living a good and happy life.

Tunney Lee

I Reprinted from Tunney Lee, "Greetings and Farewell," in *ISSUES* (Hong Kong: Department of Architecture, CUHK, 1998), no page number.

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12 SEPTEMBER 2020, HONG KONG

Tunney's life in CUHK

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Inauguration of the department, 1991

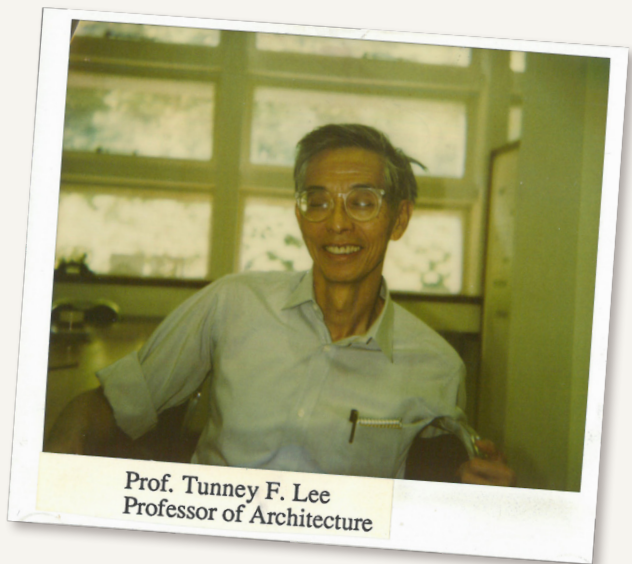


Same view, 2020





(Photo courtesy of Thiao Lee)





IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR TUNNEY F. LEE

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