



# CHINESE HERITAGE IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA INC

Volume 2: Issue 1

Jan 2016

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## President's Welcome

Happy New Year and welcome to the second newsletter for CHINA Inc. My how time flies! What a year 2015 has been for CHINA Inc. We have had another AGM, received an award, partnered with Dragon Tails and continued to promote north Australia's Chinese History and Heritage.

**AGM:** Every year CHINA Inc holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to elect key positions, committee members, register ordinary members and sit down to discuss events and projects for the following year. Our AGM was held on the 16th January 2015 in the air conditioned comfort of CAD-CAI rooms. Thank you CAD-CAI!!!

It was there that we dissolved our committee, re-elected a new one and got down to the business of finances, planning discussing the logo and forming a sub committee to guide the collation, editing and publication of the 2014 conference papers.

The AGM saw the re election of myself as president, Kevin Rains as secretary and Christine Grimwade as treasurer. Our thanks goes to the previous executive members including Julia Volkmar who stood down as treasurer for a hard earned break. Both Julia Volkmar and Sherry Du Toit were acknowledged as our first hon-

orary life members of CHINA Inc.

Gordon and Kevin put their hands up to be editors of the next CHINA Inc publication and a warm thank you to both of them. It is a large job which they have undertaken admirably with the help of Melissa Dunk.

**National Trust Awards:** I am pleased to announce that CHINA Inc was nominated and received an award from the National Trust in Queensland in recognition as a not-for-profit organization for our work in developing a Strategic Plan, hosting a conference, publishing a book and providing a newsletter to our members. We are very proud to have won a Silver Local History Award for our Chinese Heritage program 2014. It is satisfying to see that we are growing in profile yet still remain grass roots and "no fuss".

**Partnering:** As many of you know, CHINA Inc has grown from a modest beginning to a firmly established and self sustaining community based organisation. Along the way we have not only managed to meet our costs, but exceed our financial expectations to the extent that we are now able

to extend our vision into philanthropic ventures to encourage researchers and emerging scholars alike.

This year we expanded our scope from CHINA INC conference bursaries to partnering with other organisations. In particular we partnered with Dragon Tails for their *Dragon Tails: Jade Dragon in the Tropics* conference in July this year. Through the donation of \$1000 we were able to financially assist participation of five PhD & Masters students from various southern universities. This enabled them to attend the conference, participate as speakers, gain experience in effectively speaking and network with some of the leading national and international scholars of the Chinese Diaspora to Australia.

Partnering with other organisations and pursuing philanthropic opportunities forms part of our Strategic Plan objectives. I am proud to note that we are a social, ethical and community minded organisation. After all isn't that what not-for-profit means?

That's it from me. I hope you enjoy this second edition of the newsletter. And feel free to send in an item for inclusion. Cheers *Sandi Robb*

## SECRETARIAL SYNAPSES



*“I have since come to the conclusion that, while the frames may have originated from China, the pictures were probably painted locally...”*

### Chinese portrait painting – a forgotten sideline

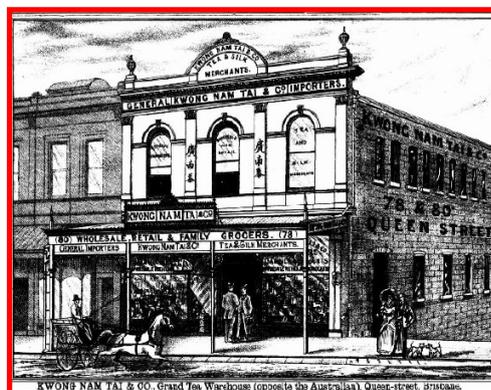
Some years ago while browsing an antique shop, I obtained this late 19<sup>th</sup> century oil painting. On the back someone had written that it was a portrait of Mr Scanlan, and that it had come from an old house in St Paul's Terrace, Brisbane. Some sleuthing at the Queensland State Archives confirmed that a Scanlan family was resident in this part of Brisbane in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The painting is unsigned and not what might be considered great art, but nonetheless historically very interesting. It has a certain flatness about it which suggests that the artist was not completely proficient in 3-D realistic modelling, and also that the portrait was probably painted from a photograph. The same person who had written the subject's name also wrote that the painting had been done in China. The ornate carved wood frame is certainly Chinese in style. A few years earlier I spotted two identically framed portraits, one of a man, the other of a woman, in another antique shop, and so my initial thought was that these pictures were souvenirs commissioned by wealthy European travellers visiting or passing through China. But I have since come to the conclusion that, while the frames may have originated from China, the pictures were probably painted locally, as I have found occasional reference in newspapers to Chinese firms in Brisbane offering the service of producing oil paintings from photographs.

One such firm was Kwong Nam Tai & Co. a well known Chinese firm based at 78, 80 and 138 Queen Street, Brisbane. There was also a branch store in Stanthorpe which was heavily involved in financing Chinese tin mining. The firm was a general importer, wholesaler and retailer, tea merchant, and a Queensland agent for the China Merchants' Insurance Company Ltd. The firm was run as a partnership between Sum Chick Tong and Leong Wah

Ting and was active in the 1880s. Chick Tong was a keen rider and horse racing enthusiast and had spent some time managing stores in Cooktown and on Palmer River goldfield. Kwong Nam Tai was among the most prominent Chinese businesses in Brisbane in this period, and in July 1887 Chick Tong received the Chinese Commissioners dispatched by the Chinese government to tour the Australian colonies. The Brisbane branch suffered financial losses in the flood of 1887 and the following year was among the Chinese firms targeted by anti-Chinese street rioters. These issues, combined with problems with the management of the Stanthorpe store and a downturn in trade on the eve of the world depression of the early 1890s, led to bankruptcy in October 1889. The firm's total debts were £16449 and total assets were worth £9262.

That my painting might be a physical connection to Kwong Nam Tai (or other contemporary Chinese firm) is fascinating. Of greater significance, though, is the link it provides to a hitherto little known Chinese occupation in Australia, professional artists and portrait painters. To my knowledge this is not an aspect of the Chinese diaspora that has been researched. It would be valuable to know where these artists learned their trade, how many were active in the Australian colonies, and how many more surviving examples of their work might be about.

Kevin Rains Secretary



KWONG NAM TAI & CO. Grand Tea Warehouse (opposite the Australasia) Queen-street, Brisbane.

## WHATS NEW: Profile and Projects

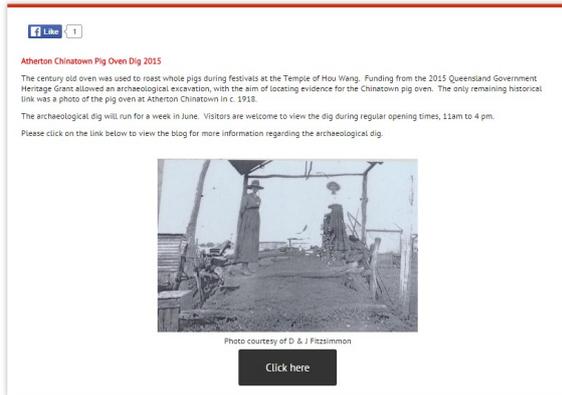
A large “thank you” from the executive team and committee goes to our technology guru and web page administrator, Melissa Dunk for once again doing a terrific job with keeping CHINA Inc up and refreshed on the Web over the last twelve months-well done Mel!

For those who don't know Mel, she is superwoman! Not only does she take care of the IT when we have CHINA Inc conferences and administers our web page, but she also works full time with a consulting group addressing heritage, environment and land management matters while undertaking her M. Phil at the University of Queensland looking at Chinese collections across FNQ. On top of that she is a passionate archaeologist, and somehow finds time to volunteer on other projects not only “hands on” but also by writing a blog as she goes!

The CHINA Inc Committee is made up of members who are involved in many Chinese history and heritage projects which relate to their field of expertise. Last year, Gordon Grimwade undertook a successful archaeological survey of the Atherton Chinatown site in his quest to find the elusive pig oven. Funded by the 2015 Queensland Government Heritage Grant, his successful archaeological dig was undertaken over a week in June. As part of that project Mel volunteered her time and recorded the dig in her Blog titled *Atherton Chinatown Pig oven Dig 2015*. A link to this project is up on the CHINA Inc website and readers can walk through each day of the dig without getting wet! CHINA Inc is a proud supporter of members projects as we provide this new interactive link with the new “Projects” button.

### Chinese Heritage in Northern Australia Inc

- Home
- Northern Links Conference
- Conferences
- Family History Research
- Newsletter
- Publications and Membership
- Projects
- Useful Links
- Contact Us



“check out the new links on our web page. We’ve added three more !



## Treasurer’s Report

Welcome to another year from the bean counter’s desk.

2015 has been a quiet year with regard to finances which is mainly based on book sales, membership and conferences. The sale of books has been slow but steady, leaving only 2012 and 2014 issues in stock. Due to increases in the post, postage for book orders will increase as of the 1st January 2016. Anyone wanting books and who is ordering through the website will see the new price which has been adjusted accordingly.

The publication of 2014 conference papers is well underway and will be ready for the 2016 conference (details back page). This next publication may see a small price increase but has yet to be confirmed.

During the year a couple of new members have joined CHINA Inc. and names have been passed on to the Secretary to be added to the membership register. The AGM scheduled for next month just prior to the conference, reminds all that it is that time of year when **Membership is due** to be paid by the end of February 2016. If you are unable to make the AGM and conference this year you can renew your membership using our banking direct details which are below or can be found online

Direct Deposit  
 BSB 633-000  
 Account No: 127016541  
 Reference: (Your name) Book title or membership  
**Annual Membership renewal \$5**

Christine Grimwade Treasurer

**Short @ Tweet!**

*The birds still  
sing on CHINA*

*INC's webpage*

*where past*

*tweets are*

*posted.*

## CONFERENCE ROUNDUP: **Dragon Tails: Jade Dragon in the Tropics**

Between 2-5 July 2015, Chinese Heritage In Northern Australia Inc (CHINA INC) partnered with Dragon Tails Inc. to bring to Cairns the Chinese Diaspora conference series Dragon Tails: *Jade Dragon in the Tropics*.

In the spirit of CHINA Inc's organization and in line with our Strategic Plan (see page 5) CHINA Inc played a lead role in the conference over four key areas. This included: key conference partner, sponsor for emerging young scholars; sponsor of opening ceremony and offer of logistical volunteer support.

Thank you everyone for jumping in and making the event a well oiled machine. Special mention goes to Melissa who provided technical support, Janet and Sherry who provided book sales support, Julia for providing her Hap Wah exhibition, Mary and Henry for taking the Cairns Chinatown Tour and Kevin for plugging holes when the dyke sprung a leak.

Jan and I partnered with Paul Macgregor as conference conveners in an organizational capacity to run things from the north. What a great collaborative team CHINA Inc is and it was a great excuse for CHINA Inc members to catch up and share their research and stories.

The Little Lion of the North was very lucky again to have the assistance of CADCAI whose Lion Dancing team provided a magnificent opening per-

formance to kick off the Official Welcome. This was followed by a Welcome to Country by honorary Doctor and Yirrganydji Elder George Skeene and the official opening speech presented by Cairns Regional Council Mayor, Cr Bob Manning.

Cr Manning provided a supportive welcoming speech which was followed by a Meet and Greet provided by a generous grant by the Mayor to CHINA Inc. to ensure refreshment drinks and delicious nibbles were available.

As a partner organization we were able to meaningfully assist emerging researchers to gain experience in presenting to an academic audience. CHINA Inc was able to generously provide a donation to Dragon Tails Inc which supported five post graduate students with a bursary of \$200 each to enable them to present their research at the conference, as well as undertake essential networking with fellow students, established academic researchers and community members alike.

The conference commenced with a Tropical Temple Tour to the Hou Wang temple in Atherton. Delegates were met by CHINA Inc committee member Gordon Grimwade and National Trust manager Rhonda Micola. Rhonda and Gordon provided an informative tour of the museum and temple with the added excitement of the recent archaeological dig.

After a quick picnic lunch at Henrietta Creek, Woolloonderron National Park the tour was welcomed by members of the Innisfail Lit Sung Gong temple. President Bill Sue Yek, secretary Jean and fellow temple patrons made everyone feel very welcome and provided an informative and enjoyable afternoon with delicious afternoon tea. Not a drop of rain was in sight!

The Dragon Tails conference series is the premiere Academic conference in Australia which covers the Chinese Diaspora and Overseas Chinese. It attracts a high level of quality researchers across the nation as well as international researchers. In its fourth year, it is held biennially in CHINA Inc's "off season"!

Over the three days presenters arrived from as far away as Rhode Island America, Darwin, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. The Key Note Speaker Professor Evelyn Hu Du Hart from Browns University, America, presented a stimulating overview of the Chinese Diaspora to the sugar plantations of Cuba. Her lively presentation sparked immediate discussion and comparisons were drawn with the Chinese participation in the sugar industry of North Queensland, family migration patterns and commercial enterprise. Broad topic areas were covered and a publication is anticipated in the next year or so.

Like all conferences, highlights included great conversations, project collaboration and sharing of ideas. The conference dinner was held at the Dragon Boat restaurant, and Yum Cha held at Café China.  
*Sandi*



## STRATEGIC PLAN

The AGM is an important time for CHINA Inc where everyone comes together to not only plan for the next conference and publication but to also discuss and plan organizational administration and key strategic directions for the future. The 2014 meeting was no exception with a major 'out of session' workshop facilitated by committee member Darryl Low Choy as he took us through a record breaking Strategic Planning session. This culminated in the first *Getting the Story Out.: Strategic Plan*, CHINA Inc .

The *Getting the Story Out.: Strategic Plan* provides a crucial document which links the key objectives outlined in the Model Rules (which govern our not for profit organization) to our strategic intent for the future. The process itself was great example of the range and depth of professional skills and expertise within CHINA Inc's membership and testament to the will of the committee to set up a firm base to move forward and grow into the future while maintaining "no fuss" values which we pride ourselves on.

In particular, a large "Thank-you" should be made to Darryl who not only kept us on time but provided the parameters for success while executing a deft approach in keeping us on track when it could have ended as an exercise in herding cats! "Well Done" to everyone involved.

CHINA Inc aims to contribute to "the important work of reporting on and disseminating the research into the involvement of early Chinese settlers with the development of northern Australia, largely during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (Wong Hoy & Rains, (2009: i). The association is a small group of researchers of Chinese Australian history and heritage whose main activities have been the biennial Rediscovered Past conferences. These conferences have brought together people from many disciplines, including history, archaeology, heritage management, law, literature, linguistics, art, and library science.

Another activity of CHINA Inc has been to publish selected articles based on papers presented at the conference. CHINA Inc also provides a link to people undertaking genealogical research on Chinese Australian families and from time to time the association has also provide comment on Chinese Australian heritage

issues within the State. The objectives of CHINA Inc, as lodged in its incorporation application, are:

1. To promote and advance Chinese Australian history and heritage;
2. To engage in research and study of relevance to Chinese Australian heritage; and
3. To collaborate, when appropriate, with similar organisations to develop and manage events of mutual support.

The strategic planning outcomes were developed through a rigorous consensus process resulting in a strategic direction to guide the organisation going forward. This is encapsulated in a Vision Statement. (See coloured margin.)

In pursuit of its Vision, CHINA Inc identified 16 Key Strategic areas. These include:

1. membership base
2. a Succession Plan
3. a Business Plan
4. the biennial conference
5. the (alternate) biennial community based workshop
6. CHINA Inc publications
7. links with other organisations
8. special links with Dragon Tails conferences
9. special links with the National Trust of Queensland
10. bursaries and student awards
11. a Communications and Engagement Plan
12. a Promotion and Awareness Plan
13. the CHINA Inc web site
14. special events
15. strategic partnerships
16. political advocacy

It is essential that CHINA Inc ensures that its ethos, essential values and principles are preserved to provide the foundations for its future endeavours and initiatives in the emerging Information Age. In response future organisational documents which will be developed include the Succession Plan and a Business Plan. Whilst there are a number of forces at play in shaping our future, what we need to keep in perspective is that:

***"The future is not just out there waiting for us...The future is there for us to shape"***



**Getting the Story Out.: a Strategic Plan for CHINA Inc 2014-2024**

March 2014

### **Mission Statement: Strategic Plan 2014**

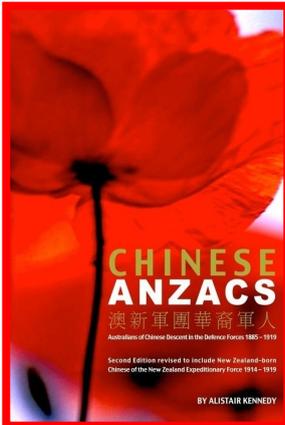
*The Chinese Heritage In Northern Australia (CHINA Inc) is a grass roots 'no fuss' organisation of researchers dedicated to the promotion and advancement of Chinese Australian history and heritage in Northern Australia.*

*It is committed to pursuing its goals through promotion and awareness raising that improves understanding and appreciation of the cultural diversity in settlement patterns, in particular the contribution of Chinese history and heritage to Australia, north of the Tropic of Capricorn.*

*Getting the Story Out.: Strategic Plan is available to members of CHINA Inc on request.*

## ALASTAIR KENNEDY —CHINESE ANZACS: Australians of Chinese Descent in the Australian Defence Forces 1885-1919

Revised to include New Zealand-born Chinese of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force 1914-1918



When World War One was declared, many young men pledged their lives to Australia and the values of freedom. Among them were young Australians of Chinese descent, first and second generations of British Subjects.

With the White Australia policy in place and anti Chinese antagonism engrained in the community Chinese diggers were initially, deemed 'Not white

enough" to serve their country of birth as they did not have sufficient European heritage.

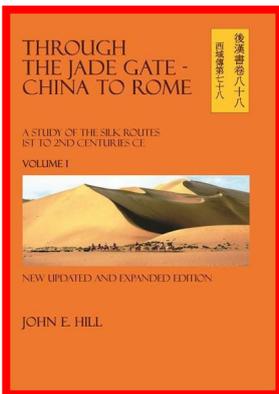
However as the war progressed attitudes changed leading to over two hundred Australians of Chinese descent enlisted across the nation. Of those forty never returned home.

Kennedy brings to light the stories and achievements

of the Chinese and New Zealand ANZACS in his revised and sought after book.

An electronic version of this publication can be purchased at the Chinese Museum in Melbourne contact [Curator@chinesemuseum.com.au](mailto:Curator@chinesemuseum.com.au) for \$30

A revised hardcopy can be obtained through the New Zealand Chinese Association in Wellington. This includes a number of NZ diggers and families.



## JOHN HILL: THROUGH THE JADE GATE: CHINA TO ROME

Through the Jade Gate - China to Rome new 2-Volume Edition is on sale now at a reduced price! The cost is US \$44.50 with free postage within the U.S. if both volumes are bought together from [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

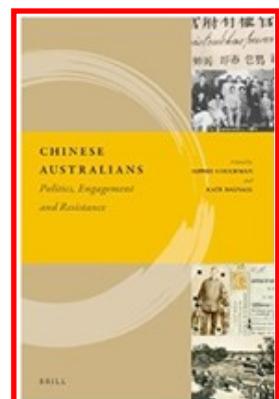
John Hill's second edition - of the annotated translation Hou Hanshu has been extensively revised, updated and enlarged.

Vol. I includes the original Chinese text, a detailed introduction, maps and detailed notes to the text. Volume II has 26 appendices which highlight extra fascinating information of special interest - such as Rhinoceroses, the Story of Sea-silk and the Significance and use of Skull Cups - and the comprehensive bibliography.

This updated definitive English translation of the com-

plete Chronicle on the Western Regions from the Hou Hanshu presents an intriguing picture of this little-known period of history.

It describes the origins of the Silk Routes using information collected from soldiers, merchants, envoys and spies. The text is based on the report to the Chinese Emperor An, circa 125 CE, by Ban Yong, his senior general in the Western Regions.



## BAGNALL & COUCHMAN ED: CHINESE AUSTRALIANS Politics, Engagement and Resistance

Couchman and Bagnall's 2015 edition of Chinese Australians offers a detailed account of Chinese Australians in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. With contributions from many leading researchers and academics in the contemporary Chinese Diaspora field.

Historians Bagnall and Couchman, bring together a collection of essays which

reflect the wide ranging influence of the Chinese Diaspora on Australian communities, towns, cities and colonies.

With a view firmly on active participation in the Australian colonial environment, Chinese individuals, families and kin relations engaged in many levels of civic duty and community participation against a backdrop of political and gov-

ernment interference.

Offering a valuable addition to Chinese Diaspora literature and readings, this book reflects aspects of history which is engaging to all.

Books can be purchased from Wordery for <http://wordery.com> for \$73.62

Or at Fishpond.com.au for discounted rate at \$68.97 at the time of this review.



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**CHINA  
INC**

## ☞ Call for Papers ☞

### Chinese Heritage In North Australia Incorporated (CHINA Inc.) The 6<sup>th</sup> “no fuss” Conference “Northern Links: Transplantation or Transnationalism?”

To be held in Townsville, North Queensland  
February 27 & 28 2016

*Its that time of year for Chinese history and heritage researchers, archaeologists, academics, museum and collection managers, family history researchers and genealogists to be invited to submit Abstracts for papers for the sixth biennial “no fuss” conference presented by CHINA INC.*

*Proposed papers may be broad based but should reflect on Chinese in northern Australia and the conference series theme “Northern Links: Transplanting and Transnationalism” with its underlying aim to demonstrate the connections between China, northern Australia, nation and the Pacific region.*

*A call for Abstracts has been extended until **15 January 2016**. Abstracts (300–500 words) should include the title of the proposed paper, author/s name, institution or affiliations (if any), contact details and a brief biography about each author. We encourage attendance and participation by emerging scholars for whom it is a great presentation opportunity and warmly welcome family historians and genealogists to whom we have dedicated a session on Chinese families and Chinese family history.*

*If you would like to present a paper or attend the conference, please email an expression of interest to: [china\\_nth@yahoo.com.au](mailto:china_nth@yahoo.com.au)*

*For general enquiries and correspondence you can also contact:*

**Secretary**  
Dr Kevin Rains  
5 Railway Street  
EAST IPSWICH QLD Australia 4305  
email: [krains@goldcoast.qld.gov.au](mailto:krains@goldcoast.qld.gov.au)

or

**President**  
Sandi Robb  
Email: [robbsandi@gmail.com](mailto:robbsandi@gmail.com)

*Further details will soon be published on the CHINA Inc website at:  
<http://chinainc.yolasite.com>*

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**Have you an announcement or wish to contribute to the next  
Newsletter?**

**Please email your ideas to the Editor of Newsletter  
[robbsandi@gmail.com](mailto:robbsandi@gmail.com)**

**Deadline: 1 July 2016**

**Thank you for your support  
from the Little Lion of the North**