

Widow wins fight to recover over \$2m

Defendants - family of her late husband - consent to judgment being entered against them

■ BY SELINA LUM

THE widow of a Singaporean businessman has won her fight to recover more than \$2 million from four family members who got part of the proceeds from the sale of his house.

The older brother of the businessman - who died in 2005 - had sold the Margate Road property for \$4.8 million.

Two years ago, Madam Wendy Chen Tsui Yu, 57, won a lawsuit against the brother, Mr Loo Chay Sit, for the sales proceeds. But the 62-year-old failed to pay up despite repeated demands. She then sued her mother-in-law Tan Chan Tee, 83, as well as Mr Loo's wife Chia Beng Eng, 57, and his sons Vuitton Loo Hong Kiat, 32, and Robin Loo Xiong Sheng, 28.

In separate court proceedings in 2008, Madam Tan, Madam Chia and Mr Vuitton Loo affirmed affidavits that they had received sales proceeds from Mr Loo Chay Sit. This was in the form of \$1 million in cash to Madam Tan, \$200,000 to Madam Chia and \$85,000 to Mr Vuitton Loo. Another \$332,000 was used to buy a warehouse in Kallang. A shophouse in Ang Mo Kio was bought for \$525,800.

The trial started on Sept 5 and was scheduled for a seven-day hearing.

Madam Tan was the first to take the stand. Last Thursday, while still in the middle of cross-examination, she developed breathing difficulties and was hospitalised. She was discharged that afternoon.

Yesterday, the defendants consented to judgment being entered against them.

Madam Tan agreed to pay \$1 million to Madam



In 2009, Madam Chen won her suit against her brother-in-law for the proceeds from the sale of her late husband's house.

Chen. Mr Vuitton Loo paid \$85,000 in the form of a cashier's order that was handed to Madam Chen's lawyers, led by Mr Chiah Kok Khun.

As for the \$200,000 received by Madam Chia, Madam Chen agreed to forgo the repayment. Madam Chia agreed to transfer her 50 per cent share in the warehouse to Madam Chen, as well as her 50 per cent share in the shophouse.

Mr Vuitton Loo and Mr Robin Loo, who own

20 per cent and 15 per cent respectively of the shophouse, agreed to transfer their shares to Madam Chen. Mr Loo Chay Sit, who owned 50 per cent of the warehouse and 15 per cent of the shophouse, had also transferred his share to Madam Chen after he lost the lawsuit.

That means that Madam Chen now fully owns the two properties. The four defendants also paid \$20,000 towards the expenses for the lawsuit.

Taiwan-born Madam Chen told reporters that she wanted the \$200,000 she passed up to go to her parents-in-law.

To date, including the \$700,000 paid up by Mr Loo Chay Sit, only about \$2.6 million of the \$4.8 million sales proceeds has been recovered.

The rest of the money been dissipated through other channels that cannot be traced.

The house was bought in 1979 under the name of Madam Chen's late husband Charles Loo Chay Loo. It has since been demolished.

In 1993, the couple moved to California - where Madam Chen still lives - with their adopted son Benson. In 2005, Mr Charles Loo attempted suicide while in prison awaiting trial for allegedly killing 17-year-old Benson, who had learning difficulties.

When Mr Charles Loo died at age 51 in hospital, Mr Loo Chay Sit served a writ on Madam Chen to claim the house by way of a newspaper advertisement in the United States.

When she did not contest his suit in Singapore because she was not aware of it, Mr Loo Chay Sit obtained judgment in his favour, transferred the property to himself and sold it for \$4.8 million.

Madam Chen, a housewife, later returned to Singapore to set aside the judgment.

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