



General Practice Division Chairman's Message



Sr Joseph Ho GPD Council Chairman

The **2015 General Practice Division Annual Dinner** was held on 6.2.2015 at the World Trade Centre Club, Causeway Bay. Its theme was the **"Evolution of the General Practice Surveyor in the Past 30 Years"** which echoed the HKIS's 30th Anniversary in 2014. A total of 108 guests occupying nine tables were in attendance. The GPD invited Sr Hon Tony Tse; representatives from 中聯辦教育部, 傅芃芃博士, and 李永權先生; the Commissioner of the Rating and Valuation Department, Mr Tang Ping Kong, JP; the Assistant Director of the Lands Department, Mr Edwin Chan; the HKIS President, Sr Vincent Ho; and GC members to attend the function. Furthermore, present among the 108 guests were three HKIS founding members and 30 probationers.

The dinner began with an opening speech delivered by the GPD Chairman, Sr Joseph Ho, followed by short speeches by Sr Hon Tony Tse and Sr Vincent Ho. During the dinner, a sharing session was conducted by Sr Veronica Lee, who invited six guests from different generations to share their experiences as GP surveyors. Sr Veronica Lee brought the audience back in time to the day when the HKIS was first formed and how GP surveyors evolved into what they are today. Other surveyors also shared their histories of the GP practice over the past 30 years. The guests invited on the stage include Sr Serena Lau, Sr Hon Tony Tse, Sr Karen Kwok, Sr Michael Yau, Ms Crystal Chau (probationer), and Sr Barnabas Chung.

The first guest in the sharing session was Sr Serena Lau. She was the HKIS President from 2011-2012, and the first female HKIS President. Her father Sr Francis S K Lau was a founding member of the HKIS and the HKIS President from 1987-1989. Veronica asked Serena if she knew the history behind the HKIS and why her father, together with other surveyors, formed it in 1984. Serena recalled that all surveyors back then were members of the RICS under the Hong Kong Chapter. In the late 1970s, the British Government and the China Government began talks and negotiations concerning the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong. Accordingly during the early 1980s, the HKIS founders considered that it was appropriate to establish our own Institute to develop our local surveyors and better represent surveyors who intended to remain in Hong Kong. The HKIS was therefore formed in 1984. Serena also told the audience that she followed in her father's footsteps to become a GP surveyor and work in

Hong Kong despite the fact that she was once educated and stayed in Australia. After all these years, she's glad that she did make the right decision and is proud of being a surveyor.

Sr Hon Tony Tse shared his path from a student to a GP surveyor and Legislative Council Member. Tony graduated from the Hong Kong Polytechnic (now Hong Kong Polytechnic University) in 1976. He joined the Crown Lands & Survey Office (now the Lands Department) immediately after graduation and qualified as a surveyor. He recalled needing to pass two written examinations as well as the TPC assessment organised by the RICS in Hong Kong before he qualified as a surveyor. He added that some of his fellow graduates even went to London to take the TPC to qualify as surveyors. After serving the government for 12 years, Tony left the Lands Department after attaining the position of Senior Estate Surveyor because he observed the marked difference in employment packages and promotion prospects offered to expatriate and local surveyors there then. Tony was actively engaged in the HKIS's work and became its President in 2003. On behalf of the HKIS, he participated in many meetings with and visits to a number of overseas institutes/organisations for exchanges. These institutes/organisations subsequently established reciprocal/mutual recognition arrangements with the HKIS, with some even accepting the HKIS as a member of their umbrella organisations. Tony explained that these arrangements expanded the scope of the HKIS beyond Hong Kong, helped members extend their careers internationally, and kept them abreast of the latest developments around the world. Tony reminded the younger generation that although the surveying environment is more challenging for them today, they need to stand up and fight for their profession by equipping themselves with the right tools and by working hard.

Sr Karen Kwok graduated from Hong Kong Polytechnic University in 1996. She has experienced Hong Kong's good and bad times since then. After graduation, Karen worked in a small land consultancy firm on land matters for a few years before beginning her career in asset management in a real estate investment fund. She recalled that when she started in an overseas real estate investment company as an analyst, she was one of its very few graduates from local universities and practically the only GP surveyor. Her colleagues mainly



hailed from top universities overseas such as Harvard and Cambridge. During the course of her employment, she completed a master's degree in finance, obtained her qualification as a CFA, and qualified as a GP surveyor. Then she moved to another Asian real estate investment firm to continue her career and is now its Director of Portfolio Analytics. While recalling her past work experiences, she told the audience that she has faced a lot of challenges and pressures. But, looking back, she was proud that she did not give up. She informed the younger generation that although there are a lot of obstacles and challenges ahead of them, they must not give up, but rather prepare themselves. Opportunities only come to those who are ready.

Veronica also interviewed two younger surveyors, Sr Michael Yau and Ms Crystal Chau (probationer). Both were estate surveying graduates with the Lands Department before they attended the APC. Michael qualified as a GP surveyor last year and is now working for a local listed developer as an assistant manager. One of his duties involves handling land development and acquisition projects under the Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance. He said that he has felt a lot of pressure from work. However, in the meantime, he did not have any long term plan but to work hard in his existing job and gain more experience.

Crystal is a probationer who just passed the APC this year and is waiting for the HKIS to grant her GP surveyor status. Now she is working as a senior officer at the Housing Society. She plans to further her education in college and, if the right opportunities come, she would not mind working in China.

Finally, Sr Barnabas Chung, the Chairman of the Board of Membership and one of the founding members of the HKIS, recounted his own history, which dating back nearly 50 years. After graduating from the Hong Kong Technical College in 1968, he joined the then-BOO (now the Buildings Department). He recalled that GP was the biggest division in the surveying industry. Many divisions branched out from it, including building surveying. During the 1970s, building surveying was an option under GPD at the RICS. Due to the large number of surveyors registering under the building option, the Building Surveyors Division was set up and later branched out from GPD. Today, it is the Building Surveying Division under the HKIS.

The Chairman, Sr Joseph Ho, further added that the GPD is a very big family with specialties that cover a wide scope of services. It does not only provide property valuations in Hong Kong, but different trade-related asset and business valuations as well. Intellectual property valuation and asset management are also within the business scope of GP surveyors. Apart from Hong Kong, the GPD's geographical coverage extends to China and overseas due to reciprocity agreements with other institutes. The surveying industry is changing given the growing diversity in its clients' demands. Hence, surveyors must equip themselves with new knowledge to meet these new challenges and opportunities.

The dinner ended with an exciting lucky draw and all guests, not only left with gifts, but also with memories and laughter.



