

SEPTEMBER 2013

Did Ancient Chinese Explore America?

*My Journey Through the Rocky
Mountains to Find Answers*

Charlotte Harris Rees



Thursday, September 19, 2013 - 6:30 p.m.

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

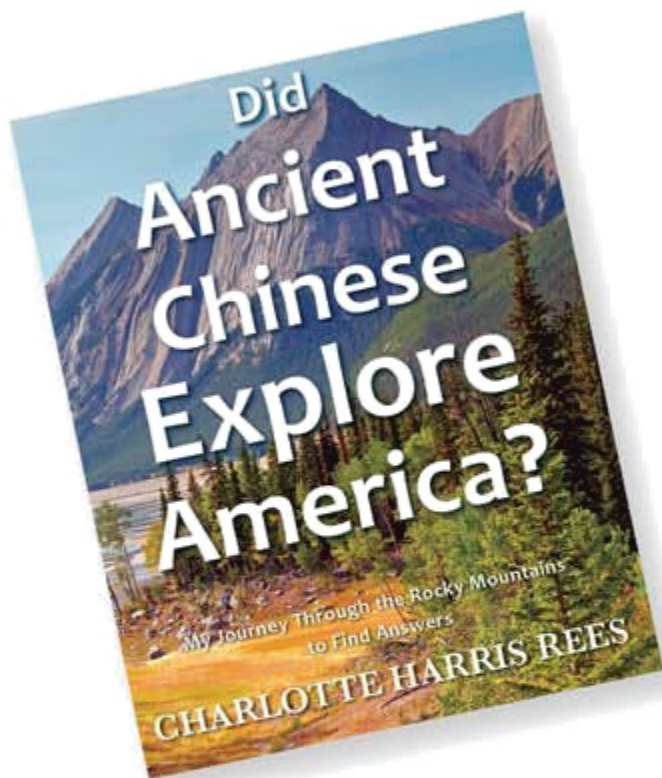
Free parking - enter via College Street

Refreshments will be served

This event is free and open to the public



In the travelogue *Did Ancient Chinese Explore America?*
I have woven together history, academic studies, and my
personal joys of the journey along with beautiful color
photographs and charts on 97 pages of the 165 page text.
Candidly sharing doubts, insights, and discoveries
I attempt to make the reader feel like part of our travel team.



Charlotte Harris Rees presenting the books to Ambassador Zhang
at the Chinese Embassy in Washington D.C.



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Keep the Spirit of '45 ALIVE!

In partnership with Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive!, CHSSC and UCLA Chinese American Studies Center invited Chinese American World War II veterans to a ceremony at the USS Iowa, honoring them for their service to our country. Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive! is a nonpartisan, nonprofit initiative, with a mission to establish an annual day of remembrance and national renewal on the 2nd Sunday of every August to honor the achievements of the men and women of the World War II generation so that their example of courage, self sacrifice, can-do spirit, unity, and service to others will forever inspire future generations of Americans.



Photos by O.C. Lee

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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.



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Pilgrimage to Wawona and Sing Peak

by Steven Ng

From August 3-7, members of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California held the first Pilgrimage to Wawona and Sing Peak to commemorate the contributions of early Chinese in Yosemite National Park. These included famous cooks such as Tie Sing and Ah Wong, the road builders and service workers.

The program opened on Saturday afternoon at the Grey Barn at the Pioneer History Center in Wawona. Lora Chau-Davis emcee'd the event. Living history performances by Nichole Wong-Franklin, Shannon Wong-Michalak, and Simon Chau. Nichole and Shannon portrayed women who received letters from laborers in California and Simon portrayed Tie Sing.

After a short break Ranger Yenyen Chan gave a presentation expanding on her previous research about the road builders, service workers and famous cook, notably Ah Wong of the Wawona Hotel and Tie Sing of the US Geological Survey, for whom Sing Peak was named. After the program, nearly 40 people gathered for dinner of Chili Verde and salad at the nearby Wawona Community Center. Among the attendees were members of the CHSSC, the Yosemite Conservancy, and National Park Service. Afterward, many gathered at the camp fire outside the Grey Barn for s'mores and stories.

Sunday morning, about a dozen people returned to the Wawona Community Center to discuss how to proceed with our efforts to recognize the contributions of Chinese in the history of Yosemite National park. We left with plans to reach out to other institutions and historical societies to bring in more participation and awareness. Next year's event will be held in from July 25th to 30th and will include historic tours of sites in the park.

Pilgrimage to Sing Peak

On Monday, August 5, six people began the backpack trip to the foot of the range of Sing Peak. Ranger Yenyen Chan, Jon-Paul Salonen, Ruth Smiley and I (Steven Ng) left from the Quartz Mountain Trailhead to hike 6 miles to Chain Lakes on the North. Jack Shu and Frank Lai backpacked to camp at Lower Stanford Lake on the South.

At 9:30 on Tuesday morning, Yenyen, JP, Ruth and I began our hike to the summit of Sing Peak (10,552'). It took us 3 hours to reach the summit of the peak over a distance of 2 miles, climbing 2000 feet, some of it up steep talus. Jack and Frank had started earlier and had a shorter climb, they reached the peak around 10:30. They rested at the top and greeted us when we arrived around 12:15.

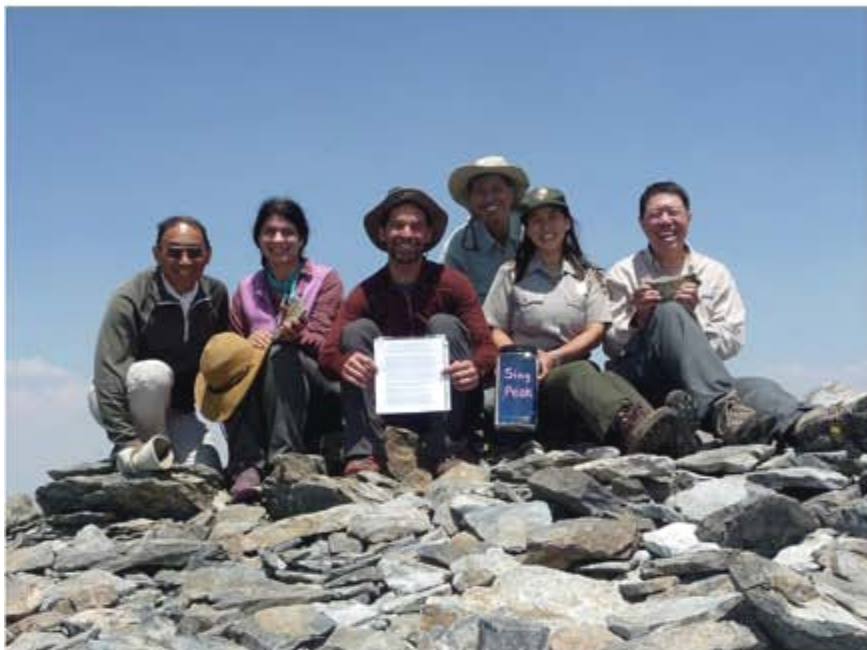
We spent about an hour on the summit, enjoying a rest, lunch, photos and signing the new peak register. Peak registers are like journals in weather proof containers for climbers to write comments and sign. Ours also contained information about Tie Sing and the pilgrimage. Around 1:30 we bid adieu to Jack and Frank and we descended Sing Peak to return to camp and departed for home the next morning.



Photos by Jack Shu and Steven Ng



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The Unsung Hero of Portraits of Pride Free Library-Book Project

By Marian Chew

If you have ever flipped through the pages of the Portraits of Pride II book, you would know it has a section on Unsung Heroes that includes short biographies of luminaries such as Charles K. Kao, the inventor of fiber optics, M.C. Chang, the father of in vitro fertilization and co-inventor of the birth control pill, and Flossie Wong-Staal, the woman scientist who discovered the AIDS virus. The Portraits of Pride Free Library-Book Program also has its own unsung hero: Mr. LP Leung.

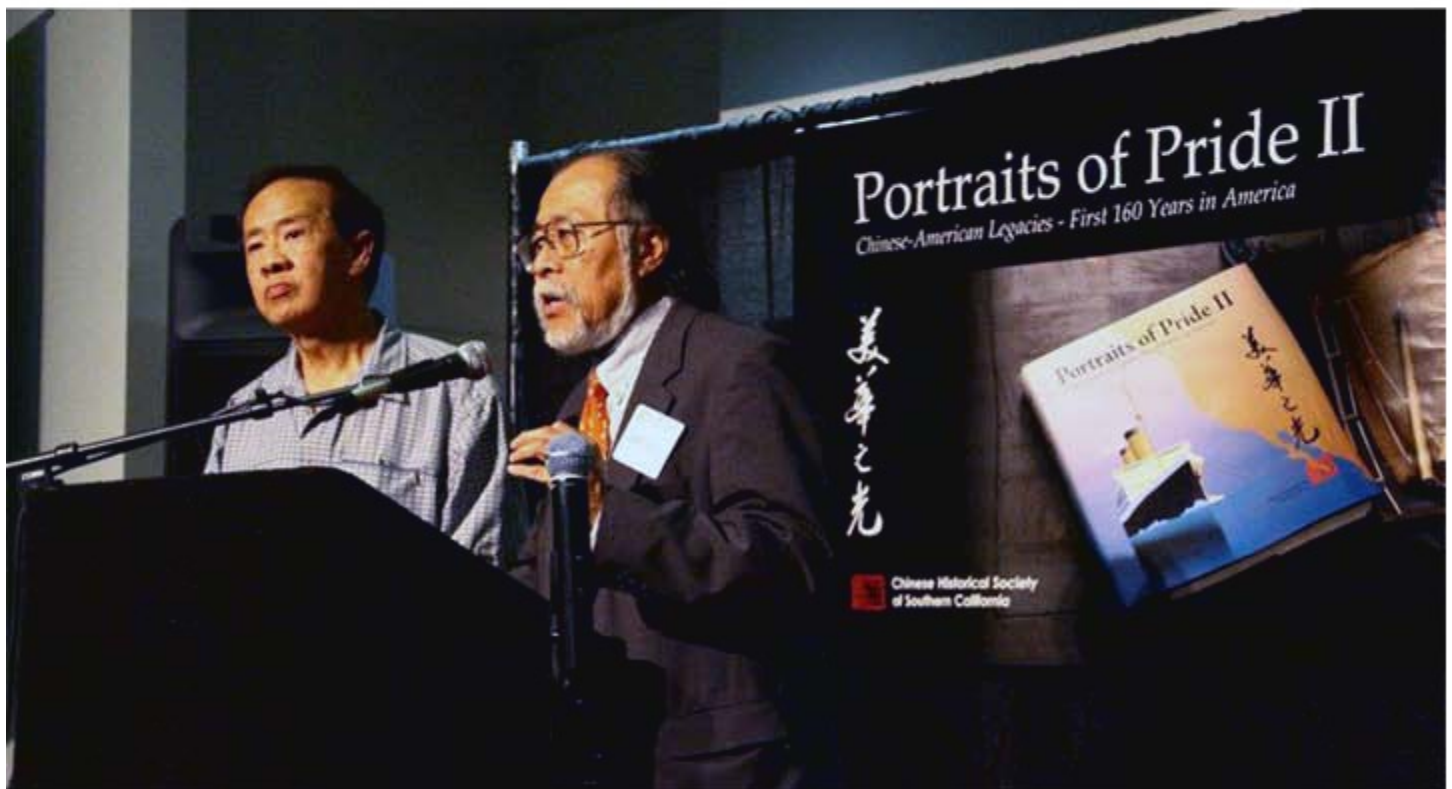
LP, a retired CPA accountant, wanted to make a difference when he joined the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California ten years ago. At the time, Wen-Ho Lee, a Taiwanese American scientist, was unjustly indicted for stealing secrets for the Republic of China and put in solitary confinement. LP and Wing Mar, MD wanted to alter the negative view of the Chinese people and came up with the idea of creating a poster exhibit on Chinese Americans who contributed positively to our society.

The posters evolved into two major activities (1) the Portraits of Pride (PoP) book series and (2) the Free Library-Book Program. After a fundraiser to start the PoP program, LP backed the funding of the project with a hefty check of \$50,000 for printing

and distributing several thousand complimentary copies of PoP I to school and public libraries. With the monetary support of LP, the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC) can claim, "We are the only nonprofit organization to distribute books free-of-charge to school libraries across the U.S." The PoP project is a win-win situation for students as well as for CHSSC, in the present and in the long term.

In addition to supporting the PoP project financially, in 2006, Mr. Leung assumed the position of being the Director of PoP II. He spent countless hours researching, writing, and recruiting volunteers to pen the articles in the second PoP book.

LP has a unique worldview of history from his background. We are proud of him and thank him for his vision, that one person can make a difference by being generous with the giving of his time and money. During the past ten years of volunteering with the PoP project, LP Leung has certainly made a difference by bringing awareness to the world-impacting contributions Chinese Americans have made, and by enriching the school curriculum with the history of the Chinese pioneers.



LP Leung and Eugene Moy during Portraits of Pride II presentation at Azusa Pacific University.



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

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

Community Calendar

Thursday, September 12, 2013 5:00 pm

Chinese American Museum's

17th Annual Historymakers Awards Gala

"Discovering the Past Defining the Future" Honoring:

Honorable Michael F. Eng Board of Trustees, Los Angeles Community College District - Excellence in Government Leadership

Kin Hui Chairman & CEO, Singpoli Group - Excellence in Leadership and Philanthropy - Judge Ronald S.W. Lew Visionary Award

David Henry Hwang - Playwright, librettist, and screenwriter Excellence in Arts and Letters

Charles W. Wong Architect - Excellence in Architecture Dr. Dan S. Louie Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award

Center for Asian American United for Self Empowerment (CAUSE) - Excellence in Community Service

The Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites

404 South Figueroa Street Los Angeles, CA 90071

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Saturday, September 21, 2013 5:00pm - 12:00am

75th Annual Mid-Autumn Moon Festival

Artisans, Calligraphy, Clay Sculpture, Face Painting, Ghost Storytelling, Street Magician Culinary Stage, Family Workshop, Moon Viewing, Telescopes provided by Robert Spellman of Griffith Observatory, LA WEEKLY Live Music Stage, Curated by Kevin Bronson of Buzzbandla.com

Central & West Plaza 943-951 N. Broadway L.A., CA 90012

www.chinatownla.com

Friday, September 27, 2013 5:30 pm

Chinatown Service Center 42nd Annual Gala

Honoring Honorable Michael F. Eng - Board of Trustees

- Los Angeles Community College District

The Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites

404 South Figueroa Street - California Ballroom

Los Angeles, CA 90071

Contact Amelia Hsu (213) 808-1760 or AHSU@CSLA.ORG

Wednesday, October 2, 2013 6:30 pm

UCLA and The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

Teresa Barnett Department Head UCLA Library Center for Oral History Research and her staff will present an overview of their program along with oral histories of 30+ years ago. They will also show other Chinese related items for review and discussion.

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