

LOKE YEW HALL: THE SIGNIFICANCE

Mentioning Loke Yew and his namesake hall in the Main Building will often bring back a flood of memories for former students, and even current ones. But few may know the significance of Loke Yew's contributions to the University.

Born in 1847 into a poor family in Guangdong, Loke Yew migrated to Singapore at the age of eleven where he worked as a coolie. Through his entrepreneurial spirit, he

made a fortune by investing in tin mining, rubber, property, plantations and other ventures.

In 1912, he was instrumental in establishing an endowment fund at the University and in 1915, when the University was facing bankruptcy, he offered a 21-year interest-free loan of \$500,000. This loan enabled the University to remain open and to create four full scholarships for needy students from Singapore



A dignified Loke Yew 陸佑, wearing the Honorary Degree of Doctor's gown when he was conferred the prestigious title in 1916.



Loke Yew statue at the entrance of the Hall's balcony.

BEHIND THE NAME

and Malaya. Before the Second World War, the student population of the University consisted of many Singaporeans and Malaysians and subsequently those HKU alumni played significant roles in building the modern states of these two countries.

In recognition of Loke Yew's generosity and commitment to the University, the Great Hall in the Main Building was renamed Loke Yew Hall in 1956.

Over the years, Loke Yew Hall has played host the University's ceremonies and students' examinations. It is the venue for Honorary Degrees and Endowed Professorships ceremonies as well as Orientation. It was, and still is, host to reunion dinners, and drama and music performances.

The Hall forms an integral part of a student's HKU experience as all students pass through its threshold at some point during their time here. Thus, Loke Yew and Loke Yew Hall are intimately tied to the University and its history. ■



A stage productions in the 1960s.



Loke Yew Hall doubled as an examination hall. Before the 1960s students were required to wear green gowns to sit in their degree examinations .



A scene from the film adaptation of an Eileen Chang novel, *"Lust, Caution"*《色戒》 depicting Mainland students in Loke Yew Hall calling for resistance to the occupying Japanese forces.



A "High Table" at Loke Yew Hall is part of the University's tradition past and present.