HOME AGAIN: DEVELOPING HISTORICAL LINKS BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND CHINA

GUANGDONG CHINA
Research Visit November 2006

Gordon Grimwade
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Executive Summary

Preliminary research in Guandong Province, China was undertaken in November 2006. It was made possible with assistance from the Brisbane Consulate of the Peoples’ Republic of China, the Guangdong Provincial Government (Overseas Chinese Affairs Office), the Australia China Council and the National Trust of Queensland.

It provided opportunities to:

• establish the potential for cooperative development of displays on Overseas Chinese that could mutually assist with trade and tourism opportunities in the longer term;
• assess and acquire information in respect of comparative temple studies and their associated material culture;
• gain a far understanding of contemporary and historical settings;
• acquire sufficient information to produce photographic displays and technical papers.
• to enhance international linkages in studies being undertaken into the Chinese diaspora – particularly in archaeological and historical issues.

Displays in two museums (the Commercial Museum in Zhongshan and the Overseas Chinese Museum in Jiangmen) and in the proposed museum at the headquarters of the OCAO in Guangzhou offer fascinating opportunities for improved co-operation between China and Australia (there are also opportunities to assist New Zealand Chinese to gain recognition).

Future directions should focus on (in order of priority):

• Contributing to the planning and development of display content for the OCAO Museum in Guangzhou. It offers considerable opportunity to showcase the contribution of Overseas Chinese to the development of Australasia (which is under represented elsewhere in Overseas Chinese displays in Guangdong). It would strengthen the socio-economic linkages between China, Australia and New Zealand. At present North America dominates any presentations in Guangdong Province on the Overseas Chinese.
• Provide photographs and cataloguing data in respect of the Hou Wang Temple collection to OCAO officers for more comprehensive evaluation. It would be well worth this being complemented by photographs from the Lit Sung Goong, Cairns, and Innisfail collections. Initial assessment suggests that Queensland has some collections of exceptional significance, both in intactness and quality.
• The Cultural Revolution took a toll in many parts of China but the Chinese are resourceful and many antique artefacts have now reappeared in once desecrated temples. While the quantity of material that has been restored is commendable it constantly strengthens the view that the north Australian collections are highly significant.
• Provide small, comprehensive collections and data to the Overseas Chinese Museum, Jiangmen and to the Commercial Museum, Zhongshan to reflect the material culture and the history of Overseas Chinese in north Australia.
• Consider more comprehensive research into village temples and a comparison with temples in western areas. Research should focus on structural form, modifications of form to suit local circumstances, source of artefacts and the diversity of them.
• Undertake comprehensive recording of the various crafts associated with temples such as woodcarving, drum making, metal casting and ceramics. Some of these crafts are at risk as China modernizes and would also add fascinating dimensions to displays that might travel between China and the western world. Production of a joint China/ Australia documentary film/s would provide an invaluable record of these ‘at risk’ crafts.
• Further research into the origins of the stone pig ovens associated with many Chinese settlements in Australia and New Zealand is justified. The best examples appear to be in north Queensland and Tasmania. There were no examples still evident at sites visited in China. One informant suggested they may still exist in some parts of rural Guangdong. This aspect of research into Overseas Chinese has been focused on settlements in Australia, New Zealand and the USA in the past. Research in China could shed more light on regional differences and technology transfer among migrant groups.
• Genealogical research opportunities exist for families seeking to trace their Chinese ancestry. The OCAO is willing to assist descendants in this regard, but needs details of village name, clan names, preferably in Chinese characters due to the bastardizations that are often evident.
This report provides details of a visit to Guangdong Province, People’s Republic of China from 4 to 13 November 2006 by Gordon Grimwade. The visit was undertaken as a guest of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO), Guangdong Provincial Government. The visit was supported by an Australia China Council grant and the National Trust of Queensland.

The aim was to establish the opportunities for greater collaborative research leading to wide ranging publications and exhibitions. This initiative of the National Trust of Queensland is part of a larger project: ‘Home Again’ focusing on developing the links between Australia and China. It was developed to value add to Queensland’s heritage tourism potential and to aid in strengthening bilateral cultural and economic relationships.

This report provides a brief background to the project, a diary, describes the various venues inspected and meetings undertaken as a prelude to providing recommendations on which to build.

**BACKGROUND**

The National Trust of Queensland owns both property and collections associated with early Chinese settlement in Queensland. In recognition of the significance of this the Trust has adopted a major research initiative, ‘Home Again: developing the historical links between Australia and China’. Australian based research has progressed opportunistically for some time. The offer to visit China was a major step in expanding the research base. It arose from a visit by Madam Liu Fei, (then) the Consul and Head of Post of the People’s Republic of China, Brisbane, to open Queensland Heritage Week 2006 and to launch ‘Along the Silk Road’, a photographic exhibition by Gordon Grimwade. The venue was the Hou Wang Temple and Museum, Atherton. Madam Liu was impressed by the conservation and presentation of the temple, (built 1903, restored 2000) with its rare examples of Chinese temple woodcarvings, and the Trust’s overall work of promoting Chinese influences on Australia’s development.

Gordon Grimwade has undertaken research into the archaeology and material culture of the Overseas Chinese in Australia for the past twenty years. He has published widely on this topic and on related management issues. Development of the first stage of a national database of Chinese Australian sites, in conjunction with Austral Archaeology, was undertaken in the 1990s. Gordon was project manager and concept planner for the $100,000 Croydon Chinatown, north Queensland heritage walk in 2000. He was subsequently engaged as Project Manager/ Interpretation Planner for the $1,300,000 conservation and presentation of the Hou Wang Temple, Atherton, Queensland.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research visit was made possible by the generous assistance of the Australia China Council (travel expenses); the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (interpreter/guide, driver and programme); the National Trust of Queensland (secretarial and part accommodation costs) and the Consul and staff of the Consulate of the Peoples’ Republic of China, Brisbane, Queensland. The assistance provided by these organizations facilitated a study tour par excellence.

During the visit to Guangdong many people gave freely of their time making me most welcome and provided opportunity for many interesting conversations. Their warm hearted willingness to give of their time is reflected in the number of people with whom I have subsequently been in direct contact over mutual interests in temples and Chinese migration.

In addition to the many staff of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office in regional Guangdong I am particularly grateful to my interpreter/guides Rocky Shi Jin and Lily.

I met with so many individuals and small groups that to name everyone would be a challenge of some magnitude. They include Wu Xing Ci, James Zheng, Mr Wang, Seto Liang, Yu Jin Lian, Jacky Deng, Rachael Yu, Chen, Huang Yu Bing, Fan Zhi Hao, Wu Yimin, Cherry, He De Bin, Huang Ying Qing, Deng Jian Qiang, Si Tu Hao, Chen Jing Shu, Mei Wei Qang, Zhai Yan Yan, Susan Huang, Selia Jinhua Tan, Tang Zhen Quan and Huang Miao Zhang. To those I have omitted I apologise. Their assistance is no less appreciated.

Fig 2 Interior of the Hou Wang Temple, Atherton with the temple ding in the foreground. It was returned to the temple, in 2006, after an absence of 70 or more years.
DIARY

4 November
Arrive Guangzhou – Meeting with officials of OCAO and welcome dinner.

5 November
Visit to Museum of Tomb of Southern Yue King, Western Han Dynasty. Discussions with Curator re: Heritage Tourism. Visit Chen Clan Academy and Temple of Sea God.

6 November
Drove to Foshan. Visits to Ancestor Temple (Zu Miao) paper-cut workshop, porcelain factory, traditional woodcraft workshop. Drove to Zhongshan.

7 November
Meeting with Messrs Ma Yan Ghoo, Yang Wen Bao, Guo Zhou Cheung whose grandfathers worked in Australia. Visits to Wing On house; Sincere Trading store founders’ house; Wu Hou Temple, Cao Bin village; Loong Dhu village temple and a modern furniture factory.

8 November

9 November
Visit Chen Ba Shrine and fan palm interpretive centre. Drive to Kaiping. Visit Diao Lou villages.

10 November
Visit library donated by See Tow/ Si Tu clan; home of Mr Si Tu Hao a famous brush maker and a second library. Returned to Guangzhou.

11 November
Follow up visit to Museum of Tomb of Southern Yue King, Western Han Dynasty, Guangzhou

12 November
Free Time

13 November
Debriefing meeting with Officers of the OCAO and inspection of the Overseas Chinese museum venue at OCAO Guangzhou. Return to Australia.

Fig 3 Boating on a Zhongshan recreational lake.

Fig 4 Waterfront restaurant near Zhongshan.
**MEETINGS**

**Initial OCAO meeting**

Meeting focused on aims of the NTQ project and visit to Guangdong. In attendance were:

- Mr Wu Xing Li, Deputy Inspector, OCAO;
- Mr James Zheng, Deputy Secretary-General, Director of Culture Exchange Department;
- Mr Huang Miao Zhing, leading archaeologist and specialist on Chinese religious practices.

The project was discussed in some detail. Mr Huang suggested the collections in Far North Queensland are well worth preserving as they are rare even in China now.

Mr Huang suggested he should be provided copies of quality photographs and/or a video to further assess their value prior to a possible site visit.

The need to exchange letters of co-operation was considered desirable.

**TOMB OF SOUTHERN YUE KING MUSEUM**

Deputy Curator Mr Tang Zhen Quan discussed issues presently relating to cultural heritage tourism and adverse impacts on heritage values without good management. Gordon Grimwade offered to provide several relevant texts to Mr Tang on this subject.

**FOSHAN FOLK ART RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

Possibility of re-sale of some paper cuts in the Hou Wang Temple Museum shop were discussed. Agreed that ceramics re-sale could be difficult due to freight costs.

**MEETING WITH ZHONGSHAN RESIDENTS**

Time constraints allowed for only brief discussion on effects of migration by their grandparents. Some technology transfer was noted; for example, hand saw and metal hammers were introduced to the district by their grandfathers when they returned from Australia. Some grammar adaptation also noted: ‘passport’ became ‘passaport’; ‘tomato’ became ‘somato’; ‘stick’ (walking stick) used directly and ‘stamp’ for postage stamp is widely used. Significant architectural style modifications were also generally commented upon (and proven in subsequent site visits).

The possibilities for developing an exhibition, for technical papers and general interest publications was noted.

**ZHONGSHAN COMMERCIAL MUSEUM**

Useful discussions were initiated about promoting Australian Overseas Chinese activities.

The museum would welcome stories of commerce by Chinese Australians. They would be open to discussion about joint or visiting exhibitions.

**PROFESSOR MEI, WEI UNIVERSITY**

A meeting was held at the Museum of Overseas Chinese, Jiangmen. A notable bias towards American Chinese currently exists in the exhibits. This is primarily because of research and contacts conducted by the museum development team in the past.

Professor Mei indicated they would welcome Australian content.

We discussed the value of a possible China/Australia/USA/NZ conference on Overseas Chinese. Prof Mei expressed some interest but had reservations in respect of linguistic problems. It was considered worth pursuing in long term.

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Fig 6 Discussions in the exhibition halls of the Overseas Chinese Museum, Jiangmen. Left to right: Gordon Grimwade, Interpreter Shi Jin, Liaison officer Susan Huang and Professor Mei, Wei University.
DEBRIEFING MEETING WITH OCAO

On 13 November a meeting was held with Mr Wu, Deputy Inspector, and Mr Wang, Section Head, Museum Development. Mr Grimwade thanked OCAO staff for their considerable efforts in arranging a comprehensive research program and looked forward to continuing co-operation in the future. Key Issues for future co-operation included:

1 Mr Grimwade will provide photographs of temple artefacts for expert evaluation in China. If their probable high significance is confirmed it is likely the OCAO will send a delegation for more detailed appraisal.

2 The opportunity for more thorough temple documentation in China would be more justified. It would provide additional information on temple forms and content. It was noted many Chinese temples have been re-established in recent years and contain modern as well as exceptionally old artefacts and design elements.

3 Some of the traditional crafts are worthy of detailed recording as they inevitably run the risk of being lost through mechanization. While craft demonstrations could be an attraction, it was agreed that such a project would be costly and would mean significant production time would be lost. Mr Grimwade suggested the possibility of making a TV program. It was considered a worthwhile possibility.

4 The OCAO is able to assist with genealogical research. To do so, it needs the correct name (in Chinese characters preferably) and a village name. They are willing to assist enquirers directly.

5 The possibility of a wide range of museum displays was discussed. There is, in fact, sufficient material from this visit to mount a primarily pictorial display. This could cover aspects of contemporary Guangdong life. The possibility of collaboration with some museums, such as the Overseas Chinese Museum in Jiangmen and Zhongshan's Commercial Museum, was noted. The former has a substantially American orientation and lacks much about Australian Chinese and has nothing about New Zealand Chinese. The museum could be interested in a small archaeological collection to add to its resources.

6 Staff of the OCAO noted they had a large exhibition area presently vacant and are needing display material. This would be available if an Australian presentation of suitable standard could be provided. Mr Grimwade subsequently inspected the gallery area proposed for exhibitions. The OCAO will provide floor plan details. The area offered is substantial (total area is around 5000m2 but includes entry and stairways). It could be readily developed with large format photographs, several free standing panels and display cases. It is a significant opportunity for Australia to showcase the contribution of its Chinese migrant community and, significantly, in the Provincial capital in the Head Office of the major Overseas Chinese service agency.

The cultural and economic advantages to be derived from such a resource are significant for Australia. The opportunity to showcase a quality display of Overseas Chinese would also be of considerable benefit to the OCAO.

7 The issue of pig ovens raised at the initial meeting was brought up by Mr Wang who stated the ovens were once used but have since fallen into disuse in favour of rotisserie style barbecues. The remaining examples in Australia, although of an archaeological nature, are therefore, items of considerable significance.

8 The meeting concluded in the belief that the visit was of considerable value to all parties and could result in a wide range of cultural projects which in turn can only have valuable socio-economic outcomes.
SITE VISITS

MUSEUM OF TOMB OF SOUTHERN YUE KING, WESTERN HAN DYNASTY.
This site museum opened in 1989 after archaeological excavations in 1986. Its impressive construction into the hill slopes is a credit to museum architecture. Displays focus on the excavations, but provide for several temporary display halls. It is frequently visited by Western tourists. It would be worth exploring the possibilities of a small traveling exhibition going to Australia and a nationally based exhibition of Australian Overseas Chinese being placed in one of the temporary display galleries.

CHEN CLAN ACADEMY
This outstanding facility survived major damage during the Cultural Revolution. It was used as a printing factory. Unfortunately, however, the ancestral tablets were destroyed. The complex timber, stone and ceramic depictions of various historical and mythological events provide rare insights into regional craftsmanship.

The staff was effusive in their interest in the Australian project and provided useful information on traditional religious practices, particularly those related to ancestor veneration.

Glass paintings in the Academy were of particular interest but proved quite different from those in the Lit Sung Goong collection of the Cairns and District Chinese Association Inc (CADCAI).

TEMPLE OF NANHAI (SEA GOD)
The present temple was rebuilt in 1986 following damage during the Cultural Revolution. It is seen as the focal point of the start of what is increasingly being promoted as the Ocean Silk Road – the shipping routes that once provided invaluable trading opportunities between China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and East Africa.
The original temple dates from 594AD. This was the site of the southern temple ordered by the Emperor. This is the only one of the four temples still extant. During the Tang dynasty (618-907AD) this site, then near the docks, was exceptionally busy as a trading port.

It has featured in a joint project with the Swedish government. A replica of the trading vessel “Gotenburg” recently visited the former port of Canton (now Zhongshan).

This temple exemplifies the significant efforts made by the Chinese government to re-establish aspects of its heritage damaged or destroyed during the Cultural Revolution.

Magnificent, but albeit modern, carvings and castings, have been integrated into a high quality modern facility. The few original steles have been incorporated into the Temple environs.

Temples of this recent period have sought to seamlessly integrate the pre-Cultural Revolution period with the modern period. In many cases this has been achieved to a remarkable standard. Notwithstanding this, the Temple of the Sea God indicates how significant the Queensland material is at the international level.

ANCESTRAL TEMPLE (ZU MIAO), FOSHAN

The Ancestral Temple was reputedly started in the reign of Yuanfeng (1078 – 1085). It burnt down in the mid 14th century and rebuilt in 1372AD. The current Miao extends over 3500 square metres (Hu Zhengshi 1992:7).

It is an excellent and rare example of temple art and architecture, and is one of a handful of temples that seems to have largely managed to avoid damage during the Cultural Revolution.
FOSHAN FOLK ART RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Institute encourages wide ranging craft development for cultural and economic purposes. Paper cuts, ceramics and traditional woodcarving are actively pursued at various locations in the city.

Paper cuts are undertaken in a publicly accessible workplace and the results are available for purchase.

A ceramic workshop produces a wide range of artefacts principally for the local market. The workmanship is of an exceptionally high standard.

In an unprepossessing workshop a small team of craft people produce a range of carved furnishings on a ‘made to order’ basis. The process remains much as it did over a century ago. A paper pattern is fixed to the timber surface and the surface progressively carved using a range of chisels. The subsequent sanding and lacquering shows only minimal signs of modern processes (for example, commercial lacquers are now applied). Metal work attachments (locks and handles etc) are also hand produced from pattern making to final presentation.

Paper cuts have the potential for resale in the Hou Wang Temple shop, which has already amply proven the public interest in quality Chinese items of this nature. In addition a demonstration by a paper-cutting artist could be an invaluable draw card at a special event.

Fig 13  Intricate paper cuts are hand cut by skilled artisans.

Fig 14  Workers at a ceramics factory in Foshan prepare a new cast.

The more elaborate ceramics, primarily by virtue of their delicate nature, would be difficult to display in Australia. Nonetheless, selected items presented together with quality photographs could certainly stimulate interest.

Similarly, a woodcarving demonstration could elicit considerable interest at venues within Australia. The cost effectiveness is the biggest hurdle, as it would need the artisan involved to cease productive work for the period of the travel. Later discussion focused on the idea of a television documentary being undertaken.

Photographs taken during the visit already provides opportunity to establish photographic display of Foshan craft works.

OVERSEAS CHINESE DWELLINGS, ZHONGSHAN

There are many examples of successful Overseas Chinese building significant structures in their home villages. Wing On Store and Sincere Trading Co. are two commercial ventures with Australian connections, that resulted in impressive structures incorporating distinctly Chinese and Western design features.
Following centuries old skills a complex wood carving takes shape. Using diverse chisels, a mallet and a keen eye for accuracy.

These buildings are largely empty but used for special events as needed. It may be possible to provide displays that could detail the history of these entrepreneurial migrants to Australia. It would certainly help overcome the relatively low exposure Chinese Australians are given in major venues.

Fig 15

Wuhan Temple, Cao Bin Village
This magnificent little temple in Cao Bin contains evidence on the stone stele within of donations for its development coming from Australia. One donor was identified as probably being from Townsville.

Fig 16

It, like most other temples suffered from depredations in the mid twentieth century. For example, ceramic tiled panels have replaced what may have been painted or sculpted panels on the external, front walls. Within the temple are excellent examples of painted areas in similar style to that found on the Atherton Temple walls.

Fig 17

Wah Tor, to whom there is also obscure reference in the Atherton ‘chop’ or seal, is represented at this temple. The brick walls are reminiscent of the painted bricks on the front of the Hou Wang Temple.

Fig 18

Temples of this style reflect those in north Queensland: modest structures with similar basic layouts. The distinctive wall murals emulate those from Atherton and were clearly locally produced. Further research is highly likely to establish closer connections between the two locations.

LOONG DHU TEMPLE
This temple of similar style to that at Cao Bin and is also in an area from which North Queensland migrants originated. Its form and content is of particular relevance to further comparative research.

A more comprehensive visit and documentation would be invaluable to any study of evolutionary and adaptive process in religious practices.
COMMERCIAL CULTURE MUSEUM, ZHONGSHAN
This museum provides some impressive dioramas depicting 19th century Chinese commerce. It is complimented by a gallery of photo-panels focused on commercial and religious memorabilia. Unfortunately, to date, collection policies have focused on the Americas and only indirectly (with the exception of Wing On and The Sincere Trading Co.) on Australasia.

The curator was enthusiastic about receiving some relevant material from Australia and New Zealand to include in future displays.

OVERSEAS CHINESE MUSEUM, JIANGMEN
This impressive and spacious modern museum building is purpose built to house a museum of Overseas Chinese achievement. It primarily uses documents and photographs to recount the history of Chinese economic activity overseas.

Again there is a strong American focus. Dominica, Turkey, Greece, Canada and the USA are disproportionately represented in comparison to Australia, while New Zealand is conspicuous by its absence, and yet it too had a major Chinese contingent during its gold rushes.

It was agreed that there should be some effort made jointly to correct the current imbalance with Australasian representation.

The provision of a selection of Australian documentary material and some artefacts was considered an appropriate first step. Options to assist Chinese scholars to visit Australia were also discussed.
SHRINE OF CHEN BAI SHA
This shrine, dedicated to the Ming dynasty philosopher Chen Bai Sha, incorporates a complex timber arch of intersecting timber beams in which no nails were used. It was built by the Emperor to venerate the memory of Chen Bai Sha's mother. The shrine buildings, similar in many respects to more standard temples, are well kept and ornate.

As with the temples at Ciao Bao and Loong Dhu, further research and documentation would be worthwhile. There is underlying evidence in the form and content of these sites that link them with north Queensland temples and, thus, with local villages.

Figs 23 Entrance to the Shrine of Chen Bai Sha.

Fig 25 The elaborate entrance arch presented by the Emperor in memory of Chen Bai Sha's mother.

FAN PALM EXHIBITION CENTRE, XINHUI
Fan palms have been central to the manufacture of diverse crafts and clothing in southern China for many centuries. The leaves of *Licuala chinensis* have been used in the production of conical hats, rain capes, roof thatching and fans.

An exceptionally high standard display centre has been developed in Xinhui, regarded as the centre of fan palm production. The displays use a combination of mannequins, palm fronds and interpretive panels to explain the production process. A small group of highly skilled artisans complement the displays with demonstrations of processing, weaving and decoration.

The centre is a good source of quality souvenir items and can produce capes and hats for display purposes. Craftspeople employed at the Centre could complement a travelling exhibition of palm leaf harvesting and utilization.

Figs 24 Temple furniture similar in style to that once used in the Lit Sung Goong, Cairns.

Fig 26 Section of the diorama on palm processing.
DIAOLOU, KAIPING

The Diaolou are fortified multi-storey dwellings built around the 1920’s by Overseas Chinese. The buildings provided a strong defensive residency for villages under attack from robbers. Axe and hammer marks scar several large timber doors. ‘Swallows nest’ parapets on the top floor enabled defenders to fire down onto the robbers during attack. Several villages, all still fully functional agricultural producers, have been nominated to the World Heritage List. The outcome of the nomination is expected in 2007.

The buildings are excellent examples of the syncretic nature of Chinese culture and architecture. Strong European and Islamic architectural styles are evident in the form of the buildings, but the interiors maintain strong Chinese characteristics. Steep narrow staircases and metal shuttered windows provide access to dwelling areas not dissimilar to those to be found in smaller rural towns of the 21st century.

It would be interesting to further research the source of funding for these structures. Did, for example, any come from Australian or New Zealand migrants?
SEE TOW/SI TU CLAN VILLAGE
Two village libraries were visited to demonstrate the benevolence of family members who left for overseas destinations. Several of the See Tow/Si Tu clan moved to Australia and contributed to developing improved cultural services for the community.

Although somewhat spartan by Australian standards the multi-storey brick buildings clearly demonstrate the contribution made by migrant workers to their homelands.

A highlight of the visit was the warm welcome. At one library a welcoming panel had been especially prepared. The fact ‘Australia’ had been confused with ‘Austria’ in the translation did nothing to dampen the kindness of the local committee.

Spontaneity also came to the fore when an invitation was extended to visit the home of Si Tu Hao, a nationally regarded calligraphy brush maker, now in his eighties. Mr and Mrs Si Tu (senior) and their son demonstrated the selection of natural fibres used in their brushes which are used by several major ceramic producers. The presentation of two calligraphy brushes, engraved with my name in Chinese, culminated this visit.

The visit proved useful in interacting with villages with strong links to Overseas Chinese and the benefits they have provided to their hometowns. More detailed investigations within Australia could provide similar additional links with the possibility for a fascinating TV documentary.
CONCLUSION
The opportunity to undertake this preliminary research visit was made possible by the combined efforts of the Guangdong Provincial Government of the Peoples Republic of China, through the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, the Australia China Council and the National Trust of Queensland.

It provided invaluable information in respect of comparative temple studies and their associated material culture. The visit provided a far better understanding of contemporary and historical settings. There is sufficient information to hand to produce photographic displays and some technical papers.

It strengthened the need to enhance international linkages in studies being undertaken into the Chinese diaspora – particularly in archaeological and historical issues. While linguistic differences can be a challenge it would significantly advance the discipline.

Displays in two museums (the Commercial Museum in Zhongshan and the Overseas Chinese Museum in Jiangmen) and in the proposed museum at the headquarters of the OCAO in Guangzhou offer fascinating opportunities for improved co-operation between China and Australia (there are also opportunities to assist New Zealand Chinese to gain recognition).

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• Provide small, comprehensive collections and data to the Overseas Chinese Museum, Jiangmen and to the Commercial Museum, Zhongshan that adequately reflect the material culture and the history of Overseas Chinese in north Australia.

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suggested they may still exist in some parts of rural Guangdong. This aspect of research into Overseas Chinese has been focused on settlements in Australia, New Zealand and the USA in the past. Research in China could shed more light on regional differences and technology transfer among migrant groups.

- Genealogical research opportunities exist for families seeking to trace their Chinese ancestry. The OCAO is willing to assist descendants in this regard, but needs certain specific data to initiate meaningful enquiries. This includes village name and clan names, preferably in Chinese characters not English due to the bastardizations that are often evident.

REFERENCES


Fig 35 Display area available for development at OCAO head office, Guangzhou.