

第 33 篇 [友情難忘] [A note about your friend]

命題大意：略述你一最佳朋友最使你難忘的特質

寫作大意：寫在洛杉磯和亡友謝元裕教授交往經過

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At least once, everyone has had a best friend. Write a little note about this person and describe what you admire(d) most about his or her personality.

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A man may have many acquaintances and friends in his life, but fewer good friends and best friends. To setup the best friend's relationship usually needs special occasion and circumstance. Best friends usually have the basis of common interest, mutual appreciation and tolerance. Further more, similar character and background, and living close enough to enable frequent contact is also essential. A man sometimes found his best friends inevitably changed from time to time and location to location. Since my wife and I moved to Los Angeles in 1985 after being retired, we left some good friends in Taiwan but have made some good ones here.

The best friend now I am talking about is Prof. Yangyu Hsei (謝元裕), with whom we setup the most valuable friendship since we met again in 1986 in an alumni meeting in LA, and departed in 1999 when he passed away. In the days of our getting along, we usually met several times a week, chatting, playing chess, discussing current affairs, or attending dancing parties. Beside the above, we often arranged tours and dining in restaurants together with our wives. In our long distance touring, I always served as a driver and he as a navigator. He and his wife had settled here about ten years earlier than us, thus knew much more about the local and the world. Whenever we have a problem about the local affairs, we first consulted him for a solution. We helped each other in our daily lives. At the critical time when he was receiving a by-path cardiac surgery, I was asked to stay in the hospital with his wife.

As the personality of Yangyu is concerned, I must say that Yangyu was a very knowledgeable and versatile scholar. He had a background of having a master degree in the Washington University majoring in civil engineering in the 1950s, and taught in the Taiwan University for many years before retirement. He authored a textbook of structure engineering in English published in the United States and translated in several other languages in some other countries. His cultivation and achievement in humane studies like literatures in Chinese and English were eminent. Though he was a person not very sociable, he was highly respected by many people at his time and surrounding.

Even now, whenever I happened to have something unknown or some problem to be straightened out, I always think of Yangyu. Confucius once said that the most important qualities of a valuable friend were frankness, forgivingness and knowlegibility, Yangyu was meeting such requirement.