

DECEMBER 2010

William F. Chew, Jr.

1931 -2010

An aerospace consultant, longtime CHSSC friend and Board of Directors officer, and published expert on the building of the Transcontinental Railroad, William F. Chew, Jr. was born in 1931 in San Francisco during The Great Depression.

His mother moved the family to Los Angeles to seek employment when Bill's father passed away. Due to financial hardships, she placed Bill and his brother in the Masonic Home for Children in Covina which instilled discipline and a strong work ethic in the boys. As a young man in Chinatown, however, Bill struggled to come to terms with his doubt of finding future success. He later credited his mother's words of encouragement, "You're going to make it. Be somebody. Look for opportunity and step up to it." With her words of encouragement, he "kept in mind that each dish I washed took me one step closer to college."

In 1950, Bill went to work for Douglas Aircraft Company of El Segundo, California, where, as a master layout man and loftsmen, he discovered his love of aircraft engineering. Working days and attending classes at night at California State University at Long Beach, he earned his Bachelor of Science degree, graduated summa cum laude, and achieved highest academic honors in his engineering classes, all the while raising two sons, Michael and Gregory.

Ever-ambitious and hard working, Bill Chew furthered his education with evening classes, earning a Master's degree in Engineering from UCLA in 1969. His aerospace engineering career continued for 45 years with positions at Aerojet (General Tire), North American, Douglas, RCA, Northrop, TRW and GTI.

In 1976, NASA assigned TRW the building of a biological experiment to search for existence of life on Mars. Bill Chew, then working for TRW and having a reputation as a creative trouble shooter, did the research and designed the unit for the Viking Mars Lander. After rigorous testing, NASA approved the instrument Chew designed as functioning perfectly. (While most scientists then concluded there was no evidence of life as we know it on Mars, others challenged this view.)

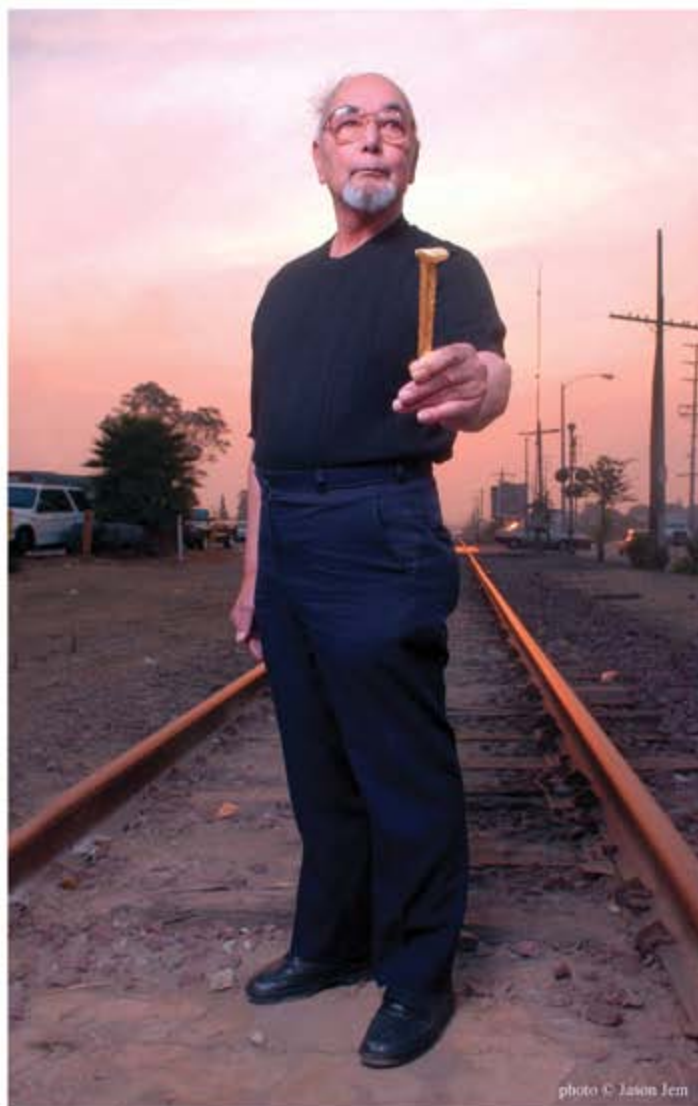


photo © Jason Jem

Photo: Jason Jem

Discovering new possibilities for living and working in space was Bill's mantra. He was proud to demonstrate that certain disease states have "fingerprint patterns" that show up in red blood cells in the space environment. He not only finished this experiment but delivered it on time. It was conducted on space shuttle Discovery flights in 1985 and 1987.

In the 1970s, W. F. Chew Enterprises, his nascent consulting firm, came into being. With excitement, Bill said, "I was able to use my accumulated knowledge and experience in the running of my own company."

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I had to do everything—engineering, accounting, marketing, machining, making contracts, and hiring personnel. I loved the independence.” W. F. Chew Enterprises operated successfully for 25 years, nurtured by Bill’s philosophy of innovation, quality, and cost-effectiveness with on-time delivery.

William Chew later launched another career, as a historian and writer. Through the research for his book on the Transcontinental Railroad, Chew was the first person to provide proof that there were tens of thousands of Chinese railroad workers in the United States. Armed with his laptop computer and assisted by his wife, Natalina, he spent over five years examining nearly century and a half-old documents. He traveled through California, Nevada and Utah researching state archives, railroad museums, and libraries. Bill Chew’s book reveals that from 1864 to 1867, there were 23,000 individual Chinese workers on the payrolls of the railroads. His face lights up with a “Eureka!” expression as he says, “Look at the numbers, they were really there!”

On March 3, 2004, the Society proudly hosted CHSSC Treasurer (and now published author) William F. Chew, who presented his new book, *Nameless Builders of the Transcontinental*. Bill’s grandfather worked on the Transcontinental Railroad and, fittingly, the book’s dedication reads: “To my grandfather, Che Wing Qui, who would not know that his contribution to railroad travel would, within two generations, lead to his grandson’s contributions to planetary travel.”

William Chew’s volume on the Transcontinental Railroad taps heretofore unpublished payroll information from the Central Pacific Railroad Company—a rich vein of primary historical data. The book is largely the flowering of trips in 1998-1999 to Promontory Point, Utah, to re-enact the celebrated “Marriage of the Rails” and the “Golden Spike” ceremony.

The March 2004 meeting and book signing was a joyful event in Bill’s life. Many family members were there to share the occasion. Also attending was his literary mentor, Susan Sovine, who spoke on her lifelong study of Pearl S. Buck. As evinced in his presentation, Bill Chew brings a scientific approach to research and synthesis by eschewing preconceived notions and rejecting the unsubstantiated.

William F. Chew often shared the following encouragement with young people: “I want any young person who is feeling discouraged to remember that someone like me, a starving student, can do it. By ‘it,’ I am referring to getting a good education. If I could do it without much money, without any scholarships, without any student loans, plus a family to support, others can too. It was not easy but it can be done with hard work and sacrifice.”

Note: In addition to being profiled himself in CHSSC’s *Portraits of Pride* (2004), William F. Chew contributed a monograph on the role of Chinese Americans in transportation to *Portraits of Pride II: Chinese-American Legacies—First 160 Years in America*, slated for publication in early 2011.

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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, multicultural society of the United States.



DECEMBER 2010

Untold Stories: A Community Oral History Program

By Jenny Cho

At the past November meeting, CHSSC co-hosted a screening of *Untold Stories: A Community Oral History Program* at Castelar School. OHP was an educational component of the *Hollywood Chinese: The Arthur Dong Collection* exhibition at the Chinese American Museum (CAM). CAM implemented an intensive youth program that trained students between the ages of 15-21 on how to conduct digital video oral histories. *Untold Stories* focused on Chinese Americans who worked as actors, extras, or stunt coordinators from the 1930s onward. The screening featured six videos of Esther Lee Johnson, Jeff Chan, Joe Wong, Al Leong, Jack Ong, and Lauren Tom. CAM also published a free educational booklet to be distributed to libraries. About eighty people attended the program, which was a 'double feature' with Robert Barde's presentation on Angel Island scheduled for the second half.

The event represented a successful partnership between three Chinatown organizations: the Chinese American Museum, Chinese American Citizens Alliance, and the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. Interns were recruited from all three organizations and assigned to interview one subject. Through workshops led by myself, interns gained a foundation on oral history techniques, post-production video editing, and transcribing. They learned about the contributions that Chinese Americans made in front of and behind the camera from the 1930s to the present.

SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to thank everyone who made this program possible. Participating interns included Chinatown residents Kevin On, Tommy Thai and Amy Chow; Michael Mercurio, Kimberly Zarate, Godwin Leung, Casey Young, Anthony Wu, and Sharon Zhu. CAM Executive Director Pauline Wong and Museum Educator Long Truong spearheaded the project. Eugene Moy, Fenton Eng and Marian Chew were supportive of the program throughout the summer. Winston Wu from the Chinese American Citizens Alliance volunteered many hours as the liaison for the CACA Youth Council. Derek Wu, Jennifer Tang, Ana Pena and Susie Oh facilitated the recruitment of Chinatown high school students. The Chinese American Museum, Winifred Lew and other volunteers sponsored refreshments.

Untold Stories was made possible through a generous grant from the Nissan Foundation and support from El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, the Friends of the Chinese American Museum, the Chinese American Citizens Alliance and the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California.



L-R first row: Winston Wu, Long Truong, Pauline Wong.
Second row: Kevin On, Tommy Thai, Esther Lee Johnson, Al Leong, Gordon Hom, Jeff Chan, Jenny Cho.



DECEMBER 2010

Save Riverside Chinatown

Students, Educators, and Residents Say No to Chinatown Land Swap!

Nearly 50 people attended the Riverside County Board of Education (RCBE) meeting on November 10, 2010 to voice opposition to a land swap deal currently being considered by the RCBE.

The Save Our Chinatown Committee, students, educators, and residents came together to urge the Riverside County Board of Education (RCBE) to reject the proposed Chinatown land swap. Attendees also called for greater transparency on matters pertaining to Riverside's historic Chinatown.

Representatives from Students for Chinatown, a UC Riverside student club, brought over 150 letters from local college students, which they delivered to Deputy Superintendent Paul Jessup following the meeting.

Due to the large number of letters, emails, and postcards received by the Riverside County Office of Education leading up to the meeting (including those delivered on November 10th), the RCBE postponed the vote on the land swap to a future undetermined date.

Public comments at the Nov. 10th RCBE meeting are found at: www.youtube.com/user/RiversideChinatown

How You Can Help

1. Since the vote on the proposed land swap has been postponed, SOCC encourages the public to continue submitting letters against the proposal, as individuals or as organizations.



Add your voice against this deliberate end-run around a case still under litigation, against actions recently described at another Riverside organization's meeting as "chicanery."

Consult <http://saveourchinatown.org> for a link to "more details on letter writing."

2. Join the site monitoring committee! Past actions by the Riverside County Office of Education and developer Doug Jacobs remind us that we must remain vigilant. Contact us at saveourchinatown@gmail.com for more information on how you can help.

3. Donate to SOCC. No grassroots organization in a David vs. Goliath situation can take on a fight without a little (financial) help from its friends. See our combined membership/donation form at: www.saveourchinatown.org

4. Spread the word! Last week, the land swap was covered by LA18, the largest Asian language television station in the U.S.! Let us know if you have personal and/or media contacts that could help us reach even wider audiences!

The public comments from the RCBE Nov 10th meeting are on SOCC's NEW YouTube Channel! We'll be uploading more content soon! Check it out and share with friends!

www.youtube.com/user/RiversideChinatown

Judy Lee and M. Rosalind Sagara
Save Our Chinatown Committee (SOCC)
www.saveourchinatown.org
email: saveourchinatown@gmail.com



Dr. Thomas W. Wing

July 22, 1915 - November 9, 2010

*Eulogy for my father,
by Carolyn Wing Greenlee*

Alas for those that never sing
but die with all their music in them.
- Oliver Wendell Holmes

Dr. Thomas W. Wing, DC, LAc, ND; Tom Wing, Uncle Tom, Grandpa Wing, Great Grandpa Wing, Daddy, poured his music on everyone everywhere. His was a symphony of encouragement, admonishment, philosophy and love. And he loved lavishly, unstintingly, extravagantly. How do you sum up such a life?

The Greeks have two ways of measuring time. There was chronos: born July 22, 1915, died November 9, 2010. He was 95. The other is chiros--events: the moment he heard the faint signal of the Los Angeles ham coming from the other side of Mt. Pinos proving that UHF waves could be bent around the mountain. The explosion of joy after the birth of his first daughter Adrienne when he rushed down the street shouting, "I'm a father! I'm a father!" He was much more than his 95 years.

Invention poured out of Tom Wing from his early days of ham radio to the chair that enabled him to care for his beloved wife Kay at home till the end. In the 1940s he invented the first viable personal radio paging system (precursor to the doctor beeper) and a non-interceptible emergency communications system that was still saving lives during the war in Viet Nam because the enemy could not tune up their radios to the higher frequencies. In 1976 he invented microcurrent, a non-needle acupuncture machine that changed medicine all over the world. But the drive for this outpouring of invention was always need. He saw it and felt compelled to meet it, making it available for the lowest cost possible to the public.

Dr. Wing was enormously successful in his practice, with patients flying in from all over the world because he was curing diabetes with Chinese herbs, diet, and good advice. But his greatest success was seeing the results of his investments in the lives of individuals. He kept track of birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, sent cards, wrote letters, clipped newspaper articles, and called



Progress Bulletin photo by Vonne Robertson

--all of which said, "I'm thinking of you. This reminded me of you. I think this will help you." He drove thousands of miles to see family and friends, often fixing their houses as well as diagnosing their ills, both physical and emotional--while he was there.

Concerned about the joblessness that was increasing before his eyes, he established the Wing Family Trust to provide aptitude testing to help people find their natural abilities so they could focus their studies and job training where their talents really lay. It wasn't just family and friends whose needs tugged the heart of Tom Wing, it was the faceless, hopeless ones out there.

Someone said, "Tom Wing's idea of resting is doing something else." He was always inventing, always thinking of all of us. And he enjoyed it all. He expended life with enthusiasm every day. He kept a vigilant eye on the future and tirelessly warned all who would listen of the coming trends and what to do about them. But always there was that optimism, a jaunty joy in the day, for he viewed each one as limitless possibilities of ways to make things better for those he loved, and for those out there he was yet to meet.

What was the source of the music within this skinny, enthusiastic man? A profound sense of purpose, of God's calling on his life. He often said God wanted him to bring these things to the world and he believed God was going to keep him here on earth until he was finished. The music poured forth for 95 years, and we, whom he knew and loved, have the privilege of adding his melodies to our own.



Nobel Laureate Dr. Charles K. Kao

How Fiber Optic Technology Helped Rescue 33 Chilean Miners

By Randy Bloch

The fiber optics breakthroughs of Dr. Charles Kao—featured in CHSSC's new book, *Portraits of Pride II: Chinese-American Legacies – First 160 Years in America*—played an important part in the rescue of 33 miners recently trapped underground in the August 5th partial collapse of the San Jose copper-gold mine, near Copiapo, Chile.

Fiber optics technology's principal application is the efficient transmission of information, including voice, text, graphics, photos, music and video. The vast communications network based on optical fiber and known as the Internet has completely transformed the world of communication as we know it—bringing human beings closer together than ever before.

On October 15, the internet publication, *Broadcast Engineering*, vividly reported on the 33 miner's plight and how high-tech communications helped effect their rescue:

The ultra-flexible, fiber optic video cable with camera and a tiny video projector was lowered and twisted through the rocky crags to the miners. It became one of the unsung heroes of the rescue effort. Together with 500 Watts of electricity and a funnel of fresh air, it saved lives and kept the miners in nearly constant communication with rescuers and the

miners' loved ones. Video communication through fiber optic cable was a lifeline connecting the trapped miners to health personnel at the surface of the mine.

Each miner got a daily video consultation with a doctor. Chilean officials assigned psychologists and a personal trainer by videoconference to tend to the men. Doctors were also able to send down a biometric belt that allowed the miners to monitor and transmit their vital signs to the surface using wireless technology. It's clear the technology played a major role in saving the lives of the 33 men. Many have called the video images of the miners as captivating as the images transmitted back from the moon during NASA's Apollo 11 space mission on July 20, 1969.

Broadcast Engineering,
<http://broadcastengineering.com/news/Fiber-optic-video-helped-rescue-Chilean-miners/>





CBS News.com, broadcasting from San Jose Mine on September 8, 2010, ran this piece, praising the benefits of high technology and fiber optic communications, excerpted below:

Chile Miners Get Live Soccer, Hope For Fresh Air:

In an effort to extend at least one comfort of home to those trapped underground, a fiber-optic cable enabled them to watch a live broadcast of the Chilean national soccer team playing Ukraine on Tuesday. A miniature projector snaked down a bore hole displayed the game on an underground wall, creating an image 50 inches-wide. Chile lost the game, but the video feed of the miners showed them seemingly enjoying the distraction.

In 1965, Drs. Charles Kao and G. A. Hockham, at Standard Communications Laboratories in England, advanced the idea of fiber optics being a practical communications medium. Publication of their findings followed in June of that year. The theory was now in place for a global communications breakthrough, and Dr. Charles Kao began a quest to bring fiber optics' possibilities to the world's attention. In 1970, a research team at Corning Glass Works of New York State began mass producing optical cable with the decreased resistances to light's travel envisioned by Kao and Hockham. By 1975, the first fiber optic communications links were installed in the United Kingdom. More soon followed in the U.S. and Japan, and a transatlantic fiber optic cable system was placed in service in 1988.

Dr. Kao received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2009 for his developments in fiber optics technology. Physicist and engineer Charles Kao received his Nobel prize from Sweden's King Carl Gustaf with a special honor: Because he suffers from Alzheimer's disease, the physicist did not have to approach the king to receive his medal and award. Instead the king came to him, leaving the podium and walking down to the stage where the beaming "father of fiber optics" walked forward a few confident paces to meet him and shook his hand firmly.

*Annual Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California*

Christmas Potluck Dinner

Wednesday, December 1, 2010 6:00 pm

DeVry University
1000 S. Fremont Ave,
Unit 100 Bldg A-11,
Alhambra, CA 91803

No charge for parking after 8:00 pm

*Bring your favorite dish
and your friends!*



Call for volunteers!

Saturday, December 4, 2010 9am

Workday

Repairs and cleanup

throughout the Campus at
411 & 415 Bernard Street
Call: 323-222-0856



Special acknowledgements to :

Robert Verre

*for his generous donation of time and skills
in the restoration of 411 Bernard Street.*

Gordon Hom

*for his generous donation
in support of the CHSSC library.*



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

415 Bernard Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: 323-222-0856 Email: chssc@hotmail.com
Web: www.chssc.org

Help us save paper and postage, email us for your online newsletter at chssc@hotmail.com

Community Calendar

Wednesday, December 1, 2010, 6:00 pm
Chinese Historical Society of Southern California
"Christmas Potluck Dinner"

DeVry University 1000 S. Fremont Ave, Unit 100 Bldg A-11,
Alhambra, CA 91803
No charge for parking after 8:00 pm www.chssc.org

Saturday, December 3rd, 2010 10:00am Set-up Friday night
CHSSC "Cleanup Day"

Set-up library, Shingle garage roof, cleanup rooms, sort archives,
sort kitchen stuff & gardening.

Thursday, December 9, 2010 / 6 pm – 8:30 pm Free to public
Dreams Deferred - Artists Respond to Immigration Reform

Presented by the Chinese American Museum
and El Pueblo de Los Angeles historical Monument.
425 N. Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
www.camla.org

Saturday, December 10th, 2010, 5:30 pm Free
"Day of Inclusion"

In recognition and appreciation of the priceless contributions
of all immigrants to the greatness of the United States.
Host Mike Eng Calif. Assemblymember
Japanese American Museum
369 E. First Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
www.dec17.org

Saturday, December 18, 2010, 2:00 pm & 6:00 pm \$25.

Celebrate CAM's 7th Anniversary!

Paper Son ~ performed by Byron Yee
National Center for the Preservation of Democracy
111 N. Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Ticket info: <http://camlapaperson.eventbrite.com>
www.camla.org

Friday, March 11, 2011

Lantern Festival Banquet -

Celebrating the book launch of Portraits of Pride II

Empress Harbor Restaurant
111 N. Atlantic Blvd., Monterey Park, CA 91745

Save the Date:
Annual Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California Banquet
Saturday, May 21, 2011