

WYCAA (VANCOUVER)



24 Aug 1990



17 July 2010

The Wah Yan College Alumni (Vancouver) Association was thrilled to be awarded the opportunity to host the 1990 Wah Yan International Conference. It was a monumentally challenging task for a young organization with a history of only 8 years and limited resources.

Inspired by the Wah Yan spirit, the board of directors readily accepted the challenge and responsibility to host the first international conference outside of Hong Kong, which would be attended by Wahyanites from all over the world. As it was a re-union of Wahyanites, the main focus was to promote unity and embrace the Wah Yan Spirit.

When the WYCAA (Vancouver) board of directors and the IC organizing committee started to formulate plans for the program, it dawned on the members that being immigrants in a foreign land, the Wah Yan re-union should leave a mark in Vancouver. So the planning committee adopted the city's environmentally friendly theme and launched a tree planting project in a popular scenic spot in Vancouver. Cdn.\$3000.00 was donated to plant 3 mature trees in Vanier Park, a popular waterfront park in Vancouver both for locals and tourists. Children's festival and Shakespearean summer theatre and kite flying contests are held in this park annually. Tree planting was in tune with the association's objectives of (1) bringing awareness to the environment and (2) leaving a significant mark for Wahyanites present and future, and their descendants.

Two 10-year old, 20-foot tall mature trees, an oak and a maple, were planted in the summer of 1990. Father A.J. Deignan S.J. and Father Sean Coghlan S.J. together with approximately 25 local Wahyanites attended the tree planting ceremony. The oak was chosen for its strength and sturdiness and the maple tree represented Canada. The Canadian flag, in fact, carries a maple leaf. The two trees were symbolic of Wahyanites and their families planting roots in Canada and growing in numbers, stronger and healthier year after year. A third tree, a hemlock, was planted a couple of months later.

The trees are now 30 years old and standing tall, stately and sturdy in a tranquil setting complimenting the inspiration that led to the tree planting project 20 years ago. The trees have grown, so has WYCAA (Vancouver) membership which now numbers over 200. Younger and more energetic members have now joined the association and the board of directors. Many active new members are graduates of the 1980's, 1990's, 2000's, with the youngest member belonging to the class of 2009.

A tour to visit the site was organized for Saturday July 17, 2010 marking the 20th anniversary of the project. The objectives of the visit were (1) to pay tribute to the late Mr. Ken Suen, president of WYCAA (Vancouver) in 1990, (2) to introduce the 20-year-old project to young members and new members, and (3) to nurture the kindred spirit among Wahyanites and their families. Over 50 people participated in this event. To strengthen the kindred spirit among Wahyanites all over the world, group pictures were taken for a collage to be presented to the WYCAA (Los Angeles) at the 2010 International Conference.