

A selection of sources relating to early Chinese restaurant and other businesses, businessmen and employees in Melbourne.

Dr. Barbara Nichol, 2016

Commonwealth government records held in the National archives of Australia

The National Archives of Australia holds many business and personal files of correspondence relating to negotiations with the Commonwealth government regarding settlement in Australia over time, and the introduction of temporary workers from China. Many of these files are held in Melbourne and some have been digitised. Search the National Archives of Australia [website](#) under the name of the business or individual you are interested in.

Guides to National archives sources

- Blake, Celia, *Collections in Melbourne: a Guide to Commonwealth Government Records*. Canberra: National Archives of Australia, 2003.
- Jones, Paul. *Chinese-Australian Journeys: Records on Travel, Migration and Settlement, 1860-1975*. Canberra: National Archives of Australia, 2005.

National Archives, Canberra

- A1, 1912/17759, The Federated Furnishing Trade Societies of Australia. – Employment of Chinese in the furnishing trade.
- A2998, 1951/2130, Chinese Merchants and Students – Conditions governing entry into Australia, [1911-1926].
- A6980, S250309, Investigation of Chinese Market Gardens, Cafes and other Establishments, [1954-1966].
- A8911, 5, Japanese Espionage – Chinese Restaurants, [1943-1945]

National Archives, Melbourne

- B937, Name Index Cards for Case Files, Alphabetical Series, 1 January 1947 to 31 December 1980. Name index for a very large series of case files, including Asian case files. To check if the archive holds a card for the person you are researching, complete the box 'Ask us a question' on the National Archives of Australia website

State government records

- **Victoria Government Gazette (1851-)**
The official government publication for the purposes of notifying the public about company registrations, bankruptcies and other official requirements of business. Search the gazette [index](#) online.

Public Records Office of Victoria

- Town Clerk's Correspondence Files:
VPRS 3181, Town Clerk's Correspondence Files, 1842-1909
VPRS 3183, Town Clerk's Correspondence Files, 1910-1982
VPRS 8904, Subject Index to Town Clerk's Correspondence Files, 1913-1983
VPRS 8907, Town Clerk's Register of Inwards Correspondence, 1910-1983

In these files you will find the reports of businesses handling food by Officers of Health and their inspectors. Inspection tours cover food manufacturers, hotels, dining rooms and restaurants. They also contain correspondence from the general public about concerns regarding public health. Check the series description and suggested search strategy on the PROV website at www.prov.vic.gov.au

- VPRS 933/R0 and R1, Defunct Business Firms, 1899-1954. [Category 'R' – under review]. This series comprises many units of unindexed files. Note: A 'defunct' business may have continued in business, but under another name, so requiring re-registration.
- VPRS 8268/P1, Index to Defunct Company, Association and Business Name Registrations, 1864-1990 [Microfiche].

National Library of Australia

Oral history interviews

- Diana Giese Collection. The collection includes Diana's oral history interviews produced between 1992-2003 and papers relating to her research for her publications *Beyond Chinatown* and *Astronauts, lost souls and dragons*.
- Post-war Chinese Australians and Chinese Australian Oral History Partnership. Project, jointly conducted by the Australia-China Council, the Museum of Chinese Australian History, Melbourne, and the National Library of Australia, Canberra. The collection comprises 77 interviews, recorded from Dec. 28, 1992 to April 24, 1998 at various locations. It includes interviews with Chinese businessmen.

Search the National Library's [catalogue](#) for details of both sources.

The National Library's Trove digitisation project

- This [online database](#) of national and local newspapers, pictures, photos, diaries and many other sources, includes two digitised Chinese language newspapers
 - *The Chinese Republic News*, Sydney, 1914-1937
 - *The Chinese Times*, Melbourne, 1902-1922).

Chinese Australian Heritage Resources

- Online English language [index](#) to the Chinese language newspaper, Sydney-based, *Tung Wah News* (1898-1902), and *Tung Wah Times* (1902-1936) –

State Library of Victoria

- **Directories**
Sands and Kenny Melbourne Directories 1857-1861 and Sands and McDougall's Commercial and General Melbourne Directories 1862-1974 (various titles), and also country directories. The State Library and several public libraries hold these records on microfiche. Several years have been digitised and are now available on the Ancestry database. The State Library also holds some years in digital format for in-house use. Check the [Library's catalogue](#) for details

Australian National University

- Federated Furnishing Trade Societies of Australasia, Victorian Branch. Minute Book 30 September 1909 to 13 April 1911, T/58/1/18. ANU, Noel Butlin Archives Centre – www.anu.edu.au

The Chinese Australian Family Historians of Victoria

- [CAFHOV](#) is a forum for Chinese Australian family historians and established researchers of Chinese Australia as well as post-graduate students and academics.

Selection of recent research theses

Check the relevant university library's catalogue for access details.

Couchman, Sophie. 'Tong Yun Gai (Street of the Chinese): Investigating Patterns of Work and Social Life in Melbourne's Chinatown 1900-1920.' M.A. thesis, Monash University, 2000.

Jones, Paul Anthony. 'Alien Acts: The White Australia Policy, 1901-1939.' Ph.D. thesis, University of Melbourne, 1999.

Kuo, Mei-fen, 'Making Chinese Australia: The Role of the Sydney Chinese Community, 1892-1912,' Ph.D. thesis, La Trobe University, 2008.

Leckey, John. 'Low Degraded Broods?: Industry and Entrepreneurialism in Melbourne's Little Lon, 1860 - 1950.' Ph.D. thesis, University of Melbourne, 2003. (Includes Lim Kee Tye and other Chinese cabinetmakers)

Nichol, Barbara, 'The breath of the wok: Melbourne's early Chinese restaurants: community, culture and entrepreneurialism in the city, late nineteenth century to 1950s'. Ph.D. thesis. University of Melbourne, 2012.

Rankine, Wendy Margaret. 'The Chinese in Australia 1930-45: Beyond a History of Racism.' M.A. thesis, University of Melbourne, 1995.

Stacker, Julie Margaret. 'Sweet and Sour Business: Chinese Restaurants and the Changing Faces of Sydney and Toronto 1900 - 1960.' M.Phil. thesis, Griffith University. 2002.

Williams, Michael. 'Brief Sojourn in Your Native Land: Sydney's Huaqiao and Their Links with South China During the First Half of the Twentieth Century.' M.Lett. thesis, University of New England, 1998.

Wilton, Janis. 'Chinese Voices, Australian Lives: Oral History and the Chinese Contribution to Glen Innes, Inverell, Tenterfield, and Surrounding Districts During the First Half of the Twentieth Century.' Ph.D. thesis, University of New England, 1997.

Selection of recent publications

"*After the Rush: Regulation, Participation and Chinese Communities in Australia, 1860-1940*", eds.

Couchman, Sophie, John Fitzgerald and Paul Macgregor. Special edition of *Overland Literary Journal*, no.9, December 2004.

Fitzgerald, John. *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007.

Giese, Diana. *Astronauts, Lost Souls and Dragons: Voices of Today's Chinese Australians*. St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press, 1997.

Holsworth, Carol, *Chinese in Echuca-Moama: a chronicle 1850s to 1930*. Echuca, Vic.: Echuca Historical Society, Inc., 2008.

Kee, Poo Kong, Ho, Chooi-hon, Paul Macgregor and Gary Presland, eds. *Chinese in Oceania*. [Melbourne?]: Association for the Study of the Chinese and their Descendants in Australasia and the Pacific Islands, Museum of Chinese Australian History and Centre for Asia-Pacific Studies, Victoria University of Technology, 2002.

Secrets, silences and sources: five Chinese-Australian family histories, ed. Sophie Couchman, Bundoora, Vic: La Trobe University, School of Asian Studies, 2005. (Stories told by members of Chinese Australian Family Historians of Victoria, Inc. (CAFHOV))

Talbot, Diann, *Who is she?: the lives and trials of the women and children who shared their lives with the Chinese men on the Upper Ovens Goldfields in north east Victoria*. Diann Talbot, 2016.

Tavan, Gwenda. *The Long Slow Death of White Australia*. Carlton North, Vic.: Scribe Publications, 2005.

York, Barry. *Admitted 1947-1957: Annual Returns on Persons Admitted into Australia and their Places of Last Permanent Residence*. Canberra: Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, 1993
