

Attachment D

**Hector Abrahams Architects - Heritage
Assessment Report - 75-77 Ultimo Road**

75-77 Ultimo Road, Haymarket

Heritage Assessment

FINAL Version V1.3

19 July 2024



For City of Sydney
by Hector Abrahams Architects and Dr Juanita Kwok

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Gadigal and Wiradjuri, the original inhabitants of the land on which we work. Nos 75-77 Ultimo Road is also located on the land of the Gadigal.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a connection to place, land, water and community, established over many thousands of years. We recognise the cultural significance inherent in these connections, that sovereignty over this land was never ceded and that it continues to be sacred to its rightful owners.

We pay respect to Elders past and present, and stand with all First Peoples in their quest for justice, truth telling, and reconciliation.

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1. Introduction

This report has been prepared responding to the Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy. The past few years have been challenging for Haymarket and the City heard from the community that the area needs revitalisation. The City adopted the Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy in December 2023 to outline actions in five priority areas to deliver on the community's vision for the area. The Strategy includes an action to strengthen recognition of cultural heritage, identifying three sites as potentially having cultural significance, linked to the Chinese Australian community. To provide a foundational understanding of the key themes from Chinatown's history the City commissioned GML Heritage in 2022 to provide a Thematic History of Chinatown.

Hector Abrahams Architects (HAA) have been asked by the City of Sydney to investigate the significance of the three places identified in the strategy as 90-100 Hay Street, 75-77 Ultimo Road and 50-54 Dixon Street, Haymarket. Our first stage was to examine the history and potential significance of these places. The findings were compiled in standalone historical research reports and drawn upon in the second stage. Following the development of the Historical Research reports, HAA was then asked to undertake a heritage assessment of 75-77 Ultimo Road, Haymarket. Our approach to all of these reports is to work in co-authorship with the Chinese Australian Historian, Dr Juanita Kwok. Dr Kwok was asked to conduct research and provide a contextual written history for the place and to advise on the place's significance and management.

This report assesses the heritage significance of 75-77 Ultimo Road. Its purpose is to advise the City of any significance, to make a recommendation on heritage listing and provide management recommendations to conserve significance. This assessment will only make a recommendation on heritage listing within the Sydney LEP 2012.

The report begins with a history of the place which outlines the background to the establishment of the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia (the Kuomintang or KMT for short). The history then addresses the establishment of the Headquarters of the Party at 75-77 Ultimo Road, Haymarket, its political and community roles and identifies people and uses associated with the building.

A detailed description of the place in its current condition follows, along with a detailed comparative analysis then investigates other KMT buildings in Australasia, buildings by the architect and buildings by the construction company. Our history and comparative analysis inform the assessment of significance which is based on Heritage NSW's *Assessing Heritage Significance Guidelines* (2023) and from which a recommendation on whether or not the place should be listed. The report concludes with management recommendations.

This report was prepared by Hector Abrahams and Sioned Lavery of Hector Abrahams Architects, and Dr Juanita Kwok, historian. Research using Chinese language sources and Chinese-to-English translations and research were done by historical translator and consultant linguist, Ely Finch.

The authors acknowledge and sincerely thank descendants and those who lived or worked in Chinatown for sharing their family stories and memories.

2. Site Description

The place is located at 75-77 Ultimo Road in the centre of Haymarket between Thomas and George Streets. Hay Street and Dixon Street are located to the north.

Its land title reference is Lot 1 DP79765. It is a four-storey masonry building with distinctive fenestration under a single arch. Constructed in 1921 for the Chinese Nationalist Party, the party continues to occupy the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors while leasing the ground floor for retail use.



Figure 1 Aerial photograph showing 75-77 Ultimo Road in red. Source: Sixmaps with HAA overlay.

3. History (written by Juanita Kwok)

Contextual Background

Chinese migrants who came to Australia for the gold rushes, came largely from counties in the Pearl River Delta region of Canton, and they maintained strong ties to their villages.¹ People tied by native place, languages and kinship established associations to support and sponsor others from the same place or of the same surname. Most groups had their own district associations and also formed associations not based on native place or lineage, but on mutual co-operation and in many cases with the aim of political reform in China. The Yee Hing mutual aid brotherhood societies, which were active on gold fields from the earliest days, espoused the political aim of overthrowing the Ching dynasty in China. The China Empire Reform Association (CERA), on the other hand, advocated modernising China but maintaining the Emperor system, and in later years advocated constitutional monarchy. Their competing ideas were circulated through newspapers, such as the *Chinese Australian Herald*, *The Tung Wah Times* and the *Chinese Times*.

Chinese migrants to Australia were actively engaged in fomenting and funding political change in China. Funds remitted and the ideas transmitted to China by overseas Chinese, including Chinese Australians, were crucial both to the success of the 1911 revolution which overthrew the Manchu Ching Dynasty and established a Chinese republic, and to the success of the Nationalist Party in gaining power in China. The Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia headquarters at 75-77 Ultimo Road is a part of this history.

A forerunner to the Chinese Nationalist Party in Australia was the Yee Hing which had branches across rural NSW and Australia. When the Yee Hing changed its name to the Chinese Masonic Society and opened the Chinese Masonic Hall at 18 Mary Street, Surry Hills in 1912, a newspaper report named delegates who attended from Braidwood, Condobolin, Wagga Wagga, Wyalong, Temora, Nyngan, Newcastle, Wellington, Walgett, Hay, Parkes, Albury, Tumut, Tingha, Narrabri, Goulburn, Gunnedah, Wollongong, Lismore in NSW and from Tasmania, Bendigo, Rockhampton, Thursday Island, Brisbane, Melbourne, Wangaratta and Auckland.² The Chinese Masonic Hall, which is listed on the City of Sydney Local Environment Plan, is highly significant for its role in the revolutionary movement which preceded the establishment of the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia.³

¹ See WILLIAMS, M. 2018. *Returning Home With Glory: Chinese Villagers around the Pacific, 1849 to 1949*, Hong Kong University Press.

² 1912 "TSUN FORE.", *The Sun (Sydney, NSW : 1910 - 1954)*, 30 January, p. 1. , viewed 03 May 2024, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article222004834>

³ NSW State Heritage Inventory, Chinese Masonic Hall including interior, <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2420970>, accessed 3 May 2024.



Figure 2 Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia building at 75-77 Ultimo Road, Photo by Juanita Kwok 2024.

The Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia Building at 75-77 Ultimo Road

Until it was resumed for the Municipal Markets in 1908, 75-77 Ultimo Road was Engine Street, named after the 'engine' of the Victoria Steam Mills. After the resumption, the section from Thomas Street to George Street was incorporated into Ultimo Road (figure 3). In 1908, Sydney Municipal Council resumed terrace houses, mills and workshops spread over four acres bounded by Ultimo Road and Thomas, Hay, Quay and Engine Streets to make way for Municipal Markets. These developments were reported in the *Chinese Australian Herald* in March 1909, with the comment that numerous Chinese firms were expected to move in light of the market's relocation.⁴ From 1910, Chinese firms which had previously been centred around Campbell and Pitt Streets, Haymarket in proximity to the Belmore Markets, began to open stores in Hay, Dixon, Quay, Harbour Streets and Ultimo Road close to the new Municipal Markets.

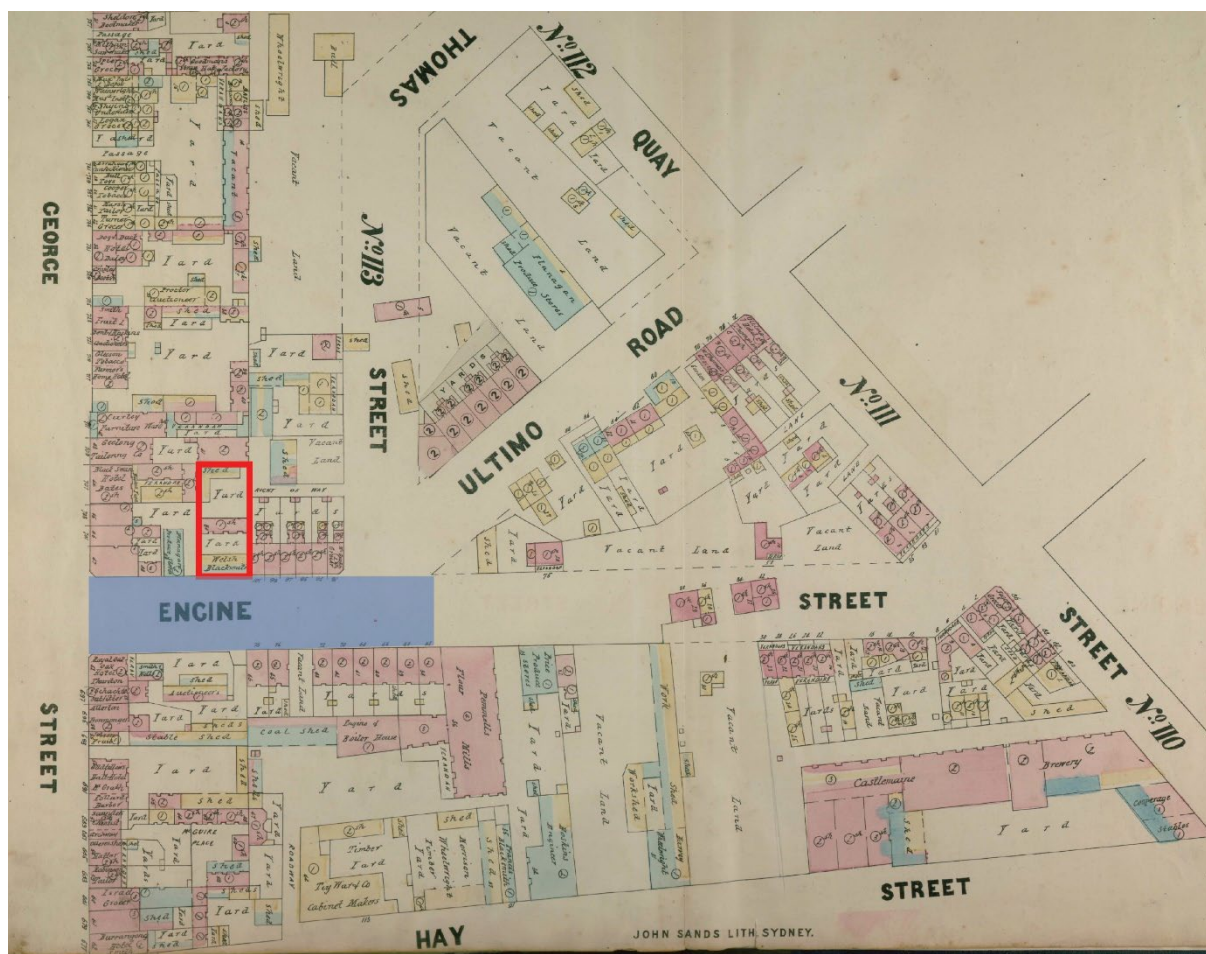


Figure 3 Dove's 1880 survey showing Engine Street. The section of Engine Street which would become Ultimo Road is indicated in blue and what is now 75-77 Ultimo Road in red. Source: City of Sydney Archives with HAA overlay.

⁴ 1909 '決議改建街市', *Guang yi hua bao = The Chinese Australian Herald* (Sydney, NSW: 1894 - 1923), 13 March, 2, viewed 21 Feb 2024, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article168080171>

The Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia and the establishment of the headquarters at 75-77 Ultimo Road

The Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia or the Australian Kuo Min Tang (KMT) was established when the Young China League was founded in Melbourne in 1910 to support the revolutionary aims of Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Chinese Nationalist Party.⁵ After the 1911 Revolution in China overthrew the Ching dynasty, a branch of the Young China League was established in Sydney, with the Presidency occupied by head of the Chinese Masonic Society, James Chuey.⁶ In April 1916, the Chinese Nationalist League was founded and George Kwok Bew of Wing Sang & Co. Fruit Merchants elected as the first President.⁷ A temporary office was established at 211 Thomas Street, next to the store of Tiy Sang & Co., whose proprietors were Nationalist League treasurer, Peter Yee Wing and Vice-President, Samuel Wong.⁸ Over the next few years, representatives from the Nationalist League travelled across Australian and the Pacific to raise funds for a permanent building, establishing branches in Brisbane, Bowen, Cairns, Mackay, Townsville, Burdekin and Atherton in Queensland; in Newcastle, Darwin, Adelaide and Perth and in Auckland, Fiji, Rabaul, Kokapo, Kavieng, Madang and the Solomon Islands.⁹ In 1917, George Bew went to Shanghai in 1917 as manager of the new Wing On Department store, where he developed a close relationship with Sun Yat-sen and other Nationalist leaders.¹⁰

In August 1921, the Chinese Nationalist League established its legal identity by registering as an association under the Companies Act in NSW. Its registered title was Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia.¹¹ Its Chinese name was the Kuo Min Tang.

£10,997 was raised by donations from Nationalist Party members in Australasia to purchase land and build a headquarters for the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia at 75-77 Ultimo Road, Haymarket.¹² Plans for a five-storey building were drawn up by architect Francis Ernest Stowe of 20 Loftus Street Sydney on 23 August 1921.

Stowe, born in Ireland in 1867, emigrated as a child to Australia with his family. He trained and worked as both an architect and civil engineer, being appointed the Grand Architect of the Grand Lodge in 1922.¹³ Stowe designed a counterweight tramway system for Darling Street Wharf, Ball's Head Coal Loading Depot and a number of Masonic buildings including the Temple in North Sydney, Baulkham Hills Masonic School and a Masonic Hospital in Ashfield. The latter four are extant but it is unclear what remains of the Darling Street Wharf tram system. One of his more interesting designs was a contender for the Sydney Harbour Bridge which had three crossings that intersected at an Anzac memorial on Me-Mel - Goat Island. In addition to his architectural and engineering work, Stowe also established the Sydney Marine Engineer College in 1902, founded the Stowe Electrical Company and published a number of booklets and pamphlets on scientific topics. He was also an early mentor to Florence Taylor (née Parsons).¹⁴ He died in 1936.¹⁵

⁵ KUO, MEI-FEN & BRETT, JUDITH 2013. *Unlocking the history of the Australasian Kuo Min Tang, 1911-2013* Kew, Victoria, Australian Scholarly Publishing, ix.

⁶ YONG, C. F. 1977, *The New Gold Mountain : the Chinese in Australia, 1901-1921*, Richmond, Australia, Raphael Arts, 141.

⁷ YONG, 150.

⁸ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 11.

⁹ YONG, C. F. *The New Gold Mountain : The Chinese in Australia, 1901-1921*. Richmond, Australia: Raphael Arts, 1977, 150-153.

¹⁰ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 16.

¹¹ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 11, 30.

¹² KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 22.

¹³ Australian Institute of Architects, "NSW Bibliographical information: Lt Col Francis Ernest Stowe," 2015.

¹⁴ Australian Institute of Architects, "NSW Bibliographical information: Lt Col Francis Ernest Stowe."

¹⁵ "Obituary Mr F. E. Stowe," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 July 1936, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/17253756>; Margaret Dobson, "John Lamb Lyon and Francis Ernest Stowe," *Leichhardt Historical Journal* 4 (1992) 6.

Stowes original 1921 plans for 75-77 Ultimo Road (Figure 4) indicates that the building was intended to be used as a series of spaces across the four floors of the building, that could be used separately or together. The retail premises at 77 Ultimo Road (identified as Shop No. One located on the eastern side of the building) was designed to be used over two levels (ground and first floor) with a timber stair in the south-eastern corner. The shop at 75 Ultimo Road (identified as Shop No. Two on the western side of the building) was on the ground floor only. The level above Shop No. Two was designed as a separate tenancy, separated from the upper level of Shop No. One by a timber partition. The drawings indicate that the stairs to the upper levels were intended to have adjacent flights on the western side of the building; these were not constructed as planned, as the stairs to the upper levels are in a series of flights lining the western boundary. The original drawings also indicate that all internal floors are timber framed, supported by steel beams but it is unclear if this is the case (see section 4. Physical Description for a description of the places current condition).

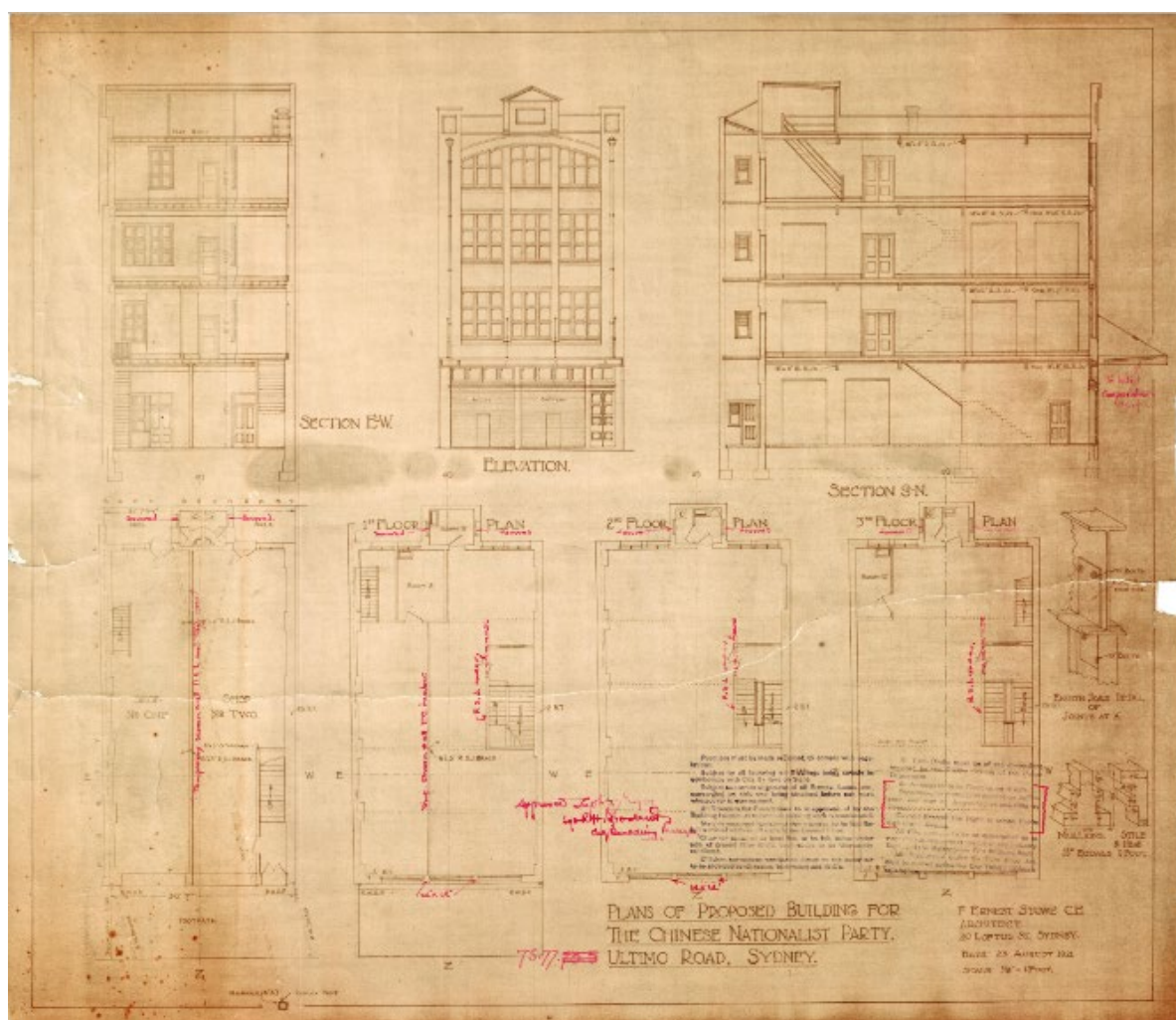


Figure 4 Plan - Chinese Nationalist Party, 75-55 Ultimo Road, 1921 (01/01/1921 - 31/12/1921), [A-00566860]. City of Sydney Archives, accessed 29 Feb 2024, <https://archives.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/1431062>

In September 1921, a City building application was made by contractors Robert Wall & Sons, for the erection of a building for the Chinese Nationalist Party at 75-77 Ultimo Road.¹⁶ Robert Wall, according to his obituary in *The Daily Telegraph*, was at 87 the “World’s Oldest Builder” and one of the best known in the state of NSW. Robert Wall & Sons had previously constructed a

¹⁶ 'CITY BUILDING APPLICATIONS', *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, NSW : 1883 - 1930), 27 September, 7, viewed 21 Feb 2024, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article239701774>.

With thanks to Antonia Finnane for supplying this reference.

number of important Sydney buildings including: Culwulla Chambers (67 Castlereagh Street), Usher's Hotel (64-68 Castlereagh Streets) and Beanbah Chambers (235 Macquarie Street). Other buildings which are no longer extant include: South British Insurance Co. (corner of O'Connell and Hunter Streets), and the Government Savings Bank on Moore Street (now Martin Place).¹⁷

The choice of Robert Wall & Sons as builders of the Australasian KMT Headquarters may have been owing to the firm's reputation as master builders, or have related to the fact that Robert Wall Senior was the father-in-law of William Henry Donald, adviser to Nationalist party leader Sun Yat-sen, and later to Chang Hsueh-liang and Chiang Kai-shek. Born in Lithgow, NSW in 1875, Donald began his career as a journalist in Australia before moving to Hong Kong where he became Managing Director of the *China Mail*. He married Robert Wall's daughter Mary Wall, in Hong Kong in 1904, though the couple separated sometime around 1920.¹⁸

The foundation stone of the building, was laid on the 12th November 1921, by Chan On Yan, sent from China as a personal representative of Sun Yat-sen.¹⁹ It can still be seen at the entrance of the building (see figure 5). After travelling around Australia and the Pacific, Chan On Yan returned to Sydney to launch the building in April 1922.²⁰



Figure 5 Foundation stone outside the building at 75-77 Ultimo Road Photo by Juanita Kwok 2024.

¹⁷ 1925 'MR. ROBERT WALL', *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, NSW: 1883 - 1930), 2 December, 5, viewed 11 Mar 2024, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article245061670>

¹⁸ Winston G. Lewis, 'Donald, William Henry (1875–1946)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/donald-william-henry-5992/text10229>, published first in hardcopy 1981, accessed online 2 May 2024.

¹⁹ Chan on Yan visited Australia and the Pacific Islands between 1921 and 1923, promoting Sun Yat-sen's ideology and raising funds for Sun's causes in China, including establishing an air-force to defeat Chen Jiong-Ming's army in China. See Kuo and Brett, 25-9.

²⁰ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 25.

Membership of the Party was open to women and female members were exempted from the membership fee. Women were particularly prominent in the Darwin branch of the KMT, though less so in the Sydney branch.²¹ By 1922 it was reported that there were 23 branches and 5289 members of the Chinese Nationalist Party in Australasia and the South Pacific.²² As Sun Yat-sen's native district was in Heung Shan, members from Heung Shan dominated the Sydney branch of the KMT.²³

President of the Australasian KMT from 1919-1930 was Charles (Peter) Yee Wing. According to a biography by his grandson, Tony Wing, Charles Yee Wing, born 1862 or 1866, became involved in Tiy Sang & Co. which traded in bananas and by 1893, he was Managing Director of the firm. He married Susan Kezia Beck in 1906 and they had at least 12 children. He established the Australasian KMT's Canton Liaison Office and was one of the founders of the China-Australia Mail Steamship Line.²⁴ C.F. Yong argues this shipping line, established to break up the Japanese shipping monopoly and extend the Sino-Australian import and export trade, "expressed the unity and co-operation achieved for the first time by Chinese in Australia over a single issue of common interest."²⁵ Like many of the leaders of the KMT in Australia, Yee Wing was a Christian. As Yong remarks, "It is striking that nearly all the top leaders of the Chinese Nationalist Party in Victoria and New South Wales in the years 1910-1930 were associated with churches."²⁶ This might be attributed as much to the influence of the Christian wives of the leaders as to the work of Chinese missionaries in particular, the Church of England minister Soo Hoo Ten and the Presbyterian Minister John Young Wai and his wife, who were actively proselytising and performing charitable work amongst the Chinese population in the Haymarket.²⁷ Yee Wing returned to China after the death of his wife Susan in 1938, and died there sometime in 1942.²⁸

Tenants of the building

After the new building opened, various rabbit merchants and grill rooms tenanted the ground floor of 77 Ultimo Road until 1923, when L.A. Pogonowski, who had occupied the site in 1913 prior to the KMT Building's construction, returned to occupy the ground floor of the new building. Pogonowski evidently had a good long-standing relationship with Samuel Wong and Peter Yee Wing, the proprietors of Tiy Sang & Co. on Thomas Street. Sometime in January or February 1911, Tiy Sang & Co. complained to the Town Clerk about damage to their premises caused by flooding.²⁹ When nothing was done, L.A. Pogonowski then took up the case, seeking action on stormwater damage to his store, the neighbouring store of Tiy Sang & Co. and two other businesses. The Town Clerk replied that the Council would not accept liability.³⁰ From 1925 until 1927, L.A. Pogonowski Talk Machines occupied the ground floors of both 75 and 77 Ultimo Road. Presumably after the death or retirement of Mr Pogonowski, Mrs C.

²¹ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 23-24; MARTINEZ, J. 2015, Chinese politics in Darwin: interconnections between the Wah on society and the Kuo Min Tang and the Kuo Min Tang. In: BAGNALL, K. & COUCHMAN, S. (eds.) *Chinese Australians, Politics, Engagement and Resistance*. Netherlands: Brill, 2015.

²² YONG, 153.

²³ Up until the early 1920s, the Chungshan district was known as Heung Shan or Heungyap. Sun Yat-sen changed its name to Chungshan to reflect his Japanese name, Nakayama, which means "middle mountain".

²⁴ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 9-10.

²⁵ YONG, 97.

²⁶ YONG, 206.

²⁷ Ruth Teale, 'Ten, George Soo Hoo (1848–1934)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ten-george-soo-hoo-4699/text7785>, published first in hardcopy 1976, accessed online 7 May 2024.; Adrian Chan, 'Young Wai, John (1847–1930)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/young-wai-john-9222/text16295>, published first in hardcopy 1990, accessed online 7 May 2024.

²⁸ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 9-10.

²⁹ *Tiy Sang & Co complained to the TC about damage to their premises caused by flooding. The Water &* (29/01/1912 - 27/02/1912), [A-00247772]. City of Sydney Archives, accessed 01 Mar 2024, <https://archives.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/866237>

³⁰ *L A Pogonowski, 77 Engine St re stormwater damage, including to Tiy Sang & Co; Pennell & Co; Morton* (29/02/1912 - 15/05/1912), [A-00246270]. City of Sydney Archives, accessed 01 Mar 2024, <https://archives.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/879399>

Pogonowski continued the business at 75-77 Ultimo Road until 1929.³¹ The Pogonowski store can be seen in an early photograph of the Australasian KMT Building (see figure. 6).

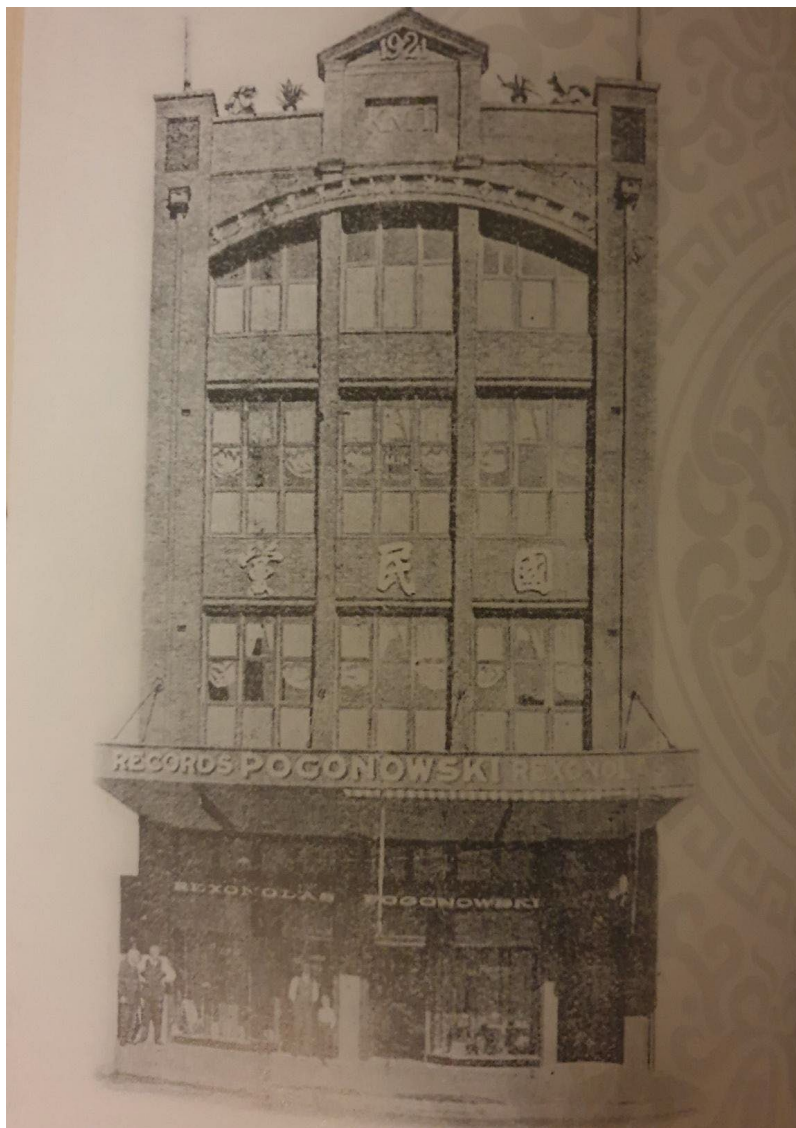


Figure 6. 75-77 Ultimo Road Source: *Big White Lie*, John Fitzgerald

From 1922, 75-77 Ultimo Road was the registered office for the *Chinese Times* newspaper. The *Chinese Times* was a revolutionary newspaper first published in Melbourne, (1902-1915), where it played an important role in shaping and mobilising support for the revolution in China and later opposing the increasingly despotic government of Yuan Shikai, the Provisional President of the Republic of China.³² In 1922, the *Chinese Times* began publishing in Sydney and continued publication until 1949 with financial support from the Chinese KMT.³³

Between 1932 and 1977, the ground floor of 75 Ultimo Road was leased to Arthur Lowe who ran a tobacconist shop there for 45 years. In an interview with Rosetta Sung in 1984, Arthur Lowe said he was born in Enfield in 1903 to Willie Bow Siew and Rosetta Helen McDonald, of Scottish descent.³⁴ When his mother died, when Arthur was only eight months old, his father

³¹ *Sands Directory* 1913-1929.

³² KUO, M. F. 2013, *Making Chinese Australia : Urban elites, newspapers and the formation of Chinese Australian Identity*, Melbourne, Monash University Publishing, 184-9, 222-5; YONG, 145-148.

³³ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 78-9.

³⁴ SUNG, ROSETTA, Interview 18, 1984, Arthur, b. 1903, Rosetta Sung transcripts, State Library of NSW, MLMSS 5619, 1984-1989.

took him back to his village in Chungshan to be cared for by his first wife. Arthur returned to Australia with his father when he was thirteen, returning once more to China with his father around 1920 at his father's insistence that he find a Chinese wife. Arthur married his Chinese wife, Liu Cheng Su Tseng in a Christian ceremony, but returned to Australia leaving his wife and children behind, as immigration restrictions prohibited Chinese women from entering Australia. Arthur bought a greengrocer business in Neutral Bay, before opening his tobacconist business on the ground floor of 75 Ultimo Road. With the help of the Chinese Consul, Arthur managed to bring his wife and three children to Australia in 1934.³⁵ The couple subsequently had another five children. Arthur said of the KMT:

Father was a member, all members. I not one of the original members but early one. Tongmenhui, meaning gathering together society, a club.³⁶ Always involved in fundraising for Kuo Min Tang. Collect lot of money and send to China, now Formosa (Taiwan) and before send to Canton or Nanking.³⁷

The operation of the Australasian KMT at 75-77 Ultimo Road

The operation of the Australasian KMT at 75-77 Ultimo Road over the years has been researched and written about by Judith Brett and Mei-Fen Kuo, and by John Fitzgerald, utilising the Australasian KMT archives housed at 75-77 Ultimo Road. In 1924, representatives from the Sydney branch attended the first National Assembly in Canton and in the following year, the Australasian KMT held its first Australasian Convention. A memorial ceremony was held for Sun Yat-sen who had died in March 1925, which recognised him as the father of the modern Chinese nation and the symbolic head of the KMT. The Convention strengthened connections between branches in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, sending money to enable representatives from branches in the Pacific to attend.³⁸ The Convention established a Canton Liaison Office, which helped returning Chinese Australians to settle back in China. It also established branches for seamen working in the South Pacific, boosting membership and providing a conduit for connecting branches in the region.³⁹ By 1927, "around one in six registered Australasian party members were able seamen and ship's engineers."⁴⁰

After Sun Yat-sen's death, Chiang Kai-shek succeeded Sun Yat-sen as leader of the KMT. The Australian government, which had hitherto been suspicious of the KMT's communist sympathies, recognised the Chinese National Government in Nanking after Chiang Kai-shek became leader.

Chiang launched an international Party Purification Movement in 1926 to purge Communists and their sympathisers from the Party. At the second Australasian Convention in Sydney in 1927, held to endorse Chiang Kai-shek's command, Samuel Wong, Vice-President of the Australasian KMT, objected to the Party Purification Movement and Chiang's leadership. Wong was expelled along with five other members.⁴¹

In 1929, Australian KMT delegates went to Nanjing to attend a national congress where they appealed to the Chinese government to seek the removal of discrimination against Chinese in Australia. They received little support in China, and Kuo and Brett assess that the main goals given to the Australasian KMT were the strengthening of its loyalty to the Chinese KMT and the winning of sympathy for the new government amongst the Australian public.⁴²

³⁵ NAA: SP42/1 C1938/8992.

³⁶ The Tongmenhui which Sun Yat-sen organised in Japan which became the Nationalist Party of China.

³⁷ SUNG, ROSETTA, Interview 18, 1984, Arthur.

³⁸ Meeting with members of the Standing Committee of the KMT, 26 February 2024.

³⁹ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 46.

⁴⁰ FITZGERALD, J. 2007. *Big white lie: Chinese Australians in white Australia*, Sydney, NSW, University of New South Wales Press.

⁴¹ FITZGERALD, J. 2007, 138-9.

⁴² KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 61-62.

The War years

In 1931, the Australasian KMT comprised of the headquarters at 75-77 Ultimo Road, seven branches and thirty five sub-branches, each with an Executive Committee, an Advisory Committee and a Standing Committee.⁴³

When the Japanese army invaded Manchuria in 1931, Chinese Australian community leaders in Sydney from across the political spectrum, including William Gock Young, William Liu and Mar Leong Wah, combined to establish the *Society of Chinese Residents in Australia* to coordinate support for China. They met regularly at 75-77 Ultimo Road, collected funds, organised events and remitted funds to China for the war effort.

The Chinese Australian community was divided over the visit of General Tsai Ting-Kai to Australia in 1934. Tsai had earned hero status after the 19th Route Army he commanded fought against the Japanese invasion of Shanghai in 1931, but he was subsequently exiled after the failure of the rebellion he led against Chiang Kai-Shek's government. The Australasian KMT failed to prevent Tsai Ting Kai's visit to Australia, and Tsai was given a hero's welcome when he arrived. The Australasian KMT expelled members who attended the welcome ceremony or met with him.⁴⁴

According to Kuo and Brett's examination of management records, in the 1930s, the Sydney KMT and the *Society of Chinese Residents in Australia* "sought connections with Australian journalists, writers and scholars to promote the recognition of the Chinese Australians claim to citizenship and to enhance their status accordingly."⁴⁵ However, the efforts of the Australasian KMT to lobby the Australian government to rethink the prejudicial treatment of Chinese Australians were met with little consideration.

At the Fifth Convention of the Australasian KMT, Mar Leong Wah was elected as one of the three members of the Standing Committee.⁴⁶ Mar Leong Wah (Harry Mar) had arrived in Sydney in 1921 to work in the Wing Sang & Co. business founded by his Ma/Mar clansmen from Sha Chung, and became manager of Wing Sang & Co. at 58 Hay Street.⁴⁷ In the photo of Wing Sang & Co. employees, Mar Leong Wah is standing on the far right (figure. 7).

⁴³ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 66-69.

⁴⁴ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 96.

⁴⁵ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 69-73.

⁴⁶ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 73.

⁴⁷ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 77-78.



Figure 7 Employees of Wing Sang & Co Ltd, 1924 (01/01/1924 - 31/12/1924), [A-00025390]. City of Sydney Archives, accessed 29 Feb 2024, <https://archives.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/586035>

In the 1930s, under Mar and David Young Narme's leadership, the Australasian KMT established music, social and sporting groups to raise funds for the war effort in China. As Kuo and Brett write, "the KMT Hall was no longer just a place for solemn political ceremonies, but had become a community gathering place."⁴⁸

The KMT Hall was the venue for a Chinese language school established in the mid-1920s.⁴⁹ A newsreel shot in 1934 shows Mar Leong Wah teaching a class of boys and girls to read and write Chinese characters. The class then stands up and sings the national anthem of the Republic of China, *San Min Chui Yi*, the Three Principles of the People. The newsreel shows how the Hall was furnished in the 1930s. Carved wood panelling can be seen at the back of the stage. There is a clear view of the elaborately carved wooden chairs used by the children and their wooden desks. Behind the children there is a Chinese ceramic on a wooden stand. There are Chinese calligraphy hangings and framed pictures on the wall.⁵⁰

In July 1938, David Young Narme and his New Zealand-born wife organised the first Dragon Ball, held at the Trocadero. In 1941, a debutante ritual was introduced to the Ball. Debutantes and their male partners were expected to attend several weeks of rehearsals, usually held at the KMT Hall at 75-77 Ultimo Road.⁵¹ The Dragon Ball became the big annual event of the Sydney Chinese social calendar.

⁴⁸ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 105.

⁴⁹ Pers. comm. Mei-Fen Kuo, 1 May 2024.

⁵⁰ "Chinese Kiddies Get International Spirit: Scholars Learn Language of Fathers in Sydney School". Newsreel series, produced by Cinesound Movietone Productions, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia 1934. No.201409. I thank Peter Hack for bringing the newsreel to my attention.

⁵¹ GASSIN, GRACE, 2021, All Eyes on You: Debutantes' Explorations of Chinese Australian Womanhood at the Dragon Festival Ball, *Australian Historical Studies*, 543.



Figure 8 Chinese Dragon Ball at Trocadero, 3 July 1940, ON 388/Box 030/Item 192, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales and Courtesy ACP Magazines Ltd. Accessed online, 29 February 2024, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/9O4zwP2n/Ry5Aeq4OyM>

As Grace Gassin, who researched the Dragon Ball for her PhD has written, the Dragon Ball not only gave debutantes their moment to shine, but it highlighted the contribution of Chinese Australian women as organisers, fund-raisers and dressmakers. Gassin spoke to women involved with the Dragon Ball from the 1940's-70s, including Cheryl Cumines, from one of the oldest Chinese Australian families. Cumines, who is currently President of the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia, told Gassin, "There were all of these Australian-born Chinese women

who were from these really old families... there was that sense of community that went back a long, long way”.⁵²

After the defeat of the Nationalist Government by the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, the Nationalists retreated to Taiwan, from where they ruled as the Republic of China. During the time that the Australian government recognised the KMT Government in Taiwan as the legitimate government of China, Dragon Balls were an annual event. On 21 December 1972, the Whitlam government established diplomatic relations with the Peoples Republic of China. According to Gassin, recognition of the PRC government “made it difficult for organisers to sustain the high-level diplomatic and political affiliations so vital to the success of earlier balls”.⁵³ Gassin’s interviewees also pointed to changing norms around gender relations as another factor in the demise of the Dragon Ball in the early 1970s. The Dragon Ball remains one of the best-remembered historical events associated with Sydney’s Chinese community.⁵⁴

The post-war years

When WWII ended in 1945, the Australasian KMT raised funds to aid in China’s reconstruction, but there were also local problems to assist with. By 1945 there were about 1,300 Chinese seamen and evacuees from the Pacific Islands stranded in Australia. Samuel Wong, who had rejoined the Australasian KMT and been appointed to its committee, proposed a plan for the relief of the refugees which resulted in the establishment of the Chinese Youth League. As Kuo and Brett write, “At this time, the Sydney KMT was fulfilling two distinct functions. At the Australasian Headquarters branch it worked closely with Chinese government officials; and as the local branch it was active in helping Chinese seamen and Chinese refugees from the Pacific Islands.”⁵⁵

Amongst the Chinese seamen and refugees who came to Australia during the war years was Eugene Seeto, who was evacuated to Sydney from Papua New Guinea with his family in 1934. In 1945, Seeto joined the Australasian KMT.⁵⁶ The family of Chinese community leader King Fong also arrived from Fiji during the war years, establishing the Say Tin Fong grocery store and boarding house in Dixon Street.

Kuo and Brett write that by 1947, when the Australasian KMT held the Sixth Convention, declining membership and loss of properties during the war had left the Sydney branch alone with a debt of £4475. In spite of the debt, those attending the convention balked at selling 75-77 Ultimo Road and confirmed the decision of the Fifth Convention that no one had the right to do so. Instead, two properties owned by the Australasian KMT in Canton were sold.⁵⁷ Records show that the defeat of the KMT government by the Chinese Communist Party and their withdrawal to Taiwan was accompanied by “an avalanche of membership loss” in the Australasian KMT. “Many Chinese Australians were anxious about their families in the now communist controlled China, and did not want to be known for an association with the KMT.”⁵⁸

Deeply in debt, the Australasian KMT decided to rent out not only the ground floor of 75-77 Ultimo Road but also the second and third floor of the building leaving only the fourth floor with the *Australia-China Times* newspaper that had been started up in 1955.⁵⁹

⁵² GASSIN, 539, citing her interview with Cheryl Cumines for ABC Radio National, 2013.

⁵³ GASSIN, 547-8, citing interviews with Doreen Cheong and King Fong in 2012.

⁵⁴ GASSIN, 533.

⁵⁵ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 116-118.

⁵⁶ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 118.

⁵⁷ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 130.

⁵⁸ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 132

⁵⁹ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 133.



Figure 9 An edition of the China-Australia Times on display at The Chinese Australasian Nationalist Party building at 75-77 Ultimo Road. Photo by Juanita Kwok, 2024.

At the Eighth Regional Convention held in Sydney in 1958, Eugene Seeto, David Sang and Charles Chan were elected to the Executive, replacing David Young Narme and Mar Leong Wah who had been in charge of the headquarters branch for more than 20 years.⁶⁰ The new executive brought structural and financial reforms as well as renovation of the building. A Double Tenth celebration (commemorating the success of the uprising on October 10, which led to the downfall of the Ching dynasty) was held in the newly renovated hall at 75-77 Ultimo Road. The hall became the venue for popular film nights.⁶¹ The NSW Chinese Sport Association had free use of the third floor of 75-77 Ultimo Road to provide room for reading, table tennis, social dancing and movie showing. Douglas Lam, who arrived in Sydney from his village in Loong Tu, via Hong Kong, used to go to the reading room upstairs at the 75-77 Ultimo Road Building in the early to mid-1960s to browse Cantonese newspapers. Lam recalls, “There was an auditorium with a mobile projector showing Cantonese movies on Sunday nights to homesick people like myself.”⁶²

In December 1961, an application was made to the City to carry out alterations and use the second and third floors for the purpose of a commercial photographic and art studio.⁶³ In 1964, a restructure by the KMT’s Central Committee reduced the Australasian KMT to the Australian KMT, though it retained its regional organisational name and a role in co-ordinating regional conventions.⁶⁴ Throughout the years, the Australasian KMT has played an important role in

⁶⁰ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 149.

⁶¹ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 150.

⁶² Pers. comm. Douglas Lam, 24 April 2024.

⁶³ 75/77 Ultimo Road A. Holland & Associates. To use 2nd & 3rd floors for purpose of a commercial (18/12/1961 - 22/01/1962), [A-00123670]. City of Sydney Archives, accessed 29 Feb 2024, <https://archives.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/748633>

⁶⁴ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 158-159.

maintaining and fostering connections between Australia, Hong Kong and Taiwan. To encourage young Chinese Australians and Chinese New Zealanders to maintain their Chinese cultural heritage, the Australasian KMT helped facilitate trips to Taiwan. The first of these “Taiwan tours” was led by Tung Koon community leader Lai Kum Hung and by Maud Chin in 1979.⁶⁵ The Australasian KMT also established the Chinese Cultural Centre in 1979, to offer public services to the older Chinese communities and to the newly arriving Indo-Chinese refugee communities.⁶⁶ In the 1990s, a Chinese school was opened at 75-77 Ultimo Road for new migrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan.⁶⁷

In 1972, Eugene Seeto started to preserve the Australasian KMT’s archives and historical objects, making the building at 75-77 Ultimo Road the home of the archives of the Australasian KMT.⁶⁸ In 2006, an invitation extended to Henry Chan of the Chinese Australian Historical Society to examine the Archives, led to a project to identify, catalogue and preserve the historical archives of the Australasian KMT. A three year grant from the Australia Research Council allowed a research team from La Trobe University to analyse and open up the Archives to academic and community researchers. One of the outcomes of this project was the book, *Unlocking the History of the Australasian Kuomintang*, which is the source for much of the content of this report. Another outcome was an exhibition of historical images of KMT and Australasian Chinese, held at 75-77 Ultimo Road from 10-16 December 2011. In 2013 another exhibition supported by the History Council of NSW was held on site.

Currently, members of Sydney meet regularly to discuss management and plan activities which the KMT facilitates for members and the Chinese Australian community. The KMT also tries to channel Australian government policies and to communicate policies to members and the broader Chinese-speaking community. Non-members can apply to visit the building but staff numbers are stretched by requests. The building belongs to KMT members. The Chinese Ginsengs & Herbs Co. which has occupied the ground floor of 75 Ultimo Road for decades is a legacy business in the area.

The museum on the third floor of the KMT Building has a historically significant collection of documents and artefacts relating to its history, including typeset blocks for printing newspapers published by the Australasian KMT, original copies of the *Chinese Times/The Australia-China Times*, calligraphic dedications, records of meetings and membership, a range of film projectors and radios and a unique hand-painted scroll depicting Sun Yat-Sen’s funeral procession. (see the appendix for a fuller account of the documents and artefacts in the collection.)

A significant item in the collection is a donations book which lists donations made by members of the Australasian KMT to raise funds for the building at KMT 75-77 Ultimo Road. (see figure. 11). The book is open at a page listing donations from members in Rabaul, New Guinea and provides demographic information about the donors, such as age and district of origin. This information would be invaluable if it were rendered accessible for family history and other research.⁶⁹

Historians of the Kuomintang, Mei-Fen Kuo and Judith Brett regard the collection as having “major historic significance for the Chinese Australian community and for the broader Australian community as a whole.”⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Lance Lai interviewed by Christopher Cheng for the Australians with Chinese heritage oral history project, [//nla.gov.au/nla.obj-3183559394/listen/1-2933~1-2947](https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-3183559394/listen/1-2933~1-2947)

⁶⁶KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 171.

⁶⁷ Pers. comm. With Mei-Fen Kuo, 1 May 2024.

⁶⁸ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013, 169.

⁶⁹ Translation and comment on the Donations Book provided by translator, Ely Finch.

⁷⁰ KUO, M.-F. & BRETT, J. 2013. *Unlocking the history of the Australasian Kuo Min Tang, 1911-2013* Kew, Victoria, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 45.



Figure 10 Some of the artefacts on display at the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia, 75-77 Ultimo Road. Photo by Juanita Kwok, 2024.

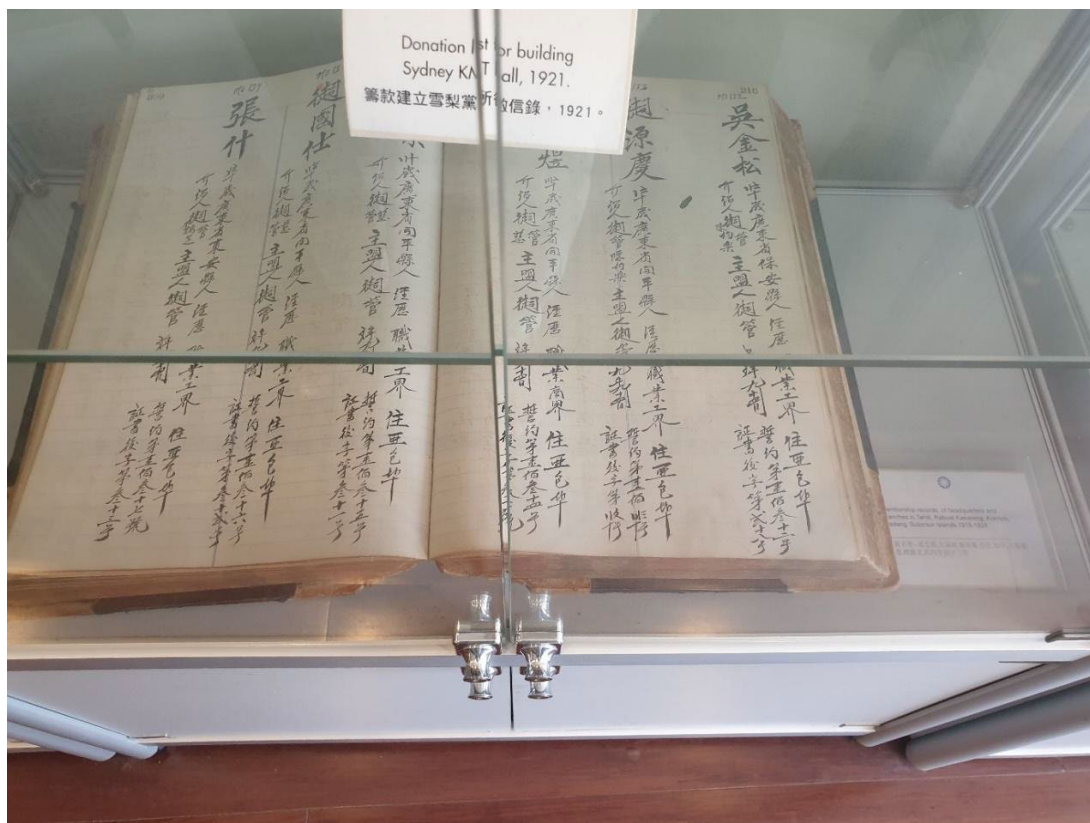


Figure 11 Donations list for building Sydney KMT Hall, 1921. On display at the Chinese Australasian Nationalist Party Building at 75-77 Ultimo Road Photo by Juanita Kwok, 2024.

4. Physical Description

The Sydney branch of the KMT is a five-storey masonry office building at 75-77 Ultimo Road. The front façade is painted brick, though likely to have been originally face brick. The building is painted white, with individual elements painted blue and red. Compositionally the façade is distinctive. The multi-paned glazing reads as a single window united under a single arch spanning the width of the building and divided into bays by brick mullions. The windows are aluminium framed, that replaced the original timber framed windows in the same configuration in the early 1990s. The façade is quite striking with its contrasting painted elements, including white Chinese characters which are fixed against a blue background on the arch and brick panels between the first and second floors, and the building date (1921) and initials K.M.T are also emphasised on the parapet and classical pediment. Two pilasters on either end of the building extend from the awning to the parapet. White down pipes run down their length and they are topped with two red decorative tree motifs and flag poles flying the Australian and Taiwanese flags. A third flag pole above the pediment is flying the KMT's flag. Together the elements of the façade come together to create a distinctive presentation to Ultimo Road.

An awning with pressed metal underside sits above the ground floor shop (featuring a modern shop aluminium and glass façade). To the west of the shop is a doorway and stairwell, lined with timber panelling and a pipe handrail, leading to the first and second floors. The upper floors of the building are all open plan; however, the ground floor and likely the first floor was originally divided by a wall running the length of the building.

The first floor is used as offices and there is no evidence of a dividing central wall as indicated on the original drawing (see figure 4). The elaborate plaster ceiling with a circular design indicates that this may not have been constructed as intended. Offices have been created with modern glazed and timber partitions, the floor is tiled and there is a glass partition separating this space from the stairwell.

The second floor contains a stage, false ceilings and modern timber flooring. The room is decorated in the colours (red, white and blue) and lined with ephemera of the KMT. A staircase located in the south west corner leads to the third floor. It is unclear if the staircase is original.

The third floor similarly has a false ceiling and modern timber floor. This level contains a large archival collection displayed in a series of glazed cabinets and open shelves with photographs lining the walls. The artefacts held in this vast collection includes records of KMT activities including donations, historical newspapers, photographs, artwork, telephones and typewriters (see Appendix for details on the collection). A defining feature of this room is the curved windows which sit under the arch of the façade.

Both the second and third levels may have original or early ceilings obscured by the modern suspended ceilings, but was not inspected so cannot be confirmed. The original drawings indicate that all internal floors are timber framed, supported by steel beams, though a detailed inspection was not carried out to confirm this configuration.

Similarly, the roof appears to be constructed in this manner, with a slight slope towards the front façade. Though not inspected, another room is located towards the rear. This room was not inspected but appears to have a skillion roof. The rear elevation was unable to be inspected.



Figure 12 Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road with its noticeable white, blue and red façade and curtain glazing.



Figure 13 Shop at ground floor of 75-77 Ultimo Road and pressed metal awning.

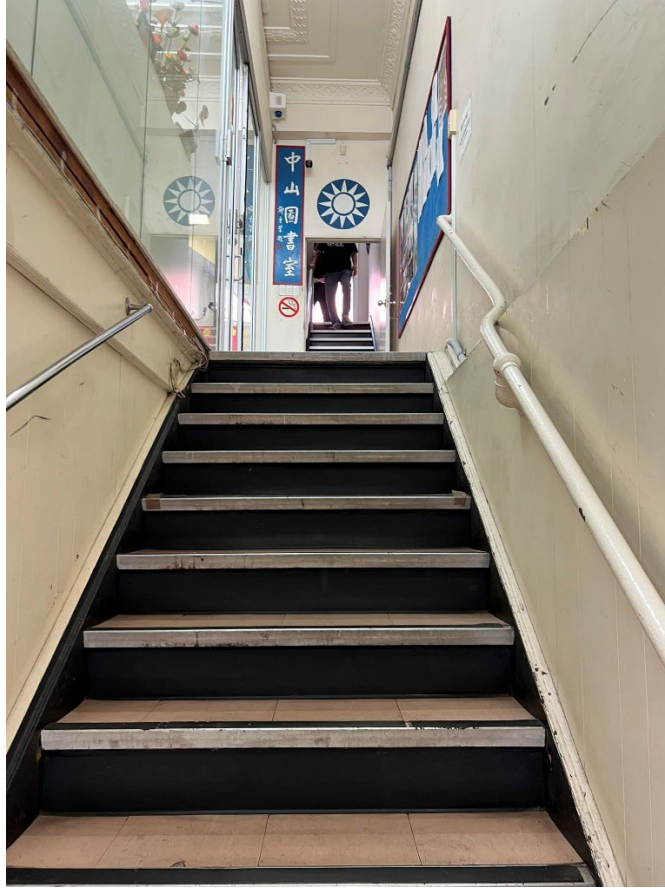


Figure 14 Stairwell to upper floors.



Figure 15 First floor office with plaster ceiling.



Figure 16 Second floor with stage.

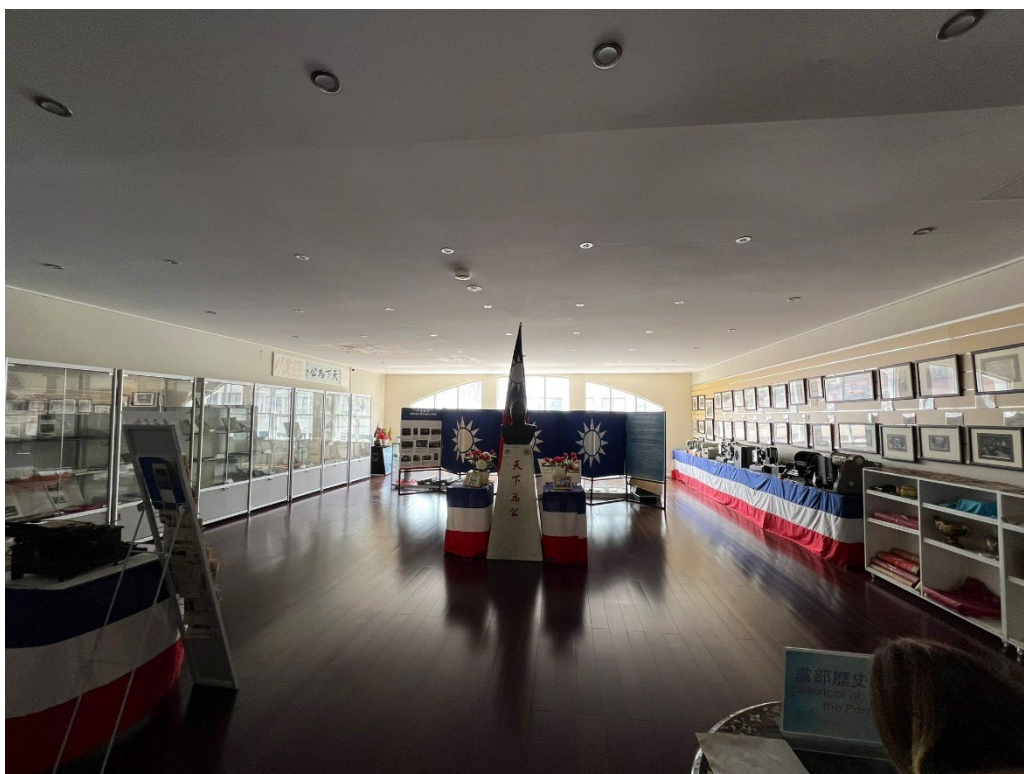


Figure 17 Third floor containing archival collection and arched windows.

5. Comparative analysis

As the Australasian headquarters, the Sydney branch, at 75-77 Ultimo Road, oversaw branches across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific and therefore this comparative analysis considers the place in this context. This comparative analysis aims to further understand the places historical significance and the integrity of the historic network of KMT's Australasian branches. In addition to other KMT headquarters the comparative analysis also considers places constructed by the builder Robert Wall & Sons and the architect Francis Ernest Stowe.

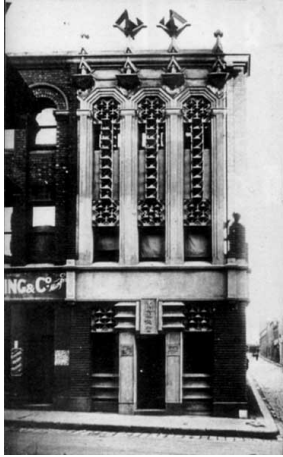

Image	Address	Description
New South Wales		
	Newcastle	By 1927 there was a sub-branch in Newcastle. ⁷¹ It is unclear where the Newcastle headquarters were located and if it is extant.
	Tamworth	By 1927 there was a sub-branch in Tamworth. ⁷² It is unclear where the Tamworth headquarters were located and if it is extant.
	Wollongong	By 1927 there was a sub-branch in Wollongong. ⁷³ It is unclear where the Wollongong headquarters were located and if it is extant.
	Inverell	By 1927 there was a sub-branch in Inverell. ⁷⁴ It is unclear where the Inverell headquarters were located and if it is extant.

⁷¹ "Their dreams are coming true, Sydney's Kuo Min Tang, Striking Growth and Activity," *The Labour Daily*, April 19, 1927, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/236620216?searchTerm=Kuo%20min%20tang%20Newcastle>

⁷² "Their dreams are coming true."

⁷³ "Their dreams are coming true."

⁷⁴ "Their dreams are coming true."

Image	Address	Description
Australia		
 <p data-bbox="204 846 655 929">Figure 18 KMT Building in Melbourne at 109 Little Bourke Street. Source Walter Burley Griffin Society.</p>	<p data-bbox="683 376 895 472">109 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne</p>	<p data-bbox="927 376 1390 674">Originally constructed as a warehouse in 1903 it was altered by Walter Burley Griffin for the KMT in 1921.⁷⁵ Like the Sydney headquarters it was opened by Chan On-Yan, a representative of Dr Sun Yat-Sen who was visiting Australia from China.⁷⁶ The building is extant but it has been altered.</p> <p data-bbox="927 689 1382 819">Though the Melbourne branch of the KMT is still active it is unclear if they still own/use the Bourke Street address.</p> <p data-bbox="927 835 1278 871">The place is heritage listed.</p>
	<p data-bbox="683 958 879 1055">Corner of Lake and James Street, Perth</p>	<p data-bbox="927 958 1374 1223">The KMTs Perth branch occupied their “new hall at the corner of James and Lake Streets” in 1921.⁷⁷ Currently there are three historical buildings (the fourth corner being a park) on this intersection but it is unclear which one the KMT occupied.</p>
	<p data-bbox="683 1256 895 1386">Hindley Street, Adelaide (most likely 171 Hindley Street)⁷⁸</p>	<p data-bbox="927 1256 1390 1487">The KMT Adelaide branch occupied this building in 1921 and there was a sign above the awning indicating their occupation of the premises.⁷⁹ It is unclear when they left this address. It is now used as a restaurant.</p> <p data-bbox="927 1503 1326 1538">The place is not heritage listed.</p>



⁷⁵ Victorian Heritage database report, ‘Chinese Nationalist Club (Kuomintang)’ <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/65205/download-report>; Walter Burley Griffin Society, ‘Kuomintang Club Building, 109 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne,’ https://www.griffinsociety.org/griffin_gallery/kuomintang-club-building-109-little-bourke-street-melbourne/

⁷⁶ Mei-Fen Kuo and Judith Brett, ‘Unlocking the History of the Australasian Kuo Min Tang 1911-2013’ (Australian Scholarly Publishing: Melbourne, 2013), p.25

⁷⁷ “Kuo Min Tang: Chinese Nationalist Party, A Perth Dinner and Meeting,” *The West Australian*, June 30, 1921, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/27967814?searchTerm=Chinese%20Nationalist%20Party%20Perth>

⁷⁸ “Little-Known Adelaide: Chinese Headquarters,” *The Advertiser*, June 29, 1935, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/40055712?searchTerm=Chinese%20Nationalist%20Party%20Adelaide>




⁷⁹ ‘Hindley Street Adelaide [B 3726] Photograph,’ State Library South Australia, <https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+3726>

Image	Address	Description
<p>Figure 19 Former headquarters of the Adelaide KMT branch. Source Google Street view.</p>		
	<p>Cavenagh Street, Darwin</p>	<p>The KMT's Darwin headquarters were likely located on Cavenagh Street Darwin.⁸⁰ This Street is highly developed and it is likely the place is no longer extant.</p>
 <p>Figure 20 Edwards Chambers and former headquarters for the Brisbane branch of the of the KMT. Source: Local Heritage Places</p>	<p>155 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006</p>	<p>King Edward's chambers were constructed in 1905 for Peter Murphy by architects Hall and Dods. It was leased to a series of business until in 1922 the Brisbane branch of the KMT leased the building. It is unclear when the KMT moved out of the building.</p> <p>The place is heritage listed for its association with its owner Peter Murphy, the eminent architectural firm Hall and Dods and for demonstrating the commercial development of the area.⁸¹</p>
<p>International</p>		
 <p>Figure 21 KMT headquarters in San Fransico. Source: Google images.</p>	<p>838 Stockton St, San Francisco, CA 94108, United States</p>	<p>Built in 1915, the headquarters of the San Fransico branch of the KMT is extant although it is no longer used by the KMT. The building retains evidence of its former use including the white sun on a blue background and in English written above the shop fronts is "Dr Sun Yat-Sen memorial hall of San Fransico."</p> <p>It is understood the San Fransico branch also has a large archival collection though no further details have been found.⁸²</p> <p>It is unknown if the place is heritage listed.</p>

⁸⁰ "20th Anniversary of Chinese Republic: Celebration in Darwin," *Northern Standard*, October 13, 1931, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/48051059?searchTerm=Chinese%20Nationalist%20Party%20Darwin>

⁸¹ 'King Edward Chambers,' *Local Heritage Places*, <https://heritage.brisbane.qld.gov.au/heritage-places/721>

⁸² In conversation with stakeholders at workshop 5th April 2024.



Image	Address	Description
 <p>Figure 22 Kuo Min Tang headquarters possibly in Rabaul PNG, 1933 prior to WWII. Source National Library of Australia</p>  <p>Figure 23 Kuo Min Tang Hall in Rabaul Papua New Guinea, 1947 Guinea. Source Australian War Memorial.</p>	<p>Rabaul, Papua New Guinea</p>	<p>Figure 11 depicts a building constructed in c.1929, it is from a series of photographs labelled Rabaul, New Britain.⁸³ It was likely destroyed during WWII. Figure 5 shows the KMT hall in the new Rabaul Chinatown which was rebuilt following destruction of the town during WWII.⁸⁴ It is unclear if the building remains extant.</p>
 <p>Figure 24 Solomon KMT headquarters. Source State Library of Victoria, H99.218/24</p>		<p>The Solomon Islands branch of the KMT was founded in 1923 under the Rabaul branch. They became an independent branch in 1931. It is unclear if the headquarters were purpose built and if the building is extant.</p> <p>The Chinese characters on the front of the building translates to “Solomans Branch of the Kuomintang [KMT].”⁸⁵</p>
	<p>Tory Street, Wellington New Zealand.</p>	<p>The KMT’s Wellington branch opened their new headquarters on</p>

⁸³ “Kuo Min Tang, Chinese Nationalist Party 1929 [Picture],” National Library of Australia 2279601

<https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/catalog/2279601>

⁸⁴ “The Kuo-Min-Tang hall where assemblies are held and administrative problems are solved by town...” Australian War Memorial, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C206665>

⁸⁵ “Wooden building with verandah and sign above reading -Kuo Min Tang/Chinese Nationalist Party” SLVIC, https://find.slv.vic.gov.au/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma9917856023607636&context=L&vid=61SLV_INST:SLV&lang=en&search_scope=slv_local&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=searchProfile&query=any,contains,H99.218%2F24&offset=0

Image	Address	Description
		Tory Street in 1928. ⁸⁶ It is unknown if it was purpose built. The exact location on Tory Street is unknown and it is unclear if it is extant.
	217 Hobson Street, Auckland New Zealand	The KMT Auckland branch was located on Hobson Street. The building was demolished in the late 1970s. ⁸⁷
 <p data-bbox="204 1077 639 1133">Figure 25 KMT Suva branch headquarters c.1945. Source: <i>Unlocking the p. 129</i></p>	Thomson Street, Suva Fiji	Although there was a Fiji KMT branch by 1916 it is unclear between what dates they occupied this building. The Fiji KMT headquarters in Suva was located on Thomson Street near Nabukalou Creek bridge. ⁸⁸ The area is highly developed and it is most likely that the building has been demolished.
 <p data-bbox="204 1467 651 1523">Figure 26 KMT Tahiti branch headquarters. Source google street view</p>	59 Av. du Maréchal Foch, Papeete 98714, French Polynesia	<p>The Tahiti branch of the KMT have occupied 59 Av. Du Maréchal Foch from 1924. The building was also used for Chinese and French language lessons.</p> <p>The building was destroyed by a cyclone in the 1980s and rebuilt with a hall. Much of its detailing was not reconstructed. Now known as the Association of the 'Koo Men Tong' it no longer has political affiliations but hosts social and cultural activities.⁸⁹</p> <p>It is unknown if the place is heritage listed.</p>

⁸⁶ "The Garden of Eden: Situated in Central Asia," *Waipukurau Press*, April 13, 1928,

https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/WPRESS19280413.2.62?end_date=31-12-1928&items_per_page=10&query=kuo-min-tang+Wellington&snippet=true&start_date=01-01-1928



⁸⁷ 'Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party). Auckland Branch – Memorabilia, 1917-1952,' Auckland Museum,

https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-research/collections/record/am_library-manuscriptsandarchives-576?p=10&c=ecrm%3AE84_Information_Carrier&prdt=%5B1917%5D&dept=manuscripts%20and%20archives&ordinal=0

⁸⁸ 'Man Standing in Thomson St, Suva, Fiji,' Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa A.019754



<https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1062618#open-iiifViewer>

⁸⁹ 'Koo Men Tong 1 Chinese School, Papeete,' *Tahiti Heritage*, <https://www.tahitiheritage.pf/ecole-chinoise-koo-men-tong/>




Image	Address	Description
Other politically affiliated buildings in Chinatown, Sydney		
 <p data-bbox="201 837 651 913">Figure 27 Chinese Masonic Hall at 18 Mary Street, Surry Hills. Source Google Street view.</p>	<p data-bbox="676 412 863 479">18 Mary Street Surry Hills</p>	<p data-bbox="924 412 1390 741">The Chinese Masonic Hall was purpose built in 1911 for the Yee Hing Company. The Yee Hing Company translated its name in 1912 to the Chinese Masonic Society. The Yee Hing Company were an anti-Manchu underground network that strongly supported the republican movement in China and was a predecessor of the KMT.</p> <p data-bbox="924 763 1342 891">A masonry building with classical elements, the top corners of the façade are also decorated with miniature pagodas.</p> <p data-bbox="924 913 1374 981">The Chinese Masonic Society continues to occupy the building.⁹⁰</p> <p data-bbox="924 1003 1342 1055">Locally listed on the Sydney LEP 2012 (I1571).</p>
Office buildings constructed by Robert Wall/Robert Wall & Sons		
 <p data-bbox="201 1648 624 1727">Figure 28 Culwulla Chambers with Dior store in the middle. Source Consuelo de Bobo Google images.</p>	<p data-bbox="676 1155 858 1290">Culwulla Chambers (67 Castlereagh Street)</p>	<p data-bbox="924 1155 1385 1518">At the time of its construction in 1912 this office block was the tallest building in Australia. Its construction led to the Heights of Building Legislation (1912) which restricted the height of buildings to 150 feet until 1956. Culwulla chambers is 170 feet. It has technical and aesthetic significance for its reinforced concrete construction and Federation free classical style.⁹¹</p> <p data-bbox="924 1541 1342 1608">Locally listed on the Sydney LEP (I1694).</p>

⁹⁰ 'Chinese Masonic Hall, Sydney' *The China-Australia Heritage Corridor*
<https://www.heritagecorridor.org.au/places/chinese-masonic-hall-sydney>

⁹¹ 'Former 'Culwulla Chambers' including interiors,' State Heritage Inventory,
<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2423739>

Image	Address	Description
 <p data-bbox="204 869 639 943">Figure 29 Former Ushers Hotel on Castlereagh Street. Source Google Street view.</p>	<p data-bbox="679 315 855 443">Usher's Hotel (64-68 Castlereagh Street)</p>	<p data-bbox="927 315 1385 539">Constructed in 1914 it is representative of a key construction period (1900-1920) and the importance of the hospitality industry in Sydney. It is also associated with the prominent architectural firm Ross & Rowe.⁹²</p> <p data-bbox="927 562 1337 622">Locally listed on the Sydney LEP (I1693)</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1525 552 1576">Figure 30 Beanbah Chambers on Macquarie Street.</p>	<p data-bbox="679 987 879 1115">Beanbah Chambers (235 Macquarie Street)</p>	<p data-bbox="927 987 1369 1279">Constructed between 1912-1913, Beanbah Chambers is a rare example of early twentieth century high-rise professional chambers. Highly intact, it also has aesthetic significance for its well resolved interior and exterior detailing including its use of art nouveau detailing.</p> <p data-bbox="927 1301 1337 1361">Locally listed on the Sydney LEP (I1881).</p>


⁹² 'Former Metropolitan "Usher's" Hotel Including Interiors,' State Heritage Inventory, <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2423738>

Image	Address	Description
Works designed by Francis Ernest Stowe		
 <p data-bbox="204 689 619 768">Figure 31 Balls Head Coal Loading platform in 2017. Source State Heritage Inventory.</p>		<p data-bbox="927 376 1393 577">Ball's Head Coal Loading Depot was constructed in 1917. It was the "first and longest operating shore-based coal loading facility in Sydney Harbour" and the largest in the southern hemisphere in 1927.⁹³</p> <p data-bbox="927 595 1326 656">It is listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR #02051)</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1099 632 1155">Figure 32 Masonic hospital in Ashfield. Source Lorelei Bookluck Google Images.</p>	<p data-bbox="679 801 858 898">63 Victoria St, Ashfield NSW 2131</p>	<p data-bbox="927 801 1377 1032">Opened in 1931 the former Masonic Hospital in Ashfield has classical elements. It was to serve masons and their families and dependents and was apparently the first of its kind in Australia at the time of its opening.⁹⁴</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1525 632 1581">Figure 33 Masonic School in Baulkham Hills. Source Hao Huynh Google images.</p>		<p data-bbox="927 1189 1377 1413">Originally the <i>Masonic Orphan School</i>, Baulkham Hills Masonic School opened in 1922 and closed in 1970s. Today the place is owned by the Hills Shire Council and houses the Hills District Historical Society Museum.⁹⁵</p>

⁹³ 'Balls Head Coal Loader Complex (including Platform Pier and Administrative and Workshop Buildings),' State Heritage Inventory, <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5056208>

⁹⁴ 'New Masonic Hospital at Ashfield, Sydney,' *Northern Star* 1931, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/94246966?searchTerm=Masonic%20Hospital%20Ashfield>

⁹⁵ 'William Thompson Masonic School (1924-1974),' Find & Connect, <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/nsw/NE00394>

Image	Address	Description
 <p data-bbox="204 723 635 775">Figure 34 Former Masonic Temple, North Sydney. Source Google Street view.</p>	<p data-bbox="678 315 879 409">317 Pacific Highway, North Sydney.</p>	<p data-bbox="922 315 1382 510">The North Sydney Masonic Temple was constructed in 1922 in the Free Classical Style. It demonstrates the prominence of the Free Masons at the time and has aesthetic significant.⁹⁶</p> <p data-bbox="922 528 1302 591">It is locally listed on the North Sydney LEP 2013 (I0961)</p>

Comparative analysis conclusion

Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road as the KMT's Australasian branch was part of a regional, national and transnational network of KMT branches. The 1920s was a prolific period that saw the opening of many new KMT headquarters of which 75-77 Ultimo Road is an early example. It is a rare example of a purpose built KMT headquarters with many, particularly in other Australian cities, being rented. Although many KMT sites have been lost some have survived. Of those that have survived, most are no longer used by the KMT, unlike 75-77 Ultimo Road which continues to be owned and occupied by the Sydney branch.

Robert Wall & Sons constructed a number of significant office buildings of which Ultimo Road is somewhat unusual for the composition of its façade under a single arch.

The buildings which Ernest Stowe designed suggest he had a strong association with the Freemasons. Research suggests there was a relationship between the European Freemasons in Australia and the Chinese Masonic Society, however, as both were secret societies, the extent and nature of the relationship is not yet fully known.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ 'Former Masonic Temple,' State Heritage Inventory, <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2180897>

⁹⁷ Fitzgerald, John. Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia. Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press, 2007, 80-99.

6. Assessment of Significance

6.1. Ability to demonstrate

Guidelines from the NSW Heritage Office emphasise the role of history in the heritage assessment process. A list of state historical themes has been developed by the NSW Heritage Council, in *New South Wales Historical Themes Table showing correlation of national, state and local themes, with annotations Dated 4 October 2001*.

The table below identifies fabric, spaces and visual relationships that demonstrate the relevant historic themes in evidence at [address].

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Notes	Discussion
2 Peopling Australia	Migration	Activities and processes associated with the resettling of people from one place to another (international, interstate, intrastate) and the impacts of such movements	The KMT building on Ultimo Road is evidence of the early Chinese migration to Australia and the political activities of Chinese migrants.
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Communication	Activities relating to the creation and conveyance of information	75-77 Ultimo Road was the registered office of the Chinese Times newspaper, an important organ of the KMT.
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Events	Activities and processes that mark the consequences of natural and cultural occurrences	As the Australasian headquarters of the KMT, Ultimo Road was the site of a number of party conventions. It was also the location important social events such as the Dragon Ball.
6 Educating	Education	Activities associated with teaching and learning by children and adults, formally and informally.	The KMT Hall was the venue for a Chinese language school established in the mid-1920s. In the 1990s, a Chinese school was opened at 75-77 Ultimo Road for new migrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Notes	Discussion
7 Governing	Defence	Activities associated with defending places from hostile takeover and occupation	<p>The Australasian KMT was active in raising funds for China's war effort during the Sino-Japanese War and for China's post war reconstruction.</p> <p>75-77 Ultimo Road was also the meeting place of the <i>Society of Chinese Residents in Australia</i> which was established to coordinate support for China's war effort.</p>
7 Governing	Government and administration	Activities associated with the governance of local areas, regions, the State and the nation, and the administration of public programs – includes both principled and corrupt activities	<p>75-77 Ultimo Road was purpose built as the headquarters of the Sydney branch of the KMT. The KMT were the ruling party in China from 1927-1949. For most of its history 75-77 Ultimo Road served as the Australasian headquarters of the KMT overseeing other branches across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific. It continues to be used as the Sydney headquarters of the KMT. The main goals given to the Australasian KMT were the strengthening of its loyalty to the Chinese KMT and the winning of sympathy for the KMT government in China amongst the Australian public.</p>
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Leisure	Activities associated with recreation and relaxation	<p>75-77 Ultimo Road was both the headquarters of a political party and a community gathering space, for members and for newcomers to Australia. The Hall was the venue for popular film nights. The NSW Chinese Sport Association had free use of the third floor of 75-77 Ultimo Road to provide room for reading, table tennis, social dancing and movie showing.</p>

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Notes	Discussion
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Social institutions	Activities and organisational arrangements for the provision of social activities	From 1938 to the mid-1970s the KMT organised the Dragon Ball, an annual social dance for members of the Chinese Australian community and their friends. Rehearsals for the debutante ritual in the Dragon Ball were held at the KMT Hall at 75-77 Ultimo Road. ⁹⁸ The Dragon Ball was the biggest and most-anticipated annual event on the Sydney Chinese social calendar. Besides the Dragon Ball, the Australasian KMT organised outdoor social activities. Through its social activities 75-77 Ultimo Road was an important place for the local community and for helping new arrivals settle in Sydney.
9 Marking the phases of life	Persons	Activities of, and associations with, identifiable individuals, families and communal groups	Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is associated with the Chinese Australian community and prominent individuals of the community include: Charles (Peter) Yee Wing, Samuel Wong and Eugene Seeto.

GML's *Chinatown Thematic History* (2023) was developed to provide key historical themes to guide understanding of the development of Chinatown. The following table identifies the relevant themes from GML's report.

GML main theme	GML sub-theme	Discussion
Theme 2: Living and Working in Chinatown	Women of Influence	Unlike the KMT party in China women were allowed to join the Australasian branch and were even exempt from the membership fee.
Theme 3: Belief, Culture and Community	Clan Houses, Clubs and Associations	Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is evidence of the headquarters of the Australasian KMT, of which people were members along political associations rather than familial and place of origin ties. Established over 100 years ago, the building continues to be owned and occupied by the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australia and it still fulfils political and social functions.

⁹⁸ GASSIN, GRACE, 2021, All Eyes on You: Debutantes' Explorations of Chinese Australian Womanhood at the Dragon Festival Ball, *Australian Historical Studies*, 543.

6.2. Assessment against NSW heritage assessment criteria

Criterion A Historic Significance

An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

75-77 Ultimo Road was purpose built in 1921 for the Sydney branch of the Chinese Nationalist Party (its Chinese name being Kuo Min Tang or KMT). It continues to be the home of the Sydney branch of the party and an invaluable archival collection of the party's activities outside China. For a significant period of its history, it was the party's Australasian headquarters and the location of the *Chinese Times* newspaper. It demonstrates three historical processes: the political processes of the KMT, the social processes of the KMT and the operation of the *Chinese Times*.

Political processes of the KMT

The KMT was globally a major political party in the 20th century and 75-77 Ultimo Road was the headquarters of the KMT in Australasia for over 100 years. It has been the locus of the Chinese Nationalist Party political activity since it was built in 1921.

Throughout the 1920s Australasian branches of the KMT were establishing their headquarters and the construction of the headquarters of the Sydney branch in 1921 is an early example of this activity. The Sydney branch was purpose built and funded by donations from members across Australasia. The establishment of global branches, purpose built and leased, is testament to the power and influence of the Chinese nationalist movement in the 20th century. The network of branches across Australia is representative of the contribution of Chinese Australians to the political revolution in China and the important part that the Australasian KMT played in a global network of Party branches.

The location of an Australasian headquarters in Sydney is demonstrative of the mobility and inter-connectedness of the Chinese communities across Australia and the Pacific through trade, communications and political affiliations which intersected in Sydney.

As the Australasian headquarters between 1922 and 1964, the Sydney branch is not only locally but also state, nationally and transnationally significant, as it oversaw branches in rural Australia and in capital cities, in New Zealand and in the South Pacific Islands. The Sydney office was the hub of KMT activity in the region and the site of a number of Australasian conventions over the years. Funds raised by members were remitted to support Sun Yat-Sen and then Chiang Kai-Shek Nationalist government which ruled China from 1927-1949.

The Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia not only contributed crucial funding for the Nationalist cause and for the war effort during the Sino-Japanese War, but it was also a transmitter of ideas and technology to China. It was progressive in comparison to the KMT in China, leading the way in allowing female members to join the Party and it played a role in advocating for the rights of Chinese Australians during the White Australia years. The third floor of the building which is set up as a museum of KMT history contains a number of artefacts which show how technology was adopted and adapted over the years to share communications with China and other branches in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific. These artefacts include cinematic projectors, audio tape records, old Gestetner machines, typewriters and printing and typographical equipment.

The building itself houses a large collection of records, documents, publications, photographs and artefacts related the history of the KMT's overseas activities.

The building is evidence of the keen interest in political reform in China maintained by Chinese Australians and how this carried over into their lives in Australia.

Social processes of the KMT

Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road was also the centre of many social activities and fundraisers for the Chinese Australian community of Sydney, particularly the annual Dragon Ball which began in 1938 and remained the major event on the social calendar for the Chinese Australian community until the early 1970s. It was also a place for people new to Sydney to connect through social activities.

Operation of the *Chinese Times*

Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road was the publishing office for the Chinese Times newspaper (1925-1949) which was an organ of the Australasian KMT.

Significance indicator	Assessment
Association with an event, or series of events, of historical, cultural or natural significance	<p>Nos 75-77 Ultimo Road was the location of a number of Australasian KMT conventions, which brought together delegates from across NSW, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.</p> <p>The rise of the KMT in China and Taiwan in the 20th century saw the establishment of overseas branches across NSW, including Sydney (75-77 Ultimo Road) Newcastle, Tamworth, Wollongong and Inverell.</p>
Demonstration of important periods or phases in history	<p>The Sydney branch at 75-77 Ultimo Road oversaw rural NSW branches, demonstrating significant Chinese settlement across NSW. The exact number in NSW is unknown but by 1922 it was reported that there were 23 branches and 5289 members of the Chinese Nationalist Party in Australasia and the South Pacific⁹⁹</p>

⁹⁹ YONG, 153.

Significance indicator	Assessment
Association with important cultural phases or movements	<p>Nos 75-77 Ultimo Road was a hub for coordinating important political and cultural activities of the Chinese Australian community. The building at 75-77 Ultimo Road dates from the early period of Chinatown centred on the Municipal (now Paddy's) Markets. At this time, the majority of Chinese migrants to NSW were Cantonese speakers distinct from the majority Mandarin speakers today.</p> <p>The Australasian KMT is distinguished both as a political and a social hub of the Chinese community in NSW, where it had branches across the state. The Sydney branch was a local social hub and the building at 75-77 Ultimo Road was the venue for cultural activities such as drama groups and film screenings, sports such as tennis and table tennis clubs and the organisational and rehearsal venue for Dragon Balls which were the key social event on the Chinese Australian social calendar from the 1930s to the 1970s.</p> <p>During the White Australia years, the Australasian KMT lobbied both the Chinese and the Australian governments for reform of racially discriminatory legislation.</p> <p>Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road was the Australasian headquarters of the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT). It was established to support political reform in China and as a base to maintain loyalty for the party in Australasia and to raise funds for the Nationalist Party and for various charitable causes. It transmitted ideas to local members and those across NSW through the <i>Chinese Times</i> (which had its publishing house at 75-77 Ultimo Road), meetings and conventions held at 75-77 Ultimo Road.</p>
Demonstration of important historical, natural or cultural processes or activities	<p>The Sydney branch of the KMT oversaw regional NSW branches and supported the KMTs government in China. In addition, it provided and continues to provide various community services. Over the years, these have included Chinese language classes (1930s), organising social activities. In the 1970s, it provided support services for new migrants from Indo-China. It continues to play a role in delivering community services today.</p>

Significance indicator	Assessment
<p>Symbolism and influence of place for its association with an important historical, natural or cultural event, period, phase or movement</p>	<p>Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is symbolic of the success of the KMT in the 20th century and the support for the party amongst the Chinese diaspora in Australasia as membership was wide spread and these members funded the construction of the building. It is also symbolic of their political activities across Chinese communities of Australasia whose ideas and fundraising, developed and raised in places such as Sydney and NSW influenced politics in China.</p> <p>Through its directives, meetings and conventions the Australasian headquarters at Ultimo Road oversaw and influenced a network of KMT branches across NSW. This was supported by <i>the Chinese Times</i> newspaper which had its publishing office at 75-77 Ultimo Road and was an organ of the KMT.</p>

Criterion B Historical Association

An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

75-77 Ultimo Road is associated with the Australasian KMT who have owned and occupied the purpose-built building for over 100 years.

Prominent individuals from the Chinese Australian community affiliated with the KMT at 75-77 Ultimo Road include:

- Charles (Peter) Yee Wing, the merchant and managing director of Tiy Sang & Co., who served as president of the KMT from 1919-1930. He helped establish the Australasian KMT Canton Liaison Office and was a co-founder of the China-Australia Mail Steamship Line.
- Samuel Wong, the merchant of Tiy Sang & Co. who was Vice President of the Australasian KMT. His membership, was revoked for objecting to Chiang Kai-Shek's leadership and the Communist purges of the Party, but in 1945 he re-joined, the party and proposed a plan for the relief of the refugees which resulted in the establishment of the Chinese Youth League.
- Mar Leong Wah, merchant and manager of Wing Sang & Co., was leader of the KMT for over 20 years and a founding member of the Society of Chinese Residents in Australia supporting Chinese resistance during the Sino Japanese War.
- Eugene Seeto, a wartime refugee who came to Australia and was later elected to the executive of the Australasian KMT. Seeto instigated the preservation of the KMT's historical collection.

The place is also associated with Robert Wall & Sons, a significant building company in the 19th and 20th centuries in Sydney who built 75-77 Ultimo Road and a number of other significant buildings such as Culwulla Chambers.

75-77 Ultimo Road is associated with the architect Francis Ernest Stowe. A notable architect and engineer of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Stowe was a prominent Freemason who was the Grand Architect of the Grand Lodge. Besides designing 75-77 Ultimo Road, he designed a number of masonic buildings, as well as the Ball's Head Coal Loading Depot. He also founded the Sydney Marine Engineer College where students such as Florence Taylor attended.

Significance indicator	Assessment
A key phase(s) in the establishment or subsequent development at the place or object was undertaken by, or directly influenced by, the important person(s) or organisation	The Sydney branch of KMT has been associated with 75-77 Ultimo Road for over 100 years. It contributes to the history of the local community representing the political activities of Chinese in Australia particularly during the early 20th century when membership was high. As leaders of the Australasian KMT, individuals such as Charles (Peter) Yee Wing, Samuel Wong, Mar Leong Wah and Eugene Seeto have extended associations with 75-77 Ultimo Road. They have made major contributions to the history of Chinatown and Chinese Australians in Australia including establishing the China-Australia Mail Steamship Line, the Chinese Youth League, garnering

Significance indicator	Assessment
	<p>support for China during the Sino-Japanese War, and instigating the preservation of the rare KMT archival collection at 75-77 Ultimo Road.</p> <p>The place is also associated with cultural activities important to the local community and held at 75-77 Ultimo Road including drama groups, film screenings, sports, and the organisation and rehearsal venue of the Dragon Ball.</p> <p>Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is also associated with the significant building company Robert Wall & Sons, and architect Francis Ernest Stowe who constructed and designed the building as well as significant buildings throughout Sydney in the 19th and 20th centuries.</p>
<p>An event or series of events of historical importance occurring at the place or object were undertaken by, or directly influenced by, the important person(s) or organisation</p>	<p>Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is associated with the Australasian KMT, having served as its headquarters from 1922-1964. In this role it oversaw branches across NSW, Australia, the Pacific and New Zealand, managing these branches through directives, meetings and conventions. Through its relationship to the NSW branches 75-77 Ultimo Road makes a major contribution to the history of NSW. Chinese Australians who were members of NSW branches were people of NSW and though their political activities, ideas and fundraising, were mainly directed at influencing politics in China, they were agitating support across NSW communities making NSW a venue of KMT political activity. They also sought to influence White Australia legislation. The building at 75-77 Ultimo Road, funded by donations from members across Australia and Australasia is a material manifestation of these efforts and ambitions in Chinatown. Thus, the association of the place to the Australasian KMT is significant in acknowledging the history of migrants, specifically politically, in NSW.</p>
<p>One or more achievements for which the person(s) or organisation are considered important are directly linked to the place or object</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

Criterion C Aesthetic/Creative/technical achievement

An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

Architecturally, nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is an early example of an office building in Sydney. It is of some architectural interest for its unusual composition where the fenestration is arranged under a single arch and reads as a single window.

The composition and detailing including arch, fenestration, brick mullions, pilasters, parapet and Chinese Characters make a notable contribution to the streetscape and demonstrates aesthetic characteristics associated with Haymarket's redevelopment in the early 20th century.

Significance indicator	Assessment
Recognition as a landmark or distinctive aesthetic natural environment	The composition of the façade is distinctive. The fenestration united under a single arch that spans the width of the building and lined with brick mullions come together to read as a single window. Its striking façade with its notable composition and detailing makes a strong contribution to the streetscape.
Recognition of artistic or design excellence	Not applicable.
Represents a breakthrough or innovation in design, fabrication or construction technique, including design/technological responses to changing social conditions	Not applicable.
Distinctiveness as a design solution, treatment or use of technology	The composition of the façade, with its fenestration under a single arch, is unusual in the local area.
Adapts technology in a creative manner or extends the limits of available technology	Not applicable.

Criterion D Social, cultural and spiritual

An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural, or spiritual reasons.

Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road has a strong association with the Australasian KMT and its members who have occupied the place for over 100 years. The place continues to be actively used and is the hub of the KMTs political activity in Sydney.

As a community hub where political, social and educational activities were located, 75-77 Ultimo Road continues to be highly valued by the Chinese Australian community as it evidence of one of the major political venues of Chinatown, and represents the political and social lives of the Chinese Australian community in Chinatown during the 20th century. As the headquarters of a network of branches across Australasia it also represents the political activities of the Chinese in NSW.

Significance indicator	Assessment
Highly regarded by a community as a key landmark (built feature, landscape or streetscape) within the physical environment	Not applicable.
Important to the community as a landmark within social and political history	Not applicable.
Important as a place of symbolic meaning and community identity	KMT membership was very high and to this community and the broader Chinese Australian community, 75-77 Ultimo Road represents significant political and social aspects of 20 th century Chinese migrants in Chinatown. This is through its capacity as the locus of KMT political activity in Chinatown since 1921 and as a community hub organising and hosting a number of cultural activities. Together these aspects made the place a hub of the Chinese Australian community in Chinatown. As a surviving example of the former network of KMT branches that once spread across Australasia, including NSW, the place at Ultimo Road is symbolic to the wider Chinese Australian community of the political activities of Chinese migrants in regional NSW and beyond.
Important as a place of public socialisation	Not applicable.
Important as a place of community service (including health, education, worship, pastoral care, communications, emergency services, museums)	Not applicable. The place currently does not function as a museum but the third floor is set up as a museum and therefore has the potential to operate as one.
Important in linking the past affectionately to the present	Not applicable.

Criterion E Research potential

An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is home to what is probably the largest collection of documents on the activities of the overseas KMT branches outside of China and Taiwan. The collection is an invaluable record of administrative records, publications and photographs not only of the Sydney branch but of those throughout Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. The archival collection has extensive interpretive value for not only the Sydney branches but those across Australasia including those in regional NSW. The collection has great potential in furthering our understanding of the history of the KMT and the Chinese Australian community in NSW and beyond. The collection was crucial in the development of the Mei-Fen Kuo and Judith Buttler's book *Unlocking the History of the Australasian Kuo Min Tang 1911-2013* though it is unclear to what extent the collection has been analysed.

There is also further research potential in the activities of the KMT across Australasia, such as the establishment of other headquarters and their links to 75-77 Ultimo Road.

Significance indicator	Assessment
Comparative analysis	<p>No other archival collections were identified in the comparative analysis and therefore the archival collection held at 75-77 Ultimo Road, appears to be the only one in NSW.</p> <p>The archival collection at Ultimo Road is highly representative of the history of the KMT in Australasia, including branches in NSW, and thus has exceptional interpretative potential for Australian historical research.</p> <p>This interpretative value includes research that could improve our understanding of the history of the KMT in NSW and the role of 75-77 Ultimo Road in that history.</p>
Potential to improve knowledge of a little-recorded aspect of an area's past or to fill gaps in our existing knowledge of the past	<p>There is some archaeological potential in relation to the former buildings on the site.</p>
Potential to inform/confirm unproven historical concepts or research questions relevant to our past	<p>The archival collection is highly representative not only of the history of the KMT but of the social, cultural, political and organisational activities of the Chinese Australian communities as a whole during the twentieth century and thus has exceptional interpretative potential for Australian historical research including in Chinatown and NSW. .</p> <p>The collection also has research potential for Chinese communities throughout Australasia, New Zealand and South Pacific where the KMT had branches. (see appendix for details on what the collection holds).</p>

Significance indicator	Assessment
Potential to provide information about single or multiple periods of occupation or use	The KMT's archival collection has the potential to provide information on the establishment and operations of 75-77 Ultimo Road and activities of regional NSW branches during the 20th century.
Potential to yield site-specific information that would contribute to an understanding of significance against other criteria	The KMTs archival collection is unique in the local area for its likely contribution to understanding the operations and achievements of the Sydney branch of the KMT and its historical significance to the local area. It also has potential to contribute our understanding of the location, operations and contributions of regional branches.

Criterion F Rare

An item possesses uncommon, rare, or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The archival collection of the Sydney branch of the KMT, housed at nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road, is likely a rare collection on the activities of the KMT's overseas branches. It is also likely the largest of its kind outside of China and Taiwan.

Rarity is a valuable criterion in the context of the Chinese in Australia as there is a history of resumptions and even later development demolishing places associated with the early Chinese settlement in Australia. Building nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is a particularly significant building. Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road is a rare surviving example of early Chinese Australian commissioned buildings and it is a rare example of a building purpose built for the KMT.

Significance indicator	Assessment
Rare surviving evidence of an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in an area's history that continues to be practised or is no longer practised	The building at 75-77 Ultimo Road houses the KMT's archival collection which is unusually extensive in the local area and NSW. The Archive provides evidence of the KMT's activities and membership across Sydney, NSW and beyond. It is rare to find such a large, intact and complete archive of a Chinese Australian organisation.
Evidence of a rare historical activity that was considered distinctive, uncommon or unusual at the time it occurred	Not applicable.
Distinctiveness in demonstrating an unusual historical, natural, architectural, archaeological, scientific, social or technical attribute(s) that is of special interest.	Not applicable.
Demonstrates an unusual composition of historical, natural, architectural, archaeological, scientific, social or technical attributes that are of greater importance or interest as a composition/collection	There was no collection of KMT headquarters in Sydney and therefore they cannot demonstrate a composition of historical attributes at a local level. It is unknown if the headquarters of the other NSW regional branches are extant and therefore it cannot be determined if a collection of KMT headquarters exists in NSW. If any regional NSW headquarters are extant then they would be valuable as a collection demonstrating an historical network.

Criterion G Representative

An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW’s cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area’s cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).

Nos. 75-77 Ultimo Road does not meet the threshold for criterion G.

Significance indicator	Assessment
A class of places or objects that demonstrate an aesthetic composition, design, architectural style, applied finish or decoration of historical importance	Not applicable.
Representative of a class of places that demonstrate a construction method, engineering design, technology, or use of materials, of historical importance	Not applicable.
Representative of a class of places that demonstrate an historical land use, environment, function, or process, of historical importance	Not applicable.
Representative of a class of places that demonstrates an ideology, custom or way of life of historical importance	Not applicable.

6.3. Statement of Significance

The building and its archival collection are a key site of Chinese history in NSW and Australia, directly related to the 20th century political history of China and Taiwan, and the social and economic affairs of Chinese Australians during the operation of the white Australia policy.

The building at 75-77 Ultimo Road was constructed for and served continuously as the headquarters of the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia (Kuo Min Tang or KMT) for over 100 years. It has been the locus of Chinese Nationalist political activity since it was purpose-built in 1921. It was also the publishing office for the Chinese Times newspaper (1925- 1949). The building at 75-77 Ultimo Road has not only local significance, as the headquarters of the Sydney branch, but is also significant at a state, national and transnational level as the headquarters of the KMT in Australasia, overseeing branches in rural Australia, New Zealand and in the Pacific.

Funds raised by members of the Australasian KMT were remitted to support Sun Yat-Sen and the ruling Nationalist government (1927-1949) in China and later for the war effort during the Sino Japanese war. The Australasian KMT was also a transmitter of ideas and technology to China. It led the way in allowing female members to join the Party and it played a role in advocating for the rights of Chinese Australians during the White Australia years.

Many prominent Chinese Australians are associated with the KMT Building at 75-77 Ultimo Road, including Peter Yee Wing, Samuel Wong, Mar Leong Wah and Eugene Seeto. The building is also associated with the prominent building company Robert Wall & Sons and architect Francis Ernest Stowe. It is architecturally notable for its fenestration and brick mullions under a single arch spanning to width of the building to read as a single window. Together the elements of the façade including its composition and detailing particular the arch, fenestration, brick mullions, pilasters, parapet and Chinese Characters, make a notable contribution to the streetscape.

The place was also the centre of cultural life with many social activities for the Chinese Australian community, particularly the Dragon Ball which began in 1938 and was a major event on the social calendar for the Chinese Australian community in Sydney until the early 1970s.

The building itself houses what is probably the largest collection of records, documents, publications, photographs and artefacts related to the KMT's history outside of China and Taiwan. It is also demonstrative of a prolific period in the 1920s that saw the establishment of the KMT's overseas headquarters in centres of Chinese settlement, of which the place is a rare purpose-built example which continues to be used today for its original purpose.

7. Listing Recommendations

Under its Local Environmental Plan (2012), the City of Sydney is required under 5.10(a) to “conserve the environmental heritage of the City of Sydney”. For a place to be heritage listed it needs to substantially meet at least one of NSW Heritage’s criteria (2023) for assessing significance. The significance assessment of 75-77 Ultimo Road has found that the place meets six criteria at least at a local level, and therefore it and its archival collection warrants protection under the Local Environmental Plan. The significance assessment has demonstrated that the place has importance to Sydney with its distinct history in the Haymarket precinct, its representing of the significant role of Chinese in Australia and the current regard held for the buildings by the community. Therefore, the place should be listed under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the City of Sydney LEP 2012.

8. Management Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn solely from a consideration of the significance of the place and good heritage practice.

These recommendations are framed with an understanding that heritage conservation is a social contract, requiring responsibility to be shared by the owners and consent authorities for the mutual benefit of all stakeholders.

As such, these recommendations are written with consideration of possible future ambitions of the owners, while striving to achieve the best heritage outcome for the place, and with an expectation that the consent authority, in representing the community's interest, will assist/support the owners in managing and conserving the significance of the place, where possible.

8.1. Obligations arising from significance

The high cultural significance of the place identified in the statement of significance obliges its conservation and good management (Burra Charter Article 2).

The significance is embodied in the place. Place means site, area, land, landscape, building of other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views. Place also includes fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places, and related objects. (Burra Charter Article 1).

The significance of 75-77 Ultimo Road is primarily identified the on-going use of the place as the headquarters of the KMT's Sydney branch for over 100 years, in the collection which it houses, and its historical use as the headquarters of the Australasian KMT. Consideration of these three values informs the management recommendations for the place.

The significance of the archival collection requires that it be appropriately cared for and that public access to the collection is facilitated.

The ongoing connection of the place to the Australasian KMT and the Chinese Australian community should be continued through use and ownership.

8.2. Tolerance for change

The façade of the building strongly conveys its association with the KMT and is of some architectural interest. There is limited tolerance for change to the building's façade with a need to preserve the buildings form and KMT associated details.

There is greater tolerance for change internally where there is limited original fabric. Appropriate interventions may include a lift and alterations to the layout. The open plan layout of the second and third floors is indicative of historical uses, namely a hall which held many social and political events. As such, any changes to the layout must ensure that the historical open plan remains interpretable.

8.3. Conservation of fabric

The archival collection should be assessed for conservation to assist with ensuring and facilitating appropriate care of its objects.

There is limited original building finishes and details at the place. Missing elements which could be reconstructed and/or reinstated, if desired, are the timber window frames and original ceilings could be revealed if existing.

8.4. Interpretation

The archival collection has high interpretative value requiring public access to be enabled. In the past, the Australasian KMT has held open days and is amendable to doing so in future,

dependent on the availability of staff or volunteers and funding. Public access to the collection could also be facilitated through digitalisation of the collection.

The significance of the place is not independent of the history and development of Chinatown in the Haymarket area, and as such, interpretive strategies for 75-77 Ultimo Road should be considered within an overall interpretation strategy for Chinatown.

We recommend that the City of Sydney and the owners work together in considering additional interpretive strategies for the place such as:

- Setting up a plaque(s) at street level to communicate the site's history and significance.
- Creation of digital archives/websites showcasing the history and significance of Chinatown, identifying 75-77 Ultimo Road as a place of significance in the area.

A heritage interpretation plan must be provided in the event of major alterations to the building.

8.5. Future use

Much of the building's significance lies with its direct relationship with the KMT and associated archival and movable heritage collection. It is recommended that future use of the building maintain these ties and continues to ensure the retention of significant internal and external features and appropriate conservation of its collection in accordance with relevant planning controls. Other appropriate uses include retail, offices or a museum space.

Appendices

Kuo Min Tang Building, 75-77 Ultimo Road

The following information on the building was provided by Elizabeth Kao, Treasurer of the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia (KMT). It is abstracted from Dr Mei-Fen Kuo's "Report on KMT archives" in 2006 and the book "Unlocking the History of the Australasian Kuo Min Tang 1911-2013" by Mei-Fen Kuo and Judith Brett, published in 2013 by Australian Scholarly.

"The KMT Building at 75 Ultimo Road was built exclusively with donations from individual party members, it was opened in 1921 and served continuously as the headquarters of the KMT organization for Australia and Oceania. The preservation of the organization's documentary collection to this day is largely a result of it being continuously housed at the one dedicated site.

"The building has four floors and a roof top room. The ground floor is leased to a Chinese herbalist shop for commercial purposes and the rental income maintains the operation of the KMT affairs. The KMT occupies the rest of the building. The organization's offices and reading room are on the first floor and on the second floor is a meeting hall. The third floor has a large room and a small storeroom and was used as a Chinese school classroom (Yu Mei Chinese School) in the 1980s and 1990s and now functions as a museum and the archives for the KMT.

"The third floor is set up as a museum of KMT history and contains a number of historical artifacts, including sewing machines, cinematic projectors, audio tape records, old Gestetner machines, typewriters, old gramophone records, printing and typographical equipment, as well as a round wooden table with marble top presented by Peking Café of Sydney, in glass display cases, there are organizational memorabilia including seals, badges, and a large number of Chinese moveable type and printing blocks. In this room are also a number of items from the archival collection that are on open display. The archived collection has administrative records, publications and photographs relating to KMT branches throughout Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. The collection also includes party membership lists, completed membership application forms, financial records, correspondence and notices, minutes of meetings and conventions, list of donors to various causes, magazine subscriptions lists, newspaper clippings, and internal and external publications (in addition to photographic and artifact collections). In the room on the roof top there are approximately ten-meter-long shelves with metal/plastic/leather-look boxes containing cinematic films screened during the 1940s through to the 1990s.

"The KMT Archival Collection kept in Sydney is probably the largest collection in the world outside of China and Taiwan of documents relating to the activities of the KMT branches among overseas Chinese. The archival collection is highly representative not only of the history of the KMT but of the social, cultural, political and organizational activities of the Chinese Australian communities as a whole during the twentieth century and thus has exceptional interpretative potential for Australian historical research. The collection is related not only to the Chinese community in Sydney but since the KMT had branches in Chinese communities throughout Australasia, New Zealand and South Pacific the collection is of national and international significance.

"The historical artifacts displayed in the KMT museum can be opened to the public on special occasions when the KMT is well planned and prepared. It is rare for such a large, intact and complete archive of an Australian Chinese organization to become available. The rarity, value and fragility of the documents in the collection along with the variety of other material, machinery, and artifacts highlights the need for professional/additional support for the KMT to establish a policy for collection management and continued preservation and protection of the collection. (This is our Committee's consensus)."¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Information provided by Elizabeth Kao, Treasurer, Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia (KMT), 6 March 2024.