

# CHINESE HERITAGE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

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## Chinese Australian History and Heritage Exhibition

An important exhibition on Chinese Australians was officially launched on Saturday by the Lord Mayor of Parramatta Councillor John Chedid. Other speakers included Dr Geoff Lee MP for Parramatta, curator Gay Hendriksen, author Jack Brook and president of the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia Daphne Lowe Kelley.

Titled *From Canton with Courage: Australian Chinese in Parramatta and Beyond*, the exhibition is a culmination of a partnership between the Parramatta Heritage Centre, Jack Brook and the regional and wider Sydney Australian Chinese Community, with support and advice from the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia.

Chinese Australians in Parramatta range from eight-generation Australians to arrivals in recent years. The 19<sup>th</sup> century stories are from the research of Jack Brook and are recorded in his recently published book *From Canton with Courage: Parramatta and Beyond, Chinese Arrivals 1800-1900*. Other stories are from research carried out by the Parramatta Heritage Centre and from Chinese Australian family contributions in Parramatta and beyond.

Parramatta Lord Mayor John Chedid acknowledged the contributions made by many generations of Chinese and the importance of today's Chinese Australian community.

Geoff Lee's family has a long history with Parramatta, some of his ancestors came from England on the Second Fleet and others came from southern China about 140 years ago. His Chinese great-grandfather had a market garden on the banks of Duck Creek at Guildford and provided food for many of his neighbours during the Depression.

In congratulating Jack Brook and the Parramatta Heritage Centre, Daphne Lowe Kelley said:

“The Chinese have a long history in Australia and all endeavours to record, publicise and interpret this information are welcome as part of the history of a multicultural Australia.

The story of Chinese settlement in Australia has many twists, turns and chapters and we are indebted to Jack Brook for his exhaustive efforts in researching and documenting the stories of the Chinese in this local area during the 1800s or 19<sup>th</sup> century.

These were difficult times and many of the early Chinese, our forebears, were subjected to legislated discrimination and outright racism. Their lives were not easy, families were divided and many led lonely lives.

We acknowledge the changes in individual and community attitudes which have made Australia into the more egalitarian and harmonious society today.”

The exhibition will be on show to 11 March 2012 at the Parramatta Heritage Centre, 346A Church Street, Parramatta. Tel: 8839 3311. Some of the sections have been translated into Chinese.

Further Information:

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