

## Mr Bounkong Kerr


### Summary of the Events of the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel

The Hostel has been in operation since 1989. The Process from initial planning to the full operation of the hostel can be divided into four stages.

- (1) Early in 1989, the Indo-China Chinese Association NSW, the Vietnamese Community in Australia NSW Chapter, the Cambodian Association and the Laos Association jointly submitted their application to the Federal and State Government, to provide care services to the elderly in the community. With the approval of the authorities and tremendous support from the Indo-Chinese communities, they began their work. Unfortunately, during the fundraising campaign for the Love the Elderly and Children Foundation, some associations withdrew from the project. As a result, the project was delayed for more than ten years.
- (2) The approval by the Australian Government was expiring in 2001 and hence, any funding granted by the Government for the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel would be withdrawn if the Hostel could not be built in accordance with schedule. Given the circumstances, the Preparatory Committee was faced with desperation of seeking a solution for the project to materialize. Firstly, a Trust Foundation was set up. Anyone who contributed ten thousand dollars to the foundation would be entitled to become one of the trustees. As the saying goes, "unity means power", and we were able to get 31 people to join the foundation, coupled with tremendous support from overseas organizations, the Indo-Chinese community and overseas Chinese communities, entrepreneurs and local Chinese associations in Sydney. With this tremendous support, we were finally able to implement our project (the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel) after more than a decade of delay. It was wonderful news to the Indo-Chinese community in Western Sydney.
- (3) The construction of the hostel commenced in 2002 and it was completed within a year. In August 2003, two months after its completion, the Hostel began to accept residents. On 1st May 2004, several hundred people, including those from the Federal and State Government Departments, local councilors, the New South Wales Commissioner of Police, numerous Sydney Chinese community representatives, Hostel Trustees, and other reputable members from the public and the media, attended the opening ceremony to mark the official launch of the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel.

It was the ingenious planning that made the Hostel look like a luxurious residential apartment. Structured with an ample parking lot at the front of the Hostel, the building is speckled with greenery and the center of the complex is adorned with a beautiful Chinese Style garden. The Hostel consists of 30 rooms, each with a wardrobe, bathroom and restroom. In addition, it has a spacious dining area that can accommodate more than 80 people, an entertainment room, a treatment room, conference rooms and staff offices.

It has been 10 years since the commencement of the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel, our enthusiastic staff and committed voluntary workers still endeavour to care for the elderly. The hostel has always lived up to the  
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stringent standards set by the Aged Care Standard and Accreditation Agency, and has always been highly praised and complimented.

- (4) In early 2012, meetings were held by the Board of Trustees to discuss the future plan for the foundation. Due to the fact that the demand for aged care service is increasing exponentially, the Board of Trustees decided to extend the hostel. An application was made to the Federal Government and a proposal for an additional fifty-eight rooms was submitted. As we have been operating the hostel in accordance with Australian Government requirements, our application for the extension of the hostel was soon approved. An extension grant of two million dollars was received from the Government accompanied with a six million dollars low interest loan. The extension of Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel commenced in late 2012. It is expected to complete by the end of 2013 and the second group of residents will be admitted.

Over the years, the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel has progressed from a humble thirty bed hostel to a well equipped and well managed eighty-eight bed elderly care hostel. We owe our achievements to the Australian Federal Government, the Health and Aging Department, the Council, the public and the cooperation among trustees, residents and their families. Finally, it is my pleasure to be one of the trustees of Love the Elderly & Children Foundation. I had the privilege of meeting many Chinese community leaders from the Indo-Chinese community and other countries. We all possess the same compassion and selfless dedication, and exert ourselves to serve the elderly in Sydney. I hope that we keep up our good work and continue to serve society diligently.