

**2024/25 CWS
OFFICE HOLDERS
AND COMMITTEE**

Patron

Mr Richard (Dick) Griffiths

Vice Patrons

Mr Austin Chin (Junior)
Mr Alfred On OAM

President

Mr Roland Chin

Vice President

Mr Daryl Chin

General Secretary

Mr Patrick Chin

Treasurer

Ms Kristina Chin

Chinese Secretary

Mr Chris Lay

Committee Members

Alice Chin
Andrew Chin
Chantelle Chin
Courtney Chin
Melanie Chin
Mikayla Chin
Randall Chin
Tina Griffiths
Bronwyn Lo
Dennis Low
Stephen Pearson
Jade Schembri
Natasha Yuen

Temple Officer

Dennis Low

Public Officer

Kristina Chin

Auditor

Eddie Lai

UPCOMING EVENTS/KEY DATES

- Wednesday 29 January - Chinese New Year
- Lion Dance Street Blessings
 - Friday 7 February - Casuarina Shopping Square
 - Saturday 8 February - Darwin CBD/Parap and Fannie Bay
 - Sunday 9 February - Palmerston and Coolalinga
 - Saturday 15 February - Northern Suburbs
- Friday 14 February, 10:00am - Seniors Luncheon Recommences
- Sunday 16 February, 8:00am (Cutters)/9:00am (Threaders) - Sartee Threading
- Saturday 22 February, 6:30pm - Chinese New Year Banquet
- Thursday 27 February, Friday 28 February and Saturday 1 March - Chinese New Year Festival Preparation and Setup
- Saturday 1 March, 11:00am - Chinese New Year Festival

FROM THE COMMITTEE

Goong Hee Fatt Choy!

The Committee would like to wish all of our members a Happy Chinese New Year.

In particular the Committee thanks the troupe members, families and supporters for their commitment throughout Chinese New Year.



As always blessings received through the New Year support the ongoing operation and maintenance of the Temple.



FROM THE COMMITTEE CONTINUED...

Chinese New Year Festival

Coming Soon

*Saturday 1 March 2025
11 am*

Territory Netball Stadium

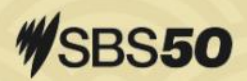
235 Abala Road, Marrara



Free Event

- * *Food Stalls*
- * *Live Entertainment*
- * *CWS Dance Troupes*
- * *Fully Airconditioned*
- * *Performances*
- * *Cooking Demonstrations*

In partnership with...





FROM THE COMMITTEE CONTINUED...



WE NEED YOU

Chung Wah Sartee Threading - Working Bee

A working bee will be held on 16 February from 8:00am (for cutters) and 9:00am (for threaders) to cut and prepare the famous Chung Wah Society sartees to be sold at the Chinese New Year Festival.

A light lunch will be provided for volunteers.

Chinese New Year Festival - Volunteers Needed

We are seeking volunteers for the Chinese New Year Festival. Assistance is requested on Thursday evening (27 February), Friday (28 February) and on the festival day (Saturday 1 March).

Please contact Tina Griffiths for further information on 0409 470 788.





2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On 24 November 2024, the Chung Wah Society held its Annual General Meeting (AGM). We would like to extend a big thank you to the existing Committee for their time and effort over the 2023/2024 year.

We welcome the new Committee and look forward to seeing what the new year brings us. A big welcome to our new Committee members - David Chin, Patrick Chin and Chris Lay.

We also give thanks to Iain MacPherson and Nathan Tam for their invaluable service to the Committee over the years. Whilst they have left the Committee - we're sure we will see them at our Chung Wah events!



Every year at the AGM, the Chung Wah Society awards a worthy recipient the Bill Wong Meritorious Award. The award recognises a member in the community who has promoted the objects of the Chung Wah Society.

The objects of the Society, include the promotion of goodwill in the community, promoting the social, sporting, cultural, educational interest and welfare of the Society's members, maintenance of the Chinese temple as a place of worship, maintaining the facilities for members and the preservation of Chinese history in the Northern Territory.

The Annual Award is named in honour of Mr William Wong OAM (Bill Wong), a well-known and respected Chinese elder who dedicated over 50 years to the Chung Wah Society and during that time held the roles of general secretary and temple officer.

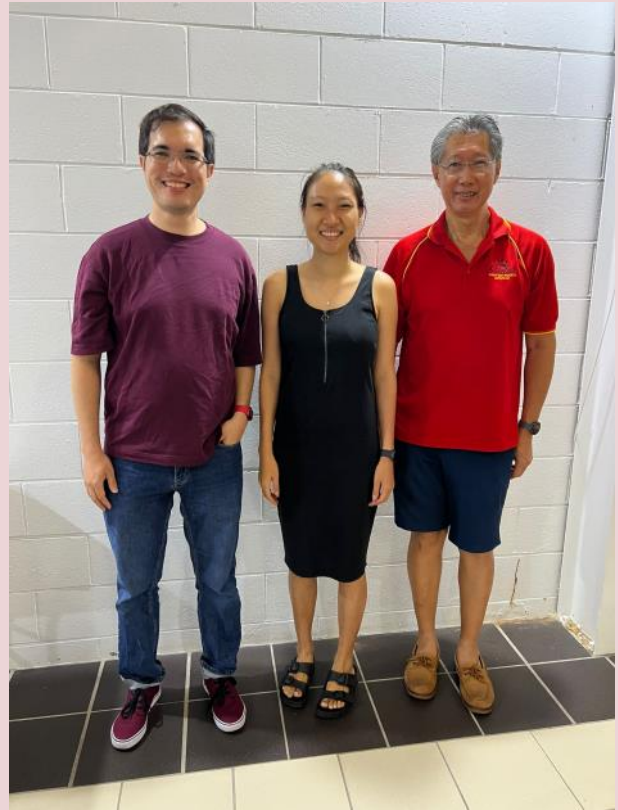
The 2024 Bill Wong Meritorious Service Award was awarded to Mr Frank Schembri. Frank has supported Chung Wah over many years by volunteering for key roles and tasks at the major annual events held by the Society. Of note, is his many appearances at the annual Chung Wah Children's Christmas Party to bring good tidings to all that attended.





2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CONTINUED...

Frank has also supported other annual Chung Wah events such as the Moon Festival and Chinese New Year Festival events where he was the MC and auctioneer of raffle prizes at these events. Not only is Frank providing his public speaking skills as a volunteer, but he is also an annual donor of raffle prizes to help with the fundraising activities of the Society. Congratulations Frank!



At the AGM, the Committee may nominate a person for Life Membership who has rendered outstanding services to the Association. Mikayla Chin and Stephen Pearson were both awarded this honour at our recent AGM.

Mikayla has been involved with Chung Wah Society from an early age as a helper for her father Daryl Chin, a long serving Committee member of Chung Wah and as a member of the Jade Dragons Dance Troupe and the Chung Wah Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe.

Mikayla joined the Chung Wah Management Committee in 2014 and expanded her involvement and participation with the Chung Wah Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe, by taking on the role as Lion troupe Co-ordinator to attend to the many requests for lion and dragon performances throughout the year. Mikayla has undertaken many hours to administer and co-ordinate the teams in order to achieve a successful outcome for such requests. Whilst considering these requests, she also understands and conveys the meaning and significance of the lion and dragon troupe blessings and performances that is tailored for social, special celebration and requests from government and other community groups to preserve the long history and culture of the Chung Wah Lion and Dragon teams.



2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CONTINUED...

The Chinese New Year Lion blessings each year are a key event for Chung Wah and are aligned to the maintenance of the Chinese Temple as well as the religious and cultural observation of the customs associated with these blessings. Mikayla has provided her logistical know how that she has learnt and refined over the years, in such manner, that the Management Committee and Senior Lion Troupe members have confidence that the events will not only be successful, but will be achieved in accordance with the customs and delivered at the high standard as to be expected by the general community.

Mikayla has been a key co-ordinator of the Chung Wah's Lion and Dragon Troupes visits to Bendigo. Her supportive role to the other co-ordinators and Management Committee has contributed to the good reputation and recognition of Chung Wah by the continued invitation from the Bendigo Chinese Association to participate in the Bendigo Easter Festival with a select Lion and Dragon Troupe teams from Sydney, Melbourne and other cities.

Mikayla is a quiet achiever, who does not seek or expect personal recognition and is most deserving of being awarded Life Membership of the Chung Wah Society.

Stephen Pearson's involvement with Chung Wah started twenty odd years ago, around 2004 as a young 14 year old teenager following the ongoing involvement of his parents and his proud Chinese Ancestry. In the early days he quickly got involved with the Dragon Dance, performing with our then popular Dragon Ball as part of Darwin's premier annual social events. This then led him to joining the Lion Dance Troupe, learning about his ancestral Chinese traditions, culture and ethics.

Stephen continued with Lion Dance until 2008, when he then moved to Sydney to study at University. He however, managed to participate with our Lion Dance Troupe in the Bendigo Easter Festival in 2008, travelling there from Sydney. He then intermittently helped out the Lion Dance Troupe from 2008-2011 whenever he was in Darwin. After completing University in 2011 and returning to Darwin, attending Bendigo again that year he resumed regular training with the troupe for the past 13 years always helping out in any way he can.

In 2014 he took over from Wayne Lo as the instructor and coordinator at Chung Wah for the Junior Lion Dance Troupe. The Juniors have continued since then, importantly Emily Tjung came on as a coordinator and the group has greatly expanded. Stephen and Emily along with a team of dedicated Senior Lion Dancers generously donate several hours a week training children as young as 5 years old at the Hall proudly watched on by their mums and dads.

Stephen eventually joined the Chung Wah Committee in 2015. As well as being dedicated to the Junior Lion Dance Troupe, he then took charge of the IT subcommittee role and briefly did memberships, as well as supporting the rest of the Lion Dance subcommittee members.

Stephen helped organise the troupe's trip to Bendigo in 2016, with the others on the Bendigo subcommittee. He has been an integral part in organising our Chinese New Year shop blessings and subsequently been to each Bendigo trip from 2008 to present.

More recently in 2019, our President, Roland Chin brought back a dedicated Dragon Dance troupe to participate in the new Chinese New Year festivals. Stephen joined on as one of the first members of this new Dragon Troupe and remains with it today. He has remained heavily committed in coordinating both groups of Juniors (Juniors and "Kindy") with Emily, a committed member of the Dragon Dance troupe and professionally coordinating IT for the Committee.

Stephen Pearson is one of our "Quiet Achievers" that lead by example, never expecting any thanks or acknowledgement. For his extraordinary ongoing contribution over the past 20 years, Stephen is most deserving of being awarded Life Membership of the Chung Wah Society.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY





CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY CONTINUED...





CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY CONTINUED...





CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY CONTINUED...





CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY CONTINUED...





SENIORS' CHRISTMAS PARTY





SENIORS' CHRISTMAS PARTY CONTINUED...





SENIORS' CHRISTMAS PARTY CONTINUED...





EYE DOTTING CEREMONY



CHINESE NEW YEAR - SYMBOL OF RESILIENCE

The past few months, especially in the lead up to last Christmas eve, saw the wave of Cyclone Tracy commemorative events, documentaries and reunions. In the words of the Bill and Boyd song, "Santa never made into Darwin"; and neither did the Rabbit.

On January 23, 1974, the Chinese New Year of the Wood Tiger, was celebrated with great enthusiasm. The Chung Wah Society organised a religious procession to celebrate the Hoy Yin festival. The procession, which wound through the streets of inner-city Darwin, was a colourful and lively event that showcased the rich cultural heritage of the Chinese community. The success of this procession generated significant enthusiasm and led to donations for the purchase of a new ceremonial lion head and possibly a dragon head for the Temple.

Curiously, the event does not seem to have been reported in the newspapers and, while there is always room for more research, neither have any photographs surfaced. The procession was written about in the government publication Northern Territory Affairs where it was stated "This year, for the first time in more than a decade, Darwin saw Chinese New Year celebrated in traditional style." The article goes on to say:



And borne high above the crowd, Yook Wong, principal God in Darwin's Chinese Temple, gazed down in serene benevolence. Accompanied by the 10 saints of the temple, Yook Wong was returning to the place of worship on the fourth day of the Chinese New year after spending three days in Heaven.

Throughout the year, the Society continued to engage in various community activities. On May 21, 1974, the Society was approached to participate in a centenary celebration street parade on September 28, 1974. The Society agreed to take part, utilising the ceremonial lion for the parade. This event, organised by local historian, Peter Spillett, was to commemorate the 150th anniversary of European settlement at Fort Dundas on Melville Island in 1824. The preparations for the parade were meticulous, with the organiser, Mr David Lam, ensuring that the lion dancers and stilt walkers would make a grand impression. The parade was a resounding success, with Chung Wah's contribution earning two trophies, highlighting the community's cultural pride and artistic talent.

The 1974 annual general meeting minutes record the report of the retiring president, Mr David Gee:



CHINESE NEW YEAR - SYMBOL OF RESILIENCE CONTINUED...

He said we ABC and Chinese immigrants from other countries should be proud of our heritage and he urged everyone to be proud to maintain its art, customs, philosophy, and ways of life. At the same time, he urged members to take a more active part in Darwin community affairs. By so doing, this would enhance the prestige of the Chinese community as a whole.

The final committee meeting of 1974 locked in arrangements for the Christmas Tree function to be held on 18 December, but no mention is made of any plans for the ensuing New Year.

However, the joy and achievements of 1974 were overshadowed by the catastrophic Cyclone Tracy on December 24, 1974. As we all know, the cyclone caused widespread devastation, including significant damage to the community hall and the destruction of the Temple. In the aftermath, the Society had to cancel the order for the new ceremonial lion head, incurring a loss of \$300 as the Hong Kong makers refused to refund the deposit.

Despite the challenges posed by Cyclone Tracy, the Chinese community in Darwin demonstrated resilience and solidarity. The first meeting of the CWS post-cyclone was held on March 16, 1975, where the secretary reported the insurers had offered \$10,000 for the loss of the caretakers cottage, \$10,000 for the loss of the Temple, And some \$28, for the partial loss of the community



hall. The community's focus shifted to recovery and rebuilding, with a renewed sense of unity and determination. Planning of a new Temple was immediately deferred until Mr Edmond Yuen could consult CHIN Loong Tang in Sydney.

The events of 1974-1975 highlighted the strength and cultural richness of Darwin's Chinese community. The celebrations of Chinese New Year and the Hoy Yin festival, the successful participation in the centenary parade, and the resilience shown in the face of Cyclone Tracy all underscored the community's commitment to preserving their heritage and contributing to the broader Darwin society.



CHINESE NEW YEAR - SYMBOL OF RESILIENCE CONTINUED...



On 7 January 1975, the Northern Territory Legislative formally established the Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust. Creation of the Trust was not without political controversy as the Commonwealth Minister for the Northern Territory had tried to put various arrangements without consulting either the Legislative Assembly or the Darwin City Council. Chair of the Trust was Mr Harold 'Tiger' Brennan, assisted by representatives of various organisations. The appointed citizens' representative was Mr Alec Fong Lim.

While there was no official Chinese New Year function in 1975, we can be sure that those families remaining in Darwin after the evacuation did indeed celebrate the Year of the Wood Rabbit. The Chung Wah Society's efforts to maintain cultural traditions and foster community spirit played a crucial role in enhancing the prestige of the Chinese community in Darwin, even during challenging times.

References

Chung Wah Society, Minute Book, 21 December 1971 - 16 May 1976.

Department of the Northern Territory, 'When the Gods walked abroad', Northern Territory Affairs, Vol. 8 No. 2, 1974, pp 3-5.

Northern Territory Legislative Assembly, 'Debates - 7 January 1975', Hansard.

Images

Image 1 - Chinese New Year Procession, Cavenagh Street, Darwin, Year of the Water Dog, 1922.

Image 2 - Opening of the Temple post-Cyclone Tracy restoration, Year of the Earth Horse, 1978.

Image 3 - Street Parade, Smith Street, Darwin, for the opening of the Temple in the Year of the Earth Pig following repair of WW II damage, 1959.

Images courtesy of Library and Archives NT.

POMELO TREE



It is with sadness that we report the loss of the temple's pomelo tree, which was severely damaged by strong winds on 4 February. While the temple fence sustained some damage, fortunately, no one was hurt, and no third-party property was harmed. The tree suffered breaks at the base, but members led by Dennis Low (Temple Officer) and Andrew Chin (Building Maintenance Coordinator) worked to replant part of the trunk. A backup tree was sourced, should the restoration fail.

Planted near the Ancestors' Chapel in the late 1960s or around the time of Cyclone Tracy in 1974, the tree was donated by Doug Yuen, son of Mrs. Essie Yuen (Sue Ching Moo), a lifelong worshipper. Its leaves have been used for cleansing the temple's altars, especially during Chinese New Year, while its fruit, a symbol of abundance and luck, was presented on the altars.

Over the years, worshippers made donations to the tree for the use of its leaves. The late Bill Wong, long-serving Temple Officer, would collect any coins found in the tree and deposit them in the donation box during his daily visits. After many fruitless years, Doug's brother, Les, suggested stressing the tree with rusty nails, and soon after, the tree began to bear fruit, much to everyone's joy.



The fruit was enjoyed by worshippers and displayed on the altars.

The pomelo tree is a cherished part of our traditions and we are committed to replanting it - whether the original or a replacement - to continue honouring these practices. Thanks go to Mervyn Chin (past Temple Officer) for his historical recollection and to Dennis Low, Andrew Chin, Des Yuen, Wayne Lo and Austin Chin for their assistance in clearing the damage and restoring the tree.






POMELO TREE CONTINUED...







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DARWIN CHINESE TEMPLE THE CHINESE YEAR OF THE SNAKE



FESTIVALS AT THE TEMPLE

Wednesday 29 January
 Saturday 1 February
 Thursday 6 February
 Thursday 13 February
 Tuesday 18 March
 Monday 31 March
 Saturday 12 April
 Monday 7 July
 Sunday 13 July
 Friday 18 July
 Saturday 13 September
 Sunday 28 September
 Saturday 8 November
 Monday 17 November

New Year	Official service at midnight Tuesday 28 January
Hoy Yin (Opening seals)	Official services at 0800 hours
Yook Wong Di	Official services at 0800 hours
Chin Lo Kwan	Official services at 0800 hours
Kwan Yin	Official services at 0800 hours
Buk Di	Official services at 0800 hours
Yuen Hun & Yee Ling	Official services at 0800 hours
Lu Bun	Official services at 0800 hours
Kwan Yin	Official services at 0800 hours
Kwang Sing Di	Official services at 0800 hours
Toy Buk Sing Goon	Official services at 0800 hours
Ho Wong	Official services at 0800 hours
Kwan Yin	Official services at 0800 hours
Wah Kwong	Official services at 0800 hours

OTHER FESTIVALS

Sunday 30 March

Ching Ming Festival

Official service at Memorial Chapel at 0900 hours,
 Then at the Chinese Memorial Cemetery – Stuart Park

Friday 5 September

Yee Lun Festival

Official service at Memorial Chapel at 1930 hours,
 Then in the open space between the hall and Temple

OTHER FESTIVALS OBSERVED

Saturday 31 May

Dragon Boat Festival

No Official service at Temple

Monday 6 October

Moon Festival

No Official service at Temple

Sunday 21 December

Doong Festival

No Official service at Temple