



NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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DECEMBER 2002

PRESIDENT'S PEN

I hope this year-end News 'n Notes finds you had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday and enjoyed our Holiday Potluck Party. I tip my hat to those who kept the Society running smoothly for the past few weeks, while I visited family and friends in Louisiana and sampled the fine Cajun and French cuisine.

A special note to all members and friends: We begin our exterior landscaping and yard beautification program next month! Since donations have been allocated, it is imperative we move ahead without delay. In keeping with our Architecture Committee's vision for the project, if you would like to donate plants indigenous to China or any Asian country, we would be most appreciative.

Looking back over 2002 and our accomplishments, I report that the Society is in vibrant good health. Several events and activities over the past year stand out, perhaps the most prominent being our top to bottom renovation of our two Victorian homes in Chinatown.

The nine month renovation work began in February with the installation of new roofs on both homes. We next repainted the 19th century houses in colors carefully chosen for historical accuracy. After discussion on the best strategy for the flooring, it was agreed to remove the linoleum, expose the broad-beam floor boards, sand the floors, and treat them with stain and polyurethane, leaving the completed floors uncovered. Further infrastructure improvements called for new toilets in both homes; and, in the Society's office (415 Bernard St.), the bathroom floor was tiled. Other improvements included replacing all galvanized pipes with copper, significantly increasing our water pressure, and installing a new sprinkler system in the yards.

Reviewing our 2002 monthly meetings, we were favored with several inspiring speakers whom we thank very much, including Dr. Gloria Ricci Lathrop, committee chair of the Historic Italian Hall Museum; Dr. James Bok Wong, author of Jade Eagle; Debbie Leung Yamada, author of Striking It Rich – Treasures from Gold Mountain; William F. Chew, who presented his groundbreaking research on the Central Pacific and Southern

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JANUARY PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2003

(Note, Second Wednesday of Month – This Month Only!)
7:00 P.M.

CASTELAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Multipurpose Room

840 YALE STREET

LOS ANGELES, CHINATOWN

(PARK ON PLAYGROUND, ENTER ON COLLEGE STREET BETWEEN HILL AND YALE STREETS)

Guest Speaker:

ROBERT CHAO ROMERO

***"THE DRAGON IN BIG LUSONG:
CHINATOWN IMMIGRATION & SETTLEMENT IN
MEXICO 1882-1940"***

Robert Chao Romero, a UCLA, Ph.D. candidate in Latin American History, will present highlights of his dissertation findings, including: Chinese migration mechanisms, "coolie smuggling networks," and Chinese immigrant smuggling; gender and familial patterns; residential patterns; employment and community patterns; and, the Mexican anti-Chinese movement.

DECEMBER HOLIDAY POT LUCK DINNER

On Wednesday, December 4th, Society members gathered for our annual, Holiday Pot Luck Dinner and singing of holiday songs. Splendid piano accompaniment was provided by Sunshine Committee Chair, Winnie Lew, and the caroling was led by Past President, Irvin Lai, Dr. Wing Mar, and Kelli Allen, formerly the Society's administrative assistant. We thank all who participated in the event, Irvin, Dr. Mar and Kelli for leading the songs, and thank you to Gilbert Hom and Linda Wong Smith for arranging and picking up the variety of delicious food.



HERITAGE SQUARE LAMPLIGHT TOURS

By Randy Bloch

The ninth annual Holiday Lamplight Tours, this year a collaboration between Heritage Square Museum and the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, presents a unique concept in architectural tours, utilizing live actors enacting in-period historical vignettes, in the rooms of the Heritage Square Museum's historic mansions. So they might survive, the Heritage Square buildings have been moved from their original locations to this unique greenbelt beside the Pasadena Freeway and Avenue 43 in Highland Park. This year, the tours were conducted on December 7, 8, 14 & 15 with performances at 15 minute intervals from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.. All performances were sold out.

Some preservationists believe a structure's historic value ceases when moved from its original location. Fortunately, many of them disagree. Beginning in 1969, the Heritage Square Museum became a safe haven and relocation venue for several Los Angeles 19th and early to mid-20th century architectural treasures about to face the wrecking ball. Uninformed freeway commuters have for years scratched their heads in wonderment as to the how and why of this unusual, freeway-side collection of storybook houses, who owns them, how they came to rest in this unlikely holding facility, and who took the trouble to rescue them.

Though orphaned, many Heritage Square buildings are imposing mansions, conceived in turn-of-the-century Victorian grandeur. Homes relocated to the Museum (in the Arroyo Seco) include the Mount Pleasant House (ca. 1876, *Greek Revival and Italianate*); the Hale House (ca. 1887, *Queen Anne and Eastlake*); and, the Valley Knudsen Garden Residence (*Queen Anne*), built in 1883 in then-fashionable Boyle Heights.

Sunday, December 15th, the first Lamplight Tour re-enactment began at dusk in the 1876 Mount Pleasant House. The stage was set as lumber magnate, William Perry, and his wife anxiously awaited their holiday guests' arrival. The tableau of characters included a Chinese American servant, an Hispanic businessman, an Austrian archduke researching a book, and the Perry's daughter, Mamie. The usual holiday tensions were on tap as the family quibbled about Mamie's upcoming trip abroad, and the Archduke's apparently greater interest in the family's Chinese house servant than their banal conversation.

The Lamplight Tour group moved next to the 1900 Hale House, where the drawing room was redolent with freshly prepared Chinese herbs. In the kitchen, two young Irish maids, Annie and Maureen, chatted about salesgirl positions in the new department stores burgeoning along Pasadena's Colorado Boulevard. We watched as Captain Spencer Thorpe's herbalist, Dr. Wing, treated him, while the captain endured the sarcasm of his friend, Mr. Robertson.

We were then escorted to the 1933 Shaw Residence, home of the Chinese Historical Society troupe's "Low Family," celebrating the holidays (while arguing in the kitchen) in spite of the Depression's travails. In full period regalia and looking terrific were Rosalyn K. Chen-Yee (Mrs. Low), Jim Fong (Ah Yeh), Linda Wong-Smith (alternate Mrs. Low), Gilbert Hom (Mr. Low), Matthew Chung (William) and Peter C. Lee (Teddy). Other performers were Mark Jue, Howard Chan and Harry Du Young and the performance was directed and

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2002-2003 CHSSC Officers

Cy Wong, President

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Linda Wong Smith, V.P. Programs

Henrietta Yuan, Secretary

Ben Nakayama, Membership Secretary

Ella Quan, Treasurer

Franklin Mah, Financial Secretary

Board Members

Eugene Moy, Chairperson

Pete Chinn Al Der

Gilbert Hom Dr. Wing Mar

Dr. Betty Gaw Icy Smith

IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!!!

DEADLINE:
February 28, 2003

**See Membership Rates
on Last Page**

*Please Add \$5 For
Twice-Yearly
Gum Saan Journal*



President's Pen (Continued from Page 1)

Pacific Railroads; Steven W. Leong, who as an engineer spearheaded construction of high rise buildings and power plants around the world; and, Dr. William Chun-Hoon, who presented "Grapes of Wrath – Telling Your California Story" at the Society's November meeting. A big thanks to our other 2002 guests speakers, also.

Our "Bridging the Communities" Spring Dinner featured guest speaker Charlie Woo, a business and community leader, and introduced, through the efforts of Dr. Wing Mar and others, an impressive and detailed display of 17 photographs and career summaries of individuals spotlighted by our Chinese American Portraits of Pride (CAPP) public education project. In November, our 27th Anniversary Fall Dinner, "They Showed The Way," was equally successful and we enjoyed a presentation by Howard "Toby" Louis, owner of the 1874 Ah Louis Store and son of Ah Louis, one of the builders of San Luis Obispo in the 19th century.

Another important accomplishment in 2002 was the installation of a permanent CAPP exhibit in our Heritage Center, recognizing the contributions of Chinese Americans in the fields of health, science and defense.

The CHSSC Board purchased a new computer system for the Society's office in November. Additionally, Financial Secretary, Franklin Mah, purchased and donated a professional public address system for our activities. The Society also received a new refrigerator through the generosity of Esther and Daniel Johnson, and, in September, Randy Bloch, former CHSSC Board member and current Shrine Preservation Committee Chair, became the Society's new Administrative Assistant.

I would like to acknowledge Board member, Dr. Betty Gaw, whose health maintenance and disease prevention articles are a wonderful addition to our News 'n Notes. The articles are archived on our website at chssc.org.

The officers and members of our Board of Directors deserve special thanks for giving so generously of their time and energy. I express my appreciation and gratitude also to those friends who help with our activities in so many different ways, and to each and every Society member for your past efforts and support.

In closing, I extend a special welcome to all new members of the Society for the year 2003. Please, as you come aboard, feel free to find something or somewhere to help in our organization, as we need your support and talents to keep the Society moving ahead.

My words for the month are: "He who gets wisdom loves his own soul." May the beauties of Christmas make their way to your heart. Have a beautiful Christmas and a joyous New Year. My heart and thoughts are with you.

President Cy Wong and Family

Heritage Square Lamplight Tours (From page 2)

scripted by playwright, Annette Lee, with assistance from Gilbert Hom and Linda Chong. Ms. Lee also assisted with the other Lamplight Tour performances. The vignette made mention of the razing of Old Chinatown and how some families refused to leave their homes, and how one Low son would soon matriculate to the University of Southern California. Family patriarch, Jim Fong, interacted with the audience from time to time, adding informative asides. Ah Yeh alternate, Eugene Moy, did not perform that evening. The CHSSC thespians definitely distinguished themselves as capable period actors!

Lastly, in the Octagon House, in 1942, five women, Mrs. Weygand, Roberta, Jan Weygand, Olive Low (CHSSC member, Linda Chong; alternate, Yi Lin) and Mrs. Lopez did their best to spread holiday cheer during wartime as Mrs. Weygand tearfully read a letter from her son, at the front.

The Holiday Lamplight Tours successfully combined a "look-see" at the Heritage Square mansions' interiors while considering how the homes' long vanished inhabitants lived their lives during the holiday season.

February General Meeting BOUTIQUE

***Bring Donations to the
January General Meeting!!!***

Please bring your donations for sale at our February Boutique to the CHSSC January General Meeting on Wednesday, January 8, 2002 at Castelar Elementary School. We have collected a variety of new and gently used kitchen aids, household items, and some jewelry for the event and Ruth Lung has been busily crocheting slippers, pot holders., etc., but we definitely need more items and time to price them. Questions: please call Ruth at (323) 462-3877, or Margie Lew at (626) 284-6348.



IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!!!

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 28, 2003

SEE MEMBERSHIP RATES ON

LAST PAGE OF (U.S. Mail Copy) NEWS 'N NOTES

ADD \$5 FOR TWO ANNUAL GUM SAAN JOURNAL ISSUES

News 'n Notes Articles, Announcements, etc.

**Must be Submitted by the 10th of Each Month
for Inclusion in the Next Issue. Thank you!**

CURRENT & UPCOMING EXHIBITS & EVENTS

ONGOING –

Museum Of Cultural Diversity

Open Tuesdays through Sundays - 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. - and by appointment

20700 Avalon Blvd. #870 (South Bay Pavilion at Carson Mall. Inside mall, next to Ikea Store.)

Current exhibits:

Twice Taken Ancestral Portraits of Ethnic Communities;

Wrap Dolls;

Toys From Around the World;

Chinese American Portraits of Pride (until end of 2002);

9/11 Healing - Mixed Media by International Artists.

CHINESE NEW YEAR 2003 EVENTS (Information: 213-617-0396)

Sunday, January 12:

Miss L.A. Chinatown Fashion Show at

Millennium Biltmore Hotel

Saturday, January 18:

34th Annual Miss L.A. Chinatown Pageant

The Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites

Saturday, January 25:

Little King & Queen Contest

at Castelar Elementary School

Saturday, February 1, 2003:

CHINESE NEW YEAR DAY

"YEAR OF THE RAM 4701"

Saturday, February 8:

104th Annual Golden Dragon Parade, L.A. Chinatown

Sat./Sun., February 8-9:

Chinese New Year Festival, L.A. Chinatown



HEALTH

DRIVER DISTRACTION BY CELL PHONE USE CAN BE DEADLY!

By Dr. Betty Gaw

Last month, while searching for a health topic to write about for News 'n Notes, I experienced the worrisome sensations of acute loss of memory, drowsiness, ataxia (loss of balance while walking), and restless sleep accompanied by bad dreams. In retrospect, I realized I had overused my cell phone for two weeks, logging more than four hours use during the month of November. Not having the flu, these symptoms caused fear and anxiety, prompting the differential diagnosis of brain tumor, especially since, in October, my friend Gaby underwent resection of one of the most aggressively malignant brain cancers, Glioblastoma Multiforme.

Soon after my excessive exposure to cellular phone radiation/CPR, I read an excellent and timely review on the subject: "*Cellular Phone Radiation and Potential Risks to the Human Brain*" in the official newsletter and journal of the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine (A⁴M, when abbreviated). Together with the recent media publication on CPR and the enormous popularity of cellular phone use, more by young people, even school students, than the elderly, I feel there is a grave urgency to publicize the hidden hazards of cellular phone radiation.

STATISTICS

Worldwide, more than 400 million people depend on cellular phones, and the numbers have escalated exponentially. Each year, cell phone use while driving results in 2,600 annual vehicle crash deaths, 570,000 injuries, and 1.5 million incidents of property damage, according to Harvard University's Center for Risk Analysis. In California, 4,699 accidents were caused by drivers using cellular phones in the last year. Indeed, cellular phone use is a serious public health issue looming large on the horizon, not even considering the subtle acute and chronic long-term biological impact on our bodies' cell functions.

ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS

Electromagnetic Mechanical Fields (EMF's) consist of electric and magnetic waves of energies, and CPR falls into the category of non-ionizing energy, as emitted by radios, cellular phones and microwaves. This energy heats tissues, increasing body temperature, and, with prolonged exposure, "cooks" the brain and tissues, causing biological damage. 20-60% of the emission energy is absorbed by the cellular phone users' brain in the first one to two centimeters beneath the skull's surface.

BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS OF EMF's

- Lethargy and malaise, a feeling of being unwell;
- Immune system dysfunction/damage;
- Central nervous system impairment: short and long term memory loss; psychomotor impairment for balance and motor skills; diminished reaction time while operating a motor vehicle; slowed judgment; sleep disturbance; and, loss of cognitive skills, as in decision making, correlation, and planning;
- DNA damage due to mutations, leading to cancers;
- Sexual organ and fertility impairment;
- Blood pressure elevation, heart disease and changes in blood cells; and
- Skin and eye damage.

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MINIMIZE YOUR CELLULAR PHONE RADIATION EXPOSURE

1. Make short, necessary conversations;
2. Use a "speaker phone" option to distance yourself from the cellular phone;
3. Buy a cellular phone with an extendable antenna, not one with a stubby antenna which emits higher intensity radiation;
4. When possible, rather than use the cell phone in a vehicle or steel construction building which increase the phone's power output, open the vehicle door or step outdoors;
5. While in a vehicle, do not turn on your cellular phone unless you are making a call or expecting one;
6. Use a hand bag or purse to carry a cell phone when it is switched on, rather than carry it close to your body;
7. When using the cell phone, take off metal-rimmed eyeglasses, as this increases radiation emissions by 20% to the eyes and 6.3% to the head;
8. Take note of the signal level for geographic connection to your cell phone. The fewer the number of "cells," or zones of service, and the farther from the base station, the greater is the radiation emission. Keep your cell phone use very brief;
9. Do not use hands free kits with a headset or ear bud/microphone which has a wire connecting your cell phone to your ear. These devices increase the radiation to your brain threefold!;
10. Use carbon, lead, or radar absorbing shields to block the radiation from penetrating the brain;
11. "Car Baby," an attachment to your cellular phone, which is dial-connected by specific radio channels, allows you to talk at home or in your vehicle at a distance of 1-2 feet away from the phone with clarity, and without attachments. Website: carbaby.com/wholesale.html;
12. Remember not to prolong your cell phone conversations.

Knowing all you do now about cell phones and their intrinsic and cumulative hazards, you do not have to be a driver driven to death by distraction, nor suffer the consequences of over-radiation, as I did. Visit the World Health Network: www.worldhealth.net for more information.

Wishing you and yours HAPPY HOLIDAY, 2002.

Dr. Betty Gaw

(Dr. Gaw serves on the Society's Board of Directors)