

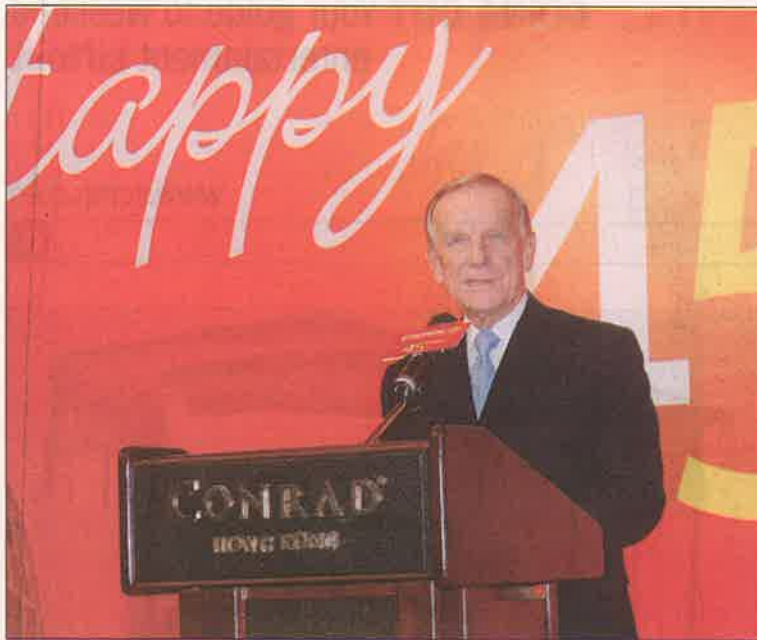


CitySeen

with Andrew Sun

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Reminiscences give Crown founder more than a Mona Lisa smile on 45th anniversary

The always prominent Jim Thompson threw a reception on Tuesday at the Conrad Hotel to celebrate Crown Worldwide Group's 45th anniversary. "Actually, it's two anniversaries," the jovial founder corrected. "It's 40 years in Hong Kong and 45 as a company."

It was a night of nostalgia for the former American Chamber of Commerce chairman and mastermind of the infamous post-Sars Harbourfest concerts. There was an awkward moment when Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam-kuen and former chief secretary Anson Chan Fang On-sang came face to face as they congratulated Thompson at the same time. Photographers asked the two to pose for a picture. Both declined as they drifted away from each other.

Both Chan and Tsang had left the

party by the time Thompson, accompanied by a slide show, started recounting anecdotes about how he started the firm in Yokohama. "I came back overseas to soak up some culture. I was 24, with no business experience and no money. The naivete of youth is what gets you into some of these things."

Now Crown is a global conglomerate with more interests than he can explain. It includes storage facilities all over the world ("We have 20 million of those cardboard boxes stored") and even a little wine cellar in Shouson Hill. However, most folk know Thompson as the mover with the red trucks. "We even moved the Mona Lisa," he said, then added, "but just from one room to the other. When you see it in the Louvre, it's so small - but so big when you move it."

Thursday Think Tank

Five things we're all wondering about

- 1 Donald Tsang Yam-kuen among least trusted Hong Kong personalities ...**
the only way he would be less trustworthy is if he dispensed fung shui advice and staked a claim on a tycoon's fortune
- 2 Murray Building to become a luxury hotel ...** instead of overpaid civil servants, it will soon be filled with overpriced rooms
- 3 ESF fees to go up again ...** you know what this means? It's either that new luxury flat or an education for junior
- 4 World Cup games likely to be shown only on Cable TV ...** TVB wanted to be the only station where commentators were allowed to speak in Cantonese
- 5 Fifty-five marathoners needed medical attention ...** officials at the finish line added that, in such humid conditions, all 60,000 runners also needed showers

Local stars add to efforts for Haiti

Even as a tremendous earthquake in Chile last week has devastated more people, fund-raisers for the January disaster in Haiti are still occurring. On Saturday, the Osage Art Foundation is hosting its own version of the Hope for Haiti Now concert, only without international pop stars. Instead, its concert will offer a range of local acts, from jazz bassist Peter Scherr (pictured) and friends, principal musicians from the