

FROM TOISHAN TO SYDNEY: THE JOURNEY OF THE YEN FAMILY

Talk by Robert Yen for the Chinese Heritage Association
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When Chinese Australian high school teacher Robert Yen delivered the eulogy at his grandfather's funeral last September, he realised how little he knew of his Grandad's early life. By the time Yen Siu-Cheong migrated to Australia in 1974, he had already lived two-thirds of his long life. In this talk, Robert discovers more about his roots and the history of the Yen family in China and Australia. The Australian connection begins in 1951 with the arrival in Sydney of John Yen, Robert's father, as a teenager working at his granduncle's banana wholesale business in Haymarket. It continues with the gradual migration of his father's siblings and parents, its involvement in the Chinese restaurant trade, the Sze Yup Society and the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT). This is the story of one family's journey, from Toishan in Guangdong province to the suburbs of Sydney, a story that spans four generations.

Introduction

My name is Robert Yen, I am a Chinese Australian, born here in 1965. I am what Chinese immigrants used to call an 'ABC,' Australian-born Chinese, or in Cantonese, *toh-sarng-jai* ('locally-born child'). I have brought my family with me today for this talk, firstly for moral support, but more importantly, to correct me if I make any mistakes. Please don't be too harsh on me because I am new at this. I am not an expert on my family's history nor do I have an extensive knowledge of Chinese Australian history, but there is enough collective wisdom and experience in our audience today to help me through. So feel free to interrupt, ask questions and tell me if I'm wrong. Even though I am a schoolteacher, you won't get into trouble. We are all Chinese here so we are family.

When my grandfather, Yen Siu-Cheong, passed away last August, aged 96, I delivered the English version of his eulogy at the funeral, and I realised how little I knew about his early life. By the time he had migrated to Australia in 1975, aged 65, he had already lived two-thirds of his life. I also realised how little I knew of my father's life before I was born, and how the Yen family came to make Australia their home.

I have been a mathematics teacher for 18 years, currently teaching at Hurlstone Agricultural High School, a state selective school in Glenfield, near Liverpool in Sydney's southwest. For the past ten years, I have been writing a newspaper column called 'Mr Yen's world' for the NSW Teachers Federation journal, *Education*, describing my teaching and personal life in a light-hearted way. My stories have been widely read by public educators in New South Wales, including Cheryl and Margaret Cumines here. When I published my grandfather's eulogy as one of my articles, Cheryl contacted me and asked if I would present a talk on my family. I said yes, but I knew I'd have to do some more research. I'd always wanted to learn more about my roots, so this seemed to be a good time. I have called my talk: 'From Toishan to Sydney: the journey of the Yen family', to discover how I got to be where I am today.

The Yen surname and the county of Toishan

My family name is Yen, pronounced *yun* in Cantonese and often spelt 'Yan' by others who share our name. Like most Chinese immigrants, our family comes from the province of Guangdong in southern China, with capital Guangzhou (Canton). Guangdong is also a sister province to New South Wales, and now includes Hong Kong and Macau, which were previously British and Portuguese colonies respectively. Famous people who share our surname include 1970s Cantonese pop star Jenny Tseng (*Yun-lai*), Chinese American TV chef, Martin Yan, of 'Yan Can Cook,' and Chinese American action film star, Donnie Yen, of 'Once Upon A Time in China II' and 'Hero'. In Sydney, you might know of the asthma specialist at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Dr Kwok-Yin Yan.

Within Guangdong, our family comes from the county of Toishan, 100 kilometres southwest of Canton, 140 kilometres west of Hong Kong and 80 kilometres west of Macau. It is formally spelt

Taishan after its Mandarin pronunciation, while its Cantonese pronunciation is *Toi-saan*, and in Toishan dialect it is *Hoi-saan*. When I was growing up, my grandmother spoke to us only in Toishanese. Toishan is often called China's first homeland for overseas Chinese because since the late 18th century, 75% of overseas Chinese have claimed origin in Toishan, including former prime minister of Papua New Guinea, Julius Chan, and Hong Kong actor Tony Leung. Today, there are 1.3 million people of Toishan roots outside of China, more than its local population of 1 million. They once dominated North America's Chinatowns and Melbourne, but not Sydney. Toishan became a city in 1992.

My grandfather's journey: Yen Siu-Cheong (1909-2005)

Yen Siu-Cheong (whom we called *A-Yair*, 'paternal grandfather') was born in 1909 in Poon Chung village, Toishan, in the coronation year of China's last emperor, the 2-year-old boy, Pu Yi. Two years later, the empire was overthrown by the Chinese Nationalist Party, or Kuomintang (KMT), with the Republic of China established by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen. My grandfather was the eldest child, and started his schooling at age five with a local tutor. *His* grandfather owned a grocery trading business in The Philippines, so when he was 10 he went to Manila with his uncle and cousin for two years. Then he went with his uncle to Canton for six years for high school.

After high school, aged 20, Grandad married my grandmother, Yee Chui-Chung (whom we called *A-Ngin* in Toishanese). She was 17 and they met through a matchmaker-astrologer, which was common at the time. Grandma came from Fung Lok village nearby, the eldest of four. Her grandfather was also a grocery merchant who was living in Sydney after setting up a business there.

In 1930, Grandad started studying at Sun Yat-Sen (Zhongshan) University in Canton while Grandma had her first child, a daughter, Yuet-Sham. He suspended his studies for two years to help out his grandfather's business in Manila when it ran into financial difficulties. His grandfather's accountant had run off with the company's money. In 1934, a son was born, Chun-Hon, my father. Grandad graduated from university in 1936, aged 27, with a degree in Law majoring in Economics. After performing with honours in a national graduate program, he was posted to Nanjing and after training became a senior tax officer at the Federal Treasury, Canton office.

During Grandad's career in public service, he moved often and became Commissioner of Income Tax and Director of Direct Tax in several offices in Guangdong and Yunan provinces. When my grandmother refused to relocate the family and travel with him, in 1942 he took a second wife in Yunan, Loong Lai-Kam, my other grandmother (whom we called *A-mah*). He was 33, she was 26. In those days, having two wives was quite common and legal.

With my grandmother, Grandad had 5 children: a daughter, 3 sons and another daughter.

English name	Chinese name	Birthyear	Relation to me	Where they live now
	Yen Yuet-Sham	1930	Aunty 1 (<i>gu-mah</i>)	died 1975 in China
John Yen	Yen Chun-Hon	1934	Father	Chester Hill
Benny Yen	Yen Chun-Bong	1936	Uncle 2 (<i>yi-sook</i>)	Beverly Hills
Jensen Yen	Yen Chun-Kong	1939	Uncle 3 (<i>saam-sook</i>)	Beverly Hills
	Yen Yuet-Yee	1946	Aunty 2 (<i>gu-jair</i>)	died 1975 in China

Note how my father's Chinese name, Chun-Hon, translated easily into John. With my second grandmother, Grandad had 4 children: a son, a daughter and 2 more sons.

English name	Chinese name	Birthyear	Relation to me	Where they live now
Albert Yen	Yen Chun-Mo	1945	Uncle 4 (<i>sey-sook</i>)	Westmead
Teresa Wong	Yen Yuet-Ming	1948	Aunty 3 (<i>gu-jair</i>)	St Andrews (Campbelltown)
Ricardo Yen	Yen Chun-Bun	1949 in Macau	Uncle 5 (<i>ng-sook</i>)	Blacktown
Austin Yen	Yen Chun-Mun	1952 in Macau	Uncle 6 (<i>look-sook</i>)	Wentworthville

There were 9 children in the Yen family: 6 boys and 3 girls.

1949: Leaving China after the Communist revolution

By 1949, aged 40, my grandfather had been appointed Regional Director of Direct Tax, Guangdong branch, with a quarter of the province under his jurisdiction. However, 1949 also saw the Nationalist government being overthrown by the Chinese Communist Party after many years of unrest, with the Japanese invasion during the Second World War followed by the civil war. The People's Republic of China was established with Mao Tse-Tung as Chairman. Our family home was seized by the new government, and our family fled to the safety of Macau and Hong Kong.

Grandad became an English tutor and opened a tutoring college in Hong Kong for needy students. The Nationalist government fled to the island of Taiwan to rule in exile. Grandad was offered a senior executive position in its treasury, but he declined the offer. He saw his family's future in migrating overseas for a better life. He knew of his father-in-law's business in Australia so in 1951, he sent his eldest son, John, aged 16, to Sydney under the sponsorship of his brother-in-law, Eric Yee, who already lived there with his wife, Violet. I am honoured that Eric and Violet are in our audience today, and thank them for coming. They celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary next year.

My father's journey: John Yen (Yen Chun-Hon, born 1934)

Yen Chun-Hon was born in 1934 in Poon Chung village, Toishan. He was the first son, and attended the village primary school at age 6 during the Second World War. In 1943, when he was 9, Japanese troops seized the family home, and the family moved to Yanping county for two years. They did not return to the village but to a neighbouring town, Sun Cheung, because there was a good primary school there. Dad's grandfather had a business there, so the family lived upstairs. As you will see, my father spent a lot of his early life living above a shop.

In 1947, aged 13, Dad joined his elder sister in Canton to attend high school together. Before starting school, they lived for a while with a family friend who shared our surname, Yen, whose son is the Dr Kwok-Yin Yan at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Dad boarded at the Sze Yup Overseas Chinese School for one year, then enrolled into Nan Mo, his father's old school.

After the Communist revolution, Dad continued his education in Macau, but it was interrupted again when he was sent to Sydney by his father in 1951. Dad's mother's father, Yee Chong-Lock (born 1890), and *his* father before him, Yee Ming-Lai, owned a grocery import business in Chinatown called Sun Kwong Hing. The plan was for Dad to live with his grandfather and start a new life in Australia. Dad's great-grandfather, Yee Ming-Lai, had arrived in Australia in 1868, aged 30, while his grandfather, Yee Chong-Lock, came in 1915, aged 25, eventually taking over the business. In those days, Chinese men came to Australia on their own to work, leaving their families in China, then returning later. Yee Ming-Lai died in 1929 in China while Yee Chong-Lock died in 1960 in Sydney, aged 70. Some of you may know of Chinatown identity Henry Ming-Lai who died in recent years, a tall, thin well-spoken man with glasses. He was Yee-Ming Lai's son and Yee Chong-Lock's half-brother. My father called him *saam-goong*: third granduncle.

1951: Coming to Australia

Robert Menzies was the prime minister of Australia after the Second World War, ruling for a record 17 years from 1949 to 1966, having also reigned from 1939 to 1941. During this time, there was a lot of anti-communism feeling in the world, due to the emergence of the USSR, China and the Korean and Vietnam wars. My father and his two cousins, Buck Lee and Victor Yee, immigrated to Australia under the sponsorship of Violet Yee, the Australian-born Chinese wife of his mother's youngest brother, Eric Yee. They sailed from Hong Kong to Sydney on the ship, the Tai Yuen. By arriving as students, they did not have to sit through the tough English dictation test. The population of Australia then was around 9 million, with about 9000 Chinese in Australia, 2500 in Sydney.

Dad's grandfather's shop, Sun Kwong Hing Importers, was located at 68 Campbell Street in Haymarket. Campbell Street runs off George Street and is where the Capitol Theatre has stood since 1927. Chinatown was here before it moved to Dixon Street in the 1970s. 68 Campbell Street is actually on the Surry Hills side of the railway bridge, off Elizabeth Street and across the road from

where Harry's Singapore Chilli Crab restaurant is today, if you know where that is. I visited 68 Campbell Street two weeks ago and found that it is now an accountant's office, Greene Moses Partners. But fifty years ago, Sun Kwong Hing was next to Tiensin Café and opposite the Shanghai Café. In those days, the word 'restaurant' wasn't used yet, and these Chinese cafes were small with fewer tables and cubicles. There was the Nanking Café, the Hong Kong Café, the Golden Capitol Café, and my father worked as a kitchen hand at the Far East Café. The Capitol Theatre and the Tivoli were part of Sydney's live entertainment district, home to musical and comedy shows.

Dad struggles with high school and English

Dad lived above his grandfather's shop, helping him out occasionally. He enrolled into Marist Brothers high school, Randwick with his cousin, Buck, commuting there by tram every day. They were the only Chinese students there, spoke little English and did not socialise with others. My father knew some English from school in Macau, and a kind Australian lady called Miss Davis ran English classes in Campbell Street. At Marist, Dad excelled at maths, chemistry and physics, but could not make any sense of English or geography. He also warmed to rugby because he could run fast (I have visions of Forrest Gump), but mainly because at age 17, he was two years older than the other boys in his form.

Because Dad stayed within Chinatown, he did not speak much English or meet Australians. He sometimes faced problems when he ran errands for his grandfather. When Dad asked for 'a quarter-pound of topside' at the butcher's, the butcher replied, 'No topside today. What about rump steak?' and Dad was speechless. At the milk bar, he asked for a milkshake and when asked 'What flavour?' he said 'Yes!'. After a haircut, the barber asked if he wanted a shampoo and my father said 'Yes' unknowingly, and then 'No!' when he discovered that shampoo meant 'wash hair'.

In 1953, my grandmother's mother, Tam-Lau, arrived from China and Grandma's family, the Yeess, were gradually moving to Australia.

1956: Dad works two jobs while studying

In his last year of high school, Dad started working in the kitchens of Chinese restaurants. In 1955, Uncle Eric opened the Wai Sing Cafe in nearby Glebe, so my father moved there to work and lived upstairs. After completing his high school Intermediate Certificate, he enrolled into a business college for Chinese students, aged 22. 1956 was a busy time for him: every morning, he would work at his granduncle's banana wholesale business at the markets from 5 am, then go to college, then work at the café until 11 pm. This was also the year the Olympic Games came to Melbourne and the beginning of television in Australia.

Dad's granduncle was Arthur Yee (Yee Hoy-Lock), whose father was brother to my Dad's great-grandfather, Yee Ming-Lai. Arthur Yee Bananas was located at 21 Quay Street, where the University of Technology (UTS) campus is situated today. The university has retained the façade of the old market building and on one of the pylons you can read the restored sign: 'A. Yee Pty Ltd Licensed Farm produce agents'. The business involved receiving bananas sent from Coffs Harbour and selling them to the fruit shops of Sydney. During the early mornings, Dad would organise crates of bananas for pick-up, lifting them onto pallets for Italian and Greek greengrocers. The business Arthur Yee Bananas still exists today, but it has been owned by other people for a very long time, like Dick Smith Electronics. Recently I spotted a calendar advertising Arthur Yee Bananas at a local fruit shop.

At night, my father worked at the New Moon Café opposite the Capitol Theatre and the money he made from the two jobs he sent back to his father in Hong Kong. The Yen family had lost everything after the Communist revolution, and my grandfather was having a difficult time making ends meet. Dad and Granddad corresponded by letters regularly. Because Dad worked long hours, he had little time left to study and in the end he stopped going to business college. On weekends, Dad played soccer at the Chinese Sports Association, of which Arthur Yee was president, and ping-pong at the KMT building in Ultimo Road. He joined the KMT (Chinese Nationalist Party) in 1958, aged 22.

The owner of the New Moon Café asked my father to move out of the kitchen because his English was better than others, so he waited tables alongside Australian waitresses who communicated orders by writing down numbers from the menu. Chinese restaurants were popular during the 1950s because the food was fast, cheap and exotic. In those days, hotels closed at 6 pm and patrons often walked next door for a Chinese meal. Dad remembers getting into physical fights with customers who were drunk, racially abusive or who would not pay the bill. The most trouble would occur on Anzac Day. Dad discovered that he had built up strength from lifting crates of bananas.

1959: Dad manages his first restaurant at Yagoona, Sun Toy Buck

Chinese migrants mainly worked in grocery stores or market gardens but in the 1950s Chinese restaurants became more popular and started appearing in the suburbs and country towns. Today, every Australian suburb or town has at least one Chinese restaurant. In 1959, Arthur Yee opened a Chinese restaurant in a growing part of Bankstown called Yagoona, about 20 kilometres southwest of Sydney on the Hume Highway. He called it Sun Toy Buck (New Taipei) after a successful trip to the capital of Taiwan. Dad became part-owner and manager, aged 25. Again, he lived above the restaurant and recruited a chef from Chinatown and his cousin, Buck. He bought a white Holden ute (utility van) to bring in supplies from Chinatown. The business thrived and soon, Buck opened a Sun Toy Buck restaurant in Campsie.

In 1962, two of my father's younger brothers, Jensen and Albert, arrived, moved in and worked at the restaurant. Albert went to Marist Brothers high school in Parramatta, then completed his engineering degree at the University of NSW. Before they arrived, the only family that my father had in Australia were his cousins, uncles and grandparents: the Yees. Now the Yen family in Australia was growing.

Cousin Buck was dating a Singaporean nurse, Bessie Tng, from the Crown Street Women's Hospital in Surry Hills and she introduced Dad to another nurse from the hospital, Nancy Ng, from Hong Kong. The two couples went out often, going to shows, and eventually Buck and Bessie married, with John and Nancy being best man and bridesmaid respectively. I suppose you know where this is heading. In 1965, Mum and Dad got married, at the Chinese Presbyterian Church in Surry Hills, across the road from the hospital. He was 31, she was 28. The minister was Reverend David Tsai, whom my mother knew from Hong Kong, and the minister there today is his son, also named David Tsai.

My mother, Nancy Ng, was born in Kowloon in 1937, the fifth child in a family of 10 children. She came from a Christian family with origins in the Chiu Chow county of Guangdong. Her father had a business manufacturing clothes. My mum came to Australia in 1963 to study midwifery with two friends after studying general nursing in Hong Kong. Her intention was to return home after the one-year course.

1965: Married life

Things happened quickly after my parents married. They bought a new brick veneer 3-bedroom house in Chester Hill, near Yagoona, for £6500, and they still live there today after 41 years. In 1965, my father earned £30 a week, the home loan interest rate was 5%, and he had to pay 50% deposit on the house. There were only 10 houses in quiet Judith Street (a dead-end street), all new. Later that year, they had their first child, at Bankstown Hospital, a son. They named him Robert after the prime minister at the time, Robert Menzies, with Chinese name, Yen Chee-Pang. I was the first baby born on Judith Street as well as the first Yen of my generation, so some celebrating went on in both Sydney and Hong Kong.

Mum worked at the restaurant until the day before I was born, then she returned to work when I turned 3 months. I slept above the restaurant during the day. The following year, my brother, Harold (Yen Chee-Ying) was born, named after prime minister Harold Holt, who was famous for disappearing into the sea while in office, believed drowned. Uncle Albert lived with us until he got married in 1969, aged 24, then my grandmother and her sister (Buck's mother) came to Australia.

My mother's youngest sister, Stella, also arrived as a student so my childhood memories are of visiting airports and seeing a steady stream of relatives pass through our house. Our home was a noisy, busy and happy place.

Chester Hill was in the federal seat of Blaxland, and our local member was a young Paul Keating who had just entered parliament, aged 25. Mum and Dad got to know him well because he helped us in applying for my grandmother and uncles to immigrate to Australia. They told me that Paul Keating might become prime minister one day, and he did, from 1991 to 1996, before John Howard's current reign. Incidentally, our state member was Neville Wran, who was premier of NSW from 1976 to 1986.

1968/1978: Yen's restaurants, Beverly Hills and Hurstville

The Sun Toy Buck restaurant was sold in 1968 and at age 36, Dad opened Yen's restaurant at Beverly Hills, further south, with his brother Jensen. It was one of the first restaurants on that busy strip of King Georges Road, situated on a corner next to the Bennelong Hotel. Chinese food was popular in the suburbs because even by the 1960s there was little alternative to pies, hamburgers and fish 'n chips. The first Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) also opened in 1968 in Guildford, and the first Pizza Hut would open in 1970 in Belfield, but pizzas would not take off in Australia for another ten years. The first McDonalds was opened in 1974 in Yagoona, so living in Chester Hill, we were halfway between Australia's first KFC and first McDonalds. In 1974, Dad extended Yen's restaurant by purchasing the premises next door and obtaining a licence to sell alcohol in that section, called the Dragon Room.

My youngest brother, William (Yen Chee-Bill), was born in 1972, named after prime minister William McMahon. It was a good thing he was born before December of that year, otherwise he would have been named Gough Yen after Whitlam. 1972 also saw the arrival of Uncle Benny and his new wife, Antonia, followed by the birth of their son, Raymond, exactly one year after William was born (19th March). The rest of the Yen family arrived in 1974: Grandad, my second grandmother, Aunty Teresa, Uncles Ricardo and Austin, and they lived in Harris Park, near Parramatta. Dad met Austin, aged 22, for the first time as he was born a year after Dad had migrated to Australia. The two elder sisters remained in China and Hong Kong.

We were able to meet the younger of those two sisters at the start of 1975, when Mum and Dad took us on our first big trip overseas, visiting Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau for six weeks. I was 9 and Harold was 8, and we were immersed into our native culture, learning to speak Cantonese very well and even going to the cinema and travelling by bus by ourselves. We got to know our *gu-jair* (aunty) Yuet-Yee, as well as our mother's family: our grandparents, great-grandmother, uncles, aunts and cousins. The rest of her family had migrated to the USA and Canada.

Tragedy struck the Yen family later that year when *gu-jair* and her husband were visiting my eldest aunty Yuet-Sham in Canton. Yuet-Sham was married with two sons aged 20 and 18 and a daughter aged 15. Both families were travelling from Canton to Siu Hing by boat when it capsized in the river. The two boys swam to safety but both couples and the daughter drowned, and in Australia we received the news by telegram. Dad never told my grandmother about this as the shock would have been too much for her. He just told her that they were all still in China and that we had lost touch with them. Ten years later, the younger son, Wong Yu-Kei (Keith) came to Australia to work at my father's restaurant, while the older son, Wong Yu-Heng, still lives in Canton.

Dad opened a second Yen's restaurant in Hurstville in 1978, shortly before the Westfields shopping centre was built there. He was 44 and I had started high school. I worked at the restaurant on weekends washing dishes and taking take-away orders. I remember the busy Saturday nights when we wouldn't go home until 2 am. Dad says that this was his most successful period, and the business kept going strong for another 10 years until the lease ran out in 1987.

My journey, Robert Yen (Yen Chee-Pang, born 1965)

I was born in 1965, Harold in 1966 and William in 1972, all at Bankstown Hospital. We lived with our parents and grandmother in a three-bedroom house, and attended the local primary school Chester Hill Public and high school Sefton High. The population then was not as multicultural as it is today. I often tell my students that when I was at school, there were only three Asian students, and one of them was my brother. Sefton High is a selective school today and its student population is predominantly Asian.

Actually, we didn't use the word 'Asian' in those days because there were only Chinese people in Australia and few other Asians. We did not get teased much at school because there were so few of us and we knew all of our classmates since Kindergarten. Grandma walked me to and from primary school, which was at the end of our street. Before I started school, we only spoke Cantonese at home and learned all of our English from TV, especially from *Sesame Street*.

Just like Dad, I sometimes had trouble with English at school. I remember in Kindergarten being blindfolded for a game and having to guess the object that was placed in my hand. I knew straight away that it was a pencil, but I didn't know the English word for it, so I said nothing. My teacher Miss Wade must have thought I was stupid. I also went home for lunch every day but one day I wasn't feeling very well and didn't go back, so I asked Grandma and Harold to deliver a note to Miss Wade for me (as they couldn't speak English). However, I didn't know how to spell the word 'sick', so I wrote 'Robert is six'. My kindergarten teacher didn't know what to make of this, so she stamped a big red star on the note, as a reward! I also remember that when Harold was in 1st grade, he was put into the ESL (English as a Second Language) class because the teachers thought he had trouble with English. But he was merely shy and didn't talk.

In 1977, I finished primary school as school captain and dux. Uncle Ricardo also got married that year, with a small family reception at the Ming Court restaurant in Double Bay, but an internationally-famous pop group was in Sydney at the time and we agreed to swap function rooms with them. And that's how we got to meet the members of Abba, and have photographs and autographs taken with them after dinner.

Mum and Dad worked long hours at the restaurant (11 am to 9 pm) and we usually stayed up until they came home, sometimes being treated with prawn cutlets and prawn chips. Tuesdays was their day off and we would often go to Chinatown for dinner. Even though we didn't see our parents much, we were very close and they had a big influence on us, always encouraging us to do our best, work hard and be proud of each other. Grandparents' birthdays were celebrated on a Monday night (the quietest restaurant night) at one of the uncle's restaurants, where we cousins would inevitably end up playing night cricket or soccer in the car park while the uncles played mah-jong with Grandad. The first six cousins of my generation were all boys, and I remember we would be excited if Raymond came down from Bathurst or Adrian from Richmond.

Chinatown on Sundays and visiting Hong Kong

We went to Sunday School at the Chinese Presbyterian Church, where we also attended Chinese class. This was followed by lunch in Dixon Street, which was then still a narrow one-way street rather than a mall. I remember the wonton soups and laminex tables at the Lean Sun Low, Eastern and Hingara cafes, the cranky woman at the Hong Sang grocery store, and buying roast pork and duck at Kai Yuen BBQ in Campbell Street. Yum cha lunch first came to Australia at the Mandarin Club, where you had to walk up flights of stairs to fifth floor, grab a ticket and wait for a table. In those days, the New Tai Yuen restaurant was actually new, and we dined at the Shanghai Village, Dragon Den and Fortuna Court.

Our family visited Hong Kong just before I started 4th grade, and we learned kung fu at a time when Bruce Lee films were popular. I remember suddenly feeling strong and empowered, and fighting students at school who bullied us for being Chinese, much to the delight of my father and horror of my mother. In those days, it was exciting to see someone Chinese on the street or on TV, even if actor David Carradine in *Kung Fu* was not Chinese. My memories of that first Hong Kong trip include catching a bus to our auntie's place on our own, seeing beggars and people spitting on

the streets, being impressed by the new harbour tunnel and afraid of the old-style toilets that were a hole in the ground and you had to squat.

When I started high school at Sefton in 1978, the first Vietnamese refugees arrived in Australia and were sent to the nearby Villawood Migrant Hostel, now the Villawood Detention Centre. In Year 7, I was asked to sit next to a new arrival from Hong Kong, Louise Chung, the daughter of the local market gardener, to help and translate for her. At school, I was good at maths, English and history. Later this year, I am going to my 25-year school reunion of Year 10 at Chester Hill RSL. During the Christmas holidays of 1982 between Years 11 and 12, Harold and I joined the first cultural study tour to Taiwan for children of overseas Chinese. We spent four weeks with other teenagers from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, visiting cities and learning Mandarin.

I spent four years at the University of Sydney for a Science degree and an Education diploma. Harold and William went to Macquarie University, majoring in Economics and Statistics/Computing respectively. Harold and I were the last students to receive a free university education, an initiative that had been introduced by Gough Whitlam in 1974. Mum's paternal grandmother turned 100 years old in 1984, so Mum, William and I went to a family reunion in Hong Kong. However, she passed away the following year.

1988: The Gold Coast period

1988, Australia's bicentenary year, was an eventful year. I started my teaching career, aged 22, when I was posted to Eagle Vale High School in a new suburb of Campbelltown. Sadly, my second grandmother died (of cancer) early in the year, aged 72. The lease ran out on Yen's restaurant in Hurstville and by the end of the 1980s, restaurants were competing with clubs and discos for business. We visited Brisbane for World Expo and an opportunity came up for Dad to manage the Chinese restaurant at the Coolangatta-Tweed Heads Golf Club on the Gold Coast. This was the largest golf club in Australia, and Dad was one of the first people to introduce all-you-can-eat buffets to clubs. Mum, Dad and Keith (my cousin from China) lived on the NSW-Queensland border while the rest of the family stayed in Sydney. We would drive up every Christmas for six years. Dad's Four Score Chinese restaurant was on the quieter NSW side of the border, and the club attracted customers from Queensland where poker machines were not yet legal, even though Jupiter's Casino had recently opened. The Dreamworld and Movieworld theme parks had recently opened. At one stage, Dad catered for busloads of Chinese tourists visiting the Gold Coast.

The 1990s

In my third year of teaching (1990), I moved out of home when Mum and Dad helped me put a deposit on a townhouse in Bradbury, a suburb of Campbelltown, where I lived for 14 years. In 1993, Dad's restaurant trade declined when poker machines were legalised in Queensland and the pilots' strike caused a dip in tourism. When the club closed the restaurant, Mum and Dad returned to Sydney for semi-retirement. Cousin Keith remained because he had bought a house there. He got married and had two children. Dad worked at a friend's Chinese takeaway at Parramatta Westfields while Mum was a nurse at an elderly nursing home. They also worked at Mum's brother-in-law's computer peripherals wholesale business, Weston Technology, in Alexandria.

Harold became an accountant, got married to Nicole Broadbridge in 1991 when he was 25, and had three daughters, Hayley, Jasmine and Caitlin, with Hayley being 13 now. They live in Erina on the Central Coast, near Gosford. William worked in market research, including a 2-year stint in London. In 1995, I transferred to Ambarvale High School in Campbelltown and started co-writing a series of mathematics textbooks called New Century Maths with my teaching colleagues. In 1999, I was appointed to Hurlstone Agricultural High School, where I also lived for three years as a tutor for its boarding students. In 1997, my grandmother passed away, aged 87.

Dad's brothers and their restaurants

After arriving in Australia, Dad's brothers married, had children and worked in restaurants (including Yen's) before starting up restaurants of their own:

2nd generation Yen	Married	Children	Chinese restaurant
John	Nancy	3 sons	Yen's, Beverly Hills and Hurstville Four Score, Tweed Heads South (with Albert)
Benny	Antonia	3 sons	Bathurst Chinese (with Buck Lee)
Jensen	Suriner	2 daughters	Yen's, Beverly Hills (closed 2003)
Albert	Karen* Emily	3 sons, 1 daughter	Golden Inn, Toongabbie (with Ricardo) Windsor Chinese (still open)
Teresa	Kent Wong	3 sons	Kent recently opened Rainbow Dragon Asian cuisines, Narellan Vale (Campbelltown)
Ricardo	Sally	2 daughters, 1 son	Golden Inn, Toongabbie (with Albert)
Austin	Winnie	1 daughter	Only son who did not go into the restaurant business. Worked for the government: Telecom, Centrelink

* Aunty Karen died of an asthma attack in 1986, and Uncle Albert remarried Emily, who had a daughter, Deborah, from a previous marriage.

Chinatown, the KMT and the Sze Yup Society

Dad has seen Chinatown grow and change for over fifty years, and these days there are mini-Chinatowns scattered all over Sydney, including Hurstville, Chatswood, Ashfield, Burwood, Flemington, Parramatta and Carlingford. Furthermore, the new Chinese immigrants aren't only from Hong Kong or Guangdong, but from Shanghai, Beijing and Taiwan as well. Mandarin, the national language, is now heard on the streets as well as Cantonese. You can now go anywhere for yum cha, and there are local Chinese newspapers, radio and TV. The old migrants were often illiterate, spoke only to each other, and did not integrate with mainstream Australian life, while the new Chinese are more business- and politically-minded, form networks, and have money and influence.

When Australia officially recognised the People's Republic of China in 1972 and cut its ties with Taiwan, Dad became more involved in the local KMT, ultimately becoming its treasurer, an office he still holds today. Sydney's KMT was formed in 1921 as the Australasian branch of the Chinese Nationalist Party, and my great-great-grandfather, Yee Ming-Lai, was its first secretary. The KMT was one of the first local Chinese associations, with a high profile amongst Chinese businessmen in Australasia, from Sydney to Fiji. Today, it holds functions for its members to celebrate national days, historical days, festivals and Chinese New Year. During his membership, Dad has helped new migrants with advice on Australian customs and procedures. My brothers and I were the first students of the Chinese language school set up by the KMT in the late 1970s, and we spent many a Sunday there practising our writing and speaking skills.

Over the years and especially during retirement, my uncles have become more involved in the Sze Yup Society. Sze Yup means 'four counties', and this society was established in 1898 as a local association for immigrants from four counties in Guangdong: Toishan, Hoiping, Sunwui and Yanping. It was set up by five import stores and was the spiritual and cultural centre for Sydney's Chinese community. It also helped old Chinese men raise enough funds to return to China. The Sze Yup Buddhist temple in Glebe is the oldest temple in Sydney. It was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1955. In more recent times, Arthur Yee's son, Harry Yee, has been president of the society, while

my uncle Albert is its current vice-president. My grandfather and uncles Benny and Jensen have been executive members.

The Yens enter the 21st century

In 2001, I met a Korean-born mathematics teacher, Ilhea Yoon, who was teaching in the isolated western NSW town of Hay. We met by e-mail after she asked me for advice on teaching a senior mathematics course. After a long-distance romance, she transferred to Sydney and we were engaged. We were married in 2003 at Ashfield Uniting Church by the famous Reverend Bill Crews, and the reception was held at the Marigold Chinese restaurant in Chinatown. I was aged 38. Our daughter Samantha was born in 2004, and next Saturday is her second birthday. Last year, we sold my townhouse and bought a two-storey house in the same suburb, Bradbury, for our growing family. Ilhea's father and brothers live in Sydney but her mother is in South Korea. She came for the wedding and Samantha's birth, and may live with us in future.

William also got married in 2003, aged 30, to Adriana Castelblanco, who was born in Colombia in South America. They also had their first child in 2004, Joshua, and live at North Ryde.

I still teach at Hurlstone and regularly write articles for the maths teacher association and HSC study guides for the Sydney Morning Herald. Harold owns an accounting practice in Epping with a partner, and his two eldest daughters are in high school. William and Adriana are market researchers for a London firm, and they both work from home by computer.

The 3rd and 4th generation of Yens

My grandfather was buried at Rookwood cemetery with his wives. His passing marks the end of his generation. The third generation of grandchildren are now mostly in their twenties and thirties, have graduated from university, started professional careers, and some are getting married and producing the fourth generation. This year, Anthony married in March while Grace will marry in October. Grandad had 9 children and 22 grandchildren. The number of great-grandchildren is currently 9, from Ka-Wah in China aged 23, to Samantha, Joshua and Ashleigh in Australia, who were born in the last two years. The total number of people in the Yen family, including those who have died and those who have married into the family, is 63.

After losing everything in the Communist revolution, Grandad had the foresight to send his family to Australia to start again, and for that we are all thankful. My parents' generation worked long hours in restaurants to provide better lives for their children, and for that my generation is extremely grateful. We are now all involved in professional careers as shown in the table below, in occupations as diverse as finance, caring for the disabled, website development, chemical testing, engineering on Sydney's trains and exercise physiology for workplace injuries. I only discovered recently that one of my youngest cousins, Alice, actually works at this hotel, the Avillion, as a human resources coordinator. Other than Keith and Adrian, none of us have continued with the restaurant trade, mainly because none of us can cook as well as our parents. Most of us tend to eat Australian food at home, and wait until the weekend to enjoy Mum and Dad's Chinese cooking.

2nd generation Yen	3rd generation Yen (age)	Spouse / Children (age)	Career
Wong Chek-Wing and Yen Yuet-Sham	Wong Yu-Heng (51)	Ng Shuk-King Wong Ka-Wah (23, male)	Maintenance and electrical officer (Canton)
	Wong Yu-Kei (49)	Chan, Lai-Kuen Louis Wong (11) Carol Wong (8)	Restaurateur, Murwillumbah Hotel
	Wong Yu-Ping (d. 1975 aged 15)		

John and Nancy Yen	Robert Yen (41)	Ilhea Yoon Samantha Yen (2)	Mathematics teacher and author, Hurlstone Agricultural High School
	Harold Yen (40)	Nicole Broadbridge Hayley Yen (13) Jasmine Yen (11) Caitlin Yen (9)	Accounting partner, Elite Financial Solutions
	William Yen (34)	Adriana Castelblanco Joshua Yen (2)	Data analyst for UK market research firm (working from home in Sydney)
Benny and Antonia Yen	Raymond Yen (33)		Engineering manager, braking systems on trains, Knorr-Bremse Australia
	Edward Yen (28)		IT consultant, hardware/software support on networks, 360 Consulting
	Peter Yen (26)		Website developer, 360 Consulting
Jensen and Suriner Yen	Grace Yen (29)	Liong Lim	Risk analyst, Sydney Futures Exchange
	Alice Yen (22)		Human resources coordinator, Avillion Hotel
Albert and Karen Yen	Adrian Yen (37)		Restaurateur, Windsor Chinese restaurant
	Andrew Yen (34)	Lisa Ng	Commercial property valuer, Savills Australia
Albert and Emily Yen	Deborah Yen (32)	Anthony Poon	Chemical analyst, National Measurement Institute
	Anthony Yen (29)	Lisa Stephenson	Exercise physiologist, workplace injuries, Peak Conditioning (Ascertainment)
Yu Wing-Fei and Yen Yuet-Yee	No children		
Kent and Teresa Wong	Arden Wong (29)		Account manager, BAC Insurance Brokers
	Dominic Wong (27)		Corporate and international tax analyst, Deloitte
	Mark Wong (23)		
Ricardo and Sally Yen	Ivy Yen (29)	Jeffrey Cheah Ashleigh Cheah (1)	Case manager for frail aged and disabled, Care Connect Limited
	Jacqueline Yen (28)		Data Quality Auditor, Television Audience Measurement, AGB Nielsen Media Research (Switzerland)
	Ivan Yen (27)		Registration officer, environmental sampling and testing, National Measurement Institute
Austin and Winnie Yen	Kitty Yen (4)	(adopted from China)	

Growing up Chinese in Australia: 20 signs you're an ABC

What has it been like being an ABC growing up with two cultures: the traditional and careful Chinese culture of my parents and the more easygoing, laidback Australian culture of my country of birth? Although at times there have been conflicts, I believe that we have been able to choose the best elements of both cultures. My cousins and I once wrote a list of 120 signs that you're a Chinese Australian. I would like to share with you 20 items from that list:

1. You have an uncle or aunty who's always asking you what you got in your last maths test.
2. You can go for a week without rice, but not McDonalds.
3. If you cough or sneeze, your mother shouts 'Put on some clothes' and immediately starts making soup.
4. Your parents look down on you because you don't know all the Chinese customs, traditions and sayings, and you'll never be as clever or wealthy as the kids in Hong Kong.
5. When it rains, you'll happily walk or play in it and not be afraid of getting wet or catching a cold.
6. When you're at a Chinese restaurant, you order in English. And you order sweet and sour pork and fried rice.
7. At the end of the meal, everyone chips in for the bill without the theatrics of arm-pushing, waiter-grabbing, 'let me pay' (*ngor-bei!*), etc.
8. If you're a child and there's another your age, adults immediately initiate the back-to-back 'Let's see who's the tallest' contest.
9. Your Australian workmates laugh at you at the Christmas party when you're red and tipsy after only one glass of wine.
10. You always have a cousin your age who's smarter than you or earns more money.
11. If you score 99% in a maths test, your parents want to know why you got one question wrong.
12. You won't queue outside a yum cha restaurant for one-and-a-half hours just because 'everybody else does so the food must be good' (and thus only add to the problem).
13. You won't eat fish heads, but you will eat chicken feet.
14. Dumb guys expect you to automatically know karate or kung fu. 'Karate's Japanese,' you tell them.
15. You get peeved when they reply, 'Chinese, Japanese – same thing!'
16. Even though you're in your 20's or 30's, you're still 'one of the children' (*say-lo*) and sit on the kids' table at family gatherings. And your parents still dump food into your bowl or on your table for you to eat.
17. You think coming second is OK.
18. Your parents tell you not to use the Yellow Pages to find tradespeople because they charge too much. Instead, they have their own 'yellow pages' of questionable Chinese people who will do the job at a special price.
19. You have rice with your Sunday roast or KFC.
20. You don't try to bargain (*gong-gar*) with the lady at David Jones.

Dad's hopes for the future

My parents are now active seniors enjoying their retirement years, with a full weekly schedule including tai chi classes, line dancing, day trips with Chinese community groups, working for the KMT, visiting nursing homes and sometimes looking after grandchildren. Like all Chinese parents, they feel they can rest easily now because all of their children have been married off and produced grandchildren.

I asked my father to reflect on his 55 years living in Australia and his hopes for the future generations of Yens. He said that he enjoys the freedom and opportunities that Australia provides, the way you can make money if you work hard. He likes how Australians are fair and honest people who help each other and treat everyone equally.

Dad's parents taught him old-fashioned values: to work hard, be honest, not be greedy or selfish, respect your elders and try to help people without expecting something in return. These are the qualities he hopes to pass onto the next generation, including loyalty, unity and pride in the family name and culture. The Yen family today are still fairly close-knit, and my father's younger brothers and sisters look up to him for what he has done. My generation of cousins also share a bond, keeping in contact regularly and having the odd soccer, cricket or touch football match.

I have travelled to China four times since 1995, when I first visited Beijing with my parents, but I haven't been to Toishan or Canton. I asked my father if he had a desire to return to his birthplace and he said only to visit the cemetery to pay respect to his ancestors, but otherwise there's nothing there to see now. Three of my uncles have been, and our old family home is still there. We can still reclaim it, but there is little point now. The only family we have in China today is my cousin Yu-Heng in Canton, the eldest son of Dad's deceased sister.

Conclusion and thanks

I would like to thank the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia for inviting me to research my family's history. I have always wanted to know more about my roots and my parents' lives before I was born but I didn't have that chance until now. The Yen family's journey is only one of many similar stories of Chinese immigrants coming to Australia, and it is important for my generation and future ones to know about it. Two of the association's aims are:

- To encourage and assist members in the recording of family and community histories
- To bridge the gap between early and more recent immigrants of Chinese origin

so I hope that my talk today has been successful in achieving these.

Grandad's eulogy

I will finish with what prompted this talk in the first place, the eulogy I delivered at my grandfather's funeral:

My grandfather, Mr Yen Siu-Cheong, was born in Toishan, Canton province, in 1909, the coronation year of China's last emperor. His family owned a grocery trading business in The Philippines, so he spent his childhood years in both Canton and Manila. In 1929, aged 20, he married my grandmother, Yee Chui-Chung, and started studying at Sun Yat-Sen University in Canton the following year. He suspended his studies to help his father's business in Manila, but graduated in 1936 with a degree in Law, majoring in Economics.

The following year, aged 28, Mr Yen was ranked top ten in a national graduate recruitment program and posted to Nanking, where he also joined the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT). After training, he was appointed as a senior taxation officer at the Federal Treasury, Canton office. During his career in public service, he was a commissioner of income tax and a director of direct tax in several offices in Canton and Yunan provinces. In 1942, aged 33, he married his second wife, Loong Lai-Kam, my other grandmother.

At age 40, Mr Yen was appointed Regional Director of Direct Tax, Canton branch, where a quarter of the province came under his jurisdiction. However, when the Communist Revolution took place in 1949, he moved most of his family out of China to Macau and Hong Kong. While striving to keep his family happy and comfortable, he became an English tutor and opened a tutoring college in Hong Kong for needy students.

Mr Yen aimed to send his children overseas for a better life and future. In 1951, he sent his eldest son, Johnny, aged 16, my father, to emigrate to Australia, under the sponsorship of his first wife's brother, Mr Eric Yee, who was living in Sydney. Granduncle Eric and his family are in our audience today, and we are honoured by his presence. During the 1960s, my father was joined by his mother and three of his brothers: Benny, Jensen and Albert. In 1974, aged 65, Mr Yen arrived in Australia with his wife, daughter Teresa, and two youngest sons Ricardo and Austin. Another two daughters remained in China and Hong Kong.

These details of Grandad's earlier life are new to me because I only know him from when he came to Australia and by then, he had already lived two-thirds of his life. I thank my uncle Austin, Grandad's youngest son, for providing this biography.

To my generation, Grandad was a proud and dignified gentleman who, with our grandmothers, loved and respected his family dearly, especially the young children. He was mild-mannered and educated, and always smartly-dressed in a suit. He never seemed to age, forever looking 65 and

healthy. He demonstrated old-world wisdom, giving good advice, telling us stories and giving us lucky money in red packets. He also loved his games of Mah-jong, especially when he won, and he could play all night with his friends and sons.

Grandad was a tolerant and kind-hearted person who did not judge people too quickly. He was fiercely proud of his family and made his grandchildren feel special. I remember Grandad being at my birthdays and school presentation days, including at a 10-year-old birthday party where he taught my school friends how to do kung fu. We will all remember our many family gatherings at my uncles' restaurants at Christmas time, Fathers Day and his birthday.

Grandad taught us to always do our best and to show respect for our culture and family name. When my cousin Anthony was seriously injured five years ago and his life was threatened, it was Grandad who remained calm and determined, saying 'Don't worry, BJ will be OK. He is a Yen and we Yens do not go easily!'

Grandad used to say that he might not live long enough to see me graduate from university, but not only did he see me graduate in 1987 (18 years ago!), he went on to be present at all of his grandchildren's graduation ceremonies. He lived long enough to see his grandchildren start their professional careers, as well as eight of them becoming married and nine great-grandchildren being born. A couple of weeks ago, he watched excitedly as my baby daughter, Samantha, started walking her first steps alongside his bed in the nursing home.

Grandad was the honourable patriarch of four generations of the Yen family in Australia. His passing marks the end of an era, but also the start of a new chapter as his family grows and evolves. Today is the day after Fathers Day and the fifth day of spring, and we are all moving on to the next stage in our lives. My parents' generation have started becoming grandparents, while my generation are getting married and becoming parents.

Long before he died, Grandad had planned to take us back to Toishan to show us our roots and to pay his respects to his ancestors, but sadly that trip didn't happen because he became too old to travel. However, all of his family are united together for the first time today, as my cousin Yu-Heng and his family have made a special trip from Canton to be here.

In Australia, Grandad saw his sons own successful Chinese restaurants in Beverly Hills, Bathurst, Toongabbie, Hurstville, Windsor and Tweed Heads. He was a respected senior member of the local Chinese community. During the 1980's, he was an executive of the Sydney League of the Three People's Principles Movement to Unite China, the president of his university's Australian alumni association, and an adviser to the Federation of Overseas Chinese Associations.

More recently, he was an executive of Sydney's Sze Yup Society and was also honoured by the KMT for his membership of over 60 years. He has been interviewed on local Chinese radio about his life experiences. On his 95th birthday last year, the chairman of the KMT in Taiwan sent him a congratulatory message, and today they have sent over a flag, plaque and banners. The two gentlemen speaking after me will be Mr Liu, representing the KMT, and Mr Quan, representing Sun Yat-Sen University.

My two grandmothers passed away in 1988 and 1997, and Grandad lived by himself throughout his eighties and early nineties in a high-rise apartment in Westmead. It sounds like a miracle, but each day he would walk or take the bus to Parramatta Westfields to buy a newspaper and a cup of coffee. In recent years, his age caught up with him but his mind and energy remained strong.

Mr Yen Siu-Cheong passed away suddenly but peacefully on Tuesday night, 23rd August, aged 96. He was surrounded by family. He lived a full, long and rich life, and left this world without regret, worry or fear. He had six sons, three daughters, 22 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. Grandad may be gone but his spirit and character lives on in all of us. My daughter, for example, has inherited his big ears. Grandad told me that big ears symbolise long life. We are all honoured and fortunate to have known him.

On behalf of his grandchildren, Robert, Harold, William / Raymond, Edward, Peter / Grace, Alice / Adrian, Andrew, Deborah, Anthony / Ivy, Jacqueline, Ivan / Kitty / Yu-Heng, Yu-Kei / Arden, Dominic and Mark, I say thank you, Grandad, rest in peace.

1st generation Yen			2nd generation Yen
	Yee, Chui- Chung		Yen Yuet-Sim (1930-1975, female) m. Wong Chek-Wing (1931-1975) (both died in shipwreck) (Guangzhou [China])
			John Yen (1934) m. Nancy Ng (1937) (Chester Hill) (Yen's restaurant, Hurstville, Four Score Chinese restaurant, Coolangatta-Tweed Heads Golf Club)
			Benny Yen (1936) m. Antonia Chung (1949) (Bathurst, Beverly Hills) (Bathurst Chinese restaurant)
			Jensen Yen (1939) m. Suriner Ma (Beverly Hills) (Yen's restaurant, Beverly Hills)
Yen, Siu-Cheong (1907-2005) m. Yee, Chui-Chung (1910-1997) m. Loong, Lai-Kam (1916-1988) (Harris Park, Westmead)			Yen Yuet-Yee (1946-1975, female) m. Yu Wing-Fei (??-1975) (both died in shipwreck) (Hong Kong)
	Loong, Lai- Kam		Albert Yen (1945) m. Karen Cheung (1945-1986) m. Emily Lam (1944) (Windsor, Westmead) (Windsor Chinese restaurant)
			Teresa Yen (1948) m. Kent Wong (1949) (St Andrews [Campbelltown]) (Rainbow Dragon Asian cuisines, Narellan Vale [Campbelltown])
			Ricardo Yen (1949) m. Sally Cheah (1952) (Blacktown) (Golden Inn Chinese restaurant, Toongabbie)
			Austin Yen (1952) m. Winnie Au (1955) (Wentworthville)

2nd generation Yen		3rd generation Yen		4th generation Yen	
		Wong, Yu-Heng (1955, male) m. Ng, Shuk-King (1954)		Wong, Ka-Wah (1983, male)	
Yen Yuet-Sim (1930-1975) m. Wong Chek-Wing (1931-1975)		(Guangzhou [China])			
		Wong, Yu-Kei (1957, male) m. Chan, Lai-Kuen (1963)		Louis Wong (1995) Carol Wong (1998)	
(Guangzhou, China)		(Bilambil Heights [Gold Coast NSW])			
		Wong, Yu-Ping (female) (1960-1975, died in shipwreck)			
		Robert Yen (1965) m. Ilhea Yoon (1972)		Samantha Yen (2004)	
John Yen (1934) m. Nancy Ng (1937)		(Bradbury [Campbelltown])			
		Harold Yen (1966) m. Nicole Broadbridge (1971)		Hayley Yen (1993) Jasmine Yen (1995) Caitlin Yen (1997)	
(Chester Hill)		(Erina [Central Coast])			
		William Yen (1972) m. Adriana Castelblanco (1970)		Andrea Zuniga (1993) Joshua Yen (2004)	
		(North Ryde)		* Andrea is daughter of Adriana from previous marriage	
		Raymond Yen (1973)			
Benny Yen (1936) m. Antonia Chung (1949)		(Guildford)			
		Edward Yen (1978)			
(Bathurst, Beverly Hills)					
		Peter Yen (1980)			
Jensen Yen (1939) m. Suriner Ma		Grace Yen (1977) m. Liong Lim (1974)			
		(Beverly Hills)			
(Beverly Hills)		Alice Yen (1984)			

2nd generation Yen

3rd generation Yen

4th generation Yen

Yen Yuet-Yee (1946-1975, female) m. Yu Wing-Fei (-1975)
(Hong Kong)

No children

Albert Yen (1945)
m. Karen Cheung (1945-1986)
m. Emily Lam (1944)
(Windsor, Westmead)

Adrian Yen (1969)

Andrew Yen (1972)
m. Lisa Ng (1974)
(Epping)

Deborah Yen (1974)
m. Anthony Poon (1974)
(Baulkham Hills)

* Deborah is daughter of Emily from previous marriage, others are sons of Karen

Anthony Yen (1977)
m. Lisa Stephenson (1979)
(Wentworthville)

Teresa Yen (1948)
m. Kent Wong (1949)
(St Andrews [Campbelltown])

Arden Wong (1977)

Dominic Wong (1979)

Mark Wong (1983)

Ricardo Yen (1949)
m. Sally Cheah (1952)
(Blacktown)

Ivy Yen (1977)
m. Jeffrey Cheah (1974)
(Bella Vista [Baulkham Hills])

Ashleigh Cheah (2005)

Jacqueline Yen (1978)

Ivan Yen (1979)

Austin Yen (1952)
m. Winnie Au
(Wentworthville)

Kitty Yen (2002)

* Kitty was adopted from China