

## The 1938 Moon Festival in Los Angeles and the Formation of the Mei Wah Drum Corp

Wednesday, May 4, 2016, 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.



Barbara Jean Wong of the Mei Wah Drum Corp, Harry Quillen Photo, undated, Peter SooHoo Sr. Collection, Chinatown Remembered Project.



1938 Moon Festival, Peter SooHoo Sr. Collection, Chinatown Remembered Project.



1938 Moon Festival, Peter SooHoo Sr. Collection, Chinatown Remembered Project.

On October 8, 1938, as dusk fell over the Moon Festival in Los Angeles's Old Chinatown, thousands of spectators gathered to take part in a fundraiser for Chinese war relief. That night the teenage members of the Mei Wah Club participated in their first full public performance as a marching drum corps. Under the guidance of their two adult sponsors, David SooHoo and Maye Wong, these young women choreographed and performed a routine that contrasted noticeably with the Orientalist aesthetic of most of the rest of the night's festivities, and in the process challenged dominant expectations of the roles Chinese American women could play at such an event. The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937 transformed war relief fundraisers for China into spectacles with broad local and often national audiences. By the summer of 1938, Bowl of Rice Festival fundraisers were held in communities across the nation. At a time when the broader American public's understanding of China and Chinese people was quickly evolving, these wartime spectacles became sites of cultural contestation, where national aid groups grappled with local Chinese American organizations and individuals to shape dominant understandings of race, gender, and American citizenship.

Join us for a presentation by CHSSC member William Gow as he discusses the origins of the Mei Wah Drum Corp and its relationship to the 1938 Moon Festival. William is currently a doctoral candidate in Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley where he is working on a dissertation currently entitled, "Performing Chinatown: Hollywood, Tourism, and the Making of A Los Angeles Community, 1931-1949." William's presentation will be drawn from research from his on-going dissertation research.



**MAY 2016**

## **Nominations to the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California Board of Directors 2016-2017**

The following have been nominated to the Chinese Historical Society  
of Southern California Board of Directors of 2016-2017

### **Officers**

President - Gordon Hom  
Vice President - Linda Bentz  
VP for Programs - John Chan  
Secretary - Winifred Lew  
Membership Sec. - Susan Dickson  
Treasurer - Simon Chhuor

### **Members at Large for 2-year Term**

Teresa Chung  
Gilbert Hom  
Don Loo  
Eugene W. Moy  
Helen Quon

### **Members at Large returning for 2nd Year of 2-year Term (Not for Election)**

Rick Eng  
Kelly Fong  
Richard Liu

Board members serve from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.  
The Board of Directors meet on the second Saturday of each month  
from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Board members have opportunities to  
serve on committees such as the Archive Committee, the Programs  
Committee, the Nomination Committee, the Outreach Committee,  
etc. Committees meet at various agreed upon dates and times.

Election will take place at the June 1, 2016 meeting at  
Castelar Elementary School's Multi-Purpose Room.

\*We will accept nominations from the floor at the May meeting.

## **Board of Directors**

### **Officers**

Donald Loo, President  
Winifred Lew, Vice President  
Gordon Hom, VP for Programs  
Helen Quon, Secretary  
Susan Dickson, Membership Sec.  
Simon Chhuor, Treasurer

### **Members at Large**

Linda Bentz  
John Chan  
Rick Eng  
Kelly Fong  
Gilbert Hom  
Henry Leong  
Richard Liu  
Franklin Mah  
Eugene W. Moy  
Shirley Chu Ng

## **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 communi-  
cate 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.



MAY 2016

## Revisiting East Adams

On April 6th, 2016, the CHSSC hosted the screening of "Revisiting East Adams" documentary film produced and directed by Jenny Cho. The film captures the history of the Chinese American community in Downtown Los Angeles from the 1930s to 1950s. During this period, the intersection of East Adams and San Pedro Street was home to a vibrant Chinese American community. We would like to thank Jenny Cho for thoughtfulness, and for spending time with us on her short vacation in Los Angeles. We would also like to thank Roy Chan, Calvin Hai, the people and families representing the East Adams Community, and our members who were in attendance for a memorable night.



## 2016 Ching Ming

April 2, 2016 – CHSSC members, friends, and students participated in the annual Ching Ming ceremony hosted by the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California to pay respect to the pioneer Chinese immigrants whose remains were dug out and discarded at a remote corner in Evergreen Cemetery during the MTA Gold Line construction. This annual tradition gives us a chance to pay our respects to the Chinese immigrants, many of whom no longer have relatives to care for their graves. After lunch, attendees went to pay tribute to Donaldina Cameron (July 26, 1869 – January 4, 1968). She was a Presbyterian missionary in San Francisco's Chinatown, who rescued more than 3,000 Chinese immigrant girls and women from indentured servitude. Thank you all for coming to share this experience with us. We hope to see you again next year.

- O.C. Lee/Vincent Huynh



Photos by O.C. Lee

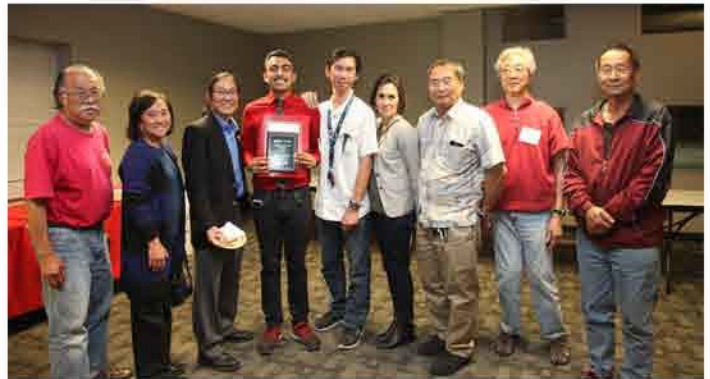


MAY 2016

## Help us reach our goal of \$2,000 to fund 2 Summer Internships at the CHSSC

Calling for donations to fund two paid summer internships with CHSSC! We have been successful with our student interns from local college campuses and CHSSC has greatly benefitted from their help. These interns have helped CHSSC grow over the past few years, including organizing our library; digitally cataloging our books, artifacts, and archives; participating in and helping organize our events including our 2015 40th anniversary banquet; and helping renovate our Bernard St. headquarters. Many of our interns continue to volunteer with CHSSC regularly after the completion of their internship. We envision paid internship opportunities as a way to build our internship program beyond undergraduates earning course credit in service learning courses. Your contribution will allow us to continue building relationships with youth, foster interest in Chinese American history and communities, provide a wonderful opportunity for students to gain work experience, and foster the next generation of CHSSC members and leaders.

To donate please call (323) 222-0856  
or email [chssc@hotmail.com](mailto:chssc@hotmail.com)





## Donate to CHSSC While You Shop

Did you know that everytime you buy your groceries at Ralphs or shop online on Amazon, you can also make a donation to Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC)? CHSSC has recently partnered with both Ralphs and Amazon to make it easier for you to support us. Please follow the instructions below to start supporting us. If you need help registering with Ralphs or making an online purchase on AmazonSmile, please call us at (323)222-0856, email us at [chssc@hotmail.com](mailto:chssc@hotmail.com), or come to our headquarters and we will be happy to help you.



Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> and create an account. Choose Chinese Historical Society of Southern California as your designated charity. 0.5% of your purchase will be donated to CHSSC every time you shop!

Thank you for your participation.

1. If you are a new customer, you must click on 'No Account? Register' (top right hand corner).
2. Follow the easy step-by-step instructions to create an online account.
3. After you have registered an online account, return to [www.ralphs.com](http://www.ralphs.com) & log in.
4. Click on your name (upper right) to bring up your Account Summary.
5. Scroll down to Community Rewards & click on "edit".
6. Choose CHSSC by typing in "Chinese Historical Society of Southern California" or type # 81892 to complete the enrollment process.
7. CHSSC will start receiving rewards of 1-4% of your purchases/month.

REMEMBER, purchases will not count for CHSSC until after you register your card.

You must swipe your registered Ralphs REWARDS card or use the phone number that is linked to your registered Ralphs REWARDS card when shopping for each purchase to count.

## Project to Uncover Riverside's Chinese American History Underway!

The City of Riverside received a state grant in 2015 to fund a research and planning document to identify important themes and property types tied to the historical experiences of Chinese Americans in Riverside. The project was initiated in February 2016 and there is much to share, but more to learn! Help us make more connections. Join us at the second of three public meetings to be held during the project timeline.

Riverside's Chinese American Story: A Sharing Event  
Saturday, May 21, 2016, 1:00-3:00 p.m.  
Riverside Metropolitan Museum  
3580 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside 92501

At this meeting, the project team will highlight some preliminary research and document attendee's materials and/or stories.

- Documents and photographs to be scanned.
- Objects to be photographed.
- Information available on how to preserve and/or donate your items will be available.\*
- Have a memory about George Wong, Chinatown, or the Chungking Restaurant?

Share it with us at our storytelling booth!

\*We will document, not acquire items at this event.

Contact Rosalind Sagara, [rivclg@gmail.com](mailto:rivclg@gmail.com)  
for more information about this project or upcoming event.



George Wong at Riverside County Landmark ceremony at Riverside Chinatown, July 24, 1968.  
Photo courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum.



## Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

411 Bernard Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 323-222-0856 Email: [chssc@hotmail.com](mailto:chssc@hotmail.com)

Website: [www.chssc.org](http://www.chssc.org)

*Help us save paper and postage, email us for your online newsletter at [chssc@hotmail.com](mailto:chssc@hotmail.com)*

### Community Calendar

**Monday, May 2, 2016 - 6:30 pm**

**The China Society of Southern California**

Golden Dragon Restaurant, 960 N. B'way, Chinatown

Topic: Royal Taste: Princely Courts in 15th Century China

Speaker, Curator Yeonsoo Chee of USC Pacific Asia Museum

Cost: \$20; RSVP to Bob Lee, (213) 284-4438

**Wednesday, May 4, 2016 - 6:30pm**

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the Formation of the Mei Wah Drum Corp.**

Presented by Will Gow

-Doctoral Candidate in Ethnic Studies UC Berkeley

Castelar Elementary School

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**Saturday, May 7, 2016 - 3:00pm**

**Chinese American Citizen Alliance**

Monthly Meeting

[www.cacanational.org/htmlPages/los\\_angeles\\_lodge.html](http://www.cacanational.org/htmlPages/los_angeles_lodge.html)

**Thursday, May 5, 2016 or Saturday May 7, 2016**

**10:45am both days**

**Docent guided tour of the Royal Taste exhibition**

Cost \$18 for non-members of the museum

For members of the museum, order your free tickets online

USC Pacific Asia Museum, 46 N. Los Robles Ave., Pasadena

[www.pacificasiamuseum.org](http://www.pacificasiamuseum.org)

RSVP to Bob Lee, (213) 284-4438

**Thursday, May 19, 2016 7:00pm**

**San Marino Book Talk and Signing with Arthur Dong**

Crowell Public Library

1890 Huntington Dr. San Marino, CA 91108

Info: (626) 300-0077.

**Saturday, May 21, 2016**

**"ALTERED EGOS"**

**How does Asian American identity matter for the gospel?**

We invite you to explore the intersections between gospel, pop culture, and Asian American identity with the award-winning graphic novelist Gene Luen Yang.

[fuller.edu/alteredegos](http://fuller.edu/alteredegos)

Free outdoor concert featuring "Tim Be Told"

(also from NoCal, starring Tim Ouyang),

and "Ruth + the Library" (new Korean Am K-Funk band)

### Save The Date

**Saturday, August 27, 2016**

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

2016 Golden Spike Awards

Hilton Los Angeles/San Gabriel

225 West Valley Boulevard, San Gabriel, CA 91776