Remembering Territory families

Emungalan, north of the Katherine River

Emungalan exists only as a memory now but once the bridge was up, most people moved across to the southern side of the river and set up there, where the present day town of Katherine is. Allan Chong-Fong recalled:

Yes, I was born in Emungalan which is north of Katherine River. That town is no longer in existence now – it’s not on the map – and across the river is Katherine.

When they build the railway bridge across the Katherine River, everyone from Emungalan moved over to Katherine, and we did the same. Katherine’s only got one main street then, at that time in the thirties, early thirties. We had a shop but we didn’t actually sell much.

We’d sell soft drinks, also a bit of a café too. We used to sell food to different people, but not much business, so, you know, we didn’t really do any good. We were not far from the one hotel, Bernard’s Hotel...

The other hotel at the other end of the street is O’Shea’s Hotel, and they had a few daughters which my sister Pearlie, used to know them. But the latest I heard is that there’s only one O’Shea left alive. It’s one of the daughters and I believe she’s in a nursing home. Other than that none of those people there are living.

There’s about one, two, three or four Chinese shops. Katherine was only one long street, and we were near the what they called the river end. [Northern Territory Archives Service NTRS 226, TS 1187 and NTRS 1815, DAT 180, Allan Chong-Fong]