

Editors' Introduction

The 2019 issue of *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies* focuses on new work in the history and heritage of Australia's Chinese communities, particularly those in rural Australia. The issue is dedicated to the memory of Canberra historian and archaeologist Dr Barry McGowan OAM, who passed away in September 2018. Barry McGowan was a unique scholar, whose research in the field (literally) led him to champion a form of community history that focused on the agency of Chinese migrants and their descendants, and highlighted their contributions to Australian life, in particular through mining and agriculture.

The articles in this issue are by researchers who knew Barry McGowan well and worked closely with him, ranging from those early in their careers as historians to those already retired from academic positions. In each of their articles we can see the broad and enduring impact of Barry's research, both in his findings and his methodological approaches.

Juanita Kwok's article examines the Chinese community in the country town of Wellington, New South Wales, while Janis Wilton and Sophie Couchman separately explore histories and memories of Chinese temples at Tingha and Emmaville in New South Wales, and at South Melbourne in Victoria. Much of Barry McGowan's work considered the economic contributions of Chinese in colonial Australia, and the next three articles consider Chinese merchants and the colonial economy – there are biographies of Dr George On Lee (by Michelle Bootcov) and merchant Sun Kum Tiy (by Darryl Low Choy), and a careful study by Nicholas Guoth and Paul Macgregor of the movement of Chinese gold off the colonial goldfields. The final three articles shift the geographical focus to Queensland, with a study by Sandi Robb of Chinese women's migration, an exploration of Chinese overland migration in northeast Australia by Gordon Grimwade, and a detailed examination by Ron Zhu and Neville Ritchie of the authenticity of a hoard of Chinese cash allegedly found on the Palmer Goldfield. To finish, John Fitzgerald and Sophie Couchman separately reflect on the challenges of writing and communicating the complexities of Chinese-Australian history in the early twenty-first century.

The issue begins with tributes to Barry McGowan written by two of his collaborators, Li Tana and Michael Pearson, as well as a list of Barry's published work. Barry published on topics as diverse as mining heritage, Australian ghost towns, Welsh mining communities in southern New South Wales, and French–Australian relations in the South Pacific. Overwhelmingly, though, Barry McGowan will be remembered for his passionate exploration of the history of Chinese communities in rural and regional Australia, particularly in south-eastern New South Wales and the Riverina. We trust he would be pleased to see this passion continue in the work of others published in this issue of *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies*.

Kate Bagnall and Sophie Couchman
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