



HAPPY MAILING

Located in an open street, a mobile cardboard booth decorated with a colourful tablecloth is transformed into a hub of happiness to spread joy to urban dwellers.

Happy Action invites passersby to create a personal message with the white cards and colour pencils provided at their homey corner. Stamps are also supplied by the group, free of charge.

Mr Yip first met Happy Action on the Valentine's Day in 2009. His encounter with the group offered him the opportunity to express his bottommost feelings hidden in his heart.

"I have not said anything like 'I love you' to my wife for over two decades," said Mr Yip. "We have been married for so long and I rarely give her anything on Valentine's Day." So, members of Happy Action drew a card with red roses for Mr Yip, which his wife received with smiles and delight.

Travelling through districts to spread happiness in the form of postcards, members of Happy Action lend out their ears to personal stories to draw up custom-made postcards for each participant.

"Before we write a letter or draw a postcard for someone, we listen to their stories," said Wong Man-foon, a 23-year-old painter from Happy Action. "I have heard youngsters sharing their dreams of becoming a dancer or director. Through this encounter, we do not feel like separated individuals who only care about our own business."

Depite the busy schoolwork at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, Ms

Wong continued to find time for Happy Action because she is motivated by the interaction and closeness built upon her conversation with each participant.

Encouraged by the quality products of Happy Action, a graduate from The Chinese University of Hong Kong came looking for the group to personalise a postcard for a Japanese friend.

"I said 'Happy Birthday' to her through Windows Live Messenger," said the graduate. "But I think she will be happier to receive a handmade postcard than an electronic line."

Mailing letters have its downside because they take so long to arrive. But Cally Yu, 40, founder of Happy Action, sees this as an advantage because the long delivery time encourages patience as we wait for the mail.

"Everyone loves speed. We send instant text messages without much thought. But letters are irreplaceable," said Ms Yu. "You can hold it in your hands and touch it. Writing a letter involves in-depth emotions and complex considerations."

Having taken part in many social actions, Ms Yu commented that protest rallies have little effect on society. Thus, she initiated Happy Action to bring laughter and stories back to the streets with ease.

Since its establishment in April 2008, Happy Action has left its footprints in Causeway Bay, Tsim Sha Tsui, Ngau Tau Kok and Fo Tan.

For their upcoming activities, please visit their website at <http://happyaction.wordpress.com/>.

So Lok-sin