

*Choline Lee 4B*

I am so glad to have had an eye-opening experience with Sir David Akers-Jones, a humble and wise gentleman — a real pillar of society.

Before we conducted the interview with Sir David, as student reporters we had done a fair bit of preparation for the interview, such as reading articles written by Sir David, predicting his responses to our questions, role-playing with our NET teacher Mr. Manolas, and making up immediate follow-on questions.

What became apparent during the interview was that Sir David never stops learning new things. Because of his diligence and quest for knowledge, he knows many languages such as Cantonese, Mandarin, Malay and Hindi. There are so many Chinese books adorning the shelves of his mahogany bookcases. He also has a Chinese name, 鍾逸傑, given to him by one of his Chinese teachers in Malaysia.

During the interview, we listened to many stories and experiences from Sir David. He was born in 1927 and he was only 12 when the Second World War began. If we had not interviewed him, we would not have known that England took down the names of streets and stations to prevent their enemies from getting information about certain locations, in case Germany dropped parachute soldiers into England. We learned so many things from him.

Originally, we scheduled the appointment with Sir David until 4.30pm. However, we could not finish the interview by that time. Sir David was generous and talked with us until 6.00pm. Because of the long interview, we made Sir David so tired.

When we took a break from the interview, Sir David showed us his "Garden", made up of a variety of plants lined up like soldiers along his windowsill. Sir David gave me some fragrant and beautiful rosemary and geranium leaves as souvenirs. The fragrance lifted my spirits.

After the interview, we asked Sir David to write something in the books he has written. As Sir David was writing in the books, I noticed that his house was full of paintings and calligraphy. Many of them were his own works. He is really a man of erudition. I am proud that I have interviewed him.

Sir David told us to enjoy life wherever we are. I think it is true that today's teenagers tend to give up easily when they meet adversities and difficulties. Sir David stated emphatically that we should enjoy our life and challenges, including homework! It will make us grow up.

During the interview, I learned that I should embrace life's challenges as this can round-out my knowledge of life. I also learnt that being happy is a choice, and that I should enjoy everything I do. It is important to be the victor in life's battles.

I am delighted to have had this unforgettable experience with one of Hong Kong's great icons. The interview was tough but enjoyable.