

澳洲華人
歷史協會

CHINESE AUSTRALIAN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY inc

NEWSLETTER

- June 2019 -

The latest news and updates from CAHS



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From the President



When I reflect on where, when and how I acquired an interest in the history and heritage of the Chinese in Australia, it started with growing up in New Zealand as the child of minority immigrant parents, with an ancestral home in Canton (Guangzhou) China. Over the years, this interest has grown, especially in the last two decades, with the formation and activities of the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia (CHAA) and the Chinese Australian Historical Society (CAHS).

I mention these two organisations, of which I am a founding member, that were both registered as incorporated associations in 2002. Henry Chan was the founding president of the CAHS and I served as the president of CHAA for ten years from 2003. Both Henry and I spent our formative years in New Zealand and is it a coincidence, or are there other reasons, that these two Chinese Australian organisations were led by Chinese New Zealanders?

Sadly, Henry passed away all too early in 2008. In order to remember Henry, the CAHS Committee suggested an annual lecture to be known as the *Henry Chan Lecture*. Since 2017, CAHS in association with the State Library of NSW has had a special lecture given by a visiting academic, Dr Selia Tan in 2017 on *The UNESCO World Heritage Diaolou Towers of Southern China and their Australian links*, and Dr Bing Chen in 2018 on *G. E. Morrison: An Australian in Late Imperial China*.

In May, a special announcement to launch the *Henry Chan Lectures* was made by CAHS in collaboration with the State Library of NSW, and Li Jianjun's 14 May 2019 lecture, *Australian Writers in China in the 1950s-60s*, became the 3rd Henry Chan Lecture. We were especially pleased that Henry's widow Mary Chan and their son Sebastian, who came from Melbourne for the occasion, were present in the audience.

There is a growing number of activities and events of interest to the Chinese Australian community and you will notice that in addition to CAHS events, we promote events by other organisations which are of interest to our members.



At the State Library of NSW for the Henry Chan Lecture by Li Jianjun, with CAHS Vice President Michael Williams, Li Jianjun, CAHS President Daphne Lowe Kelley, Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville, special guest Mary Chan, CAHS Secretary Ann Toy and Sebastian Chan. Photo courtesy of the State Library of NSW; photographer Bruce York.

Although CAHS is a non-party political organisation, community members are encouraged to follow the policies of the political parties and not be a silent minority. Prior to the 18 May 2019 election, there were only two federal politicians with Chinese heritage - Senator Penny Wong (Labor SA) and Ian Goodenough MP for Moore (Liberal WA). Following the 18 May election, the Victorian electorate of Chisholm will have the first female MP of Chinese descent in the Federal Parliament's House of Representatives.



One of CAHS's objectives is saving items of heritage value. A Public Notice appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald on 1 April 2019 - *Interim Heritage Order for 82-84 Dixon Street, Haymarket*. The City of Sydney has made an interim heritage order for the property known as the 'Kwong War Chong store' at 82-84 Dixon Street, Haymarket. The temporary order, effective from 22 March 2019, will apply to the property for six months.

The heritage-listed La Perouse Chinese Market Gardens is a project I have been involved in for over a decade. These last remaining seven hectares, located in Randwick Council, have been cultivated by Chinese for over 150 years, and have been subjected to a land grab by developers and the neighbouring cemetery trust. At this time market gardener Robert Tang who has been farming here for 40 years is still doing so and hopefully will have proper tenure shortly. In recent times there has been much media interest in the gardens and resulting in a number of news clips and documentaries.

Our committee is working well and it is good to see members taking on responsibilities. Thank you to Peter Hack, our newsletter editor and to all those who have contributed to this edition. We look forward to seeing you and your friends at our upcoming events.

Daphne Lowe Kelley
lowekelley@bigpond.com

From the Editor

The Historical Expression of Chinese Art is an exhibition of calligraphy and painting from the National Museum of China showing at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra until 29 July 2019. In exchange, an exhibition of Aboriginal bark paintings from our national museum is touring China until February 2020. *Old Masters: Australia's Great Bark Artists* will be shown at museums in Shenzhen, Sichuan and Taiwan.

A highlight of the exhibition in Canberra is the 20-metre replica of the first of 12 scrolls depicting the 1751 tour of Emperor Qianlong to the southern provinces. Even more impressive is the enormous three-dimensional, 14-minute animation of the scroll showing the procession leaving Beijing with the Emperor, Dowager Empress, consorts, Ministers, imperial bodyguards - 2,500 foot and 6,700 horse. A royal progress by Elizabeth I pales into insignificance.

Also of historical interest is *The Harvest of Endurance Scroll* which the National Museum has put on display as part of the exhibition. The scroll is in a long case with visitors able to view the last eight metres of the 50-metre scroll. The scroll was a bicentennial project commissioned by the Australia-China Friendship Society to depict the history of the Chinese in Australia during the previous 200 years, 1788-1988. It shows Chinese-Australians engaging in a range of industries including mining, agriculture, construction and commerce as well as social, political and religious activities. The entire scroll can be accessed online at:

<https://www.nma.gov.au/explore/features/harvest-of-endurance>

The scroll was painted in the traditional *gongbi* style by Mo Xiangyi with the assistance of his wife, Wang Jingwen, and historical research was undertaken by Mo Yimei, the artist's sister. Interestingly, this family trio was engaged in 1991 by the Australia-China Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NSW) to produce 26 scrolls, also in *gongbi* style, depicting the life of William Liu.

The last eight metres of *The Harvest of Endurance Scroll* currently on public display cover the period 1960 to 1988. And there are plenty of familiar faces - quite a young-looking King Fong, until recently President of the Chinese-Australian Historical Society, Professor Wang Gungwu, Helen Quach, Dr Victor Chang, Professor Christopher Chen, Helen Sham-Ho, Harry Chan... But there is also a group of three people standing in King's Hall of Old Parliament House. These three men represent the end of the "White Australia Policy" - Al Grassby, William Liu and Arthur Calwell.

Arthur Calwell is remembered today as a staunch supporter of the White Australia Policy. He became Australia's first Minister for Immigration in 1945 in Ben Chifley's post-war Labor Government. While Europeans were welcome in Australia, Calwell started deporting many Malayan, Indochinese and Chinese wartime refugees and evacuees, including those who had married Australian citizens and started families in Australia, and others who worked for the war effort or joined the Australian armed forces.

In one notorious case in 1949, Calwell had a group of Hainan Chinese arrested and taken to Long Bay Gaol to await deportation. During the war, they had been working on the construction of Warragamba Dam. Several hundred Chinese seamen were organised by

the Chinese Youth League to work on the dam from 1942 to 1944 with government approval.¹ Some of the Hainan Chinese were married to Australian citizens and the wives turned to William Liu for help. He organised the women into a committee and contacted an Australian reporter he had known during their time working in Shanghai in the 1930s. On the front page of *The Sydney Morning Herald* on Monday 5 September 1949 appeared the headlines:

"SAVE US FROM MR. CALWELL"

Petition By Wives Of Chinese

"A LAW UNTO HIMSELF"

The Sydney Morning Herald reported that the wives had gone over the head of Immigration Minister Calwell. A petition was to be sent to the Federal Attorney-General, Dr. H. V. (Doc) Evatt, in his capacity as President of the United Nations, and a copy would be sent to every member of the United Nations who signed the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The petition was published in full:

We plead to be saved from the arbitrary and inhuman action of the Minister for Immigration, Mr. Calwell in attempting to deport by force our Chinese husbands from Australia, leaving us and our children in grief and distress.

What Mr. Calwell, a Minister of the Australian Government, has done to others in the past and is now directing his officers to do to our humble families, we feel sure must come before the sympathetic notice of the members of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations and the people of the world through the Press of Australia and other countries.

We charge Mr. Calwell with having infringed the whole preamble to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and many articles of that great world document so as to make us wonder whether he has become a law unto himself, having no regard to all the human blessings that document meant to confer on mankind.

We fear Mr. Calwell as millions upon millions of the world's people feared Hitler and Tojo during the past decade.

It is a regular nightmare to us, our relatives and to all those Chinese whose lives and future happiness he is so keen to destroy.

During the past few weeks, at his orders, five Chinese were flung into gaol in Adelaide, eight in Melbourne, and 38 in Sydney.

¹ Shirley Fitzgerald (2008), *Red Tape Gold Scissors; The Story of Sydney's Chinese*, Sydney: Halstead Press, p. 179.

While a High Court injunction against the action of the Minister was being sought and after a temporary injunction had been granted, he engaged a special plane and deported nine Chinese to New Guinea before dawn.²

The previous week, on Saturday 27 August 1949, *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported, again on the front page, that 38 Chinese had been imprisoned by Arthur Calwell and a plane chartered for their deportation. A Sydney solicitor, Mr. C. Moseley, was reported to have said that he would inform the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor's Department that he proposed to apply for a High Court injunction on Monday restraining the Minister for Immigration from deporting the Chinese and would request the Crown Solicitor to prevent the Department of Immigration from taking any action to fly the Chinese out of the country until the matter was decided by the High Court.

The Chinese Seamen's Union guaranteed to pay half the legal fees if the wives could raise the other half. The Australian wives spent Friday night 26 August making "appeals in Chinese gambling dens for money to meet legal expenses". The funds were raised and there on the front page of *The Sydney Morning Herald* was a photograph of three of the women counting the money.³ One cannot but admire the journalistic talent and public relations brilliance at work.

COLLECTION TO FIGHT TEST CASE



Mrs. Sin Ah Jong (centre), whose Chinese husband is in Long Bay Gaol awaiting deportation, counting money raised from an appeal made in the Chinese community last night. The money will be used for legal expenses to test the validity of the deportation order. With her are Mrs. Peggy Han (left) and Mrs. Norma Han, whose husbands are also threatened with deportation.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 27 August 1949, page 1.

Some readers will recall the High Court case from the presentation and article by Malcolm Oakes about William Lee.⁴ The 38 Hainan Chinese lost the case, but it had bought precious time. The newly elected Menzies Government found it difficult to send wartime refugees back to a Communist Chinese regime it was loudly condemning and when Harold Holt replaced Calwell as Minister for Immigration in late 1949, he allowed 800 non-European refugees to stay and Japanese war brides to come to Australia.

William Liu retold the story of the Hainan Chinese in an interview with Hazel de Berg in 1978, ending with a wonderful anecdote about his relationship with Calwell:

Oh yes, well, Calwell and I, we used to have some slang-bangs, right up to 1958 or so, and we finished up, when he used to write to me, he used to always address me as "Dear Ho Pang Yow Billy Liu". (Ho Pang Yow means good friend.)

² *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 September 1949, p. 1.

³ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 August 1949, p. 1.

⁴ Malcolm Oakes SC, 'William Lee: First barrister of Chinese descent admitted to the New South Wales Bar', pp. 73-6 in *Bar News: The Journal of the New South Wales Bar Association*, [2015] (Winter), Sydney: NSW Bar Association, pp. 73-76.

So despite all these slang-bangs we had, but I do remember, I was up at Canberra and crossing King's Hall, Parliament House. Mr Arthur Calwell spotted me and waved his finger, and we were going to have a cup of tea. And while we were having this cup of tea in Parliament House there, he murmured these words, "We fear Calwell".

I said, "Stop, stop!" you see.

He said, "Billy Liu, I knew, I interviewed every one of those girls that married those Chinese. There's not one of them could have thought out words like that! Now who did it?"

These funny things happen in life.⁵

The full oral history interview of William Liu with Hazel de Berg can be accessed at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.oh-vn1536541>

William Liu was a lifelong campaigner for reform of Australia's discriminatory immigration laws with which he had his first experience on return to Sydney in 1908 after eight years at school in China. In 1912 at the age of 19, William was employed as a secretary at the Chinese Consulate in Melbourne where much of the work related to exemptions under the *Immigration Restriction Act*.

By the 1960s, William was travelling to Canberra each January when the Australian Citizenship Convention was held in Albert Hall. He was barred from attending; but he could lobby and protest outside in favour of non-European background representation at these conventions.

In 1968, *The Sydney Morning Herald* estimated that over the previous decade William Liu had sent an average of 500 letters each year to Ministers, politicians and Immigration Department officials. He had also written to two Governors-General and in 1963 he wrote to Queen Elizabeth II. However, regarding the Australian Citizenship Convention, "Mr Liu has had no success in getting an Asian or an Aborigine invited to observe or attend the proceedings."⁶

William Liu tirelessly pursued four issues during the 1960s:

- (1) **Representation on advisory and decision-making bodies.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Australian citizens of non-European background must be represented at Australian Citizenship Conventions and Good Neighbour and Assimilation Movements, not just Australian citizens of British and European backgrounds.
- (2) **Equality of treatment for all passport holders.** Australian citizens of non-European background should be treated no differently than other citizens when they travel to

⁵ *William Liu Interviewed by Hazel de Berg* [sound recording] (1978), Oral Transcript 1/1093-1095, Canberra: National Library of Australia., pp. 14,941-14,942.

⁶ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 January 1968; National Archives of Australia, William Liu's ASIO file, Volume 4, p. 130.

and from Australia. It is requested in every passport that the same courtesies, facilities and help be given to the passport holder; but non-European holders of such passports “unhappily and embarrassingly find that they are treated differently, both in and out of Australia”.

- (3) **Eligibility of all migrants, regardless of race, to apply for citizenship after the same period of residence.** This particular issue was resolved shortly after Harold Holt became Prime Minister in 1966. Non-European residents could apply to become citizens after five years instead of 15 years, the same as European background residents.
- (4) **Eligibility of all Australian citizens of good-standing to sponsor a relative or acceptable friend to migrate to Australia.** This right should not be limited to citizens of British or European background.

After the election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972, William Liu corresponded with the new Minister for Immigration, Al Grassby, about immigration policy in general as well as the Good Neighbour Movement and the Australian Citizen Convention. Minister Grassby sent William two quite exceptional replies both dated 17 October 1973, detailing a watershed in government policy. In one, he wrote:

I can appreciate the concern you have felt previously concerning the question of the acquisition of Australian citizenship. Now, of course, the guiding principle of the Government is that there should not be any discrimination between groups of settlers, and irrespective of their birth, nationality or colour, they should be able to become Australian citizens under the same conditions. In accordance with this principle the Government proposes that the common period of residence required before a person may be granted citizenship will be 3 years, as by this time migrants are expected to be fully settled and desirous of identifying themselves with the rest of the community as Australian citizens.⁷

In the second letter of the same date, the Minister wrote:

I was delighted to have your letter of 20 September and I am particularly pleased that you have made such excellent progress in the formation of the New South Wales Chinese Association which I look forward to seeing affiliated with the Good Neighbour Council of New South Wales and of course when the next convention is held in Canberra the Chinese part of our population will be very much represented.

It is my intention to abandon completely the old form of Citizenship Convention and instead have a Family of the Nation Convention at which every section of the Australian people will be represented from the Aborigines right through to the present time.

I am most anxious to acknowledge the contribution to Australian settlement of the Chinese people.

⁷ William Liu's papers, Mitchell Library, CY4241.

In my own electorate of the Riverina most of the clearing was done by Chinese. The largest inland cities had Chinese as a second language 120 years ago. Chinese people have been a part of the history of this country for nearly the whole of our two centuries of existence. I would hope that you yourself would be at the Family of the Nation Convention when it is held in 1975.⁸

After more than six decades of protest, letter writing and lobbying, these two replies from Minister Grassby represent one of William Liu's finest moments.

PS. In the 1880s, a young man working in one of the large gangs of Chinese, organised by the Sam Yick company of Hong Kong, felling trees and clearing land for the sheep graziers and wheat growers of the Riverina, was William Liu's father, William Ah Lum (also Lumb Liu or Liu Hee Lum).

Peter Hack

Your Contribution

We welcome contributions to our quarterly newsletters (next one to appear in September 2019). If you have any stories about your Chinese ancestry or family history that you want to share and is relevant to our members; or are you organizing an event that you want to have publicized, we would be grateful if your copy could reach us by 12th August, 2019. Chinese Australian Historical Society Inc. (E): peter.hack6@bigpond.com>

⁸ William Liu's papers, Mitchell Library, CY4241.

Upcoming Events

Chinese Australian Historical Society

Invites you to

Business Networks in Chinese-Australian Furniture Production, 1870-1930

Furniture production was one of the most important economic activities for Chinese migrants and their descendants in Australia after the gold rushes of the 1850s and 1860s.

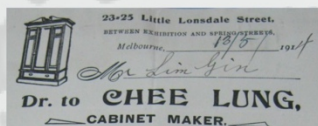
There were around 200 Chinese furniture factories and up to 2,000 workers Australia-wide at its peak in 1911-2, concentrated in Sydney and Melbourne. As a perceived danger to the industrial advancement of 'White Australia', Chinese furniture factories were the focus of discriminatory agitation and legislation, a prominent feature of which was 'race'-based furniture stamping.

This presentation will address how Chinese manufacturers operated despite such obstacles by exploring their business networks. Drawing on a variety of historical source material, especially insolvency and bankruptcy files, it will reveal surprising new insights into the nature of Chinese-Australian enterprise, and indeed the nature of 'White Australia' itself.



Peter Gibson

Peter Gibson is finalising his PhD thesis on Australia's Chinese furniture factories at the University of Wollongong. He has published articles in *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies*, *Labour History*, the *Australian Economic History Review* and *Twentieth-Century China*.



H. MCKENZIE,
Timber Merchant, Pyrmont.
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Date: Saturday 20 July 2019
Time: 2.30 pm
Venue: Mitchell Theatre, Sydney Mechanics Schools of Arts,
Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney
Presenter: Peter Gibson
Cost: \$10 members, \$15 non-members (includes refreshments)
RSVP: Daphne Lowe Kelley 0417 655 233 or
lowekelley@bigpond.com

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Poster designed by Michael Quan

CHINESE AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NSW History Week Event

Theme: Memory and Landscapes

More details will be available closer to the date.

Date: Saturday 31 August 2019

Time: 2.30 pm

Venue: Mitchell Theatre, Sydney Mechanics Schools of Arts, Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney

Panel: Juanita Kwok and others

Cost: \$10 members, \$15 non-members (includes refreshments)

RSVP: Daphne Lowe Kelley 0417 655 233 or lowekelley@bigpond.com

Excursion to Orange and Wellington

Date: 25-25 October 2019

If you are interested in joining a CAHS field study of Orange and Wellington (including the Fong Lees Lane Festival in Wellington on the evening of Friday 25 October) please contact Ann Toy anngtoy@gmail.com 0403 006 028.

CHINESE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Design historian, educator, and author Michael Bogle will speak on the Chinese influence on Australian art and design

Date: Saturday 8 June 2019

Time: 1:30 - 2.30 pm

Venue: Sydney Mechanics Schools of Arts, Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney

Cost: \$7 members; \$8 non-members.

RSVP: Phone Rose Wong 0418 838 737, Marie Chan 0410 582 338 or email meilinyum@gmail.com

nomnomnom: Life, death and food delivery in Kings Cross

Kings Cross Theatre (KXT), in partnership with Kings Cross Hotel's Vivid program, presents Roshelle Fong's immersive show 'nomnomnom'.



This site-specific, participatory experience, which won the Melbourne Fringe 2018 award for Innovation in Culturally Diverse Practice, invites audience members to take to the streets and deliver food to real houses inhabited by actors playing 'customers'.

Since premiering the show at Melbourne Fringe, Roshelle has adapted nomnomnom in Seyðisfjörður, a town of 670 people in East Iceland, and curated a large-scale time-travelling iteration of the show in Melbourne, supported by Australia Council for the Arts and City of Melbourne. She was also one of 200 artists invited to attend the Immersive Design Summit in San Francisco earlier this year.

Roshelle Fong is a Chinese-Australian multi-disciplinary artist, currently undertaking the Women in Theatre program at Melbourne Theatre Company. She is excited to bring nomnomnom to her hometown Sydney in collaboration with actress Gabrielle Chan, whose latest credits include Chimerica (Sydney Theatre Company 2017) and Golden Shield (Melbourne Theatre Company 2019), and stand-up comedian Jeeves Verma fresh from his show 'Get Rickshaw Die Trying' at Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

“Loneliness is getting more and more exposure as a global public health concern and it’s something that features heavily in my art. Coming back to Sydney to explore how it can manifest here means a lot to me.”

Following nomnomnom’s season at KXT, Roshelle will take the show to Shanghai, producing a local adaptation in Jinze ancient water town supported by the Ian Potter Cultural Trust.

Limited tickets to nomnomnom in Kings Cross are available [here](#).

Nomnomnom: KXT Popstairs to the Glasshouse

Dates: 5 - 12 June
Times: 6.30pm and 8.30pm every day except Saturday with matinees on at 2.00pm and 4.00pm
Duration: Approx. 50 minutes in total
Venue: Meet at Kings Cross Hotel (outdoor VIP lounge entrance), 248 William Street, Potts Point, NSW 2011
Tickets: \$30 full fare, \$25 concession
Enquiries: Roshelle Fong 0415 238 339 or nomnomnomdelivery@gmail.com

Azure Seas Cantonese Traditional Theatre and Australasian Art and Stageworks Inc.

Monkey King and Skeleton Devil

Date: Friday 26 July 2019
Time: 12.30 pm
 3.00 pm Monkey King starts
Tickets: \$70 \$60 \$50
Venue: The Concourse Theatre, 409 Victoria Avenue, Chatswood
Enquiries: Daphne Lowe Kelley lowekelley@bigpond.com 0417 655 233

Azure Seas Cantonese Traditional Theatre
and Australasian Art & Stageworks Inc.

invite you to

a classical repertoire -

Monkey King & Skeleton Devil

with Chinese and English subtitles

香港碧海粵劇團主辦 澳亞藝術承辦 查篤撐粵劇團協辦

智激美猴王

又名 三打白骨精 長劇

主演：洪海 莫華敏 林芯菱 謝曉瑜

時間 Date/time : 26/07/2019 星期五下午12:30時

Friday 12:30pm

Monkey King starts at 3pm

票價 Tickets : \$70 \$60 \$50(Stall) \$50(Dress Circle)

網購 Bookings : TICKETEK (Discount for senior group bookings)

(凡購買10張以上或70以上長者九折優惠)

地點 Venue : The Concourse Theatre 劇場

409 Victoria Ave

Chatswood NSW 2067 Australia

查詢 Enquiry : Daphne Lowe Kelley 0417 655 233

海報設計: 陳金燕 Poster designed by Gabby Chan

司儀: 王侯偉

Supported by



香港藝術發展局
Hong Kong Arts Development Council

THE HENRY CHAN LECTURE

When the idea arose of having an annual lecture by a Chinese scholar to be named after CAHS's founding president Henry Min-hsi Chan, our CAHS committee was unanimous and when this suggestion was put to the State Library of NSW's Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville, the Library was also in agreement, and this has given birth to the Henry Chan Lectures.

After Mr Neville made this announcement on May 14 at the State Library of NSW, I responded by saying:

As the current president of the Chinese Australian Historical Society, it gives me great pleasure to be here today, in association with the State Library of NSW, with an event which will be known as a Henry Chan Lecture. For the past two years, we have held a lecture by a Chinese scholar, in association with the State Library. In 2017, Dr Selia Tan's lecture was on *The UNESCO World Heritage Diaolou Towers of Southern China and their Australian links* and in 2018, Dr Bing Chen's presentation was titled, *G E Morrison - An Australian in Late Imperial China*. So, today's lecture by Li Jianjun on *Australian Writers in China in the 1950s-60s* will be known as the third in this series.

Henry Chan was the founding president of the CAHS, an organisation registered as an incorporated association in 2002. Those who knew Henry knew he was a prodigious worker, who set high standards and played a very important role in researching and recording the history of the Chinese in Australia. Despite his early passing in 2008, he achieved much and his legacy continues when we survey the current position of research, recording and interpretation of the role of the Chinese in the history of Australia.

When I approached Mary Chan about establishing an annual Henry Chan lecture in association with the State Library, she was surprised and thrilled. How fitting this should be in association with the State Library as Mary is an academic in her own right. She was a lecturer in English when she met Henry, then a lecturer in History.

It was most fitting that our special guests were Mary, Henry and Mary's son Sebastian, who flew up from Melbourne to be present, and also Sebastian's parents in-law, Michelle and Kevin Cavanagh - Michelle having served on committee with Henry.

Daphne Lowe Kelley

HENRY CHAN (1937-2008)

In 2000, Henry, a Chinese historian, with colleagues and friends in the Sydney Chinese community, founded the Australian Chinese Historical Society. He was a foundation member and its first President. Until his death in 2008, Henry devoted almost all his time to encouraging projects, seminars and talks about Chinese contributions to Australian society. He spent time with local communities, especially around NSW,

speaking to local historians and local history groups, helping to organize weekend events, tours to places of significance in the history of the Chinese in Australia, and the contributions, large and small, of individuals and immigrant communities.

Henry was born in Guangzhou in 1937, the only son of Chan Runling and his wife, Huang Lixia. His family came from Sungai, Zengcheng County, in Guangdong province. Henry's family had had links with Australia since the mid-19th century, first in Queensland and then in NSW. Henry's father had been sent by his own father to Auckland, New Zealand, in 1933 to set up a New Zealand branch of the family greengrocery business. Henry and his mother joined him there in 1940.



Henry Chan. Photo courtesy of Mary Chan

Henry was educated in Auckland and at Canterbury University, Christchurch, where he studied European and New Zealand History. He taught history at Colenso High School in Napier and in 1968, he was Junior Lecturer at Massey University, Palmerston North, where he met his wife, Mary Joiner, then a Lecturer in English. They were married in 1970, and their son, Sebastian, was born in 1973.

The family spent a year in London in 1974 where Henry studied for an MA in Chinese and Japanese history at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. They returned to New Zealand in 1975, and the following year moved to Sydney where Mary took up a Lectureship at the University of NSW and Henry, a position in the Rare Books Library at Sydney University. In 1986, Henry was appointed to a Lectureship in Chinese History at the University of Newcastle, from

where he commuted to Sydney until he retired in 1998, and he and Mary moved to Katoomba.

In 2004, Henry was awarded a Fellowship at the National Library of New Zealand, Wellington, where he studied Chinese immigration to New Zealand. In 2006, a book on immigration to New Zealand from Zengcheng was published for the 80th anniversary of the Zengcheng Association of Wellington: *Zengcheng New Zealanders*.

Over the last two decades of his life, Henry made contributions to almost every important event and institutional initiative in Chinese Australian Studies. This lecture is in his memory.

Mary Chan

AUSTRALIAN WRITERS IN CHINA - 1950 TO 1965

The third in our series of presentations by China scholars of Australia (now to be named the Henry Chan Lecturers) was a scholarly exposition by Li Jianjun, Director of the Australian Studies Center at the prestigious Beijing Foreign Studies University. The

audience was entertained with an insightful and intriguing account of Australian literature in translation in the new China of the 1950s and 1960s.

Part way into his research for a PhD with Western Sydney University, Li Jianjun detailed the surprising number of well-known and some less well-known Australian authors whose works were available to the Chinese people through a range of excellent translations. We learned that while Henry Lawson was and continues to be the most popular, Frank Hardy, Mona Brand and Jack Lindsay were among 11 Australian authors translated. All these writers were considered progressive or sympathetic to the socialist aims of the People's Republic of China in its formative years.



Translations donated to the State Library of NSW by Li Jianjun. Photo courtesy of the State Library of NSW; photographer Bruce York

Li Jianjun's research will take him into such questions as: Why were some authors and not others translated? Who made the decisions to translate? And what impact did the presence of Australian literature in China have in laying the foundations for future Australian-Chinese relations?

The well-attended lecture was enthusiastically received and generously rounded off with a presentation to the Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville by Li Jianjun of nine translations of the

Australian authors to the State Library of NSW.

Michael Williams

ON THE NIGHT



Daphne Lowe Kelley addressing the audience. Photo courtesy of the State Library of NSW; photographer Bruce York.



Li Jianjun. Photo courtesy of the State Library of NSW; photographer Bruce York.



Mary Chan addressing the audience. Photo courtesy of the State Library of NSW; photographer Bruce York.



Some of the audience. In the front row are Richard Neville, Ann Toy, Daphne Lowe Kelley, Sebastian Chan and Mary Chan. Photo by Li Dayong, China Radio International.



Li Jianjun with Daphne Lowe Kelley, Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville, Mary Chan and Ann Toy. Photo courtesy of the State Library of NSW; photographer Bruce York.

**THE POISON OF POLYGAMY
 UPDATE**



The translation of the first novel of the Chinese-Australian experience - *The Poison of Polygamy* - is still on track to be published this year. Translator Ely Finch and project instigator Michael Williams will be presenting on the novel at ICAS 11 (International Conference of Asian Scholars) in Leiden, the Netherlands this July. They will be bringing this unique piece of Australian literature to an international audience.

The surprising story of Wong Shee Ping will be broadcast on ABC RN (576 AM Sydney) and available via podcast and ABC Listen from Tuesday 11 June at 11.00 am. It will also be repeated on radio the following Saturday 15 June at 5.30 pm.

INAUGURAL BATHURST CHINESE WALK

A crisp and sunny Sunday morning, 31 March 2019, saw the Inaugural Bathurst Chinese Walk hosted by CAHS member Juanita Kwok. The walking group was limited to 20 and included fellow CAHS members Kate Bagnall (and family), Douglas Lamb and Malcolm Oakes. The Walk started outside the Bathurst Courthouse.

Structurally speaking, there is not a lot left of the Chinese presence in Bathurst. But not to worry, because Juanita had put a tonne of preparation into her narration notes, which was apparent, and her commentary allowed one to imagine the times, the buildings and the people.

Bathurst was the first inland town, having been founded by Governor Macquarie in May 1815. The first recorded Chinese west of the Blue Mountains were four stockmen who worked for grazier Andrew Brown on a property near Lithgow. Brown mentioned them in his 1830 diary. It was the end of convict transportation to NSW in 1840, the First Opium War (1840-1842), the Treaty of Nanking and the opening of the treaty ports, which enabled the development of a trade in indentured Chinese labour. Most worked as sheep shepherds on remote pastoral runs. Apart from the remoteness, their pay was between a quarter to a third of European shepherds and the standard indenture did not include a return fare. No Fair Work Commission then; rather, Masters & Servants legislation heavily favouring the graziers. Somewhere between 3,000 and 10,000 indentured labourers are estimated to have come to the Australian colonies under this system, most departing from the port of Amoy in Fujian Province.

The next group of Chinese, which followed the 1851 goldrush, were primarily Cantonese.

The Walk proceeded from the courthouse to the nearby site of the hanging for murder of an Amoy labourer, Newing, in 1852. The other known Bathurst Chinese hanging (also for murder) was of the bushranger Sam Poo in 1865. The gallows area is now a manicured park.

With the advent of the goldrushes, parties of Chinese would pass through Bathurst on their way to the goldfields. Bathurst was a provisioning point for goldminers. The earliest reported group of Chinese miners was in 1856. In 1858, a walking group of 500, three miles long, was reported. Also in 1858, the purchase of 20 tons of rice by a Chinese group was reported. Between the 1856 and 1861 censuses, the Chinese born population in NSW increased from 1,806 to 12,988. More than half of these were on the goldfields surrounding Bathurst with Chinese in the majority in Sofala and Tambaroora.

Chinese businesses in Bathurst in 1867 included two boarding houses, a shop, a Chinese doctor, various market gardeners, hawkers and packhorse operators. The market gardeners even managed to produce vegetables during bad droughts. By 1885, the Bathurst Show (the organising committee having the glorious name of the *O'Connell and Macquarie Plains Campbell and Fish River Agricultural Association*) had introduced a market garden produce section, with Chinese market gardeners winning prizes.

Two buildings which do remain are rows of terraces which were occupied by Chinese. The first of these is in Howick Street and the second is in Durham Street, near to the

Chinese Masonic Lodge, which stood on the corner of Rankin and Durham streets until it was sold in 1952 and demolished the following year. The old Lodge site is now a non-descript business premises, but one good thing to come out of the Walk is that one of the participants knew of a 1933 photo of the Lodge building. The Lodge was at the centre of the Bathurst Chinatown area, which embraced a circular area covering Durham, Rankin, George and Morrisset Streets.



The Chinese Masonic Lodge on the corner of Rankin and Durham Streets with the row of terraces in Durham Street, 1933.

From as early as 1858, the Chinese were the subject of police raids on premises suspected of housing Caucasian women having “no visible means of support”, selling sly grog, conducting gaming houses or later opium smoking dens (after it was outlawed in 1903). The Gaming & Betting Act was introduced in 1906. A common game was fan tan, similar to roulette. The over-zealous activity of the police in this area of law enforcement even had the local magistrate complaining as to why the Chinese should be so harassed, when Europeans obviously were not. He saw it as a restriction on Chinese recreation.



The row of old terraces in Durham Street, 2019. Photo by Malcolm Oakes.



267 Howick Street, Bathurst was the subject of an opium bust early last century. This row of now gentrified terraces was occupied by Chinese in 1906, but the Chinese had gone by 1920. Photo by Malcolm Oakes.

In 1876, the railway came to Bathurst and that allowed the Chinese market gardeners to supply the Sydney market. This meant they could increase the scale of their activities. An 1886 newspaper report refers to one market gardener losing 9,000 cabbages in a flood. In 1914, 2,000 tons of cabbages and cauliflowers were consigned from Perthville Station (about 15kms south of Bathurst), with like amounts being consigned from Bathurst and Kelso Stations.

Juanita only found one report during her research of a Chinese born woman being brought into Australia for marriage: that was Ah Holt, who came to Australia as a 16-year-old, married a Chinese farmer and likely died in childbirth 10 months later. This was a sad case, and her physical and social isolation, in particular the language barrier, can only be imagined. Most marriages were with Caucasian women. A number of these families subsequently anglicized their Chinese surnames, including the Kaye (Ah Kee), Lynne (Ah Lin) and Quinn (Ah Tuck) families. This was likely a deliberate attempt to hide Chinese heritage, given the discrimination. A number of current members of these families have only recently discovered their Chinese ancestry. There are stories of family documents being disposed of by Caucasian wives in past generations to “cleanse” the family records. By the 1947 census, there were only 10 Chinese full bloods in the Bathurst municipality.



Walk participants at the Bathurst War Memorial. Photo by Tim Sherratt.

The final Walk stop was the War Memorial, in the park opposite the courthouse. It shows William Beacham Jnr. who served in the Boer War, Hector Lupp who served in the RAAF, and Charles Tow Jnr. who served in the 6th Division of the AIF in WWII. Clem Lynne was KIA (Killed In Action) when the *Centaur* was torpedoed off Moreton Island in 1943. Much work has been done in identifying Chinese in the Australian military forces, including Alastair Kennedy’s book in 2013 and the Chinese Anzacs exhibition at the Chinese Museum in Melbourne in 2014. Research has been hampered by the anglicizing of Chinese surnames as with indigenous servicemen.

This Walk was terrific. CAHS has a plan for a future members’ trip to Bathurst, with Juanita repeating her Walk, and a bus tour from Bathurst. The decline in Chinese populations in country towns as the White Australia Policy had its effect has meant that many country towns are simply unaware of their Chinese heritage. Fortunately, as a result of Juanita’s research, Bathurst will not be one of them.

Malcolm Oakes

UNVEILING OF THE MEMORIAL TO THE AMOY SHEPHERDS



Saturday, 30 March 2019, may transpire to be a ground-breaking day in Chinese-Australian historical thinking.

The boy to the left of the photo is a descendant of a successful Chinese store owner and his wife - who had bound feet - in St George at the time of Federation in 1901.

The Memorial itself was entirely manufactured in China, cleared Customs in Brisbane, trucked to St George over 509 sometimes tortuous kilometres, and assembled on site with cranes. It was some journey. But not to be compared with that which the Amoy shepherds endured on the way there, or the life they lived thereafter, marooned in a hostile land.

No members of our Parliaments spoke at the unveiling ceremony, though three of them were present. A number of Councillors also came, some from afar. We had decided that we had no need to invite white VIPs to tell us what useful people we the Chinese had been and are now, although we made them very welcome and invited all of them to our effervescent dinner that night.

We wanted to make sure that this historical event was not turned into an electioneering circus, with each side telling us why their Party is better or have more respect for the Chinese. But most of all it was time for us to stand on our own feet.

We did however make a special mention of Tchen Tsebin, the first China-born to sit in our Senate, now a Commissioner of the Victorian Multicultural Commission. He drove all the way from Melbourne. And we were delighted and honoured to have Fiona Gaske, an opera singer and Deputy Mayor, sing at the beginning of the ceremony, the Amoy version of *Oh Danny Boy*, to imagine the women in Amoy lamenting their sons and husbands leaving home, to make more bearable the consequence of poor rice harvests.

The story-telling followed. At the end of that story-telling, Richard Marsh, Mayor of the Balonne Shire in which the Memorial is situated, and Consul Shen Ang from the Consulate General of PRC in Brisbane, jointly performed the honours for the day. The Memorial, at first look, is somewhat perplexing.

IN MEMORIAM

To the young men who, around 1850, left the famine in Amoy
to become indentured shepherds
and those who, in the 1880s, drifted here in itinerant “coolie” gangs
after the Palmer River gold had gone

∞

These sojourners never earned enough to return
to the families left behind in their ancestral villages.

∞

Here now they lie
silent witnesses to the settlement history of this region.

That was the essence of the story we salvaged, as best we could. But why that picture, a modern-day Aboriginal picture on the memorial?

A flood in 1906 had destroyed all the cemetery records housed in the Shire building. And a grass fire in the 1970s had consumed all the timber headstones. One 14” white marble headstone stood in solitary watch over the entire Chinese section of the St George cemetery.

We do not really know with any certainty the identity of those Chinese now lying in peace in St George cemetery. On the balance of probabilities, a significant portion would have come from Amoy. Some might have tarried when their “coolie gangs” got them there after the Palmer River gold ran out some three decades later. And some would have been those who went there, decades after the Amoy shepherds, to set up small shops and thus provide the means by which to establish a family line.

The Amoy shepherds first came in 1847, the first organised labour movement from China to the antipodes. Three hundred of them minded 450,000 sheep. Historically it was a capital offence for a Chinese to leave the realm of his Emperor. But the Opium War that ended six years earlier had put an end to all that.

The Darling Downs was expanding fast, and the flow of convicts from Great Britain had stopped. In Amoy, the continual famine had driven men to leave their hearth and kin, to look for jobs abroad, to send the money home. Thus, over the ensuing six years British boats carried 3,000 Amoy men, all in their prime, to Australian Ports, and 300 of these arrived in the Darling Downs.

The picture on the Memorial is the winning entry from a competition for school students in the region. Daisy Brown, an 11-year-old descendant of the Kamilaroi people who once roamed free in the region, conceived it as a scene depicting her tribal elders allowing the Chinese to enter their land.

It is a fitting beacon for our time.



Carved into the right-hand side of the marble column is a poem by Li Bai, some 1,300 years old:

低	舉	疑	牀
頭	頭	是	前
思	望	地	明
故	明	上	月
鄉	月	霜	光

*The moonlight shines bright beyond my bed
I wonder if there's frost on the ground outside*

*I raise my head to see the moon
 I lay down my head and yearn for my ancestral village.*

It was thought that Li Bai conceived this poem whilst in exile - alone, far from home, in a strange bed, having been woken up by a bright moonlight.

The picture could be seen as an unconscious longing of a young Aboriginal girl, removed in time from the catastrophe that befell her forbears in the birthing of the frontier history of Australia. In fact, during 1847 and 1848 the Aboriginal resistance fighters had attacked every white station in the region. But they were overwhelmingly quashed by the colonisers with guns on horseback soon after. It is unlikely that the imagined ceremony on the bridge across the Balonne River could have occurred.

The poem on the other hand elicits the loneliness of the Amoy shepherds' existence, and the obsessive bond that the Chinese had to their clan villages.

The story could have ended there. An abject failure; marooned for life; finding comfort in the Aboriginal community, as two peoples living under the whim of white station masters found sympathy in one another. But we wanted to break the mould.

Thus the left hand side of Memorial speaks of the potency of the Aboriginal picture, and the back of the Memorial is devoted to honouring the spirit of the Amoy shepherds' noble sacrifice and seeking their blessing on our journey to cross the last frontier for Chinese Australians today.

The Memorial is therefore in part a heritage site that casts a beam into the future.

In breaking the mould, we have avoided the usual pitfalls of such Chinese-Australian projects: talking up the achievements of the early Chinese; dwelling obsessively on the injustice inflicted upon them; asking for an apology; and worst of all getting some descendants to talk about reconciliation, as if we today have the moral right to forgive on behalf of the early Chinese.

Instead we focused on shining a light on the past, to search for clues which might explain why the place of the Chinese in Australia is what it is today. The Yellow Peril in the 19th century; the tolerated aliens destined to die out after 1901; the rehabilitated loyal John Chinaman during the thawing period of White Australia; the useful minions selectively let in after 1972; the fall of Vietnam; the Tiananmen massacre; the business migration; the rapid rise of PRC immigrants. In 1947, White Australia was all but achieved. The Chinese counted around 10,000 in a population of some 8,000,000: not a lot more than 0.1%. We are now over 1,200,000 in a population of some 25,000,000: about 5%! Given our history it is perhaps little wonder that the White Australia virus has broken out in recent times, this time precipitated by an anxiety about a China that is no longer the sick man of Asia.

We put all these thoughts together, ever so briefly, in the commemorative Booklet. It invites those who care to look further into the place of Chinese in Australia - yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

DISCLAIMER: The views expressed in this article in the Newsletter are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Chinese Australian Historical Society.

Chek Ling
Heritage Advisor
St George Chinese Community Memorial Committee

THE OXLEY MUSEUM IN WELLINGTON

The planned CAHS visit to Orange and Wellington in October 2018 was cancelled due to the untimely death in September 2018 of Dr Barry McGowan OAM, who was to be our guide. The tour was to include a visit to Wellington's Oxley Museum, opened in 1967 and run by the Wellington Historical Society. On the occasions when Barry and I visited the Museum, we were shown around by the Society's treasurer Carole Gass, who has also held the office of Secretary, family history researcher and museum guide in the thirty years she has been a member of the Society. Both Carole's maternal grandparents, Ruby and Joseph Ah Yook and paternal grandparents, Eva and George Loo Sick, were market gardeners in Wellington. Carole is a wealth of information about the objects and photographs in the Museum, as well as the history of the town, being author of two pictorial history books on Wellington.



Chinese wedding garments worn by Eva Cheuy Hoo and George Loo Sick at their wedding in 1905.

Housed in the historic Bank of NSW, built in 1883, the two-storey Museum has a

collection which includes over 50,000 photographs, and over 6,000 catalogued items organised into themed rooms. Of greatest interest to our members is the Chinese room, which displays merchandise and clothing from Fong Lee & Co. department store. The store dates back to 1879 when Hong Wong, trading as Kum Yoon Fong, advertised that he had opened the large, new, two-storey building nearly opposite Woodley's Royal Hotel with a splendid stock of new goods.⁹ By the late 1880s, the store was run by Kum Sing Lee and it was known as Fong Lee & Co. and was one of only two stores in Wellington in 1891.¹⁰ In 1896, Melbourne-born William Suey Ling took over management of the store. He took a trip to China in 1903, bringing back a Chinese bride, Alice (Sing Ying Ean born 1888).¹¹ Ruby Chun Tye, one of two orphaned sisters brought up by the Ling family in Melbourne married market gardener Joseph Ah Yook.¹² The Lings, the Ah Yooks and the Loo Sicks, together with the Mow Funns, the Coons, the Bows and the Sing Lees formed the nucleus of a community of Chinese-Australian families in Wellington. Many of the families came from Jang Seng/Zengcheng and are related to the families of current CAHS President Daphne Lowe Kelley and founder and past President Henry Chan.

In the 1960s, when David Ling was cleaning out the Fong Lee warehouse, he found fifteen trunks, containing mostly new ticketed items that would have been sold in the store and clothes belonging to the Ling family including a trunk of forty-six Chinese style garments belonging to Alice Suey Ling. The items in the trunks were donated to the Museum to form what Carole considers to be probably the largest collection of clothing in any country museum. A highlight of the Chinese collection are the traditional Chinese wedding garments worn by Eva Cheuy Hoo and George Loo Sick at their wedding in 1905.

A range of merchandise in the trunks now on display in the Museum, shows the store catered for a broad customer base. In December 1916, it was stated that at Fong Lee & Co, there was "not a want of the housewife that could not be satisfied."¹³ During the depression years William Suey Ling was known to give extended credit to families, which may be one of the reasons the store amassed such liabilities that it was voluntarily wound up in 1936, the year William Suey Ling died.¹⁴ Carole Gass recalls, "I was not allowed to keep the extremely large ledger books as they recorded the names of those owing the business money. The ledgers were consigned to the town's rubbish tip as instructed by David."¹⁵ The Chinese books on display in the Museum are order books for the store.

⁹ Robert Porter, *The History of Wellington: A Record of the Growth of the Town and District from Earliest Days*, (Sydney: W. C. Penfold & Co Printers), p. 20.

¹⁰ *National Advocate*, 6 July 1891, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/157157397>

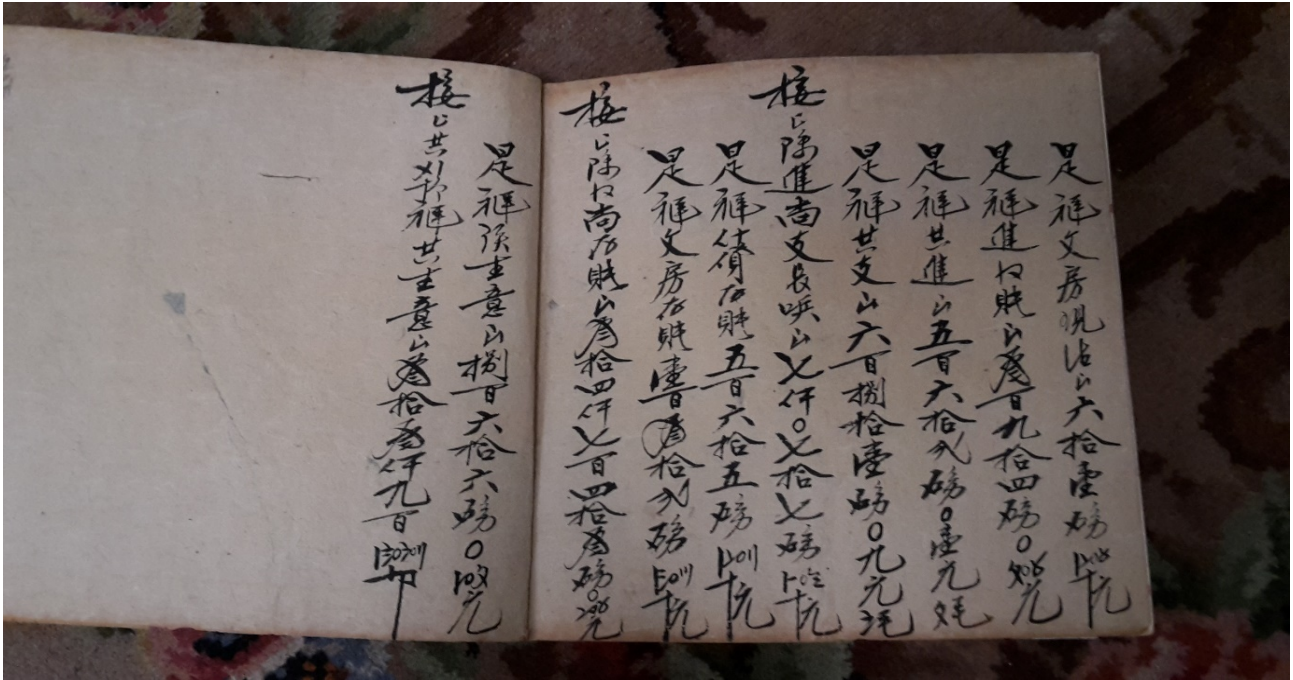
¹¹ *Wellington Times*, 9 April 1903, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/137889657>

¹² Carole Gass, *A brief family history*, unpublished manuscript.

¹³ McGowan and Mott, p. 275.

¹⁴ *Wellington Times*, 10 January 1936, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/224752743>

¹⁵ Carole Gass, "*A Brief Family History*", unpublished manuscript.



Fong Lee & Co Order book, Oxley Museum, Wellington

The Chinese Room also contains a collection of artefacts from the Loo Sick and Ah Yook families, such as large ceramic urns, displayed with a description by Carole Gass of how her grandmother, Ruby Ah Yook, used the urns for pickling vegetables. Photographs of artefacts from the Museum and family stories about how the items were used feature in Janis Wilton's *Golden Threads*.¹⁶ The outdoor collection of the Museum contains farming tools and machinery and a rice grinder which belonged to the Ling store.

Despite the wealth of its collection, the upkeep of the Oxley Museum has been neglected over the years. The building is owned by Council and the Wellington Historical Society who run the Museum require the written permission of Council to put in for grants. The toilet, which has been broken for years, gives an indication of the need for maintenance. Wellington Council was recently subsumed in a Council merger with Dubbo Regional Council. According to Carole, the new Council has said there are no funds to cover the \$750,000 required for repairs to the building. The Council plans to move the Museum to the old Police Station building on the main road. This move is being resisted by the Wellington Historical Society. According to Carole Gass, "At the moment we have the space to display most items but will not know just what is required if we have to move."

This collection is of great historical importance to preserving the stories of rural Chinese. Barry McGowan regarded the Wellington Chinese community as "one of the most important Chinese communities in rural NSW if not rural Australia in the 19th and 20th centuries to the present day".¹⁷ He included an addendum on Wellington to the Chinese

¹⁶ Janis Wilton, *Golden threads: the Chinese in regional New South Wales, 1850-1950*, (Armidale, New England Regional Art Museum in association with Powerhouse Publishing, 2004).

¹⁷ Barry McGowan and Genevieve Mott, *True Australians and Pioneers: A Thematic Study of the Chinese People in the Orange, Blayney and Cabonne Shires and the Town of Wellington*. (Orange, NSW: Orange City Council), 2017, p. 269.

Heritage Report he and Genevieve Mott prepared for Orange Council, and Barry was advocating for support for the Museum before he died.

Dubbo Regional Council has already had its awareness of the Chinese history of Wellington raised by awarding Event of the Year in Wellington in 2018 to the inaugural Fong Lees Lane festival (see the story on Fong Lees Lane in a previous CAHS newsletter). If there is sufficient interest amongst our members, the planned overnight excursion to Wellington might be revived to attend the next Fong Lees Lane festival on 25 October 2019, and visit the Museum. In the meantime, you can write to Dubbo Regional Council or Federal MP Andrew Gee to show your support for the Museum.

The Oxley Museum, Wellington, on the corner of Percy and Warne Streets Wellington, is open Monday to Friday 1.30 to 4.30 pm and at other times by appointment.

More information can be found on the Museum's website:
<https://www.oxleymuseum.org.au/>

Juanita Kwok

PS The report by Barry McGowan and Genevieve Mott, *True Australians and Pioneers: A Thematic Study of the Chinese People in the Orange, Blayney and Cabonne Shires and the Town of Wellington* was announced the winner in the Heritage Resources category at the National Trust Heritage Awards presented at Doltone House, Pyrmont, on 10 May 2019.

HEAVEN AND EARTH IN CHINESE ART: TREASURES FROM THE NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM, TAIPEI

Those of you who saw this exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW couldn't help but be impressed and amazed at the creativity, dedication and skill involved in these works of art spanning 5,000 years from the Neolithic period to the 19th century.

As mentioned in the program:

From paintings, calligraphy and maps to bronzes, ceramics and jades, these fine objects are bound by the cherished Chinese philosophical concept of *tian ren he yi*, the harmonious coexistence of nature and humans within the cosmos.

The objects demonstrate the artists' careful observation of their surroundings, and reveal how an appreciation for nature inspired unique forms of artistic

expression. Each work tells a remarkable story of the society in which it was created, and bears broader cultural and philosophical meanings.

When I came across the longest scroll in the exhibition, *Along the River During the Qingming Festival* (about 5 metres in length), I remember being truly amazed at the intricacy of detail and wondered just how long it would have taken the artist to complete. This painting by the Song dynasty artist Zhang Zeduan (1085-1145) captures the daily life of people, both rich and poor, in its rural and urban landscapes. Karla Whitmore, a member of the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia and the North Shore Poets, was so impressed that she has written a poem about it - enjoy.

Daphne Lowe Kelley

**Along the River
(during the Qingming Festival)**

A scroll unfolds
 with the river's flow
 several metres
 Unhurried the pace
 of medieval China
 Man and beast
 enjoined to exalt
 the celestial kingdom
 Tiny figures outlined
 with the finest brush
 convey daily offerings
 to imperial order
 At work and at ease
 twenty donkeys pull a dray

mere specks cross a bridge
 a wedding party parades
 Seen as always was
 repeated in homage
 to conformity
 stability and harmony
 Look closely and see
 buildings with perspective
 a nod to modernity
 creating barely a ripple
 in the slumbering river

© Karla Whitmore 2019

Membership

New Members: Welcome to our new life member, Nicolas Lai; new members, Edilia Ford, Valerie Lee and Monica Tan; and renewing members Margaret Kelly and Phoebe Alexander. We look forward to seeing you at our events and to your active participation.

Membership Renewals: The membership year is the same as our financial year, 1 July to 30 June. Membership renewals for 2019-2020 fall due on 1 July 2019.

The membership form can be used for membership renewals and also for enrolling new members.

<https://cahsociety.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/cahs-membership-form-2019.pdf>

It can also be downloaded from the CAHS website <http://chineseaustralianhistory.org>

**Twentieth Anniversary of Incorporation of the Society
Call for documents**

The Society was incorporated with its registration on 4 September 2002.

The Committee is keen to prepare a short history of the Society's first 20 years and to that end seeks any old documents relevant to the Society's activities, particularly those from the early years, with a view to creating an archive.

The types of documents we have in mind include:

- Newsletters
- Minutes of Annual General Meetings
- Minutes of Committee meetings
- Treasurer's Reports to AGMs or Committee Meetings
- Copies of correspondence to and by the Society
- President's Reports to AGMs
- Photographs of activities undertaken by the Society
- Details of presentations or addresses made to the Society.

If you require assistance with scanning, let us know and we will borrow what you have and return it. Or if you no longer want the documents, we will happily take them off your hands!

Contact Malcolm Oakes
SMS or ring 0419 249 697
oakes@tenthfloor.org

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