

JUNE 2017



## Golden Spike Journeys:

*A recap of a recent journey  
to Promontory, Utah*

*Presented by Gordon Hom,  
Eugene Moy, and Susan Sing*

Wednesday, June 7, 2017  
6:30 p.m.

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

Free parking - enter via College Street  
This event is open to the public.

In 2014, renowned Asian American civil rights photographer Corky Lee began the first of a series of pilgrimages to the site of the historic May 10, 1869 joining of the transcontinental rails in the Promontory Mountains of Utah. Growing up, Lee saw the historic photos, and could not understand why Chinese workers were not included. Now, to right the record, he conceived a "photographic act of justice" by recreating the most famous of the historic photos, replete with Central Pacific and Union Pacific locomotives, train engineers, champagne bottles, and a crowd of celebrants, but INCLUDING CHINESE FACES in the photo. Along with a photographic re-creation, he would invite Chinese Americans, and all others interested, to join in a series of educational events, including talks, film screenings, and exhibitions, to elevate the image of the Chinese American role in building America. The grand finale: a 2019 event to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the completion of the First Transcontinental.

For this year, CHSSC President Gordon Hom and two CHSSC members journeyed to Utah to participate in Corky's celebratory event, and will share images from their 1500 mile trip, which included side jaunts in search of Asian American history.

In addition to this year's trip, after digging into the archives, some images from the CHSSC's two field trips to the Golden Spike site in 1998 and 1999, led by Johnny Yee, Bill Chew, and others, will be shown. We invite you to come for a discussion and sharing of some memorable images!



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## **Nominations to the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California Board of Directors 2017-2018**

The following have been nominated to the Chinese Historical Society  
of Southern California Board of Directors of 2017-2018

### **Officers**

President - Gordon Hom  
Vice President - Linda Bentz  
Secretary - Winifred Lew  
Treasurer - Teresa Chung  
VP for Programs - John Chan  
Membership Sec. - Helen Quon

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

Jeannie Chen  
Judy Chou  
Susan Dickson  
Rick Eng  
Kelly Fong  
Richard Liu

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

Gilbert Hom  
Donald Loo  
Franklin Mah  
Eugene W. Moy

Board members serve from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018.  
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 7, 2017 meeting at  
Castelar Elementary School's Multi-Purpose Room.

## **Board of Directors**

### **Officers**

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

### **Members at Large**

Teresa Chung  
Rick Eng  
Kelly Fong  
Gilbert Hom  
Richard Liu  
Donald Loo  
Franklin Mah  
Eugene W. Moy  
Helen Quon  
Anthony Tjio

## **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.





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## Storytellers - 2017 Golden Spike Awards

The CHSSC appreciates everyone who was involved in making the Golden Spike Awards a successful event. Thank you to our event committee led by Susan Dickson, our sponsors, our donors, and our attendees for making this evening a special one for our honorees. Additionally, the photobooth services provided by Tommy Su of Bobalife USA, the cookies provided by Amay's Bakery, and the delicious soy pudding desserts provided by AFC Soyfoods have contributed to making our event a memorable and unique experience.

Congratulations again to our storytellers Jenny Cho, John Jung, L.P. Leung, Susie Ling, and Lisa See on receiving your Golden Spike Award. Thank you for telling our story.

### Gold Sponsors

Cathay Bank, Los Angeles Chinatown Corporation,  
South Bay Chinese American Chamber of Commerce

### Silver Sponsors

Gordon and Rose Hom, Winifred Lew, L.P. & Bobbi Leung, Susie Ling,  
Wing & Joyce Mar, Eugene Moy & Susan Sing, Lisa See,  
Supervisor Hilda Solis

We hope that everyone will join us again for the continuation of the Storyteller series for our next Golden Spike Awards in 2018.  
If you took a photo at the photobooth, relive the memories here:  
[snapitstudio.zenfolio.com/chssc2017gsa](http://snapitstudio.zenfolio.com/chssc2017gsa)







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## Storytellers - 2017 Golden Spike Awards







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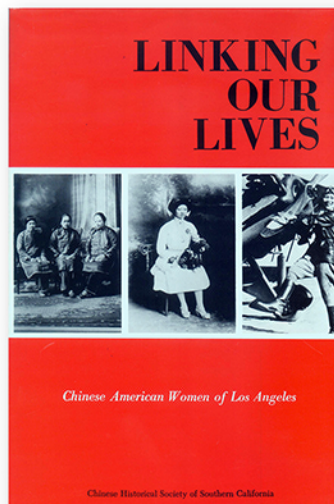
## Notes on Chinese American History

*A monthly column about Chinese American History by CHSSC member, William Gow.*

In honor of one of this year's Gold Spike recipients, Susie Ling, I thought I would devote this month's column to discussing the seminal 1984 publication, *Linking Our Lives: Chinese American Women of Los Angeles*. Co-authored by Lucie Cheng, Suellen Cheng, Judy Chu, Feelie Lee, Marjorie Lee, Susie Ling, Elaine Lou, and Sucheta Mazumdar the book was a joint project of the Asian American Studies Center at UCLA and the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. Despite being more than thirty years old, the book remains both a cornerstone of the scholarship of Chinese Americans in Los Angeles, and also an important early contribution to the history of Asian American women.

*Linking Our Lives* was inspired in part by the Southern California Chinese American Oral History Project that began in 1978 as a way of documenting the experiences of Chinese Americans in Los Angeles in the first half of the twentieth century. That project interviewed more than 150 Chinese Americans who lived in Los Angeles before World War II. As the authors of *Linking Our Lives* explain in their preface many of these individuals did not feel that their own lives were important enough to be documented: "our subjects constantly told us that they were 'ordinary' Chinese, who had led 'ordinary' lives that could not be of interest to others. We disagreed with them, because as the project advanced we became fascinated by the richness of their experiences, their struggles, disappointments, and triumphs. The project has enabled us to appreciate the extent that history grows out of the lives of ordinary people."

The book is a short, 121-pages in length with two sections and five chapters. The first section, "History" contains only one chapter and provides a broad overview of the history of Chinese American women in Los Angeles from the nineteenth century to the 1930s. This section draws on archival research including analysis of census data, newspapers, oral histories as well as the limited amount of secondary source material available when the book was written. The second section, "A Tapestry of Oral Histories," contains four chapters each with a different theme: "In the Family," "Traditions and Transitions," "At Work," and "Building Community." Each of these chapters is authored by different person or pair of people, and focuses on one particular aspect of the lives of Chinese American women in Los Angeles in the 1920s and the 1930s.



By drawing extensively on oral history interviews, this second section of the book places the actions of Chinese American women in the forefront of the history of the community. For example the chapter, "At Work," co-authored by Judy Chu and Susie Ling, examines the various types of paid labor that Chinese American women in Los Angeles engaged during the 1920s and 1930s. They discuss the careers of professional women such as Grace Chow who had a successful

career as an insurance agent for Occidental Life; They examine women who worked in the entertainment industry like casting director Bessie Loo; educators like Caroline Chan and Wen Hui Chung Chen; and women like Bernice Leong who worked in her family restaurant as well as the stories of many others. The personal stories in these chapters foreground Chinese American women as important agents of historical change and community building in Los Angeles in the early twentieth century.

*Linking Our Lives* is all the more impressive when placed in the context of the broader historiography of Asian American studies. Not only was this book published more than a decade before Judy Yung's historical monograph, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese American Women in San Francisco* or Huping Ling's book *Surviving On Gold Mountain: A history of Chinese American Women and Their Lives*, but it was also published half a decade before Ronald Takaki's *Strangers from a Different Shore*. In this way Susie Ling and the other authors had to produce this study without the benefit of a large amount of secondary source material. Despite these obstacles, the book they produced remains a valuable contribution to the field of Chinese American history more than three decades after it was first published. I and many other scholars in the field of Chinese American history remain grateful to the authors of *Linking Our Lives* for their contributions to the field.

*William Gow is currently a doctoral candidate in Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley where he is writing a history of Los Angeles Chinatown in the 1930s and 1940s. He has been a CHSSC member for more than a decade. He invites feedback, suggestions, or questions about this column and his academic work. William can be reached by email at [wgow@outlook.com](mailto:wgow@outlook.com)*





## Intern Reflections



*Congratulations to CHSSC interns Jeremy Cole and Cheng Wang who both graduated with their Masters in Recreation and Tourism Management on May 20, 2017. The CHSSC would like to thank them for their service here and wish them the best in their future endeavors.*

### Jeremy Cole

I am very proud to have had the opportunity and privilege of interning at CHSSC over these last three months. I have been exposed to a wealth of knowledge and opportunities that have definitely aided in shaping my perspective of cultural and heritage-based tourism, and this is what means the most to me. I have had the chance to see what it takes to operate a non-profit organization, and have gained practical experience about the career field that I intend on venturing into. I have also been afforded with seeing the passion and dedication that is alive within CHSSC by working with its members, and thus have been able to accurately discern the type of energy I would seek to naturally possess in regards to my own career endeavors. Throughout my time interning for the organization, I have engaged in a number of different projects, and this is only a glimpse into some of the work that I have been apart of.

I have helped with the restoration of one of the front porch of CHSSC's historic homes, from chipping paint, to sanding, and even painting the lower portion of the porch itself. I helped to organize CHSSC's electronics, with the thought of disposing of e-waste, and creating additional space for future exhibits. I also helped in the creation of space within the archival outhouse; working to rearrange its holdings, relocate material, and build additional shelving.

I have been able to support the continued development of the CHSSC's library collection, by cataloging newly donated books, and through the assessment of its overstocked holdings. I also helped to catalogue a collection that is available in the organization's archive, making it accessible to the public. I attended an event on behalf of the organization, which gave me the chance to interact with the public and promote CHSSC. Besides that, I have helped through the means of research in regards to, trying to assist in the continuation of exhibit building, trying to improve the functionality of the overall site, and the organizations online timeline. I very much enjoyed my experience, and I hope to be a asset to the organization in the future.

### Cheng Wang

Through the different projects at CHSSC, I had the opportunity to learn about the Chinese American history and culture. I am surprised, to be truthful, I didn't know much about Chinese American history before I started my internship. Not only because I was not born in the U.S., but also the lack of the deeper knowledge or understanding of the history. My first experience with the CHSSC was the Docent Program. It showed me the interaction between CHSSC and local community, and also the history behind the businesses in Chinatown. I believe that many Americans have the similar experience as I do, and this is why the CHSSC's mission to preserve Chinese American history and educate younger generations is important to me.

My internship at CHSSC was an invaluable learning experience because it provided me opportunities to be more independent as well as take more responsibilities. During my internship at the CHSSC, I continuously reflected on both my strengths and weaknesses, and I quickly learned how to manage multiple projects while working in a fast paced environment. This internship experience helped me realize that I have great potential to achieve success, as long as I have faith in myself. My internship experience will continue to have a profound effect on me long after I graduate from CSUN. Not only did I come to a better understanding of the value of history, but also that I finished my time at CHSSC with a better understanding of how I'm able to overcome my weaknesses and develop my strengths to be a become a working professional.





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## Archive Spotlight

This month, twelve graduate students from UCLA's Department of Information Studies are volunteering at CHSSC. The students attended an orientation meeting on May 13, 2017 where CHSSC Board Member Eugene Moy gave a brief presentation about Chinese American history. Afterwards, students were assigned to various tasks such as working on the archives sub-committee, and the library team. They are also participating in translation projects, conducting historical research, and investigating the proper software and technology to advance the goals of the Archives Committee. We want to thank future board member, Jeannie Chen (pictured), for organizing the volunteers and bringing their expertise to CHSSC.



## May Meeting

At our last monthly meeting, Drs. Kelly Fong and Clement Lai presented on their research on Chinese American homestyle foodways. In this project, Dr. Fong and Dr. Lai use community cookbooks published since the 1950s to investigate what Cantonese American families were eating in their homes as a way to explore the creation of Chinese American (rather than "traditional" Chinese) foodways. Their research is an ongoing project that includes collecting Asian American community cookbooks as well as Chinese American homestyle recipes. If you know of any Asian American community cookbooks or have any recipes to share, we encourage you to contact us today at [chssc@hotmail.com](mailto:chssc@hotmail.com) or visit the project's blog at: [chineseamericanhomestylecooking.wordpress.com](http://chineseamericanhomestylecooking.wordpress.com) Don't forget to let us know what's on your meat pie!







# Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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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, June 5, 2017 - 6:15 check-in, 6:45 dinner**

**China Society of Southern California**

**Lecture on Liu Jipiao,**

**The Father of Chinese Art Deco Architecture**

**by Jennifer Wong**

Jennifer Wong's search for her roots in China

Golden Dragon Restaurant

960 N. Broadway, Los Angeles, CA

\$25 cash or check, pay at the door

**Wednesday June 7, 2017 - 6:30PM**

**CHSSC – Golden Spike Journeys**

**presented by Gordon Hom, Eugene Moy, and Susan Sing**

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Castelar Elementary school

840 Yale St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

Free parking- enter via College Street.

Refreshments will be served.

This event is free and open to the public

**Friday - Sunday June 9-11, 2017**

**"Hunting Your Heritage"**

**48th Annual Southern California Genealogy Jamboree**

Whether you are new to genealogy research or have been tracking your family history for years, this year's three-day Conference features something for everyone!

RSVP and more info at: [www.genealogyjamboree.com](http://www.genealogyjamboree.com)

**Tuesday, June 20, 2017 - 4:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.**

**Passing What I Have Learned on to My Family – Chinese Family History Group of Southern California**

Pass your research and stories on to present and future generations of your family. Use free and readily available tools to produce family history products. Space is extremely limited and based on a "first-come; first served" rsvp reply.

SCGS Library 417 Irving Dr, Burbank, CA 91504

RSVP required by June 15 please visit:

[www.chinesefamilyhistory.org/small-group-work-sessions---june-20-2017.html](http://www.chinesefamilyhistory.org/small-group-work-sessions---june-20-2017.html)

**Sunday, June 25, 2017 - 5:30pm**

**BAMBI/TYRUS- Tyrus Wong double feature -American Cinematheque**

Presented by the American Cinematheque and the Art Directors Guild Film Society. Sponsored by The Hollywood Reporter and ASIFA. Discussion between films with TYRUS director Pamela Tom, moderated by production designer Thomas A. Walsh.

Egyptian Theatre

6712 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, CA 90028

**Thursday, July 27, 2017 – Wednesday, August 2, 2017**

**5th Annual Pilgrimage to Yosemite National Park**

Commemorating the Contributions of Chinese in the Sierra Nevada. Sponsored by the CHSSC and Yosemite National Park. For the fifth year, the CHSSC in collaboration with the National Park Service is helping to sponsor an annual pilgrimage to historically significant sites in Yosemite National Park. Save these dates and make reservations for accommodations in or around Wawona! Summer months are some of the busiest times in the Park and reservations are filled early. All are welcome to join us! The dates and planned activities for this year are on our website at [www.chssc.org](http://www.chssc.org)