

Memories of the 5th Chairman of the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel Mr Vincent Kong

Ten years ago, under the recommendation of Mr. Oai Trieu, I joined Love the Elderly and Children Foundation as a trustee. My early memories of Australia were of arriving here as a boy. My family and I were refugees. It took me a while to adjust to a place with a different culture and language, however after years of hard work, I now live a comfortable life in the land of promise. I possess an overwhelming feeling of thanks to have been given so many opportunities and hence would like to show my gratitude by making contributions to society, which is why I participate in the Love the Elderly and Children Foundation.

In 2003, with the great effort of the trustees, the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel was built as the first elderly hostel in Western Sydney. It was built to cater for 30 residents and was formally put into operation in October 2003. Initially the trustees, staff and voluntary workers of the hostel faced many challenges and difficulties. Fortunately, the members involved were co-operative and determined to achieve an efficient running of the organization. As a result of everyone's hard work, along with the fact that the hostel was well managed, well-equipped and has a pleasant environment, the hostel became popular among the community. However due to the limited number of places available, the elderly who sought placement had to be put on a long waiting list before being admitted. With the rise in numbers of the ageing population, the extension of the Hostel is inevitable. This is so as to provide care services to a greater number of frail in the community.

During my term as the 5th Chairman of the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel in 2008, the Board of trustees encountered various financial difficulties due to lack of funding. Fortunately, the trustees upheld the traditional Chinese virtue of filial piety, and actively supported the extension project with an enthusiasm of serving the elderly. An Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel open day was organized to showcase the hostel. Government officials, the media and the public were invited to visit it. Afterwards, the Hostel's reputation was enhanced by the media's report and the extension of the hostel was broadly recognized by the public.

Hence I would like to express my appreciation to TVBA, the Lions Club associations as well as many other associations who have given us support. Additionally, I would like to thank the celebrities such as Miss Chinese and Miss Vietnamese who have added color to our hostel by participating in our charitable sales activity and visiting the elderly in the hostel.

Mr. Oai Trieu's (one of our trustees) generous and admirable contribution to this organization is well worth mentioning. During Mr. Trieu's Birthday, which was organized by his students, Mr. Trieu donated all his gifts to the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel. His students were deeply touched and spared no efforts to raise funds. Soon, we were able to purchase a piece of land for the future extension of the Hostel.

Currently, the extension project is almost complete. Upon completion, there will be an additional fifty-eight beds, which means the Hostel would be able to accommodate a total of eighty-eight residents. The Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel has its achievements attributed to the joint efforts of trustees, staff and voluntary workers. Each and every one of us has altruistically contributed with the spirit of selfless dedication. I hope that under the brilliant leadership of successive Chairpersons, we can achieve a greater leap in the services we provide to the community and assisting the elderly in finding their retirement home where they can enjoy a happy and peaceful life in their remaining years.