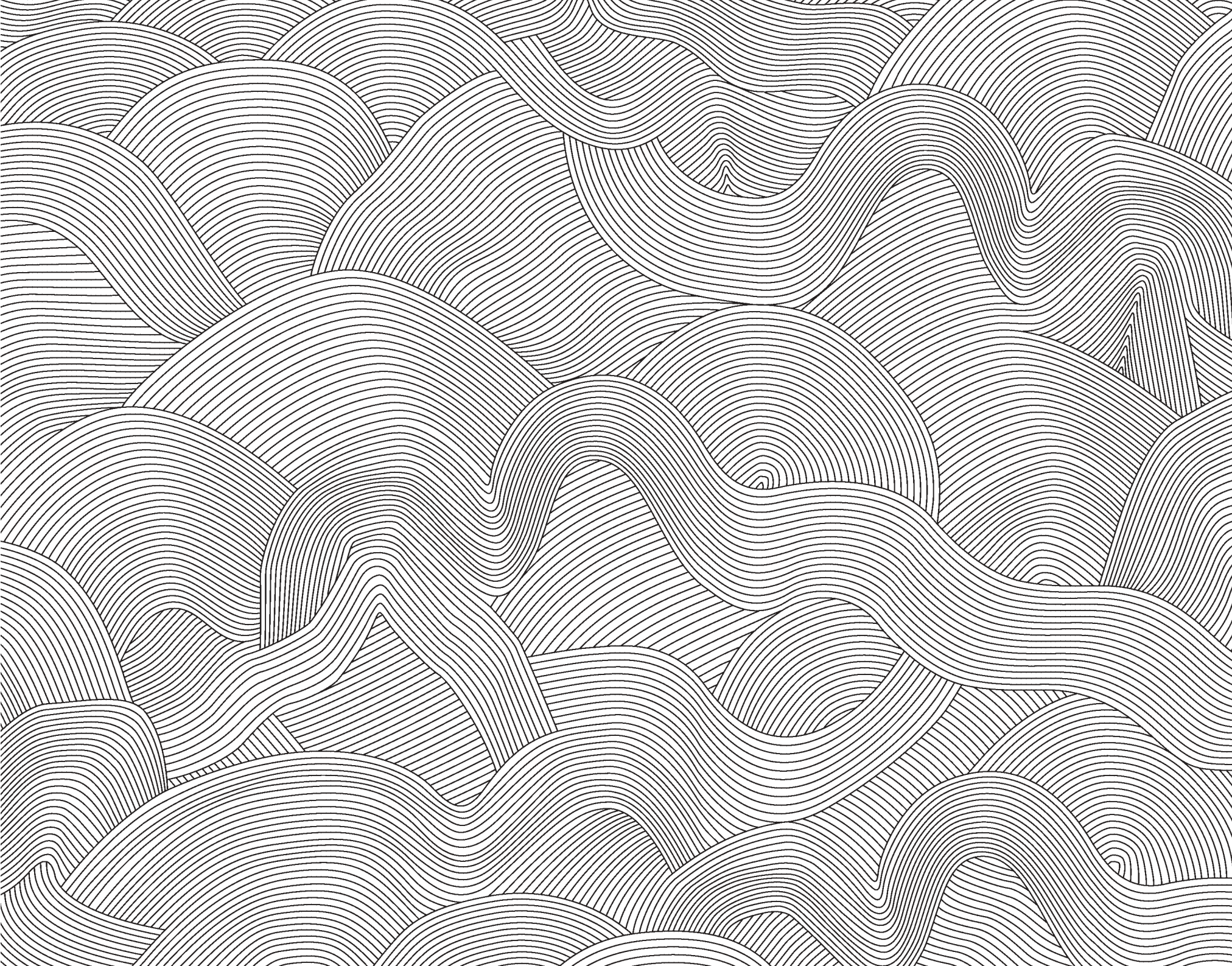


龙的踪迹

澳洲华人史迹溯源

Tracking the Dragon

A guide for finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places



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A guide for finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places

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Printed by Goanna Print, Canberra

Also available online at: www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage

National Library of Australia cataloguing-in-publication data:

Tracking the Dragon : a guide for finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places.

Bibliography.

ISBN 0 642 54763 7.

1. Chinese – Australia. 2. Historic preservation. 3. Historic sites – Australia – Identification. 4. Cultural property – Protection – Australia. I. Australian Heritage Commission. II. Title.

363.69

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Foreword

True knowledge is when
one knows the limitations
of one's knowledge.

— Confucius



Hundreds of thousands of Chinese people have arrived in Australia since the early nineteenth century and have made it their home. Where did they live, work and worship? Where are the places they cared about?

We know some of these places — temples, Chinese burial areas as well as some shops, market gardens and gold diggings from the past. Much remains unknown.

The Australian Heritage Commission is working to rectify this gap in our knowledge of migrant-related heritage places. It has been developing ways to assist migrant groups and the wider community to identify heritage places important to them. In 1999 it produced a 'how to' guide which has helped communities find and assess their migrant heritage places — the Migrant Heritage Places kit.

We have taken this a further step with the development of this guide and its sister internet 'toolkit' for heritage practitioners (*A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places*). The toolkit includes a bibliography of Chinese Australian references and a database of heritage sites.

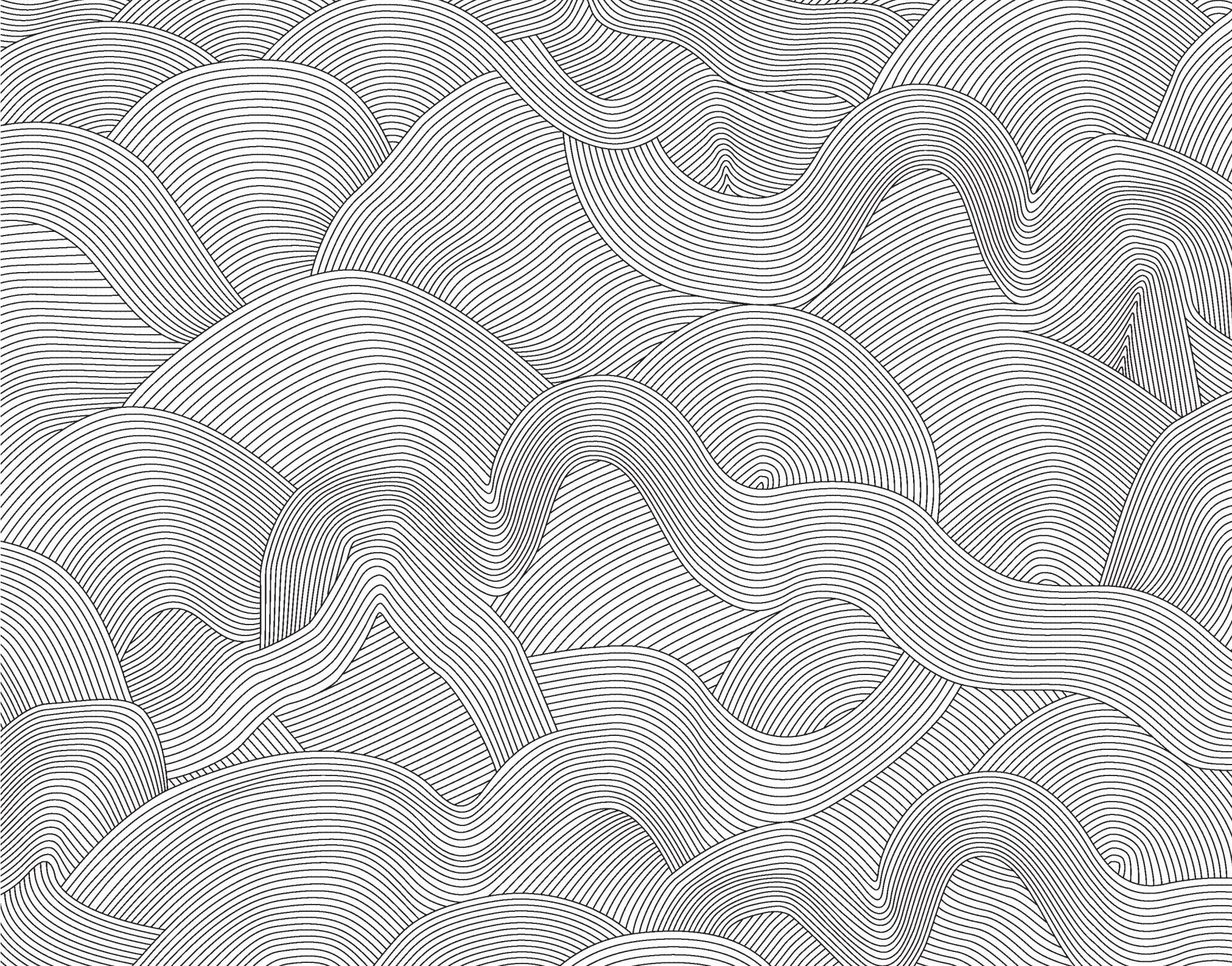
These resources provide both communities and those working in the heritage field with ways of finding out more about the heritage places of a particular migrant group — Chinese Australians.

These new resources will make it easier than ever before to search, find and assess the undiscovered stories and places of our rich Chinese Australian inheritance. Their use will help to build a wider appreciation of this heritage among all Australians.

The knowledge of our Chinese Australian heritage is there to be found. I invite all Australians to help with the search.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tom Harley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Tom Harley
Chairman
Australian Heritage Commission





Section A — Background

A brief overview of Chinese life
and heritage places in Australia





Introduction



Chinese people have been arriving in Australia for almost 200 years. However, knowledge of their activities in Australia and the places linked with them is very patchy.

We do know that the first Chinese person to arrive in Australia was a carpenter who came to Australia as a free man in 1803. His name is recorded as 'Ahuto'. Another early Chinese arrival was Mak Sai Ying. He came to Australia in 1818 as a free-settler farmer and in 1829 became the publican of the *Lion* inn in Parramatta⁽¹⁾.

Early Chinese immigrants worked in a wide variety of occupations. Mining attracted most of the nineteenth century immigrants. Many later became involved in other occupations such as cooking, farming, furniture-making, storekeeping, commerce, market gardening, medicine, construction, fishing, fish curing and dressmaking. The places they lived and worked in are all potentially important parts of our heritage because they will help us to piece together the story of this rich thread of Australia's history.

Today, individuals and community groups, especially Chinese community groups, can make a major contribution to our knowledge and appreciation of Chinese Australian heritage by helping to research this area. Filling in the local picture will add to the richness and diversity of the story of the Chinese in Australia.

Commercial enterprise

The publican, Mak Sai Ying, was the first in a long line of Chinese entrepreneurs who set up stores and businesses in colonial cities and towns. The status and financial standing of these entrepreneurs made them a pivotal part of the development of Chinese communities in Australia and helped in maintaining strong links with China.

The first recorded Chinese store in Sydney was established in 1858. By the end of the century, networks of stores operated throughout New South Wales and similar networks existed in other colonies⁽²⁾. The network in northern NSW — off-spring of the 'parent' stores of Kwong Sing & Co in Glen Innes and Hong Yuen in Inverell — shows the intricate relationships imposed by family and district affiliations in China and Australia⁽³⁾.

These relationships entailed obligations to look after family and village members both here and overseas, often through establishing formal Chinese associations. In the New England area, where there were not enough Chinese to develop such associations, prominent members of the Chinese community, such as storekeepers, fulfilled these obligations.

Stores required little capital which enabled Chinese men to pool their resources and buy individual shares in a store, thereby creating business and employment opportunities.

Many stores survive today that were or are still run by Chinese families. Some of these have been listed on heritage registers including:

- the Wing Hing Long & Co. store in Tingha, NSW
- Ah Toy's bakery in Pine Creek, Northern Territory, and
- Wong Hee's Shop in Mathinna, Tasmania

Many places are yet to be found and their details recorded, especially in the Chinatown areas of our cities.



Ah Toy's Bakery, Pine Creek, Northern Territory, was built by Jim Ah You as a butcher's shop at Mount Diamond in about 1908. The building was moved to Pine Creek in 1915, and converted into a bakery by his son, Jimmy Ah Toy. It is still owned by the Ah Toy family. (J McKinnon, AHC Collection)



Following the gold rushes in Western Australia from the 1880s, many Chinese came from other parts of Australia and set up businesses in the coastal and inland towns as well as in Perth and Fremantle. They ran general stores, laundries, boarding houses, furniture factories and tailoring shops.

From the mid nineteenth century, Chinese laundries could be found in every city or town across Australia with a large Chinese population. In Western Australia in 1904, for example, at least 50 Chinese laundries operated in the Perth/Fremantle area ⁽⁴⁾.

While Chinese food stores and restaurants have always been found in Chinatown areas, it wasn't until the 1950s that Chinese cafes and restaurants became common in suburbs and country towns. They filled a gap left by a decline in market gardening and storekeeping as viable outlets for Chinese Australian capital after World War II.



The former Ken Yen Kee Store, Mount Morgan in Queensland was operated by Chinese storekeepers from 1890 to the 1980s. It is typical of the many Chinese stores once scattered through rural Australia. (AHC Collection)



Sketches of the exterior and interior of John Alloo's Chinese restaurant, main Road Ballarat, 1853. (ST Gill, by permission of National Library of Australia, NK3770)



Rural and domestic workers

Among the earliest Chinese to arrive in Australia were three Chinese domestic servants employed by John and Elizabeth Macarthur at Elizabeth Farm, NSW in 1821 ⁽⁵⁾. They were the first of many Chinese to work as domestic servants in various parts of Australia.

In June 1847, the first Chinese labourers are believed to have arrived in Adelaide from Singapore. These dozen men came to work as indentured or contracted shepherds.

In the same year, 20 Chinese landed in Western Australia, again from Singapore, to work as carpenters and servants ⁽⁶⁾. Other indentured labourers also began to land in the eastern colonies, largely from Fukien (Fujian) province in south-eastern China. For example, in October 1848, 120 Chinese agricultural labourers landed in Sydney directly from Amoy (Xiamen) in Fukien province. By 1853 this number had risen to more than 3300 ⁽⁷⁾. At this time Chinese rural labourers were spread from the Darling Downs in Queensland to southern Victoria, west to Perth and south to Tasmania.

These immigrants worked mostly in the wool industry as shepherds and hut-keepers and were spread throughout rural districts in ones and twos and small groups. These men were generally contracted to work for a five-year period.

It is difficult to find places linked with this early Chinese immigration. No buildings or sites occupied by Chinese agricultural labourers in the 1840s and 50s have yet been accurately identified. If sites from this era can be found, they are likely to be of great heritage interest.

A few sites do exist which are linked with later rural workers and domestic servants, such as the pine-log woolshed at Mungo Station in western NSW, believed to have been built by Chinese rural labourers.



This pine log woolshed at Mungo Station in the western districts of New South Wales is believed to have been built by Chinese rural labourers in 1869. (D Robin, AHC Collection)

To overcome chronic labour shortages in Western Australia caused by a range of factors including gold rushes, the colonial government organised the immigration of Chinese contract labour between 1847 and 1898.

Agents in Singapore drew this labour from a greater mix of Chinese districts than that of other Australian colonies. Most served out two to three-year contracts working on pastoral properties as labourers, cooks, servants or gardeners. Non-contracted Chinese started to migrate to Western Australia in the 1880s, with most coming from the other colonies to work in non-agricultural fields ⁽⁸⁾.

Miners

By the time of the Australian gold rushes in 1851, Chinese people had an established history of migrating to other countries to work in a range of occupations including mining. They had already worked on mining fields in Malaysia and Singapore and when the opportunities arose, joined the Californian gold rush and later the Australian rushes ⁽⁹⁾.

The first Chinese miners bound for the Australian goldfields arrived in Melbourne, **Victoria** in January 1853. Numbers steadily rose over the next few years as organised teams of miners arrived from Guangzhou (Canton) and Hong Kong. By 1855 about 19 000 Chinese had arrived in Victoria. By the end of 1857, this figure had climbed to more than 26 000.

The new gold rush arrivals were not from Amoy like the Chinese shepherds of earlier years. Most came from agricultural areas of Guangdong Province, notably the Sze Yup (See Yup, Siyi), Sam Yup (Sanyi) and Zhongshan.



Heading for the goldfields — a stage coach laden with luggage and Chinese people.
(La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

The proportion of Chinese in the goldfields grew to an average of between 15% and 25%, reaching 43% in Bendigo. Tension grew in some areas when parts of the European population started to resent the economic competition from the Chinese and moved to oppose their immigration. In 1855, political pressure led to the first restrictive immigration legislation in Victoria. This imposed a substantial tax on Chinese people landing in the colony and also limited the number carried in each ship.

To avoid the tax, ships carrying Chinese immigrants diverted to the South Australian ports of Port Adelaide and Robe, and for the next two years South Australia was the principal entry route to the Victorian goldfields. The would-be miners were met by local agents and housed in temporary camps in what are now the Adelaide suburbs. They were then guided on the long overland road to Victoria, finding water in wells that had been dug along the route. Some of these wells still exist as heritage sites. Under pressure from Victoria, the South Australian Parliament passed legislation in 1857 that was almost identical to the Victorian Act of 1855. This dramatically reduced the immigration flow.

Many heritage places associated with Chinese miners are known in Victoria, but many more remain to be found and described. Chinese diggings, for example, include those at Wehla, Newstead, Fryerstown and Ararat, and associated sites such as cemeteries and gardens are known at a number of places, including the cemeteries and Chinese camp sites at Ballarat and Bendigo.

In **New South Wales**, some ships landed Chinese immigrants at the colony's ports. From there they travelled overland to the NSW or Victorian goldfields. Pressure for restricted immigration grew in NSW as well, with disturbances on the goldfields at Rocky River, Tambaroora and Adelong between 1856 and 1858. The most notorious of these was the so-called Lambing Flat riot — a drawn-out series of incidents on the Burrangong Goldfield near Young in New South Wales between November 1860 and September 1861. Two months after the Lambing Flat incident, the



Chinese sluicing near Beechworth, Victoria, Chevalier sketch.
(By permission of National Library of Australia)



This stone retaining wall was constructed by Chinese alluvial gold miners on a gully off Butcher's Creek in Queensland's Palmer goldfield. Its purpose was to divert upsteam water into two races heading in differing directions. (J Wegner)

New South Wales Parliament passed legislation similar to Victoria's. The effect on Chinese immigration to New South Wales was dramatic, with Chinese arrivals dropping from 6985 in 1860 to just 63 by 1863 ⁽¹⁰⁾.

Like Victoria, New South Wales also has a number of identified Chinese mining sites and associated camps such as those at Kiandra, Tambaroora, Araluen, Major's Creek and the Turon. It is likely that many more such places are yet to be identified.

In **Queensland**, Chinese worked on a number of goldfields, but they were most dominant on the Palmer River goldfield which was discovered in 1873. Chinese miners began to arrive on the Palmer a few weeks after the discovery was announced, coming at first from mining fields in the southern colonies. By the end of 1874, about 1500 Chinese people, or 40% of the mining population, were distributed across the Palmer field.

In 1875, Chinese from Hong Kong began to arrive in Cooktown, the nearest port to the goldfield. The Hopkee Company organised up to two steamers a week to bring in an average of a thousand Chinese miners a month. Most were recruited from the lower Pearl River districts. Within months the Chinese population grew to between 9000 and 12 000, and by 1877 had reached 18 000 — more than 90% of the goldfield's population. The Chinese organised most of the supplies, including food, for this community. Much of the folklore about aggression between Chinese and Aborigines has been greatly exaggerated — death at the hands of Aborigines was statistically less likely than death by drowning, snakebite or falling from a horse.

By 1882 the Palmer's alluvial gold was worked out and only about 2000, mostly European miners, remained. The Chinese miners either returned to China, moved to new goldfields or took up other work elsewhere, such as gardening. Today, the Palmer River area still retains many Chinese mining sites, house sites, water races, gardens, cemeteries and other heritage sites ⁽¹¹⁾.

Gold was discovered in the **Northern Territory** in 1872, the most notable discoveries being in the Pine Creek district which was similar to Palmer River in climate and terrain, although not nearly as rich.

The first 186 Chinese arrived on the Pine Creek goldfield in 1874 from Singapore. They were part of an organised team hired by a European mining company to work the alluvial diggings. Ships carrying Chinese miners from Guangdong soon started to arrive in Darwin. The Chinese population swelled to 10 000 by the early 1880s — which constituted around half of the Northern Territory population until 1910.

By the 1920s the Chinese population was concentrated in Darwin. Only a few dozen aging fossickers stayed on the goldfields. Most of the remaining buildings in the mining townships, including the temples, were destroyed by Australian troops between 1942 and 1945 ⁽¹²⁾ although a small number of Chinese sites still exist especially around Pine Creek.

In **Tasmania** they mined for tin and not for gold. Tin was discovered at Mount Bischoff in 1871 and then in the Ringarooma district of the north-eastern mountains in 1874. The price of tin was rising in the late 1870s, and by 1878 Chinese miners were moving into the district around Weldborough. By 1882 they became the largest group in the local population.

As the Tasmanian alluvial mining industry relied on an abundant water supply, many Chinese built races to bring water to hydraulic mining districts. The 1891 census lists 931 Chinese in Tasmania, 695 of whom were alluvial tin miners while 122 were market gardeners. In the 1920s tin was no longer profitable so most of the Chinese left the mining towns. Many younger people moved to Launceston or Hobart and turned to market gardening or service industries ⁽¹³⁾.



Pine Creek Chinatown, Northern Territory is a rare example of the remains of a mining settlement Chinatown. (J McKinnon, AHC Collection)



At Tasmania's Mount Bischoff mines, Chinese workers mined for tin and not for gold. (La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

One of the more unusual activities involving Chinese miners was the extraction of phosphate on **Christmas Island** from 1897. Chinese were recruited largely from Singapore to work the phosphate deposit. Today, the island still has a Chinese community⁽¹⁴⁾ and related heritage places have been assessed recently for their significance.

Cabinet makers

For many years, furniture making was a major Chinese industry in Australia with furniture factories operating in most major urban centres from the 1870s⁽¹⁵⁾. The first Chinese cabinet makers were two men employed by the Reverend John Dunmore Lang in Sydney in 1827⁽¹⁶⁾. Melbourne had its first Chinese cabinet maker in 1836. South Australia followed suit in 1842 with its first cabinet maker setting up in Port Adelaide⁽¹⁷⁾.

By the 1880s in Sydney, a quarter of all cabinet making workshops were Chinese, and by 1912, 862 Chinese people were employed in the furniture trades⁽¹⁸⁾. This trend was not to last as the changing industrial climate and the introduction of restrictive immigration policies meant that by the 1920s few Chinese furniture factories survived in Sydney.

In Western Australia, by the early 1900s furniture manufacturing had become one of the strongholds of Chinese immigrants from the eastern states. Still operating today are the Gee Hop Company, Kwong Yick and Co and the JW Wing Furniture Manufacturers cabinet making factories in Northbridge, Perth. In Melbourne, the Po Hong Nam Building (cabinet makers) is still in business and other factories are sure to survive in other cities and regional centres.



Furniture making was one of the main Chinese industries in the late 1800s and early 1900s. This 1880 sketch provides an insight into the activities of a Chinese furniture workshop. (Australasian Sketcher illustration 24/4/1880 p.69, by permission of National Library of Australia)

Market gardening and agriculture

Many Chinese migrating to Australia in the 1800s came from rural backgrounds and brought with them agriculture and water management skills. As a result, considerable numbers of immigrants later took up market gardening and wider vegetable and fruit production. This was one of the few industries where little competition, and hence little friction, existed with European workers.

From the second half of the nineteenth century, Chinese market gardens became a mainstay of the urban food supply and were found in most cities and towns. Most gardens were leased by groups of five to 10 people, allowing individuals to visit China for a year or two at intervals without closing the garden.

By 1885, 54 Chinese gardens were being worked in the Alexandria and Botany districts of Sydney⁽¹⁹⁾. By 1901, 67% of NSW market gardeners were Chinese⁽²⁰⁾.

Following Federation, restrictive Commonwealth legislation was introduced which narrowed employment opportunities for the Chinese. Market gardening then became one of the main areas of employment to be dominated by Chinese people. Exemptions for market gardeners under the *Immigration Restriction Act* did not keep up with retirements of Chinese Australian market gardeners. After World War II, Italian and other European immigrants largely did this work⁽²¹⁾.

A few Chinese market gardens do survive today in several areas including the Robert Tang, Tiy War & Co and Lo Wun Leong's gardens in Sydney's Botany area. Of the former gardens, the remains of the historical Ah Toy's garden on the Palmer River have been studied in detail⁽²²⁾.



Chinese gardeners have worked in the Bunnerong, La Perouse area of NSW for at least 100 years. (NSW Heritage Office)



Chinese with a junk load of bananas shooting a rapid on the South Johnstone River, Queensland. Chinese growers were central in establishing northern Queensland's agricultural areas. (By permission of National Library of Australia)

After 1878, many Chinese left Queensland's Palmer goldfield and moved to the nearby ports of Cooktown, Port Douglas, Cairns and Geraldton (later Innisfail), where they established tropical agricultural industries. Chinese farmers cleared Atherton Tableland rainforest to grow maize, and the Hop Wah Company founded the Cairns sugar industry in 1881. Others cleared scrub along the hot, wet, coastal plain to grow sugar cane, bananas, pineapples and mangoes throughout the 1880s. They established an industry that today supplies Australia's major cities with tropical fruit.

Chinese merchants and growers also dominated the NSW banana trade. Many of Sydney's Chinese stores owned plantations in Fiji. When tariffs on imported bananas were raised they promoted banana growing in northern NSW. By 1919 Chinese growers owned or leased nearly 500 acres around Mullumbimby. After World War I, returned soldier settlers resisted Chinese involvement in the industry and their participation eventually stopped when disease struck the banana crop in 1925⁽²³⁾.

As well as growing fruit and vegetables, Chinese people also marketed produce. In the first decade of the twentieth century, almost half the fruit merchants at the Melbourne fruit markets were Chinese⁽²⁴⁾.

In Western Australia, in the early 1900s, half of the Chinese population worked in market gardening. The work was seasonal and involved travel — during the summer they would grow vegetables in Perth and in winter they would travel to WA's wheat belt to work⁽²⁵⁾. Other places associated with market gardening which could be of heritage interest might include the boarding houses where market gardeners stayed on the night they brought their produce to the city markets.

Many rural properties employed Chinese gardeners and sometimes, Chinese cooks. Relatively little research has been done into this aspect of agricultural labour. At Mount Wood Station, near Tibooburra in far north-west NSW, the Chinese gardener Tom Chaw maintained an irrigated vegetable, fruit and ornamental garden in front of the homestead from about 1889 until at least 1913. He is believed to be buried near the homestead. Thomas Hoon was also employed as a gardener and cook for several years from 1904 ^[26]. Vestiges of the garden survive.



Chinese garden and gardener's cottage at Jandra Station on the Darling River, NSW. Chinese gardeners provided fresh vegetables for many rural properties throughout Australia. (Ian Jack)

A tobacco plantation in Bathurst, NSW, run by Chinese farmers. (La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

Chinese farmers pioneered tobacco growing in NSW but their involvement was short-lived. In 1891, 464 growers were working in NSW and Victoria, but within 10 years this had dropped to 89. In NSW tobacco growing areas included Albury, Nundle and Manilla ^[27]. No Chinese tobacco farms have been assessed for heritage values.



Construction labourers

From the latter part of the nineteenth century Chinese labourers worked on a number of large-scale construction projects including road and rail building. One such example is the railway built from Darwin to Pine Creek in 1888 which involved almost 3000 Chinese construction workers. Sites associated with these works may still exist across Australia but have not yet been identified and assessed.

Herbalists and doctors

Herbalists and doctors of traditional Chinese medicine practised in Australia from the time of the gold rush. While some recent work has been published on the practice of Chinese medicine in Australia ⁽²⁸⁾, little or no research exists on doctor's surgeries or herbalist's shops.

In Western Australia, the Pang Chong Fe and Sho Hen herbalist shops in Northbridge, Perth still remained in 2001 but had not been recorded and assessed as heritage places. Other such shops undoubtedly exist in other cities, and they too await assessment.



J Chung Leong in his car outside his Chinese herbalist shop in Ballarat, Victoria.
(Reproduced courtesy of Museum Victoria)

Harvesting the sea

Fishing and fish curing sprang up as an industry to supply miners working on the goldfields. Chinese and European fishermen fished in Lake Macquarie, Broken Bay, Port Stephens, Jervis Bay and Twofold Bay in NSW, and in Port Phillip in Victoria. Fish curing involved salting the fish and was an enterprise run mostly by the Chinese.

In Sydney in 1858 three Chinese fishermen were licensed to operate a sailing boat to catch fish and gather oysters. By 1861 a George Street merchant, Ah Chuney, owned and leased between 15 and 20 boats to European and Chinese fishermen. He guaranteed to buy their catch which was cured and sold through his store⁽²⁹⁾. By the late 1880s fewer Chinese were involved in the NSW industry⁽³⁰⁾.

In Western Australia, between the 1880s and the early 1900s, Chinese fishermen and fish curers worked in a number of places such as Dongara and Mandurah. As yet no heritage places have been identified which relate to Chinese involvement in this industry. Coastal communities have the opportunity to identify this aspect of Chinese Australian heritage.

The related industry of pearling attracted Chinese to work as pearlers, cooks and shopkeepers. Chinese pearlers worked at Shark Bay until at least 1886. The pearling town of Broome, in Western Australia, still has a Chinatown with a number of Chinese buildings and a local cemetery with a Chinese section.



Chinese fishing by moonlight, 1873 — a wood engraving by Robert Bruce.
(By permission of National Library of Australia)



Ah Fat's cottage in Broome in Western Australia was built by Chinese merchant Ah Fat and features a wind scoop to cope with the tropical climate. (J McKinnon, AHC Collection)

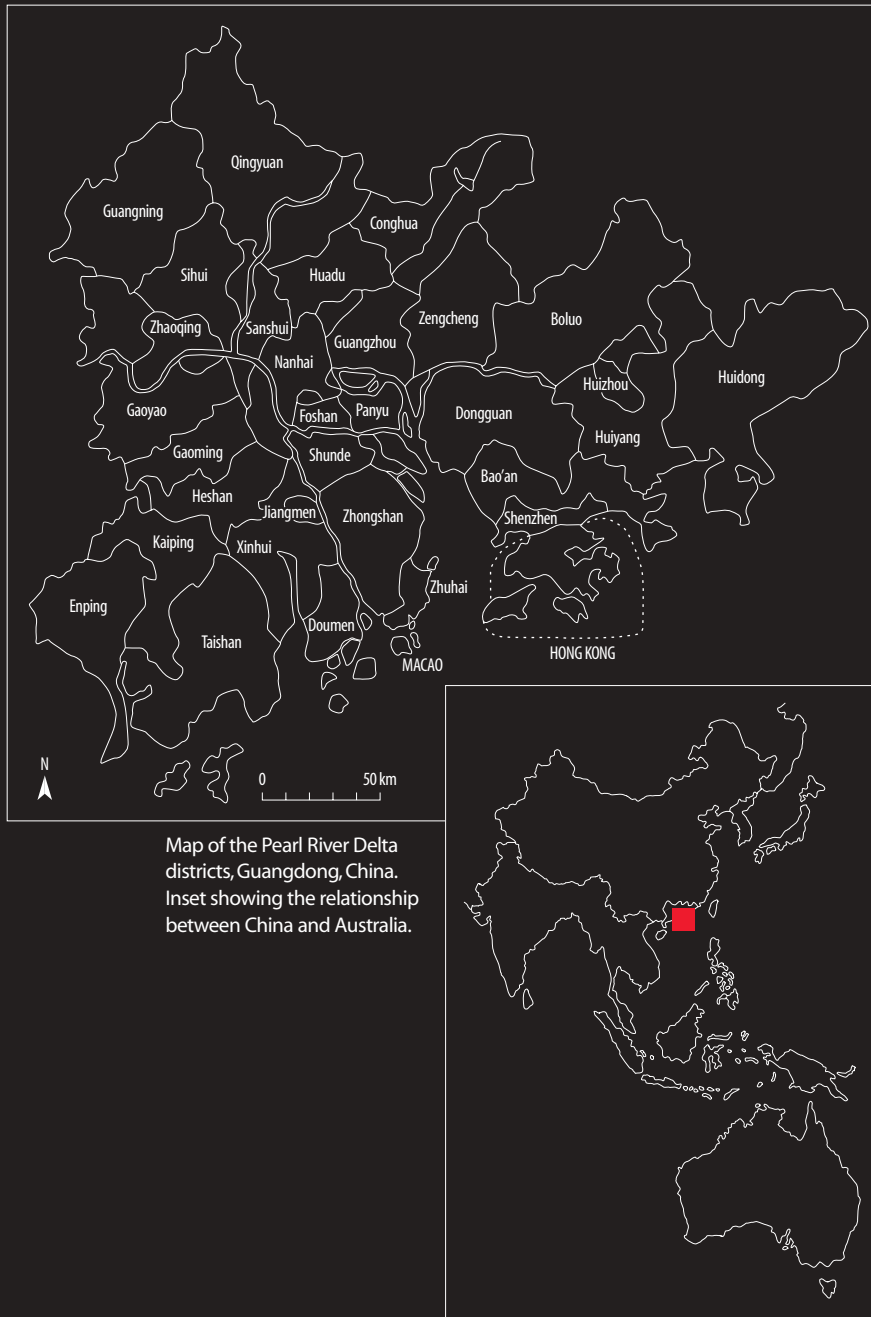
Chinese settlements and 'Chinatowns'

In cities and larger towns, Chinese enterprises tended to cluster together in areas dubbed by Europeans as 'Chinatowns'. This gave them security as well as the benefits of community support and local markets. Substantial Chinatowns flourish today in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Broome. Cavenagh Street, Darwin's Chinatown at the time of World War II, was a row of timber and corrugated iron buildings. During the war it was damaged by bombing, the Chinese evacuated and the area demolished as part of official Australian wartime policy⁽³¹⁾. Other substantial Chinese settlements were not categorised as Chinatowns, though some have been studied, such as The Rocks in Sydney⁽³²⁾.

New or extended Chinatowns are now forming in some cities, and these may develop heritage significance to the Chinese community.

Social organisation and institutions

Chinese people organised their migration, local societies, businesses and their mining activities according to village and district ties, obligations of debt, and dialect affiliations⁽³³⁾. The Chinese immigrants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were usually heavily indebted to family, community, brokers or merchants for their fares to Australia (this has been termed the 'credit-ticket system'). They were also obliged to help support their families in China⁽³⁴⁾. These factors combined to stimulate hard work, the cheapest living arrangements possible (usually organised communally) and a willingness to persist with any work at hand. They were also in regular contact with China and their home districts (qiaoxiangs).



Map of the Pearl River Delta districts, Guangdong, China. Inset showing the relationship between China and Australia.

Dialect and language played an important role in maintaining regional links among the Chinese in Australia. Most of the Chinese in Australia coming from the province of Guangdong spoke the Yue language (Cantonese), though some such as the Hakka, who were numerous in northern Australia, spoke a non-Yue language. In NSW there were many Chinese from the Long Dou area of Zhongshan district, who spoke their own dialect. Victoria was dominated by people from the Sze Yup districts ⁽³⁵⁾ and they too spoke their distinctive dialects, especially those from Toishan (Taishan). In the nineteenth century, language and dialect affiliations were very important. The Chinese in Australia often formed themselves into different communities with their own spoken language and cultural practices and their own temple. In Cairns, for instance, the Chinese formed two main district and dialect groupings, each with their own temple ⁽³⁶⁾. Rivalry within Chinese communities was often based upon district and dialect affiliations.

In Western Australia, there were no distinct dialect affiliations, as there were no dominant districts represented since the Chinese were mostly from Singapore or the eastern colonies of Australia.

During the latter part of the twentieth century, Chinese migrants came from a wider range of places inside China and from other South-East Asian countries. As a result, dialect as a broad-scale social influence is probably less important now than it was formerly.

Some Chinese temples are in use today, including the Chinese Joss House in Darwin, NT. (National Archives of Australia, A6135, K29/7/91/101)





Temples were often the focal point of Chinese community life and were established on the basis of district and dialect affiliations. Communities established or re-established temples in many cities, towns and goldfields at different periods right up to the present day. A number still survive including:

- Sze Yup Temple, Glebe, Sydney, NSW
- Yiu Ming Temple, Alexandria, Sydney, NSW
- Chit-Kung-Tang Temple, Bendigo, Vic
- Sze Yup Temple, South Melbourne, Vic
- Sze Yup and Chung Wah Temples, Darwin, NT
- the Temple of the Holy Triad, Breakfast Creek, Brisbane, Qld and
- the Temple of Hou Wang in Atherton, Qld

Chinese churches are a feature of many communities due to the work of Christian missionaries. In some areas, such as Melbourne's Chinatown, the churches played an important role in teaching the Chinese language and in helping to maintain traditional ways. Conversely, the churches also ran English classes and helped to 'Europeanise' Chinese communities⁽³⁷⁾. Examples of places with known heritage significance include:

- the Chinese Christian Churches in Milsons Point, Sydney, NSW and in Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, Vic and
- the Chinese Sunday School in Fremantle, WA

During the nineteenth century, district societies (tongxianghui or 'same place' societies) provided social support for Chinese communities in Australia. Their work included establishing temples and returning old men to China who were unable to fund their own return. The societies also returned to China the bones of members who had died in Australia. Between 1875 and the late 1930s, societies organised the exhumation of more than 1500 bodies from Rookwood cemetery and sent the remains back to China.

Societies also helped Chinese communities to keep their focus on family obligations and links to China. Australia's oldest society, the Sze Yup Society, was established in Melbourne in 1854. The oldest society in NSW is the Quong Sing Tong, which was established in 1877. By the 1890s there were a further 10 Sydney-based societies with membership spread throughout the state. Three of these are still operating in Sydney, and others have been formed or reformed in recent decades ⁽³⁸⁾.

Societies existed in most cities with a substantial Chinese population. The Kuomintang, for example, had branches operating in at least Sydney, Broome and Darwin. Some significant buildings associated with these societies survive today including:

- the Chung Wah Association building in Northbridge, Perth, WA
- the Australian Chinese Association building in Sydney, NSW
- the Nan Poon Soon Chinese Society Clubhouse in Melbourne, Vic as well as
- temples sponsored by specific societies

Erected in 1861, the Nan Poon Soon Chinese Society Clubhouse in Melbourne still used by the society for its meetings. (P Wright, AHC Collection)





The Chinese Nationalist Revolution in 1911 galvanised many Australian Chinese into political activity, prompting the formation of political organisations and newspapers, particularly in the Chinese communities of Sydney and Melbourne. After the 1930s Chinese national affiliation, as opposed to district affiliation, began to dominate local Chinese community views. Little has been done to identify and record the places associated with these developments.

Cemeteries

Chinese cemeteries are to be found across Australia. These range from poorly marked areas of disturbed ground containing a small number of burials, through to large formal cemeteries with headstones and burners which were used to burn money offered in memory of the dead.

Chinese graves may occupy a specified portion of a general cemetery, as at Rookwood Necropolis in Sydney or the two general cemeteries in Ballarat, or may be a distinct Chinese burial ground. Grave markers may mark coffin burials or ceramic urns containing reburied bones. As mentioned earlier, many Chinese bodies were exhumed and the remains returned to China for reburial.

Chinese burners used to burn money for the dead at Beechworth Cemetery in Victoria. (Michele Parsons, AHC Collection)

Summary

This overview of Chinese life and heritage places in Australia is just a starting point. Much of this history is yet to be researched and revealed.

Areas needing investigation include women, children and families. More work also needs to be done on linking heritage places in Australia with the different cultural and ethnic patterns of the originating communities in China and South-East Asia.

What we do know of the history of Chinese communities in Australia is not always reflected in heritage registers. While these registers provide official recognition of the importance of a place to a country's heritage, the information they contain may not be comprehensive. Well-documented listings of Chinese Australian heritage places would put on record this important part of Australia's migrant heritage.

If you are interested in discovering more about this part of our heritage, the following guide will help you to find and identify Chinese Australian heritage places.



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At right: Photomontage entitled 'With compliments of Mr and Mrs Quong Tart, 1892, Gallop House, Ashfield', Kerry & Co (ML Ref SV1A/ASHF/2). Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.

Quong Tart

One of the most famous Chinese Australians at the turn of the twentieth century was **Quong Tart** — tea merchant, entrepreneur, philanthropist, sportsman and reciter of Robbie Burns poems.

Quong Tart was born in China's Canton province (Guangzhou) in 1850 and at age nine came to Australia with an uncle to settle in the Braidwood district in New South Wales. After being taken into the home of Scottish settlers, Quong Tart went on to make his fortune on the goldfields.

In the 1880s he established a network of *Quong Tart and Company* tea shops and dining rooms around Sydney. It was during this period that he built his Ashfield home — **Gallop House**.

He used his wealth and position to help others with many organisations and individuals benefiting from his generosity. He also campaigned against the importation of opium and against racism at the turn of the century. Following an attack from which he did not recover, Quong Tart died at Gallop House in 1903. His funeral brought almost unprecedented crowds of Chinese and Australian mourners (from 'Quong Tart', *Ashfield at Federation*, ed. Chris Pratten, Ashfield, NSW, Ashfield and District Historical Society, October, 2001).

From Quong Tart's grand-daughter-in-law, Lois McEvoy who lived in Gallop House

'I lived at Gallop House from late 1945 to early 1954, with my husband John, a grandson of Quong Tart. His mother was Ettie Tart married to Harry McEvoy — my three eldest children were born there. Gallop House was a two-storey Federation house with very wide street frontage, circular drive from two entrances. The rooms were large with lots of windows...

'In the drawing room over the two marble fire places were large mirrors with Chinese woodwork surrounds. Outside the drawing room into the main hall entrance were two large heavy metal lion dogs on stands (to protect the house from evil).

'Many times I was conscious of a presence in the house and saw his ghost. We had happy times at Gallop House. It was sold in 1958 and became Bennelong Private Hospital... I have only happy memories of my time there.'



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Section B — The guide

Finding and assessing Chinese
Australian heritage places

龙的踪迹



Chinese miners established a camp on Pennyweight Flat, Victoria, during the height of the gold rush. The site has strong historical associations and archaeological potential. (AHC Collection)



Chinese produce gardens at Walhalla, Victoria, in the nineteenth century. (La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria). *'In marked contrast to the [old houses] we saw laying in the deep valley by the road... a couple of Chinaman's gardens beautifully laid out and beautifully kept... a weed would have had a poor chance...'* (From an account by William Broadbent of his visit to the area in 1911, reproduced in GF James and CG Lee's *Walhalla Heyday*, Robertson and Mullens, 1970)



The pearling boom attracted Chinese people to Broome to work mainly as shopkeepers, cooks and domestic servants. Broome retains a Chinatown with a number of intact Chinese buildings. (AHC Collection)



Pig and other meats were cooked in earthen or masonry ovens, especially for ceremonial or social occasions. Such ovens are found at a number of former Chinese settlement sites around Australia including this one at Pine Creek in the Northern Territory. (AHC Collection)

Introduction



What are Chinese Australian heritage places?

Australia has many places connected with the history of Chinese settlement, and with Chinese Australian communities.

These places may be sites, archaeological remains, buildings, structures or gardens. Some are grand, others are modest. They can range from large temples and department stores through to small cemeteries or outdoor stone ovens. They can be old or recent and include important objects.

Each of these places has a story to tell about the experiences of Chinese Australians and their part in the emergence of a multicultural nation.

Although some Chinese Australian heritage places are already well-known and protected, many are not. Some sites may be known but have little recorded about them. Others have not yet been identified. Overall, much more needs to be known about Chinese Australian sites.

This guide has been created to help individuals and communities fill these gaps by explaining how to identify lesser-known places and to assess and document their 'heritage values'.

Finding out what remains of our heritage is a first important step. Our next step will be to keep it and care for it for the benefit of the generations ahead.

What is the guide for?

This is a step-by-step guide to researching and finding places connected with Chinese settlement in Australia. It also examines how you can assess the heritage value of these places.

It explains:

- the types of Chinese places in Australia that might be part of our heritage, ie that might have heritage values
- how communities and individuals can identify and record the important heritage aspects or 'heritage values' of Chinese Australian places
- where to find more detailed information about Chinese Australian places and how to assess and protect their heritage values, and
- how to nominate Chinese Australian places to government heritage registers

Who should use it?

The guide will help anyone interested in identifying and assessing Chinese Australian places, including:

- Chinese Australian individuals, groups and communities
- individuals and groups in any community wanting to identify heritage places, either in their local area or over a wider region
- local government staff and councillors involved in heritage studies
- state/territory heritage agencies undertaking surveys or conservation planning involving Chinese Australian places, and
- heritage practitioners working with Chinese Australian places and communities (a toolkit which is designed to help practitioners is available on the internet at www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage)

What is 'heritage' and 'heritage significance'?

'Heritage' is the collection of places, objects and experiences that we inherit, value and want to keep for the future. Our heritage gives us a sense of the past and of who we are — our cultural identity. Protecting our heritage and passing it on will help future generations to understand their past.

As our environment is constantly changing and it is impossible to keep everything, we need ways to identify and assess places to determine which are the most important for us to keep as part of our heritage.

'Heritage significance' is a phrase used to describe the value of a place or object. A place may be recognised for many reasons — for its aesthetic, historic, social, scientific or for other special values held by the community. Places with heritage significance may help us to understand the past, enrich the present or be of value to future generations.

The way we think about heritage inevitably alters as society's tastes and values change. The significance of some items may increase as we learn more about our history. Historical information is therefore essential to understanding the context of individual heritage items and why they are important.

What is a significant place?

Chinese Australian heritage places include buildings, groups of buildings or precincts and sites. They also include objects relating to these places. They can be old, but are not necessarily so. They may be important to contemporary Chinese Australian communities, and also to the broader community, for their place in the development of Australia's cultural history and identity.

Chinese Australian heritage places may have had other uses or associations in the past which also make them important to other sectors of the community.

Deciding on whether a particular place has heritage significance should be based on assessing a range of issues such as the history of the place, its associations and intactness.

This guide should help in making decisions about the heritage significance of places.

Why assess and protect Chinese Australian heritage places?

You might want to assess and protect Chinese Australian heritage places because they:

- are pleasing visual elements of a neighbourhood
- are important historical links to a community's distant or recent past
- represent shared experiences or associations important to a community
- are important to the continuity of Chinese culture in the community
- have social, religious or ethical obligations attached to them, and
- contribute to the economic viability of a property or neighbourhood

If you want to protect a place for any of these reasons, you should first:

- understand the history of the place
- know what parts of the place are particularly important
- be able to record this information for others to share, and
- nominate it to a heritage register

What is a heritage register, and why use it?

A heritage register is an official record of those places which are valued by the community for their historic, aesthetic, social or scientific importance. Some registers include places valued for their natural importance.

The Commonwealth and each state and territory have their own heritage registers as do some local governments.

In general, local government registers list places of local significance, state and territory registers list places important to the state or territory, and the Register of the National Estate is a national list of heritage places maintained by the Commonwealth government. Places that are of undoubted universal significance may be given World Heritage listing.

Most heritage registers are linked to legal controls for protecting heritage places. These controls are not intended to prevent development or change, but rather to minimise damage to the heritage values of listed places.

Differences in register listings

- **Entry in a local government register or local environmental plan (LEP)** usually means that the local council will look closely at any proposed changes to a register-listed place, such as additions, major renovations or demolition. The council considers the impact of proposed changes on heritage significance before giving approval or otherwise for the works to proceed.
- **State and territory government heritage registers** work in a similar way to local registers. They may require local councils and developers to consider additional controls when assessing works that might have a negative impact on the heritage values of a place. Most state and territory registers list places assessed to be important beyond the local level.
- **The Commonwealth government heritage register**, the Register of the National Estate, is supported by the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975* which controls the activities of Commonwealth agencies that might impact on heritage places. This legislation may change in 2002.

The extent and nature of the legal controls imposed by heritage registers varies from state to state, so it is wise to find out what happens in your state. Use the **Useful contacts** section in this guide to locate information from your state or territory heritage agency.

Why heritage registers are useful

Heritage registers:

- are an important recognition of special places
- are a means of letting others know about important places
- are valuable sources of information about heritage places
- contain information that can help with assessing the relative heritage significance of places and
- are a way of protecting places — a link to planning controls and other legal protection

Nine steps for researching, assessing and recording Chinese Australian heritage places

To discover if a place is important to our heritage, we first need information. We need to know as much as possible about the history of the place and the role it has played in the lives of Australians past and present. This information may be scattered in many locations — in records both official and unofficial, in local knowledge and personal memories and in the place itself. Local Chinese Australians are an obvious source of information about their own histories and local associations and should be consulted by anyone doing heritage research.

It is important to gather this information so that it can be analysed in order to assess why the place is significant to our heritage. The following pages set out how to approach the important steps of researching, assessing and recording heritage values.

Chinese community celebration on the steps of the Yü Ming Temple, Sydney, 2000 to mark the temple's register listing. (NSW Heritage Office)



Background research

Step 1

Gather historical information and document community connections with the place

Step 2

Understand the history of the place



Step 1

Gather historical information and document community connections with the place

The broader context

A definitive history of the Chinese in Australia does not yet exist and much remains to be learnt about the places related to this history.

To become familiar with the range of Chinese activities and occupations in Australia, study the section at the start of this guide — *A brief overview of Chinese life and heritage places in Australia*. This looks at Chinese life in Australia and gives examples of places that illustrate aspects of Chinese Australian heritage.

A select bibliography at the end of this guide identifies key books and articles. A more comprehensive bibliography can be found in the companion internet publication to this guide called *A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage).

A local focus

After looking at this broader context, try next to understand the history of Chinese settlement in your local area, using locally available sources of information.

A wide range of historical resources can cast light on the Chinese Australian history of an area (see **Where to find local information** opposite). Individuals and community groups, especially Chinese community groups, may be able to fill in the local picture and contribute greatly to our knowledge and appreciation of Chinese Australian heritage places.

Actions

- **Contact and involve** Chinese Australian families and communities associated with the place, especially if the project is being undertaken by a non-Chinese Australian group or individual.

- **Search further afield** if local Chinese Australian families have moved away from the area. Try to identify and contact them because their knowledge and links with the area might add to its social significance.
- **Involve the broader community** by locating local historians, knowledgeable residents or members of long-established local families — local historical societies or family history groups may provide you with contacts. Interested groups or individuals should be invited to be involved in the project, contribute their knowledge, and acknowledged in the final documentation.
- **Form an outline of the history** of the Chinese at the place and its surrounding area by studying relevant local histories, published books and articles, government records, maps and photos. Try to find the original descriptions, rather than rely on later and often inaccurate secondary histories. For more ideas on **Where to find local information**, see opposite. Use the bibliography in this guide, and in the internet resource — *A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage).
- **Take photocopies of the significant records** you discover including historical photographs and plans. Note or photocopy relevant sections of historical text.
- **Interview former residents**, community members and local historians who may know the place and its stories. For places significant to relatively recent Chinese migrants, this might be the only source of information which is available.
- **Consider holding a meeting**, a focus group or a community workshop which may assist in exploring shared memories. Guides have been published that relate directly to the processes of involving local communities. These are the Australian Heritage Commission's *Migrant Heritage Places in Australia — How to find your heritage places — A guide* (2000), and *Protecting local heritage places: a guide for communities* (2000).
- **Check to see if the place is already recorded** by searching the Australian Heritage Places Inventory (www.heritage.gov.au), the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage) and your local council heritage register. The records for many listed places do require further information. You may find places in registers with only some of their values recognised and with Chinese Australian heritage significance omitted. If you have more information, it would be useful to update the listing by contacting the agency administering the register.

Where to find local information

- **Local and regional histories** in the local library, historical society, family history society and state library — several of these have their catalogues on the internet.
- **General historical books and articles** on Chinese Australian history — see **Resources** section at the end of this guide for a feel for the broader context. A wider selection of sources can be found online in the bibliography of *A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage).
- **Oral history recordings** with local Chinese Australians can offer valuable insights into a local area. Some interviews may already exist so first check your local library and historical societies. You may also want to explore the National Library of Australia's national directory of Australia's oral history collections available online via www.nla.gov.au. Some useful guides exist to help you undertake oral history recordings including *Oral History Handbook* by Beth Robertson, (1994).
- **Historical photographs** may be stored at the local library, historical society or at the local newspaper. Photographs of street scenes, celebrations, parades, and work life in a town or suburb or in the country can reveal images of Chinese people and businesses. They can provide evidence of the local Chinese presence and activities and give leads for further research.
- **Local and city newspapers** can be a key source of information but can take time to research. Microfiche or back copies of local newspapers are sometimes held by the local library, family history society or historical society. If not, a useful listing of surviving newspapers in Australian libraries is the National Library of Australia's *Newspapers in Australian Libraries, a Union List, Part 2, Australian Newspapers* (4th edition Canberra 1985), which can be found in many regional and all state libraries.

A number of **Chinese newspapers** have been established in Australia, and these can be a key resource for Chinese language readers. Work has already started on developing an index of one of the most important Chinese language newspapers in Australia, the *Tung Wah* (see <http://chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au/>).

- **Local government** records can provide information on property ownership and structural alterations through archived documents such as land titles, maps and plans. These records can also shed light on changes and subdivisions to the place over time.

- **Commonwealth and state government records** are held by state and national archives and can provide very specific information. They are particularly valuable if you have the name of a Chinese person known to have lived locally. The records include naturalisation papers, customs records relating to immigration restriction and the issue of passports as well as census statistics. A database guide and index books to the Chinese naturalisation records in NSW from 1857 to 1887 by T McCormack (1997) is available on CD-ROM at the State Library of NSW and the National Library of Australia.

A valuable resource for Victoria is the reprinted Victorian Parliamentary Papers and legislation relating to the Chinese, 1855–1900, including descriptive reports of Victoria's Chinese population printed in 1868 and 1881, edited by IF McLaren (1985).

- **Mining records** are a major source of information about Chinese mining activities although they may have to be supplemented by other sources, such as newspapers. The *Mining Heritage Places Assessment Manual* by Michael Pearson and Barry McGowan (2000) provides a guide to researching and assessing mining sites.

Step 2

Understand the history of the place

The reason for gathering historical information is to better understand the place. This stage may take some time, but it is worth doing well as it is crucial to being able to properly assess its heritage value. Once you have gathered this material you will need to sort and analyse it so that a succinct and focused description of the history of the place can be written.

Actions

- **Find answers** to these basic questions:
 - when was the place established or built?
 - how did the Chinese use the place?
 - was the place used before or after its occupation by Chinese people, and if so, what can you find out about them?
 - what major changes, if any, have been made and by whom? What were those changes?
- **More detail is now needed** so use the **Questions to help historical analysis** at right to fill out the information you have gathered. Answer as many of the questions as you can with the information you have. Your particular place may raise other questions in your mind and you may need to seek additional sources of information.

Questions to help historical analysis

Analysing the collected information will be more useful if something is known about Chinese history and about the home provinces of Chinese migrants. The experiences of Chinese Australians varied according to where they came from, where they landed in Australia and their circumstances at the time. Their stories are influenced by their regional affiliations, ancestral origins and obligations, life experience in China prior to migration, personal skills and the varied regional characteristics (economic, climatic and cultural) of their new home in Australia. (See **Overseas Chinese history — general references** in the Resources section of this guide.)

Ask these questions:

1. What was happening regionally?

- What was the extent of Chinese Australian settlement in the region — was this place one of many or was it unusual?
- Are other Chinese Australian places associated with the one being recorded — are they a part of the history of the place?
- What were the connections between the local Chinese Australian community and the broader Chinese community elsewhere in Australia or in the Pacific, South-East Asia or China?
- Did the Chinese Australian place influence, or was it influenced by, broader settlement patterns?
- Did the Chinese Australian presence stimulate or facilitate other industries or activities such as mining, market gardening, pastoralism etc?
- Did the Chinese Australian presence at this place influence transport routes or modes of transport in the district or on a wider scale?
- Did Chinese Australian settlement and related activities have a lasting impact on surrounding landscapes?

2. What does the historical evidence tell us about the use of the place?

- What activity or activities were carried out at the place?
- Do documents exist which relate to the activities at the place such as mining records, store records, family reminiscences?
- Does the evidence, documentary or physical, tell us about activities that were particularly Chinese in origin?
- Was the place part of a broader pattern of Chinese Australian activity and settlement in the area or region?
- Do photographs exist of the place and show how it was used by Chinese Australians?
- Is there evidence of how the place was used and changes made when no longer used by Chinese Australians?
- If the place is a work site, such as a mine, garden or workshop, where did the Chinese Australians workers live?
- Do people survive (Chinese Australian or other) who knew the place when it was used or occupied by Chinese Australians? Have they been interviewed?
- Did the place have any architectural, engineering or aesthetic feature of outstanding creativity or noteworthiness?
- Does historical information about similar Chinese Australian places indicate that this place was in any way unusual, or is it/was it typical of its type?

3. What are the historical associations of the place?

- Was the place associated with prominent identified individuals or groups? How?
- Did any important events occur at the place?
- Does the place have important historical associations not relating to Chinese Australian activities or settlement?
- Did the place influence contemporary or later historical developments? (eg, was it the subject of important legal proceedings; did it have a major role in stimulating local economic development; did it play a role in local social activities or reinforce social cohesion; did it influence Chinese Australian settlement or activities elsewhere; were any important race relations issues raised or resolved there?)
- How important was the Chinese Australian place in the overall context of the Chinese Australian settlement of the region, state or nation. For example, was it the largest Chinese Australian settlement of its type in the region or state; did it lay the foundation for a network of Chinese Australian activities and settlement in the region or state?
- Do communities or groups survive (Chinese Australian or other) who value the Chinese Australian place because of past or current associations?
- What are the relationships between the Chinese and non-Chinese associated with the place (eg marriages, business partnerships, landlord/tenant etc)?
- How do you rank the historical significance of the place:
 - is it important in the history of the state?
 - is it more relevant to the settlement of the local area or region?
 - are the events associated with the place unusual, or did similar things happen elsewhere?
 - were the individuals associated with the place particularly notable?

The discussion in **Step 7** about assessing significance will help in this ranking.

Site investigation



Step 3

Get permission

Step 4

Be prepared

Step 5

Describe the place

Step 6

Photograph the place

Step 3

Get permission

Actions

- Before starting to record the place or visiting the site you should **obtain permission** from the property's owner.
- **If access is denied**, decide if you want to proceed with assessing the place, and if so, limit your description to what is observable without entering the property.

Step 4

Be prepared

Action

- When visiting the site, **take with you the information and equipment you will need** to record the type of place. For a building, this might be a notebook, pencil, camera and copies of relevant photographs or plans. For a garden or mining site you might also take a clipboard and A4 paper (to sketch a plan), a compass, tape measure and a map.

Step 5

Describe the place

Actions

- **Decide on where the boundaries lie.** The place may be very different from that defined by the surveyed property boundaries. Make sure you take into account the functions and relationship of the place and its parts with its setting — for example the boundaries of a mining site may stretch beyond the diggings to incorporate the water races and their source dams. The exact boundary may evolve through the process of exploring the history and values of the place.
- **Record its street address**, if it has one. If it doesn't, note its map grid reference and map name and number. If the area is large, draw the boundary on a copy of the topographic map or street directory map.
- **Draw a map or plan of the place.** If it is a building, also sketch the sheds, driveways, fences and any other features within the boundary of the place as well as the layout of each floor of the building. If it is a larger area of land, sketch the features that make up the place, such as mining remains, creeks, water races, gardens, sheds, machinery and artefacts, taking measurements and/or compass angles from an identifiable fixed point.
- **Compare the place with any existing historical photos** and describe differences and changes that you observe. This will help you to understand the history and changes to the place over time.
- **Describe in your notebook the main features of the place**, such as the style, materials and construction of buildings, their surroundings and settings, mine workings, and gardens etc. Describe in detail any features associated with its Chinese history or which otherwise contribute to its heritage significance. Copy any Chinese inscriptions for later translation. Remember to record features relating to earlier or later use of the place by non-Chinese occupants.

- **Look for the small things as well as the large.** Objects and artefacts on the ground or in a building can provide valuable information, may be part of the place's significance and could add immeasurably to the richness of its story.
- **Take note of related places**, such as buildings which lie outside the boundary.
- **Cross reference your descriptions** with maps, plans or photographs by numbering the descriptions and the mapped/photographed features.
- **Note the condition and intactness of the place.** Has it changed much when compared with old photographs? Have parts been added or demolished? What is its condition? Is its current use causing any damage to the site?
- **Keep notes of oral recollections** of those associated with the place as the human memory can be a rich source of information. These will help to gain insights into places with a recent past that is important to our heritage.

Step 6

Photograph the place

Good current photos are invaluable. They will assist your memory later on and will serve as a record of the place in any report, exhibition or publication.

Actions

- **Photograph the place from a good vantage point**, showing as many associated features as can be seen in a single frame or in a number of connecting photos. It is important and useful to record a sense of the environment of the site.
- **Photograph individual features and objects** that help in understanding its Chinese associations.
- When taking the photos, **write down the details of each frame in sequence.** Note on the sketch plan where each photo was taken and the direction of the view (a simple circle and arrow is best). This will help later in linking the photos to your written notes and sketch plan.

Assessing heritage significance

Step 7

Decide what is of heritage significance

- historic
- social
- aesthetic
- scientific



Step 7

Decide what is of heritage significance

Use the information you have gathered on the place's history, its meanings, associations and physical condition to decide what is important about it. A word of warning — assessing significance based on hearsay or myths is not a good basis for making decisions about a place's future, conservation, funding or community celebration.

What is it that makes a place important? Some places:

- are important **historically**
- will be of **social value** to the Chinese Australian community, or the general local community, while others will not be held in particularly high regard, sometimes simply because few people know of them
- make a major **aesthetic** contribution to their location, while others might not stand out from their neighbours or setting at all, or
- are a source of important information with **scientific value**

Using the above criteria will assist you in assessing whether a place is important but you will then need to compare it with other similar places to understand its degree of importance. To do this, consider whether the place is:

- **rare or unique** because it is the only example of a particular type of place to survive or
- **representative**, being typical of its period with few outstanding historical associations

If the place is rare or a good example of a type, it may be significant for these reasons. Having determined how significant a place is, you need to consider the level of significance (see **Levels of significance** at the end of Step 7).

Action

- After completing your background research and site investigation you can now **decide whether the place has heritage significance and if it should be conserved for future generations**. To help you with this process, use the guidelines provided in the following **How to assess heritage significance**.

How to assess heritage significance

Does it have HISTORIC heritage significance?

A place may be historically significant because it has close associations with important events, activities or people or with phases of settlement.

Consider:

- does it reflect important aspects of the community's history?
- is it a good example of traditional building techniques, technology, design or craft traditions brought to Australia?
- was it closely associated with an event, individual or group that influenced the Chinese settlement of a region, town or suburb, or be otherwise important in the community's history?
- does it show ways of life, customs or land uses of the Chinese Australian community in the past?
- is it linked to other places specially valued by the community or group?

For help with assessing these values, work through the earlier section in **Step 2 — Questions to help historical analysis**. Remember that the more intact a place is, and the more evident its Chinese associations then the more significant the place is likely to be.

Examples:

- **a mining site, cemetery or furniture factory** can reflect important aspects of a community's history, such as:
 - *Stonyville township, water race and Chinese cemetery* is historically significant as part of the Palmer River goldfield — the largest established alluvial goldfields worked by Chinese miners in Far North Queensland or
 - *Twelve Mile Chinatown settlement and battery sites* in the Northern Territory have historic significance as the centre of a small but widely-known European and Chinese settlement. It is also significant for being one of a now-small group of important sites which have not been disturbed by development, or
 - an early or surviving furniture factory such as the *See Wah & Co Factory* in West Perth, WA.

- a **temple** or **Chinese funerary burner** can demonstrate traditional practices such as:
 - the *Chit-Kung-Tang Temple*, also known as the Chinese Masonic Temple in Bendigo Vic. This place is important as it illustrates the lives and religious practices of Chinese immigrants to the Victorian goldfields in the second half of the nineteenth century or
 - the *funerary burner at Maldon, Vic* which, while part of Chinese religious practice brought to Australia, is a striking and unique example exemplifying the lavishness of Chinese Australian funerary burners.
- a **store** or **restaurant** long associated with a Chinese community such as:
 - the *Wing Hing Long & Co Store* in Tingha, NSW which provides a unique insight into the history of Chinese Australian retailing in regional New South Wales or
 - the *Sing Lee Café* in Melbourne, Vic.
- a **house** closely associated with a once-prominent community member such as:
 - *Gallop House*, Ashfield, NSW, built for Quong Tart and his family. Quong Tart was a tea importer, restaurateur and the best-known Chinese resident in Sydney at the end of the nineteenth century.
- a **'Society' building**, such as:
 - the *Num Poon Soon Chinese Society Clubhouse* in Melbourne, Vic, built in 1861 by Lowe Kong Meng, President of the Sam Yup Society and a prominent merchant/ importer and leader of the Chinese community in Victoria. The building was used as a Chinese lodging house, meeting rooms and clubhouse and shows past ways of life of the Chinese Australian community.
- a **former** or **current market garden**, such as:
 - the *Arncliffe Chinese Market Gardens*, Sydney, NSW which is highly significant for its association with the Chinese community and its demonstration of a continuous pattern of land usage since the late nineteenth century. It is one of only three such surviving gardens in the inner Sydney region.
- a **garden** may be linked to the **market** at which the produce was sold, or to the **boarding house** where the gardeners stayed when delivering produce.

For help with distinguishing ways in which a place might be significant, refer to the Australian Heritage Commission's Australian Historic Themes Framework which is available online at www.heritage.gov.au.



Burners for making paper money offerings to the departed souls are found at a number of cemeteries around Australia including this one in Maldon Cemetery, Victoria. The Australian cemetery burners are far more notable than those found elsewhere in the world. (Ian Jack)

Does it have SOCIAL heritage significance?

Social significance refers to the importance and meanings a place has for a present community. It includes places that are the continuing focus of the community's religious, spiritual, symbolic, cultural, educational or social sentiments.

Social significance is identified by seeking the shared opinion of community members about the characteristics they value, or by observing the way in which the community relates to the place. All places are likely to have some degree of social value to some part of the community, but **places with social heritage value will be those held in strong and special regard by the community as a whole or by a particular group within it.** Places of social value stand out in the community's collective mind as being important to today's society. They are places which provide community identity.

Social significance can change over time, for example, the community may learn more about the history of a place which alters its appreciation. It is important to distinguish heritage values from other values, such as amenity or utility. The local supermarket has great amenity value but it may not be a place with social heritage value. Such places that have current, but probably short-lived, amenity value to a community would usually not be assessed as having heritage value.

The following questions might help decide if a place has social heritage significance. The 'community' referred to here may be the Chinese Australian community or the wider local or regional community, or a large and recognisable group within the community (such as a Chinese Society).

Consider:

- does the current community or group see it as being more important than most other places?
- is it important in maintaining the community's or group's sense of identity?
- has it become important to the community or group because of its use over a long period of time?
- is it associated with an event or person venerated by the community or group?
- has it got special meaning in the community's religious, cultural, educational or social life?

- is it held in high esteem because of its visual qualities or its landmark quality (see also **Does it have aesthetic heritage significance** opposite)?
- is it valued by the community as the association is reflected in its design or decoration or in written or oral histories or photographs?

Examples:

- **a long-established Chinatown area**, such as:
 - the *Haymarket*, Sydney, NSW or *Little Bourke Street*, Melbourne, Vic, both of which have remained significant to the Chinese community since the nineteenth century.
- **a place recognised by the community** as central to its history in Australia, such as:
 - the *Poon Saan* area on Christmas Island which is of special significance to the Chinese population and symbolises the Chinese presence on the island.
- **a temple or church** may have special significance in the community's religious life, such as:
 - the *Sze Yup Society Temple* in South Melbourne, Vic or
 - the *Chinese Uniting Church* (formerly the Methodist Mission Church), 196 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, Vic.
- **a cemetery**, such as:
 - *Rookwood Necropolis*, Sydney, NSW, used as a burial ground by the Chinese community since 1867 and held in high esteem as a tangible manifestation of the social history of Sydney and Australia, documenting the cultural and religious diversity of the Australian community or
 - the *Vaughan Chinese Cemetery*, Vic which is significant for its association with Chinese miners, a connection still apparent in 1929 when the cemetery was restored using money raised within the Chinese communities at Castlemaine and Bendigo.
- **a society building**, such as:
 - the *Chung Wah Association Building* in Northbridge, WA, which is associated with the largest ethnic Chinese association in Western Australia.

- a **restaurant or recreation room** that is a centre for community interaction and identity, such as:
 - *Loong Yee Tong* in Dixon Street, Sydney, NSW.
- a **cemetery** may be held in high regard by the current community for its design and landmark qualities, such as:
 - the *Beechworth Cemetery* in Victoria where the place, especially the funerary towers and altar, is a major feature of the Beechworth cemetery and contribute to the local townscape.



A Chinese Christian church, the Uniting Church in Little Bourke Street, Melbourne — church membership became a strong social link for sections of many Chinese communities. (P Wright, AHC Collection)

Does it have AESTHETIC heritage significance?

A place and its setting may have aesthetic heritage significance because its form, scale, colour, texture and material appeal to a community's ideas of beauty, grandeur or to formal aesthetic rules. In the case of Chinese Australian heritage places, this may include the application of the principles of feng shui. In some cases, the smells and sounds linked with a site can contribute to its aesthetic significance.

Consider:

- was it built using traditional design and craftsmanship?
- is it a distinctive landmark?
- is it particularly important to the community because of its appearance?
- does it comply to formal rules of siting or design (such as feng shui)?
- is it a good or outstanding example of a particular architectural design?
- is it an important landscape either on its own or in relationship with its surrounds?

Examples:

- a **temple** with intact carved boards and fittings, such as:
 - the *Yiu Ming Temple* in Alexandria, Sydney, NSW exhibits traditional design and craftsmanship.
- a **temple** may also be a distinctive landmark and comply with formal rules of siting or design, such as:
 - the *Hou Wang Temple*, Atherton, Qld.
- a **prominent cemetery** with intact funerary burners may have particular importance because of its appearance, such as at:
 - *Beechworth Cemetery*, Vic where the impressive twin towers, capped with high metal spires, are considered astonishing by world standards, or
 - the *Cooktown Cemetery* which is rare being the only identified Queensland cemetery in which a Chinese shrine is erected within the cemetery reserve. The shrine is intact and is a rare example of its type in Queensland.

- a building with distinctive Chinese design elements, such as
 - the shop-houses in Broome, WA.
- a fine example of an architectural style built for or used by Chinese owners, such as:
 - the *Sze Yup Society Temple*, South Melbourne, Vic which is notable for the successful fusion of traditional Chinese details and statuary with European architecture. The arrangement of buildings is based on traditional Chinese temple designs from the area around Guangzhou, or
 - the *Sum Kum Lee Building*, 112–114 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, Vic which is architecturally significant as one of the most elaborately modelled facades in Little Bourke Street. The design is a very unusual composition incorporating Chinese architectural motifs into an elaborate boom-style classicism façade.
- a distinctive Chinatown streetscape, such as:
 - *Little Bourke Street*, Melbourne, Vic.



Sum Kum Lee Building, Little Bourke Street, Melbourne — this 1888 building is a notable example of boom-style classicism with Chinese architectural motifs. (AHC Collection)

Does it have SCIENTIFIC heritage significance?

Scientific heritage significance means the value of a place as a source of important information. That information may be in the archaeological remains of a place or the construction details of a little-studied type of building.

Consider:

- is it likely that any future study of the building, site or archaeological deposit will contribute new information or knowledge that is relevant to research in historical, architectural, archaeological or other fields?
- is it likely to be important because it can contribute knowledge not found elsewhere eg documents, photos or oral histories?

Examples:

- a **building or site** which may contain information about the transfer of technology, craft skills, design and siting, particularly the application of the principles of feng shui from China to Australia, or from one place to another within Australia.



- an early market garden or pastoral station garden that might increase knowledge of Chinese irrigation systems such as:
 - *Ah Toy's Garden* on the Palmer River, Qld.
- a Chinese settlement site that might reveal more about Chinese lifestyles in Australia such as:
 - *the Rocks* area in Sydney, NSW
 - the Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Vic and
 - the Chinatown area at Cossack, WA.
- a hut site of a Chinese miner, such as:
 - one lived in by Chinese tin miners in north eastern Tasmania that might contain evidence of miner lifestyle not available from other sources.

The archaeological excavation of a house at Ah Toy's Garden, Palmer River, Queensland. (Ian Jack)



How does it compare with other places?

When assessing the particular values of a place you should ask 'why is this one important compared with others?' Comparing similar places can help determine whether the place is significant. It can also help identify those that are special — they may be rare or good examples of a particular type.

This 'comparative assessment' can be useful for some types of places but is not meant to suggest that there is only room for one significant place of a given type.

Having done a comparative assessment of a range of similar places, one place may be considered to be a particularly good representative example of that type of place. You need to explain why the site is a good example of its kind — for example, a mining site may be a good representative of a type which shows key characteristics of Chinese Australian mining techniques in the nineteenth century.

A place may be considered to be rare or uncommon because few were ever built, or only few survive. It may be that it is an outstanding example of uncommon practice, use or design such as a place with distinctive funerary burners.

Comparative assessment is not needed when assessing social significance, because social value is usually unique to the place. It can also be difficult if research on other places is unavailable.

For help in finding comparable places, refer to:

- **A brief overview of Chinese life and heritage places in Australia** (at the start of this guide)
- **Getting more information** (in the **Resources** section of this publication)
- *Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage), and/or
- *Chinese Australian Sites Database* in the associated website *Toolkit* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage)

Consider:

- how many similar places exist in the region, state, territory or Australia?
- how important is it compared with similar places, and what makes it important?
- is this place rare, common or a good example of its type?

Levels of significance

Heritage places have different levels of significance. They may be valued by local, regional or state communities or be valued at national or international levels. Understanding the level of significance is an important guide to determining the appropriate level of conservation and management to apply to a place.

Important indicators of the level of significance are:

- the intensity with which the place is valued and
- the size of the community that values it

A place is likely to be significant if it:

- can demonstrate clearly the values or associations felt to be important
- has well-documented associations with the historical events, people or community recognised as being important
- is unusually intact or in exceptionally good condition compared with others of its type
- can be shown to be an early, influential, or crowning example within a particular phase, period, or type of place which is important to the Chinese Australian experience
- is a particularly good example of a type of place (a comparison should be explicit) and/or
- is a rare example of an important type of place, in that few were built, or few have survived

Having considered these questions, you should be able to say whether the place is of low, moderate, high or of exceptional heritage significance, within a local, regional, state or national context.

Examples of different levels of significance are provided among the statements of significance in the next section.

Statements of significance

Step 8

Write a statement of significance

A statement of significance is simply a short statement that summarises the key reasons why a place is important.

It is a useful statement that can explain to others why a place is important, can be used in displays, signs and brochures, and is a necessary part of any nomination of a place to a heritage register.



Example statements of significance for Chinese Australian heritage places

These examples are for places with different levels of significance.

Sue Wah Chin Building, Darwin, NT

This statement of significance, from the Register of the National Estate, indicates that the place, a single-storey terrace of five shops, is important in Darwin's Chinese history. **It is of local significance.**

Chinese people were numerically dominant in Darwin until 1911, and they dominated the commerce of the town until World War II. This site is of outstanding significance as the most intact and visible reminder of the antiquity and importance of the Chinese presence in Darwin. The building has close associations with the Chin family, the most numerous Chinese family in Darwin today. The building makes a positive contribution to the Cavenagh Street streetscape, and it is held in high esteem by the Darwin community for its historic and other social values.



Sue Wah Chin Building, a terrace of Chinese shops built in Cavenagh Street, Darwin in 1888.
(NT Department of Lands, Planning and Environment)

Wing Hing Long & Co Store, Tingha, NSW

This statement of significance, from the NSW Heritage Register, indicates that this small complex of buildings operated as a Chinese general store and residence from 1881 to 1998. **This place is significant at the local, regional and state levels.**

Wing Hing Long occupies a central position on the main street of Tingha. Its structure, fabric, and archival and movable heritage collections provide a unique documentation of the continuous and significant contribution of Chinese Australians and of general stores to the history of retailing in regional New South Wales. They also provide significant insight into the rise and decline of the tin mining community in which the store is located.



Exterior (above) — Wing Hing Long store, Tingha, operating under Chinese ownership from 1881 until 1998. Interior (at right) — Wing Hing Long Store, well-packed shelves, typical of older country stores.
(NSW Heritage Office)



Temple of Hou Wang, Atherton, Queensland

This statement of significance from the *Chinese Australian Heritage Places Database* indicates **that the temple is of very high local and regional significance** and is a rare type within the small 'set' of surviving temples. **It is highly significant in the state and national context.**

The temple is considered significant because of its importance as a site of Chinese Australian settlement which proved highly successful as a commercial centre despite the opposition of European Australians. The contribution of Chinese labour to the development of the Atherton Tableland has often been overlooked. The Temple of Hou Wang is historically important for its strong association with Southern Chinese settlers. It is a rare example both as a temple dedicated to Hou Wang — there are understood to be only about six such temples world wide (one is known in Kowloon and one on Tai O) — and as a timber temple (most are of brick or stone... it is the only timber temple in Australia or New Zealand still extant and possibly in North America and SE Asia. As such it is an unparalleled example of temples built by overseas Chinese.

Its roof lines and the use of vertical and horizontally placed corrugated iron sheeting give it an unusual and somewhat modest appearance which belies its extensive use of now-valuable timbers — Red Cedar and Black Bean. Its dimly lit interior provides a remarkable aesthetic appeal when viewed with the elaborate carvings and ornaments in their relative positions.

The Temple is no longer actively used but it retains a strong religious association for some visitors. Its close association with Chinese culture in an alien environment, its rarity and its setting are such that it is regarded as having a particularly high value as a cultural site.



The Temple of Hou Wang, Atherton, Queensland in 1929. It was built in 1903 and remained in use until the 1960s. (Collection: John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland)



Recent conservation work will prolong the temple's life. (AHC Collection)

Place records

Step 9

Prepare a place record

- share the information
- nominate the place



Step 9

Prepare a place record

Having now assessed the heritage significance of the place, it is extremely useful to make a record of the place that will explain to others what the place is and why it is important. This is called a 'place record' and should include:

- the name of the place
- its address or location (include a map reference if outside a city or town)
- a description of boundaries
- an indication of who owns the place
- a summary of its history (as researched above)
- a description of existing physical characteristics and setting
- an assessment of condition and intactness
- information on its current usage
- a plan or map of the place, supported by photographs and
- a statement of significance (as assessed above)

A place record can be used to:

- publicise the place within the community
- seek funding for conservation (your state or territory heritage agency, the Australian Heritage Commission or the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage can provide information on grant programs — see **Useful contacts** at the end of this guide), and to
- supply information for nomination forms for heritage registers at all levels (nomination forms are available from your state or territory heritage agency or the Australian Heritage Commission — again see **Useful contacts** in the **Resources** section of this guide).

Actions

- Use the Sample place record opposite to help you to **prepare your own record**.
- **Share the information** you have gathered and the heritage significance you have documented with others who are interested in the place.
- You may also choose to **nominate the place** for inclusion in a heritage register or upgrade a previous, less detailed listing.

The place record can also be used to submit a record for the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* with the possibility of either updating a record that already exists or to add a new one. The record can be submitted by email to: ahc@ea.gov.au.

Nominations for heritage registers can be made to the relevant state or territory heritage agency and to the Australian Heritage Commission, GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601.

Sample place record

For a Chinese Australian Heritage Place

Answer these questions as fully as you can.

1. What is the name of the place?*

*A place might have more than one name. It could have a Chinese name, an historical English name and a current name. List them all, but highlight the name by which you think the place should be known.

2. Where is it?*

*Describe the place's location and boundaries. Give its street address if in a town or city, and its property location, map reference and name, direction and distance from the nearest town if it is in a rural or remote area. If you know the local government area, name it. Attach a plan of the place, marking its heritage boundary, and a map of its location, especially if in a rural or remote area.

3. Describe the place*

*Include information about the place's physical appearance and features, highlighting those that make it important as a Chinese Australian place. Describe the place in relation to its setting or surroundings and in relation to other places nearby that are also of heritage importance. List or describe any objects or artefacts in the place that are important. Make sure that your sketch plan of the place identifies any important features.

4. Summarise its history*

*Indicate when and why the place was built or established and when it first had a Chinese association (if not established by Chinese originally). Indicate if and when Chinese associations with the place ceased. Describe the nature of the association with Chinese individuals, families and communities, historically and today if the place continues to be important to Chinese Australians.

5. What is its condition?*

*Is the place in need of repair? Is it being used appropriately? Has it been altered and if so, do the alterations detract from the significance of the place? Is it under any threat of further change or destruction?

6. Statement of significance*

*Attach the statement of significance you have prepared using this guide.

7. Who owns the place?*

*Indicate who owns the place, if this information is available.

8. Other information about the place*

*List any books, articles, photographs, oral histories etc that relate specifically to this place. Attach relevant copies of historical and current photographs (don't attach originals of old photos — they could be lost or damaged).

9. List your contact details*

*Provide your name, address, phone, fax and email contact details in case further details are needed about the information on this form or so that you can be informed of the success of entry in a register or database. If you don't want your name released to others, say so.

Summary



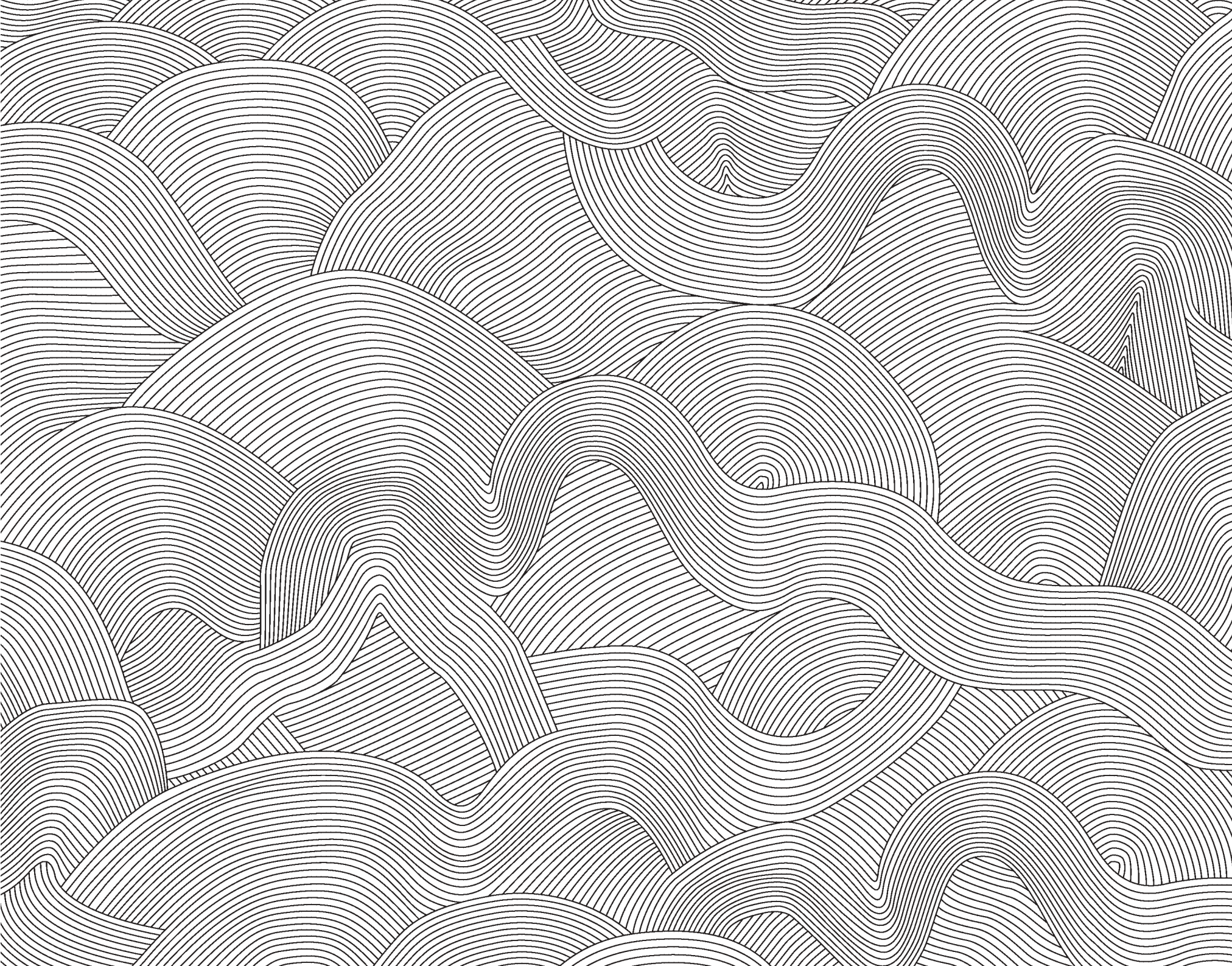
Congratulations! If you have completed these steps then you now know much more about your local Chinese Australian heritage places. You know their stories and better understand their role in Australia's heritage.

The information you have gathered will be important for future generations and may also form the basis for greater protection through listing the place in a heritage register.

The stories behind these places are there for current generations to enjoy as well, so don't forget to share what you have uncovered. Who knows, sharing these stories may lead to further exciting discoveries!

If you have found this guide useful — please spread the word and encourage others to seek out and assess their Chinese Australian heritage places.

The places of our Chinese Australian heritage are among the many which reflect Australia's journey into the richly diverse society that it is today.





Section C — Resources



Glossary of terms

AHC	Australian Heritage Commission.
Associations	The special connections that exist between people and a place.
Burra Charter	<i>The Australia ICOMOS charter for the conservation of places of cultural significance</i> or 'Burra Charter', is a document that sets out principles of heritage planning and conservation. It was developed by Australia ICOMOS, and is the established standard for heritage conservation work. The Burra Charter is available online at http://www.icomos.org/australia/
Chinese Australian heritage places	Sites, buildings and associated objects that are important because of their associations with the history of Chinese settlement in Australia and with Chinese Australian communities.
Compatible use	A use that respects the cultural significance of a place. Such a use involves no or minimal impact on cultural significance.
Conservation	All the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance.
Conservation plan/ conservation management plan	A document establishing the significance of a place and how to conserve and manage the place to retain its significance.
Cultural significance	A concept that helps to assess the values of places for past, present or future generations. These values may be aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.
Curtilage	An area of land surrounding a heritage place or feature, which is essential for retaining and interpreting its heritage significance.

Fabric	All the physical material of the place including fixtures, contents and objects.
Heritage	Our natural and cultural inheritance.
Heritage register	A listing of heritage places which may refer to the statutory registers maintained by government heritage agencies in the Commonwealth and each state and territory and by the local government councils. It may also refer to the non-government registers maintained by the National Trust and others in many states. Registers provide different degrees of protection for the places they list.
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites, a professional non-government organisation based in Paris, with national bodies in many nations. Australia ICOMOS developed the Burra Charter.
Oral history	Information about the past that is transmitted by word-of-mouth, rather than in the written form. Oral history is a key source of information for many heritage places.
Place	A site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works. It may include components, contents, spaces and views.
Place record	A written record about a heritage place that includes information about the location, history, description and assessment of a place.
Register of the National Estate	A national heritage register maintained by the Australian Heritage Commission for the Commonwealth Government.
Setting	The area around a place, which may include the visual catchment.
Use	The functions of a place, as well as the activities and practices that may occur at the place.

Getting more information

If you would like to find out more, the following sources of information may be useful.

How to do documentary and oral history research

Hibbins, G.M., Fahey, C. & Askew, M.R., 1985, *Local History: a handbook for enthusiasts*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

National Library of Australia, 1997, *Australia's oral history collections: a national directory*, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

National Library of Australia, 1972, *Chinese Newspapers in the National Library of Australia*, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

Reid, R. & A., 1996, *Into History: the Australian historical directory*, R. & A.F. Reid, North Ryde, NSW.

Robertson, B.M., 1995, *Oral history handbook*, Oral History Association of Australia (South Australian Branch), Adelaide.

Sagazio, C. (ed.), 1992, *The National Trust Research Manual: Investigating buildings, gardens and cultural landscapes*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Wilton, J., 1983, *Balancing the books: oral history for the community: handbook prepared for the Oral Histories Project of the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW*, Sydney, Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales.

How to record places and plan for conservation

Australia ICOMOS, 1999, *The Burra Charter (The Australia ICOMOS charter for the conservation of places of cultural significance)*, Australia ICOMOS, Sydney.

Cemeteries: Guidelines for their care and conservation, 1992, Department of Planning, Heritage Council of NSW, Sydney.

Historical Archaeological Sites: Investigation and conservation guidelines, 1993, Department of Planning, Heritage Council of NSW, Sydney.

Kerr, J., 1996, *The Conservation Plan; a guide to the preparation of conservation plans for places of European cultural significance*, National Trust of Australia (NSW), Sydney.

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Walker, M., 1998, *Protecting the social value of public places: an illustrated guide*, Australian Council of National Trusts, Canberra.

Useful Internet sites

A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places

www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage

Resources for heritage professionals.

Australia's Cultural Network

www.acn.net.au/

A network site, giving access to many government cultural organisations, museums, heritage sites, the arts etc.

Australian Heritage Bibliography

www.ahc.gov.au/infores/HERA/

Bibliography of many thousands of published books and articles and unpublished reports in the heritage field.

Australian Heritage Commission

www.ahc.gov.au

A site containing many useful resources about Australia's heritage places.

Australian Heritage Commission's related sites list

www.ahc.gov.au/related/

A useful link to many sites in Australia and overseas, including most state/territory heritage-related government organisations and National Trusts.

Australian Heritage Places Inventory

www.heritage.gov.au/ahpi

Access point to the Register of the National Estate and many state and territory heritage registers.

Australian Heritage Directory

www.heritage.gov.au/

Access point to a range of heritage-related sites, including all state/territory heritage agencies.

Australia ICOMOS

www.icomos.org/australia/

A site which looks at conservation for culturally significant places.

Australian Mining History Association

www.ex.ac.uk/~RBurt/MinHistNet/bibaumha.html

Includes a bibliography of mining site literature broken up by states, including material about Chinese mining sites.

Chinese Heritage of Australian Federation Project

<http://chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au/index.shtml>

A collaboration between Latrobe University and the Chinese Museum, to develop a range of useful online resources relating to Chinese Australian history and heritage.

Chinese Museum

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~mcah/welcome.htm>

The site of Melbourne's Chinese Museum.

Golden Dragon Museum

<http://users.netcon.net.au/gdmb>

The site of Bendigo's Golden Dragon Museum.

Golden Threads Project

<http://amol.org.au/goldenthreads/>

An online exhibition which focus on the story of the Chinese in regional Australia between 1850 and 1950.

Living in Brisbane — The Chinese Connection

www.brisbane-stories.powerup.com.au

The Chinese connection story in Brisbane.

National Library of Australia

www.nla.gov.au/ohdir/

A national directory of Australia's oral history collections.

Protecting Heritage Places

www.heritage.gov.au/protecting.html

Ten steps to protecting the natural and cultural significance of places.

Queensland Museum — Cross-cultural Studies Section

www.Qmuseum.qld.gov.au

Information on Chinese material in the museum's collection.

Useful books and articles about Chinese Australian history, heritage and places

The following references are a very small proportion of the wide range of material available on Chinese Australian history and heritage. They are selected from sources that are published and relatively easy to access through libraries. A more complete bibliography is included in the Chinese Australian Heritage Places website (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage), which should be referred to if your research extends beyond the sources listed here.

Overseas Chinese history — general references

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Chinese mining places and history

- Bell, P., 1995, 'Chinese Ovens on Mining Settlement Sites in Australia', in Macgregor, P. (ed.), *Histories of the Chinese in Australasia and the South Pacific*, Museum of Chinese Australian History, Melbourne, pp. 213–229.
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McLaren, I.F. (ed.), 1985, *The Chinese in Victoria: official reports and documents*, Ascot Vale.

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Neale, M., 1988, *We were the Christmas Islanders: reminiscences and recollections of the people of an isolated island*, the author, Chapman, ACT.

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Christie, M., 1995, 'The End of Darwin's Chinatown', *Northern Perspective*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 45–52.

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Useful contacts

Local Council

Contact your local council or regional community centre to see whether there is a heritage advisor, history officer, librarian, community liaison officer or ethnic affairs officer who might be able to help you. Some community centres also have heritage/historic resource centres that could be useful.

Local historical society or National Trust branch

Most towns have an historical or family history society, and many regional centres have National Trust branches, which might be able to provide useful information and help.

Universities or colleges

Contact your local university or TAFE college and see if there are lecturers or students who are interested in Chinese Australian history, culture or sites. The departments of history, archaeology, geography or sociology would be good starting places.

Museums

Most specialised Chinese museums seem to be in Victoria, though many other state and territory museums hold smaller Chinese collections.

Bendigo Chinese Association

Golden Dragon Museum
PO Box 877
Bendigo, Vic 3552
Tel: (03) 5441 5044

Museum of Chinese Australian History

22 Cohen Place
Melbourne, Vic 3000
Tel: (03) 9662 2888 or 9663 1797

Gum San Chinese Museum Trust

20 Lambert Street
Ararat, Vic 3377
Tel: (03) 5352 2203

Immigration Museum

400 Flinders Street
Melbourne, Vic 3000
Tel: (03) 9927 2700

Cross-cultural Studies Section

Queensland Museum
PO Box 3300
South Bank, Qld 4101
Tel: (07) 3840 7668

Heritage agencies**Australian Heritage Commission**

GPO Box 787
Canberra, ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6274 1111

Heritage Unit

Environment ACT
PO Box 144
Lyneham, ACT 2602
Tel: (02) 6207 9777

NSW Heritage Office

Locked Bag 5020
Parramatta, NSW 2124
Tel: (02) 9635 6155

Heritage Conservation Branch

Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment
GPO Box 1680
Darwin, NT 0801
Tel: (08) 8924 4143

Cultural Heritage Branch

Environment Protection Agency
PO Box 155
Brisbane Albert Street, Qld 4002
Tel: (07) 3227 6499

Heritage South Australia

Department of Environment and Heritage
GPO Box 1047
Adelaide, SA 5001
Tel: (08) 8204 9261

Tasmanian Heritage Council

GPO Box 618
Hobart, Tas 7001
Tel: (03) 6233 2037

Heritage Victoria

Nauru House, Level 22
80 Collins Street
Melbourne, Vic 3000
Tel: (03) 9655 6519

Heritage Council of Western Australia

108 Adelaide Terrace
East Perth, WA 6004
Tel: (08) 9221 4177

龙的踪迹



Nine steps for researching, assessing and recording Chinese Australian heritage places

Chinese community celebration on the steps of the Yü Ming Temple, Sydney, 2000 to mark the temple's register listing. (NSW Heritage Office)



Background research

Step 1

Gather historical information and document community connections with the place

Step 2

Understand the history of the place



Step 1

Gather historical information and document community connections with the place

The broader context

A definitive history of the Chinese in Australia does not yet exist and much remains to be learnt about the places related to this history.

To become familiar with the range of Chinese activities and occupations in Australia, study — *A brief overview of Chinese life and heritage places in Australia*. This looks at Chinese life in Australia and gives examples of places that illustrate aspects of Chinese Australian heritage.

It may also be helpful to look at this toolkit's **selection of key books and articles**. The more extensive **Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography** lists a wide range of sources on Chinese Australian history and heritage places.

A local focus

After looking at this broader context, try next to understand the history of Chinese settlement in your local area, using locally available sources of information.

A wide range of historical resources can cast light on the Chinese Australian history of an area (see **Where to find local information** opposite). Individuals and community groups, especially Chinese community groups, may be able to fill in the local picture and contribute greatly to our knowledge and appreciation of Chinese Australian heritage places.

Actions

- **Contact and involve** Chinese Australian families and communities associated with the place, especially if the project is being undertaken by a non-Chinese Australian group or individual.

- **Search further afield** if local Chinese Australian families have moved away from the area. Try to identify and contact them because their knowledge and links with the area might add to its social significance.
- **Involve the broader community** by locating local historians, knowledgeable residents or members of long-established local families — local historical societies or family history groups may provide you with contacts. Interested groups or individuals should be invited to be involved in the project, contribute their knowledge, and acknowledged in the final documentation.
- **Form an outline of the history** of the Chinese at the place and its surrounding area by studying relevant local histories, published books and articles, government records, maps and photos. Try to find the original descriptions, rather than rely on later and often inaccurate secondary histories. For more ideas on **Where to find local information**, see opposite. Use the bibliography in this guide, and in the internet resource — *A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage).
- **Take photocopies of the significant records** you discover including historical photographs and plans. Note or photocopy relevant sections of historical text.
- **Interview former residents**, community members and local historians who may know the place and its stories. For places significant to relatively recent Chinese migrants, this might be the only source of information which is available.
- **Consider holding a meeting**, a focus group or a community workshop which may assist in exploring shared memories. Guides have been published that relate directly to the processes of involving local communities. These are the Australian Heritage Commission's *Migrant Heritage Places in Australia — How to find your heritage places — A guide* (2000), and *Protecting local heritage places: a guide for communities* (2000).
- **Check to see if the place is already recorded** by searching the Australian Heritage Places Inventory (www.heritage.gov.au), the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage) and your local council heritage register. The records for many listed places do require further information. You may find places in registers with only some of their values recognised and with Chinese Australian heritage significance omitted. If you have more information, it would be useful to update the listing by contacting the agency administering the register.

Where to find local information

- **Local and regional histories** in the local library, historical society, family history society and state library — several of these have their catalogues on the internet.
- **General historical books and articles** on Chinese Australian history — see **Resources** section at the end of this guide for a feel for the broader context. A wider selection of sources can be found online in the bibliography of *A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage).
- **Oral history recordings** with local Chinese Australians can offer valuable insights into a local area. Some interviews may already exist so first check your local library and historical societies. You may also want to explore the National Library of Australia's national directory of Australia's oral history collections available online via www.nla.gov.au. Some useful guides exist to help you undertake oral history recordings including *Oral History Handbook* by Beth Robertson, (1994).
- **Historical photographs** may be stored at the local library, historical society or at the local newspaper. Photographs of street scenes, celebrations, parades, and work life in a town or suburb or in the country can reveal images of Chinese people and businesses. They can provide evidence of the local Chinese presence and activities and give leads for further research.
- **Local and city newspapers** can be a key source of information but can take time to research. Microfiche or back copies of local newspapers are sometimes held by the local library, family history society or historical society. If not, a useful listing of surviving newspapers in Australian libraries is the National Library of Australia's *Newspapers in Australian Libraries, a Union List, Part 2, Australian Newspapers* (4th edition Canberra 1985), which can be found in many regional and all state libraries.

A number of **Chinese newspapers** have been established in Australia, and these can be a key resource for Chinese language readers. Work has already started on developing an index of one of the most important Chinese language newspapers in Australia, the *Tung Wah* (see <http://chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au/>).

- **Local government** records can provide information on property ownership and structural alterations through archived documents such as land titles, maps and plans. These records can also shed light on changes and subdivisions to the place over time.

- **Commonwealth and state government records** are held by state and national archives and can provide very specific information. They are particularly valuable if you have the name of a Chinese person known to have lived locally. The records include naturalisation papers, customs records relating to immigration restriction and the issue of passports as well as census statistics. A database guide and index books to the Chinese naturalisation records in NSW from 1857 to 1887 by T McCormack (1997) is available on CD-ROM at the State Library of NSW and the National Library of Australia.

A valuable resource for Victoria is the reprinted Victorian Parliamentary Papers and legislation relating to the Chinese, 1855–1900, including descriptive reports of Victoria's Chinese population printed in 1868 and 1881, edited by IF McLaren (1985).

- **Mining records** are a major source of information about Chinese mining activities although they may have to be supplemented by other sources, such as newspapers. The *Mining Heritage Places Assessment Manual* by Michael Pearson and Barry McGowan (2000) provides a guide to researching and assessing mining sites.

Step 2

Understand the history of the place

The reason for gathering historical information is to better understand the place. This stage may take some time, but it is worth doing well as it is crucial to being able to properly assess its heritage value. Once you have gathered this material you will need to sort and analyse it so that a succinct and focused description of the history of the place can be written.

Actions

- **Find answers** to these basic questions:
 - when was the place established or built?
 - how did the Chinese use the place?
 - was the place used before or after its occupation by Chinese people, and if so, what can you find out about them?
 - what major changes, if any, have been made and by whom? What were those changes?
- **More detail is now needed** so use the **Questions to help historical analysis** at right to fill out the information you have gathered. Answer as many of the questions as you can with the information you have. Your particular place may raise other questions in your mind and you may need to seek additional sources of information.

Questions to help historical analysis

Analysing the collected information will be more useful if something is known about Chinese history and about the home provinces of Chinese migrants. The experiences of Chinese Australians varied according to where they came from, where they landed in Australia and their circumstances at the time. Their stories are influenced by their regional affiliations, ancestral origins and obligations, life experience in China prior to migration, personal skills and the varied regional characteristics (economic, climatic and cultural) of their new home in Australia. (See **Overseas Chinese history — general references** in the Resources section of this guide.)

Ask these questions:

1. What was happening regionally?

- What was the extent of Chinese Australian settlement in the region — was this place one of many or was it unusual?
- Are other Chinese Australian places associated with the one being recorded — are they a part of the history of the place?
- What were the connections between the local Chinese Australian community and the broader Chinese community elsewhere in Australia or in the Pacific, South-East Asia or China?
- Did the Chinese Australian place influence, or was it influenced by, broader settlement patterns?
- Did the Chinese Australian presence stimulate or facilitate other industries or activities such as mining, market gardening, pastoralism etc?
- Did the Chinese Australian presence at this place influence transport routes or modes of transport in the district or on a wider scale?
- Did Chinese Australian settlement and related activities have a lasting impact on surrounding landscapes?

2. What does the historical evidence tell us about the use of the place?

- What activity or activities were carried out at the place?
- Do documents exist which relate to the activities at the place such as mining records, store records, family reminiscences?
- Does the evidence, documentary or physical, tell us about activities that were particularly Chinese in origin?
- Was the place part of a broader pattern of Chinese Australian activity and settlement in the area or region?
- Do photographs exist of the place and show how it was used by Chinese Australians?
- Is there evidence of how the place was used and changes made when no longer used by Chinese Australians?
- If the place is a work site, such as a mine, garden or workshop, where did the Chinese Australians workers live?
- Do people survive (Chinese Australian or other) who knew the place when it was used or occupied by Chinese Australians? Have they been interviewed?
- Did the place have any architectural, engineering or aesthetic feature of outstanding creativity or noteworthiness?
- Does historical information about similar Chinese Australian places indicate that this place was in any way unusual, or is it/was it typical of its type?

3. What are the historical associations of the place?

- Was the place associated with prominent identified individuals or groups? How?
- Did any important events occur at the place?
- Does the place have important historical associations not relating to Chinese Australian activities or settlement?
- Did the place influence contemporary or later historical developments? (eg, was it the subject of important legal proceedings; did it have a major role in stimulating local economic development; did it play a role in local social activities or reinforce social cohesion; did it influence Chinese Australian settlement or activities elsewhere; were any important race relations issues raised or resolved there?)
- How important was the Chinese Australian place in the overall context of the Chinese Australian settlement of the region, state or nation. For example, was it the largest Chinese Australian settlement of its type in the region or state; did it lay the foundation for a network of Chinese Australian activities and settlement in the region or state?
- Do communities or groups survive (Chinese Australian or other) who value the Chinese Australian place because of past or current associations?
- What are the relationships between the Chinese and non-Chinese associated with the place (eg marriages, business partnerships, landlord/tenant etc)?
- How do you rank the historical significance of the place:
 - is it important in the history of the state?
 - is it more relevant to the settlement of the local area or region?
 - are the events associated with the place unusual, or did similar things happen elsewhere?
 - were the individuals associated with the place particularly notable?

The discussion in **Step 7** about assessing significance will help in this ranking.

Site investigation



Step 3
Get permission

Step 4
Be prepared

Step 5
Describe the place

Step 6
Photograph the place

Step 3

Get permission

Actions

- Before starting to record the place or visiting the site you should **obtain permission** from the property's owner.
- **If access is denied**, decide if you want to proceed with assessing the place, and if so, limit your description to what is observable without entering the property.

Step 4

Be prepared

Action

- When visiting the site, **take with you the information and equipment you will need** to record the type of place. For a building, this might be a notebook, pencil, camera and copies of relevant photographs or plans. For a garden or mining site you might also take a clipboard and A4 paper (to sketch a plan), a compass, tape measure and a map.

Step 5

Describe the place

Actions

- **Decide on where the boundaries lie.** The place may be very different from that defined by the surveyed property boundaries. Make sure you take into account the functions and relationship of the place and its parts with its setting — for example the boundaries of a mining site may stretch beyond the diggings to incorporate the water races and their source dams. The exact boundary may evolve through the process of exploring the history and values of the place.
- **Record its street address**, if it has one. If it doesn't, note its map grid reference and map name and number. If the area is large, draw the boundary on a copy of the topographic map or street directory map.
- **Draw a map or plan of the place.** If it is a building, also sketch the sheds, driveways, fences and any other features within the boundary of the place as well as the layout of each floor of the building. If it is a larger area of land, sketch the features that make up the place, such as mining remains, creeks, water races, gardens, sheds, machinery and artefacts, taking measurements and/or compass angles from an identifiable fixed point.
- **Compare the place with any existing historical photos** and describe differences and changes that you observe. This will help you to understand the history and changes to the place over time.
- **Describe in your notebook the main features of the place**, such as the style, materials and construction of buildings, their surroundings and settings, mine workings, and gardens etc. Describe in detail any features associated with its Chinese history or which otherwise contribute to its heritage significance. Copy any Chinese inscriptions for later translation. Remember to record features relating to earlier or later use of the place by non-Chinese occupants.

- **Look for the small things as well as the large.** Objects and artefacts on the ground or in a building can provide valuable information, may be part of the place's significance and could add immeasurably to the richness of its story.
- **Take note of related places**, such as buildings which lie outside the boundary.
- **Cross reference your descriptions** with maps, plans or photographs by numbering the descriptions and the mapped/photographed features.
- **Note the condition and intactness of the place.** Has it changed much when compared with old photographs? Have parts been added or demolished? What is its condition? Is its current use causing any damage to the site?
- **Keep notes of oral recollections** of those associated with the place as the human memory can be a rich source of information. These will help to gain insights into places with a recent past that is important to our heritage.

Step 6

Photograph the place

Good current photos are invaluable. They will assist your memory later on and will serve as a record of the place in any report, exhibition or publication.

Actions

- **Photograph the place from a good vantage point**, showing as many associated features as can be seen in a single frame or in a number of connecting photos. It is important and useful to record a sense of the environment of the site.
- **Photograph individual features and objects** that help in understanding its Chinese associations.
- When taking the photos, **write down the details of each frame in sequence.** Note on the sketch plan where each photo was taken and the direction of the view (a simple circle and arrow is best). This will help later in linking the photos to your written notes and sketch plan.

Assessing heritage significance

Step 7

Why is it important? Assessing the heritage significance of a place



Step 7

Why is it important? Assessing the heritage significance of a place

Before assessing the heritage significance of a place, understand its history and physical characteristics. Without this knowledge it may not be possible to state clearly why the place is important. Assessing significance based on hearsay or myths is not a good basis for making decisions about the future, conservation, funding or heritage register listing of a place.

Undertaking a systematic assessment will help you to work out exactly why a place is important and what different aspects of the place make it significant.

One way of working through the assessment of a place is to apply established criteria used to assess places for entry into heritage registers. These criteria vary slightly from state to state, but are all similar to the criteria for the Commonwealth's Register of the National Estate.

The following discussion is based on the Register of the National Estate criteria and is representative of the various criteria used around Australia. If you are going to nominate a place for a heritage register or are undertaking a study associated with a statutory planning process, be sure to refer to the criteria used by the heritage agency in your state or territory.

The following discussion concentrates on applying criteria to Chinese Australian places. You only need to demonstrate significance against one criterion to show that a place has heritage value although most places with heritage value will probably be significant under more than one criterion.

Additional examples of significant Chinese Australian heritage places are included in *Step 7 of Tracking the Dragon — a guide for finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places*.

Heritage criteria — a discussion

Criterion 1

The importance of the place in the course or pattern of the history of the nation, state, territory or region.

The 'course or pattern' of history is made up of the events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, state, region or community. The Chinese settlement of Australia has been a major element in the course and pattern of the history of the nation and of the Chinese Australian community.

A place meets this criterion if it:

- shows evidence of a significant Chinese settlement, occupation or activity
- is associated with a significant event or historical phase in Chinese Australian history, and/or
- maintains or shows the continuity of a historical process or activity associated with Chinese Australian history.

A place would not meet this criterion if it:

- has only incidental connections with historically important events, activities or processes in Chinese Australian history
- is associated with events, activities or processes of doubtful historical importance, and/or
- has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of, or be considered symbolically important because of, a particular historical association.

Criterion 2

The place possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the history of the nation, state or territory.

These uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the history of a place might demonstrate a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design which is no longer practised, in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest.

In a number of states the criteria for rarity is interpreted as qualifying other criteria, rather than as a criterion used in isolation. For example, a place might be significant if it is important in the course or pattern of history **and** is rare. Assessors should check the particular criteria of the state or territory in which they are nominating a Chinese Australian place.

Comparing similar places can help identify those that are special — they may be rare or good examples of a particular type. Judging the rarity of a place largely depends on the amount of comparative information available. For help in finding comparable places, check the *Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography* and the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* in this toolkit, your state heritage agency and local government planner or heritage adviser. If comparative research is poor, it should be made clear that the assessment of rarity is based on limited current information and may need to be revised as further research is undertaken.

Rarity is also relative to the size of the population being considered — hence it is important to state whether the assessment of rarity is in a global, national, state, regional or local context. Rarity is also relative to the particular historical context, so a specific type of building might be rare in terms of its Chinese associations, but common in other contexts. Similarly, a place might be rare for its period, but common in other periods. The particular context for the claim of rarity should be clearly stated in the assessment.

It is also important to state whether the place was always rare (ie that few ever existed) or is rare now because only a few survive of the many that once existed.

A place might be 'endangered' because the class of similar places as a whole is threatened by redevelopment or redundancy.

A place might meet this criterion of being uncommon, rare or endangered if it were:

- a good example of a type originally few in number
- a sole survivor or one of a few remaining examples of a type that was once more common, and
- a good example of a type that is being actively depleted due to development or redundancy.

A place would not meet this criterion if it were:

- not rare
- of a type that is not being depleted despite a perceived threat
- rare in a local context but numerous or abundant elsewhere.

Criterion 3

The potential of the place to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the history of the nation, state or territory.

Some heritage places have value as a source of important information — they have research potential. The important qualifying test in assessing places under this criterion is the degree of confidence that can be placed in the claim that the place has research potential. This is particularly important at sites being assessed for their archaeological potential.

A sound basis must exist for assessing that the place has demonstrated or potential research value inherent in its fabric and that the information to be yielded by the place is likely to contribute significantly to our knowledge of the past.

The educational use and potential for interpreting places are attributes which relate more to management opportunities rather than to intrinsic significance, and are not included under this criterion.

A place might meet this criterion of having research potential if it can be demonstrated that it can contribute:

- new and worthwhile information through the study of its elements — structures, site, archaeological deposit and/or contents
- knowledge not available from any other information source, such as documents, photos or oral history
- knowledge not found at other places, and/or
- knowledge that is relevant to research questions being asked by those in the historical, architectural, archaeological or other research fields.

A place might not meet this criterion if:

- the four dot points above cannot be satisfied — the simple existence of archaeological deposits is not sufficient to satisfy this criterion. The value or likely value of the deposits must be demonstrated, or
- a building is valued for an unusual feature which is referred to in the documentary sources but is no longer part of the surviving fabric.

While a place which has had its research potential fully exhausted may not meet this criterion, it may be eligible for other criteria for its historical associations, technological or architectural values.

Criterion 4

The importance of the place in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the nation, state or territory's heritage places.

Some heritage places are good examples of their type. They are important because they demonstrate the principal characteristics of a human activity in the Australian environment (including a way of life, custom, process, land use, function, design or technique).

Every place is an example of its type, but this criterion tries to identify those places that are particularly valuable because they provide a good understanding of their type. To be a good example, a place should usually have high integrity (it should be intact and 'authentic' to its type). Some places with only moderate integrity might still be important under this criterion if others places of the type have been completely lost or are substantially less intact. The place can then be both a good example (criterion 4) and rare (criterion 2) at the same time.

Some places may be important because they show regional variations of their class or type. In the case of Chinese Australian places, these variations may relate to the Chinese districts of origin of the people associated with these places, or may result from differing regional patterns of work or lifestyle in Australia.

A place might meet this criterion if:

- it represents all or a larger number of the distinguishing characteristics of the class than is common — it might have attributes typical of a particular way of life, custom, process, land use, function, design or technique (such as a Chinese gold mining area)
- the physical evidence demonstrating a range of characteristics is particularly intact and well-preserved, compared with others of the class (such as an intact temple)
- the place has a large number of class characteristics from one point in time, but also possesses a wider range of physical characteristics representing changes over time that are historically important within the class (such as a Chinese store continuously operated over a long period), and/or
- the place is part of a group of places that collectively illustrate a particular type (such as a 'Chinatown').

The more completely a place shows the characteristics of its type, and the fewer the number of similar examples that exist, the more significance the place will have.

A place would not meet this criterion if it:

- is a poor example of its type
- does not include or has lost a substantial number of elements typical of a class of place, compared with other known examples
- cannot be demonstrated to be an important example of its type compared with other examples of similar completeness and integrity, and/or
- does not represent well the characteristics that makes up a significant variation of a type.

Criterion 5

The importance of the place in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by the community or cultural group.

A place may have aesthetic heritage value because the form, scale, colour, texture and material of a building and its setting, or a site, appeals to a community's ideas of beauty or grandeur. It may also comply with formal aesthetic rules. In the case of Chinese Australian heritage places, applying the principles of feng-shui, for example, is a set of formal aesthetic (and social) rules. In some cases, the smells and sounds associated with a site contribute to its aesthetic significance.

A place may meet this criterion if it is:

- a place built to traditional form, design and craftsmanship
- a distinctive landmark
- a place particularly important to the community because of its appearance (including being aesthetically distinctive), and/or
- a place or series of places complying to formal rules of design (such as feng-shui).

A place might meet this criterion if:

- its aesthetic values cannot be clearly stated, and/or
- its aesthetic values cannot be said to be important compared with other places.

Criterion 6

The importance of the place in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

This criterion applies only where the place has evidence of specific innovation or technical creativity or achievement particular to that place (eg the place had a seminal impact). It could also have a particularly good (and perhaps rare) example of an innovation or innovative application of existing technology which is superior to other existing examples. This might occur, for instance, in the fields of engineering, architecture, industrial design or landscape design. If a place simply includes a good example of an interesting technology or design also found at other places, it should be assessed under Criterion 4.

The capacity of the place to demonstrate the creative or technical achievement is important — if the place has deteriorated or been altered to the extent that such evidence is lost, the power of demonstration is probably also lost.

A place might meet this criterion if it:

- shows, or is associated with, an important creative or technical innovation or achievement, and/or
- is the inspiration for an important creative or technical innovation or achievement.

A place might not meet this criterion if it has:

- lost its design or technical integrity, and/or
- only a loose association with a creative or technical achievement (for example, is one of many places resulting from the same innovation).

Criterion 7

The place's strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

This criterion is usually described as 'social significance', and is about the value of the place for the current community or cultural group. It includes places that are the continuing focus of spiritual, traditional, economic, political or other social or cultural sentiment for the community.

Social significance can only be identified by the community or group itself. It is identified by seeking the opinion of community members, or by observing the way in which the community relates to a place. All places are likely to have some degree of social value to some part of the community, but those with social heritage value will be the ones that are held in strong and special regard by all or a part of the community. They stand out in the community's collective mind as being important to today's society.

Social significance can change quickly over time, for example as the community learns more about the history of a place, or as values within the community or group change. Places that have current but probably short-lived amenity value to a community, such as a local supermarket, would usually not be assessed as having heritage value.

A place might meet this criterion because it is:

- a place of strong and special value to the current community, compared with other places
- a place important in maintaining the community or group's sense of identity
- a place that has become important to the community or group because of use over a long period
- a place associated with an event or person venerated by the community, and/or
- a place that has special meaning to the community's religious, cultural, educational or social life.

A place would not meet this criterion if it:

- is only important to the community for short-term amenity reasons, and/or
- cannot be shown to be of particular importance to the community or group.

Criterion 8

The special association of the place with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the history of the nation, state, territory or region.

The key to this criterion are the words 'special association', and 'group or persons of importance'. Assessing for this criterion should show why the association between a person or group and the place is more significant than other associations the person or group may have had with any other place. It may be that the association was long-lived or that the place was a significant part of the person or group's life and works.

It should also be demonstrated that the person or group is important in the history of the locality or wider area.

Places containing direct evidence of the association in its fabric would generally be seen as being more significant than places where such evidence did not exist. This may also apply if it can be demonstrated that a person's association with the place has affected other notable aspects of the person's life or works.

Other than in exceptional cases, transitory associations with notable individuals do not make a place significant.

A place might meet this criterion if the:

- person or group associated with the place is important in the history of the locality or wider area, and/or the
- association between the person or group and the place is special.

A place would not meet this criterion if it:

- has only incidental or insubstantial associations with an historically important person or group
- provides evidence of people or groups that are of doubtful historical importance, and/or
- has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association.

Compare your place with others

Comparative assessment should be part of any consideration of these criteria. While assessing the particular values of a place, you will usually have to think about comparisons between this place and others and ask 'why is this one important?'

Comparative assessment can be difficult if research on other places is unavailable. For help in finding comparable places, check the *Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography* and the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* in this toolkit.

Comparative assessment is not meant to suggest that there is only enough room for one significant place of a given type. Places might be significant in a local, regional, state or national context. Comparative assessment is meant to help decide how important a place is compared with others in these differing contexts.

The aim of a comparative study of Chinese temples, for example, would be to determine:

- which attributes of one temple are typical or rare (in regional, state and national contexts)
- which aspects of different temples are well-preserved and which are not, and
- how the physical characteristics of the various temples, and their development histories, compare and contrast.

Such a study would enable a clear statement to be made about what was important about a particular temple.

The questions to ask include:

- how many other places like this one are there in the region, state, territory or nation?
- how important is this place compared to similar places and what makes it important?
- is this place rare, or a good example of its type?

Levels of significance

Heritage places have different levels of significance. They may be valued by local, regional or state communities or be valued at national or international levels. Understanding the level of significance is an important guide to determining the appropriate level of conservation and management to apply to a place.

A place may be locally significant, that is, valued by a small local community or group because it relates to local history and settlement. It may also be important to its sense of identity.

Some places will be important in the pattern of a state's historical settlement, and others will be significant to the whole Australian community, or even the world's. To members of a small community, locally significant places might be just as important to them as the World Heritage area next door. What might be different is how the level of significance influences the way the place is conserved and managed. It is important to think about the level of significance of a place so that the appropriate level of conservation and management is applied.

Important indicators of the level of significance are:

- the intensity with which the place is valued and
- the size of the community that values it.

A place is likely to be significant if it:

- can demonstrate clearly the values or associations felt to be important
- has well-documented associations with the historical events, people or community recognised as being important
- is unusually intact or in exceptionally good condition compared with others of its type
- can be shown to be an early, influential, or crowning example within a particular phase, period, or type of place which is important to the Chinese Australian experience
- is a particularly good example of a type of place (a comparison should be explicit), and/or
- is a rare example of an important type of place, in that few were built, or few have survived.

Having considered these questions, you should be able to say whether the place is of low, moderate, high or of exceptional heritage significance, within a local, regional, state or national context.

Examples of different levels of significance are provided among the statements of significance in the next step.

Statements of significance

Step 8

Write a statement of significance

A statement of significance is simply a short statement that summarises the key reasons why a place is important.

It is a useful statement that can explain to others why a place is important, can be used in displays, signs and brochures, and is a necessary part of any nomination of a place to a heritage register.



Example statements of significance for Chinese Australian heritage places

These examples are for places with different levels of significance.

Sue Wah Chin Building, Darwin, NT

This statement of significance, from the Register of the National Estate, indicates that the place, a single-storey terrace of five shops, is important in Darwin's Chinese history. **It is of local significance.**

Chinese people were numerically dominant in Darwin until 1911, and they dominated the commerce of the town until World War II. This site is of outstanding significance as the most intact and visible reminder of the antiquity and importance of the Chinese presence in Darwin. The building has close associations with the Chin family, the most numerous Chinese family in Darwin today. The building makes a positive contribution to the Cavenagh Street streetscape, and it is held in high esteem by the Darwin community for its historic and other social values.



Sue Wah Chin Building, a terrace of Chinese shops built in Cavenagh Street, Darwin in 1888.
(NT Department of Lands, Planning and Environment)

Wing Hing Long & Co Store, Tingha, NSW

This statement of significance, from the NSW Heritage Register, indicates that this small complex of buildings operated as a Chinese general store and residence from 1881 to 1998. **This place is significant at the local, regional and state levels.**

Wing Hing Long occupies a central position on the main street of Tingha. Its structure, fabric, and archival and movable heritage collections provide a unique documentation of the continuous and significant contribution of Chinese Australians and of general stores to the history of retailing in regional New South Wales. They also provide significant insight into the rise and decline of the tin mining community in which the store is located.



Exterior (above) — Wing Hing Long store, Tingha, operating under Chinese ownership from 1881 until 1998. Interior (at right) — Wing Hing Long Store, well-packed shelves, typical of older country stores.
(NSW Heritage Office)



Temple of Hou Wang, Atherton, Queensland

This statement of significance from the *Chinese Australian Heritage Places Database* indicates **that the temple is of very high local and regional significance** and is a rare type within the small 'set' of surviving temples. **It is highly significant in the state and national context.**

The temple is considered significant because of its importance as a site of Chinese Australian settlement which proved highly successful as a commercial centre despite the opposition of European Australians. The contribution of Chinese labour to the development of the Atherton Tableland has often been overlooked. The Temple of Hou Wang is historically important for its strong association with Southern Chinese settlers. It is a rare example both as a temple dedicated to Hou Wang — there are understood to be only about six such temples world wide (one is known in Kowloon and one on Tai O) — and as a timber temple (most are of brick or stone... it is the only timber temple in Australia or New Zealand still extant and possibly in North America and SE Asia. As such it is an unparalleled example of temples built by overseas Chinese.

Its roof lines and the use of vertical and horizontally placed corrugated iron sheeting give it an unusual and somewhat modest appearance which belies its extensive use of now-valuable timbers — Red Cedar and Black Bean. Its dimly lit interior provides a remarkable aesthetic appeal when viewed with the elaborate carvings and ornaments in their relative positions.

The Temple is no longer actively used but it retains a strong religious association for some visitors. Its close association with Chinese culture in an alien environment, its rarity and its setting are such that it is regarded as having a particularly high value as a cultural site.



The Temple of Hou Wang, Atherton, Queensland in 1929. It was built in 1903 and remained in use until the 1960s. (Collection: John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland)



Recent conservation work will prolong the temple's life. (AHC Collection)

Place records

Step 9

Prepare a place record

- share the information
- nominate the place



Step 9

Prepare a place record

Having now assessed the heritage significance of the place, it is extremely useful to make a record of the place that will explain to others what the place is and why it is important. This is called a 'place record' and should include:

- the name of the place
- its address or location (include a map reference if outside a city or town)
- a description of boundaries
- an indication of who owns the place
- a summary of its history (as researched above)
- a description of existing physical characteristics and setting
- an assessment of condition and intactness
- information on its current usage
- a plan or map of the place, supported by photographs and
- a statement of significance (as assessed above)

A place record can be used to:

- publicise the place within the community
- seek funding for conservation (your state or territory heritage agency, the Australian Heritage Commission or the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage can provide information on grant programs — see **Useful contacts** at the end of this guide), and to
- supply information for nomination forms for heritage registers at all levels (nomination forms are available from your state or territory heritage agency or the Australian Heritage Commission — again see **Useful contacts** in the **Resources** section of this guide).

Actions

- Use the Sample place record opposite to help you to **prepare your own record**.
- **Share the information** you have gathered and the heritage significance you have documented with others who are interested in the place.
- You may also choose to **nominate the place** for inclusion in a heritage register or upgrade a previous, less detailed listing.

The place record can also be used to submit a record for the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* with the possibility of either updating a record that already exists or to add a new one. The record can be submitted by email to: ahc@ea.gov.au.

Nominations for heritage registers can be made to the relevant state or territory heritage agency and to the Australian Heritage Commission, GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601.

Sample place record

For a Chinese Australian Heritage Place

Answer these questions as fully as you can.

1. What is the name of the place?*

*A place might have more than one name. It could have a Chinese name, an historical English name and a current name. List them all, but highlight the name by which you think the place should be known.

2. Where is it?*

*Describe the place's location and boundaries. Give its street address if in a town or city, and its property location, map reference and name, direction and distance from the nearest town if it is in a rural or remote area. If you know the local government area, name it. Attach a plan of the place, marking its heritage boundary, and a map of its location, especially if in a rural or remote area.

3. Describe the place*

*Include information about the place's physical appearance and features, highlighting those that make it important as a Chinese Australian place. Describe the place in relation to its setting or surroundings and in relation to other places nearby that are also of heritage importance. List or describe any objects or artefacts in the place that are important. Make sure that your sketch plan of the place identifies any important features.

4. Summarise its history*

*Indicate when and why the place was built or established and when it first had a Chinese association (if not established by Chinese originally). Indicate if and when Chinese associations with the place ceased. Describe the nature of the association with Chinese individuals, families and communities, historically and today if the place continues to be important to Chinese Australians.

5. What is its condition?*

*Is the place in need of repair? Is it being used appropriately? Has it been altered and if so, do the alterations detract from the significance of the place? Is it under any threat of further change or destruction?

6. Statement of significance*

*Attach the statement of significance you have prepared using this guide.

7. Who owns the place?*

*Indicate who owns the place, if this information is available.

8. Other information about the place*

*List any books, articles, photographs, oral histories etc that relate specifically to this place. Attach relevant copies of historical and current photographs (don't attach originals of old photos — they could be lost or damaged).

9. List your contact details*

*Provide your name, address, phone, fax and email contact details in case further details are needed about the information on this form or so that you can be informed of the success of entry in a register or database. If you don't want your name released to others, say so.

Summary



Congratulations! If you have completed these steps then you now know much more about your local Chinese Australian heritage places. You know their stories and better understand their role in Australia's heritage.

The information you have gathered will be important for future generations and may also form the basis for greater protection through listing the place in a heritage register.

The stories behind these places are there for current generations to enjoy as well, so don't forget to share what you have uncovered. Who knows, sharing these stories may lead to further exciting discoveries!

If you have found this guide useful — please spread the word and encourage others to seek out and assess their Chinese Australian heritage places.

The places of our Chinese Australian heritage are among the many which reflect Australia's journey into the richly diverse society that it is today.

A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places

What are Chinese Australian heritage places?

Australia has many places connected with the history of Chinese settlement, and with Chinese Australian communities.

These places may be sites, archaeological remains, buildings, structures or gardens. Some are grand, others are modest. They can range from large temples and department stores through to small cemeteries or outdoor stone ovens. They can be old or recent and include important objects.

Each of these places has a story to tell about the experiences of Chinese Australians and their part in the emergence of a multicultural nation.

Although some Chinese Australian heritage places are already well-known and protected, many are not. Many sites may be known but have little recorded about them. Others have not yet been identified. Overall, much more needs to be known about Chinese Australian sites.

Finding out what remains of our heritage is a first important step. Our next step will be to keep it and care for it for the benefit of the generations ahead.

Welcome to the toolkit

This toolkit is designed to assist those involved in researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places. It was developed particularly for professionals working in the heritage field. The toolkit has six components including links to supporting databases. These components are:

Chinese Australian Heritage Places Research Resources

1. **A brief overview of Chinese life and heritage places in Australia** — examines Chinese settlement in Australia and associated heritage places.
2. The online **Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography** — a database which lists published and unpublished works dealing with Chinese Australian history and heritage places.
3. **Useful links to other online research tools** — web resources for Chinese Australian heritage research.

Sources for Chinese Australian Heritage Places Research

4. **A practitioner's guide to researching, assessing and recording Chinese Australian heritage places** which contains steps and checklists to help analyse and describe places, and how to apply the heritage criteria used in government planning and listing processes.
5. The online **Chinese Australian Sites Database** which contains preliminary information on a range of Chinese Australian places.
6. A **list of useful contacts and additional information** relating to Chinese Australian heritage.

It is hoped that the *Toolkit* will prove useful to heritage practitioners such as historians and archaeologists, heritage agency staff, local government planners and heritage advisers, academics and students, as well as community groups and individuals investigating local Chinese Australian heritage and places.

Feedback on the toolkit components is welcome. Comments and suggestions should be emailed to ahc@ea.gov.au or mailed to:

Chinese Australian Heritage Project
Australian Heritage Commission
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601

COMPONENT 2

Chinese Australian Heritage bibliography

The **Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography** has been developed as a tool to assist researchers interested in the activities of the Chinese in Australia. It generally lists only those sources that have the activities of the Chinese in Australia as their principal subject matter. It also includes a few sources from foreign countries that make comparative references to Australia.

The bibliography is based on a database originally intended as a research tool to assist in the archaeological study of places occupied by Chinese people in Australia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Bell, Grimwade & Ritchie, 1993). It concentrates on sources that are likely to help the study of material culture and the physical manifestations of settlement. This database, funded through the National Estate Grants Program, was developed by a team coordinated by Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd, for the Museum of Chinese Australian History in Melbourne.

This bibliography lists sources identified in the bibliographies of existing publications and reports, library catalogues and research databases. An effort has been made to inspect every source cited and verify information, but a few entries have simply been repeated from the work of others in good faith. The bibliography is lightly annotated, principally to clarify entries whose subject matter and usefulness might not be evident from the title and imprint.

The database will provide a useful reference tool to assist members of communities and groups, local history societies and museums, heritage agencies and other government departments, school students, researchers and heritage professionals. It is a tool to which researchers can contribute, by updating and expanding its contents. Information that could be included in the bibliography can be emailed to: ahc@ea.gov.au.

Australian libraries

Libraries throughout Australia have extensive holdings of published works on the Chinese in Australia, although unpublished works are usually only held in one place. Most major Australian library catalogues can be searched on the Internet via the Australian Libraries Gateway at www.nla.gov.au/libraries/. The two largest collections of historical material relating to the Chinese in Australia are held in the Mitchell Library in Sydney and the National Library of Australia in Canberra.

COMPONENT 4

A practitioner's guide to researching, assessing and recording Chinese Australian heritage places

Chinese Australian heritage places can be found by:

- studying historical records
- investigating the places themselves, and
- drawing on the knowledge and memory of individuals and groups in the community.

The whole community, including any Chinese Australian community or group within it, can help to identify Chinese Australian places, and should be encouraged to become involved. A step-by-step guide to organising community involvement is set out in the guide *Migrant Heritage Places in Australia — How to find your heritage places*, published by the Australian Heritage Commission and available online at www.heritage.gov.au/protecting.

Some categories of Chinese Australian heritage places can only be identified by, or with the direct involvement of, the Chinese Australian community. Places associated with and valued by the present generation of Chinese Australians for their contemporary associations are places which have current social significance. These associations may only be known within the community and are critical to identifying and conserving the 'living' Chinese Australian heritage.

The following information outlines the steps needed to adequately research, assess and record Chinese Australian heritage places.

Nine steps for researching, assessing and recording Chinese Australian heritage places

Background research

Step 1: Gather historical information and document community connections with the place

Step 2: Understand the history of the place

STEP 1 — Gather historical information and document community connections with the place

The broader context

A definitive history of the Chinese in Australia does not yet exist and much remains to be learnt about the places related to this history.

To become familiar with the range of Chinese activities and occupations in Australia, study *A brief overview of Chinese life and heritage places in Australia*. This looks at Chinese life in Australia and gives examples of places that illustrate aspects of Chinese Australian heritage.

It may also be helpful to look at this toolkit's **selection of key books and articles**. The more extensive **Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography** lists a wide range of sources on Chinese Australian history and heritage places.

A local focus

After looking at this broader context, try next to understand the history of Chinese settlement in your local area, using locally available sources of information.

A wide range of historical resources can cast light on the Chinese Australian history of an area (see **Where to find local information** below). Individuals and community groups, especially Chinese community groups, may be able to fill in the local picture and contribute greatly to our knowledge and appreciation of Chinese Australian heritage places.

Actions

- **Contact and involve** Chinese Australian families and communities associated with the place, especially if the project is being undertaken by a non-Chinese Australian group or individual.
- **Search further afield** if local Chinese Australian families have moved away from the area. Try to identify and contact them because their knowledge and links with the area might add to its social significance.
- **Involve the broader community** by locating local historians, knowledgeable residents or members of long-established local families — local historical societies or family history groups may provide you with contacts. Interested groups or individuals should be invited to be involved in the project, contribute their knowledge, and acknowledged in the final documentation.
- **Form an outline of the history** of the Chinese at the place and its surrounding area by studying relevant local histories, published books and articles, government records, maps and photos. Try to find the original descriptions, rather than rely on later and often inaccurate secondary histories. For more ideas on **Where to find local information**, see below. Use the bibliography in this guide, and in the internet resource — *A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage).
- **Take photocopies of the significant records** you discover including historical photographs and plans. Note or photocopy relevant sections of historical text.
- **Interview former residents**, community members and local historians who may know the place and its stories. For places significant to relatively recent Chinese migrants, this might be the only source of information which is available.
- **Consider holding a meeting**, a focus group or a community workshop which may assist in exploring shared memories. Guides have been published that relate directly to the processes of involving local communities. These are the Australian Heritage Commission's *Migrant Heritage Places in Australia — How to find your heritage places — A guide* (2000), and *Protecting local heritage places: a guide for communities* (2000).
- **Check to see if the place is already recorded** by searching the Australian Heritage Places Inventory (www.heritage.gov.au), the *Chinese Australian National Site Database* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage) and your local council heritage register. The records for many listed places do require further information. You may find places in registers with only some of their values recognised and with Chinese Australian heritage significance omitted. If you have more information, it would be useful to update the listing by contacting the agency administering the register.

Where to find local information

- **Local and regional histories** in the local library, historical society, family history society and state library — several of these have their catalogues on the internet.
- **General historical books and articles** on Chinese Australian history — see **Resources** section at the end of this guide for a feel for the broader context. A wider selection of sources can be found online in the bibliography of *A toolkit for researching and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* (www.ahc.gov.au/chineseheritage).
- **Oral history recordings** with local Chinese Australians can offer valuable insights into a local area. Some interviews may already exist so first check your local library and historical societies. You may also want to explore the National Library of Australia's national directory of Australia's oral history collections available online via www.nla.gov.au. Some useful guides exist to help you undertake oral history recordings including *Oral History Handbook* by Beth Robertson, (1994).

- **Historical photographs** may be stored at the local library, historical society or at the local newspaper. Photographs of street scenes, celebrations, parades, and work life in a town or suburb or in the country can reveal images of Chinese people and businesses. They can provide evidence of the local Chinese presence and activities and give leads for further research.
- **Local and city newspapers** can be a key source of information but can take time to research. Microfiche or back copies of local newspapers are sometimes held by the local library, family history society or historical society. If not, a useful listing of surviving newspapers in Australian libraries is the National Library of Australia's *Newspapers in Australian Libraries, a Union List, Part 2, Australian Newspapers* (4th edition Canberra 1985), which can be found in many regional and all state libraries.

A number of **Chinese newspapers** have been established in Australia, and these can be a key resource for Chinese language readers. Work has already started on developing an index of one of the most important Chinese language newspapers in Australia, the *Tung Wah* (see <http://chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au/>).

- **Local government** records can provide information on property ownership and structural alterations through archived documents such as land titles, maps and plans. These records can also shed light on changes and subdivisions to the place over time.
- **Commonwealth and state government records** are held by state and national archives and can provide very specific information. They are particularly valuable if you have the name of a Chinese person known to have lived locally. The records include naturalisation papers, customs records relating to immigration restriction and the issue of passports as well as census statistics. A database guide and index books to the Chinese naturalisation records in NSW from 1857 to 1887 by T McCormack (1997) is available on CD-ROM at the State Library of NSW and the National Library of Australia.

A valuable resource for Victoria is the reprinted Victorian Parliamentary Papers and legislation relating to the Chinese, 1855-1900, including descriptive reports of Victoria's Chinese population printed in 1868 and 1881, edited by IF McLaren (1985).

- **Mining records** are a major source of information about Chinese mining activities although they may have to be supplemented by other sources, such as newspapers. The *Mining Heritage Places Assessment Manual* by Michael Pearson and Barry McGowan (2000) provides a guide to researching and assessing mining sites.

STEP 2 — Understand the of the place

The reason for gathering historical information is to better understand the place. This stage may take some time, but it is worth doing well as it is crucial to being able to properly assess its heritage value. Once you have gathered this material you will need to sort and analyse it so that a succinct and focused description of the history of the place can be written.

Actions

- **Find answers** to these basic questions:
 - when was the place established or built?
 - how did the Chinese use the place?
 - was the place used before or after its occupation by Chinese people, and if so, what can you find out about them?
 - what major changes, if any, have been made and by whom? What were those changes?
- **More detail is now needed** so use the **Questions to help historical analysis** at right to fill out the information you have gathered. Answer as many of the questions as you can with the information you have. Your particular place may raise other questions in your mind and you may need to seek additional sources of information.

Questions to help historical analysis

Analysing the collected information will be more useful if something is known about Chinese history and about the home provinces of Chinese migrants. The experiences of Chinese Australians varied according to where they came from, where they landed in Australia and their circumstances at the time. Their stories are influenced by their regional affiliations, ancestral origins and obligations, life experience in China prior to migration, personal skills and the varied regional characteristics (economic, climatic and cultural) of their new home in Australia. (See **Overseas Chinese history — general references** in the Resources section of this guide.)

Ask these questions:

1. What was happening regionally?

- What was the extent of Chinese Australian settlement in the region — was this place one of many or was it unusual?
- Are other Chinese Australian places associated with the one being recorded — are they a part of the history of the place?
- What were the connections between the local Chinese Australian community and the broader Chinese community elsewhere in Australia or in the Pacific, South-East Asia or China?
- Did the Chinese Australian place influence, or was it influenced by, broader settlement patterns?
- Did the Chinese Australian presence stimulate or facilitate other industries or activities such as mining, market gardening, pastoralism etc?
- Did the Chinese Australian presence at this place influence transport routes or modes of transport in the district or on a wider scale?
- Did Chinese Australian settlement and related activities have a lasting impact on surrounding landscapes?

2. What does the historical evidence tell us about the use of the place?

- What activity or activities were carried out at the place?
- Do documents exist which relate to the activities at the place such as mining records, store records, family reminiscences?
- Does the evidence, documentary or physical, tell us about activities that were particularly Chinese in origin?
- Was the place part of a broader pattern of Chinese Australian activity and settlement in the area or region?
- Do photographs exist of the place and show how it was used by Chinese Australians?
- Is there evidence of how the place was used and changes made when no longer used by Chinese Australians?
- If the place is a work site, such as a mine, garden or workshop, where did the Chinese Australians workers live?
- Do people survive (Chinese Australian or other) who knew the place when it was used or occupied by Chinese Australians? Have they been interviewed?
- Did the place have any architectural, engineering or aesthetic feature of outstanding creativity or noteworthiness?
- Does historical information about similar Chinese Australian places indicate that this place was in any way unusual, or is it/was it typical of its type?

3. What are the historical associations of the place?

- Was the place associated with prominent identified individuals or groups? How?
- Did any important events occur at the place?
- Does the place have important historical associations not relating to Chinese Australian activities or settlement?
- Did the place influence contemporary or later historical developments? (eg, was it the subject of important legal proceedings; did it have a major role in stimulating local economic development; did it play a role in local social activities or reinforce social cohesion; did it influence Chinese Australian settlement or activities elsewhere; were any important race relations issues raised or resolved there?)
- How important was the Chinese Australian place in the overall context of the Chinese Australian settlement of the region, state or nation. For example, was it the largest Chinese Australian settlement of its type in the region or state; did it lay the foundation for a network of Chinese Australian activities and settlement in the region or state?
- Do communities or groups survive (Chinese Australian or other) who value the Chinese Australian place because of past or current associations?
- What are the relationships between the Chinese and non-Chinese associated with the place (eg marriages, business partnerships, landlord/tenant etc)?
- How do you rank the historical significance of the place:
 - is it important in the history of the state?
 - is it more relevant to the settlement of the local area or region?
 - are the events associated with the place unusual, or did similar things happen elsewhere?
 - were the individuals associated with the place particularly notable?

The discussion in **Step 7** about assessing significance will help in this ranking.

Site investigation

Step 3: Get permission

Step 4: Be prepared

Step 5: Describe the place

Step 6: Photograph the place

STEP 3 — Get permission

Actions

- Before starting to record the place or visiting the site you should **obtain permission** from the property's owner.
- **If access is denied**, decide if you want to proceed with assessing the place, and if so, limit your description to what is observable without entering the property.

STEP 4 — Be prepared

Action

- When visiting the site, **take with you the information and equipment you will need** to record the type of place. For a building, this might be a notebook, pencil, camera and copies of relevant photographs or plans. For a garden or mining site you might also take a clipboard and A4 paper (to sketch a plan), a compass, tape measure and a map.

STEP 5 — Describe the place

Actions

- **Decide on where the boundaries lie.** The place may be very different from that defined by the surveyed property boundaries. Make sure you take into account the functions and relationship of the place and its parts with its setting — for example the boundaries of a mining site may stretch beyond the diggings to incorporate the water races and their source dams. The exact boundary may evolve through the process of exploring the history and values of the place.
- **Record its street address**, if it has one. If it doesn't, note its map grid reference and map name and number. If the area is large, draw the boundary on a copy of the topographic map or street directory map.
- **Draw a map or plan of the place.** If it is a building, also sketch the sheds, driveways, fences and any other features within the boundary of the place as well as the layout of each floor of the building. If it is a larger area of land, sketch the features that make up the place, such as mining remains, creeks, water races, gardens, sheds, machinery and artefacts, taking measurements and/or compass angles from an identifiable fixed point.
- **Compare the place with any existing historical photos** and describe differences and changes that you observe. This will help you to understand the history and changes to the place over time.
- **Describe in your notebook the main features of the place**, such as the style, materials and construction of buildings, their surroundings and settings, mine workings, and gardens etc. Describe in detail any features associated with its Chinese history or which otherwise contribute to its heritage significance. Copy any Chinese inscriptions for later translation. Remember to record features relating to earlier or later use of the place by non-Chinese occupants.
- **Look for the small things as well as the large.** Objects and artefacts on the ground or in a building can provide valuable information, may be part of the place's significance and could add immeasurably to the richness of its story.
- **Take note of related places**, such as buildings which lie outside the boundary.
- **Cross reference your descriptions** with maps, plans or photographs by numbering the descriptions and the mapped/photographed features.
- **Note the condition and intactness of the place.** Has it changed much when compared with old photographs? Have parts been added or demolished? What is its condition? Is its current use causing any damage to the site?
- **Keep notes of oral recollections** of those associated with the place as the human memory can be a rich source of information. These will help to gain insights into places with a recent past that is important to our heritage.

STEP 6 — Photograph the place

Good current photos are invaluable. They will assist your memory later on and will serve as a record of the place in any report, exhibition or publication.

Actions

- **Photograph the place from a good vantage point**, showing as many associated features as can be seen in a single frame or in a number of connecting photos. It is important and useful to record a sense of the environment of the site.
- **Photograph individual features and objects** that help in understanding its Chinese associations.
- When taking the photos, **write down the details of each frame in sequence**. Note on the sketch plan where each photo was taken and the direction of the view (a simple circle and arrow is best). This will help later in linking the photos to your written notes and sketch plan.

STEP 7 — Why is it important? Assessing the heritage significance of a place

Before assessing the heritage significance of a place, understand its history and physical characteristics. Without this knowledge it may not be possible to state clearly why the place is important. Assessing significance based on hearsay or myths is not a good basis for making decisions about the future, conservation, funding or heritage register listing of a place.

Undertaking a systematic assessment will help you to work out exactly why a place is important and what different aspects of the place make it significant.

One way of working through the assessment of a place is to apply established criteria used to assess places for entry into heritage registers. These criteria vary slightly from state to state, but are all similar to the criteria for the Commonwealth's Register of the National Estate.

The following discussion is based on the Register of the National Estate criteria and is representative of the various criteria used around Australia. If you are going to nominate a place for a heritage register or are undertaking a study associated with a statutory planning process, be sure to refer to the criteria used by the heritage agency in your state or territory.

The following discussion concentrates on applying criteria to Chinese Australian places. You only need to demonstrate significance against one criterion to show that a place has heritage value although most places with heritage value will probably be significant under more than one criterion.

Additional examples of significant Chinese Australian heritage places are included in **Step 7 of *Tracking the Dragon — a guide for finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places***.

Heritage criteria — a discussion

Criterion 1 — The importance of the place in the course or pattern of the history of the nation, state, territory or region.

The 'course or pattern' of history is made up of the events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, state, region or community. The Chinese settlement of Australia has been a major element in the course and pattern of the history of the nation and of the Chinese Australian community.

A place meets this criterion if it:

- shows evidence of a significant Chinese settlement, occupation or activity
- is associated with a significant event or historical phase in Chinese Australian history, and/or
- maintains or shows the continuity of a historical process or activity associated with Chinese Australian history.



A place would not meet this criterion if it:

- has only incidental connections with historically important events, activities or processes in Chinese Australian history
- is associated with events, activities or processes of doubtful historical importance, and/or
- has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of, or be considered symbolically important because of, a particular historical association.

Criterion 2 — The place possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the history of the nation, state or territory.

These uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the history of a place might demonstrate a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design which is no longer practised, in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest.

In a number of states the criteria for rarity is interpreted as qualifying other criteria, rather than as a criterion used in isolation. For example, a place might be significant if it is important in the course or pattern of history and is rare. Assessors should check the particular criteria of the state or territory in which they are nominating a Chinese Australian place.

Comparing similar places can help identify those that are special- they may be rare or good examples of a particular type. Judging the rarity of a place largely depends on the amount of comparative information available. For help in finding comparable places, check the *Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography* and the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* in this toolkit, your state heritage agency and local government planner or heritage adviser. If comparative research is poor, it should be made clear that the assessment of rarity is based on limited current information and may need to be revised as further research is undertaken.

Rarity is also relative to the size of the population being considered — hence it is important to state whether the assessment of rarity is in a global, national, state, regional or local context. Rarity is also relative to the particular historical context, so a specific type of building might be rare in terms of its Chinese associations, but common in other contexts. Similarly, a place might be rare for its period, but common in other periods. The particular context for the claim of rarity should be clearly stated in the assessment.

It is also important to state whether the place was always rare (ie that few ever existed) or is rare now because only a few survive of the many that once existed.

A place might be ‘endangered’ because the class of similar places as a whole is threatened by redevelopment or redundancy.

A place might meet this criterion of being uncommon, rare or endangered if it were:

- a good example of a type originally few in number
- a sole survivor or one of a few remaining examples of a type that was once more common, and
- a good example of a type that is being actively depleted due to development or redundancy.

A place would not meet this criterion if it were:

- not rare
- of a type that is not being depleted despite a perceived threat
- rare in a local context but numerous or abundant elsewhere.

Criterion 3 — The potential of the place to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the history of the nation, state or territory.

Some heritage places have value as a source of important information — they have research potential. The important qualifying test in assessing places under this criterion is the degree of confidence that can be placed in the claim that the place has research potential. This is particularly important at sites being assessed for their archaeological potential.

A sound basis must exist for assessing that the place has demonstrated or potential research value inherent in its fabric and that the information to be yielded by the place is likely to contribute significantly to our knowledge of the past.

The educational use and potential for interpreting places are attributes which relate more to management opportunities rather than to intrinsic significance, and are not included under this criterion.

A place might meet this criterion of having research potential if it can be demonstrated that it can contribute:

- new and worthwhile information through the study of its elements — structures, site, archaeological deposit and/or contents
- knowledge not available from any other information source, such as documents, photos or oral history
- knowledge not found at other places, and/or
- knowledge that is relevant to research questions being asked by those in the historical, architectural, archaeological or other research fields.

A place might not meet this criterion if:

- the four dot points above cannot be satisfied — the simple existence of archaeological deposits is not sufficient to satisfy this criterion. The value or likely value of the deposits must be demonstrated, or
- a building is valued for an unusual feature which is referred to in the documentary sources but is no longer part of the surviving fabric.

While a place which has had its research potential fully exhausted may not meet this criterion, it may be eligible for other criteria for its historical associations, technological or architectural values.

Criterion 4 — The importance of the place in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the nation, state or territory's heritage places.

Some heritage places are good examples of their type. They are important because they demonstrate the principal characteristics of a human activity in the Australian environment (including a way of life, custom, process, land use, function, design or technique).

Every place is an example of its type, but this criterion tries to identify those places that are particularly valuable because they provide a good understanding of their type. To be a good example, a place should usually have high integrity (it should be intact and 'authentic' to its type). Some places with only moderate integrity might still be important under this criterion if others places of the type have been completely lost or are substantially less intact. The place can then be both a good example (criterion 4) and rare (criterion 2) at the same time.

Some places may be important because they show regional variations of their class or type. In the case of Chinese Australian places, these variations may relate to the Chinese districts of origin of the people associated with these places, or may result from differing regional patterns of work or lifestyle in Australia.



A place might meet this criterion if:

- it represents all or a larger number of the distinguishing characteristics of the class than is common — it might have attributes typical of a particular way of life, custom, process, land use, function, design or technique (such as a Chinese gold mining area)
- the physical evidence demonstrating a range of characteristics is particularly intact and well-preserved, compared with others of the class (such as an intact temple)
- the place has a large number of class characteristics from one point in time, but also possesses a wider range of physical characteristics representing changes over time that are historically important within the class (such as a Chinese store continuously operated over a long period), and/or
- the place is part of a group of places that collectively illustrate a particular type (such as a 'Chinatown').

The more completely a place shows the characteristics of its type, and the fewer the number of similar examples that exist, the more significance the place will have.

A place would not meet this criterion if it:

- is a poor example of its type
- does not include or has lost a substantial number of elements typical of a class of place, compared with other known examples
- cannot be demonstrated to be an important example of its type compared with other examples of similar completeness and integrity, and/or
- does not represent well the characteristics that makes up a significant variation of a type.

Criterion 5 — The importance of the place in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by the community or cultural group.

A place may have aesthetic heritage value because the form, scale, colour, texture and material of a building and its setting, or a site, appeals to a community's ideas of beauty or grandeur. It may also comply with formal aesthetic rules. In the case of Chinese Australian heritage places, applying the principles of feng-shui, for example, is a set of formal aesthetic (and social) rules. In some cases, the smells and sounds associated with a site contribute to its aesthetic significance.

A place may meet this criterion if it is:

- a place built to traditional form, design and craftsmanship
- a distinctive landmark
- a place particularly important to the community because of its appearance (including being aesthetically distinctive), and/or
- a place or series of places complying to formal rules of design (such as feng-shui).

A place might meet this criterion if:

- its aesthetic values cannot be clearly stated, and/or
- its aesthetic values cannot be said to be important compared with other places.

Criterion 6 — The importance of the place in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

This criterion applies only where the place has evidence of specific innovation or technical creativity or achievement particular to that place (eg the place had a seminal impact). It could also have a particularly good (and perhaps rare) example of an innovation or innovative application of existing technology which is superior to other existing examples. This might occur, for instance, in the fields of engineering, architecture, industrial design or landscape design. If a place simply includes a good example of an interesting technology or design also found at other places, it should be assessed under Criterion 4.

The capacity of the place to demonstrate the creative or technical achievement is important — if the place has deteriorated or been altered to the extent that such evidence is lost, the power of demonstration is probably also lost.

A place might meet this criterion if it:

- shows, or is associated with, an important creative or technical innovation or achievement, and/or
- is the inspiration for an important creative or technical innovation or achievement.

A place might not meet this criterion if it has:

- lost its design or technical integrity, and/or
- only a loose association with a creative or technical achievement (for example, is one of many places resulting from the same innovation).

Criterion 7 — The place's strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

This criterion is usually described as 'social significance', and is about the value of the place for the current community or cultural group. It includes places that are the continuing focus of spiritual, traditional, economic, political or other social or cultural sentiment for the community.

Social significance can only be identified by the community or group itself. It is identified by seeking the opinion of community members, or by observing the way in which the community relates to a place. All places are likely to have some degree of social value to some part of the community, but those with social heritage value will be the ones that are held in strong and special regard by all or a part of the community. They stand out in the community's collective mind as being important to today's society.

Social significance can change quickly over time, for example as the community learns more about the history of a place, or as values within the community or group change. Places that have current but probably short-lived amenity value to a community, such as a local supermarket, would usually not be assessed as having heritage value.

A place might meet this criterion because it is:

- a place of strong and special value to the current community, compared with other places
- a place important in maintaining the community or group's sense of identity
- a place that has become important to the community or group because of use over a long period
- a place associated with an event or person venerated by the community, and/or
- a place that has special meaning to the community's religious, cultural, educational or social life.

A place would not meet this criterion if it:

- is only important to the community for short-term amenity reasons, and/or
- cannot be shown to be of particular importance to the community or group.

Criterion 8 — The special association of the place with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the history of the nation, state, territory or region.

The key to this criterion are the words 'special association', and 'group or persons of importance'. Assessing for this criterion should show why the association between a person or group and the place is more significant than other associations the person or group may have had with any other place. It may be that the association was long-lived or that the place was a significant part of the person or group's life and works.

It should also be demonstrated that the person or group is important in the history of the locality or wider area.

Places containing direct evidence of the association in its fabric would generally be seen as being more significant than places where such evidence did not exist. This may also apply if it can be demonstrated that a person's association with the place has affected other notable aspects of the person's life or works.

Other than in exceptional cases, transitory associations with notable individuals do not make a place significant.

A place might meet this criterion if the:

- person or group associated with the place is important in the history of the locality or wider area, and/or the
- association between the person or group and the place is special.

A place would not meet this criterion if it:

- has only incidental or insubstantial associations with an historically important person or group
- provides evidence of people or groups that are of doubtful historical importance, and/or
- has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association.

Compare your place with others

Comparative assessment should be part of any consideration of these criteria. While assessing the particular values of a place, you will usually have to think about comparisons between this place and others and ask 'why is this one important?'

Comparative assessment can be difficult if research on other places is unavailable. For help in finding comparable places, check the *Chinese Australian Heritage Bibliography* and the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* in this toolkit.

Comparative assessment is not meant to suggest that there is only enough room for one significant place of a given type. Places might be significant in a local, regional, state or national context. Comparative assessment is meant to help decide how important a place is compared with others in these differing contexts.

The aim of a comparative study of Chinese temples, for example, would be to determine:

- which attributes of one temple are typical or rare (in regional, state and national contexts)
- which aspects of different temples are well-preserved and which are not, and
- how the physical characteristics of the various temples, and their development histories, compare and contrast.

Such a study would enable a clear statement to be made about what was important about a particular temple.

The questions to ask include:

- how many other places like this one are there in the region, state, territory or nation?
- how important is this place compared to similar places and what makes it important?
- is this place rare, or a good example of its type?

Levels of significance

Heritage places have different levels of significance. They may be valued by local, regional or state communities or be valued at national or international levels. Understanding the level of significance is an important guide to determining the appropriate level of conservation and management to apply to a place.

A place may be locally significant, that is, valued by a small local community or group because it relates to local history and settlement. It may also be important to its sense of identity.

Some places will be important in the pattern of a state's historical settlement, and others will be significant to the whole Australian community, or even the world's. To members of a small community, locally significant places might be just as important to them as the World Heritage area next door. What might be different is how the level of significance influences the way the place is conserved and managed. It is important to think about the level of significance of a place so that the appropriate level of conservation and management is applied.

Important indicators of the level of significance are:

- the intensity with which the place is valued and
- the size of the community that values it.

A place is likely to be significant if it:

- can demonstrate clearly the values or associations felt to be important
- has well-documented associations with the historical events, people or community recognised as being important
- is unusually intact or in exceptionally good condition compared with others of its type
- can be shown to be an early, influential, or crowning example within a particular phase, period, or type of place which is important to the Chinese Australian experience
- is a particularly good example of a type of place (a comparison should be explicit), and/or
- is a rare example of an important type of place, in that few were built, or few have survived.

Having considered these questions, you should be able to say whether the place is of low, moderate, high or of exceptional heritage significance, within a local, regional, state or national context.

Examples of different levels of significance are provided among the statements of significance in the next step.

Statements of significance

STEP 8 — Write a statement of significance

A statement of significance is simply a short statement that summarises the key reasons why a place is important.

It is a useful statement that can explain to others why a place is important, can be used in displays, signs and brochures, and is a necessary part of any nomination of a place to a heritage register.

Example statements of significance for Chinese Australian heritage places

These examples are for places with different levels of significance.

Sue Wah Chin Building, Darwin, NT

This statement of significance, from the Register of the National Estate, indicates that the place, a single-storey terrace of five shops, is important in Darwin's Chinese history. **It is of local significance.**

Chinese people were numerically dominant in Darwin until 1911, and they dominated the commerce of the town until World War II. This site is of outstanding significance as the most intact and visible reminder of the antiquity and importance of the Chinese presence in Darwin. The building has close associations with the Chin family, the most numerous Chinese family in Darwin today. The building makes a positive contribution to the Cavenagh Street streetscape, and it is held in high esteem by the Darwin community for its historic and other social values.

Wing Hing Long & Co Store, Tingha, NSW

This statement of significance, from the NSW Heritage Register, indicates that this small complex of buildings operated as a Chinese general store and residence from 1881 to 1998. **This place is significant at the local, regional and state levels.**

Wing Hing Long occupies a central position on the main street of Tingha. Its structure, fabric, and archival and movable heritage collections provide a unique documentation of the continuous and significant contribution of Chinese Australians and of general stores to the history of retailing in regional New South Wales. They also provide significant insight into the rise and decline of the tin mining community in which the store is located.

Temple of Hou Wang, Atherton, Queensland

This statement of significance from the *Chinese Australian Heritage Places Database* indicates **that the temple is of very high local and regional significance** and is a rare type within the small 'set' of surviving temples. **It is highly significant in the state and national context.**

The temple is considered significant because of its importance as a site of Chinese Australian settlement which proved highly successful as a commercial centre despite the opposition of European Australians. The contribution of Chinese labour to the development of the Atherton Tableland has often been overlooked. The Temple of Hou Wang is historically important for its strong association with Southern Chinese settlers. It is a rare example both as a temple dedicated to Hou Wang — there are understood to be only about six such temples world wide (one is known in Kowloon and one on Tai O) — and as a timber temple (most are of brick or stone... it is the only timber temple in Australia or New Zealand still extant and possibly in North America and SE Asia. As such it is an unparalleled example of temples built by overseas Chinese.

Its roof lines and the use of vertical and horizontally placed corrugated iron sheeting give it an unusual and somewhat modest appearance which belies its extensive use of now-valuable timbers — Red Cedar and Black Bean. Its dimly lit interior provides a remarkable aesthetic appeal when viewed with the elaborate carvings and ornaments in their relative positions.

The Temple is no longer actively used but it retains a strong religious association for some visitors. Its close association with Chinese culture in an alien environment, its rarity and its setting are such that it is regarded as having a particularly high value as a cultural site.

Place records

STEP 9 — Prepare a place record

- **share the information**
- **nominate the place**

Having now assessed the heritage significance of the place, it is extremely useful to make a record of the place that will explain to others what the place is and why it is important. This is called a 'place record' and should include:

- the name of the place
- its address or location (include a map reference if outside a city or town)
- a description of boundaries
- an indication of who owns the place
- a summary of its history (as researched above)
- a description of existing physical characteristics and setting
- an assessment of condition and intactness
- information on its current usage
- a plan or map of the place, supported by photographs and
- a statement of significance (as assessed above)

A place record can be used to:

- publicise the place within the community
- seek funding for conservation (your state or territory heritage agency, the Australian Heritage Commission or the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage can provide information on grant programs — see **Useful contacts** at the end of this guide), and to
- supply information for nomination forms for heritage registers at all levels (nomination forms are available from your state or territory heritage agency or the Australian Heritage Commission — again see **Useful contacts** in the **Resources** section of this guide).

Action

Use the Sample place record opposite to help you to **prepare your own record**.

Share the information you have gathered and the heritage significance you have documented with others who are interested in the place.

You may also choose to **nominate the place** for inclusion in a heritage register or upgrade a previous, less detailed listing.

The place record can also be used to submit a record for the Chinese Australian Heritage Place Database with the possibility of either updating a record that already exists or to add a new one. The record can be submitted by email to: ahc@ea.gov.au.

Nominations for heritage registers can be made to the relevant state or territory heritage agency and to the Australian Heritage Commission, GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601.



Sample place record

For a Chinese Australian Heritage Place

Answer these questions as fully as you can.

1. What is the name of the place?*

*A place might have more than one name. It could have a Chinese name, an historical English name and a current name. List them all, but highlight the name by which you think the place should be known.

2. Where is it?*


*Describe the place's location and boundaries. Give its street address if in a town or city, and its property location, map reference and name, direction and distance from the nearest town if it is in a rural or remote area. If you know the local government area, name it. Attach a plan of the place, marking its heritage boundary, and a map of its location, especially if in a rural or remote area.

3. Describe the place*

*Include information about the place's physical appearance and features, highlighting those that make it important as a Chinese Australian place. Describe the place in relation to its setting or surroundings and in relation to other places nearby that are also of heritage importance. List or describe any objects or artefacts in the place that are important. Make sure that your sketch plan of the place identifies any important features.

4. Summarise its history*

*Indicate when and why the place was built or established and when it first had a Chinese association (if not established by Chinese originally). Indicate if and when Chinese associations with the place ceased. Describe the nature of the association with Chinese individuals, families and communities, historically and today if the place continues to be important to Chinese Australians.



5. What is its condition?*

*Is the place in need of repair? Is it being used appropriately? Has it been altered and if so, do the alterations detract from the significance of the place? Is it under any threat of further change or destruction?

6. Statement of significance*

*Attach the statement of significance you have prepared using this guide.

7. Who owns the place?*

*Indicate who owns the place, if this information is available.

8. Other information about the place*

*List any books, articles, photographs, oral histories etc that relate specifically to this place. Attach relevant copies of historical and current photographs (don't attach originals of old photos — they could be lost or damaged).

9. List your contact details*

*Provide your name, address, phone, fax and email contact details in case further details are needed about the information on this form or so that you can be informed of the success of entry in a register or database. If you don't want your name released to others, say so.



Summary

Congratulations! If you have completed these steps then you now know much more about your local Chinese Australian heritage places. You know their stories and better understand their role in Australia's heritage.

The information you have gathered will be important for future generations and may also form the basis for greater protection through listing the place in a heritage register.

The stories behind these places are there for current generations to enjoy as well, so don't forget to share what you have uncovered. Who knows, sharing these stories may lead to further exciting discoveries!

If you have found this guide useful — please spread the word and encourage others to seek out and assess their Chinese Australian heritage places.

The places of our Chinese Australian heritage are among the many which reflect Australia's journey into the richly diverse society that it is today.

COMPONENT 5

Chinese Australian Sites Database

The *Chinese Australian Sites Database* is an initial compilation of information held in various state and territory heritage registers, the Register of the National Estate and lists compiled by the Museum of Chinese Australian History. The database indicates the register from which information has been extracted.

The information in the database is incomplete reflecting the state of the data in the parent registers and showing the need for active research and recording of Chinese Australian heritage places. It is a tool to which researchers can contribute, by updating and expanding its contents. Information that could be included in the database can be emailed to ahc@ea.gov.au.

Most of the parent heritage databases can be accessed through the Australian Heritage Places Inventory (www.heritage.gov.au/ahpi). These are worth checking, given that they will continue to grow.

The brief analysis below indicates the current nature of the database and the challenges in developing a more comprehensive inventory of Chinese Australian heritage places.

The database was funded through the National Estate Grants Program. It was developed by a team coordinated by Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd, for the Museum of Chinese Australian History in Melbourne.

Analysis of the Chinese Australian Heritage Places Database

The database is the first attempt to bring together information about Chinese Australian places across the country. It is only as good as the information upon which it is based and at this stage, many gaps exist in that information. Of the 440 places in the database in April 2001, a number have no information beyond the site name and specific or general location.

The distribution of places by state and territory is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Database records by State/Territory (rounded to the nearest whole number)

	NT	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	Tas	SA	Total
No of records	48	52	195	15	74	52	4	440
% of database	11%	12%	44%	3%	17%	12%	1%	100%

The high proportion of Victorian records reflects both the systematic survey of mining sites in the state and the legacy of the Victoria's large Chinese population during and since the goldrushes. Other states, such as Queensland and NSW, are under-represented. This probably reflects the lack of systematic surveys and entries of Chinese Australian related places in heritage registers in those states.

The problem of clearly identifying Chinese mining remains is evident in the database. In a number of cases, the entry contains no information to verify the recorder's assumption that the place resulted from Chinese mining.

The database includes many buildings in 'Chinatowns' in capital cities and rural towns. The patchy information presented in these records shows the need for more intensive recording and assessment work particularly involving the appropriate Chinese Australian communities. The records relating to historical and architectural significance are the strongest, and those relating to social significance are the weakest. Many of the site-types identified in the toolkit component *A brief overview of Chinese life and heritage places in Australia* are as yet poorly represented or totally absent from the database.



The Chinese Australian Sites Database

The following database form can be used to format any additions or changes to the database.

The following sample place record based on that used for the *Chinese Australian Sites Database* should be used in collecting data where possible. This database can then be used to export multiple records to the online database.

Sample Place Record

(Please insert up-to-date Sample place record from Tracking the Dragon page B29)