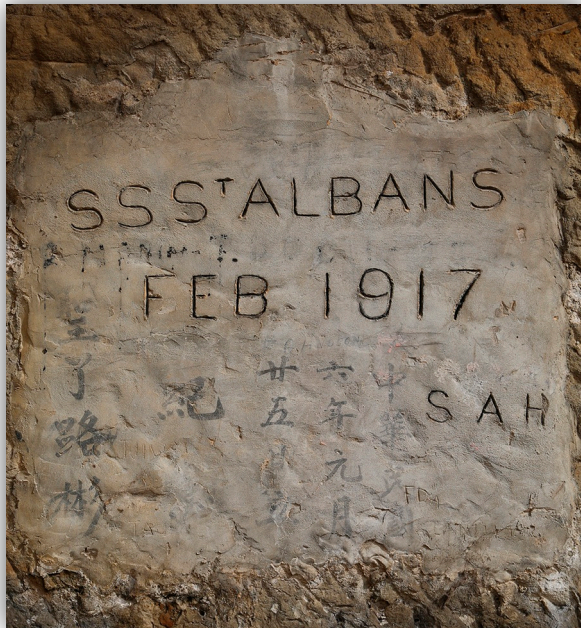


Members' Newsletter – September 2015
 澳洲華人歷史協會會訊
<http://chineseaustralianhistory.org>

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 Edited by: Michael Williams

Visit to North Head Quarantine Station Saturday, November 21st



[Photo] © Ursula K Frederick,
 Quarantine Project, 2014.

This memento of a visit of the steamship *St Albans* in 1917 reveals much about the Chinese history of Sydney's former Quarantine Station at North Head, Manly.

Created by layering concrete onto a sandstone cliff face, this inscription features messages in both English and Chinese. Latin characters were scored into the wet concrete to read simply "SS St Albans Feb 1917 SAH".

For historians working in Australian and British sources, this is enough to track down Samuel Alfred ('Alf') Hollingsworth, third mate aboard the steamer when it was quarantined for smallpox over 16–19 February 1917.

Writing Chinese carvings and calligraphy into Sydney's quarantine history

But the concrete is also giving up another secret. As lime wash weathers away after nearly a century of sea air, a more detailed message is emerging. Painted with a skilled hand, this Chinese panel has led to some confusion – particularly the somewhat cryptic column on the left. Speaking the characters aloud, however, reveals their intention: they sound out a close equivalent of 'St Albans'. The entire message has been translated to state:

"Erected in the sixth year of the Republic, first month, twenty-fifth day, to commemorate St Albans".

Who crafted this careful calligraphy, is unknown. Certainly, the *St Albans* had a mixed British and Chinese crew, and spent decades sailing between Australian and Asian ports. The symmetrical layout, balancing the English and Chinese messages suggest it was planned from the outset as a bilingual monument. Although the Chinese characters were later overpainted, an unintended benefit was that they have been better preserved as they reappear in the present.

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Chinese residents, travellers and crew caught up in quarantine have moved in and out of visibility at North Head since the 1850s. Across the landscape, they also left over 100 inscriptions carved or painted onto cliffs, boulders, buildings and drain covers, while others are memorialised in the nearby cemetery.

Since 2013 a team of archaeologists and historians from the University of Sydney has been recording these inscriptions and seeking to tell some of their stories of travel, disease, internment, sadness and strength.

Dr Peter Hobbins

The CAHS committee has planned an exciting end of year excursion for our members and friends.

Dr Peter Hobbins of the University of Sydney and an expert on the archaeology and history of quarantine will guide us through the history of the Quarantine Station in which early Chinese migrants played a significant role.

There will also be a visit to the Third Cemetery developed in 1881 to receive those afflicted with smallpox. Names like Ah Hon and Kee Moon may stir feelings or memories for some of us.

When

Saturday, 21st November 2015

2pm at the Quarantine Station.

Cost

Depends on numbers – around \$20 per person

How

Bus 135 leaves from Manly Wharf (after a lovely ferry ride)

Bookings Essential

To help us plan the day, let us know if you are interested in coming.

Also can you transport friends by car?

If you have no transport we can arrange something for you if you let us know.

Contact Anna Lee at - annalee@workready.com.au

or phone 9519 7436 BH

or 0412 334 398 anytime

for further information and bookings

For those who don't yet know, the CAHS now has some new features:
 [cut & paste the links if they do not open properly]

A new website

<http://chineseaustralianhistory.org>

We are now also on

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/chineseaustralianhistorysociety>

and of course

Twitter

https://twitter.com/cahs_contact
 #ChinOzHist

*Please check these out
 and join our*

Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/100152676996563/>

Or search Facebook for

**Chinese Australian
 Historical Society**
& request to join

If you are not ready to join Social Media some of the highlights that have been featured through our Facebook page or the website so far have been:

**A brief view of Chinese-
 Tasmania**

<http://chineseaustralianhistory.org/around-australia/>

A look at the life of the first
 Chinese Barrister in NSW

William Lee

<http://chineseaustralianhistory.org/current-research/>

A striking explanation of

The Dictation Test

<http://chineseaustralianhistory.org/white-australia-policy-survivors/>

A special page about former members such as
 Henry Chan and Toytaan Ah Ket has also been set up.

<http://chineseaustralianhistory.org/cahs/>