

MAY 2024

My Dad: One of the Many Invisible Chinese American Heroes of World War II

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, 7pm

Free to attend. RSVP via Eventbrite on
CHSSC website: <https://chssc.org>



James King Fong



Ken Fong

Ken Fong will share stories of his late father, James King Fong, a true war hero, having flown 38 missions over Germany during WWII. But when the majority of Americans—even those of Chinese or Asian descent—think about who put on the uniforms and risked their lives to defeat the Axis powers, they don't think of his father or the nearly 20,000 other Americans of Chinese descent who also served and fought.



Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California

南加州華人歷史學會



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MAY 2024

President's message

Our By-laws Committee, Robert Chong, Susan Dickson, Cindy Fong and myself, have been working on an update to our current By-laws, which were last revised in 1996. There have been many changes in the way our organization has operated and we felt that our By-laws needed to reflect these changes. Suggested improvements affect:

- Membership categories, annual dues, and voting rights
- Member meetings, including the annual members meeting
- Board of Directors officers and directors-at-large: their duties, service period, and causes for removal
- Nominations and elections
- Standing committees
- Dissolution and distribution of assets

The updated By-laws will be available for review on May 15. We will make an announcement via mail, email and on our website. Please review so the update can be voted on and approved at our Annual Members meeting in June.

May is also the time when we nominate officers and directors-at-large for the upcoming 2024-2025 term. Please see page 2 for our proposed slate. If you want to nominate someone, please email to info@chssc.org.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank LA Chinatown Firecracker Run for supporting our local schools and nonprofits. Firecracker Board Member Gloria Gee presented us with a check at their 2024 Firecracker Appreciation Banquet, celebrating their 46th year of community service.



Ricky Leo

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Ricky Leo, President
 Gordon Hom, Vice President
 Susan Dickson, Secretary
 Franklin Mah, Treasurer
 Laureen Hom, Membership Secretary

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Linda Bentz
 Robert Chong
 Cindy Fong
 Annalise Harlow
 Angela Lancaster
 Grace Leo
 Albert Lowe

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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My Dad: One of the Many Invisible Chinese American Heroes of World War II

Ken Fong’s late father, James King Fong, was a true war hero, having flown 38 missions over Germany during WWII. But when the majority of Americans - even those of Chinese or Asian descent - think about who put on the uniforms and risked their lives to defeat the Axis powers, they don’t think of his dad or the nearly 20,000 other Americans of Chinese descent who also served and fought.

Ken grew up badgering his dad to share his war stories, and he will tell a few of the most memorable ones during our May program so that ABC’s like him will no longer be so invisible.

Speaker Bio:



Dr. Ken Fong is a third-generation Chinese American from Sacramento, CA. Graduating in 1976 from Cal Berkeley with a degree in biology, he moved to Los Angeles in 1978, graduating from Fuller Theological Seminary with an M.Div. and a D.Min. He helped lead Evergreen Baptist Church of LA to become one of the first English-only multiethnic, majority pan-Asian churches in America. He also was the first Executive Director of Fuller’s Asian American Center and was an affiliate associate professor of Asian American church studies. Over the years he has served as a trustee for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Westmont College, IWA, and the Asian American Drug Abuse Program. He is a noted speaker, author, and social influencer. In 2017 he was given Congressional Recognition by Rep. Judy Chu as the Community Leader of the Year in the West San Gabriel Valley. He retired from pastoring in 2017 and from teaching in 2019. He is an avid cyclist and a dedicated photographer. He and his wife ‘Snoopy’ have a daughter and reside in the shadows of the San Gabriel Mountains in Sierra Madre, CA.

2024-2025 CHSSC Board Nominations

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| President | Ricky Leo |
| Vice President | Robert Chong |
| Secretary | Susan Dickson |
| Treasurer | TBD |
| Membership Secretary | Lauren Hom |
| Directors-At-Large | Linda Bentz, David Castro, Isaac Chu, Cindy Fong, Annalise Harlow, Gordon Hom, Angela Lancaster, Grace Leo, Albert Lowe, Eugene Moy |

Additional nominations are welcome. Please email to info@chssc.org



MAY 2024

Ching Ming at Evergreen's Chinese Shrine

By Eugene Moy and Cindy Fong

CHSSC officially celebrated Ching Ming on Friday, April 12 at the historic Chinese Shrine located in Evergreen Cemetery in East Los Angeles. We moved up the gathering from the announced date due to the threat of rain on that Saturday. Thanks to Gordon Hom and Anita Lee who spent several days prior to the event tidying up the site, especially the area within the shrine enclosure.

On Friday, they, along with O.C. Lee, Willie Lew, Ernie Low, Mei Ong, Susan Sing, Chuck Woo, and the authors, spent the first part of Friday raking weeds and pine needles. On hands and knees, the group scraped dirt and debris that partially covered some of the over 165 headstones. These headstones were placed by Metro to mark the reburial of remains relocated from the nearby Gold Line construction. A special shoutout to O.C. for preserving the day with his photographic talent.



Photo courtesy of O.C. Lee

L to R: Eugene Moy, Susan Sing, Ernie Low, Mei Ong, Willie Lew, Cindy Fong, Chuck Woo, Anita Lee, Gordon Hom



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Susan led the crew in arranging flowers at the Shrine, the Metro memorial wall, and on every headstone. Additional bundles of flowers were placed at the shrine in memory of some of the original Shrine restoration committee members, including among others, Irvin Lai, Gilbert Hom, Randall Bloch, and Charles Wong. The entire group placed lighted incense at the Shrine and paid respect to our LA Chinese American pioneers.



Photos courtesy of Susan Sing

We then packed up all our gear and drove a short distance in the cemetery to the location of the graves of Donaldina Cameron and some of her family members. Many may know of her crusading spirit in the late 19th-early 20th century in San Francisco, rescuing enslaved Chinese girls and providing a group home for them. Few may be aware that a good part of her early life was spent in Southern California; hence, many of her family are at rest at Evergreen Cemetery. We placed more flowers at the Cameron family site, which included the final resting place of Tien Fu Wu, Donaldina's longtime assistant at Cameron House. After we "adjourned", we re-gathered and enjoyed a nice lunch at the legendary Liliana's in nearby East L.A. [whew]

View more photos at <https://chssc.org/2024-ching-ming/>

Special Announcement!

The draft of our revised By-laws will be available for review on our website, <https://chssc.org/> on May 15.



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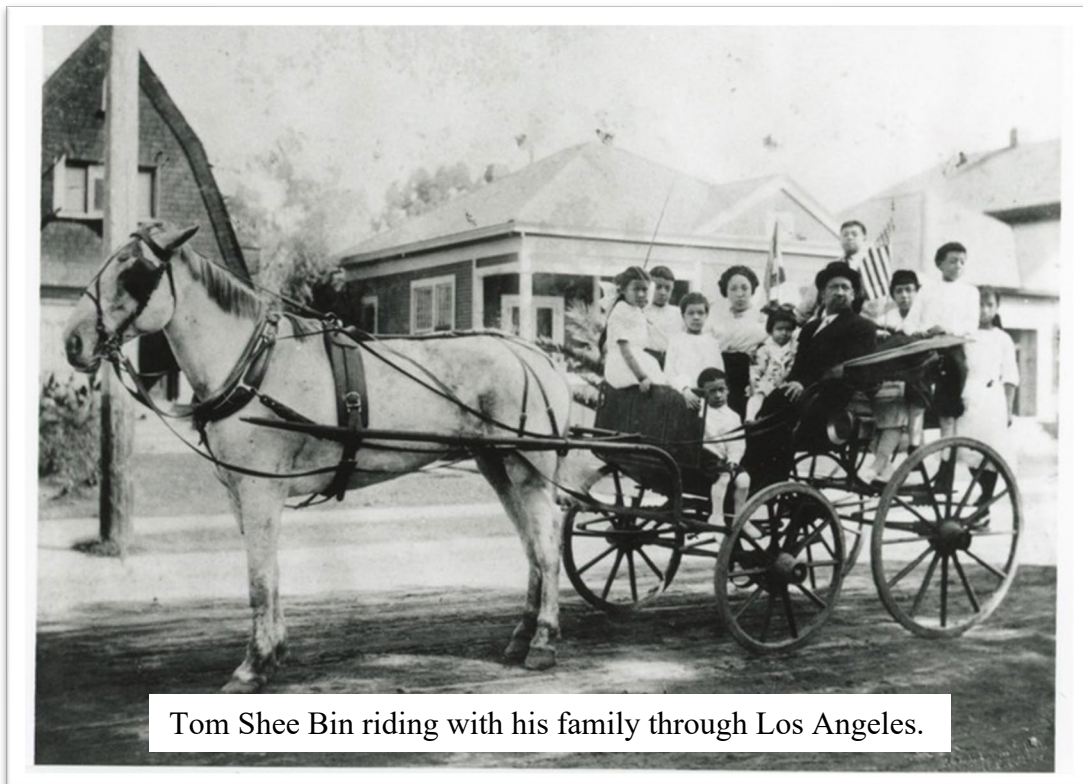
Archives Spotlight

by Linda Bentz

We are thrilled to announce that the Southern California Chinese American Oral History Project (SCCAOH) is now available in the CHSSC Digital Archives. The SCCAOH Project was a joint venture between CHSSC and UCLA Asian American Studies Center. From 1979 to 1983, local Chinese residents were invited to share their family histories and photographs. One hundred and sixty-nine interviews were recorded and over 1500 pictures were copied.

All interviews and images have been digitized, and today, each interviewee has their own page in the Digital Archives. Here you can listen to individual interviews, read summary transcripts, and view family images. Various topics are discussed and described in the interviews. These include immigration, associations, Old Los Angeles Chinatown, China City, community leaders, discrimination, ethnic identity, education, and so much more.

We encourage you to visit the Southern California Chinese American Oral History Project as it contains information for anyone who wants to learn more about Chinese American history in Los Angeles. Here is a link to the project: <https://chsscdigital.libraryhost.com/s/southern-california-oral-history-project/page/about>



Tom Shee Bin riding with his family through Los Angeles.



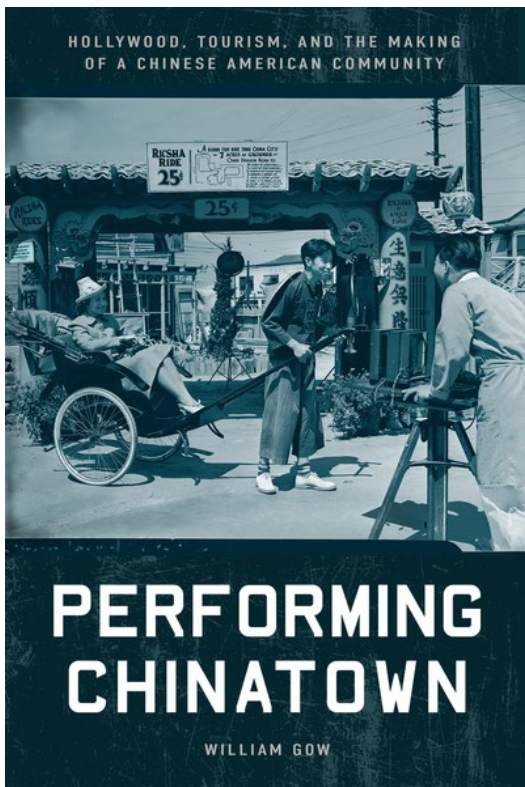
Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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Performing Chinatown: Hollywood Tourism, and the Making of a Chinese American Community

By Will Gow

After 20 years of research, I am excited to announce the publication of my book *Performing Chinatown*. The book tells the story of the ways in which Chinese Americans in Los Angeles during the Exclusion era used performances in Hollywood and in Chinatown to shape ideas about Chinese Americans in the public consciousness. In many ways, my work on this book began with my introduction to the CHSSC by Gilbert Hom in 2004. The vision of the project was certainly shaped by all the community members I met while at the CHSSC working on the documentary *Revisiting East Adams* and while directing the Chinatown Remembered Project. To all of you who helped with the book, shared stories, or photos with me, thank you. Your support made this work possible. Please consider joining me for our book launch at Pico House on Sunday, May 19th from 10:30am to 12pm. You can RSVP for the event at camla.org/williamgow



For those of you interested in purchasing a copy, I have a 20% discount code to share with you when you order through Stanford University Press.

Release May 14, 2024

\$28.00 paperback

Receive 20% off at

www.sup.org with the code

GOW20

Book Introduction

In *Performing Chinatown*, historian **William Gow** argues that Chinese Americans in Los Angeles used performances in Hollywood films and in Chinatown for tourists to shape widely held understandings of race and national belonging during a pivotal chapter in U.S. history. Gow conceives of these racial representations as intimately connected to the restrictive immigration laws that limited Chinese entry into the U.S., beginning with the 1875 Page Act and continuing until the passage of the Immigration and Nationality

Act of 1965. Drawing on more than forty oral history interviews, this book retells the long-overlooked history of the ways that Los Angeles Chinatown shaped Hollywood and how Hollywood, in turn, shaped perceptions of Asian Americans. William Gow is an Assistant Professor at California State University, Sacramento, and a community historian



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

411 Bernard Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: 323-352-8824 Email: info@chssc.org
Webiste: <https://chssc.org/>

Donations for April

In Memory of George Sheu

Dean & Shirley Chu Ng

Donations

Pameoa Kislak

L.A. Chinatown Firecracker Run Committee, Inc.

Wes Leslie

Georgia Grubelich

Upcoming Events

“We Said No! No!: A Story of Civil Disobedience”, Saturday, May 11, 2024, 2:00-4:00 PM

Santa Monica Public Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd, Santa Monica. Filmmaker Brian Tadashi Maeda screens his award-winning feature documentary about the Japanese Americans who refused to say “yes” to the infamous Loyalty Questionnaire while imprisoned at the Tule Lake concentration camp, followed by a panel discussion with cast and crew.

“Performing Chinatown: Hollywood Tourism, and the Making of a Chinese American Community”

Book launch for Will Gow’s latest book at Pico House on Sunday, May 19th from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm. Please RSVP for the event at camla.org/williamgow

“Anna May Wong and the Golden Age of Asian American Cinema”, Saturday, May 25, 2024, 2:00-3:00 PM

Santa Monica Public Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd, Santa Monica. Authors Katie Gee Salisbury (Not My China Doll: The Wild and Shimmering Life of Anna May Wong) and Jeff Yang (The Golden Screen: How Movies Made Asian America) discuss Anna May Wong and other underappreciated Asian American pioneers of the Dawn of Hollywood. Oscar-nominated filmmaker and author Arthur Dong (Hollywood Chinese: The Chinese in American Feature Films) moderates the conversation.

A book sale and signing follow.

“2024 Yosemite Pilgrimage”, July 26 – 28, 2024 and “Sing Peak Backpacking Trip”, July 29-31, 2024

Mark your calendars. Check our website for itinerary and registration details.