



Chung Wah Society Incorporated

2022 President's Report

It is my pleasure to present my second AGM report to members as the President of Chung Wah Society.

Management Committee and Subcommittees

Our Management Committee and the appointed subcommittees have continued to carry out the regular activities and customs over the last twelve months, whilst handling the health and safety concerns placed on us by COVID 19. We have noted and understand that our seniors who have been the mainstay of the opening of the museum, could not devote the volunteer hours as they have done pre COVID. Nonetheless, the senior volunteers continue to provide their support through their families and attendances at the activities and events hosted by Chung Wah. A special thank you for the countless hours by our subcommittee coordinators, volunteers, subcommittees and the management committee for their ongoing support in enabling Chung Wah to carry out its activities during the year. In many instances, our volunteer base includes three generations from many of our long term family member groups.

Patron and Vice Patrons

Thanks to Dick Griffiths for his support as Patron during the year in attending the Chung Wah events and providing in kind and financial support from Bradlaw Agencies. Thanks also to Alfred On as Vice Patron for attending the Chung Wah Santee working bee to supervise the preparation and mixing of the famous Chung Wah Santee marinade for the Chung Wah Santee Stall at the Chinese New Year Festival. Finally, thanks to Austin Chin in his capacity as Vice Patron, Chinese Museum subcommittee member/volunteer and for taking the phone enquiries to Chung Wah Society.

Volunteers

It is reassuring that whilst we continue to have the support for our more senior volunteers, what is pleasing to see is that our younger members, are actively engaged in the community to proudly represent Chung Wah and act as strong role models for the juniors. This is evident at our popular events during the year including Chinese New Year Festival, Lion Troupe training and performances, Moon Festival Function and Christmas Parties, where the youth are manning and co-ordinating the stalls as well as providing the entertainment by performing as part of the Chung Wah dance troupe/ Christmas band and setting up for the events.

Building and Capital Works

The building subcommittee lead by Daryl Chin and Andrew Chin have attended to the ongoing maintenance of the grounds and buildings situated at 25 Woods Street including the Chinese Temple. Chung Wah has received a Federal Government Grant for the purpose of improving

the hiring facilities and to provide hall partitioning to enable smaller or concurrent hires. The building committee found that the partitioning required significant engineering and interstate suppliers were unable to install and require customisation to fit the intended purpose. We were able to repurpose the grant to replace the partitioning with video conferencing and large screen multipurpose TV as well as automating our security of the grounds. This project was completed by end of August this year.

Chinese Museum

The Chinese Museum has been reopening but by appointments only as mentioned earlier, the volunteer's museum volunteers who are mostly seniors, are limited in numbers and time available to open the museum on regular hours that were possible pre covid. However, we are receiving many enquiries from schools and tourists to visit the museum. Feedback has been positive for most visitors. As the visits often involves a guided tour and enlightened talk on the history and customs of the long and rich history of Chinese in the NT of the Chinese Temple and the Museum exhibits.

Neville Jones as the Honorary Museum Director is our point of contact for enquiries on family trees and liaising with other historical groups and museums in Australia. His knowledge, networks and keen interest in the history of Chinese in the Territory is a key factor for the continued interest and enquiries of the Chinese museum.

The Chinese Museum held an exhibit over September and October 2022 of the Ken Chan "family murmurings" that involved use of visual reality googles for a 3D effect of the artistic panels by Nancy Liang that was inspired by the stories written by Ken Chan of growing up as an Australian Chinese in the 50s and 60s. Chung Wah was able to sponsor Ken Chan to visit and officially launch the exhibit on 20 September 2022. Thanks to Neville Jones and volunteer helpers in making this exhibit a success.

Chinese New Year Festival

Chung Wah held the 2021 Chinese New Year Festival at the airconditioned Darwin Netball stadium on the 19 March 2022, which was only made possible with the generous support of the NT Government through the Community Benefit Fund grant programme. The current grant funding is for a period of three years commencing in 2022 with reduced funding over the ensuing 2 years. Chung Wah was successful in attracting sponsorship from SBS to subsidise the reduce CBF grant funding and we were able to hold the event to the standard as set in the previous successful New Year Festivals from 2019 to 2021. SBS took the opportunity of the sponsorship to film the event and interview Aunty Joyce Chin for one of their documentaries on Chinese migration to Australia during the early 1900's.

There were initial health and safety concerns with the COVID outbreak during January 2022 that the event may be postponed until the following year. But with the support of the Sponsors, Food Stallholders, participating sporting and social clubs as well as our strong volunteer base the organising committee was confident that the 2022 Chinese New Year Festival could be held, albeit some 6 weeks after originally planned.

A separate report titled "Report by the Management Committee for the year ended 30 June 2022" lists the elected Executives and elected ordinary committee members as well as summarising the principal activities of Chung Wah during that year.

The automated secured gates to the driveway have provided better after hours security by limiting after hours public access to the grounds, although there have been instances of unauthorised public being locked in after hours as they continue to use the grounds as thoroughfare much to the annoyance of a committee member assigned to let them out. The building committee is investigating remote opening options to cover for these instances.

Finances

Thanks to Iain Macpherson as Honorary Treasurer in aptly managing the financial affairs of Chung Wah and he will report separately in his Treasurer's report on the audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2022.

Jade Dragons Dance Troupe

Thanks to Natashia Yuen, Madeleine Chin and Georgia Chin for co-ordinating and coaching the JD Dance Troupe at their weekly Saturday training days. The JD Dance group gave their last performance at the Moon Festival on 10 September 2022 with a tearful thanks of support from the dance troupe coordinators. As with family, overseas work and other commitments, the coordinators could not continue to provide the many hours of coaching and practice to enable the troupe to perform at the high standard that we expect of the JD Dance Troupe in their graceful and exacting performances at the Moon Festival. Let's say that JD Dance Troupe is having a break and we hope to see the JD's performing again soon.

Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe

The Lion and Dragon Troupe continue to train and have performed at various events and occasions during the year. Thanks to the Troupe leadership in providing the support and training to the juniors, intermediates and beginners. I am proud to see the teams perform at such a high standard that they will do us proud in we send a team to Bendigo to perform with other Lion and Dragon troupes around Australia. The applause received by the Lion Troupe performing at the Chinese New Year Festival, Blessings, Moon Festival, and other performances, that Chung Wah Chinese Lion Troupe are a gauge of both their skill and ability to entertain. The Dragon Troupe have been performing new routines and has welcomed new members to the troupe.

The Dragon team leadership group including Nathan Tam, Owen Chin and myself are looking for more dragon team members as we are not limited to one team since we have acquired a new performing dragon that was blessed by our Patron Uncle Dick Griffiths at the Moon Festival function on 19 September 2022.

The level of autonomy given by the Committee to the Lion Troupe reflects the trust and respect given to the coordinators in the way they manage the events and contribution to customs of temple blessings and performances throughout the year. Thanks to Mikayla Chin, Brayden Chin, Joseph Tjung, Kristina Lee, Mathew Chin, and Patrick Chin for leading and training the intermediate and senior lion teams every Saturday. Thanks also to Emily Tjung and Stephen Pearson for training the new junior troupe and teaching them the stances and

moves required for performing under the lion in a manner that the juniors enjoy and have fun learning the lion routines.

Members' Recognition and Awards

Australia Day 2022 Honours

Leila Chin OAM was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia on Australia Day 2022 Honours in recognition of her valued service to the Chinese Community in Darwin. She is known for her continuous dedication to the Chung Wah fortnightly seniors group gathering since its inception 30 years ago, her cooking and attendance at Chinese Temple main festival days and as a respected elder, her opinion and guidance is often sought on how best to observe and carry on the Chinese customs and traditions that has been handed down over the generations.

Aunty Leila attended with her very proud family, the Government House Investiture Ceremony on 1 July 2022 to receive the Order of Australia medal from Her Honour, the Administrator, The Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO.

Newsletter

A quarterly newsletter is sent out to members to advise them on future events and update on events held and celebrations relating to Chung Wah and its members. Thanks to our General Secretary, Jade Schembri and to Natasha Yuen in taking over as editor of the newsletter. We are always looking for articles and updates and these can be sent by email to admin@chungwahnt.asn.au.

Seniors Group

The senior's group meet at Chung Wah for their regular fortnightly Friday gathering and luncheon. The Seniors enjoy and value the gatherings as an opportunity to socialise with friends and enjoy the delicious home cooked lunch and finish the afternoon with a friendly game of mah-jong. The health and wellbeing of our seniors is important, and we are fortunate in today's times of dealing with COVID measures, that we can continue with the regular fortnightly Friday gathering. Thanks again to Aunty Leila Chin and Melanie Chin for their commitment to the Senior's Group for over 30 years.

Temple Affairs

Dennis Low as the Temple Officer and temple elder has been the mainstay for observing the customs and religious festivals of the Chinese Temple. Dennis has also performed the daily duties of the temple caretakers for the days they have taken holiday leave. The Chinese Temple continues to be a place of worship frequented by worshippers and visitors to Darwin. The Temple is well supported by temple donations, but the 2022 Chinese New Year Street Blessing was cancelled this year due to the COVID outbreak in Darwin and this has impacted on the income of the temple as compared to previous years. During this dry season, the temple roof, skirtings, doors and door frames were painted as part of the ongoing maintenance of the Chinese Temple. You may have noticed that the paints used are the red, yellow and green, which are all traditional colours of the Chinese Temples.

The Bill Wong Meritorious Award

Jan MacPherson when she was the general secretary of Chung Wah Society initiated the concept of Chung Wah Society Award be given in recognition of services to Chung Wah Society. Jan also suggested that it would be appropriate that the award should be named in recognition of Bill Wong (William CF Wong) and his great and long service to Chung Wah Society. A worthy person be named as the annual recipient of The Chung Wah Society - Bill Wong Meritorious Service Award.

Bill Wong was general Secretary of Chung Wah for a continuous period of 40 years from 1955 until 1994. Bill was also involved in the temple affairs from the time he was the secretary and later as temple officer until 2005. Bill acted with upmost integrity in representing Chung Wah Society and the Chinese community and he was granted an Order of Australia in 1996 as recognition of his great community service in Darwin. Rosemary Wong on behalf of the family of Bill Wong has kindly donated a perpetual shield to Chung Wah Society. Each committee from year to year will be tasked to formulate the criteria for which a worthy recipient can be selected. The recipient will have their name inscribed on "The Bill Wong Meritorious Award" perpetual shield.

Worthy recipients since the inception of this award are Norm Chin, Leila Chin, Robin Lawrence, Melanie Chin, Natasha Yuen and Rochelle Chin, Dennis Low, Neville Jones and Andrew Chin.

It is my pleasure to announce Brayden Chin as the worthy recipient of the 2022 Bill Wong Meritorious Award.

Brayden has been an active and dedicated member of the Society for most of his life.

Whilst he has involved himself in all activities of the Society, his focus has been with the Lion Dance troupe. Starting at the very young age of 4, he has worked hard and dedicated many years to develop his lion dance skills and expertise. Having excelled as a performer and proud member of the troupe, he now leads the troupe, training and passing on his techniques and knowledge to all other members of the troupe, organising Chinese New Year Blessings and performances, choreographing performances, and maintaining and repairing all lions and equipment. He also has a commitment and dedication to understanding, upholding and continuing the important religious and cultural significance of lion dancing, and works hard to instil this appreciation and understanding in the troupe members. Through his and other senior troupe member's dedication and leadership the lion dance troupe continues to develop and improve and is highly valued by the Society.

Beyond lion dancing Brayden has worked tirelessly and unselfishly to develop the troupe's club house and training shed, lion dance equipment and props, improvements to the CWS Hall and facilities, Moon Gate and Wall, Wood Street entrance, Museum and Temple grounds. He has volunteered many hours and has also been remunerated on the few occasions where he was asked to apply his trade skills beyond that expected as a volunteer.

Examples of his efforts include :-

- Construction of all the shelving in the lion dance shed.

- Renovation of the lion dance club house.
- Building of numerous lion dance performance props and dragon trolleys.
- Assist in removal of fencing on Wood Street boundary, rock jack hammering for wall foundations, paint sealing and masonry work to wall, installation of steel feature inserts in wall windows and steel fabrication and construction of Wood Street entrance archways.
- Steel fabrication of 2 folding chair trolleys, each holding 35 chairs.
- Repairs to ceiling of CWS Hall and building of bulkhead between old and new sections of the Hall.
- Construction of lining to high level hall windows to reduce glare.
- Demolition works for kitchen renovation and preparatory work (penetration through brick wall of kitchen) for installation of kitchen exhaust unit.
- Demolition works for renovation of toilets.
- Painting of new kitchen storeroom and renovated toilets.
- Painting of floor and carpeting of mezzanine storeroom.
- Removal of package aircon unit in Museum and repair of wall penetration.
- Building of storeroom wall and door and lining of toilet wall to prevent vermin entering hall.
- Assist with fabrication of Chinese New Year festival store facades, fabrication of Temple entrance roof and set-up and take down for all 4 Chinese New Year festivals.
- Mowing of Temple lawn 2 years.
- Volunteer for numerous working bees.

Throughout his years as a member of the Society Brayden has always promoted the aims of the Society and worked hard to further the development of the Society's facilities and grounds for the benefit of its members. He also leads by example and through his actions, he is a fine example of a great role model for the younger members of the Society.



Roland Chin AM

President