

NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

415 Bernard St., Los Angeles, CA 90012; Voice: 323-222-0856;

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Chinatown Heritage & Visitors Center: 323-222-0856

DECEMBER 2005

JANUARY PROGRAM

Guest Speaker

SUSAN ROBINSON, PROGRAM CHAIR, FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN FROM CHINA SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2006, 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)

Families with Children from China (FCC) is a non-profit, volunteer-run organization that provides educational, cultural, and peer support programming for parents, children, youth and prospective parents. In addition to serving families in America, FCC is strongly committed to promoting the welfare of children who remain in China's orphanages. FCC has an international network of over 100 chapters. Our January speaker, Susan Robinson, is the program and Chinese New Year chair for the Southern California chapter of FCC.

In the best of situations, adoption is a stress filled process for all parties involved. The new parents have all kinds of questions: Will the child like us? Will we like her? What was her life like before coming to us? The child sees a world of unknowns: a new family, separation from familiar caretakers, and the wonder of acceptance in her new life. As the adoptee matures, she may have questions about who she is, who were her birth parents, and how does she fit into this new world. In cross cultural adoptions, these questions are sometimes exacerbated by the realization of racial differences within the family, e.g. Why don't I look like mommy? Why do the kids at school make fun of me?

FCC was created to help answer some of these questions for a growing group of American parents adopting unwanted children from the People's Republic of China. They are not only preparing for the eventual questions that will come from their new family member, but they are also seeking answers to these difficult questions for themselves. Ms. Robinson will be sharing about the mission of FCC as it relates to the very familiar theme of finding ones cultural identity... that void so hard to name but so emotionally felt.

FCC chapters generally organize some or all of the following activities: newsletters, membership directories, family picnics and pot-luck suppers, celebrations of Chinese festivals and holidays, preadoption information meetings, playgroups, Chinese language and culture classes for children, and parent speakers.

For further reading on overseas adoption and the impact felt on parents and children alike, please see the article "Research Shows FCC and Chinese American Families Share Similar Issues" on page 2 and for more information on FCC, please visit www.socal-fcc.org.



RESEARCH SHOWS FCC AND CHINESE AMERICAN FAMILIES SHARE SIMILAR ISSUES

By Donna Coble

What is Chinese cultural heritage? How do we pass it on to the next generation, particularly as it changes in the context of U.S. society? These are issues shared by many adoptive Chinese families and Chinese American families.

Since 2000, Dr. Andrea Louie, a cultural anthropologist from Michigan State University, has been interviewing St. Louis area families who have adopted from China. Her research focuses on whether, how, and why adoptive families teach their children about China and Chinese culture. She conducts her research by participating in adoption-related events, such as those organized by local adoption agencies and by the St. Louis chapter of Families with Children from China. She also interviews adoptive families about their adoption stories and attitudes toward China and Chinese culture.

Louie first became aware of the adoptive community in St. Louis in 1997, while on a postdoctoral fellowship to teach Asian American Studies at Washington University. Since then, she has made numerous trips to St. Louis, ranging from a few days to two months, to carry out her research. In 2002, she accompanied a group of adoptive parents to China to receive their children through the St. Louis adoption agency, Children's Hope International. To date, she has conducted approximately 30 interviews of adoptive families, adoption professionals, and community members in St. Louis. In the process, she has grown to know and respect adoptive families, who are breaking new ground as they deal with issues relating to adoption, family, race, and cultural heritage. At the same time, she has come to recognize that adoptive families are in most respects like any others who juggle work, school, church/temple, and other daily activities.

Issues of Chinese cultural identity are not new to Louie, whose previous research in the San Francisco Bay Area focused on American born Chinese American identities, particularly in relation to China. A third generation Chinese American with ancestry in Guangdong Province, Louie participated in a cultural heritage tour called "In Search of Roots" (xun gen) in 1992. The trip, which was jointly sponsored by the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco and the Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs (Qiao Ban) in China, brought Chinese Americans, ages 18-25, to visit their ancestral villages in China. The trips were intended to not only encourage Chinese Americans to trace their ancestral roots, which extend from villages in China to the U.S., but also make them aware of China's new economic development in the wake of the Open Policy and Economic Reform.

Louie has observed that adoptive parents have complex concerns when it comes to building a relationship to China and Chinese culture for their children. Most of the adoptive families she interviewed placed heavy importance on teaching their children about China and Chinese culture. During the adoption process, both the adoption agencies in the U.S. and the

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California was organized in November, 1975. The purposes of the Society are: 1) to bring together people with a mutual interest in the important history and historical role of Chinese and Chinese Americans in Southern California; 2) to pursue, preserve and communicate knowledge of this history; and; 3) to promote the heritage of the Chinese and Chinese American community in support of a better appreciation of the rich, multi-cultural society of the United States.

DECEMBER 2005



AROUND CHSSC

2005 HOLIDAY POTLUCK DINNER

By JW Wong



(Photo by Tom Eng)

Food, good friends, sleigh bells, red hats, carols, and Santa Claus! Put them all together and what have we got? A memorable Christmas potluck with your extended Chinese Historical Society family. Our annual holiday potluck was a resounding success. It got off to a rough start, we had to wait for a few more entrees, but once we got it together we were on a festive roll.

Angi Ma Wong read her newly published children's book, *Who Ate My Socks?* It was a wonderful beginning to the evening. Members and guests were enthralled and entertained as Angi read her book. The decorations assembled by Johnny Yee really added to the festive atmosphere of the evening. Thank you, Johnny, for bringing the Christmas decorations and encouraging others to participate by wearing Santa hats and ringing sleigh bells. Again, past CHSSC president Irvin Lai led guests in the caroling as Winnie Lew accompanied beautifully on the newly tuned Castelar Elementary School piano.

Thank you also to the bevy of volunteers who set up the tables, set out the food, and served the guests. I also want to acknowledge Gilbert and Linda Hom for getting extra Chinese food and to a special guest, Ji Kwon, for running out and getting ice and drinks. Ji is Monica's (CHSSC administrator) husband who just returned from a 6 month tour in Iraq as a captain in the United States Marine Corps. Everyone took an immediate interest in meeting him and hearing his stories about Iraq. I'd like to say thank you, Ji, for you patience and strong assistance. Another special guest was a surprise visit from Santa Claus. What a wonderful treat he was as he joined in the caroling and handed out candy canes for all. Thank you, one and all for your participation and making the holiday potluck a success.

At the end of the evening, an impromptu announcement

was made by board member, Gene Moy. He announced that a very generous donation made by life member Kyra Woo on behalf of herself and her four grandsons, Devon, Galen, James, and Owen. The donation will benefit the Society's *Portraits of Pride* project. Kyra stated that she is donating this money to support the work that the Society does to document the achievements of the Chinese and Chinese Americans in our community. Thank you, Kyra, for honoring us with this very charitable donation.

PORTRAITS OF PRIDE BOOK PROJECT END OF THE YEAR REPORT

By Dr. Wing Mar, Project Director

This report gives only the general approximates of the cost for publication and distribution of Book I and the donations generated by Book I. The numbers below give a good estimate of the true cost of this project. It can serve as a guide for future amateur ethnic historians to consider in his or her desire to produce books and ethnic multimedia materials for free distribution to public and parochial schools. The PoP writing team recognizes an historical and sociological problem and wants to remedy important missing historical links in the education of our public schools. We think this approach by CHSSC is novel, helpful to our heightened pluralistic communities, and can be successfully duplicated by other ethnic historical societies.

The distribution phase of the 1500 free books to the library and schools in California was completed in 2005. After extensive discussion and consultation, we decided to use the computer programs *Quickbooks* and *Excel* to integrate the data in tracking the books and its myriad aspects of feedback information such as statistical determinants, tracking of the books, comments for quality assessment, outcome objective comparative studies, and impact on its host sponsor – the CHSSC.

Below is the financial report from a very modest financial beginning six years ago to the present substantial budget. The data is taken from the accounting material of the CHSSC. (It is interesting to note that 60% of the contributions are from 4 families.)

Year	Donations	Expenses
2000	\$5,050	\$2,170
2001	\$46,513	\$3,835
2002	\$1,200	\$4,758
2003	\$21,900	\$10,051
2004	\$75,000	\$50,000
2005	\$50,000	\$55,000

Reserve Balance: \$75,000

N/N



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Chinese government emphasize the importance of maintaining a connection to China and Chinese culture for these children. While many parents did not know much about China and Chinese culture prior to adopting, most made admirable efforts to learn about these issues and to expose their children to them after returning from China.

Many parents that Louie interviewed felt that a connection to China is one thing they can provide for their children in the absence of knowledge about their birth parents. They would also like to give them the tools to fit into the broader Chinese American community and perhaps return to China someday for a visit. Unlike Korean adoptees of an earlier generation who were raised with little acknowledgement of their Korean origins, today's Chinese (and other) adoptees are growing up in an era where cultural and racial differences are celebrated. Most adoptive parents Louie spoke with wanted their children to be proud of being Chinese, and hoped that this pride would help them handle teasing from other children or other racist incidents as they grow older.

However, parents choose to emphasize different aspects of Chinese or Chinese American culture. While some feel that having their children learn Chinese language is of key importance, others focus more on exposing their children to Chinese arts such as dance and calligraphy, and on celebrating Chinese holidays. For many parents, being around other families like their own is of key importance, as is connecting with the local Chinese American community. Other families have taken their children back to visit China.

While some parents try to incorporate as much information about China and Chinese culture as they can into their family's lives, many parents Louie spoke with have found it increasingly challenging to maintain these activities after their children enter school and become involved in extracurricular activities such as sports, music lessons, church or synagogue activities, etc. In addition, adoptive families are often multicultural, with familial influences from a number of ethnic and sometimes racial backgrounds. Like many other multicultural and multiracial families, they work to balance these various influences in the context of daily family life.

Louie has come to recognize that there are both similarities and differences between adopted Chinese Americans and the American born Chinese Americans she studied previously. Like many children in adoptive families, the American born Chinese Americans in her first research project did not have much firsthand experience with China. Having been raised primarily in America, many did not speak or read Chinese and did not comfortably fit into Chinese culture and society. In fact,

while in China, the American born Chinese Americans Louie interviewed in many ways identified more with the icons of popular culture they were familiar with from home, including Japanese comics, kung fu movies, and Hong Kong pop stars. Though they were proud of being Chinese and happy to make connections to their ancestral villages, they felt that their experience of tracing their ancestral roots from China to the U.S. ultimately brought them closer to their fellow Chinese Americans and their families in the U.S. In fact, it was the ritual and traditions practiced in the context of their Chinese American families

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

JANUARY 2006 MEETING DATE CHANGE

Please remember, we will be meeting on **January 11th** this month. Due to Castelar Elementary's closure that week, we will not be meeting on the first Wednesday of the month as usual. We will resume meeting on the first Wednesday of each month in February.

DEADLINE TO RENEW YOUR CHSSC MEMBERSHIP

Please renew your membership today for 2006! Membership information can be found on the last page of this newsletter. Please mail checks to the CHSSC Office at 415 Bernard Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012-1703.

CHINESE NEW YEAR PARADE – FLAG BEARERS NEEDED

For 29 continuous years, the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California has carried the Stars and Stripes in the vanguard of the Golden Dragon Chinese New Year Parade in L.A. Chinatown. Be a part of history as we march again for the 30th consecutive year on Saturday, February 4th! We will assemble at 1:00 p.m. at the intersection of Aliso and Main, just south of the Chinese American Museum at El Pueblo Monument. Uniform of the day will be red shirt or blouse and black pants. Please call Monica at the CHSSC office to let her know you will be participating. Thank you and we look forward to marching with you!

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WELCOME, NEW CHSSC MEMBERS!!!

On behalf of CHSSC President Kenneth L. Chan, Membership Secretary Peter Liang and the CHSSC Board, we extend our warmest welcome to Sor Chum, Susan Sandberg, Joy Wu, and back from a long absence, Lynn Kronzek.

CHSSC NEEDS YOUR HELP WITH ITS CHINATOWN TOUR PROGRAM!

The Society's tour program handles requests from individuals and schools throughout Southern California. We believe our tours serve a valuable function educating the public on Chinese American history. To keep our tours operating we must increase our docent force. Tours are by reservation, last an hour, and are usually weekday mornings. Peak season is from September to June. Tour guides receive modest compensation. If you are interested in helping out, please phone the CHSSC office at (323) 222-0856.

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM PAST CHSSC PRESIDENT, CY WONG

In action, a great heart is the chief qualification. In work, a great head.

When things are steep, remember to stay level-headed.

CONDOLENCES

Our condolences to the family of Lawrence Jue who passed away on December 2, 2005. Mr. Jue was highlighted in CHSSC's publication *Portraits of Pride* for his contributions to the field of naval architecture and mechanical engineering as well as his civil activism for the community of San Francisco's Chinatown. He is survived by his wife, children, and grandchildren.

THANK YOU FOR REMEMBERING THE CHSSC

Our appreciation goes out to the families of Helen Quon Lew and Lawrence Jue for remembering the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. Both families asked that donations be sent to CHSSC in memory of their loved ones. May their legacies live on in the impact they had on their community.

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that were most meaningful to them, whether or not they understood their origins or practiced them in "authentic" ways.

In speaking with adoptive parents, Louie has come to realize that many assume that children raised in Chinese American families maintain a close relationship with China and Chinese culture. She hopes that as adoptive families learn more about the variety of ways that Chinese Americans practice Chinese culture and relate to China, they will realize that there is no one way of being Chinese American. From her perspective as a cultural anthropologist, culture is constantly changing and taking on new forms, and it is important not to become overly concerned with issues of authenticity. The forms of Chinese culture practiced in mainland China vary widely, not to mention the various forms that Chinese customs take in Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and in other Chinese communities around the world in Latin America. Africa. Australia, etc. Thus, the question of what defines Chinese culture is complex and ever-changing. Should karaoke, ever popular in China and other parts of Asia, now be considered part of Chinese culture? Louie also encourages adoptive families to look toward the vast resources produced by the Chinese American and Asian American communities, which reflect the experiences of living as a racial minority in the U.S. Despite their unique connections to China, children adopted from China will share much in common with other Asian Americans, particularly the feeling of being in between cultural and racial groups.

Louie has been asked on numerous occasions by adoptive parents whether she thinks they are "doing the right thing." She usually responds by saying that the best thing that parents can do is be aware of the issues and make efforts to expose their children to as many resources as possible, related to both China and Chinese-Americans. Speaking as a Chinese American daughter, she also reminds parents that when children grow up, they will almost inevitably criticize their parents for something they did or didn't do. Just as there is no right or wrong way to be Chinese, there is no one way to be Chinese American.

Louie can be reached by e-mail at louie@msu.edu. Her recently published book (Duke U. Press 2004) based on her first research project is titled "Chineseness Across Borders: Renegotiating Chinese Identities in China and the United States."

This article has been reprinted with permission. St. Louis Chinese American News, No. 730. St. Louis, MO. August, 19, 2004.



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GUM SAAN JOURNAL 2006 BOOK LAUNCH

Join us for the official launch of the 2006 edition of the *Gum Saan Journal* on Sunday, January 15th at 3:00 p.m. It will take place at the Chinese American Citizens Alliance (CACA) building located at 415 Bamboo Lane, next to the Phoenix Bakery in Chinatown. This is the 29th volume of the *GSJ* and it highlights Chinese grocers such as Robert & Edith Jung, Kenneth Wong, and Jack Lee. There will be a panel discussion with the grocers profiled in the *GSJ* and of course there will be a chance to ask the grocers, editors, and writers to sign your very own copy of the *GSJ*. Come out and get your very own copy for \$10 or pick up the one that you've already purchased! For any questions, please call Monica at the CHSSC office, (323) 222-0856.

CHSSC TO BE REPRESENTED ON LOCAL TELEVISION SHOW

On Sunday, January 15th at 6:00 a.m., CHSSC member and co-editor of the *Gum Saan Journal* Dr. Susie Ling will be a guest on local Channel 5 (KTLA) program, "Pacesetters." This program is a community affairs show produced and hosted by Ray Gonzales. Ray will be highlighting and discussing the history and community of the Chinese in Southern California. With the Lunar New Year just around the corner, this show will provide Southern California a taste of the significance of Chinese Americans in the area.

UPDATED RESULTS OF CHSSC BOARD MEMBERSHIP DRIVE COMPETITION

Kenneth L. Chan	4
Susan Dickson	2
Peter Liang	2
Irvin Lai	1
Jeannie Liu	1
Eugene Moy	1
JW Wong	1
Jack Ong	1

Dr. Wing Mar: 0; Ben Nakayama: 0; Marlynn Ma: 0; Dr. Don Loo: 0; Dr. Albert Chang: 0; Dr. Betty Gaw: 0; Dr. Munson Kwok: 0; and Mary Yee Kwok: 0.

CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT LOVE

By Dr. Betty Gaw

During the last months of the year, America has many occasions for celebration. In November, Americans celebrate Thanksgiving by gathering with family and friends to give thanks for all the many blessings in ones' life. December carries on what begins in November as being a month for cultural and religious celebrations. Those who are Jewish have a celebration of dedication called Hanukkah which lasts for eight days. Kwanzaa, celebrated by African Americans, began in 1966 and is celebrated between December 26 and January 1. Christmas is celebrated on December 25 by Christians. All these celebrations of prayer, feasting, dedication and gift-giving commemorate historical events.

I would like to discuss something that is close to my heart: Christmas. Through the ages, Christians all over the world have memorialized the birth of Jesus Christ. Although there is no documentation about the Nativity and Jesus' date of birth, historians have passed the information down through the ages through writings and oral histories. No man has made such a dramatic impact in this world as did Christ.

The Nativity

The 25th day was believed to be the day of Jesus' birth, but the month and year have been speculated on. After the great persecution of the Christians, around 310 A.D., the Roman Church finally established December 25th as the official birthday of Jesus Christ. There have been no documents found to chronicle the Nativity; what was written by the disciples in the Bible may have been documented about two generations after His birth. The first MASS of CHRIST, or CHRISTMAS, was celebrated on December 25, 354.

The Spirit of Christmas

Christmas is about love. The sharing, giving, love, and caring that occur during this month of festivities profoundly enriches each person. Love boosts our good hormones and neurotransmitters, so that we not only feel uplifted and energized, but we are also rejuvenated. Our immune system is powerfully enhanced, making love a life-extending and life-enriching emotion, the glorious quintessence of health.

May this season of Christmas remind us of love and peace. MERRY CHRISTMAS to you all and have a happy and healthy new year!

DECEMBER 2005



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Through January 8th, 2006, Sunday "BIG DRUM: TAIKO IN THE UNITED STATES" **EXHIBIT**

Japanese American National Museum 369 E. First St., Little Tokyo Information: (213) 625-1770; www.janm.org

Through January 15th, 2006, Tuesday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

"IMPRESSIONS: MILTON QUON'S LOS ANGELES" **EXHIBIT**

"SAM BOI LEE: A PORTRAIT OF MY MOTHER" **EXHIBIT**

Chinese American Museum 425 N. Los Angeles St. El Pueblo State Park at Olvera Street, L.A. Information: (213) 626-5240; www.camla.org

Through February 12, 2006, Friday-Sunday "PLACE/DISPLACE: THREE GENERATIONS OF TAIWANESE ART" EXHIBIT

Pacific Asia Museum 46 N. Los Robles Ave., Pasadena Information: (626) 449-2742, ext. 10; www.pacificasiamuseum.org

December 1st, 2005 through May 31st, 2006, Thursday-Wednesday

"WHEN CHINA RULED THE SEAS: THE TREASURE FLEET OF THE MING DYNASTY, 1405-1433" EXHIBIT

Ventura County Maritime Museum 2731 S. Victoria Ave., Oxnard Information: (805) 984-6260

January 14th, 2006, Saturday, 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

LITTLE KING & QUEEEN CONTEST

Castelar Elementary School 840 Yale St., L.A. Chinatown

Information: (213) 617-0396; www.lachinesechamber.org

January 15th, 2006, Sunday, 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

CHSSC GUM SAAN JOURNAL 2006 BOOK LAUNCH

Chinese American Citizens Alliance Bldg.

415 Bamboo Ln., L.A. Chinatown

Information: (323) 222-0856; www.chssc.org

January 14th-15th, 2006, Saturday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-7:00

ASIAN AMERICAN EXPO

Pomona Fairplex

1101 W. McKinley Ave., Pomona

Information: (626) 280-8588; www.asisanamericanexpo.com

January 21st, 2006, Saturday, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

COOKING FOR THE CHINESE NEW YEAR WITH CHEF JET TILA

Grand Star Jazz Club

943 Sun Mun Way

Central Plaza, L.A. Chinatown

Information: (213) 680-0243; www.chinatownla.com

January 21st, 2006, Saturday, 7:00 p.m.

MISS LOS ANGELES CHINATOWN PAGEANT

Westin Bonaventure Hotel

404 S. Figueroa St., Downtown L.A.

Information: (213) 617-0396; www.lachinesechamber.org

January 29th, 2006, Sunday

CHINESE NEW YEAR DAY - YEAR OF THE DOG 4704

January 29th, 2006, Sunday, Parade: 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.,

Festival 12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

5TH ANNUAL PASADENA LUNAR NEW YEAR PARADE & FESTIVAL

Colorado Blvd., Old Town Pasadena Information: (310) 478-1818

February 4th, 2006, Saturday, Parade: 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.,

Festival: 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY ANNUAL LUNAR NEW YEAR PARADE & FESTIVAL

Valley Blvd.

Alhambra and San Gabriel

Information: (626) 284-1234; www.lunarnewyearparade.com

February 4th, 2006, Saturday, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

107th ANNUAL GOLDEN DRAGON PARADE

L.A. Chinatown

Information: (213) 617-0396; www.lagoldendragonparade.com

February 4th-5th, 2006, Saturday: 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.,

Sunday: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

CHINESE NEW YEAR FESTIVAL & CAR SHOW

L.A. Chinatown

Information: (213) 617-0396; www.lachinesechamber.org

February 12th, 2006, Sunday, 8:00 a.m.

28th ANNUAL L.A. CHINATOWN FIRECRACKER 5K/10K RUN/WALK

Broadway near College St.

L.A. Chinatown

Information: (323) 256-1363; www.firecracker10k.org



Membership Form

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Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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