



Another Happy Moment: A short report from DC's Poy Gum Lee Walk Tour
11th July, 2009

Dear All,

You may wonder where in the world I have disappeared after the Poy Gum Lee tour... .. I'm still alive and writing you all this email while waiting for my herbal tea in the kitchen to boil --- --- the weather is too hot and I'm badly in need of some Cantonese herbal Tea (pronounced as Leung-Chaa) to cool down myself; one can't drink cold beer too much, am I correct to say that?

After almost a year exchanging emails with Kent, the grandson of Poy Gum Lee, and numerous visits to the Biblioteque and with the generous help from Anne Warr, Tess Johnston, John and Sun-Ling Meckley, we spotted a few of the places Poy Gum Lee had designed while he was living in Shanghai during the 1930s.

We started our tour at the Cosmopolitan Apartments and climbed up to the top floor where we were greeted by a friendly old couple who allowed us to stand at their lovely terrace for a while! We had omitted the YMCA on Tibet Road since Kent and Stuart had visited it the other day; and as it's a building we pass by everyday, we went straight ahead to the old Canton Bank Building on Kiangse Road (Jiangsu Road). Lupin pointed to one Art Deco building and asked, "Is this the building?" I said no, but we checked the plaque and it states clearly: "the Canton Bank Building"... ..

Stuart took out his Black and White photos and checked... .. it appears that the Canton Building is another building which is one block away from this Art Deco one! A good lesson to all of us. These lovely plaques are not something we can trust!!!

Later we walked to the YWCA building on Yuanminyuan Road. All buildings in the Rock Bund area are now under scaffolding, so unless you wanted to visit them, otherwise, wait for a few more months! We visited a few more places including a tour inside the Bridge House since I've got a friend in UK who is curious about it. As promised I've taken some pictures for you --- please allow me some time before I send them to you! It's got a very interesting structure one should visit!

We walked all the way down Sichuan Road to our last stop: The Cantonese Baptist Church. No plaques... .. Since it's the first time Kent and Stuart visit China, we also took them to the famous Dolun Road before heading to the Factory at 1933 the Slaughterhouse for some cold beers.

I love to take this opportunity again to all those who made this tour possible:

To Kent and Stuart: Thanks for sharing all these valuable information about Poy Gum Lee with us. It's a great to learn more about another great architect!

To Spencer Dodington: Thanks so much for sharing so many stories with us; the tour won't be so interesting without your participation!

To Anne Warr and Tess Johnston: For offering me so much help researching on the old directories... ..

To John and Sun Ling Meckley: For finding out the Cantonese Baptist Church, and also the Quarantine Station (Due to limited time, we were not able to visit it, so Kent, this is another excuse for you to visit China soon again!)

To Sean Dinsmore: For allowing us to use your projector and then with Poy Gum Lee's portrait smiling at us while we were enjoying our cold beers at your place. It's such a wonderful venue, and yes, you owe me a JPG logo to put on our site!

Finally, not the least of course, to Lupin, Coco, Alex, Tracy, Gerd, Carol, Eva, Nam, and the other "Bicycle People" for your participation. It's so nice to catch up with all of you again.

As the places are pretty well known, I haven't taken much pictures... .. instead I took some snapshots of our happy moments.

Just two days after the PGL tour, I had the opportunity to join Explore Shanghai Heritage's walk tour to the campus of St. John's University. It's quite an interesting place, and in fact there are lots of wonderful school halls in Shanghai. I pass by quite a lot of them when commuting around Shanghai, but have yet the chance to take a good photo of them... .. Perhaps we should organize another grand tour this autumn to do that! A grand tour... yes... because these schools scatter all across the city!

Kent and Stuart, have a safe trip back home! We'll miss you and hope you enjoyed our tour! Keep in touch... ..

Cheers,
Cintia