

Mak King Shing

Mak King Shing was born on July 6th, 1942 in Macau, but lived in Kowloon, Hong Kong prior to his move to Sydney.¹ In 1962 he came to Australia aboard the M.S *Anshun* to study at university, and most likely resided in Sydney for up to two years, before returning to Hong Kong.² He subsequently returned to Sydney in 1964 to continue his studies, arriving on a British Overseas Airways Corporation flight. It's interesting to note that at both times he entered Australia, his immigration papers indicated that he wished to stay in Australia for longer than the Department of Immigration ultimately allowed. This perhaps demonstrates how poorly informed he was of immigration processes in Australia, but more likely it is indicative of the changes made in the Migration Act of 1958 which allowed the Department of Immigration far more discretion in the issuing of visas to foreigners with the intent of minimising the entrance of Asians, but without the racial implications attached to the now removed dictation test.³



This inscription written in pen on an interior wall of the Administration Area indicates that he was ousted by his landlord, and subsequently detained at North Head's Quarantine Station where he was processed and deported. Interestingly, in the inscription, Mak King Shing refers to himself as being "well-versed in the arts and matrial arts. I can speak Mandarin, Cantonese, English and French", however his use of several simplified Chinese characters seems to indicate otherwise. The use of simplified characters introduced in the People's Republic of China (PRC) in an attempt to boost literacy rates, but was not taught in schools in Macau or Hong Kong, and is deemed bad practice.

Interestingly, in the same year that MS *Anshun* delivered Mak Shing to Australian soil, the ship was involved in an immigration scandal. A man by the name of Willy Wong was arrested for being a stowaway on the steamer *Changsha* and residing illegally within Australia for seven years. On February 12th, he was taken to North Head quarantine station, Sydney's immigration detention facility, and his deportation order was signed on February 22nd.⁴ After his arrest, three non-Chinese Sydney residents submitted declarations in which they stated that they had known the man Willy Wong for seven years, and his solicitor wrote to the immigration department as well as prominent political figures to have his deportation order stayed. On March 24th, Willy Wong was placed on board M.S *Anshun* and taken to Hong Kong. While Willy Wong was ultimately deported, the fact that three non-Chinese individuals took the time and effort to come to his aid speaks to the connections Chinese immigrants made with individuals outside their own culture, and challenges the idea that the White Australia policy was necessary because it restricted people were seen to be culturally incapable to contribute to, and appreciate the values espoused by the young Australian nation from entering.⁵

¹ Mak, King Shing [Chinese - (1) arrived Sydney per SS ANSHUN on 1 Jan 1962; (2) arrived per aircraft GAPDE on 18 Feb 1964. Box 3], 1962-64, National Archives of Australia (NAA): SP682/2, 2059

² NAA: SP682/2, 2059

³ Tavan, G., *The Long Slow Death of White Australia*, (Carlton North, Scribe Publications Pty Ltd, 2005), p.105

⁴ Neumann, *Asylum Seekers*, p.130

⁵ Fitzgerald, J., *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2007), p.27