

Atherton Chinatown Excavations Archive

Atherton Chinatown, located in tropical North Queensland, developed during the late nineteenth century. The town was once home to a thriving Chinese community. Gold attracted Chinese settlers to North Queensland in the late 1800s but when the gold ran out, many turned to market gardening and timber cutting. By the late 1920s Atherton Chinatown was virtually deserted. This collection records the James Cook University's archaeological activities between 1986 and the early 1990s, at a highly significant site at Atherton in regard to a temple. The remains of Atherton's Chinatown are now an archaeological site featuring that community's place of worship, the Hou Wang Temple, which has been conserved and restored. The documents and photographs here are primarily concerned with site descriptions and summaries of Chinatown's history, records and descriptions of excavated finds, and survey/grid reference maps.

Archive Location: Cairns 222

Detailed Listing

ACE/1/ Site Plans & Assoc. Notes - Atherton Chinatown

ACE/2/ Atherton Chinatown - Resources, Contacts, etc.

ACE/3/ Atherton Chinatown - Miscellaneous Resource Materials

ACE/4/ Atherton Chinatown - Site Records

ACE/5/ Sketch of Fong On Residence, Chinatown, Atherton, c. 1920 (not to scale), prepared by Grace Fong On for Material Culture Unit, James Cook University, 5 June, 1986

ACE/6/ Sketch plan of Fong On Residence, Atherton Chinatown, c. 1915-20 - grid plan; with two roughly drawn plans and estimates

ACE/7/ Hou Wang Miao: Atherton Chinese Temple – Location of Temple Artefacts (3 copies); with notation that this plan indicates definite or probable locations of artefacts held by the National Trust of Queensland in November, 1986; devised by Gordon Grimwade, 10 January 1987

ACE/8/ Resubdivision Map

ACE/9/ Survey map: Reference No. 3: Atherton to Evelyn, Crown Pound Reserve;
County of Nares in Parish of Barron

ACE/10/ Illustrations: Well – Site 6: Profile; Well – Site 6: Plan View; Atherton
Chinatown; grid reference detail; Cooking Facilities – Chinatown

ACE/11/ Excavation Forms/Part 1/ Excavation Form – Atherton Chinatown 1990:
Squares 1A to 15F

ACE/12/ Excavation Forms/Part 2/ Excavation Form – Atherton Chinatown 1990:
Squares 16A to 27F

ACE/13/ Atherton Chinatown: A Site Survey 1986; hand-written paper of 29 pages'
length, on historical backgrounding and archaeological work and data analysis of
the site, with references

ACE/14/ Basic Site Information; hand-written notes regarding legal title, lot number,
excavation work, advisory capacity of Heritage Consultant Gordon Grimwade,
grid summaries, etc.

ACE/15/ Descriptions of excavated items, mainly in the 'Materials and physical
description' and 'Details of manufacture' sections

ACE/16/ Two sets of reference cards for sources on archaeology-related matters, race
relations, North Queensland local history, town records, etc.

ACE/17/ Publications/1/ Atherton 100 Centenary Souvenir Edition, 3 September, 1985

ACE/18/ Publications/2/ Atherton Centenary: Commemorative Edition 1885-1985.
Supplement to The Tablelander, September 1985

ACE/19/ Photographs/1/ Photograph summaries – hand-written:

i. Photographs 30/10/90, 7 pages

ii. Photos According to Grid Sequence, 5 pages

ACE/20/ Photographs/2/ Contact sheets: Atherton Temple Artefacts, September 1986

ACE/21/ Photographs/3/ Colour photos of archaeological excavations, organised
according to grid overviews and references

ACE/22/ Photographs/4/ Collection of colour slides of Atherton Chinatown and
excavation areas, September 1986; includes separate box marked 'Atherton
Chinatown Survey 1986'

ACE/23/ Photographs/5/ Four b/w photographs in wrapping paper marked 'Hou Wang Temple Atherton NQ'

Additions

ACE/24/ Hou Wang Temple, Atherton: Draft Development Plan. Report of the Hou Wang Temple Management Committee; 2 versions, early 1992

ACE/25/ Gordon Grimwade and Barrie Reynolds, Report on Atherton Chinatown Site Survey, Material Culture Unit, James Cook University, 1986 [bound copy]

ACE/26/ Gordon Grimwade and Barrie Reynolds, Report on Atherton Chinatown, North Queensland, 1: Site Survey [draft version]

ACE/27/ Early 1990s correspondence and records regarding excavations, finances, travel costs, permissions, records of finds, departmental and museum or Queensland state government department collaborations