



Hans Pehl's dragon at the entrance to Atherton Chinatown.

Credit: Tim Nemeth



The god to whom the temple is dedicated.

Credit: Tim Nemeth



Hou Wang Temple at night.

Credit: Tim Nemeth

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Presented by Museum & Gallery
Services Queensland in partnership
with Atherton Chinatown.

'Did You Know' – intriguing facts about the Museum

- Did you know that the Hou Wang temple is the only original timber and iron Chinese temple in Australia and New Zealand?
- Did you know that the temple design includes double doors and a high step at the front to repel evil spirits and repel negative influences?
- Did you know that the ornate timber banners that hung each side of the heavenly well described the feng shui elements which determined the site for the temple? Translated they tell of the dragon's breath- the early morning mist in the valleys and the Jade caterpillar- Herberton ranges that act as the back door to the temple.
- Did you know that all Chinese bells are clapperless?
- Did you know that the clapperless bell was struck 72 times for Chinese New Year and is one of the oldest objects in the temple?
- Did you know that the Chinatown museum's 'archaeological interrogator' allows visitors to see first hand the process of archaeological investigations and documentation of objects?
- Did you know that the original temple seal was found in the grounds on the Chinatown site before being returned to its temple home?
- Did you know that the grounds of the Atherton Chinatown included a pig oven which was used to cater for community feasts?

Our Profile

The National Trust property, Atherton Chinatown, incorporates an interpretive centre and the Hou Wang Temple. The museum is located in the old Atherton Post Office building.

The exhibitions orient visitors to the Atherton Chinatown site. Information panels, images, objects and interactive displays give the visitors relevant historical insight into Chinese culture and adaptations to day to day life in far north Queensland. Important temple objects including the official temple seal are also on display.

The Hou Wang temple is the only remaining Chinatown building. It is also the only original timber and iron Chinese Temple in Australia and New Zealand. Guided tours of the temple are a highlight of a visit to Atherton Chinatown, however visitors are also able to stroll the grounds and gardens as part of a self guided tour following the interpretive signs at their own pace.

What the Standards Program has meant for our museum

The Standards Program provided access to a more comprehensive and accountable approach to collection management. A more succinct focus on exhibition and display development and future acquisitions has resulted

Current organisational structures were reinforced but also extended to include a broader more efficient volunteer policy which clearly defines the expectations, roles and responsibilities and obligations of both volunteer and host organisation.