



NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

appreciation of our Chinese American heritage • a non-profit organization • 1648 Redcliff Street • Los Angeles, CA 90026

October 1989

FALL DINNER

The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California will host its fall dinner on **Saturday, November 4, at Golden Palace Restaurant, 911 North Broadway, Los Angeles, CA 90012 (213) 624-2133.** (This dinner will take the place of our regularly scheduled meeting which would have been on Wednesday, November 1.)

5:00 p.m. No-host cocktails

6:00 p.m. (sharp!) Dinner

We promise the evening to be interesting and exciting! Following dinner, but before our actual program, we will be honoring two organizations in the community, namely the **Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA)** and the **Kong Chow Association of Southern California** in their celebration of 100 years of existence. Our program speaker for the evening is **Ruthanne Lum Mc Cunn**, an Amerasian raised in Hong Kong, worked as a teacher, librarian, and educational consultant. She is the author of several reference works, an award winning children's book, Pie-Biter, and the critically acclaimed biographical novel, Thousand Pieces of Gold. A former director of the Chinese Historical Society of America, she co-edits the Society's annual publication, Chinese America: History and Perspectives. Her talk and slide presentation will be on her most recent work, Chinese American Portraits: Personal Histories 1828-1988. Her book tells the compelling stories of remarkable individuals and families from many walks of life. Capturing the detail and texture of the Chinese American experience in all regions of the country, these portraits combine history, biography, politics, and ethnic studies. We will have a special guest appearance by **Mr. Poon Lim**, the 73-year old "World's Champion Survivor" of McCunn's book, Sole Survivor. Mr. Lim was a second steward who survived 133 days on a wooden raft at sea when his torpedoed ship, the Benlomond, sank in the Atlantic on November 23, 1942. His courage and endurance earned him the British Empire Medal and he continues to hold the Guinness World Record for survival at sea. He is truly a Chinese Robinson Crusoe! Immediately at the close of our evening, we will have book signing and photo session with McCunn and Lim.

The Fall Dinner Committee is working diligently in wrapping up little loose ends at this time. We look forward to having you, your family, and friends join us. If you haven't made your reservations, it's not too late. Be sure to contact **Sylvia Soo Hoo** immediately. **Reservation deadline is October 25 (but we'll extend the deadline to November 1 at the very latest).**

Cost is \$22 for members and \$27 for non-members. Free parking is available at Castelar School (enter on College Street between Hill and Yale Streets). **Gate will close at 5:45 p.m.** Arrive early for available parking.

For further information, contact co-chairs, **Bev Hom (818) 336-7900** or **Sylvia Soo Hoo (213) 221-5573.**

PLEASE NOTE: For those of you planning to attend the fall dinner, we are

asking that everyone be in their seats at exactly 6:00 p.m. As our program speaker will be leaving directly from the restaurant to the airport, we have a very full schedule on our hands. We are asking for everyone's cooperation so that the evening will move smoothly and everyone will have an opportunity to have their purchases autographed by McCunn and Lim (and may be get a few photos of the two). If you would like to arrive a few minutes earlier to take care of your purchases and meet our guests for the evening, you may do so.

In any event, we look forward to seeing you all on the 4th! In the meantime, let's get those reservations in the mail!

**Joint Dinner Meeting
of
The China Society of Southern California
The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California
The Friends of the Chinatown Library**

- Date: Monday, November 6
- Time: 6:15 p.m. Social hour 7:00 p.m. Dinner
- Place: Golden Dragon Restaurant
960 North Broadway
Los Angeles
- Cost: \$ 9.00 for members of the three groups
\$10.00 for non-members (guests of the three groups)
- Program: EXPLORING THE YANGTZE
by Herman How-Man Wong

Mr. Wong is President of the China Exploration and Research Society and is known to us as an explorer, author, photographer and researcher in the studies of the geography and peoples of remote areas of China and bordering countries. He had led numerous National Geographic expeditions to China since 1982. He has been called the "space age Marco Polo". He resides in Los Angeles with his wife and four children.

He will speak on his new publication, Exploring The Yangtze. His book, as well as the 1990 China calendar, will be on sale at the dinner. His book is \$30 and the calendar is \$9 (tax included). Proceeds from the sale will be donated to one of the three organizations (China Society, Chinese Historical Society, or Friends of the Chinatown Library) you designate that evening.

As some of you will recall, Mr. Wong spoke before a joint meeting of the Chinese Historical Society and the Friends of the Chinatown Library in the summer of 1987. His presentation was well received!

If you are interested in this joint dinner meeting, please contact Bev Hom (818) 336-7900 no later than November 1. Early reservations will assure you a space at dinner!

BITS OF NEWS - DIGGING IT UP. Recently, members of the Society were able to witness excavations finding remains of Los Angeles' Old Chinatown. As

part of the Metro-Rail Project, ramp construction is taking place across the northern line of old Apablasa Street, possibly at the intersection of Benjamin Street or further east. By law, archaeological studies must be conducted. These are being performed by noted archaeologist, Roberta Greenwood. The 2 foot dirt layer of covering fill, put in at the time of Union Station construction, has been removed to reveal the trash pits of the Old Town. Thus far, nearly 200,000 pieces of pottery, jars, pipes, and other Chinese artifacts have been recovered for future examination. The greatest excitement lies in the fact that these discoveries are possibly being made in the vicinity of the two-story building on the corner of Benjamin and Apablasa, or near the old Soo Hoo homestead, birthplace of Peter Soo Hoo, Sr., the erstwhile founder of New Chinatown. The two-story building was the residence of Nellie Chong, one of our known pioneers, and the offices of famed editor, Ng Poon Chew, at the turn of the century. The actual location of the dig will depend on engineering surveys. Preliminary map studies suggest that the digging location may be a bit further east, near the Ma Yard.

Ms. Greenwood was kind enough to allow Society members to view the dig and examine some of the findings. Participating in this field trip were Kipham Kan, Paul Louie, Emma Louie, Tom McDannold, and Suellen Cheng.

Cal-Trans, owner of the findings, and Ms. Greenwood are hoping to develop an exhibit on this work and on Old Chinatown, possibly in the Union Station itself.

Some weeks later, in trench excavations for a gas line running from El Pueblo Historic Park and Union Station, more Chinese artifacts were found near Alameda Street.

Old Chinatown remains a repository of a century of history, just waiting to be rediscovered in the ground.

TEARING IT DOWN. We have recently learned that the building which houses the Yee Mee Low Restaurant and the old Shanghai Street of China City has been acquired by a developer for the purposes of demolition and redevelopment. The building is also the location of a very old herb store. Because of earthquake safety codes, the costs of proper historic preservation would appear to be prohibitive. Nevertheless, an ad hoc group of patrons, "Friends of Yee Mee Low", have filed an application to declare the restaurant and its interior an historic and cultural site of Los Angeles. The Historic and Cultural Affairs Department has initiated a process which includes a 45-day review (recently extended to 60 days) leading to a recommendation to the City Council, which has the power to postpone demolition for at least one year while extensive research and an environmental impact study are conducted. This action is now pending.

There is no question that a lot of Chinatown history has passed through that building. In February, the China City Committee (Ruby Ling Louie, Emma Louie, Tom McDannold) held its China City reunion in Yee Mee Low, at which the China burger was revived for just one more afternoon by Richard Lee (Curly) Soong.

For further inquiries about Spring Street happenings, contact Kipham Kan, Munson Kwok, or Tom McDannold.

Eala Mae Wong, the sister of CHSSC member Cy Wong, passed away September 1, 1989 in Shreveport, Louisiana after a long bout with cancer. She had lived in California for 32 years. In June, Eala moved back to her native Campti, Louisiana to live with her mother. During the 50th anniversary celebration

of Chinatown in 1988, she visited Peter Soo Hoo Plaza with Cy, and took pictures with Angi Ma Wong and Eugene Wong Moy. Eala was the mother of one son, Rodney Eastman, of the Philippines. CHSSC sends its condolences to Cy and Betty Wong and family.

Society member, **Norine Dresser**, has been flown to Hungary to be part of a show called DRACULA -- LIVE FROM TRANSYLVANIA! The show stars George Hamilton and it will be aired in the United States on Wednesday, October 25, during prime time in most cities across the country and will be seen in Los Angeles on Fox TV, channel 11, from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. It will be aired on different channels in other cities (not just Fox). Norine's husband, Harold, will be accompanying her to Budapest.

LOTUS FESTIVAL (addendum to news reported in last N'nN) - Carlos and Beverly Picazo would like to acknowledge the following people missed in the previous News 'n Notes announcement: Cy Wong for his hard work in setting up, selling and dismantling of our booth. Allen Dong and Kenneth Dong for assisting Carlos and Beverly for additional coordination, assistance (provided cutting boards and ice chest), and support for the two-day event. Carlos and Beverly wish to apologize for the oversight of these individuals and to any other individuals who have not come forward.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE - As of the October 4 General Meeting, we have 371 members. We welcome our 98th life member, **Munson Kwok!** Congratulations!

Congratulations, Munson Kwok, on becoming Chair of the CT Advisory Council!

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT - Shirley and James Lau are the proud parents of their first child, a boy, **David Si-Chuen Lau**, born October 5 at 5:52 a.m., weighing 7 lbs. 2 ounces. **Congratulations, Shirley and James, on the new addition to your home!**

REFRESHMENT THANK YOUs are extended to the following: September 16 general meeting: **Richard Smith, Ella Quan, Lillian Fong, Sylvia Soo Hoo, Ben and Doreen Chan Nakayama and Bev Hom;** October 4 general meeting: **Eugene Moy, Cy Wong, Sylvia Wong, and Lillian Fong.**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

thru Saturday, October 28: The Woman's Building presents "Crossing Cultural Boundaries". Society member, **Carol Nye**, will display her work entitled, "Chinatown, black and white photography with text". Gallery hours are Wednesday-Friday, noon - 6:00 p.m. and Saturday, 10:00 a.m. -4:00 p.m. at 1727 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, (213) 221-6161.

Saturday, October 28: **Chinese American Family History and Genealogy Symposium/Workshop** from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Chinese Culture Center, 750 Kearny Street, 3rd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94108. Event is sponsored by the Cheng Society of America, Chinese Culture Foundation and the Chinese Historical Society of America. Pre-registration deadline is October 20. Fee: \$10. Workshop participants will be entitled to attend all sessions and receive the workshop materials. Lunch will not be provided. Registration is limited and only preregistrants are assured of a place in the workshop. Check is payable to CAFH.

Two of the featured speakers in this one-day symposium/workshop are CHSSC members, **Emma Woo Louie and Him Mark Lai**. Emma will speak about Chinese Surnames in America and Him Mark on Researching Your Ancestral Tree: A

Chinese American Perspective.

Saturday-Sunday, October 28-November 26: Zhang Zhenhua and Yu Xiaoxing both trained in traditional Chinese ink painting. Zhenhua's work encompasses ink brush painting on rice paper of different textures. He also utilizes paper and silk to create mixed media and collage works. Xiaoxing uses permanent mineral colors and gold dust (powder) on Chinese rice paper and silk to paint such diverse subjects as Chinese women of the Yunnan Province and tropical plants. Opening reception is Saturday, October 28, 2:00-4:00 p.m., the Foyer Gallery of the Pacific Asia Museum, 46 North Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101 (818) 449-2742.

thru Sunday, October 29: "In Pursuit of the Dragon: Traditions and Transitions in Ming Ceramics, an Exhibition From the Idemitsu Museum of Art." Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles (213) 857-6111. Tuesday-Friday 10-5, Saturday-Sunday 10-6. Adults \$3; seniors and students \$1.50; children ages 5-12, \$.75.

Saturday, November 11: Organization of Chinese American Women's (OCAW) 1989 Annual Awards Dinner will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 1440 East Imperial Highway (Valencia Room), El Segundo. Cocktails in the Granada Court at 6:00 p.m., dinner at 7:00 p.m. Honorees that evening are Linda Wong, Executive Director of California Tomorrow (Outstanding Chinese American Woman award) and Barbara Jean Lee, teacher at Los Feliz Elementary School (Individual Community Service award). Black tie optional. Dancing to follow program. Cost: \$45 members/\$55 non-members. For more information, contact Sharlene Tso (818) 572-0192 or 572-0093.

Sunday, November 19: The Los Angeles Chinese Women's Club Juniors (LACWCJ) will participate in the flea market at Pasadena City College. Members are asking for donations such as books, household items, clothing, toys, dishes, or whatever, as long as they are in good condition. We hope you will come out and join the crowd for some interesting shopping. You never know what bargains you might find. For further information, contact Connie Ng (818) 369-2836, Doreen Chan Nakayama (213) 726-9064 or Bev Hom (818) 336-7900.

Monday, November 20: Friends of the Chinatown Library General Meeting - optional dinner 5:30 p.m. at Happy Valley; meeting 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room (Chinatown Library).

Next CHSSC Board Meeting to be announced at a later time.

WANT / HELP ADS: Call (213) 281-7429 for an update on the Society's calendar of events. Questions? Leave a message and someone will call you back.

"Program" suggestions? Welcome any suggestions you may have for our monthly meetings. Please call Bev Hom (818) 336-7900.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thank you for your support of News 'n Notes -- staff contributors in this issue: Cy Wong, Christie Bourdet, Dolores Wong, Beverly and Carlos Picazo, Munson Kwok, and Lillian Fong. September 28 mailing session supporters: Kipham Kan, Dorothy Siu, Franklin Mah, Bob Large, Johnny Yee, Jeannette Young, and Lillian Fong. Special thanks to Kipham Kan and Richard Smith for providing their home and special treats

after a very "large" mailing session! Thank you, everyone!

Items for News 'n Notes are always welcome! Please submit in writing to News 'n Notes Editor, 15744-25 Tetley Street, Hacienda Heights, CA 91745. **Reminder: The editor would appreciate the cooperation of Society members and friends in submitting any articles for N'nN by the 15th of each month. (This is the absolute deadline!)** Items submitted are printed at the discretion of the editor. Thank you!

Beverly M. Hom
N 'n N Editor

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FIRST CLASS