

NEWS'N NOTES



**Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California**

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

DECEMBER 2013

Annual Christmas Potluck

Wednesday, December 4, 2013 - 6:30 p.m.

*Castelar Elementary School
840 Yale Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012*

Free parking - enter via College Street
Bring your favorite dish or \$5. for admission,
children are free.



Bring your whole family.

Sing Christmas carols.

Catch up with fellow members and friends.

Don't forget to purchase Christmas gifts
from our selection of fine publications
and of course, renew your
2014 CHSSC membership.

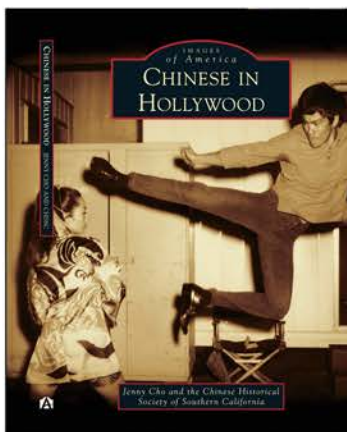




DECEMBER 2013

New Release! Chinese in Hollywood

by Jenny Cho and
the Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California



Hollywood has long exerted an international influence on the global imagination.

In the first half of the 20th century, Chinese actors who aspired to a career in Hollywood found their opportunities limited to roles that propagated asian stereotypes. Meanwhile, many Chinese roles were given to non-Asian actors playing yellowface. It has been a long, hard road for Chinese in Hollywood who have striven to build meaningful careers behind and in front of the camera. This book focuses on the contributions of Chinese to the film and television industries as well as those who lived and worked in the Hollywood area. Copies will be available at the December meeting or call 323-222-0856 to reserve your copy.

The San Gabriel

Southern California's First Locomotive

by Angi Ma Wong



CHSSC Past President and award-winning author Angi Ma Wong will debut the release of her newest children's book *The SAN GABRIEL Southern California's First Locomotive* next month at the Society's December holiday meeting and celebration. The juvenile fiction is based on historical fact, is set in rhyme and

tells the story of the small "pony" engine bought secondhand by Phineas Banning for his fledgling Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad. Illustrated in full color with photographs, index and glossary, the book will be available for sale \$9.99 at the next meeting and a portion of proceeds donated to CHSSC.

Angi's next project, already in progress and due for a spring 2014 release is *Wisteria Seeds in a Wicker Suitcase* Lim Ying and the Banning Family, the story of the Bannings' longtime Chinese cook. This title incorporates some history of Chinese in Los Angeles, setting the stage for Lim's arrival before he joined the family's staff.

Board of Directors

Officers

Susan Dickson, President
Eugene W. Moy, Vice President
Gordon Hom, VP for Programs
Helen Quon, Secretary
Kelly Fong, Membership Sec.
Richard Liu, Treasurer

Members at Large

Su Chen
Jenny Cho
Clement Lai
Winifred Lew
Donald Loo
Steven Ng
Mei T. Ong
Francine Redada
William Yuen

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 2013

Dear friends of CHSSC,


As 2013 comes to a close and we prepare for another extraordinary year of CHSSC events, I invite you to renew your CHSSC membership and continue supporting us through 2014. We greatly appreciate your membership this past year and we hope that you will renew your membership. As in past years, CHSSC has four different membership levels: Student/Senior (\$32/year); Silver (\$57/year); 100 x 100 Club (\$100/year); and Diamond (\$300/year). With a 2014 membership renewal, you will receive our monthly newsletter News 'N Notes as well as our yearly Gum Saan Journal. The 2014 issue of Gum Saan Journal is titled "Voices of Chinatown," and features personal stories from Los Angeles and Santa Barbara Chinatowns. This is definitely an issue you do not want to miss! Lifetime CHSSC members and members who would like an additional copy of Gum Saan Journal can purchase the 2014 edition for \$12.

Your membership also entitles you to a discount on books and goods at our store. Your membership discount would be a perfect opportunity to purchase an autographed copy of our newest publication, *Chinese in Hollywood* by CHSSC board member Jenny Cho. This book features over 200 images, chronicling the important contributions of Chinese Americans in film and television.

Your support this past year has allowed CHSSC to host our monthly meetings with speakers from across the United States as well as countless public programs at local libraries, community centers, and museums throughout Southern California. These events are organized by CHSSC volunteers and are free to the public. CHSSC staff and volunteers also have continued giving walking tours and collecting oral histories to continue to educate and preserve Chinese American history. With your support, we have made CHSSC one of the most active Chinese American historical societies in the United States.

We plan to continue organizing exciting events in 2014, but we cannot do this without your continued support. Your membership fees and donations are essential to keeping our programs and events running, our publications printed and mailed, our facilities maintained, and our offices staffed. We also have ongoing projects in our archives, including digitizing and organizing our archives, and working with independent authors to publish their research on Chinese American communities. With your support, we will be able to continue projects and preserve and promote Chinese American history. Therefore, as we reach the last days of 2013, I encourage you to renew your membership and invite you to consider making a year-end donation.

Sincerely,


Kelly Fong, Ph.D.
Membership Secretary

Please Renew
Your Membership Now!



Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California

南加州華人歷史學會

Membership

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Silver

Monthly newsletter.
Free Gum Saan Journal.
Discount on field trips to historical sites.
Discount on publications and products.
Admission to Heritage Center during non-public hours (call in advance)

100 x 100 Club

All benefits of Silver membership.
Invitation for 2 to special events.

Diamond

All benefits of 100 x 100 Club membership.
2 complimentary tickets to Annual Gala Dinner.

Student/Senior (60+)

All benefits of Silver membership.

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

Visa/MC # _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

411 Bernard Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 323-222-0856
Email: chssc@hotmail.com
Website: www.chssc.org

Make checks payable to CHSSC

We are a 501(c)3
non-profit organization,
tax ID: 95-3155357

I am interested in helping with:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silver | \$ 57. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 100 x 100 Club | \$ 100. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diamond | \$ 300. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student or Senior (60+) | \$ 32. |
| Donation (tax deductible) | \$ _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |

- | |
|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |



DECEMBER 2013



Feeling Connected

*Tracing My Roots and
Visiting the Villages of My Ancestors*

I was born and raised in the Netherlands. Apart from the color of my skin, long-life noodles on birthdays, and a somewhat peculiar name, there was nothing Chinese about my upbringing. From the language at home to my friends at school, everything was Dutch.

My parents were born in Indonesia and had moved to the Netherlands when they were young. As a boy, we often visited Indonesia, but I never really liked it that much. We always had to visit this aunt or that uncle, the food was strange, and everything was just different from home.

During my teenage years, I warmed up to Indonesia. I started noticing its natural beauty and became curious about the people behind the faces, about their histories and their cultures. I started to understand why my father loved the country. Indonesia came alive, and with it, images of my ancestors, of my grandparents as little kids, running through the sugar fields of eastern Java.

During my time at university, it was China's turn. China had not only been distant like Indonesia, it had also been unknown. More importantly, I felt conflicted about China: I looked Chinese, I "was" Chinese, so going like a regular tourist observing from the outside somehow didn't feel right. However, I didn't speak a word of Chinese, no dialect whatsoever. This already made me feel bad in a restaurant in Amsterdam's Chinatown; how was I going to feel when my "limping Chineseness" would be exposed to millions of "real Chinese"? Delay and distant attraction was the safer option.

However, China's pull was unmistakable. China had no equal when looking at a country's history, future potential, and current global impact combined. Also, my roots were Chinese and that was never going to change. Finally, I went on a long-awaited blind date with China in 2004. Following an intensive Mandarin course, I was quickly seduced by the country's career opportunities and social, political and economic developments. I decided to stay.

The next eight years I focused on building a successful career, which was in business consulting and government relations. However, as I had started to find "my own place in China", I also started to wonder: "Where in China is my family actually from and why did they leave? How is 'my China' different from my ancestors' China? and what was it like for them, to build a whole new life, miles from home?" And so the search for my roots started, evolving from a young and unassuming curiosity to a mature hobby with a life of its own. It was the start of an immensely rewarding journey that taught me about my family, our history, and about myself.

I learned that my ancestors from both my parents' sides were from Fujian, home to many of the bravest seafarers and merchants in China's history. In the late 17th century, my first migrating ancestors had left

the Zhangzhou area, where many Ming loyalists were resisting or escaping the foreign Manchu rulers of the newly established Qing Dynasty. Other ancestors had left some 150 years later, when the bloody Taiping Rebellion was raging its way north, out to bring down the same House of Qing.

Before the mid-19th century, the place to go for emigrants was Southeast Asia, where European colonizers had settled and were in need of labor to facilitate booming international trade. Through established migration networks based along clan and regional lines, my ancestors typically left China from Xiamen and headed to the port of Semarang in Indonesia, often via Singapore.

I learned how my ancestors built their new lives, families and businesses in Indonesia. One ancestor was a ship owner, another became rich through the sugar trade. I found magic stories about ancestors that were Captains or Majors, which were administrative titles that the Dutch colonizers bestowed upon the richest and most influential Chinese community leaders in Indonesia. Then, following the rise of glittering family fortunes, there was often demise three to four generations later: spoiled sons gambling the wealth away and spending it on women and racing horses. In a more spectacular instance, demise started after a great-great-aunt placed a curse on her adopted son's descendants.

The 1940s saw the Japanese army marching into the lives of my grandparents. Gone were the days of easy living. Lands and houses were taken away, and the Indonesian nationalist fervor that followed Japanese occupation did not bode well for the country's Chinese population. With Mainland China still backward and taken over by the Communists in 1949, what other place to go to than Holland?

Walking around in my ancestral villages in Fujian and Jinmen, I felt I was closing a circle of history. I walked on the same sandy paths that six generations ago my ancestors walked, I stood in front of the same ancestral altar where my ancestors stood. It gave me a feeling of being at ease, a rare experience in today's restless world of disposable information and short attention spans. It was an intensely personal and peaceful experience that more than anything gave me a feeling of being connected: connected with my family's history, with the world today, and most of all, connected with myself.

In 2012, several years after his first visit to one of his ancestral villages, Huihan established My China Roots. Based in Beijing, My China Roots provides ancestry and roots-related research and travel services, targeting overseas Chinese. For more information, please visit www.mychinaroots.com or email huihanlie@mychinaroots.com.

Before starting My China Roots, Huihan worked at a leading global wind energy company as Vice President of Government Affairs and External Relations. Prior to that, he was a business strategy and government relations consultant in Beijing. Huihan holds a Masters Degree in International Law, having received education and training at Columbia University, the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael", the Delegation of the European Union in Beijing, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva. He speaks Dutch, English, Mandarin Chinese, and basic French and German.



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

Community Calendar

Monday, December 2, 2013 6:00 pm

Hiding in a Cave of Trunks: A Prominent Jewish Family's Century in Shanghai and the Internment in a WWII POW Camp Cost: \$20 members, \$25 non-members

Meet Author Ester Benjamin Shifren Book Talk/Questions/Book Signing. China-born Ester Shifren is the descendant of five generations of British Jewish Nationals living in Shanghai for more than one century. She and her family were interned by the Japanese during WWII. Between 1987 and 2004, Ester managed to tape three interviews of her parents that yielded 100 transcribed pages of invaluable information for use in her book. She has lectured extensively internationally about her life, the multi ethnic groups and cultures, and the Japanese incarceration of Far Eastern Allies, in Shanghai.

The China Society of Southern California
Golden Dragon Restaurant in Chinatown
960 N. Broadway, Los Angeles

Free valet parking available adjacent to restaurant on the downtown side of the building
Please arrive between 6:00 pm and 6:30 pm
Dinner will be served at 7:00 p.m. sharp
chinasocietyofsocal.org/

Wednesday, December 4, 2013 6:30 pm Free
CHSSC Christmas Potluck

Bring your favorite prepared dish, or pickup items from Chinatown or pay \$5 to join us in Christmas celebration. .
Castelar Elementary School 840 Yale St. L.A. 90012
Free Parking – enter via College Street
www.chssc.org www.facebook.com/groups/chssc
chsscorg.blogspot.com

Saturday, December 7, 2013 2:00 pm

Miss Los Angeles Chinatown Charity Fashion Show

Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Los Angeles and the reigning Miss Los Angeles Chinatown court presents its annual fashion show. Designs are modeled by the contestants for the upcoming pageant. The Queen and her Court donate the net proceeds to a charity of their choice. Previous recipients have included the Chinese American Museum, the Chinatown Service Center, Operation Smile and the Asian Pacific Women's Center. www.lachinesechamber.org

Sunday, December 8, 2013 2:00 pm Free

Carved in Silence (1987) Felicia Lowe Productions, To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The 45-minute documentary combines oral history interviews with historical footage and dramatic re-enactments to tell the story of the Exclusion Era and the impact of detention on Chinese immigrants. A panel discussion will share their comments about the documentary following the screening. Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Library located at 318 S. Ramona, 91754 www.chssc.org www.facebook.com/groups/chssc
www.lowedownproductions.com

Saturday, December 14, 2013

Little King and Queen Pageant

of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Los Angeles

Participants include 5 and 6 year old boys and girls of Chinese Heritage. A King, Queen, Prince, and Princess are chosen and will attend the Chinese New Year festivities including the Annual Golden Dragon Parade. The experience is unique for these young children. Every participant receives a gift bag generously provided by sponsors. www.lachinesechamber.org