

(5) The Elderly Home Project – All Out Commitment

When our Society undertook the Croydon elderly home project in 1989, our leaders were well aware of the immensity of the difficulties lying ahead. Even though there was funding provided by the Government to support this project, a sum of \$140,000 was needed urgently to enable the completion of the purchase of the two properties involved. Subsequent to that, there was an urgency to commence the provision of aged hostel service from the useable part of the building purchased. Then, it would be necessary to gather funds to renovate the remaining parts of the building to improve its condition to a level suitable for use as an elderly hostel. All these would require unceasing efforts to fundraise continuously for a considerable period of time. As our Society had only limited resources, to complete the elderly home project would require the all-out commitment of our Society, and thus the development plan of our Society adopted in 1987 had to be modified to accommodate the situation. Three members of our Board joined the Board of EACH, together with several enthusiastic members. All of our volunteers were directed to contribute their efforts on fundraising events for the elderly home.

In order to realise the establishment of the aged hostel at Croydon, our Society reached out to the wider community to seek support and assistance. During this process, it was discovered that there were considerable community misconceptions about the work, viewpoints and direction of both our Society and EACH. This was caused by certain people in the community who deliberately spread rumours, connecting our Society and EACH to certain aspect of motherland politics. Realising this situation, our Society reviewed the purposes of its existence and the scope of its services, recognising that our Society was an organisation registered in Australia with a primary aim to provide services within Australia. Its position on any matter should be based on the national policy of the Government of Australia. On the other hand, as our Society aimed to provide services to various communities, its target groups of clients should be irrespective of backgrounds, religions or viewpoints. Our Society should have friendly relationships with all communities. Under this clear understanding, our Society started to project a clear image in the community.

August 1989

Our Society, the Chinese Youth League and the Sydney Chinese School entered into an agreement to provide interest-free loans of a total sum of \$140,000 to EACH to allow the completion of purchase of the Croydon properties. CASS provided an interest-free loan of \$50,000, which was not paid back until the end of 1993.

5 February 1990

The Croydon Elderly Hostel commenced to provide services.

Fundraising activities organised in 1990 for the Croydon Elderly Hostel included:

April: Planned a large-scale cultural performance, which raised \$26,000.

August: Organised a charity dinner, which raised \$22,000.

Fundraising activities organised in 1991 for the Croydon Elderly Hostel included:

March: Assisted the staging of a charity Cantonese opera performance titled “Lion Roaring”, which raised about \$10,000.

October: Staged a children’s drama performance titled “Malanhua”, which raised about \$16,000.

6 September 1992

Organised a large scale “Dragon Charity Walk” fundraising activity and raised \$52,000 for the Elderly Hostel project. This activity was kindly assisted by Wayin Network and Hong Kong Students’ Associations of various universities and colleges in Sydney. It was also sponsored by Po Hong Group of Companies.

December 1992

Having the experiences of those fundraising activities organised for the Elderly Hostel project, the Society considered that it would continue to carry out activities to raise fund for the Croydon Elderly Hostel project and other public benevolent institutions. To facilitate this work, the Society resolved to establish the “CASS Charity Trust Fund”. The Trust Fund received approval from the Australian Taxation Office. Donations of \$2 and over can receive tax deduction concession.

12 September 1993

Organised another large scale “Dragon Charity Walk” fundraising activity and raised \$27,000 for the Croydon Elderly Hostel Project, and \$3,000 for the Westmead Children’s Hospital. The Po Hong Group of Companies sponsored generously again.