



ANNUAL REPORT of the PRESIDENT 2018-2019

INTRODUCTION

In October 1940, young Chinese sportsmen and women, who had often been turned away by “European only” sporting clubs, revived the Darwin Chinese Recreation Club (DCRC). This had been formed in the early 1920’s but had been largely inactive throughout the depression years. Charles See Kee (President), Charles Fong (Treasurer) and Albert Fong (Secretary) formed the executive and a constitution was written.

The aims and objectives of the revived club, which were written into the constitution and later formed the basis of the Chung Wah Society’s constitution.

Only Chinese residents were eligible to join in the pre-war years, but this rule was later relaxed and non-Chinese were able to join. Members entered the sporting arena against Europeans in a variety of sports including basketball, tennis and baseball.

The DCRC was also active in organising social events for the young Chinese-arranging social dances and picnics. They used the premises which became known as the “Stone House” in Cavenagh Street. The Young Chinese did well on the sporting field and showed that their sporting prowess was equal to that of the Europeans.

DCRC members also began building a basketball court on the property now occupied by the RSL Club in Cavenagh Street, but unfortunately war came before it could be used. American servicemen completed the court during the war and it was used for a short time by DCRC members (basketball and netball) in the post war years.

After the war, Chinese families gradually returned and rebuilt their businesses. Many things were however different. The Chinatown of the past was now gone and most surviving buildings in Chinatown were demolished under orders from the government. The Chinese were no longer concentrated in one area, but dispersed throughout the city and surrounding suburbs.

Attitudes also changed and the Chinese community realised there was strength in unity. They decided it was time to unite under one parent body and so the Chung Wah Society was formed in 1946, however the first executive committee wasn’t elected until 1949 with Albert Fong as President, Leung Sing Noy as Chinese Secretary, Charles Fong On as General Secretary and George Lim as Treasurer.

I am proud to note that current committee members, Roland, Jade, Tina, Randall and myself are grandchildren of Chin Loong Tang, Daryl, Andrew and Jeremy are Grandchildren of Chin Loong Pak, Mikayla of course being a Great Granddaughter, were all members of the founding committee 1949.

Also Chung Wah Patron, Richard Griffiths is the Son in Law of Chin Loong Tang and Vice Patron, Alfred On is the son of Charles Fong On.

This is of some strange significance as 2019 is the 70th Anniversary of the Chung Wah Society.

I would like to thank the following Office Holders of 2018-2019:

EXECUTIVES

Mr Richard (Dick) Griffiths	Patron
Mr Alfred On OAM	Vice Patron
Mr Daryl Chin	Vice President
Ms Jade Schembri	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
Ms Tina Griffiths
Ms Natasha Yuen
Mr Jeremy Chin
Mr Nathan Tam
Mr Stephen Pearson
Mrs Lyn Tam
Dr Randall Chin

Subcommittee Co-ordinators

Building and Maintenance
Temple Officer (with Mervyn Chin)
Senior Lion Dance Troupe
Building and Special Projects
Major Events Project Management, Membership, and Car Parking Administrator
Jade Dragons and Event Management
Building and New Woods St Wall Project
Senior Lion Dance Troupe
Senior Lion Dance Trouper and IT Management
Special Projects Support
Special Projects Support

Other Posts

Mr Eddie Lai	Auditor
Melanie Chin	Seniors Group
Neville Jones	NT Chinese Museum
Mr Brad Griffiths	Project Site Manager

FACETS of Chung Wah Society

- **Darwin All Deities Temple**

The Temple has two new Care Takers, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Dennis Low for his work as the Temple Officer for the past several year who won't be standing again. He has offered to assist Mervyn Chin who has nominated to take on the position once again.

The Chinese Temple is a very important part of our Society and is steeped in traditions which are over 100 years old. These traditions have not changed over time, our Temple can be likened to a "Time Capsule" as every custodians have strictly followed every tradition past down by our ancestors.

- **The NT Chinese Museum**

The Museum is a tribute to our Ancestors and their stories, they played a important part with the development of the Northern Territory. Our visitors book is filled with wonderful comments and has been especially popular not only with locals but with visitors from all over Australia and by many international visitors, not to mention by many school children. A Report on the Museum has been tabled by our Museum Co-ordinator, Mr Neville Jones.

- **The CWS Seniors Group**

The Seniors Group have continued to enjoy their fortnightly home cooked lunch which has been prepared by Aunty Leila and her volunteers in the kitchen.

Melanie Chin has continued to provide a wonderful environment where "Old Friends" can catch up with each other and enjoy a game of Mah Jong or two.

Another service are the workshops regarding information which affect our elder members such as health and support facilities.

The Senior Group has been invited by the Broome Chinese Community to visit Broome next year to promote a stronger relationship with our Society.

- **The Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe**

The Chung Wah Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe has grown thanks to the dedication and passion provided by the Troupe Coordinators. The Troupe have established a strong relationship with many other Lion Dance Associations throughout Australia and some international teams through attending the Bendigo Easter Festival.

Whilst many of the younger generation are falling in the trap provided by computer games, our youth are not only learning about our culture and traditions, they are benefiting by being able to perform great acrobatic skills that are required by the ancient "Game of the Lion"

The ethics and philosophy which are an important part of Lion Dancing will no doubt hold them in good stead as future leaders in our Society.

- **Jade Dragons Cultural Dancers**

The Jade Dragons although a relatively new group in our Society have shone like a diamond and become a great credit in promoting our culture. Where other community groups are struggling to involve their younger generations, our Society is dearly blessed by having our girls appreciating our cultural heritage of traditional dancing.

Many of our girls are also involved with the Lion Dance Troupe and are able to hold their "own" with the boys.

Their Drumming Routine has to be seen and obviously heard to be appreciated.

Both the Lion Dance Troupe and Jade Dragons Dancers have been highly regarded by the many other Chinese Associations in Australia.

- **Building Maintenance and Development**

As you will have noticed, the ongoing refurbishment of the Hall and Kitchen has been progressing extremely well. The ongoing upgrades will make the Hall more “useable” and may also help in future fund raising for the Society by being hired not only by our members but by the general public community.

The Woods Street Wall project is also progressing well with all Stages 1,2 and 3 nearing completion.

Woods Street is not only the main entrance to the Society’s premises, it is also at the front of our Temple, therefore the new “Moon Gate” will provide the auspicious entrance to the Temple which has been so long overdue.

Some Highlights of 2018-19

- **2017/2018 Bill Wong Award**

Every year our Society recognises annually the good deeds of a member in the community who has promoted the objectives of the Chung Wah Society, The 2018 Award went to two recipients, being Rochelle Chin and Natasha Yuen for their outstanding work with the Jade Dragons Dance Troupe.

- **2018 Children’s Christmas Party**

Always a major event for our Society, the Childrens Christmas Party was held at the hall on 9th December. For as long as I can remember it was the highlight event which promoted membership to the Society.

The smiles of delight shown on the faces of the children when Santa arrives with all the presents make for a wonderful start to the Christmas period.

- **2019 Year of the Pig New Year Banquet**

The Banquet was held at the Darwin Turf Club Marquee and as always, was a popular event on the Darwin Social Calendar. The Banquet which quickly outgrew the Chung Wah Hall, was moved to the then SkyCity Casino Marquee and the move to the Darwin Turf Club was due to it being the venue for the following New Year Festival.

- **2019 New Year Festival**

The Society re-established the New Year Festival in a big way this year. Originally the New Year Festival was held in Cavenagh Street, however due to the festival being in the “Wet Season” it stopped because it was “Washed Out” by a tropical downpour and most of the infrastructure set up in the street was destroyed.

We followed up with “Sedan Chair Races” in Smith Street which went for a short time but that also struggled due to OH & S regulations.

The Festival was revived with the generous funding provided by the NT Government which enabled us to hire the airconditioned Marquee at the Darwin Turf Club.

The inclusion of Adam Liaw, a winner of MasterChef Australia along with several other Darwin Chinese Community Groups presenting Gourmet Food Stalls made the Festival a resounding success, attracting several thousand people over a three days.

The other major attraction was the Chung Wah Lion Dance Troupe, Jade Dragons Cultural Dances and the Australia China Friendship Cultural Dancers.

- **2019 Moon Festival**

The second largest festival on the Society’s calendar is our Moon Festival, held on the 14th of September, members and friends enjoyed a night under the full moon and the stars. The Moon Festival continues to be a wonderful event where families can bring their children to enjoy a night of entertainment and of course the kids Lantern Parade.

Life Membership

As part of the AGM every year the Society invites members to nominate any members who should be considered for Life Membership to the Society. This is in recognition for extraordinary service and dedication to the society and is not given out lightly.

Mr Roger Lowe was nominated by Mr Austin Chin, President of CWS and was Seconded by Ms Tanya Fong Lim, General Secretary of CWS.

Roger comes from a family who are long term members of the Society and who have contributed greatly to the Society. Roger's, cousin, the late, Mr Adam Lowe was a most dedicated Life Member of Chung Wah and served as President for 11 years from 1999 to 2010.

Roger first joined the Chung Wah Committee in 2001, 17 years ago, he recently had to step down off the CWS Committee due to health reasons. His mother, "Aunty" Eva is a proactive contributor and a highly valued member of the Chung Wah Seniors Group. Roger joined the committee to get to experience how things work within CWS and see what makes CWS such a great success in the Darwin community.

He contributed by building stronger relationships/networking with other CWS Committee Members as well as the CWS Membership in general. In doing so he greatly contributed to the further growth and success of CWS as a community organisation by building on CWS's already outstanding profile not only in the Darwin community but Australia wide. As a committee member over the past 17 years, his contribution consisted of a variety of skills, knowledge and experience which greatly complemented his vast professional IT background. By utilising his IT background, it enabled CWS to have a comprehensive internet presence with the development of not only the CWS website, but also two other key important and critical databases for our Membership & Carparking which he managed during his spare time.

Like all of our other committee members, Roger's life experiences has given him an astute and practical business sense which has without doubt, played a big part in the many decisions which have been made by the committee over the past two decades.

It is by no accident or luck that the Chung Wah Society has always managed to find such productive committee members and motivated volunteers. "Good people" will always seem to attract other "good people". Roger is one of the "Quiet Achievers" who has always lead by example, always extremely hard working, always ready to jump in and lend a hand especially when many other people are unable to find the time.

He has always set a standard and quality of dedication which is envied and applauded by many of the other community leaders that I often talk to. Roger was indeed deserving of Life Membership as he has made an extraordinary contribution over the years and his involvement has greatly benefited our Society and it's members.

Great dedication and effort by such people as Roger will always be recognised and acknowledged by Societies such as ours. We welcome Roger as our newest Life Member to the Chung Wah Society.

VALE

The Board members of the Chung Wah Society express deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of

- Vernice Chen
- Ginny Chin
- Barbara Hostalek

In Closing

I have been humbled by the honour of holding the post of President of Chung Wah Society for the past several years.

Particularly in this our 70th Anniversary, I am proud to present my 9th Annual Report. I have truly enjoyed being able to represent a community group that has contributed so much to the development of the Territory.

The Lunar Year of the Pig has been quite a turbulent one not only for the Territory, but for Australia and the world. However like our Ancestors, we will always be resilient and like all Australians, we will always care for others who may not be as fortunate. The respect by others for the Chung Wah Society is something to be cherished and proud of.

We do not possess to be a "Peak Body" for the Chinese Communities of the Territory, however, I must say when they refer to the Chung Wah Society as "Big Brother", I am quietly chuffed to say the least.

Our Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison talks of the "Quiet Australians"as always, I have always called our committee members the "Quiet Achievers"

Many of our committee members have been serving the Society for many years, they continue to serve without any expectation of thanks or acknowledgement. Having said that, as President, have and never will take them for granted. I therefore encourage others to consider joining the committee as it is so important to continue to bring in "New Blood".

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Neville Jones of receiving the Bill Wong Award this year as he is indeed one of our quiet achievers and it is a pleasure to show him the thanks and recognition that he deserves.

To all our supporters, volunteers and Major Sponsors, especially the NT Government, Darwin Office Technology and Alfreds Gift Shop, I say thank you for your continued support.

I would be amiss of me not to mention a big thank you to the Chinese Language and Culture Centre of Darwin for their recent most generous donation towards our Chinese Temple Moon Gate Entrance Project.

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

Austin James Chin



President

17th November 2019