



ANNUAL REPORT of the PRESIDENT 2016-2017

INTRODUCTION

Welcome everyone to our 71st Annual General Meeting, as we approach the end of the Year of the Rooster and prepare for the New Year of the Dog, I ponder at how quickly the last seven years as President of this fine organisation has passed.

I have always found that people will only follow you if they believe that you know what you're doing, well I can only assume and hope that I knew what I was doing. I have always felt a personal connection with each one of the executives and each committee member. I have never claimed to be an inspirational leader, however each and every one on the committee have always gone the proverbial "extra mile" that true leadership inspires,... how lucky am I.

I truly care and respect our committee members and volunteers who we have often been taken for granted, their ideas and the work that they're doing, their passion, dedication and ethics have always truly motivated and inspired me no end.

Our committee's do not have any so called "devilish advocates" who are advocates for anything other than their own egos and points of view. "Perspective" is often just bragging in disguise. "Voice of reason" is often just the voice of ego or the voice of a person who may have tried and failed and therefore thinks no one can--or more likely should--ever succeed.

I have sat and Chaired on many committees, and have seen many groups fail due to people who are on the committee for the wrong reasons, we don't have such people on board.

Our Chung Wah Society is truly blessed to have so many members and friends who continuously and unselfishly donate their time and support throughout the year. The past and present committee members who have served us so professionally and passionately without no other agenda than for the betterment of the Society, we thank you.

The young and not so young members of the Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe, the Jade Dragon's Cultural Dance Group, you have left us in no doubt that the

Society will be in good hands for the future. You are indeed the “Life Blood” of the Society’s DNA.

The Seniors Group and our Elders, we know that you are proud of the way we have continued to follow the traditions, culture and ethics that you have instinctively passed down to us. We have sincerely appreciated your legacy and what you have worked so hard to provide for the generations to follow.

We are going through a world of continuous rapid change, however our family values have and will always remain strong and true.

Chung Wah Society have shown what a multicultural community can achieve. Although we are proud of our Chinese heritage and culture we are no less proud to be called Australians. I truly believe the multicultural make up of Australia make us one of the most respected people in the world due to our culture of Mateship and lending a hand in times of need.

We have served our constitution well in promoting good relationships and long term friendships, this is reflected by the popularity of our Chinese New Year Banquet where we celebrate each New Year with a banquet where friendships are renewed with smiles and laughter.

I would like to thank the following Office Holders of 2016-2017:

EXECUTIVES

Mr Richard (Dick) Griffiths	Patron
Mr Alfred On OAM	Vice Patron
Mr Daryl Chin	Vice President
Tiffany Chin Rinaldi	General Secretary
Mr Roland Chin	Treasurer and Public Officer
Mr Daniel Chow	Chinese Secretary

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr Andrew Chin
Mr Dennis Low
Ms Mikayla Chin
Mr Desmond Yuen

Subcommittee Co-ordinators

Building and Maintenance
Co-Temple Officer (with Mervyn Chin)
Senior Lion Dance Troupe
Building and Special Projects

Ms Jade Schembri	Special Projects Support
Ms Tina Griffiths	Major Events Project Management
Ms Natasha Yuen	Jade Dragons and Event Management
Mr Jonathan Quan	Lion Dance CNY Executive Support
Mr Nathan Tam	Senior Lion Dance Troupe
Ms Tania Fong Lim	Committee "WHIP"
Mrs Lyn Tam	Special Projects Support
Ms Quen Foo	Special Projects Support
Dr Randall Chin	Special Projects Support
Mr Roger Lowe	IT Support, Membership and Car Parking
Mr Stephen Pearson	Senior Lion Dance Troupe

Other Posts

Mr Eddie Lai	Auditor (replaced Mr John Hetherington)
Mrs Melanie Chin	Seniors Group (with Aunty Leila)
Mr Neville Jones	NT Chinese Museum (with Norm Chin)
Mr Wayne Lo	Junior Lion Dance Troupe Development
Mr Mervyn Chin	Temple Officer
Mr Paul Ho	Temple Caretaker
Mr Jeremy Chin	Property Development
Mr Brad Griifiths	Property Development Adviser

• Darwin All Deities Temple

Many thanks to Mervyn Chin, Dennis Low, Aunty Leila, Paul Ho and all the helpers for organising our many festivals and the successful upkeep of the Temple as a place of worship. Our Temple has been likened to a "Time Capsule" where ancient traditions have not changed for over 150 years.

The older generation has taught us the ancient traditions and culture that were observed in China from our ancient Taoist beliefs of thousands of years. Unfortunately, many of the younger generation are starting to lose some of these traditions as the older generation become somewhat incapacitated.

We don't mean to force the old traditions on the young ones, rather that we provide them a choice. However the younger generation are following many of the ancient traditions through their involvement within the Lion Dance Troupe and Jade Dragons Cultural Dances without them even realizing it.

- **The NT Chinese Museum**

We could not have wished for a more professional and dedicated person to have taken on the management of the Museum.

Neville Jones has taken on this task with amazing passion and interest. Not only has he organised and supported our volunteers and the day to day management of our museum, he has since produced a comprehensive ten year plan for the museum.

His academic knowledge and expertise, his networks and promotional skills have held the museum in good stead. Organising many School Visits and educating the many young students to the Chinese history here in the Territory.

A copy of the full report of the past year for the museum is available at the AGM and we encourage people to peruse a copy for themselves.

Our NT Chinese Museum is a Chung Wah Society treasure. So many interesting stories and facts recorded from our ancestors. Our steep history is so important not only for our children and their children but also for the wider members of our multicultural community.

As always we encourage our members to visit our Museum and should you be able to volunteer even just for a day, we assure you that you won't be bored.

We would like to thank all our Invaluable Museum Volunteers:

Norm Chin, Austin Chin, Tanya Fong Lim and John Duguid, Elaine and Neil Prosser, Irene and Ian Musgrave, Joyce and Kevin Chin, Lorraine Quong, Lynette Lee, Nen Nen Chin, Teresa Jong, Camille Fong Lim, Donna Quong, Marie-Louise and David Pearson, Ros and Andrew Chin.

Special thanks to: Roger Lowe, Melanie Chin, Mervyn Chin, Paul Ho and Jennifer Xi Liquor

- **The CWS Seniors Group**

The Seniors Group was formed as a result of the "Chinatown 42" exhibition.

"Chinatown 42" exhibition held by Chung Wah Society in 1992 and was a significant "Watershed Moment" for our Society. The year 1992 was the 50th Anniversary commemorating the Bombing of Darwin during World War II.

Melanie had held the post of Chairperson of the "Chinatown 42" working committee. The month long exhibition (extended by popular demand) was an outstanding and successful event that bought incredible kudos to our Society.

The exhibition was based on stories and the oral history obtained by interviewing our Senior members, many of whom have since passed on. The management committee back then wisely decided that it would be a great tragedy if these stories were only to be hidden away, filed away in obscured databases and filing cabinets.

As an offshoot to the Chinatown 42 exhibition, the NT Chinese Museum was therefore created to exhibit these stories and to showcase the Chinese invaluable contribution towards the development of North Australia,

Melanie felt that after the exhibition, our seniors should not be forgotten, so since 1992, our Seniors have met every fortnight to catch up with each other and enjoy a home cooked lunch and a game of Mahjong or two.

For 25 years now, Melanie has worked overtime at her workplace so that she can take a day off in lieu every fortnight to coordinate the Seniors Group Lunch at the Hall, with the help of her mother and all the other Aunties and dedicated band of volunteers.

- **The Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe**

Not only does this group of dedicated young and not so young people perform one of our most popular and exciting display of dance and culture, they have become the life blood and the future leaders of the Chung Wah Society.

No other community group that I know of can boast of having so many of their young people so keenly involved with their club. Lion Dancing within Chung Wah today is a most healthy Way of Life for the next generation. The training is extensive as shown by the skill level of our dance troupe. The performances and special routines displayed by the teams are up there amongst some of the best in Australia.

As well as the fitness that naturally come out of this activity, there are so many more facets such as discipline, philosophy, strong ethics, strength of character, great self-respect, personal esteem and life-long friendships not only amongst their own team, but with other Lion Dance Teams both nationally and internationally.

The Lion Dance Troupe other function is to provide spiritual protection for the Temple and the many businesses during the Chinese New Year period. The teams learn about spiritual "Way of the Dragon" especially with the cultural traditions involved with ceremonial blessings.

The Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe along with the Jade Dragons are currently fund raising to attend the Bendigo Easter Festival in 2018 where they will perform in front of thousands of spectators lining the streets. The Bendigo Chinese Association has somehow made Bendigo the Chinese Cultural Hub of Australia during Easter whilst raising precious funds for the regional hospital.

- **Jade Dragons Cultural Dancers**

There has to be the Ying and Yang of Chung Wah and the girls have indeed blossomed into a most beautiful flower representing our Society.

Lead by Natasha Yuen and Rochelle Chin, our girls not only astound us with their amazing choreographed cultural dances, they perform drumming routines that are so captivating and uplifting, the audiences are often completely blown away.

They too will be the next generation that will inherit what past generations of Chung Wah worked so hard for. We are so fortunate to have such faith in our young people to carry on the Chung Wah Banner.

If we appear to be so proud of what we see in the future of our Society, one would have to believe in "Karma"..... one could consider !

Some Highlights of 2016-17

- **CWS Dragon & Lion Dance Troupe: "2016 Moon Festival"**

The CWS Moon Festival function was a great opportunity for all members of the dragon & lion dance troupe to show off their skills in front of a crowd of over 300

people. Our junior, intermediate and senior teams trained hard to put together some fantastic performances enjoyed by the Moon Festival crowd.

- **2016 Senior's Christmas Party**

Held on the 2nd December, was very popular as all the food was provided as well as a small gift for everyone who attended.

- **2016 Childrens Christmas Party**

The Children's Christmas Party was once again a most popular events to end the Year. The large blow up Wet Jumping Castles was a great way for the kids to stay cool and entertained whilst waiting for Santa to arrive.....Ah to be Young again!

- **“ LIGHT the NIGHT 2016 ”**

On the 7th October at the Darwin Waterfront Precinct, our wonderful Jade Dragons girls helped to raise collectively over \$9,374 towards the Leukaemia Foundation's annual fundraising walk to help more Australians beat blood cancer by improving survival rates and quality of life.

- **2015/ 2016 Bill Wong Award**

The Award for 2015/2016 went to Mr Robin Lawrence for meritorious service to Chung Wah Society's Temple and tireless Chinese New Year Volunteer. Robin's involvement within the Temple has been ongoing for many years in assisting the Temple Officer in preparing and roasting the “Suckling Pigs” for the large Festivals at Temple such as Ching Ming and Yee Lun Festivals. Well done Robin !

- **2017 Year of the Rooster Chinese New Year Ball**

Held on the 11th February early this year at the Skycity Pavillion, was a glamorous Black Tie event. As always, the ever popular Chung Wah Society Chinese New Year Ball has been a “Sell Out” on the Darwin Social Calendar for over the past 70 years.

Chinese New Year in Darwin has always been about catching up with friends, especially the long time “Darwin Mob”. Over 200 guest celebrated in a most spectacular setting.

- **Chief Ministers Chinese New Year Reception**

The Chief Minister, the Hon Michael Gunner MLA invited many of the Chinese community members to a Reception at Parliament House to celebrate Chinese New Year. After a wonderful dance by the Australia China Friendship Society, the Chung Wah Lion Dance Troupe performed a traditional blessing ritual to ward off Evil Spirits and to welcome in the New Year. The Troupe seemed to be always coming up with new ways to astound the guests

- **2017 Chinese New Year Shop Blessings**

Held on Saturday 4th February for the Northern Suburbs & Palmerston and then Saturday 11th February in the Darwin City CBD. The Lion Dance Troupe and volunteers raised much invaluable donations for the Temple.

- **Qantas comes on Board as a Major Sponsor**

Chung Wah Society was proud to welcome Qantas on Board as a Major Sponsor for 2017. We encourage all our members to support this Australian Icon as they have been very generous in supporting us. Thank you Qantas !

- **Farewell to our Long Serving Auditor – Mr John Hetherington**

The management committee wish to acknowledge and thank the valued contribution of John Hetherington for his role as the auditor of Chung Wah Society Inc. over many years. John first became involved in an audit role for the Society during 1993 and he established a great rapport with succeeding management committee since then.

- **Hong Kong Club Mahjong Competition 2017**

For the past several years our Society has supported the Hong Kong Club with support by providing our Hall for the mah-jong tournament. A total of 22 people enrolled and many were turned away due to a limit on competitors. Every participant enjoyed the tournament tremendously. The competition was very tight as the differences between the winners and losers in each round was only a matter of one or two winning hands. The tournament was a extremely successful event

- **2017 “CHING MING” Festival**

Ching Ming was held on Tuesday 4th April this year, this yearly ritual of paying homage to our ancestors and the dead by sweeping their graves and burning paper offerings is steeped in the Chung Wah Society familial tradition. These days many of Darwin’s Chinese take this opportunity to remember and honour ancestors at grave sites amongst their own family groups which takes place around the 15th day of the Spring Equinox. Chung Wah has for many years organised an official service at our Memorial Chapel and then at the Chinese Memorial Cemetery off Tiger Brennan Drive, in Stuart Park.

- **CWS Senior’s 2017 Biggest Morning Tea**

Held on the 2nd June at Chung Wah Hall. For the past several years, the Senior’s biggest morning Tea event has raised many thousands of well needed funds for the Cancer Council. Well done Seniors !

- **Start of the Proposed Wall & Temple Gates Project**

For some time securing our property and creating a suitable Woods Street grand entrance to the Temple has been part of the CWS Property Masterplan.

Plans for the Wall, Woods Street driveway gates, Temple gate and stair entry were completed, passed by an engineer and a building certifier and construction started.

Special thanks must go to Jeremy Chin and Brad Griffiths for facilitating this project.

- **Building of New Shed behind the Cottage**

Thanks to the NT governments Immediate Works Grant scheme the Society has received vouchers to the amount of approximately \$83,000 to build a new storage shed. Much of the hard work was done by the Lion Dance Troupe and has now

eased the congestion of our store room at the Hall. Many thanks to our Vice President, Daryl Chin on facilitating this project.

- **Peoples Republic of China Ambassador Visits Darwin**

Ambassador Cheng Jingye visited Darwin on the 27th of June, which was his first visit to the Northern Territory. While in the Northern Territory, the ambassador met with the many local Chinese community.

- **Darwin Waterfront Harmony Day Soiree**

The Soiree provides a great opportunity for groups to showcase their culture and talent to the wider community. Attended by a large cross section of the Darwin population and tourists, our aim was to have as much interaction as possible in a relaxed picnic style atmosphere.

- **Pine Creek Goldrush Festival, 17th June 2017.**

As of the past several years, our Lion Dance Troupe has been traveling down to Pine Creek to help celebrate this unique festival. During construction of the Overland Telegraph Line, posthole diggers discovered traces of gold and this led to the goldrush of 1871. Pine Creek became a busy little mining town and around the year 1885 there were about 200 Europeans and 4,000 Chinese working the goldfields.

- **An End of an Era for our Darwin Show Sartee Stall**

It was with great sadness and regret that after 51 years, due to circumstances beyond our control, our Society was not be able to participate in the 2017 Royal Darwin Show this year with our Sartee Stall.

Due to overbearing requirements for us to purchase professional outdoor cooking equipment to satisfy OH&S current standards set for Market Operators and the price of meat at a all time high. It was decided that it was not viable to run the Sartee Stall. The Committee received a lot of comment in the local media by Long Term Darwin Show goer's complaining that the Royal Darwin Show is not the same without our famous Sartee's. The management committee will be looking at other ways to keep this tradition going for the "Fans of our Sartee's".

- **Yee Lun Festival**

One of the important Festivals celebrated every year by the Temple is the Yee Lun Festival which is also known as the "Hungry Ghost Festival". This year it was celebrated on Monday 4th September, it is when the souls of the dead are believed to roam the earth. The event is held in the area between the Temple and the hall and if you haven't attended one yet, it is quite an amazing spectacle.

- **Seniors Group Celebrate their 25th Anniversary**

Congratulations to our Senior's Group on celebrating their 25th Anniversary, the Seniors Group was started in 1992 after our "Chinatown 42" project and exhibition as part of the 50th Commemoration of the Bombing of Darwin. This year coincidentally is the 75th Commemoration of the Bombing during World War 2.

Melanie Chin who was then the Chairperson of the "Chinatown 42" project, involved the interviewing of our senior members who's stories fill our NT Chinese Museum.

Melanie felt that Chung Wah Society owed our senior's for the resounding success of the exhibition and decided to thank and acknowledge them by forming the CWS Senior's Group.

VALE :

Dawn Chong Fong (nee Yuen)

Last November the Society was saddened by the loss of long standing member and supporter of the Society. Sincere condolences to Charles, Kathleen and Warren.

Eric Lee (5th March 1934-20th February 2017)

Family and friends of Eric Lee gathered on 27 February 2017 to say farewell and to share some of the highlights of a fascinating life and a man who gave so much to those around him. Sincere condolences to Andrea, Debbie, Marcus, Rebecca, Leonie, Narelle, Erica and all other family members and friends.

- **2017 Moon Festival**

This year the Moon Festival was celebrated on the 30th of September. The Festival was coordinated by the Lion & Dragon Dance and the Jade Dragon Cultural Dance Group. The event was extremely successful and tickets were sold out early which meant a lot of disappointed people who left buying their tickets to the last minute. A great night was had by all under the Moon and Stars. The performance by the Dance Troupes, especially the Dragon Dance performed by the very young ones left a great impression on all the guests. The highlight as always was the Children's Lantern Parade. Many thanks to the coordinators, performers, volunteers, our fantastic banquet chefs and our invaluable sponsors. All funds raised will go to helping our Dancers to perform at next year's Bendigo Easter Extravaganza .

In Closing :

Chung Wah Society has been a successful organisation because it is made up by people who tend to ask smart questions, prepared to help others and to do things differently. We tend to excel in solving problems as opposed to creating problems. The vast skill levels on our committee are astounding, and we have managed to utilize these skills and life's experiences to fulfil our Society's goals and objectives.

Special thanks always to our Major supporters and sponsors, the NT Government, Qantas, Darwin Office Technology and Alfred's.

I commend this Report to all our members, please forgive me if I should have accidentally made any omissions.

Austin James Chin



President

29th October 2017