

# **“Northern Links: Transplantation or Transnationalism?”**

**The Sixth “no fuss” Conference  
February 27-28, 2016.**

**Organised by  
Chinese Heritage in Northern Australia Inc.  
(CHINA Inc)**

## **Conference Program**



### **Venue:**

**Seagulls Resort Townsville  
74 The Esplanade, Belgian Gardens, Townsville**

### **Featuring**

**Pop-up book Stall: Bring your books to sell**

**Q150 Exhibition  
Chinese Historical Association of Queensland**

**Pre- Conference Tour**

**2X Speaker Bursaries**



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**FRIDAY, 26 February 2016**

**PRE-CONFERENCE TOUR**

**Ravenswood & Charters Towers:  
Chinese and Mining Mayhem Tour**

**\$45 pay as you get on**

**Itinerary**

8.30am - Depart Seagulls Resort and drive up to Ravenswood over the Mingela range  
10.30am - Arrive in Ravenswood where we will pick up a local guide  
10.30 - 11.00am - Tour around Ravenswood and onto "White Blow" before heading back  
head Ravenswood  
11- 12pm - 1 hr walking tour around Ravenswood including Chinese temple site, Mabel  
Mill and Ravenswood CBD  
12.00pm - Depart Ravenswood and head up to Charters Towers for lunch. approx 1.00pm  
1-1.45pm Lunch at Lissner Park for 3/4 hr before picking up the local guide  
1.45pm- 2.45pm - Tour around Charters Towers mining sites, former Chinatown area,  
Chinese market gardens, down to Millchester to former Temple site back up Queenton  
before up to  
"The World Lookout"  
2.45pm - Charters Towers CBD where ¾ hr free time walk around  
3.30pm Sharp - Depart Charters Towers to arrive in Townsville at 5.00pm

**6.00pm – 7.00pm**

**Seagulls Resort**  
( Rear Lawn Area)

**Official Welcome and Opening**

Nibbles and Lion Dance

Cash Bar Available



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<b>SATURDAY, 27 February 2016</b>		
8.30 am – 9.00 am	Registration:	Meet and Mix
9.00 am – 9.10 am	Welcome and introduction	<b>President's Welcome</b>
9.10 am – 9.45 am	Keynote address	<p><b>Dr Wendy Li</b></p> <p>Wendy's reflects on her personal journey as a female Australian-New Zealand-Chinese academic working in the research fields of migration, ageing and mental health. Employing three theories—Confucianism, transnationalism and volunteerism—the speech focuses on the theme that the past remains in the present and informs the future. Building upon three concepts—Chineseness, hybridity and community—that are related to Wendy's identity, the speech provides a discussion on the multiple self and how Wendy positions herself between the West and the East.</p>
9.45 am – 10.15am	<b>Morning tea.</b> 30 mins	Light Refreshments – tea /coffee
10.15am – 11.30am  20 mins each  5 mins at the end of each talk for questions to speakers	<p><b>Session One –</b> Transplantation and transnationalism</p> <p><b>Chair: Sandi Robb</b></p>	<p><b>Professor Darryl Low Choy</b> The Journey to New Gold Mountain: the personal experiences of Tam Gaun Sit and Wun Toong Yuan</p> <p><b>Natalie Fong</b> <i>'My ventures are not in one bottom trusted'</i>: Chinese merchants and transnational business and family networks in the Northern Territory, 1880-1920</p> <p><b>Dr Robert de Jong &amp; Johnny van Schalkwyk</b> <i>"Starving the white race of workers out of the country"</i>: Queensland responses to the use of indentured Chinese mine labour in South Africa, 1902-1910</p>
11.30 am – 11.35pm	<b>Short break</b>	5 min break stretch legs!



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11.35pm – 12.50pm	<p><b>Session Two –</b> Death and Devotion</p> <p><b>Chair: Juanita Kwok</b></p>	<p><b>Paul MacGregor</b> Temples of the North: Rich Contents and a Wealth of Meaning</p> <p><b>John Lee - Lit Sing Gung, Innisfail</b> History of Innisfail Temple Lit Sing Gung – A living Temple of all Religions</p> <p><b>Hilda Maclean</b> “<i>The Defunct Celestial</i>”: Chinese funerary practices in 19th century Northern Australia</p>
12.50 pm – 1.50 pm	<b>Self-catered lunch 1 hr</b>	Nearby cafes or bring you own lunch Informal lunch break
1.50 pm – 3.05 pm	<p><b>Session Three –</b> Community and Connections</p> <p><b>Chair: Jonathon Richards</b></p>	<p><b>Sandi Robb</b> “<i>For all time...</i>”: A brief look at Townsville’s Chinese community of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century</p> <p><b>Xiaolu Wu</b> The Impact of The war: The Chinese families of Darwin in the World War II</p> <p><b>Julia Volkmar</b> The Catholic Confectioner: entrepreneurial Andrew Leon of North Queensland</p>
3.05pm – 3.20 pm	<b>Short break. 20 mins</b>	<b>Afternoon tea</b> <b>Book launch: <i>China Inc Northern Links</i></b>
3.25 pm – 4.40 pm	<p><b>Session Four –</b> Truth and Tradition</p> <p><b>Chair: Natalie Fong</b></p>	<p><b>Michael Brumby</b> Dr William Lam Pan, Charters Towers and the Chinese Experience</p> <p><b>DR Kevin Rains, Melissa Dunk, Gordon Grimwade.</b> <b>Presented by Dr Kevin Rains</b> Opium use and the Chinese Diaspora in Far North Queensland</p> <p><b>Dr Janice Wegner</b> Chinese and weeds: myth, prejudice or reality?</p>
<p><b>5.30pm CHINA INC AGM all members invited</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dissolution of current committee and election of new executive and committee</li> </ul> <p><b>6.00pm – 6.50pm CHINA INC General Meeting #1: 2016</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive and committee members</li> </ul>		

**7.00 pm** - Conference dinner at the **Seagulls Restaurant**. The restaurant is licensed and the cost is **\$40** per head. **Booking and pre payment required by 12.00 noon 27 February 2016 to CHINA INC registration team.**

**Plated Entrée:**

Prawn Crackers\*  
 Steamed Chicken and Prawn Dim Sim  
 Golden Pork Wonton  
 Vegetarian Spring roll\*\*  
 Beef Satay\*

**Mains served Banquet style:**

Roast Duck with Soy Sauce\*  
 Crispy Pork belly with plum sauce\*  
 Salt and Pepper Squid  
 Vegetarian Hokkien Noodles\*\*  
 Beef and Black Bean Sauce\*  
 Asian Greens\* \*\*  
 Individual Steam Rice bowl\* \*\*

Gluten Free \*  
 Vegetarian\*\*

**Fresh Fruit Platters\* \*\***

**SUNDAY, 28 February 2016**

8.30 am – 9.00 am	Registration	
9.00 am – 10.15 am  20 mins each  5 mins at the end of each talk for questions to speakers	<b>Session Five</b> – Feeding the community  <b>Chair: Robert de Jong</b>	<b>Conor Johnstone</b> The Chinese Contribution to Agriculture in the Cairns District from 1870 to 1920  <b>Rosalie Shephard</b> Chinese in the Redlynch Valley from the 1880s to the 1920s  <b>Dr Jonathon Richards</b> <i>“No vegetables shall be stored or kept in a house occupied by Chinese”:</i> Infectious Disease Regulations in Queensland, 1904’
10.15 am – 10.25 am	Short break 10 mins	Tea /coffee
10.25 am – 11.25 pm	<b>Session Six:</b> Working with sources	<b>Dr Kevin Rains &amp; Sandi Robb</b> Chinese Australian Historical and Archaeological Materials in Queensland
11.25 - 12.00 pm	Wrap up	<b>Darryl Low Choy</b>



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**1.00pm – 2.00pm Not So Yum Cha \$20.00**  
**To be paid to Satay Mas on arrival.**

**Entrée Platter**

Salt & Pepper Tau Foo  
Fried Bean Skin Roll  
Veg Spring Roll

**Main Course**

King Prawns & Broccoli  
Chinese Mix Vegetables  
Crispy Skin Chicken  
Singapore Noodles  
Steak Oyster Sauce & Cashew nut  
Steam rice

**Satay Mas**

**234 Charters Towers Rd, Hermit Park QLD 4812**  
**Phone:(07) 4775 2633**  
Mob: 0438752633  
Email: [sataymas@hotmail.com](mailto:sataymas@hotmail.com)

**Pre conference “Conference Tour “– Ravenswood & Charters Towers Chinese and Mining Mayhem Tour–**  
**To be paid on entering the bus. Please have correct money.**

*Depart Seagulls 8.30 am Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February and head up to Ravenswood where sightseeing around the historic town will include the former Chinatown area, pig oven, White Blow and historic township. Bus then heads up to Charters Towers where a bus tour will take in former Chinatown area, market gardens, former Temple site and mining tour of “The World”. Arrive back in Townsville at 5.00pm before official Welcome and Opening at 6.00pm*

**\$45 per person**

**Please register intent early and register dietary requirements.**

*“No Fuss” conference registration to be paid for on the day at the conference venue. Receipts issued at conference.*

Whole conference	<b>AUD \$65.00</b>
27 Feb only – AUD \$40.00	28 Feb only – AUD \$25.00
Conference dinner and lunches are pre pay-as-you-go <b>CASH ONLY</b>	

Conference details can also be found on the CHINA Inc website:  
<http://www.chinainc.yolasite.com>



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## Abstracts and presenter details



### Key Note Speaker:

#### Dr Wendy Li

The speech starts with a review of Wendy's personal journey as a female Australian-New Zealand-Chinese academic working in the research fields of migration, ageing and mental health. Employing three theories—Confucianism, transnationalism and volunteerism—the speech focuses on the theme that the past remains in the present and informs the future. Building upon three concepts—Chineseness, hybridity and community—that are related to Wendy's identity, the speech provides a discussion on the multiple self and how Wendy positions herself between the West and the East.

*Dr Wendy Li is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology in College of Healthcare Sciences at James Cook University, Australia. Dr. Li is currently a Research Fellow of The Cairns Institute, JCU; a Research Associate of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery Education and Research Capacity Building; a Research Associate with School of Psychology at the University of Waikato, New Zealand; and a Senior Research Consultant for Verité (a US-based NGO) of the China Office. Dr. Li has an extensive research experience and led projects in Australia, New Zealand and China in areas including ageing, mental health, migration and refugee. Dr. Li is currently the President of the Townsville Chinese Club.*

### DAY 1:

#### SESSION 1: Transplantation and Transnationalism

#### Professor Darryl Low Choy

#### **The Journey to New Gold Mountain: the personal experiences of Tam Gaun Sit and Wun Toong Yuan**

*"The majority of Chinese immigrants to Australia during the gold rush were indentured or contract labourers. However, many made the voyage under the credit-ticket system managed by brokers and emigration agents. Only a small minority of Chinese people were able to pay for their own voyage and migrate to Australia free of debt." (National Museum of Australia - Australian gold rush, [www.nma.gov.au](http://www.nma.gov.au), accessed 7<sup>th</sup> Jan 2016). However, were there in fact other categories of immigrants who ventured to the Far North Queensland gold fields during the second half of the nineteenth century?*

Were their motives the same as other, larger numbers, of Chinese sojourners to these gold fields of Far North Queensland? Was it in search of a personal fortune from 'Xin Jin Shan' (the New Gold Mountain)? Were they also seeking to satisfy long held universal aspirations to: (1) buy land; (2) build house and (3) get married. Were there other factors that combined to provide them with the motivation to take the plunge to leave family, home and country and travel to an unknown land and to an unknown fate? What were their expectations? What was their understanding of this



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unknown land? Having made that decision, how did they make the journey to the New Gold Mountain?

This paper examines this sojourn experience through the eyes of the author's maternal family. It will utilise the experiences of the author's maternal great grand parents utilising both written and oral historical evidence. Drawing on family and official primary and secondary sources, the paper will seek to answer the questions posed.

**Darryl Low Choy** is Professor of Environmental and Landscape Planning in the School of Environment, Griffith University. He is currently researching values-led planning and indigenous landscape values; resilience and peri-urbanisation of the landscape; and climate change adaptation for human settlements. He chairs the Queensland State Government's Regional Landscape and Open Space Advisory Committee and is a member the CEOs Committee for Natural Resource Management. He is an advisor to the NSW Natural Resources Commission on planning for natural resource management. He is the National President for Toc H Australia.

Darryl Low Choy has also had a distinguished military career. Major General Darryl Low Choy commenced his military career as an Army cadet with the Innisfail State High School Cadet Unit. He enlisted in the Army Reserve as a Private in 1964 and rose to the rank of Major General before retiring in 2007 after 43 years of service. He is a qualified military engineer and he commanded the Queensland 7th Brigade from 1993 to 1996. From 1997 to 2004 he held the three most senior Reserve appointments in the Army and the Australian Defence Force.

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**Natalie Fong**  
Griffith University

### **'My ventures are not in one bottom trusted': Chinese merchants and transnational business and family networks in the Northern Territory, 1880-1920**

Early on in William Shakespeare's play, *The Merchant of Venice*, the Venetian merchant, Antonio, feels assured by the fact that his 'ventures are not in one bottom trusted' But through 'a series of unfortunate events', he loses everything, putting him at the mercy of his debtors. Fortunately for the Chinese merchants in the Northern Territory in the late 1800s to early 1900s, they had established a familial business model which, like Antonio's, divided the assets, but, unlike his, divided the risk. By appointing family members to manage businesses in the Territory, elsewhere in Australia and around southeast Asia, it was, as Dr Amanda Rasmussen notes, a clever business strategy primarily about '[maximizing] opportunities and [minimizing] risks' . This safety net helped secure their success. By the late 1800s, the Chinese had become numerically and economically dominant, making the Territory rather unique among the colonies. But with severe economic downturn and the lead up to Federation, this success caused resentment amongst some European businessmen.

Increasing attention is being given by historians to Chinese diasporic communities and their transnational familial business networks, and how these organisational principles may have been transplanted from China. Applying this approach to the history of the Chinese in the NT helps us understand how they became numerically, politically and economically dominant. Chinese merchants were able to capitalise on



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the long history of trade between the 'Top End' and southeast Asia, Darwin's accessibility from Hong Kong by steamer, and the continual rejection by Parliament of a poll tax for the NT to establish family business networks. In doing so, they drew on organisational structures from China.

As in China, the NT Chinese community was hierarchical, with wealthy merchant patriarchs at the apex who organised aspects such as labour, finance, sociocultural activities and philanthropy. They also instigated protests against discrimination. The merchants were not just concerned with their families' business interests. They also took seriously the responsibility of social concerns and representing the community, even though members did not necessarily come from the same clans or dialect groups. The community was not an isolated one. Thanks to the merchants' business networks, they were connected to other Chinese communities in Australia, southeast Asia and China. Professor Adam McKeown's use of the term 'astronaut' to describe the merchant headmen encapsulates their ability to operate independent, family-driven companies, maintaining mobility as they travelled across their business enterprises.

This paper will examine the organisation of the NT Chinese community and their transnational familial business networks, primarily through a case study of my great-grandfather and his business, Wing Wah Loong. This discussion will be located within wider national and international contexts, in order to consider the significance of this business model, and to highlight the need for further exploration of the connectedness of diasporic Chinese communities.

***Natalie Fong** is completing her MPhil in History at Griffith University, focusing on the roles played by Chinese merchants in organising the NT Chinese during the period 1880-1920. She is descended from two prominent NT Chinese patriarchs – Wing Wah Loong and Low Dep Chitt. Natalie is also a secondary English and History teacher, and currently the Head of English and ESL at Citipointe Christian College, Brisbane.*

[natfong@gmail.com](mailto:natfong@gmail.com)

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**Robert de Jong**

*Heritage Consultant, Townsville*

**Johnny van Schalkwyk**

*Senior Curator for Anthropology, Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History, Pretoria, South Africa*

**“Starving the white race of workers out of the country”: Queensland responses to the use of indentured Chinese mine labour in South Africa, 1902-1910**

At the advent of the 20th century South Africa was recovering from the effects of the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902. For the newly formed colonial government of the Transvaal, assisted by the British government and the mining companies, the resumption of production of the lucrative gold mines around Johannesburg was a priority in an effort to rebuild the economy. Local white (and black) labour shortages led to the importation of about 64,000 contracted mine workers from Mainland China in 1904. Strong anti-Chinese sentiment among the white population and the return of black and white labour eventually led to their repatriation. These events drew considerable attention in Queensland and other Australian states. The importation of “cheap” Chinese labour was felt as a sense of betrayal of Australia's support for Britain during the war, which was based on the assumption that (white) British



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interests and subjects in the former Boer republics had to be protected; for many Queenslanders it also vindicated their opposition against the Chinese immigrants in their own state, prophesying that the new Chinese sojourners in the Transvaal would also soon become settlers and would "...overrun the country". This presentation explores the use of indentured Chinese labour in the Johannesburg gold-mines and the responses of the media in Queensland.

**Robert C de Jong** (born in Haarlem, the Netherlands) immigrated with his parents to South Africa in 1962. He studied at the University of Pretoria and was conferred a PhD in Cultural History in 1990, with a thesis on the Dutch employees of the Netherlands South African Railway Company (1887-1909). He completed a Post-Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies in 1979. From 1983 till 2005 he was employed as a museum specialist by provincial and national government agencies in South Africa. Since 2005 he has been a full-time heritage practitioner (consultant), specialising in heritage impact studies, heritage management planning and heritage training with projects in South Africa and Mauritius, and has continued this career after emigrating to Townsville, Queensland, in 2011.

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## **SESSION 2: Death and Devotion**

**Paul MacGregor**

*Historian and Heritage Consultant*

### **Temples of the North: Rich Contents and a Wealth of Meaning**

The plaques, objects and decorations in the Chinese temples of the North of Australia contain a wealth of information about who founded and supported these institutions, what their values were, their links back to China and their connections across the global Chinese diaspora. This paper investigates and compares historical Chinese temples in Queensland and the Northern Territory - particularly in Cairns, Atherton, Innisfail, Brisbane and Darwin, where the temples, or temple artefact collections, still remain as part of their community heritage. The contents of demolished temples, such as in Brocks Creek NT, and Ravenswood Qld, will also be considered through surviving photographs. The Chinese text on plaques and artefacts in these temples contain worthy moral statements, names of donors (including shop and business names), date of erection, as well as manufacturer's name and city of location in Guangdong. Some of these names of donors and manufacturers can be matched up with names in local English and Chinese language historical documents. Altars, shrines, statues, incense burners, textile banners and a plethora of other decorative objects in these temples are rich with symbolic images - dragons, phoenixes and lions; the Eight Immortals and their characteristic possessions; the Buddhist Eight Treasures; as well as other symbols of wealth, abundance, longevity and good fortune. The choice of principal deity, the range of auxiliary deities, and the names of the temples, can contain clues as to why the temple was founded, and by whom. The suite of symbols chosen for use in a particular temple can be used to construct the key values that were important to the community who established and maintained that particular temple. The structure and layout of temples, as well as contents, can tell us of the range of secular purposes also carried out within their walls. By comparing the contents and texts in the temples of Australia's North, pictures can be recreated of the patterns of community development, of shared and contrasting values, of community alliances and divergences, and of cultural and historical changes - in China, across the diaspora, and in the Chinese communities of Australia.



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**Paul Macgregor** is an historian and heritage consultant who was curator of Melbourne's Chinese Museum from 1990 to 2005. He has published widely, organised many conferences and exhibitions, engaged in archaeological excavations and worked on several major research projects, all on Chinese Australian history. He is currently researching the material culture heritage of Chinese in Australia as part of a wider investigation of the nineteenth and early twentieth century co-evolution of European and Asian societies in Australasia, China, Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean. His most recent publications include: 'Chinese Political Values in Colonial Victoria: Lowe Kong Meng and the Legacy of the July 1880 Election', in Sophie Couchman and Kate Bagnall (eds), *Chinese Australians: Politics, Engagement and Resistance*, 2015, and 'Joss Houses of colonial Bendigo and Victoria' in Mike Butcher (ed), *An Angel by the Water: Essays in honour of Dennis Reginald O'Hoy*, 2015.

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**John Lee**

*Lit Sing Gung, Innisfail*

### **History of Innisfail Temple Lit Sing Gung – A living Temple of all Religions**

The area of Far North Queensland where the town of Innisfail is located has been home to the Mamu Indigenous people for millennia. European settlement in the district commenced in the year 1879 and the township of Geraldton was established. Chinese workers were utilized and in 1886 more than 30% of the non-indigenous population of Geraldton was Chinese.

Two Chinese Temples or Joss Houses have existed in Innisfail ("Geraldton" until 1913). The first was built of timber and iron in about 1886. It stood on the land just behind the present Commonwealth Bank Building at the corner of Edith and Owen Streets. Badly damaged by the catastrophic cyclone of 1918, it was repaired, and still standing in May of 1940, but demolished soon after. The present Temple at 10 Owen Street was built in 1940 with the proceeds of the sale of the land on which the first Temple stood. Most of the temple artefacts date from 1886. Originally brought from China covered in gold leaf, they represent deities from the Taoist, Confucian and Buddhist traditions. On appropriate days, candles and joss sticks are lit, and gifts of symbolic paper money and tea burned in the offering jar in the temple garden. This is believed to invoke the blessings of the Gods and Saints. To this day, the Innisfail Temple continues to be a place of worship for locals and visitors alike.

Until the 1960's the Lit Sing Gung was the home to the Ah Buks, elderly Chinese men who lived out their lives in exile in "New Gold Mountain" (Australia), supported by the local Chinese Community. Failing to make fortune and bring honour, they could not rejoin their families (in China) empty-handed. In 1940, twelve Ah Buks lived in rooms behind the old Temple. As young men, some of these would have been part of the Palmer River gold rushes which began in 1873. Other Chinese persons were more successful, becoming important merchants and becoming representatives of the Chinese community and of the wider community. Tom See Poy and Taam Sie were such persons. The first See Poy store was opened in 1882.

Many Chinese men died building the Mourilyan Mill to Harbour sugar tramway across crocodile-infested and fever-infested swamps. The Chinese established the banana industry, clearing the virgin rain-forest and tropical scrub. Europeans, who were allowed to own land, moved in to grow sugar-cane, when the short-term Chinese leases had to move on.



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The name of the Temple is as significant today as it was in the time of the first Temple. Successive Generations of Custodians have maintained an unbroken tradition that the Temple is meant it to be a place of worship and spiritual refreshment for anyone of any faith. With more than 50 spoken languages and diverse traditions of the 20,000 people of the district and many overseas visitors, the Temple has patrons every day of the year. The current Custodians have resolved that the tradition of the Innisfail Temple will continue in perpetuity.

***John Lee** is a Director of the Innisfail Chinese Community, His father William Lee and oldest brother Neville Lee have been instrumental in the continued functioning of the Innisfail Temple since 1940. John was born and raised in Innisfail in a Catholic School environment, initially at the Sacred Heart Convent School, then at the Marist Brothers Good Counsel College, and finally at the Innisfail State High School. John subsequently attended James Cook University (Townsville) where he graduated in Civil Engineering. John also has a Graduate Diploma of Business from University of New England (Armidale), and a Master of Business (Marketing) degree from Charles Sturt University (Bathurst). John's professional work as Engineer, Project Manager and Commercial Manager has been based predominantly in large Capital Cities in Australia and Overseas. In this capacity John has observed the breadth of the Chinese diaspora in remote areas of Nigeria in West Africa, and has encountered the homeland of many Melanesian Australians in Vanuatu. In 2015 John represented the state of New South Wales in Dragon Boat Racing, a sport which originated in China. John has recently (late 2015) returned to reside in Innisfail.*

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**Dr Hilda Maclean**

*Historian*

*University of Queensland*

**“The Defunct Celestial”: Chinese funerary practices in 19th century Northern Australia**

The horse-drawn hearse topped by black plumes is an enduring image of the Victorian era funeral even in 19th century rural Australia. However, occasionally the deceased being conveyed to the cemetery originated from China. Chinese funerals from this period ranged from being indistinguishable from the norms of the dominate British burial culture exported to Australia; to those which mirrored contemporary Chinese practices as far as the local conditions allowed. The funerals of the latter group were described in great detail by the newspapers of the day. To satisfy to curiosity of the observers, the scribes attending these funerals described, in as much detail as possible, the rituals performed in the obsequies and left behind a rich archival but previously unexploited resource. Where possible, these newspaper reports are compared with the undertakers' records to measure the funerary consumption at these often spectacular events. The funerals of the “defunct celestials” (a phrase often employed by contemporary newspapers) varied greatly according to the social standing of the deceased and mirrored the social classes of the communities where they lived, allowing direct comparison between Chinese and other funerals. Post-funerary rituals, such as grave visitation are also examined including the eventual repatriation of the remains to China. To pay for the funerals and exhumations, the Chinese organised themselves into friendly and burial societies, not unlike those which operated in the wider community.



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**Hilda Maclean PhD**, is an accredited historian, professional genealogist, and archival researcher encompassing over twenty years researching north and central Queensland family and pastoral histories. Since 2012, Hilda has been casually engaged by the University of Queensland Culture and Heritage Unit to conduct genealogical and historical research including Indigenous/Chinese families of the Gulf of Carpentaria while completing her PhD in colonial era burial practices. Hilda regularly presents workshops on genealogical and archival research methodology and has presented at international conferences on allied topics. She also acts as a research consultant for documentary television production companies.

[h.maclean@uq.edu.au](mailto:h.maclean@uq.edu.au)

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### **SESSION 3: Community and Connections**

**Sandi Robb**

*Historian, Researcher & Heritage Consultant*

**“For all time...”: A brief look at Townsville’s Chinese community of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century**

Of all the large 19<sup>th</sup> Century Chinese communities throughout North Queensland, Townsville remains an enigma. Never truly developing a “Chinatown” and with no Joss house constructed, Townsville’s Chinese community can claim some of the earliest Chinese settlers to north Queensland yet very little is known about it. This paper seeks to reveal some of the lost history and present some theories as to why the community was different to other major centres. It is a work in progress and presents research undertaken a part of a Townsville City Council/ RADF supported grant program which remains ongoing.

**Sandi Robb** is a historian and cultural heritage consultant with a historical research/ cultural heritage consultancy business which specializes in Chinese family history , cultural management and interpretive projects. As a PhD candidate at James Cook University, she is researching and writing her thesis Chinese Families in North Queensland. Sandi has presented at various conferences on Chinese Australian History , published articles in books and journals and published her first book Cairns Chinatown: A Heritage Study. An active committee member of the Townsville Chinese Club, she is also a founding member and current president of the Chinese committed to researching and promoting Queensland’s Chinese history and cultural heritage

[robbsandi@gmail.com](mailto:robbsandi@gmail.com)



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**Xiaolu Wu**

*University of Queensland*

### **The Impact of The war: The Chinese families of Darwin in the World War II**

After arriving in Darwin, the Chinese people still kept the traditional Chinese family culture and structure. There were two spaces: the space in the family and the space outside family. The war pulled the young people out from their traditional family space and reshaped them. Some young Chinese people joined the Australia Army during the war. The impact of the war went beyond the battlefield, and it influenced on the families, too. The paper will explore the changes of Chinese families during the war and the experience of young Chinese people in the army.

*Xiaolu Wu is a PhD Candidate in the School of History, Philosophy, Religion And Classics at the University of Queensland. She Graduated from Chongqing University in 2011 and obtained a Master's Degree in Journalism. Her PhD research focuses on urban culture and everyday life in wartime Chongqing (1937--- 1945). Xiaolu is also interested in the history of Chinese Miners in Australia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and she is a member of the Australia Mining History Association.*

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**Julia Volkmar**

*Artist & Researcher*

### **The Catholic Confectioner: entrepreneurial Andrew Leon of North Queensland**

Andrew Leon (c1841-1920), North Queensland pioneer settler from Zhongshan, China, contributed fundamentally to the early development of Cairns, Queensland, through the substantial Chinese community as well as their European counterparts. Leon is best known as executive of the Hap Wah enterprise (1878-1886) that initiated the Cairns cane sugar industry and in his multi-faceted leadership role in the Cairns Chinese community into the 1890s. Current research brings to light archival documents that illuminate his leadership qualities as well as the largely unexplored extent of his entrepreneurial efforts. His letters, property acquisitions, litigation and interpretation in court, his family with wife Mary Piggott – all provide invaluable insights into this remarkable son of China and naturalized British subject in the Colony of Queensland. While much is still unknown, this overview should enlighten and perhaps surprise. Leon has global links to Guangdong Province in China, Hong Kong, Cuba, Hawaii and Ireland as well as Bowen, Townsville, Ravenswood, Millchester, Cooktown, Cairns, Port Douglas, Innisfail, the Atherton Tablelands and capital cities in other states.

*Julia Volkmar began research on the Hap Wah enterprise and its spokesman manager Andrew Leon under the mentorship of the late Chinese Australian historian Kevin Wong Hoy in 2010. The purpose of this community history project was to install a memorial plaque honouring the Hap Wah venture that kick-started the sugar industry in the Cairns region in 1882. Over 100 individuals and organizations provided information that brought this goal to fruition in January 2013. Research continues as the Hap Wah & Andrew Leon Historical Project, compiling essential, long-buried information. Julia has a Master of Public Policy from Charles Darwin University and is a member of the Cairns Historical Society, Cairns and District Chinese Association Inc and Chinese Heritage in Northern Australia Inc.*

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## **SESSION 4: Truth and Traditions**

**Dr Janice Wegner**

*Historian, Senior Lecturer  
James Cook University*

### **Chinese and weeds: myth, prejudice or reality?**

The Chinese undoubtedly introduced a number of plants to the north. They were also associated with a number of introduced weeds in tropical Queensland, such as 'Chinee apple' and 'Chinese burr'. In most cases the links were false, the product of myth or prejudice, or the evidence for them is tenuous. This paper considers why these associations were made and which might have some historical evidence for reality.

*Janice Wegner is a senior lecturer in History at the Cairns Campus of JCU. Her research areas are mining history and the history of introduced weeds.*

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**Michael Brumby:**

*Coordinator of the Charters Towers Archives*

### **Dr William Lam Pan, Charters Towers and the Chinese Experience**

This paper will deal with the life and work of Dr William Lam Pan. Lam Pan was well respected for his community leadership, his medical work and his ability to define the Chinese experience in what was once North Queensland's largest town, Charters Towers.

*Michael Brumby is a community historian who was born, raised and educated in Townsville. He fell in love with Charters Towers when he transferred there as a teacher in 1978. When Michael returned with a family in 1994, he took to researching and writing about the town. Michael left teaching in 2009 to concentrate on running the Charters Towers Archives and of course do more writing. He writes a regular column for the local Northern Miner on all aspects of Charters Towers history. Black to Gold which was published in 2014 was Michael's twentieth publication. Michael still finds Charters Towers intriguing.*

[michael.brumby@gmail.com](mailto:michael.brumby@gmail.com)

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**Dr Kevin Rains, Melissa Dunk and Gordon Grimwade.**

**Presented by Dr Kevin Rains**

*Archaeologist, Researcher & Heritage professional*

### **Opium use and the Chinese Diaspora in Far North Queensland**

From the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century, large numbers of Chinese immigrants came to Far North Queensland (FNQ), and they brought with them the practice of opium consumption. This generated hysteria and prejudice from the European populace and was used as a basis for persecution. Analysis of the historical archaeological data does support the notion of FNQ being a major area of opium importation and consumption, however the impacts and roles of the drug were



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not simplistic. It is likely that the majority of Chinese users were able to moderate their consumption so that it did not become a destructive addiction. Furthermore, FNQ was a social landscape of complex interactions that utilised opium within local Chinese communities and between them and other groups. Opium was incorporated into relations of sociality, recreation, exploitation, gender, class, and commerce. Its distribution and consumption involved both Chinese and non-Chinese, and in particular became an element within close ties generated between Chinese and Aboriginal communities. The Chinese drew on Aboriginal people as workers for land clearing, gardening and other industries, as well as sexual companions, while Aboriginal people, dispossessed from their traditional modes of subsistence, turned to the Chinese as resource providers and employers. These ties were a matter of concern for authorities eager to protect indigenous people from what were classed as undesirable outside influences, and European employers competing for access to indigenous labour. Eventually growing antipathy towards opium use, both within and outside Chinese communities, combined with a heightened national feeling of excluding non-Europeans from the country, led to tough restrictions on, and subsequent decline of, recreational opium use by the Chinese.

*Dr Kevin Rains is an archaeologist, heritage manager and history researcher. He completed a PhD in archaeology from the University of Queensland in 2005, and his thesis examined the Chinese social landscape of early Cooktown. He has worked since 2001 in the general field of heritage management and archaeological research for consultancy firms and state and local government. He has attended and presented papers at various conferences on Chinese Australian history and heritage, and is a founding member of the research association, Chinese Heritage in Northern Australia Inc.*

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## **DAY 2:**

### **SESSION 5: Feeding the Community**

**Conor Johnstone**

*James Cook University*

#### **The Chinese Contribution to Agriculture in the Cairns District from 1870 to 1920**

The Chinese contribution to agriculture in the Cairns district from 1876 to 1920 was highly significant, especially in the sugar and banana industries. They came from the declining Palmer and Hodgkinson goldfields to commence agriculture around the newly founded township of Cairns. The initial clearing of the land for cultivation was mainly conducted by the Chinese, who used a variety of traditional methods. As the Chinese were not able to own land unless naturalised, Chinese farmers typically leased small plots of land from European owners, with the exception of the Hap Wah Plantation, established in 1878 by local businessman Andrew Leon and his Chinese business associates, who established the sugar industry in the Far North. Market gardeners grew an extensive assortment of fruit and vegetables which was vital to the sustenance of early settlement in the region. Besides sugar, the local Chinese population was heavily involved in the cultivation and export of bananas, especially around Geraldton (now Innisfail) and the Johnstone River, where they established canals with locks to get their bananas to the ships. Regrettably, the local Chinese population was greatly reduced as a result of the post-Federation legislation designed to limit the arrival of Chinese immigrants and restrict the productive



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activities of those who remained in Australia. As part of the 'White Australia' policies, these legislative changes had devastated the Chinese as a distinct group in agriculture in the Cairns district by 1920. However, some were able to find ways around those restrictions.

**Conor Johnson** is a Bachelor of Arts (Political Science and History) student at James Cook University. He currently studies at JCU's Cairns campus and lives in a rural area outside the city of Cairns. Having been raised in an area known for its abundant fields of sugar cane and bananas, Conor's interest in the development of these local agricultural industries encouraged him to investigate the once prominent Chinese presence in the region

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**Rosalie Shephard**  
James Cook University

### **Chinese in the Redlynch Valley from the 1880s to the 1920s**

The history of Chinese in the Cairns district has often referred to the early Chinese people as 'pioneers of agriculture', through acknowledgment of their efforts in the cultivation of labour intensive crops such as vegetables, maize, rice and bananas since settlement in 1876. However, the contribution of these people has generally remained an anonymous and faceless collection of Chinese gardeners who cultivated land along the Barron River and Freshwater Creek with bananas and citrus orchards.

Investigation into the early agriculture in the Redlynch Valley has assisted in uncovering some Chinese identities through the process of sifting through names and dates to explain their presence in the district prior to enactment of the "White Australia Policy" in 1901. Further government legislation also sought to exclude Chinese from agriculture and ownership of land in order to attain a 'white' tropical north.

This paper will focus on several case studies of Chinese in the Redlynch Valley to identify them as individuals and explain their presence because of, or despite, government legislation that sought to exclude Chinese as settlers in the tropical north region of Queensland.

**Rosalie Shephard** is a PhD candidate at James Cook University where she is currently researching and writing her thesis *Cultural Landscape of White Settlement in the wet tropics: A case study of the Redlynch Valley*. Rosalie is a member of the Cairns Historical Society where she works part time as a volunteer research assistant. She has an interest in local history and has written several historical bulletins for the Society.

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**Dr Jonathon Richards**

*Adjunct Research Fellow  
The University of Queensland*

**“No vegetables shall be stored or kept in a house occupied by Chinese”:  
Infectious Disease Regulations in Queensland, 1904’**

In 1904, a draft regulation prohibiting the use of urine ‘or any other liquid manure’ was prepared for the Home Secretary by government officials. The document was headed ‘Regulations for the guidance of Chinese Gardeners’ and published in English and Chinese. However, the reference to Chinese gardeners was later deleted and the regulations were proclaimed - state-wide - to apply to all Gardeners. Why were Chinese mentioned at all?

This episode serves as a good illustration of racial perceptions in Australia, particularly the claim - aired in local newspapers - that Chinese were ‘inherently dirty’. The ban on the use of human manure and urine in vegetable-growing was part of the emerging awareness of public health, especially with regard to the transmission of disease. A closer examination of the background to this event reveals a society - obsessed with race and cleanliness - but also determined to blame “others” rather than change hygiene practices.

*Dr Jonathan Richards, currently an adjunct Research Fellow at The University of Queensland, is an experienced professional archive specialist, with an ongoing interest in records relating to poverty, violence and death. After much time spent researching frontier violence in Australia, he has widened his focus to consider Chinese lives and deaths in Queensland, recognising the significance of these individuals and this community for a more complete understanding of Australian history.*

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**SESSION 6: Working with Sources**

**Dr Kevin Rains  
Sandi Robb**

**Chinese Australian Historical and Archaeological Materials for Queensland**

This session is a composite presentation between Kevin Rains and Sandi Robb who draw upon their knowledge to explore and provide insight into the range and depth of sources available in local, State and National repositories accessible to the public. This is a flexible conference session and questions from the floor are encouraged during the presentation.

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## Additional Information which might be handy!

### What is a NO FUSS conference?

If you have never been to a “No fuss” conference before, here is a little background and heads up as to what it’s all about.

Chinese Heritage In North Australia (CHINA Inc) is a not for profit organization formed in 2005 by Kevin Wong Hoy, Kevin Rains and Sandi Robb with the generous assistance and support by parents, partners and friends, to meet the legislative requirements to form an incorporated organisation. With the key focus to research, write and promote Chinese History and Heritage across north Australia, it was envisioned that CHINA Inc would host a regular small “no fuss” conference where the efforts of anyone who is interested in Chinese history and heritage could share their research in a welcoming, equal and affordable environment. Since 2006 CHINA Inc has hosted four Biennial “No Fuss” conferences with 2016 being the sixth. From humble beginnings, each conference has built upon the last, and we are proud to say CHINA Inc has grown into an active and vocal “Little Lion” of the north.

CHINA Inc is committed to maintaining a “No Fuss” conference, where the costs are kept low, everyone is equal in the room, no matter what their background, and research experience is shared, acknowledged and enjoyed by all. To keep the conference welcoming and affordable there are a few things which need to be conveyed to attendees so that we can continue to maintain the low conference fees, continue to attract a wide and diverse audience, and encourage participation in an open and friendly forum. This means goodie bags and conference snacks are kept to a minimum, accommodation and meals are self-catered and people, papers and presentations remain the main event.

It is important to note that coffee/ tea will be provided all day for both days, just in case you are flagging. Morning tea will be offered on the first day only with a light snack of biscuits available in the break in the afternoon. Tea and coffee will be available on the second day but because it is only a half day there will be no break for morning tea. Our traditional Yum Cha lunch will be held at Ming’s Place at the Domain and held at 1.00pm. Taxis will be ordered to take diners there should it be required. Lunch is not provided on the first day and attendees have to organize their own lunch. The resort offers a la carte luncheons, a bakery is across the road and a café and fish and chipper is a short walk away. There is a lovely park on the foreshore area to relax and refresh. That way, conference attendees can explore, make choices according to personal budget and dietary requirements and stretch their legs before the afternoon session.

The Conference Dinner at the end of the first day it is a very popular event. It is also traditional on the second day for CHINA Inc to mark the official end of the conference with a shared Yum Cha. The price is set to the menus and conference attendees wishing to go to either or both events are required to register and prepay for the Conference Dinner and Yum Cha on the day of registration. Both are very popular meal sharing events and bookings and pre-payment are required by 11.00am on both days so that the restaurants can be notified of numbers. There is no obligation to go to either meal, but based on past years a fun time is had by all. Please note CHINA Inc does not have Eftpos facility, so Cash is the preferred method. We are trying to keep it as simple and “no fuss” as possible! Receipts are issued at the time of registration/ booking.

CHINA Inc supports local businesses and acknowledges the generous assistance of Seagulls Resort Townsville, The Townsville Chinese Club Inc, The Townsville Kung



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Fu Academy, Ravenswood Museum, Charters Towers Regional Council, and Townsville City Council..

The 2016 CHINA Inc conference will support a “pop up” book store where researchers, academics, and writers of family history can bring along their books and sell them at the conference. Those wishing to take advantage of this must attend their own stall area and provide a written receipt to the purchaser at point of sale.

As this is a “no fuss” conference attendees are encouraged to volunteer if they see a gap which needs to be filled. CHINA Inc welcomes the generous assistance from the attendees, to make the conference a truly shared experience!

Membership of CHINA Inc can be taken out at the time of registration. Membership is a modest \$5.00 and new members are welcome to attend the second 2016 CHINA Inc meeting on Monday at 10.00am at the Townsville’s City Library. This enables CHINA Inc to remain dedicated to the promotion of Chinese Heritage across North Australia, to host a biennial conference, and continue to mature as the “Little Lion of the North”.

**How to get there:**

Seagulls Resort & Conference Centre, Rose Bay, is only a short taxi ride from the Townsville Airport. Entrance to the resort and Conference centre is via Primrose Street and off street parking is available at the rear of the resort via Marshall Street.

Taxi Services are available from the airport, the venue and CBD district and there is a bus from the Airport as well as Hire Car facilities if you are staying a few days to take advantage of what Townsville has to offer. Magnetic Island is only a ferry away and Ingham is one hours drive to the North and the Burdekin and Ayr the same to the South.



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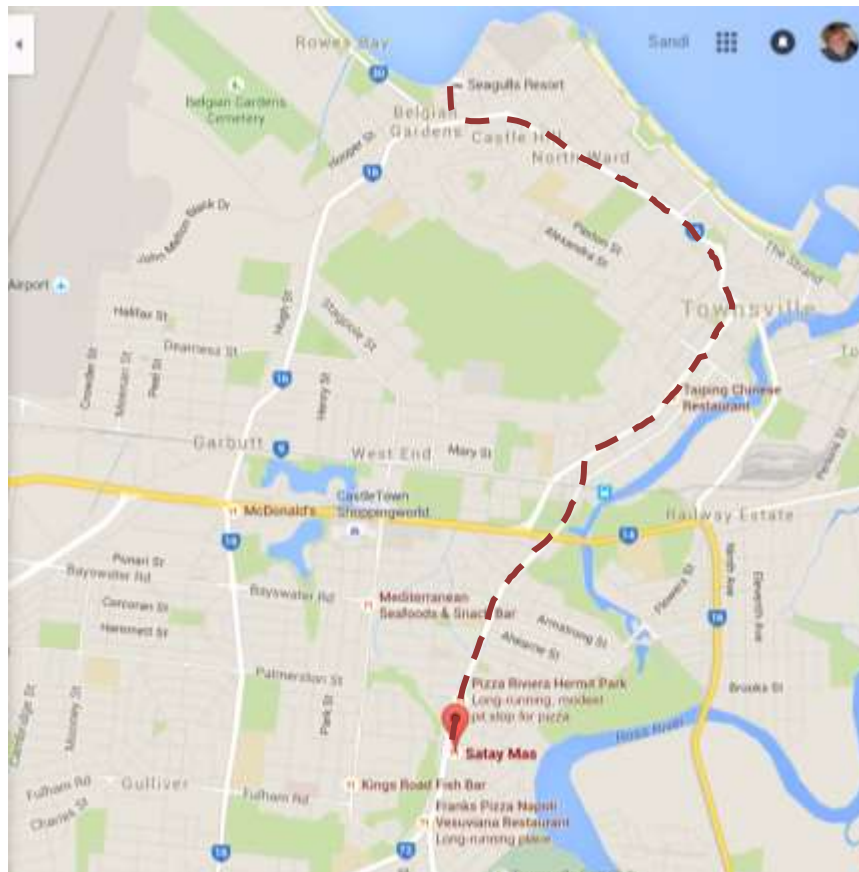


### Self Serve Lunch Places

- Seagulls Restaurant
- Bakery
- Fuel Café
- Fish and Chip shop



### No So Yum Cha Directions to Satay Mas



**Where to stay:**

Townsville is a popular tourist destination and there is a range of accommodation options available to suit any budget of the conference attendees around the inner and outer City area. This includes a range of budget back packer style accommodation to boutique B & B up to 5 Star Resort Style “deluxe have a holiday as you go and live it up” type of accommodation!

The conference venue Seagulls Resort has kindly offered a standard room rate for \$110 for room only or for \$130 including Buffet Breakfast. (max 2 persons per room). Additional foldaway beds for children can be discussed and provided at the time of booking. For enquiries contact *Nathan Robinson, Resort Manager*, from the details below. Make sure you mention that you are part of the CHINA Inc conference!

STANDARD ROOM \$110 ROOM ONLY
STANDARD ROOM \$130 with CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
GARDEN ROOM \$120 ROOM ONLY
GARDEN ROOM \$140 with CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST



Seagulls Resort  
74 The Esplanade, Belgian Gardens, Townsville, North Queensland

Reservations and general enquiries:  
Email: resort@seagulls.com.au  
Phone: +61 7 4721 3111

**Townsville and Region:**

Cairns and surrounding far north region offers a wonderful location to host the CHINA INC biennial conference. It is not only a beautiful part of Australia, but offer an incredibly diverse arrange of accessible attractions both natural and historical in which to explore. There are many places in which to book a tour and should you stay at the Seagulls Resort they are happy to assist.

Further Sites to wet your whistle are:

<http://www.townsvillenorthqueensland.com.au/>

<http://www.queensland.com/explore-queensland/townsville-north-queensland>

<http://www.bbfq.com.au/townsvilletouristinformation.php>

<http://ttcci.org.au/>

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**Enjoy!**



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