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*Queensland is filled with a richness and diversity of cultures which we acknowledge and celebrate, and recognise as a result of our long history of migration – this publication was developed with the sole intention of disseminating information for the benefit of the public and promoting the diverse immigration stories and experiences that are an important part of Queensland history.*

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# Japanese

– Written by Dr Yuriko Nagata and Dr Jun Nagatomo –

Japan is not known as a great emigrant-producing country. Nonetheless, from the late nineteenth century the Japanese government sent people as indentured labourers to North and South America, the Asia-Pacific and Oceania. Some of those labourers came to Australia. There has been a Japanese presence in Australia for over a century and today Australia has the third largest number of Japanese residents after the United States and China. Until World War II, Queensland had the largest concentrations of Japanese people in Australia, with indentured labourers working in the pearl-shell industry in the Torres Strait and on Queensland sugarcane fields. Because of this, the first Japanese Consulate in Australia was opened in Townsville in 1896, marking the beginning of the Australian-Japanese diplomatic relationship. This chapter will give a brief historical overview of how the Japanese community in Queensland has changed since the late nineteenth century.

## Early days to World War II

At the time of the 1901 Australian census, there were 3,593 Japanese in Australia, of which 2,257 were in Queensland. As the indentured labourers were not allowed to bring their families, the pre-war Japanese community was predominantly unattached males, but some married local women, settled permanently and produced Nisei (second generation Japanese), many of mixed race. In 1901 the passing of the Immigration Restriction Act, known as the White Australia policy, closed Australia to further settlement by Japanese, but the pearling industry was exempted because of its dependence on Japanese divers. The Japanese continued to arrive and dominate the pearling industry until the outbreak of World War II, but the number of Japanese in the sugarcane industry declined steadily.

When the war broke out with Japan on 8 December 1941 (7 December US time), Australia interned almost all of the 1,141 Japanese residents, including the Australian-born Nisei. As a result of this wholesale internment and their subsequent deportation after the war, Japanese communities in Australia largely disappeared. A small number of Japanese families with Australian-born children remained in Australia. Eighty former residents returned to their pre-war localities in Queensland, providing a tenuous, but unbroken thread which linked the pre-war and post-war Japanese presence in Queensland.

## The post-war Japanese community

Immediately after the war Australia placed a total ban on the entry of Japanese people, but both the Australian and Japanese governments were making conscious efforts to facilitate the development of economic relations between the two countries. Official ties were re-established in 1957. The number of Japanese people in Australia steadily increased from 966 in 1954, to 2,306 in 1961. A substantial number of these post-war arrivals were Japanese women who had married Australian soldiers in Japan during the Allied occupation. The Australian census of 1961 shows that 210 Japanese were residents in Queensland, of whom 121 were women. It is estimated that around 100 women settled in Queensland, the majority in Brisbane, and in this way the gender profile of the post-war Japanese community suddenly changed from being mostly male, to a female majority. The largest concentration of Japanese in Australia also shifted from Queensland to Sydney as it became the major destination for Japanese visitors.

The growth of the Japanese community in Queensland was slow, but by the end of the 1960s, three major Japanese corporations, Mitsui, Sumitomo and Mitsubishi, had opened offices in Brisbane. A Japanese consulate was established in Brisbane in 1966 and it was upgraded to a Consulate-General of Japan in 1972. By the mid-1970s, eight more Japanese companies had established offices in Brisbane. The Japanese presence in Australia over the decades following Australia's adoption of multiculturalism as a principal social policy in 1973 began to diversify with some permanent settlers in family units, but largely reflected business-, students- and tourist-related activities.

## Recent migrants

Since the 1990s, Japanese migration to Australia has been typical of the era of globalisation and transnationalism. The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 census showed that the median age of Japanese residents in Australia was 33.9 years, compared to 46.8 years for all overseas-born. In 2006, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs listed 52,970 residents in Australia who claimed Japanese heritage. They were made up of both permanent residents (25,315) and long-term sojourners (27,655). The permanent

residents had different reasons for migrating to Australia. The percentage of those who migrated to conduct business was relatively lower than that for other Asian ethnic groups. One of the main reasons for middle-class Japanese to migrate was lifestyle change, particularly for those who wanted to escape busy company life in Japanese cities. They came to find a better balance between work and leisure. Others migrated to retire here. Some female Japanese migrated to avoid traditional gender stereotyping in company or family life. Significantly, approximately 66 per cent of these permanent settlers were women.

Those sojourners who stayed in Australia on long-term visas were mainly students and those on working holidays, the latter being the majority. The Japan-Australia Working Holiday Agreement, which commenced in 1980, provides increased opportunities for exchange and life experience at the grass-roots level. In 2005–6, Japanese were the fifth largest group of people on working holidays in Australia after the United Kingdom, South Korea, Ireland and Germany. Some of these students and working holiday makers become permanent settlers after marrying Australians, and this category is increasing among contemporary Japanese migrants to Australia. According to the Consulate-General of Japan in Brisbane, approximately 19,800 Japanese were living in Queensland in 2011, of which 8,100 were on the Gold Coast, 7,500 were in Brisbane and 2,800 in Cairns.

The Japanese in Australia usually maintain close contact with their families in Japan even after migrating. In the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 census, the rate of uptake of Australian citizenship for the Japan-born in Australia was only 20.6 per cent, compared to an average rate of 75.6 per cent for all overseas-born people in Australia. Therefore, a large number of Japanese residents stay in Australia with a permanent resident visa. One reason for this is that Japan does not allow dual citizenship. This may change as the second generation of Japanese in Australia grows and if Japan modifies its attitude towards dual citizenship.

## Community associations

The Nihonjin-kai (Japanese Society) and Australia-Japan Societies are the two major organisations related to Japan in Australia. Both have been in existence since the pre-war years. Australian-Japan Societies are a nation-wide association and their membership

includes both Japanese and non-Japanese people from the business community, as well as members of the general community. They are social clubs which function primarily for the purpose of networking. They provide information through their monthly newsletters as well as organising events and activities for members. The Nihonjin-kai, on the other hand, used to be made up exclusively of Japanese nationals, but now their membership is open for non-Japanese to match the changing composition of a Japanese community with more mixed marriages. They play a central role in the welfare and social life of primarily Japanese expatriates in the communities. One of their main activities is to provide a Saturday supplementary Japanese school for children of Japanese families. The supplementary school is subsidised by the Japanese Government, catering for children of Japanese nationals who have to maintain their Japanese education so that they can go back to Japanese schools when families return home, as well as for children from migrant families who wish to maintain their first language. In Queensland, there are three campuses – Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Cairns.

To cope with the increasing demand from mixed-marriage families, in 2006 a new Japanese ethnic school called Japanese Language and Culture School of Brisbane was established with the aim of teaching Japanese as a heritage language specifically for children of these families. This school was formally recognised as an ethnic school by Queensland Education. A similar school was also established on the Gold Coast in 2011.

Today's Japanese presence in Queensland is also supported by Queensland's commitment to Japanese language education. Japanese is one of the priority foreign languages and is being taught at all levels – primary, secondary and tertiary. In 2009, Australia ranked fourth in the number of people learning Japanese after South Korea, China and Indonesia. The Japanese presence is also supported by cultural exchanges at the grass-roots level, and these are promoted by sister-city arrangements. To date, Queensland has established 29 various sister agreements with Japan.

## Acknowledgements

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## AUTHORS PROFILE

NAGATA, Dr Yuriko was born and grew up in Kawasaki, Japan. She came to Australia in 1980 and until recently taught Japanese. She is Senior Lecturer in Japanese in the School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies, the University of Queensland (UQ), and researches Japanese diasporic experiences in Australia.

NAGATOMO, Jun was born and grew up in Miyazaki, Japan. He received a PhD from the University of Queensland and is Associate Professor at the School of International Studies, Kwansai Gakuin University, Japan. He researches contemporary Japanese migration to Australia.

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# Jews

– *Written by Libby Burke* –

The Jewish community in Queensland, though small and tightly bound, possesses a small town-inspired resilience that has allowed it to survive for more than 150 years.

The history of Jews in Australia dates back to the First Fleet, with many settling in Queensland in the early days of the colony. After the separation of Queensland from New South Wales in 1859, a number of Jewish families settled in Brisbane, as well as dispersing throughout the state, including rural Queensland, as far north as Cooktown, and the Gold Coast – today thriving with a high Jewish population.

The professions of the early Jewish Queenslanders varied; from government officials, doctors, scientists, merchants, tradesmen or farmers and, in authentic antipodean spirit, some were even convicts.

The Jews who first settled in Brisbane promptly created a Jewish life. Tank Street was the home of a temporary place of worship and a religious school and cemetery were also set up in the city's west.

Sydney's Rev Joseph E Myers became the minister, with his cousin Jonas Myer Myers taking his place in the same year and working in this capacity for the next four decades, despite never becoming an ordained minister.

Jonas was a significant influence within the Queensland Jewish community, travelling throughout the state to engage in rituals, weddings, or simply when needed.

After Tank Street it was decided in March 1865 that a room in Bulcock's Building, Queen Street would be the next temporary place of worship and the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation was formed. It was roughly two decades later in 1886 that the present synagogue in Margaret Street was built and consecrated. Rural Queensland also was the home of Jews, and in 1876 a synagogue was opened in Toowoomba. Besides this being the first permanent synagogue in Queensland, the Darling Downs Jewish community declined over the years and by 1917 most Jews moved away.

Post World War II many Jews began to flock to the Gold Coast. Many were retirees from Brisbane, throughout Australia and overseas.

Over the years there have been distinct waves of overseas Jewish migration to Queensland.

The Russians arrived in the early twentieth century. Before 1914 a visa was not required and Brisbane, as the first port of call for ships arriving from Asia, proved to be a convenient option for many Jews. They built their own Deshon Street Shule in South Brisbane in 1910. This area flourished with Russian Jews and even became known as 'little Jerusalem', as Yiddish and Russian was commonly spoken and the aromas of Jewish cooking emanated from this inner city area. Many of the Russian Jews engaged in manual labour and formed a Jewish Workers' Association based on Bundist principles. A Yiddish library was also established.

The 1960s to the 1990s saw the arrival of Israelis. They tended to keep a low profile and did not mix with the general Jewish community until after being here for a number of years.

The most recent wave of immigration took place from the 1980s up to around 2005 by South Africans. It has petered out now, but their arrival continues to have a significant effect on the Jewish community in Queensland. All who came arrived as a 'package' – a cohesive family unit. They fled a society where government decision-making was based on race. The South Africans sought a better life and education here. This contrasted with their life in South Africa where they were not optimistic about the future for their children. Here in Queensland, Australia, they felt hopeful, they saw a safe place and plenty of opportunity for their children.

Over the years, the Jewish population has steadily grown, due to the growth in the Queensland economy and tertiary education options.

Although many are attracted to the casual lifestyle and temperate climate the Sunshine State has to offer, the population, now between 6,000 and 8,000 is still not significant enough to sustain a strong cultural Jewish lifestyle. The access to Jewish schools and kosher food, for instance, is limited compared to Sydney and Melbourne. Also, the community is very decentralised with Jewish people living in Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Cairns and some other regional centres.

This means that once young Jews want to start a family, many travel south where they can bring up their children with access to more Jewish infrastructure.

For these reasons, today's young generation of Jews continue to face many of the challenges their Queensland ancestors had to – and then some.

However, despite the challenges, many young Jews have a strong commitment to the continuation of their culture. Some pursue this in a more secular context, and others prefer to adhere to a more traditional Jewish lifestyle, for instance celebrating Shabbat (a family meal celebrated Friday night) and keeping kosher.

They are proud of their heritage, arts, culture and tradition and are keen to share and nurture it with both their younger peers and the general public.

Each year, for example, an open Chanukkah festival is celebrated that is embraced by both the Jewish community and the wider public.

As one young Jewish male said: “We want the traditions to continue, and know it is incumbent upon us to sustain them – we are the next generation. We don't want our traditions to die just because we may feel lazy. We want to share our beautiful culture with others.”

For some, being connected to other young Jews is important, while for others (as in many other communities), it is not so essential they have Jewish friends. The common denominator for many is to continue the tradition, which is supported by the small, cohesive and dynamic Jewish community.

“Being Jewish changes your perspective on the world because you really feel like you have an extensive support network,” observes one Jewish male.

One issue young Jews must face is the inordinate amount of attention Israel receives in the media and the repercussions as a result.

Although they attribute these negative sentiments to ignorance, it can be gravely upsetting for some.

One young 20+ Jewish male said that despite trying to desensitise himself to what he strongly believes are ill-informed views, the hurt and pain remains.

“It really upsets and gets to you. It does affect me.

You're fighting ignorance and stupidity – you can't argue because they're irrational.

“Israel was set up as a safe haven. I am proud of Israel and want it to be safe.

“There's a lot I can't do anything about, but what this does do is make me think about how best I can be a representative of my people.

“The word 'Jew' can be an insult and I want to show the beauty of our culture.”

Some of the major issues facing the young generation of Jews, according to one young Jewish leader, is apathy and atheism.

He expressed concern that some of his peers may not see how being Jewish benefits them. For this reason there are many subsidised trips for young Jews to Israel so they have the opportunity to connect with Jewish tradition and ritual.

Another factor is the rise of secular Judaism, often at the sacrifice of passing on certain intrinsic Jewish doctrines and principles such as a strong commitment to philanthropy.

However, despite these issues, Queensland continues to sustain an active Jewish community. It has been symbolically described as the greenery that grows on the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem: little green shoots sprout from the barren spaces, but determinedly continue to grow and re-shoot.

Today, Queensland is home to six Jewish places of worship. There are the Brisbane and South Brisbane Synagogues, Beit Knesset Shalom and the Temple of the Progressive Jewish Congregation in Brisbane, as well as a synagogue and temple on the Gold Coast. There is one Jewish school, Sinai College, and Gan Gani is the Jewish Kindergarten in Fig Tree Pocket in Brisbane's Western suburbs. There is a Jewish cemetery located at Mount Gravatt and a communal centre in Brisbane's south. In addition, there is a range of other Jewish organisations in Queensland that cover welfare, Zionism, sports, women and youth, which are all listed at the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies website ([jewishqld.com](http://jewishqld.com)).

So, just as the tenacious greenery continues to thrive despite its often barren surrounds, so too, does the Jewish community in Queensland.

As one of the young Jewish leaders said: “There are more beautiful things to come. Our aim is to share this with our fellow Queenslanders.”

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## AUTHOR PROFILE

BURKE, Libby was born in New York, United States, and after spending her childhood in Florida, boarding school in New England, and university years in California, she moved to Australia in 1988 after a study/travel stint in 1987. With a degree in international relations and art history, she pursued a writing, communications/media relations career in Brisbane. Being Jewish, Libby has a keen interest in all aspects relating to Judaism and Israel.

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# Kashmiri Indians

– Written by Ashok Qazi –

Kashmir is in the north-western region of the Indian subcontinent and until the mid-nineteenth century this term was exclusively applied to the Valley of Kashmir. In their own language the Kashmiri call it 'Kashir'. It is 134 km in length and up to 40 km in width, a valley with green pastures, brooks, lakes, glaciers and magnificent mountains as a backdrop; a unique paradise. The valley is part of a wider region under Indian administration. Accession with India took place at the time of India's partition in 1947 but territorial disputes involving major states have remained unresolved. Kashmiri people also live in India and Pakistan, and there is a substantial Kashmiri migrant population in Britain. When compared with the Kashmiri population of Sydney and Melbourne only a small number of Kashmiri have so far settled in Queensland.

Several Kashmiri professionals and their families came to Brisbane after initial settlement in other Australian cities. They include Information Technology (IT) experts, a medical doctor and business people with few links to other Kashmiri in this State. Amongst recent Kashmiri arrivals in Australia there were mainly highly educated men and woman with skills which are in demand by the Australian economy. In the home country the Kashmiri are closely associated with India and the Indian people, a relationship which continues after migration to Australia. Kashmiris in Queensland and Australia are mainly Hindus or Muslims. Many of us feel like Indians, work and socialise with them and join them in our religious practices. We also marry Indians though in Australia out-marriages with mainstream Australians are not uncommon.

Kashmiri families in Queensland and Australia tend to be comfortable about Australian multiculturalism as we consider cultural maintenance is important though difficult to maintain beyond the first generation. It is acknowledged that India, the world's largest democracy, is a remarkably diverse and vibrant multicultural country observing 22 official languages.

Kashmiris in Queensland speak with their children in Kashmiri but they accept that conversations in the family tend to be half/half. Even when the parents persist with speaking Kashmiri, the children increasingly respond in English. The children are rarely taught how to write in their parents' mother tongue. At school the children easily make friends with other children with different ethnic and linguistic

backgrounds but there is always a factor of social mainstreaming through the English language. On account of their parents' close association with India and Indians the children feel Indian and Kashmiri.

In the age of fast and cheap travel migrants are no longer cut off from their former home countries. Kashmiri professionals enjoy the Queensland climate and the suburban life style and when they return to their home country for a holiday they are confronted with a stressful urban life experience so different from the steadfast and quiet ways of Australian society and the Australian workplace. Kashmir was a cradle of religious thought and practices. Consequently many colourful and unforgettable festivals, rituals and cultural events are regularly celebrated. In the new country there are also many colourful places and occasions we can share and enjoy as part of our new Australian lives. We also preserve in the Australian-Kashmiri family the traditional dishes we loved at home: dum aloo (spiced potatoes) and rogan josh (spiced lamb) and most Kashmiri continue drinking the teas they loved to drink in the home country.

There is a Kashmiri Kitchen restaurant in Burpengary to the north of Brisbane. It is noted for its Indian food and vegetarian options. The Kashmiri Association is based in West End, Brisbane.

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## AUTHOR PROFILE

QAZI, Ashok and his family came to Australia in 1991. Some 15 years ago he established in Queensland a business trading in commodities, an occupation already pursued in his homeland Kashmir. The Qazis call Queensland home and continue to cherish the memory of their beautiful, peaceful and mountainous country of origin. Ashok is currently in his eighth year as president of the Kashmiri Association of Queensland.

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# Kenyans

– *Written by anonymous* –

Kenya is the most industrialised country in East Africa with a population of over 44 million. The country derives its name from Mount Kenya, Africa's second tallest mountain. Political independence was achieved in 1963. Kenya shares with Uganda and Tanzania the world's second largest lake, Lake Victoria. Conditions are tropical on the coast, semi-desert in the north and savannah in the south. Tourism is a major foreign exchange earner.

Kenyans in Queensland speak to each other in English and in Swahili, the country's two national languages, and we tend to mix the two languages when we converse, often mid-sentence. Swahili is a language of wider communication in East Africa and when we meet fellow Africans in Queensland originating from neighbouring countries of Kenya we also use both languages in the same way. Some 80 per cent of the media in the home country are in English, the remainder in Swahili. Adult Kenyans in Australia have good English language skills. Control of English facilitates our settlement and integration with Australian society. Kenyan families in Queensland tend to use both languages at home and they ensure their offspring also acquire at least spoken skills in Swahili. For the benefit of the children of the Kenyans in Brisbane, classes in Swahili are regularly held at Africa House.

Kenyan migrants living in Queensland settled mainly under the skilled migration scheme or under Australia's family reunion scheme. Kenyans also came to Queensland as international students and on completion of their study courses in Queensland institutions some of them decided to stay here permanently by applying for resident status. Kenyans live all over Brisbane and there are a few individuals and families living in regional and rural Queensland. Amongst Kenyans in Queensland there are no former refugees as we are not barred from returning to our beautiful home country.

About 80 per cent of Kenyans in Queensland have Christian religious backgrounds and about 20 per cent describe themselves as Muslims. Kenyan Christians and Kenyan Muslims live together in complete harmony. We are a proud Queensland community of about 1,000 people, including the second generation. We also like to interact with fellow Africans from other countries and together we celebrate African diversity in Queensland.

Sharing the experience of people diversity and good citizenship are key points of the Strategic Plan 2013–18 which has been devised by the Queensland African Communities Council (QACC). Multicultural societies are the norm in Africa and most African states are made up of many ethnic groups speaking different languages and practicing different cultures. It is implicitly understood that the multicultural Queensland population is most welcome to join and participate in the festivities and events held under the auspices of our community.

Kenya has had trade relations with Queensland and Australia for many years. Kenyan coffee and tea are well known to Australian consumer and many recent migrants from Europe would also know that large amounts of fresh flowers are dispatched from Kenyan airports on a daily basis to main European destinations. Kenyan made artefacts enjoy considerable popularity in Queensland homes as they can be purchased locally and Australian travellers to Africa love buying souvenirs in our African home court.

For young Australians, Kenya is perhaps best known for international achievements in sports such as long distance athletics, soccer, rugby and cricket. Here in Queensland we have our own Kenyan soccer team. We do not yet have a rugby team of our own. It is perhaps easier to assemble a soccer team requiring only 11 players and a player with limited skills in handling a soccer ball does less damage to an overall team effort. There are also several boxers amongst the sports enthusiasts of my community in Queensland, a sport which is widely practiced in Kenya. In 2012 Kenya was represented at the annual rugby tournament held at the Gold Coast. The Kenyan community of Queensland is a sponsor of the team from Kenya. My community's fondness of sports is an important factor facilitating the integration of the Kenyans wider the broader Australian society and the workplace.

Kenyan people at home and abroad love popular music, which is expressed through song accompanied by the guitar, our favourite musical instrument. When we meet socially in Queensland we sing in English, Swahili and also in other regional Kenyan languages. We also enjoy maintaining the Kenyan culinary habits and the ingredients for our cuisine are readily available in Queensland. We also like the Australian dishes.

Our community association is called Kenyans in Queensland and at our functions we enjoy the company of brothers and sisters from originating from other Africa countries. We are gregarious people and mixing with people with different cultural habits comes to us naturally. We feel at home here and want to be accepted. The sunburned Australian landscape often reminds us of our former homeland. Young Kenyans in Queensland and Australia now intermarry quite frequently, with other Africans and with mainstream and multicultural Queenslanders.

# Koreans

– *Written by Ki Chune Nah and Hye Jin Jang* –

The Republic of Korea, also known as South Korea, is located in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula of Far East Asia. Over 90 per cent of South Koreans (Koreans) are descendants of the people from south-central Siberia who migrated to Korea from the Neolithic Age to the Bronze Age. The Korean language is the sole national language. The country's near neighbours are China, Japan and North Korea. Korea covers a total land area of only 100,000 sq. km but there is a large population of 50 million. Over 25 million people live in the capital city and its surrounding areas, including the Incheon metropolis and the Gyeonggi province.

Korea is a member of the United Nations (UN), World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and a founding member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and the East Asia Summit. It is the world's 12th-15th largest economy, and its economy is mainly based on international trade, focusing on electronics, automobiles, ships, machinery and petrochemicals exports. Korea is now Australia's fourth biggest trading partner and the year 2011 marked the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and Korea. Both governments designated 2011 as the 'Australia-Korea Year of Friendship'.

## Early and recent immigrants

Koreans started to come to Australia in the 1920s. They were brought here by Australian missionaries for the purpose of studies. The first visitor to Australia was a teacher at a middle school in Korea which was established by an Australian missionary. Sponsored by the Assembly of the Victorian Presbyterian Church, he came to Australia in 1921 to study at the University of Melbourne. In 1926, another Korean came to Australia with Amy Skinner, an Australian missionary. Subsequently, doctors and other health workers, educators and pastors regularly came to Australia for professional development.

The first immigrant groups to settle in Australia were Korean war orphans and the brides and wives of Australian soldiers dispatched to Korea during the Korean War, 1950–1953. They came to Australia after the war but little was recorded about them. The first Korean who obtained Australian citizenship appears in the Australian Yearbook of 1958. The Korean community discovered that this person had married an Australian soldier. In the 1960s, a number of Korean Colombo Plan

students became permanent Australian settlers. A few Koreans did not go back to Korea after a period of study or training in Australia. A Korean scholar came to Australia as a research fellow at CSIRO in Geelong and an academic came to Brisbane to teach at the University of Queensland. They both chose to become permanent residents.

In the 1970s, Korean migrants arrived in increasing numbers. Queensland and Australia welcomed these qualified professionals and trades people: engineers, miners, chefs, mechanics, electricians, helicopter pilots and Taekwondo masters. In the 1980s, the number of Korean immigrants continued to grow as highly skilled managers and business people and investors began to settle in Australia. In the 1990s and 2000s, the number of Korean immigrants soared as Australia needed skilled workers. Over 10,000 Koreans became Australian permanent residents between 2000 and 2006, and most of them arrived under the Skilled Migration Scheme. This sudden exodus was prompted by a surplus of skilled workers on the Korean labour market and a shortage of such workers in rapidly growing Australia.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2011 Census, 88,964 people in Australia have Korean ancestry, partially or fully Koreans, yet they remain a relatively small ethnic minority group with a low profile in Australia. However, the Korean ethnic presence is now quite substantial when considering their relatively short immigration and settlement history. In 2011 there were 14,263 Koreans in Queensland. They are active in a wide sector of professional activities and are particularly attracted to business and small business, architecture, music and sports. The greatest concentration of Korean settlers is in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, and there are smaller though significant Korean communities in Cairns and Townsville.

## Arrival, integration and participation

New arrivals in Queensland from Korea are normally welcomed and supported by relatives, friends, co-workers or religious groups. They will assist them in activities as diverse as opening a bank account or renting a house and buying a car. In Queensland there are about 37 churches run by Koreans, including two Roman Catholic churches as well as Buddhist temples

in Brisbane and Gold Coast. It is assumed that some 90 per cent of Koreans in Queensland participate in a religious group.

Many immigrants from Korea have good English language skills, as English is one of the requirements for obtaining a permanent visa to Australia. Some of them have extensive work experience or have already studied in tertiary education before they receive the visa. For that reason, they seldom experience cultural difficulties when settling in Australia. Koreans prefer to live in the inner city of Brisbane or in the south-east or the city's north. They are also keen to live on the Gold Coast, another urban area with a large Korean community and Korean businesses and shops. They find it easy to build up good fellowships with other fellow Koreans and it is convenient to live in areas where Korean goods and authentic Korean food are available.

Korean settlers start life in Australia as skilled migrants. They normally start off as employees or they set up a small business relevant to their skills and work experience. Koreans in Queensland open a variety of businesses such as accounting and law firms, (oriental) medical clinics, duty-free shops, gyms, saunas, newspaper companies, grocery markets, restaurants, and education and travel agencies. In addition, there are a number of Koreans working for companies established by enterprising Korean business groups: Diana Hotel and Princess Plaza in Woolloongabba, Springwood Tower Apartment Hotel and Hotel Gloria in Springwood, Willahra Tower in the Brisbane city, Prime Meat in Cannon Hill, Smart Factory Outlet in Heathwood, CJ in Toowoomba, and Korea Zinc Australia in Townsville.

As the number of Korean settlers in Queensland has increased, the presence of first and second generation Koreans has also increased. The second generation grew up in the Australian education system and naturally fully integrated with the Australian mainstream. It is easily noticed that some Koreans have nearly forgotten the Korean language and/or culture. In such cases they may end up estranging themselves from their own family and their fellow Koreans as they experience some difficulties when trying to communicate. Therefore, the earlier generation of Korean migrants has endeavoured to

draw their children to studying the Korean language and culture hoping to pass down the valuable Korean cultural heritage to future generations. By voluntarily supporting the Korean language schools young Koreans are given an opportunity for the maintenance of their language and culture. There are a half dozen Korean language schools in Queensland, mainly Brisbane and on the Gold Coast. There is no conflict between good citizenship in multicultural and English-speaking Australia and the teaching to youngster of the spirit and the pride of Korea through the Korean language. Why should we not diffuse the Korean heritage of culture, manners, literature, music, dance and sports to anyone with an interest in our community in Australia and the people of a partner state in East Asia? The Koreans living in Queensland and Australia have a particular and permanent commitment and affinity with English-speaking Australia and its extraordinary people diversity.

## The community associations

The first Korean community association in Queensland was the Brisbane Korean Society, established in 1966 by seven PhD students. It used to participate in the Australian-Asian Society's cultural events and invited the Korean children dance company 'Little Angels' to Brisbane in 1973. The society lasted until 1977. The Queensland Korean Society (QKS) was established in 1982 and represented Koreans in Queensland and arranged Korean cultural events. QKS celebrated 'Korean Day' annually since 1985, with performing Korean classic dances, choruses, traditional percussion quartets, folk games, traditional weddings, fan dances, and Taekwondo demonstrations. A number of organisations used to participate in these events or send their performance teams. These organisations are Gyeonggi Provincial Traditional Orchestra, Hanyang University Dance Company, Korean Classic Music Association, and Daejeon Yeonjeong Municipal Korean Music Institute. The QKS has also sponsored a number of sports events including soccer, volleyball, foot volleyball, and tug-of-war events, since 1982. From 1904 the QKS has organised The Sydney Consul General Cup Golf Tournament in order to raise funds for the maintenance of the Korean Community Centre and for purposes of building a Korean Cultural Centre.

The following Korean community associations are currently operating: Queensland Respect-For-Age Association, Queensland Korean Literary Society, Queensland Korean Golf Association, Korean War Veterans Association Queensland, Vietnam War Veterans Association Queensland, Korea Veterans Association Queensland, and Korean Welfare Association. These associations have meetings on a regular basis, promote good fellowships, and serve local Australian and Korean communities. In addition, there are some Korean community organisations on the Gold Coast. The Koreans on the Gold Coast were linked to the QKS but they are physically remote from the main body in Brisbane. Consequently, the QKS could not represent them adequately and in a timely manner. Therefore, a separate Gold Coast Korean Society was founded in 1996. There is also a Respect-For-Age Association on the Gold Coast.

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## AUTHORS PROFILE

NAH, Ki Chune PhD (UQ) was born and grew up in Korea where he completed BA and MA degrees. He started his teaching career by training reserve forces in the Korean army holding the rank of a first lieutenant. He initially came to Australia in 2001 and migrated here the following year. In 2008 he completed a PhD degree at the University of Queensland in Applied Linguistics. He has taught at the University of Queensland since 2004 and currently he is the director of the SL Institute of Languages, which develops on/off-line Korean and English learning programs, courses, textbooks and applications, and trains Korean and English teachers. He is specialised in Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and has published a number of books and international journal articles.

JANG, Hye Jin was born and grew up in Seoul, Korea. She has a PhD and taught English as a foreign language in Korean universities, from 2001 to 2007. She has particular expertise in using films for TESOL studies and published a number of books and international journal articles. Hye Jin migrated to Australia in 2007 and lives in Brisbane. A mother of two children she has been working as a professor at Batheay International University, Cambodia and is currently teaching the Korean language at a local community centre in Brisbane.

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# Kurds

– Written by Allan Kurdo –

Although the term Kurdistan describes the traditional homeland of the Kurdish people, it does not represent a sovereign state. The ethnic Kurds live largely in territories belonging to Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The Kurdish Diaspora extends to other nearby countries such as Russia, Georgia, Israel, Armenia and many more and some 1.3 million Kurds live in Western Europe, mainly in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Britain, Sweden, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland and in North America. It is difficult to estimate the number of Kurds in the Diaspora because census statistics are usually based on place of birth in one specific country but the Kurds are born in many different states. The Kurdish population of some 30 million people represents the fourth largest ethnic community in the Middle East, their largest concentration being in Turkey.

The history of the Kurds and the ongoing struggle for their national identity is interlaced with repression and genocide on the one side and valiant resistance on the other. The Kurds say that from their homeland you can look north, south, east or west and you are always facing a direction where Kurdish people have been persecuted. In their home territory the unfortunate Kurds were destined to live on land where more than 10 per cent of the world's oil reserves are stored underground. Sitting on this precious natural resource represents a threat to a people living there but not being in control politically.

The Kurds began to arrive in Queensland from the mid-1980s and after the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, and the mass exodus of Kurdish people from Iraqi Kurdistan in 1991. The first wave of mainly refugees settling in Queensland came from Kurdistan in Iraq and Iran, including a few families from Turkey. With very few exceptions these Kurds were admitted to Australia under the Humanitarian Program. Many of these refugees were former victims of persecution and torture and every single Kurds had lost one or more family members or a close relative.

After their arrival in Brisbane these early refugees were confronted by linguistic and cultural barriers as many of these new settlers had little education and some were even illiterate in their own language. Many of them had amazingly diverse spoken skills in several languages, including the official language of the country where they had grown up. Kurdish new arrivals in the twenty-first century tend to be better educated

fellow ethnic Kurds who had arrived much earlier. They are acquainted with the Western lifestyle and have English language skills and are comfortable with the digital revolution in life and work. This new generation of young Kurdish men and women has little rapport with the former Kurdish refugees who settled here a couple of decades earlier. Members of the established Kurdish community at times express regret because the new generation of Kurdish settlers does not even want to meet with the 'old timers'.

Kurds in Queensland tend to live either on the Southside of Brisbane or on the Gold Coast. A few have settled in rural and regional Queensland, including Gatton. Some of the earliest settlers with Kurdish backgrounds found accommodation and work on Brisbane's Southside and their peers arriving during subsequent years decided to live close to other members of the Kurdish community. By living in close proximity to each other Kurds can provide mutual assistance and socialise on a daily basis. Kurds are aware of the fact that most Australians appreciate mass immigration as a matter of national priority and that many Australians welcome for compassionate reasons the acceptance and integration of substantial numbers of refugees. Kurds are grateful for having been accepted by a politically and economically stable country with a pluralist society composed of many different ethnic groups. Kurdish people in Queensland acknowledge that they rarely encounter situations of racism though there can be some contexts of discrimination pertaining to a community which in the Middle East continues to be severely disadvantaged.

Kurdish men and women are adaptable people and they value Australian citizenship. At work and in their daily routine the Kurdish women enjoy interacting with Australian people and they feel that they are accepted. It is noteworthy that Kurdish women in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast do not wear the burka or hijab. Most of the Kurds in Queensland and around the world are Muslims and are at least nominal members of the Sunni branch. Other religions are also practiced by some few Kurds in Queensland, posing no problems within the Kurdish and wider Australian community.

Kurds living in the two large urban areas of Queensland tend to work as taxi drivers, painters or unskilled workers. They own small kebab shops, panel beating businesses or restaurants. They interact freely with other migrants or refugees from the Middle East

and occasionally use their skills in languages other than English. Kurdish women tend to be factory workers or hold other unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. Amongst the early arrivals there were some professionals and tradesmen who experienced considerable problems when trying to re-start their careers in Queensland. Kurdish families strongly support their children's education and many of the young Kurds in Queensland have now completed university degrees or Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses.

Kurds in Queensland are sociable and hospitable people. They still retain certain traditions they acquired during their earlier lives when living overseas. They wear traditional costumes for ceremonies and occasionally even at home. Being attached to Kurdish traditions is also an affirmation of their ethnicity and the freedom expression taken for granted by all people living in Australia. The Kurds support multiculturalism. Kurdish parents relate to their children the ancient stories they were told by their own parents and grandparents. These stories are an important expression of Kurdish culture and they continue to shape the Kurdish psyche even when living overseas. The parents also ensure that their children can understand the Kurdish language and they also appreciate that control of English by the children is fundamental for a successful life and a career in Australia. The Kurdish identity is also expressed through singing and dancing and live music performances. Kurdish music is played with the traditional instruments.

Kurdish people in Queensland intermarry frequently, an expression of the Kurds' adaptability to different societal circumstances. Their partners have a great variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Non-Kurdish partners often learn to prepare some of the popular dishes from Kurdistan and they learn some of the Kurdish dances. The most important annual event is the community celebration of the Kurdish New Year called 'Newroz'. The Kurdish Association of Queensland was formed in Brisbane in 1989. It was primarily concerned with settlement support and preserving the Kurdish culture and language. It is currently a dormant organisation waiting to be revived.

Being an ethnic group with a long history of discrimination and persecution the Kurds are willing to integrate with Australian society. They are forward looking people, although many Kurdish people in Queensland have experienced overseas violence and trauma and years of living in refugee camps far away

from where they had grown up. The Kurds are grateful for their lives in freedom in Queensland and they are committed to giving their offspring a chance for a good life and career life in the new country.

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## AUTHOR PROFILE

KURDO, Allan was born in Kirkuk, Iraq. His family of seven was very poor, surviving on a day by day existence. Father passed away when Allan was five years old leaving behind only a donkey which had served at work as his father's 'truck'. Below the ground of the Kirkuk region there is a virtual sea of oil yet this valuable natural resource was of no benefit for the thousands of struggling local Kurdish families. The Saddam Hussein regime condemned the Kurdish minority to a miserable life of systematic discrimination and abject poverty. Therefore many young Kurds supported Kurdish opposition movements and banned political parties. When Allan reached the age of 17 he joined a Kurdish Marxist-Leninist organization and in 1986 he had to escape to safety in the mountains of Kurdistan where he joined freedom fighters led by Jalal Talabani, the current president of Iraq. In 1989 Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons and there were large scale massacres of Kurdish people. Allan is a survivor from such acts of genocide and fled to Pakistan via Iran. He spent 10 years of his young and hard adult life as a refugee in Pakistan. He was able to join a group of Kurds destined for settlement in New Zealand. A bright and joyful life began to blossom and Allan was able to restart his education by enrolling for a bachelor's degree in Auckland. He was delighted to become a naturalised New Zealander. There he met a Samoan girl, his future wife. They came to Brisbane in 2003 where they were warmly welcomed by the Kurdish community. Allan now works as a volunteer team leader and is in his tenth year as a panel operator and broadcaster of the Kurdish program of Radio 4EB.

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