



NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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

Fax: 323-221-4162; Email: chssc@earthlink.net; Web: www.chssc.org;

Chinatown Heritage & Visitors Center: 323-222-0856

October 2007

October Program

Wednesday, October 3, 2007

7:00 p.m

Castelar Elementary School

Multipurpose Room

840 Yale Street

Los Angeles Chinatown

Park in playground

Enter on College between Yale and Hill Streets

Film on The Yee Family

The Yee family came to the United States from China in 1850 during the Gold Rush, then resettled in Midland, Pennsylvania, which is outside of Pittsburg. The Yee family eventually relocated to Los Angeles. This film was shown on KABC TV April 2, 1979, and again on *American Perspective: Another View* July 12, 1981. Johnny Yee and some of his brothers and sister are charter members of CHSSC.

November 7th—Laurena Tong will talk about her great grandfather who was a baseball player.

December 5th—Pot luck dinner, caroling, white elephant sale, fun, and catch up with friends.

January 9th—The first Wednesday of January 2008 is January 2 and Castelar School will still be closed for the holidays. CHSSC will have its program on the second Wednesday. Henry Ong's oral history class will make a presentation.

Around CHSSC

Oral History Workshop

Twenty one persons signed up for Henry Ong's workshop on documenting oral history. The first class was held August 29, 2007. Below is Henry's version of the first class.

"We did a general introduction of what oral histories means (my definition is "anything goes"...which means, participants can interpret it anyway they like). Participants broke into pairs to find out about each other and introduced their partners, what they were hoping to get out of class, etc.. Several brought sentimental objects and spoke about the significance of these objects. We will continue the sentimental-object exercise in the next class. Also, participants are asked to start thinking of what they would like to contribute in the presentation/conclusion at the Society's January 9th program meeting. Homework: Bring two pages of "something"...a poem, a song, a memory, an "oral history." "

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Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

October 2007

(“AROUND CHSSC,” from page 1)

Documenting Los Angeles Chinatown



Eugene Moy, right, presents certificate to William Kwok, left.
Photo by Tom Eng

There are documentaries on New York, San Francisco and Seattle Chinatowns but not Los Angeles Chinatown. William Kwok, a graduate student in film at USC has begun documenting the history of Los Angeles Chinatown. He was the speaker at the Society's September 5th program.

William and his parents moved to Flushing, New York, when he was an infant. His family relocated to a neighborhood just outside of San Francisco's Chinatown when he was 13 years old. He has lived near Los Angeles Chinatown in the past three years. He earned a B.A. in English and Political Science from Columbia University. He worked briefly in finance and then for the presidential campaign of John Kerry. He realized that his love is in making documentary films.

William showed a clip of his film that is the beginning of a larger project. The film includes scenes of the new Chinatown, short interviews with Eugene Moy of CHSSC and author Lisa See. William wants to focus on both the old and the new Los Angeles Chinatown, looking at trends, changes, etc.

Some 25 persons attended and each has a unique history. One woman remembers being ordered to leave the old Chinatown suddenly. She remembers fondly playing in the neighborhood and was quite shocked to be ordered to leave with 24-hour notice. A few in the audience are later generation Chinese Americans who talked about obstacles they encountered. One is a teacher of Castelar since 1981 and witnessed the changes in student population.

—Yvonne Chang, CHSSC Staff

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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.



Portraits of Pride Project Update

Delivery of and additional 3,500 copies of Pop-Book 1 is expected in mid-October. They will be distributed to university and public libraries throughout the United States.

The collective stories in this book present a picture of America in the early 1900s when the great majority of Chinese Americans were challenged to rise above obstacles in most professions and businesses.

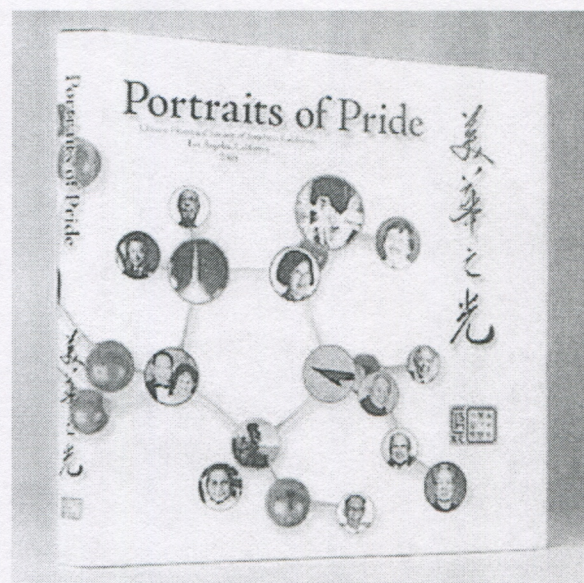
These portraits are the dramatic life stories of 38 Chinese American men and women in Southern California of the WWII era whose accomplishments in science, technology, medicine and education are largely unknown. Many have been under-recognized by history books and the public media. Most were educated in American public schools. Some came from China to complete their education, remaining here due to political unrest in China. Overcoming economic hardships, racial prejudice and a feeling of oppression, they persevered, remained optimistic and mustered the courage to pursue their dreams.

Anyone wishing to purchase a copy can send check payable to CHSSC or fax MC/VISA account information to:

CHSSC
415 Bernard Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tel: 323-222-0856
Fax: 323-221-4162

The cost is \$30 plus \$5 S/H for members, and \$35 plus \$5 S/H for non-members.



PoP-Book 2 is on track to be published early 2008. This book includes Chinese Americans throughout the United States Stay tuned.

PoP Order Form

Enclosed is my check. _____

Please charge to my MC/VISA account _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Account #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

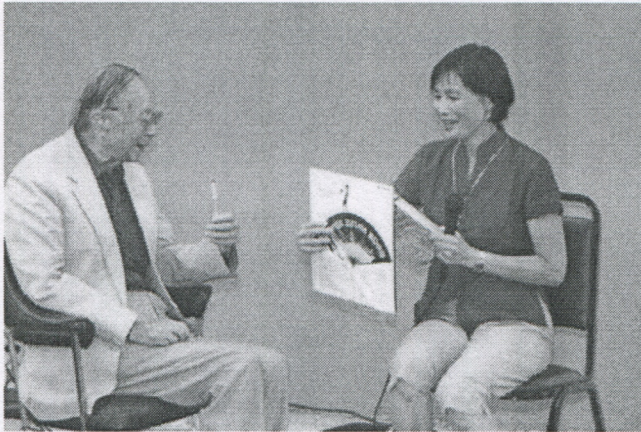
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CHSSC Open House Picnic

Approximately 70 people came to the Society's open house picnic. They came August 26, 4:00 p.m. and lingered well after dark. There was a wide range of ages, both members and non-members. The weather was comfortable, the crowd was happy. Guests walked through the Society's galleries, library and mingled among themselves.

One of the highlights was the preview of an exhibition on Monroe Leung's cartoons. Monroe is a member of a pioneering Chinese American family. Their story is told in *Sweet Bamboo* by Louise Leung Larson. Monroe's daughter Linda Kam is cooperating with CHSSC in the installation of this exhibit. The exhibition is curated by Albert Chang and designed by Jeffrey Chang.



C.Y. Lee (in photo on the left), ninety something years old, author of *Flower Drum Song* was a special guest. He was interviewed by Marjorie Lee (in photo on the right), Librarian of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center. Marjorie spent 30 hours in research in preparation of her interview. Will Gow and a CHSSC friend taped the interview, to be included in the Society's oral history collection.

There was another guest, a twenty something years old businessman, Jay Chen, who is running for a seat on the Governing Board of Hacienda La Puente Unified School District (HLPUSD). The CHSSC is a non-profit organization and does not endorse political candidates. But we welcome them

to the Society's events to speak. The other candidates for the HLPUSD are Norman Hsu, Jeannie Garcia, Erica Holloway, John Eckman and Barbara Moore. The election will be held November 6, 2007.



Margie Lew looks on as Sin Hock Gaw flips a hamburger. Both are long time supporter of CHSSC.

CHSSC Board members Gilbert Hom, Gene Moy, Albert Chang, Will Gow, Irvin Lai, Donald Loo, Ken Chan, Ernesto Con and Jeannie Liu made the picnic a blast. Gilbert and Gene spent many hours after work to spruce up the facility and make sure everything was in working order. Albert and Will are the Picnic Committee. They purchased all the supplies and delivered them. Irvin was the BBQ chef.



Many guests helped with setting up, serving the food and even cleaning up. Phoenix Bakery, Lupe Chee, and, Ernesto and Nety Con donated cakes to help celebrate C.Y. Lee's recent birthday. As usual, Gilbert, Don, Gene and his wife Susan Sing can be counted on to pick up the last pieces of garbage and turned the lights off.



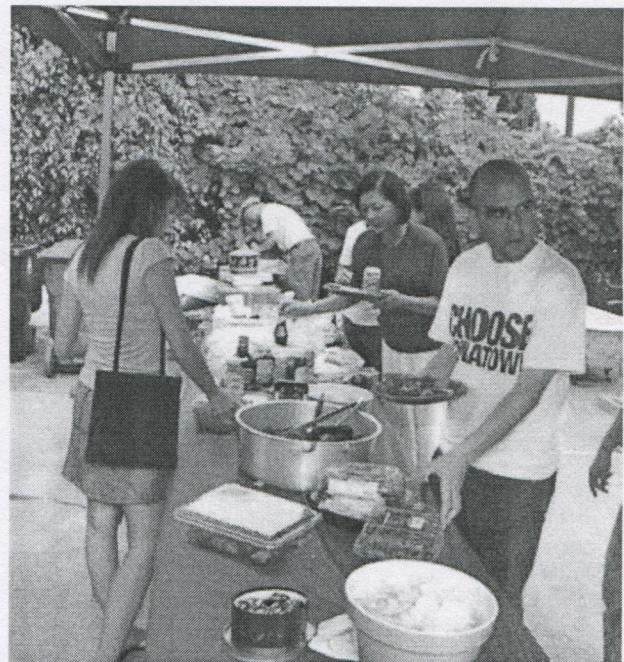
Past CHSSC President and current Board member Irvin Lai barbecuing hamburgers and hotdogs.



In the foreground are Board member Susan Dickson, left, and former Board member Betty Gaw, M.D., right.



Guests enjoy the food and the company.



L to R, a young guest, staff Yvonne Chang and Board member Will Gow

All photos on page 4 and this page are by Tom Eng.



Acknowledgements

- Tom Eng donated two DVDs, *Bittersweet Roots: The Chinese in California's Heartland*, a film about the Chinese who came to California during the Gold rush, and *Big Trouble in Little China*, a high adventure movie starring Dennis Dun who was honored at the CHSSC's 2006 Spring Dinner. These are two nice additions to CHSSC's video library.
- In the September issue of NNN it was mentioned that Gilbert Hom and Gene Moy spend much of their personal time in sprucing up the CHSSC facility in preparation for the annual open house picnic. Actually, Gene's wife, Susan Sing and their 20-year old son Bernie also pitched in and spent many hours weeding, cleaning and doing whatever was necessary to make CHSSC look welcoming to the picnic guests. Susan Dickson and several young guests also pitched in in setting up the picnic tables. Those who stayed to help cleaning up were rewarded with left over cakes.
- Annie Siu, D.D.S. gave a generous donation to the Portraits of Pride 2 Project.
- Legendary actor James Hong donated proceeds from screening of his latest film, *Balls of Fury*.

Words of Wisdom

Life is a theater, invite your audience carefully. Not everyone is holy enough and healthy enough to have a front row seat in our lives.

—Cy Wong
Past t CHSSC Presiden

Announcements

Howard Fong, CHSSC member sent the following article:

In verbatim from Asian Week, August 10-16, 2007,
Volume 3, No. 51. 17.

"Old Marysville Chinatown Receives \$30,000

"MARYSVILLE, Calif. -- Billie Single, president of the Friends of Bok Kai Temple, recently announced the receipt of a gift in excess of \$30,000 from the McBean Family Foundation. The monies will be used in a continuing effort to restore the Bok Kai Temple in Old Town Marysville."

"The local Chinese community, along with the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of San Francisco and the Sahn Fow Chinese Community of Marysville, now has more help in the preservation and continuing maintenance of the world famous home of Bok Kai and other gods."

"Sutter County native Deidra Head provided the gift through her family's San Francisco-based foundation. Yuba City and Marysville have celebrated annual tributes to the ancient water god Bok Kai for a century and a half."

Correction

In the July 2007 issue, in the article on a book by Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War on Chinese Americans*, Holmboldt State University in Oregon is incorrectly stated. The Holmboldt State University is in California.



Historical Chinatowns

Los Angeles New Chinatown - Chinatown Revisited Exhibition

There is an exhibition honoring Y.C. Hong and Gim Fong from September 23, 2007 to the end of the year. The exhibit is open from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays at 445 Gin Lin Way in Los Angeles Chinatown.

Y.C. Hong was the first Chinese American to graduate from the University of Southern California School of Law and the first to pass the California Bar in 1923. He testified before a U.S. Senate Committee on immigration issues and fought to repeal the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Hong was also a major developer of "New Chinatown" in the late 1930s. He built the neon-lit main gate on Broadway which became Chinatown's signature landmark. From the gate on Broadway he built three buildings on Gin Ling Way. On the second floor of the third building, he opened his office overlooking Chinatown. He served as President of the local lodge of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance.

The exhibit recreates the law offices in the 1940s and 1950s including its distinctive furnishings. The Hong family has donated the furnishings and files of Y.C. Hong to the Huntington Library and the Chinese American Museum. This is the last chance to see the office at its original site.

Gim Fong, nephew of Fong See (of On Golden Mountain by Lisa See) was the proprietor of Fong's Oriental Works of Art on Chungking Road since 1952. Gim is an artist in his own right, displays an exact replica of his shop created in miniature and a collection of his hand-wrought cloisonné. They will be on display in the exhibition.

Caldecotto Medal-winning children's book writer and illustrator Leo Politi immortalized the store and many of its object in *Moy Moy* and *Mr. Fong's Toy Shop*, both are books on Los Angeles

Chinatown. The store is part curio, part antique and part museum.

There will be a special opening of the exhibit for members and guests of the China Society of Southern California following their October 1 dinner meeting at the Golden Dragon Restaurant. The cost of the dinner is \$13 for members and \$14 for guests. The CHSSC office is not taking reservations but will be happy to provide telephone number of their Society's treasurer-secretary Dorothy Brown.

Community Calendar

Bone Marrow Drives

Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches
Various locations throughout Los Angeles area
Information: (888) 236-4673
www.asianmarrow.org

Thursdays, 3:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.

Chinatown Farmers Market

727 N. Hills Street, Los Angeles Chinatown

Through November 2007

Exhibition: Daily Rituals: Himalayan Art in Practice

Pacific Asia Museum
46 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA
\$7 general admission, \$5 seniors and students
(626) 449-2742

Thursday, October 4—6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

"Dine Around Chinatown" Progressive Dinner

Sponsored by Chinatown Business Improvement District/
\$75 per person
213-680-0243

Friday, October 5

"12 Girls Band," Chinese instrumental group from China

Greek Theater
323-665-1927

Friday, October 5
Organization of Chinese Americans Image Award Banquet.
Honorees: California State Controller John Chiang, KCET and Verizon.
Omni Hotel
251 S. Olive Street, Downtown Los Angeles, CA
\$65 + per ticket
213-250-9888

Friday, October 19—6:30 p.m.
Asian Youth Center Banquet
Honorees: Judge Ronald Lew, the late San Gabriel Councilman Chi Mui, and LA84 Sports Foundation.
San Gabriel Hilton
225 W. Valley Boulevard, San Gabriel, CA
\$125 per ticket
626-309-0425, X115

Saturdays, October 20, November 17 and December 15, 7:30 p.m.
Cold Tofu Improvisational Comedy Show
Maryknoll Japanese Catholic Center
222 S. Hewitt St., Los Angeles Little Tokyo, CA
Admission \$5, 213-739-4142

Saturday, November 3, 12:00 noon —3:45 p.m.
Chinese Family Festival
Pacific Asia Museum
46 N. Los Robles Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101
Lion dance, double fan dance.
Arts and crafts for children and the young at heart.
Chinese calligraphy demonstration and talk on etymology of Chinese characters, by a professor of Chinese languages of UCLA.
Feng Shui lecture by Angi Ma Wong.
Performance by Cold Tofu

This festival is made possible in part by a grant from the City of Pasadena.

Admission: Free



**Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California**

415 Bernard St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012-1703

