



SUMMER 2018

## Sixth Annual Yosemite-Sing Peak Pilgrimage



The CHSSC is pleased to announce its Sixth pilgrimage to explore Yosemite National Park's Chinese American heritage. This year's trip will be filled with new hikes, a short film screening and talk, and the ever-popular mountain cooking potlucks! Though we are close to capacity for many of our activities, let your friends and other interested parties know about the event!

### **PART 1 – Yosemite activities (preliminary schedule)**

**Thurs 7/26** Arrive at the campsite before sunset. Campgrounds are not open for late arrivals. Dinner worked out in advance or dine at the nearby Big Trees Hotel

**Fri 7/27 9:30-11a.m.:** Tour Yosemite Valley viewpoints and visitors center

1-4:00 p.m.: Trail hike to Inspiration Point, potential extended hike to old Wawona wagon road (built by Chinese workers, 1875)

**Sat 7/28 9:30-11a.m.:** Tour newly opened/restored Mariposa Redwood Grove. Hike part of Washburn Road (built by Chinese). 4-4:45 p.m.: What's the connection between the Chinese Exclusion Act and Yosemite? Understand by visiting historic buildings in Wawona and watching a PBS trailer for Exclusion Act and immigration. Then help compose a display which would help people understand the effects of the Act. Set-up 5 p.m., Dinner 6-8:00 p.m.: Potluck dinner at Wawona Community Center, "Chinese Dishes without Chinese Ingredients" with outdoor mountain cooking demonstration(s)

**Sun 7/29** Potluck breakfast, Time TBA

Planning meeting, future heritage tours in CA and elsewhere

### **PART 2 – Sing Peak backpacking trip (for qualified hikers)**

**Mon 7/30-Wed 8/1** Moderate backpacking for experienced hikers to Sing Peak 10,552' elev.

Backpackers provide own gear and food. Contact Jack Shu - jkshu52@gmail.com or (619) 708-2050 regarding space on Wilderness Permits and trip itinerary.

### **Accommodations:**

#### **Campground**

If you are interested in using the free tent campsites reserved for volunteers, email Jack Shu at jkshu52@gmail.com with your responses for questions 1-3 below and the kind of tent you will be using.

#### **Cabins at The Redwoods at Yosemite:**

4 nights (7/26-7/29) or 3 nights (7/26-7/28 or 7/27-7/29)

Rate is \$78 per person per night private room, \$60 shared

If you are interested in reserving cabin space, email the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California at this address: chssc@hotmail.com with the following information.

1. Name, phone number and email address
2. Date and time of arrival and departure
3. Number of people
4. Whether you want a private bedroom for two or to sleep in a shared space.

Contact CHSSC staff (323) 222-0856 or chssc@hotmail.com





## **Letter from the President**

Dear CHSSC Members:

As my term begins, CHSSC is experiencing a time of change in our office personnel. Your board of directors has long been monitoring the Society's year to year cash flows, and has recently determined that it will be necessary to reduce the amount of paid staff hours. We have been carrying three part time staff, and have decided that we will be able to balance our budget with fewer staff hours, augmented with volunteer time from board and other volunteer members. As a result, we regretfully inform you that our long-time Administrator, Fenton Eng, has left. One of Fenton's impacts on our organization can be seen online because he designed our website. Although we had a history of having awards' dinners, Fenton developed the idea of a "Golden Spike" Awards dinner and designed the award, a gold railroad spike encased in an elegant Lucite block. Fenton's vision for the renovation of the properties can be seen in both exterior and interior improvements. He designed the current exhibits, painted the interior walls with volunteers he recruited, and collected period furniture and rugs for our old Victorian houses. As Fenton has been handling other commitments besides the CHSSC, we wish him well.

Vincent Huynh, our assistant administrator, has graduated from Cal Poly Pomona and started a full-time job at the end of June. We have greatly appreciated his dedication and enthusiasm as well as his organizational and business skills. He has been a familiar face at most of our monthly meetings and events.

Serena Wu, who was recently hired as an interim replacement for Vincent before she commences her graduate studies, is also leaving. Marian Chew, who had been providing support as project manager for the Portraits of Pride project, now completed, will be working in the office on Tuesdays. As we begin our search to find a new employee, Board members will be working at CHSSC when possible. As we transition, we hope to minimize any delays in our responses to your emails and phone messages.

I am happy to report that Board member Linda Bentz will be continuing to work with the UCLA interns in the archives throughout the summer. In addition, we are in the process of hiring a project manager for the term of the Duty and Honor grant that we received from the Friends of the Chinatown Library.

This time of transition is a challenging but necessary fact in any organization. We hope that some of you will be able to contribute some volunteer time to support some of our work. We are also about fellowship and shared experiences, and as we move forward, please join us for our picnic and photo days this summer.

Sincerely,  
Susan Dickson

## **Board of Directors**

### **Officers**

Susan Dickson, President  
Donald Loo, Vice President  
Linda Bentz, Secretary  
Teresa Chung, Treasurer  
Gordon Hom, VP for Programs  
Eugene W. Moy, Membership Sec.

### **Members at Large**

John Chan  
Judy Chou  
Wendy Chung  
Cindy Fong  
Laureen Hom  
Winifred Lew  
Franklin Mah  
Felicia Tabing

## **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.





JULY 2018

## The Jade Pendant

Written by CHSSC member L.P. Leung, *The Jade Pendant*, a tragic love story set against the lynching of 18 Chinese in 1871 Los Angeles Chinatown, was made into a movie and is now available on DVD at Walmart, Target, Best Buy, and on-line at Amazon. The price is approximately \$9.99.

L.P. Leung was a history major in college when he learned about the Los Angeles Chinese Massacre, and wanted to do a term paper on the subject, but was not able to find solid information on the incident. The subject stayed in his head, he researched more, wrote a film treatment, and took it to an independent producer, who deemed it unmarketable because of its predominant Asian cast and lack of a white male lead.

After attending the USC Graduate School of Accounting and a successful career as a CPA, L.P. followed up on his early interest in Chinese American history, and became involved with the CHSSC's Portraits of Pride (PoP) project. The two volumes of PoP contained numerous biographical profiles of Chinese Americans and their significant achievements, despite having to overcome social obstacles, in many fields, including science, engineering, art, entertainment, agriculture, and education. L.P. became a researcher, writer, and project director for the PoP project, which resulted in the free distribution of thousands of copies of the two volumes to libraries and schools across the country.

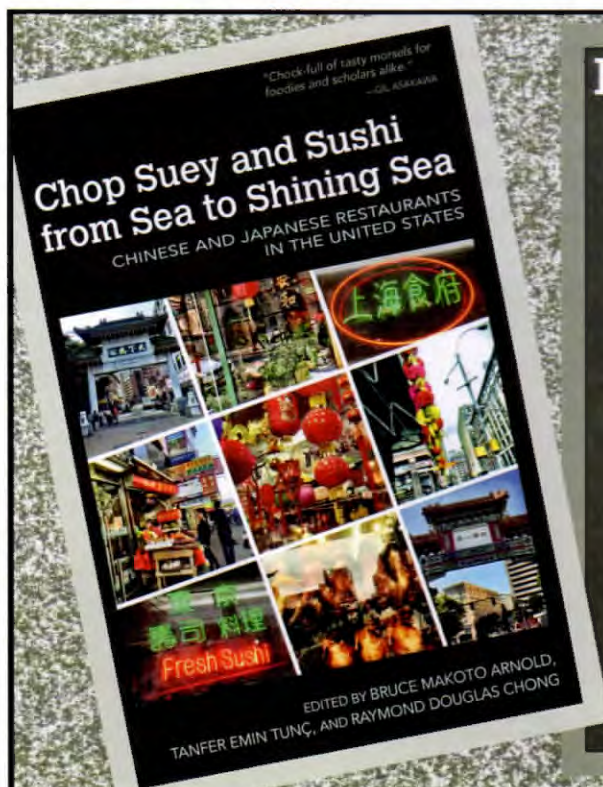


L.P. then turned his creative energy to writing a story that illustrated the heroic struggles of early Chinese Americans., a story sparked by his college history class. The central figure of *The Jade Pendant* is a strong young woman who fled a bad arranged marriage in China, and found a new life in the American West, which many other Chinese immigrants were helping to build.

The screenplay and script were developed and shopped, but again, the largely Asian cast was a hard sell. An independent producer finally took it up in 2015, and the film was shot in Utah and released in November 2017.

*The Jade Pendant* movie has been shown in major U.S. theaters. At the 2017 Chinese Asian American Film Festival, the film won the Best Independent Film Award, and at the DisOrient Asian American Film Festival, the movie won the Best Feature Film Award.

Read a full interview of L.P. Leung by playwright and screenwriter Victoria Moy (author of "Fighting For The Dream") that was cross-published in *The Huffington Post* and the *Alhambra Source* at:  
[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/screenwriter-lp-leung-on-his-chinese-american-western\\_us\\_5a07d765e4b0ee8ec3694261](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/screenwriter-lp-leung-on-his-chinese-american-western_us_5a07d765e4b0ee8ec3694261)



## BOOK LAUNCH PARTY

**Chop Suey and Sushi from Sea to Shining Sea: Chinese and Japanese Restaurants in the United States**

by Bruce Makoto Arnold (Editor), Tanfer Emin Tunç (Editor), Raymond Douglas Chong (Editor)

The essays in *Chop Suey and Sushi from Sea to Shining Sea* fill gaps in the existing food studies literature by revealing and contextualizing the hidden, local histories of Chinese and Japanese restaurants in the United States.

Saturday, July 21, 2018, 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Far Bar (old Far East Café)  
347 East First Street  
Los Angeles CA 90012 (Little Tokyo)

Sponsors: Chinese Historical Society of Southern California  
and Little Tokyo Historical Society

\$10 per person, including foods and drinks

RSVP - Mike Okamura of LTHS at  
[Littletokyohs@gmail.com](mailto:Littletokyohs@gmail.com)

"Chop Suey and Sushi from Sea to Shining Sea is a thoughtful and thought-provoking collection of essays about the history and cultural legacy of Chinese and Japanese restaurants in the United States. From the origins and importance of chop suey to the rise of sushi as a Japanese staple in America (a recent culinary phenomenon) or the evolution of Chinese restaurants as reflected in menus over decades, this eclectic book is chock-full of tasty morsels for foodies and scholars alike."  
—GIL ASAKAWA



Chinese Historical Society  
of Southern California





## Notes on Chinese American History

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

On Tuesday June 5th, a group of Asian Americans gathered in front of New York's City Hall to protest proposed changes to the admissions process to eight of the city's elite public schools. At the protest, Asian American parents and their supporters held signs that read "End Racism," and "I Have a Dream." The New York Times coverage quoted one attendee at a related event comparing the proposed change in admissions policy to the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Currently, students in New York City are admitted to eight of the city's most selective schools, including the storied Stuyvesant High School, based on the Specialized High School Admissions Exam. The current system has led to an under-representation of Black and Latino students at these schools. Mayor Bill De Blasio has proposed a plan to eventually replace the test with a system that would admit a top percentage of students from all of the city's middle schools. This would increase the number of Black and Latino students at these selective schools. Many of the Asian American protesters fear that this increase would come at the expense of Asian American students; hence their protests.

The controversy over high school admissions has garnered intense media scrutiny in part because it taps into deep anxieties over race, schooling, and democracy that have long been part of US political discourse. The history of Asian Americans remains central to understanding these issues.

The stereotype of Asian Americans as the model minority arose in the post-World War II era. Articles in the New York Times Magazine in 1960 and US News and World Report in 1966 held up Asian Americans as exemplars of the American dream. This model minority myth portrayed Asian Americans as diligently working within the system, discrediting the Black protesters who resorted to civil disobedience to bring about systemic social change. As historian Ellen Wu argues in her 2014 book *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority*, Asian Americans moved from being seen as "definitively not white" in the nineteenth century, to being seen as "a racial group distinct from the white majority, but lauded as well as assimilated, upwardly mobile, politically non-threatening and definitively not-black." (Wu, 2) Wu demonstrates how the Asian American model minority stereotype is grounded in a form of anti-black racism.

With their use of historical references, the Asian American admissions protesters attempt to link their protests over school admissions to a long history of Civil Rights protests in the United States. The use of signs declaring "End Racism" and the comment linking the actions to the Chinese Exclusion Act paint the proposed changes as part of a long history of anti-Asian racism in the United States. At the same time, the "I Have a Dream" posters link the protests to the actions and beliefs of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr..

Yet the status quo these Asian American protesters fight to maintain is one that has led to Black and Latino students making up only 10 percent of specialized high school students even as they represent 67 percent of students in the city's public schools. In this context, the allusion to Dr. King's is not without irony. It is hard to imagine a world where Dr. King, one of the great Black Civil Rights leaders would support a system in which, according to The New York Times, only ten black students were offered admission to Stuyvesant High School in 2018.

There is a form of racism at work here, but I dare say that it does not take the form of a proposed admissions system that increases the number of Blacks and Latinos at these selective schools. Rather the racism at work here is a broader structural racism that manifests itself in the all too common form of under-funded, segregated public schools, often staffed with poorly trained teachers where students are led to believe that if they only work hard enough through some act of their own "merit" they too can be individually successful. The historical lesson that Asian Americans today can draw from the Civil Rights movement is that only when people of color and white allies work together to address the marginalization of all groups can we forge a more equitable society.

*William Gow is currently writing a book on the history of Los Angeles Chinatown and its relationship to Hollywood 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)*

### Archive Spotlight by Linda Bentz

The Archives Committee was very fortunate to have a UCLA intern, Tristan Willenburg from the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, work with us this quarter. Tristan created an inventory of the Duty and Honor collection. This work is very important as we move forward with our grant from the Friends of the Chinatown Library.

The next step for the grant is hiring an archivist. We have prepared a job description and will advertise the position soon. This summer will be very busy at CHSSC as we process the Duty and Honor collection and celebrate the 20th anniversary of the publication of the book. Stay tuned for updates as this work progresses!





## In Memoriam



**William Y.S. Tom, O.D.**

Dr. William Y. S. Tom passed away on June 19, 2018 at the age of 96. Born in a village in Guangdong Province, Bill left China during a period of political instability and arrived at Angel Island in 1937. He attended high school in San Francisco and worked in a grocery store and as a house boy.

When he turned 21, Bill enlisted in the U.S. Army, maintaining and painting aircraft for the 13th Army Air Force which served in the Pacific during WWII. Afterwards, using the G.I. Bill, he attended the Illinois College of Optometry. In 1957 Bill opened his own eye-care practice, serving the Los Angeles Chinatown community for 45 years. Along the way, he joined the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Los Angeles, becoming involved in voter registration efforts, serving as its president in 1982-83, and helping in the creation of the Chinatown Public Safety Association.

Bill has been married to Lanora Tom since 1956. They have 2 adult children and 4 grandchildren.

Bill's WWII career was profiled in *Duty and Honor* in 1998, and in 2014 Bill received the CHSSC's Golden Spike Award for his many years as a community leader.



**James Bok Wong, Ph.D**

Dr. James Bok Wong, who was profiled in the CHSSC's *Portraits of Pride 1*, passed away on May 25, 2018.

James was born in 1924 in China, came to the US at the age of 12, and graduated from high school in New York. He was drafted into the U.S. Army and served in the 407th Air Service Squadron of the 14th Air Force, also known as the Flying Tigers, in China during WWII. Following the war, he married Wai Ping Lim and completed undergraduate and advanced degrees in agricultural and chemical engineering.

James was an astute businessman who became the chief economist for Dart Industries, and served the community through the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Los Angeles, as its president in 2011-12, and through the related CACA scholarship foundation. He has received numerous awards, including the Outstanding Volunteer Service Award for the City of Los Angeles in 1977, and a few years ago, with his wife Betty Yeow, was honored for their community service at the Chinese American Museum's Historymakers dinner. His WWII service was profiled in *Duty and Honor*.

Wai Ping passed in 2001, and James is survived by their three adult children and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and by wife Betty.



## 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)

*Please help us save paper and postage,*

*email us to indicate your preference for an online newsletter at [chssc@hotmail.com](mailto:chssc@hotmail.com)*

### Community Calendar

**Now through Saturday, July 14, 2018**

#### **Soul Mining exhibit**

Works on display uncover histories of forced migration, political struggle and transformation, and offer personal narratives to reconcile with these collective experiences.

East Los Angeles College - Vincent Price Art Museum  
1301 Avenida Cesar Chavez, Monterey Park, CA 91754  
323-265-8841

#### **Friday July 20 – National Fortune Cookie Day 80th Anniversary Specials at Phoenix Bakery!**

A free fortune cookie to the first 800 customers

Sat. August 11 – 8 almond cookies for \$0.80

Sat. August 18 – 3 sugar butterflies for \$0.80

Sat. August 25 – 10:00 AM – lion dancers, and more

11:00 AM – free slice of strawberry cream cake  
to first 500 customers

For more info on a historic Chinatown business, see:

<http://www.latimes.com/food/la-fo-phoenix-cake30-2009sep30-story.html>

**Saturday, July 21, 2018. 1:30-3:30 PM**

Book launch party for Chop Suey and Sushi

**Monday, July 30, 2018 – Wednesday, August 1, 2018. 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM**

#### **Chinese American Genealogy Workshop**

The workshop provides insightful presentations on Chinese genealogy research. It instructs attendees on how to use various techniques to advance their own research and discover the interesting information pertaining to their family / clan history and to identify those resources that can best serve them. There will also be exposure to the various information, material, and tools available on the Internet and in books and other sources to assist in compiling and documenting Chinese lineages. The ancestral villages of attendees will be identified and located - the primary source for family genealogy books.

North-Beach Center City College of San Francisco  
808 Kearny Street  
Room 503 (AM) & Room 404 - Student Lounge (PM)  
San Francisco, CA 94108

**Now through Sunday, August 19, 2018**

#### **Genghis Khan: The Exhibition**

##### **Discover the Man Behind the Legend**

Now the most comprehensive exhibition of Genghis Khan and his treasures invades the Reagan Library, its only Southern California stop on an international tour that has drawn more than a million visitors.

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum  
40 Presidential Drive  
Simi Valley, CA 93065