

NEWS'N NOTES



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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

DECEMBER 2018



Join us for our yearly **Holiday Potluck!** The CHSSC will be celebrating the season, and everybody is invited to sing carols, share food, and catch up with fellow members and friends.

Please bring your favorite dish (serving 4-6 people) or \$5 for admission.
Children are free.

Give a yearlong membership this season, or check out our online bookstore at store.chssc.org or stop by our Chinatown location for more gift ideas.



Carolers at an early CHSSC Holiday Potluck. Adults pictured L-R: Dorothy Lew, Kiphan Kan, Suellen Cheng.

Wednesday, December 5, 2018
6:30pm-9:00pm

Castelar Elementary School
840 Yale Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Free parking (via College Street)
This event is open to the public.



Drum & Bugle Corps at Monthly Meeting

At the CHSSC's monthly meeting in November, a panel of 11 former members of the LA Chinatown Drum & Bugle Corps shared their experiences as a troop. Stories about the formation of the group: their separation from Chung Wah School and the subsequent challenges to establish themselves as an independent group were explained. To the different panelists, being part of the troop had various significance, whether it meant learning discipline, how to work collaboratively, meeting their future partner, or was simply a moment in their coming-of-age story. Memorabilia from the CHSSC archives was on display; trophies, photo albums, and props symbolized the Corps' journey.



Back row (L-R): Frank Wong, Greg Fong, Linda Ching-Ikiri, Don Quon, Cliff Uyeda, Dick Lem; front row: Wayne Rorex, Linda Rorex, Beaumont

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Susan Dickson, President

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MEMBERS AT LARGE

John Chan

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-Americans community in support of a better appreciation of the rich, multicultural society of the United States.

Special Thanks...

The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California would like to sincerely thank the supporters of the capital campaign effort thus far:

Susan Dickson, major donor

Winifred Lew, major donor

Israel & Nadine Soo Hoo Levy, major donor

Peter McDonald, Jr., donor

Donna Young, donor

Please learn more about our capital campaign goals on page 4.





DECEMBER 2018

This year CHSSC has been very busy and productive:

Golden Spike Awards Dinner:

- Recognized and honored four filmmakers: Arthur Dong, Felicia Lowe, Renee Tajima-Peña, and Pamela Tom.

Grants:

- Completed “Island of the Blue Dolphins: Lone Woman at the Crossroads” grant awarded by California Humanities.
- Received a grant to digitize the Duty and Honor collection
- Hired two archivists to oversee the project, put the information online, and transcribe the interview tapes

Exhibits:

- Commemorated the 10-year anniversary of our “Chinatown Remembered” project with a display at Central Plaza during the 80th celebration of the beginning of New Chinatown
- Contributed 50 objects from our archive to an exhibit in D.C. which is sponsored by the 1882 Foundation

Cooperation among educational/community organizations:

- Launched partnership between the National Archives, Save Our Chinatown Committee, and San Bernardino State University to digitize Chinese Exclusion Act Case files at the Perris regional branch.
- Picnicked with C.A.C.A. and OCA at the LA State Historic Park.

CHSSC Archives:

- Received and processed archival materials.
- Displayed portions of CHSSC Archives at monthly meetings.
- Hosted scholars doing research in our archives.
- Conducted the first “Photo Day” at Atherton Homes in Alhambra.

Yosemite:

- Received California Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 262 for recognizing Chinese contributions in Yosemite.
- Organized the 6th annual pilgrimage to Sing Peak.

Outreach:

- Participated at the Archives Bazaar at USC for the 12th year.
- Participated in the History Day LA at Azusa Pacific University.
- Held our annual Ching Ming celebration at Evergreen Cemetery.
- Conducted Chinatown walking tours for schools and people of all ages.

Last month, we announced the beginning of a fundraising drive to update our Chinatown Heritage Center with new wiring, new windows, air conditioning, and a handicap accessible bathroom. Generous donors have stepped forward to help us reach our goal of raising the \$50,000 needed to secure an anonymous \$50,000 “match” donation. Your donation will enable us not only to preserve our Victorian homes, but it will also ensure that CHSSC can expand our mission.

Susan Dickson
President

To the CHSSC Family and Friends,



Our Victorian Homes at 411 (built 1886) and 415 (1892) Bernard Street need some tender loving care! We are proud to announce that a generous anonymous donor has offered CHSSC a \$50,000 challenge match for our capital campaign. We are reaching out to our members to secure the \$50,000 required to match this challenge and to realize our **\$100,000** goal.

Necessary improvements:

- Central air for our valuable books, archives, and guests.
- Electrical panels and wiring for 21st century and new digital support.
- Update restrooms with new plumbing and handicap access.
- Repair rotten windows/capture insulation benefits.
- Replace exterior paint to correspond within original exterior themes, and enhance historical significance of the Heritage Center.

 Please cut along the dotted line



**Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California**

南加州華人歷史學會

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Los Angeles, CA 90012

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

Make checks payable to CHSSC

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

Visa/MC # _____

Expiration Date _____ CV# _____

Signature _____

Donation to Capital Investment (tax deductible) \$ _____

2019 Membership \$ _____

Total \$ _____

CHSSC membership is...



Outreach—Archives Bazaar at USC

Publications—2018
Gum Saan Journal



Fellowship—Holiday Potluck



Albert Lowe and David Castro

Research—Duty and Honor Grant



Honoring pioneers—
2017 Golden Spike
Fundraising Dinner



Education—Drum &
Bugle Corps exhibit at
CHSSC

To join CHSSC, visit
our website:
chssc.org or
complete the flyer
on the reverse side.



Mission Statement

Established in 1975, the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC) unites people with a mutual interest in promoting the rich heritage of Chinese and Chinese American history. Our mission is to pursue, preserve, and communicate the history and historical role of Chinese and Chinese Americans in Southern California.

What We Do

- ◆ Organize monthly meetings and public presentations on Chinese American History.
- ◆ Sponsor and participate in symposiums, exhibits, and conferences.
- ◆ Conduct Chinatown walking tours for students and the public.
- ◆ Lead the annual Lunar New Year Golden Dragon Parade.

Research and Publications

- ◆ Publication of multiple books by renown scholars.
- ◆ The *Gum Saan Journal* is the Society's annual publication.
- ◆ Cultivates a library with thousands of titles related to Chinese American topics.
- ◆ Maintains an archive consisting of oral histories, archaeological collections, photographs, and family histories.

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New Membership

Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

Visa/MC # _____

Expiration Date _____

I am interested in helping with:

- Programs
- Publications
- Research
- Publicity
- Fundraising
- Other _____

Signature _____

- Silver \$ 57.
 - 100 x 100 Club \$ 100.
 - Diamond \$ 300.
 - Student or Senior (60+) \$ 32.
- Donation (tax deductible) \$ _____

Total \$ _____



Notes on Chinese American History by CHSSC member Will Gow, Ph.D. *Reflecting on the implications of the Chinese Exclusion Act on the 75th anniversary of its repeal.*

This December 17th marks the 75th anniversary of the Magnuson Act which repealed some of the restrictions placed on Chinese in the United States. Signed in 1882 by President Chester A. Arthur, the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited Chinese from entry to the country. In 1943, when President Roosevelt, recognizing the threat it was to the Sino-American alliance, declared the Chinese Exclusion Act “a historic mistake” and thus limited immigration of Chinese was permitted. Looking back at the Magnuson Act’s significance more than seven decades later, it is obvious that the law represents a consequential point in Chinese American history, and yet as time has progressed, I would argue, the law also represents a missed opportunity. The Magnuson Act failed to advocate for a more substantial rejection of the racism that is so central to exclusion.

Historian Erika Lee argued that the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 transformed the United States into a gate-keeping nation, introducing a mindset on immigration and immigrants that haunts the country in the present day. The scope of the Magnuson Act was more limited. In repealing the Chinese Exclusion Act, the law incorporated Chinese Americans into the existing national quota system set up by the Immigration Act of 1924.

The repeal was in many ways symbolic, but even in its symbolism it was limited. With the passage of the Magnuson Act, Chinese immigrants were let in under a quota of 105 people per year and some were allowed for the first time to naturalize as citizens. Still, Chinese Americans were prevented from property and business ownership. The repeal also did not apply to other allied Asian populations in the US, such as Filipinos and it left the overtly racist logic in the heart of the national quota system. Previously in 1924, the Immigration Act set-up a system of national immigration quotas based on the racist pseudo-science of eugenics. This gave priority to Western European nations such as Great Britain over Southern and Eastern European nations like Greece and Italy. It also completely excluded Asian immigrants. By putting in place these provisions, supporters of the 1924 law were vocal of their belief that the United States should remain predominantly Anglo-Saxon.

Following entry into World War II, the US allied with China against Japan. As the war in the Pacific

raged, Japanese propaganda targeted the America’s treatment of Asian immigrants. Congressman Warren Magnuson, the law’s sponsor, stated that repealing Chinese exclusion would provide the government of China with “one of the greatest counter-propaganda weapons it could have.” It was wartime strategy, rather than an explicit desire to condemn racism, was the impetus for the Magnuson Act.

During his recent Supreme Court confirmation hearing, Brett Kavanaugh was asked by California Senator Kamala Harris about an 1889 Supreme Court case in which the nation’s highest court upheld the legality of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Senator Harris pointed out that the “case has never been explicitly overruled.” She then asked Kavanaugh, “Was the United States correct in holding that Chinese people could be banned from entering the country?” After admitting that the cases in that era “represent discriminatory attitudes by the Supreme Court,” Kavanaugh responded: “Senator, I don’t want to opine on a particular case without looking at and studying the discrimination.” In this response, Kavanaugh passed on an opportunity to state definitively that the Supreme Court should have overturned the Chinese Exclusion Act.

We live in an era of heightened xenophobia and anti-immigrant rhetoric, in which the building of a wall to restrict immigration along the Southern border of the US is being seriously debated. This is also a time in which a Supreme Court nominee feels uncomfortable taking a public stance on whether or not the government should be allowed to ban immigrants on the basis of race. The Magnuson Act may have overturned Chinese exclusion, but the underlying logic of exclusion and racial gate keeping that were so central to the law remain very much a part of our national discourse today. For these reasons, seventy-five years on, I would argue that the Magnuson Act is at best viewed as a case of missed opportunity.

William Gow holds a PhD in Ethnic Studies from UC Berkeley and is currently writing a book on Los Angeles Chinatown and its relationship to Hollywood Cinema in the 1930s and 1940s. William welcomes comments and questions on his column. He can be reached at wgow@outlook.com



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Email us to indicate your preference for an online newsletter at info@chssc.org*

Community Calendar

Monday, December 3, 2018

Festivals, Fairs & Rituals: Textiles, Costumes and Carpets of the Eastern Grasslands of Tibet

The China Society of Southern California with Cheri Hunter presents her collection of photographs from Kham and Amdo, remote Tibetan provinces in China. Her photo talk will cover the usage of textiles and rugs throughout the region, and the shaman festivals and horse fairs where the participants don cultural garb. Please RSVP for dinner and/or the program by December 1st by contacting Bob Lee (boblee213@aol.com) or Yvonne (310-454-3621).

6:00pm, Social hour
6:30pm, Dinner (\$25 at door)
7:30pm, Program (free)

Golden Dragon Restaurant
960 North Broadway
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Saturday, December 8, 2018, 2:00pm-4:00pm

8th Annual Day of Inclusion: Memories of Migration: Diverse Journeys

Presented by the Multicultural Council, this program will focus on the theme of migration and immigration to the Inland region. Keynote Speaker, Karthick Ramakrishnan, will present. Visit www.riversidemuseumassociates.org for more information.

César Chávez Community Center
2060 University Ave.
Riverside, CA 92507

Saturday, December 15, 2019, 10:00am-2:00pm

CHSSC Photo Day

The Chinese Historical Society invites guests to help identify photos in the archives. Collections of unidentified pictures from Chinatown over the years will be brought out in hopes that names, dates, and locations can be determined. A light lunch will be provided and free parking is available.

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Wednesday, January 9, 2019, 7:00pm

“Find Chinese America/Finding America: A Route 66 Journey and Beyond”

At the CHSSC monthly program, Eugene Moy and Susan Sing will share a presentation about their 6,000 mile road trip in 2017 that observes Chinese American life across the United States.

Castelar Elementary School
840 Yale St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

Lunar New Year, Year of the Boar

Saturday, February 9, 2019, 1:00pm

LA Chinatown’s 120th Golden Dragon Parade

The CHSSC will have a flag unit at the lead of the annual parade celebrating the Lunar New Year.

Chinatown, North Broadway