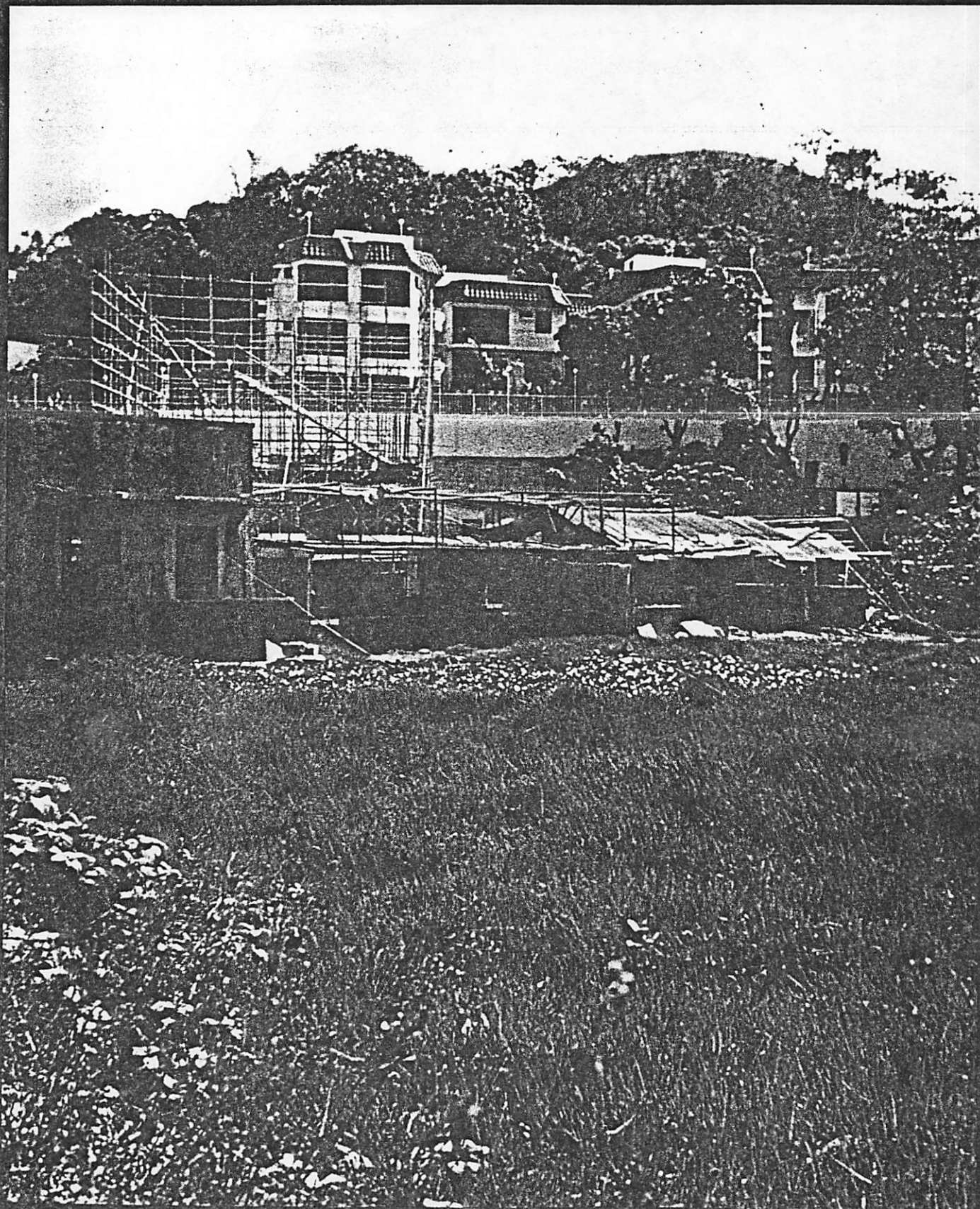


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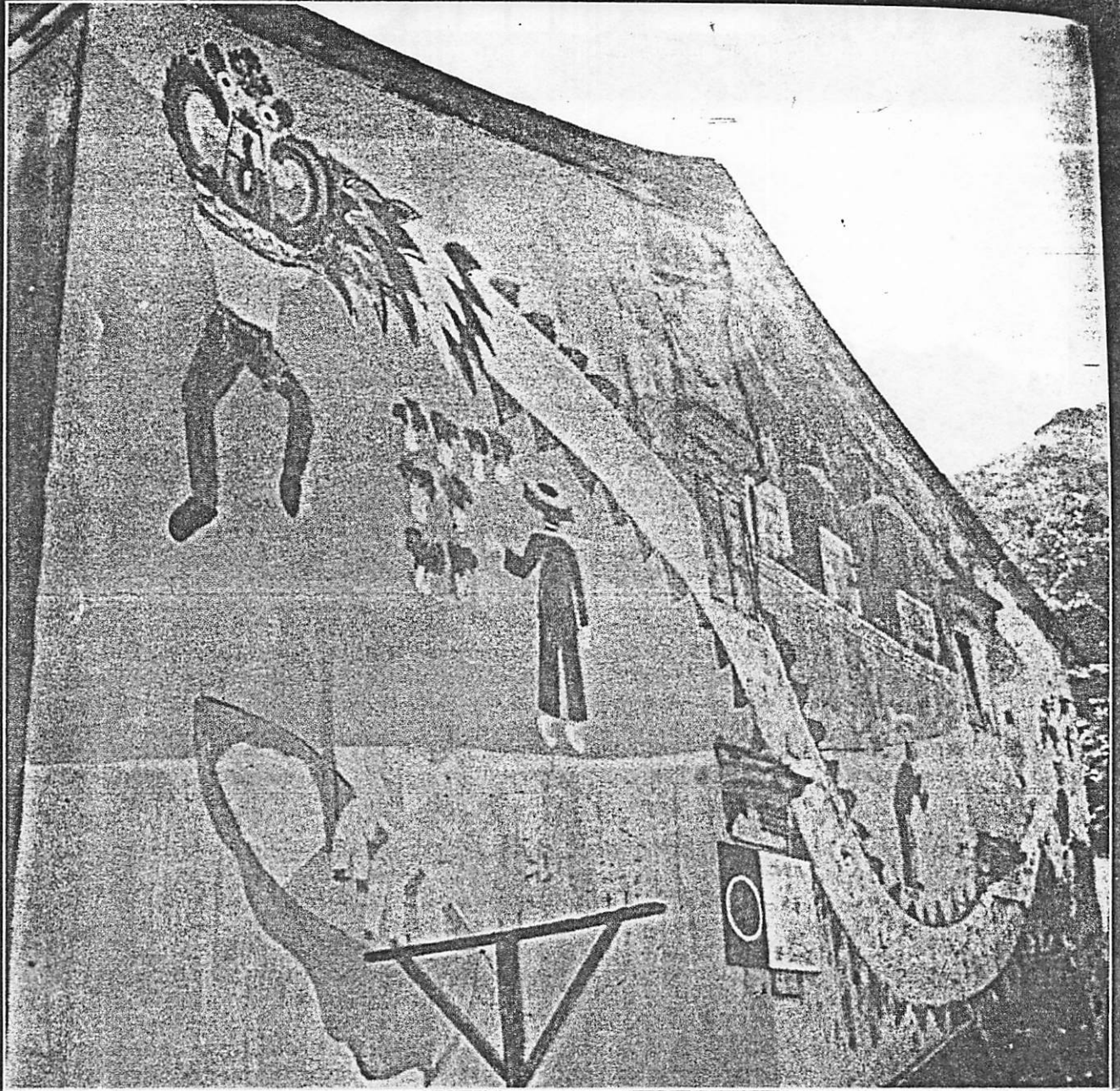
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南圍村的蛻變 Metamorphosis of Nam Wai

Metamorphosis of Nam Wai Village

A painting showing the history of Nam Wai



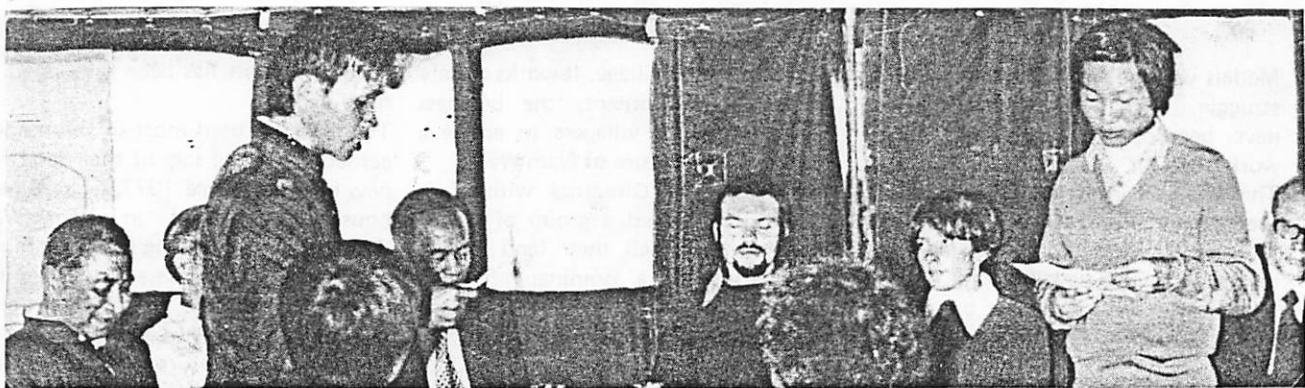
Nam Wai was one of the poorest villages in the Sai Kung District until the mid 70s. Houses were small and roughly built. Very little means for subsistence was available in the village. For many years, Nam Wai was forced to be self-sufficient through farming and fishing because of the lack of road and transport facilities. However, agricultural output was very limited. Resources were used for household consumption with a meager amount for trade and no extra to store up for bad crop years. Villagers had to work 20 hours a day to help meet their needs.

With the People's Republic of China sending cheap food to Hong Kong, it was no longer feasible for the village to make a reasonable profit by selling vegetables. Inevitably, most of Nam Wai's farming land was abandoned. Some villagers sold their land to outsiders who speculated for land development.

In 1977, only fifteen people worked in the village and 120 commuted to construction and factory jobs in Hong Kong and Kowloon. Others found jobs in Chinese restaurants overseas. Virtually all of the social and economic functions of the village disappeared. The village as an integral social unit was losing its identity.

Today, more job opportunities are offered as the number of business establishments increase. Productivity within the village is rising, and the physical image of Nam Wai has improved substantially.

These positive changes were conceived when the Institute of Cultural Affairs contemplated a model project for human development. It worked closely with the Secretary of the New Territories and Sai Kung District Officer, Robert Upton, to find a village that would be open to such a project. After visiting numerous villages and talking with the village representatives, the Institute found that Nam Wai's two village representatives (one representing the families of the Yau clan and the other the families of the Shing clan) were keen to venture into the village renewal scheme. The Institute decided that the local people had the resources, knowledge and desire to improve their conditions but lacked models and methods to effect change.



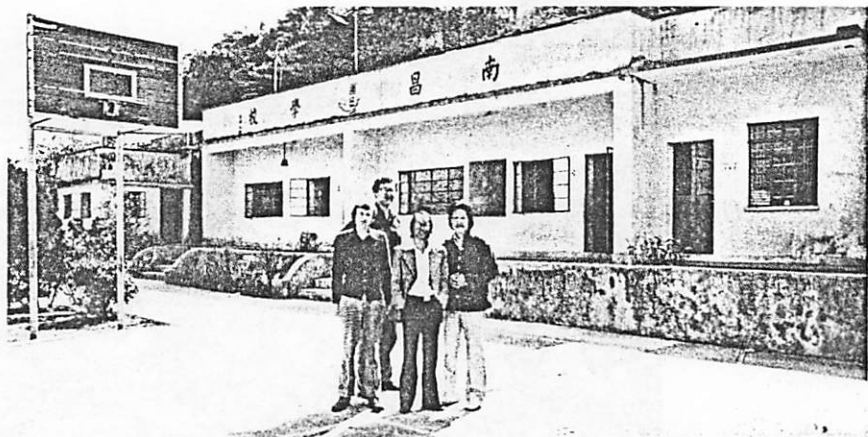
The Institute of Cultural Affairs is a global service organisation whose purpose is to motivate cooperative involvement within the community for human development. It was incorporated in Evanston, Illinois in 1954 as a private and non-profit organisation. It is now autonomously registered in 32 nations. It specialises in devising and implementing practical methods for comprehensive rural renewal. Its approach is based on the conviction that 'hope takes root' where people actively take part in directing the course of their own future.

The Nam Wai Development project began in February 1977. A prerequisite to beginning the project was that the villagers would agree to undertake a comprehensive development of their community. 'It is the village's project, not the ICA's,' said Mr. John Ballard of the ICA. 'We are only here to assist them in carrying out their plans.'

A week-long consultation involving 100 Nam Wai residents and 113 volunteer consultants from nine nations created a comprehensive plan with 13 components to deal with the social, economic and cultural life of Nam Wai. The wide-ranging plan included education, service, beautification, recreation, cultural tradition, business enterprise, agriculture and land development. The major focus was on rebuilding community identity.

The ICA studied the history and culture of the village. Their study encouraged the elders to write their history assimilating many clan records. The ICA sought to revitalise the village without hampering the preservation of its traditional Chinese cultural values. The villagers were asked to identify factors that were hindering the development of Nam Wai. The major block was the lack of any cooperative method of planning. It took many meetings - week after week of meeting with villagers, business advisors and government representatives to form the foundation for development.

NAM WAI HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT		THE PROPOSALS CHART		SOCIAL LIFE PROPOSAL	
ECONOMIC GROWTH PROPOSALS		B COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL		C 社會生活提案	
I RICHMOND TRADING PROJECT	II HUMAN POTENTIAL PROJECT	III ELDER INCOME PROJECT	IV COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT	V SERVICES FOR YOUTH PROJECT	VI COMMUNITY CARE PROJECT
VIKING HUMANITY PROJECT	III ELDER LITERACY PROJECT	IV ELDER INCOME PROJECT	V COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT	VI YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROJECT	VII FOUNDATIONAL PROJECT
CROP EXPANSION PROJECT	IV ELDER LITERACY PROJECT	V ELDER INCOME PROJECT	VI COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT	VII YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROJECT	VIII EARLY LEARN PROJECT
FRUIT MANAGEMENT PROJECT	V ELDER LITERACY PROJECT	VI ELDER INCOME PROJECT	VII COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT	VIII YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROJECT	IX SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION



ICA workers John Ballard (left) and Joseph Nagy (second from left) with villagers, James Shing (third from left) and Robert Yau (right).



Models were set up. 'It was however a struggle, trying something that has never been done before and making it work,' said Mr. Ballard.

The village leaders recognised land as their major resource. But the immense pressure to sell plots for quick profit meant haphazard development.

A major step forward by the village took place in 1978 when its decision-making body, Nam Wai Foundation, Ltd., was organised. It is a representative entity wholly owned by the villagers. Its first aim was to acquire some village-owned land which would be developed for income to support the Nam Wai Human Development project.

The Foundation has elected its Board of Directors. The Board meets monthly to discuss and decide on issues of im-

portance to the village. It works closely with the government, the business sector and local villagers to create a model for the future of Nam Wai.

The Board of Directors with their advisors persuaded a group of village landowners to sell their land to the Foundation at a nominal price. A total of 700,000 square feet of unused agricultural land was purchased by the Foundation using some of the HK\$15 million it has borrowed. The Foundation has entered into a joint venture partnership with an outside investor, Yuet Fat Investment Ltd., to develop the land.

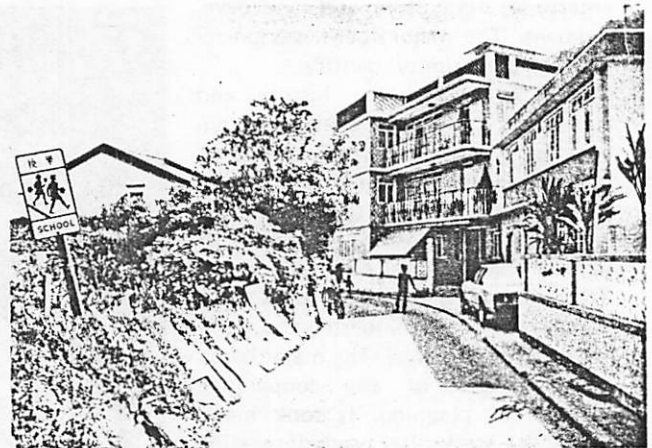
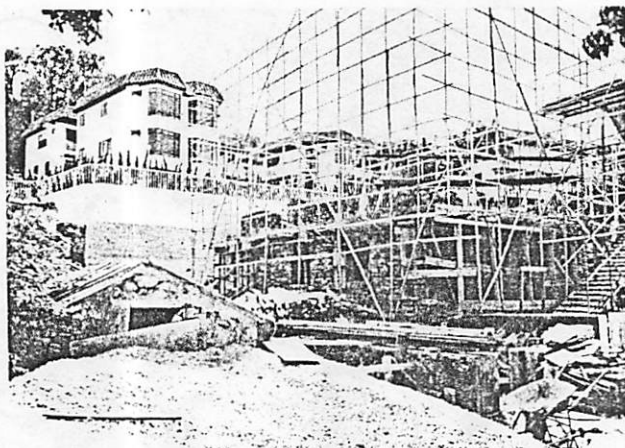
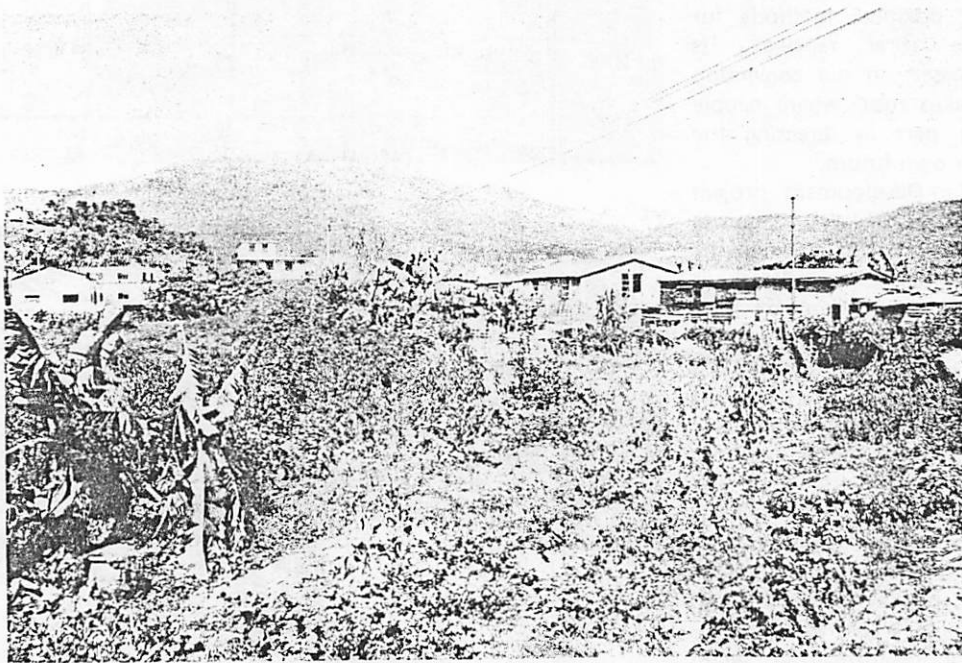
Under the agreement, the Foundation will receive a 51% share of profits of the development. Profits will be used for economic, social and physical improvements of Nam Wai. At least

HK\$12 million has been reinvested in the village.

The villagers used most of the money earned from the sale of their land for new housing. Since 1977, over 30 new houses were built in Nam Wai, dramatically improving the appearance of the village. Increased construction provided jobs for residents. It also allowed family members living outside the village to return. Other families put up apartments for rent to supplement their income.

'The process of building community is continuous,' said Mr. Ballard. 'One problem is solved and another appears. What is required is a core of community leaders from all age groups and backgrounds who will take responsibility for creating the solutions.'

The challenge facing the Foundation



was how to broaden the villagers' participation in the development of Nam Wai. The ICA believes that if someone else builds the plan for the village, it will probably fail because the villagers have no stake in it. Recently, the young people of Nam Wai have taken interest in the Foundation and have assumed positions of leadership, showing that capacity for leadership and service is expanding in the village.

As the Foundation continued to meet, more needs were recognised.

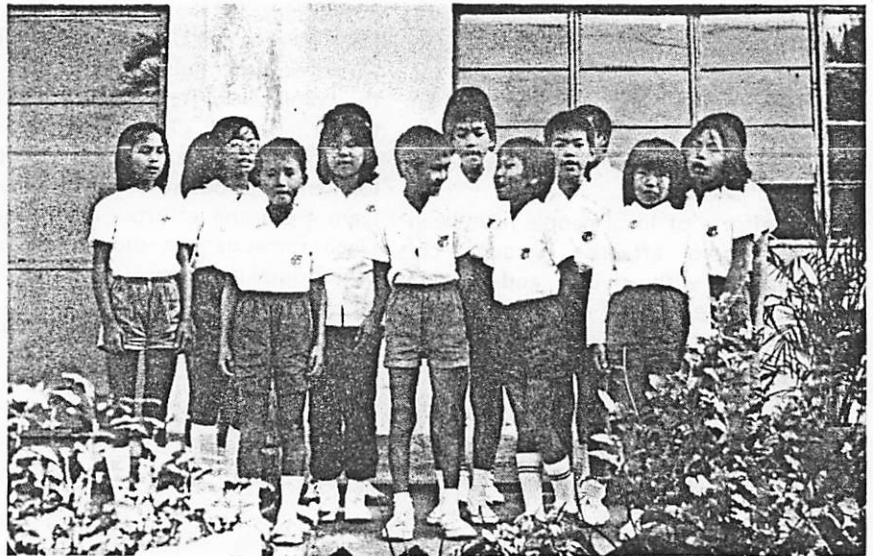
Most people work and spend their money outside the village. A method was needed to increase jobs in Nam Wai and keep money circulating within the village. Several economic experiments were tried, including mushroom growing and an electronic assembly plant. Neither proved to be economically feasible. Recently, a village leader has successfully established a packaging industry that employs a number of people.

A health survey revealed that a major problem in the village was dental care. A dental health day was organised in which 200 people attended. In 1979, a fully equipped dental clinic was organised with three village women trained as dental assistants.

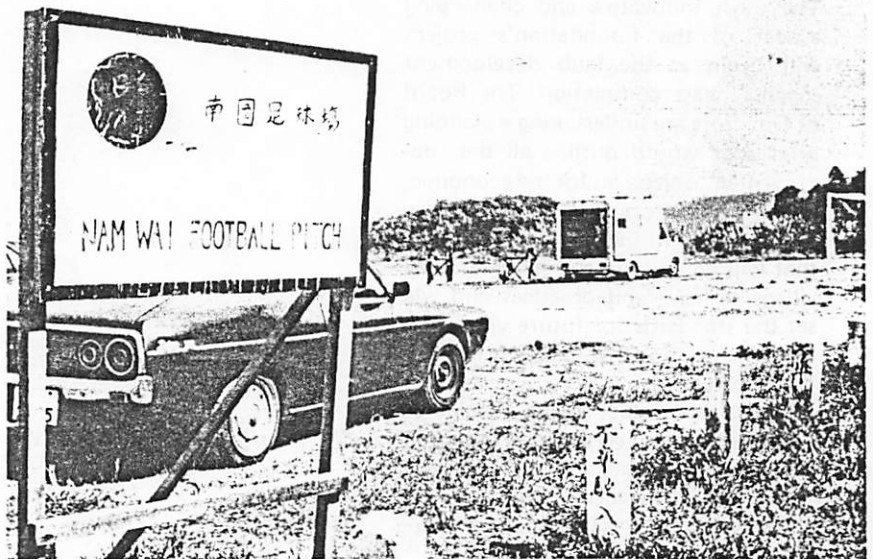
The village has undertaken construction of a community centre and a football pitch was made for youth and adult recreation. Various activities were organised in which both the youth and the adults participated. During Sundays, the open spaces made available for the village are filled with children playing basketball, bicycling or playing other outdoor games and adults discussing further development of the village and other relevant topics.



The small but fully equipped dental clinic



Children in the village have a brighter future



The people decided to acquire new breeding boars to increase pig production. Once a minor income producer in the village, pig production has increased by 30% over the past four years. In fact, the number of pigs is more than twice the total human population of Nam Wai!

Training in new skills for leadership and corporate action has been a major focus of the project. Four young people from Nam Wai participated in community development training schools in Korea and in the Philippines. Practical methods for economic, social and cultural development were learned. Government agriculturalists held day-long sessions with villagers on improved methods of care for pigs and poultry. A banker volunteered to lead several sessions for shop owners and village businessmen in accounting and management. Courses in planning and conducting meetings were given for village youth and women. 'When people have the skills and self-confidence, they can work miracles,' said Mr. Ballard.

The efforts of local people have been made more effective through co-operation with public and private sectors. The ICA has acted as a liaison. Government has provided services and helped define and implement policies while the business sector has provided management expertise and financial assistance. 'Most important has been the local villagers' knowledge of the issues as they are experienced in community life. Therefore the development reflects the real needs of the village,' according to Mr. Ballard.

The most innovative and challenging aspect of the Foundation's project will begin as the land development scheme nears completion. The Board of Directors are undertaking a planning brief that would outline all the improvement objectives for the economic, social and cultural life of the village. The brief will include special issues that will go beyond the scope of most village policies and practices and will set the standards for future village development in other parts of Hong Kong.

Some of the issues to be considered include a study of agricultural potential, transportation needs, economic base, education assistance, limitations to growth, local management and housing needs.

The Foundation has already begun this work by organising five committees.

The Management Committee will be responsible for the financial affairs and all correspondence of the Foundation. The Planning Committee will oversee the creation of the village master plan. The Community Centre Committee will oversee the construction of a new community centre and manage its use. The Social Service Committee will manage the dental clinic and investigate other areas for social service. The Pond Committee will negotiate to obtain control over the key village resource, the pond bordering the north side of the village which is now owned by people outside the village.

Each committee will consist of both Foundation Board members and interested villagers. Each will report monthly to the full meeting of the Board of Directors.

It was clear at the beginning that the Nam Wai Human Development project would be a demonstration project for the whole New Territories. According to Mr. Ballard, 'Nam Wai made a decision to pioneer community development methods so that others could learn from the efforts of the village. Once someone has shown the way, others quickly follow.'

by Josephine Martin





Temple recently built by the Yau clan in Nam Wai.

