

Tamkang U. Will Soon Have a New Chinese Garden Named Chueh Shuan Garden

To enhance the amenities of the TKU campus, aside from the European and Japanese styled gardens, she will soon have a garden featuring the traditional Chinese design. It will be named Chueh Shuan Garden.

Originally a hothouse nursery, Chueh Shuan Garden is located at the rear of the Lantern classrooms. The dilapidated hothouse was torn down to give way to a uniquely designed classical Oriental garden. It was named after Mr. Chu Cheng (Chueh-sheng), known to many people as one of the Founders of R.O.C., also the Arch-Founder of TKU, and the first Chairperson, Board of Trustees, TKU., who was also the maternal grandfather of Dr. Clement C.P. Chang, Founder of TKU.

This garden is expected to be finished and due to open to the public in upcoming January. Aside from Chueh Sheng Memorial Library, this is the second building named after the Arch-Founder of TKU.

On December 11 (last Tuesday) when Dr. Clement C.P. Chang remarked, while inspecting the construction site, that this garden will be open for use by student clubs/associations in the future, so that (he hoped) not just physically, but also spiritually, they may be re-invigorated by the beauty of the landscape. In the past, the TKU Founder continued to enlighten us humorously, there used to be an activity that went on in College of Science, “Let’ s date under a banyan tree” . Now we can replace it with “Let’ s meet at Chueh Shuan Garden” . The new saying sounds even more poetic.

TKU has often been proud of her multifarious scenic spots on campus, be it the western flavored garden in front of the Book Plaza, or the European landscape adjacent to the Sheep Pasture Lawn, or the garden with the Japanese motif, or the artificial mountain- and- stream layout called Fu Yuan before the Business/Management Building, or the flat terrace water fountain alongside the walkway of Carrie Chang Fine Arts Center: the list can go on forever. Now, she has one more addition: Chueh Shuan, the Chinese Garden.

It was designed by Mr. Hsu Wei-chih, Lecturer, Department of Architecture, TKU, and the plan is now being executed by Mr. Chen Chao-yang, a traditional Chinese contractor well versed in the traditional technique know-how. For instance, instead of iron nails, Mr. Chen preferred the ancient Chinese cohesive technique by dovetailing many beams with wooden bolts.

According to Mr. Hsu Wei-chih, the design artist, he had modeled Chueh Shuan Garden upon the prototype of Yu Yuan, a famous memorial garden as well as a celebrated sightseeing tourist attraction on the outskirts of Shanghai. In addition to the tortuous gallery, it also has pavilions, artificial mountain-and-streams ensemble, a pond and the waterfalls and some reclining couches, so-called “Seats for Reclining Beauties” , etc.

These are common features. One thing most outstanding is that the traditional Chinese garden would use stone as its builder’ s motif, which is the trademark of so many ancient Chinese gardens. But this time, Mr. Hsu used ceramic material (used as a surface veneer), to give it a modern look. Shall we say this design is rather ingenious?

