

Lillian at Dominican

8/26/12

LI-YEN WANG '51

Li-Yen, her Chinese name translates into English as “beautiful” and “demure.” It was a perfect name for Lillian, her chosen American name, for she was indeed a beautiful young woman – tall and slim, with a gorgeous smile. But there was much more to her besides physical beauty; her character and personality held an attractive blend of many qualities. She was reserved, reflective, gentle; she was sweet, refined, dignified. She could also be forthright in speaking her mind; and she was always serious, especially about study. Chemistry - her major, and Education - her minor, absorbed her. She worked hard at learning and was never satisfied with any task done poorly or in haste. Later years spent in graduate school and in the professional scientific world were well served by her Dominican undergraduate preparation.

Lillian came from Shanghai, China, to then Dominican College of San Rafael in 1948. A sophomore, she immediately won the friendship of her schoolmates, especially science majors, by the delightful way in which she encouraged them to take their courses as seriously as she took hers. She frequently gave time to students who were having trouble understanding the complexities of chemistry assignments. Outside of class she could light up a room with subtle humor and a wide, charming smile. She could not always understand why some of her friends spent so much time, in her opinion, going home on weekends, or attending mixers or parties. Perhaps it was because she had already met Huo-Bing Yin, the young man she would one day marry; he was studying on the East Coast during her years at Dominican. So for the present, she took academic challenges to heart and would not let anything stand in the way of pursuing excellence. Competitive and serious about the goals she had set for herself, she was determined to achieve those goals by way of first attaining academic success at Dominican and readying herself for the graduate school she would attend immediately after completing bachelor's degree requirements.

Those who knew Lillian best loved her quiet presence among them. She could also be a tease, a ready participant in discussions with residence housemates. She had a knack for making others feel good, for doing the respectful, thoughtful thing for others. Whenever school events called for it, she would attend in brocaded Chinese dress that won her many compliments.

Lillian died on September 24, 2000. We mourn her departure from this earth, even as we happily recall the memories she left us. Today we are grateful for the good she and her late husband continue to do by having provided the University with both an endowed scholarship for Chemistry students in 2002 and the Lillian L. Y. Wang Yin, Ph.D. Endowed Professorship in Chemistry 2011.



Lillian Wang Yin (top row, center right) and the Dominican College Graduating Class of 1951.