



NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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Chinatown Heritage & Visitors Center: 323-222-0856

July 2008

July Program

Saturday, July 12, 2008

Open House Picnic at CHSSC Heritage Center

415 Bernard Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.



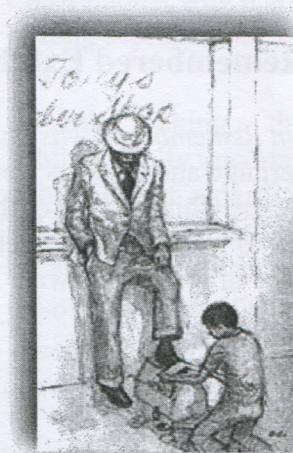
Meet the members of the 2008-2009 Board of Directors, see the exhibition of life in Los Angeles Chinatown in the 1930s - 1940s, and make new friends.

Free admission, parking in street or garage across the street from CHSSC. RSVP by July 10, 323-222-0856.

Around CHSSC

Growing Up on Grove Street, 1931-1946

Sketches and Memories of a Chinese American
Boyhood by Duncan Chin



CHSSC's June 4th program meeting featured a reading by Duncan Chin of his book about his boyhood in Watsonville, California between 1931 and 1946. Captured in his drawings and captions is the multi-cultural, working class world of a California agricultural community during the Great Depression and WWII.

Forced to live side-by-side, Chinese, Japanese, Croatian, African-American, Filipino, and Dust Bowl refugees from Oklahoma created a community bound together by work and struggle. It

is a story of a Chinese American family trying to make it under very difficult conditions. Duncan was trained as an illustrator. All the sketches are from memory which began as doodling out of boredom. His wife encouraged him to expand his drawings and the result is this book. Duncan and his wife Anna now live in Southern California.





Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

July 2008

Election of 2008-2009 Officers

A slate of officers and members at large were elected at the June 4th meeting at the Castelar Elementary School. Kenneth L. Chan, Eugene Moy and Albert Chang will serve another term as President, Vice President for Programs and Secretary respectively. Will Gow is elected Vice President and Mei Ong Membership Chair. Returning members at large are Pete Chinn, Susan Dickson, and Irvin Lai. New members at large are Jenny Cho, Gordon Hom, Henry Leong and Diane Poon. We thank Jeannie Liu, Donald Loo, Gilbert Hom and George Yin for their services as CHSSC Board members in the past several years.

Chinatown Remembered Exhibition

Exhibition of *Chinatown Remembered* was launched Saturday, June 28, 2008 at CHSSC Heritage and Visitors Center. The exhibition is co-sponsored by the Chinatown Youth Service Center. Youth volunteers have helped to write exhibit labels. To date, the project has completed 38 hours of interviews with 11 residents of Chinatown who have lived in the 1930s and 1940s. More interviews are planned. These interviews will be edited down into 5-minute video clips for a website. This website will contain original articles and video clips. Stay tuned.

Gum Saan Journal 2008 Edition will feature these articles as well. A film on *Chinatown Remembered* will debut on August 9th at the East/West Players Theater in Little Tokyo.

Preserving Family History Workshops

The 5th of CHSSC's Preserving Family History Workshop Series was on videography held on May 17 at the Society's Heritage Center. The presenter was Will Gow, community historian and the director of CHSSC's oral history project. Participants received an introduction to recording oral history on digital video. Topics covered included: camera usage, sound and microphone usage, framing and shooting in natural light.

(Continued on page 3)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

Kenneth L. Chan, President
William Gow, Vice President
Eugene Moy, V.P. for Programs
Albert Chang, M.D., Secretary
Mei Ong, Membership Secretary

Members at Large

Pete Chinn
Jenny Cho
Susan Dickson
Gordon Hom
Irvin Lai
Henry Leong
Diane Poon

News 'n Notes Editor,

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.

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

July 2008



("Family History," from page 2)

On June 21, the 6th workshop was held on correcting and otherwise adjusting photos in poor conditions using Photoshop or free softwares. The following is a report on the workshop by Anna Gee.

Participants brought a black and white photo which was a copy of a copy of a photo of a grandfather, a snapshot taken in the late sixties with a significant tear, a portrait of a grandfather, which had wear and discoloration. One participant brought in many recently unearthed documents and photos of her parents. I had brought in a small black and white of my mother which was part of an inoculation record for immigration and a snap shot taken in the 1960s. It was losing its color and turning yellow for which there is no negative. The instructor, Miki, was able to improve all of the photos. Susan, another participant showed the work Miki had done for her, in which copies of portraits of her grandparents were improved. Glare was removed, the height of one grandparent was adjusted to make the two of them match better, and giving a warmer tone to relieve the grayness of the old photos.

These are some of the points we learned from looking at each of the photos.

1. For comparison, the instructor showed us what can be done with freeware, which often comes with purchases of cameras and scanners. Freeware can do a number of functions automatically. This makes it easier to use, but leaves you with little control over the extent of the modification, sometimes losing too much detail with a clean up. Photoshop can do more, sometimes more easily, with more control. Importantly, it can allow you to keep layers of photos so that you keep the original and various stages of modification. Photoshop is expensive, about \$600. If you are a student with an ID you can purchase Photoshop at half price, through Santa Monica City College, probably at other colleges as well. We hope to have a Family History Resource Room in the future which will allow CHSSC members to come in and use Photoshop.

2. The one and a half inch square photo on a Hong Kong document taken in the 1950's can be blown up into a good 5x7 portrait because the original photo was taken with a good lens. Surprisingly, these immigration documents could be sources of nice display photos for your family.
3. Damages to photos are often not visible but they become obvious when they are scanned and enlarged. The extent of damage to photos taken as recently as the 1980s was surprising.
4. As an artist, Miki gave special attention to the eyes, if an image needed to be sharpened.
5. Color photos which are disappearing, yellowing, turning sepia, can be brought back to a surprising extent.
6. By really looking at the photos, you learn things. While initially uncertain about the identity of the photo Gilbert, a participant had brought in, he was able to ascertain that it was indeed his grandfather, because the enlargement on the wall showed a slight detail, which one person noticed. Several noticed the resemblance of Gilbert's son to the portrait. We noticed that my mother seemed younger than her age and thought that it was probably due to the difference in nutrition at that time.

In between, Mike, a participant, passed around a program from a reunion he and his brother organized of people who used to work at the Far East Café in Little Tokyo. It included a history of his father, who passed away early in 1979. We may be able to share more details of their efforts on their family history in the future. If you know of someone who was involved in the Café, who may be interested in future reunions, please contact us, and we will let Mike know. At the workshop, he met Marie, whose grandfather was involved with the café.

("Family History," continued on page 4)

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

July 2008



("Family History," from page 2)

In between photos, we also had a discussion of standards for copying photos. There are many trade-offs. As far as file formats for storing pictures, there are trade offs between jpeg and tiff, with the former more appropriate for general use where convenience is important, and the latter more appropriate for archival or quality purposes. Storage might be an issue, with tiff taking 4 to 10 times the space than jpeg. However, memory is so cheap now. Marie brought up the Raw format, which she will explore further and report at a later workshop. Sandy, who is interested in quality issues, will look into some of the standards being used at relevant institutions and report back.

We learned in the January 2008 workshop how important it was to make copies of family photos to store off site as insurance against loss and to use for display and scrap books so that the originals could be stored in cool, dry, acid free environments. This is especially true of old photos and documents, which are often irreplaceable. While copying photos may be a chore, it is also an opportunity to really look at the photos, clean them up and make use of them.

To contact Miki for help with your photos, go to www.mikikato.com and find her contact page. It makes a difference to have a good eye for those special photos! We thank Miki for donating her services for this workshop.

Go to www.irfanview.com for free software that can resize and edit your pictures. GIMP, another free software can do much more than most freeware, but is more complicated to use, being open sourced.

The next workshop will be at the Chinatown branch of Los Angeles City Public Library, 639 . N. Hill Street, Saturday, July 26, 2:00 pm to 5:00 p.m. Topic is "Genealogical Resources in the National Archives" by Paul Wormser. He is the Director of the National Archives at Laguna Niguel, will speak about materials of general genealogical interest as well as holdings which relate specifically to people of Chinese ancestry. Space is limited, call 323-222-0856 to RSVP.

Enrollment for the following workshops is open now at the Discovery Center of the Little Tokyo Service Center in downtown Los Angeles:

- Intro to Computers, July 8-Aug7, Tues & Thur 9:30-11:30 am.
- Intro to the Internet, Aug 12-Sept 11 Tues-Thur 1:30-3:30pm
- Using Picasa to edit Photos, Saturdays, Aug 16 & 23 10:30-12:30
- Digital Histories: Video Storytelling July 7-Sept 17 Mon & Wed (:30-11:30

Taking these classes can help you with your family history efforts. Please call (213) 621-4158 for further information.

Portraits of Pride, Books 1 and 2

By Wing Mar, M.D.

While the 39 people in Portraits of Pride (PoP) Book 1 broke down the doors of prejudice in their choice of professions, the multitude of profilees in Book 2 are making cracks in the glass ceiling and broken doors. By having the book available to this young generation of students, we will help to instill appreciation of a diverse citizenship.

For four years now we have been doing the Free Book Initiative to libraries and have distributed nearly 8,000 books free of charge to public and school libraries. L.P. Leung, who helped us with paying off the mortgage on CHSSC facility and then financially help sponsor the first batch of printed books, is now the Director and Editor of the second volume. He also is the financial guarantor of the second volume of PoP and will be the fundraising chair for the first printing of PoP Book 2. without this kind of commitment we can not do this publishing project. PoP Book 2 is in the final stage of editing.

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

July 2008



Announcements

By Light Of Lanterns - An Untold History Of Monterey's Chinese Fishermen

Geraldine Low-Sabado, a descendant of the first Chinese immigrants to the Monterey area and originator of the "100 year Respectful Remembrance of the Point Alones Chinese Village," will talk about her experience last summer with the Stanford Archaeology Team which uncovered artifacts from the Pt. Alones Chinese Village in Pacific Grove. It was a 5-week dig with Archaeologist Bryn Williams. Come hear why her heart is now attached to that land and beautiful shores where her grandfather was born in 1881.

"By Light Of Lanterns—An Untold History of Monterey's Chinese Fishermen" will be screened. It is a documentary produced by students at the California State University at Monterey Bay.

Where: Maritime Museum of Monterey, Monterey, California

When: Saturday, July 19, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. Doors open at 1:00 p.m.

Seating is limited to the first 90 visitors. If there is an overflow audience, the presentation will be repeated 3:30 p.m. Come learn about the Chinese villages where many Chinese fishermen were born and about their early Chinese American experiences on the Monterey Peninsula.

Come and find out whether Gerry's Early Chinese Pioneering Ancestor's Fishing Boat influenced a local "Lantern Festival" in a neighboring town Pacific Grove. See story of the town's lantern festival in CHSSC's November 2007 edition on page 3.

For further information on the presentation please email Gerry Low-Sabado, Rsaturday@aol.com.

San Francisco's Asian Art Museum Presents Power & Glory: Court Arts of China's Ming Dynasty

June 27- September 21, 2008

A rare collaboration between three of China's most prominent museums brings the first exhibition of Ming dynasty court arts to the United States. On view from June 27- September 21, 2008, this major groundbreaking exhibition explores the grandeur and opulence of one of the most important dynasties in Chinese history.

THE THREE MUSEUMS ARE - The Palace Museum (Forbidden City) in Beijing, the Nanjing Municipal Museum, and the Shanghai Museum. Some of the most precious artworks from the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) from these museums, along with some of the finest items from this period owned by the Asian Art Museum, make up Power & Glory, the first exhibition in the U.S. to focus on the full range of Ming court arts. Many of the more than 240 artworks - porcelain, paintings, textiles, lacquer, jade, jewelry, architectural elements, and more - will be on public view for the first time.

Acknowledgements

Phoenix Bakery, Winnie Lew, Johnny and Esther Yee provided snacks at the June 4, 2008 program meeting.

There are no speakers program in July and August as is the tradition every year. If any reader has recommendations for CHSSC's monthly speaker program please call 323-222-0856 or email chssc@earthlink.net.



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

July 2008

Historic Chinatowns

Historic Riverside Chinatown Site

The Riverside Chinatown site is designated City Landmark, County Landmark, State Point of Historical Interest, and National Register of Historic Places

The California Gold Rush of 1848 drew thousands of Chinese from Guangdong and Fujian to this place they called "Gold Mountain." Thousands more came to the new State to build the Union Pacific Railroad in the 1860s. Then in the 1870s, citrus, a second kind of gold rush pulled them to Southern California. Riverside, California, original hometown of the famous Washington Navel Orange, generated a prosperous and thriving Chinatown. Between, 1885 and the early 1930s, Pioneer Chinese from Guangdong Province lived and worked in this wealthy citrus town. They established a flourishing Chinatown of more than 450 full-time residents, and housed an additional 2,500 during harvest season, from January through April.

- Pioneer Chinese from Gom-Benn Village, Taishan District, Guangdong, China made possible the rise of Riverside's famous navel Orange Empire, by providing the chief skilled labor force for the Inland Citrus Belt, and
- By contributing horticultural techniques brought with them to California from the citrus-producing regions of southern China, including furrow irrigation (claimed as the "Riverside Method"), pattern packing of fruit, called the "China Pack," and insect pest control techniques for scale pests, and
- Riverside's Chinatown labor contractors, merchants, businessmen, and vegetable growers and dealers controlled those trades in all the Riverside citrus districts, providing a strong middleman minority that helped build up Riverside as a powerful economic and cultural capital of southern California, rivaling Los Angeles at the time,

- The Chinese Remittance Banker, Wong Sai Chee, served more than 2,500 of his countrymen in Riverside and San Bernardino, and acted as a liaison with the Anglo citrus barons of Riverside, creating a solid bridge between the two cultural groups,
- Duey Woo Lung Co., a laundry owned by Wong Nim, held a virtual monopoly on laundry service in the Riverside area for many years, and
- Riverside Chinatown Chee Kung Tong had strong ties to Dr. Sun Yat Sen, and aided his efforts to raise money in southern California for the Revolution against the Manchu Dynasty in 1911.
- The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and Geary Act of 1892, halted Chinese immigration to California, resulting in the demise of Riverside Chinatown, and others like it around the citrus belt. Chinatown's last owner-resident, George Wong Ho Leun, died in 1994.

The architectural remnants of Old Chinatown are gone now, but the site is an important and recognized local, county, state and national historic site.

Proposed Medical Office Building Threatens Chinatown Site

Chinatown is now threatened by a proposed private development of a 65,000 square foot medical office building and parking lot. If the project gains approval and goes forward as submitted, it will literally obliterate this important historic archaeological site. Chinatown will fade into a ghostly memory, recalled only by a few displays, some landscaping, and bronze plaques. We need your help to stop this project as planned, and to create a more appropriate alternative. The men who spent their lives in Old Chinatown, often unable to return to China, and who toiled here so long and hard, helping to build California deserve nothing less for their sacrifice.

The above fact sheet is provided by the Riverside Chinese Culture Preservation Committee. For further information please contact:

James Lu, (951) 343-4277 (work)
Judy Lee, (951) 827-5486 (work)
Amber
qzhao@sbcglobal.net

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

July 2008



CHSSC Gift Donation Form

I would like to donate \$ _____ to CHSSC's general operating fund

I would like to donate \$ _____ to _____

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

VISA or MC # _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Please return this form to: CHSSC, 415 Bernard Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Or if pay by credit card, fax to 323-221-4162.

Community Calendar

Through July 27, 2008

Exhibition - Chinaman's Chance

Pacific Asia Museum
46 N. Los Robles Avenue
Pasadena, CA 90012

Admission for non-members \$7
626-449-2742

July 11, 5:00 p.m. —9:00 p.m.

July 12 and 13, 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Lotus Festival

Echo Park Lake, Los Angeles

CHSSC will have a display booth on Sunday

Echo Park Lake is located on Park Avenue between
Glendale Avenue and Echo Park Boulevard, just north
of the Hollywood (101) and Pasadena (110) freeway
junction, near Dodger Stadium.

June 28 through November 2, 2008

Saturdays and Sundays 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Historic Chinatown in Neon Postcards: An Installation

445 Gin Lin Way, Los Angeles Historic Chinatown

Admission: \$2.00

Contact DSR @ 213-628-7335

Through October 12, 2008

Exhibition - Terra Cotta Warriors: Guardians of China's First Emperor

Bowers Museum

2002 North Main Street, Santa Ana, CA 92706

Adults

\$27 / \$25—weekends/weekdays

Seniors (age 62 or older) and students

\$21 / \$19—weekends/weekdays

Children 6-17

\$21 / \$8—weekends/weekdays

Children under 6, free

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