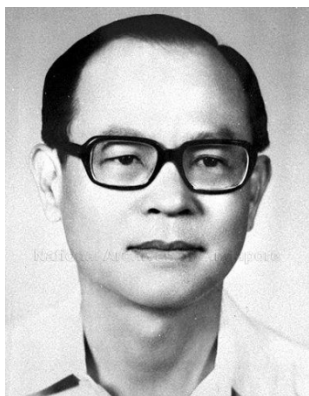


About
Dr Ang Kok Peng



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~ Professor Ang – the Scholar ~



Dr Ang Kok Peng, a long-serving member of the National University of Singapore until his retirement in 1988, passed away on 9 October 1997 at the age of 70 after a two-and-a-half-year battle with lung cancer. Born and educated in Taiping, Dr Ang received a Bachelor of Science in chemistry from the University of Malaya in 1950, followed by a Master's degree in 1952 and a PhD three years later. He was awarded the Raffles College Scholarship (1947-50) and the Queen's Fellowship (1956-57 and 1959-60). Dr Ang started his academic career in the Department of Chemistry in 1952 and rose to the rank of professor in 1976. His research interests include the development of new methodologies for the study of air pollution in Singapore; the determination of pKa values of polybasic acids; and the development of abiochemical sensor for the real-time monitoring of creatinine and urea in blood as an indicator of the condition of the kidney.

Dr Ang brought the Department of Chemistry to the forefront of chemical education and research while he was its head from 1971 to 1988. In November 1979, the Chemistry Department accepted two Thai students under the ASEAN Training Awards scheme for a six-month period of practical training on the instrumental methods of analysis and glass-blowing techniques.

In October 1981, Singapore hosted the Chemistry Network Co-ordinating Board Meeting. During this meeting, the Chemistry Department organised a training course for junior scientists from the Network countries. The theme of this course was Physical and Synthetic Methods in Natural Product Chemistry.

From 5 to 10 November 1984, the Chemistry Department, under the joint sponsorship of the National University of Singapore and the Singapore National Commission for UNESCO and UNESCO ROST/SEA, held a training course on Isolation and Structural Studies of Natural Products. The lecture topics included: recent trends in computerised GC, HPLC, FT NMR, GCMS and FAB/liquid SIMS mass spectrometry. Twenty four participants from eight countries attended the course.

In addition to his work for the University, Dr Ang was a member of Singapore Polytechnic's chemical process technology advisory committee which worked towards enhancing the practical relevance and academic standing of its diploma course. As president of the Singapore National Academy of Sciences from 1978 to 1992, Dr Ang held meetings with leading science academies worldwide - the research councils of the Third World and the science academies of industrialised countries. In these meetings, Dr Ang discussed the problems of the development of the sciences in the Third World and the possibilities of South-South and South-North collaborations.

Dr Ang also served as president of the Singapore Association for the Advancement of Science (SAAS). He organised many seminars to keep the association's members and the general public in touch with current developments in science, especially those in areas relevant to the development of Singapore. He also initiated the Primary Science Club Activities for primary school students, and Questa for secondary school students. These schemes encourage students to take an active and independent role in science learning, guiding them to design and carry out science activities on their own.

Some 60,000 students have been taking part in these schemes every year over the last 10 years. In 1997, Dr Ang initiated two SAAS Outstanding Science Teachers Awards for teachers to attend overseas conferences to keep abreast of developments in the field of science teaching and learning. He also initiated a SAAS Science Award to be given to an outstanding science student in each primary school in Singapore.

Dr Ang was one of the founders of the People Scholarship Fund (1975) which awards scholarships to needy and deserving students at the pre-university, polytechnic and university levels. He was chairman of the Fund when he passed away.

~ Professor Ang – the politician ~

Dr Ang was an extremely nice man and he helped me a lot when I first started out as MP..." - Dr Tan Cheng Bock, Member of Parliament for Ayer Rajah.



As a senior lecturer in chemistry in the then University of Singapore, Dr Ang was appointed Singapore's first ambassador to Japan in 1968. After serving in Japan for three years, he returned to the University of Singapore as dean of the science faculty in 1971. In that same year, he was awarded the Public Service Star (BBM) and joined politics shortly thereafter. Dr Ang first stood for election in 1972 under the People's Action Party banner. After winning the Crawford seat, he was appointed Minister of State for Communications, in which position he served for two years. This was followed by another two years as Minister of State for Health from 1974 to 1976. In 1976, he stood for re-election and won the Buona Vista seat, where he served uncontested for 12 years.

Dr Ang's parliamentary service also included serving on select committees that looked into such legislation as the Human Organ Transplant Bill and the Environment Public Health Bill. From 1979 to 1983, Dr Ang also led a delegation of MPs annually to the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development.

~ Professor Ang – the exemplary family man ~

Dr Ang leaves behind his wife, Dr Ang Wai Hoong, a distinguished educationist and recently a Senior Fellow at the National Institute of Education, two daughters (both President Scholars) and a son.

