



January 2025



Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California

南加州華人歷史學會



CHINESE NEW YEAR - WHAT YOUR MOTHER NEVER TOLD YOU - CHINESE NEW YEAR IN THE AMERICAN CONTEXT



DAVID LEI

ON JANUARY 29TH 2025 WE WILL
CELEBRATE 4723 ON THE CHINESE
CALENDAR AND SOME OF US WILL FOLLOW
CENTURIES OLD TRADITIONS, RITUALS
AND CUSTOMS - MUCH OF WHICH WE DO
NOT KNOW WHY, SOME ARE
MISINTERPRETED AND SOME ARE
OUTRIGHT WRONG - COME AND LISTEN TO
WHAT YOUR MOTHER NEVER TOLD YOU
ABOUT CHINESE NEW YEAR.

Wednesday, January 8, 2025
7PM - 8PM

FREE TO ATTEND
RSVP VIA EVENTBRITE ON CHSSC WEBSITE:

<https://chssc.org>





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CONSERVATION OF ENERGY AND WINTER PLANTINGS

Growing up in L.A., my Chinese American parents always knew what to do in every season. On the cusp of fall and winter, we would clear all the old growth and prepare the soil for new plantings, like carrots, various greens, onions, turnips, and snow peas. My spouse, from the Central Valley farm belt, similarly learned what and when to plant. So together we have grown up with gardening instincts, and have started plantings for winter. We're conserving energy, building up our reserves, feeding/watering judiciously.

At the CHSSC, we are transitioning, from one set of archivists who have moved on and up, and are welcoming new (and returning) archivists and interns who will tackle the next round of archival and research work. In support, CHSSC's facilities are being continuously upgraded, inside and out, with help from generous donors. Like for a farm or garden, we are preparing for future bounty.

Another sign of renewal is our annual participation in Chinese New Year festivities. We will once again have a flag and marching unit in the Golden Dragon Parade, set for Saturday February 8. We will open our houses to welcome Chinatown visitors, and hopefully new members. Volunteer hosts are needed! So please join us in Welcoming the New Year on Feb. 8.

Happy Holidays to All!
Eugene Moy

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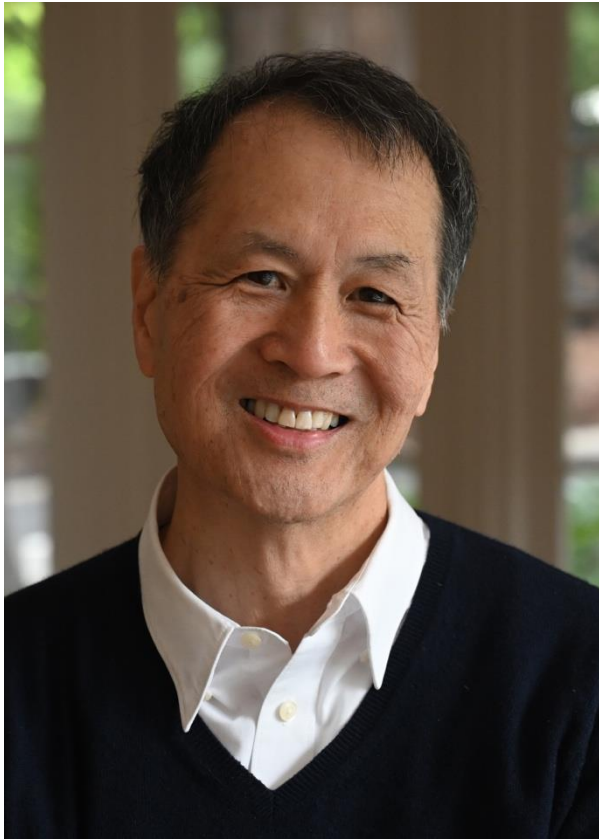
Mission Statement

The purpose of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, Inc. shall be:

- to advocate for a wider understanding of the significance of the role of Chinese and Chinese Americans in the history of Southern California;
- to bring together people with a mutual interest in the Southern California history of Chinese and Chinese Americans;
- to perform all the functions required to acquire, preserve, and communicate knowledge of this important history; and
- to promote a better appreciation of our rich multi-cultural society.



January 2025



David Lei

Bio:

David Lei began his career as a social worker in San Francisco's Chinatown in the late 1960s, where he worked with at-risk youth. In 1981, he transitioned into the business world, focusing on exporting consumer products to Mexico. He sold his business in 2003 and retired. David is deeply committed to community building, preserving and interpreting Chinese American history, youth education, and the arts. In recent years he has given talks mostly on Chinese American art/history/culture at various venues including the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, the Chinese Historical Society of America, 1882 Foundation in DC, UC Berkeley class of 2019 commencement ceremony at Memorial Stadium, the Commonwealth Club, Center for Chinese Studies at UC Berkeley, Calgary Chinese Culture Center and many Chinese American museums and historical societies in North America. David has been involved with the Chinese New Year Parade in San Francisco since 1965 and was the parade director and is still involved as its cultural advisor.



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Gum Saan Journal

In 1968, a new term - “Asian American” – was introduced by Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee to replace “Oriental”. From this, the pan-ethnic Asian American Movement took off. In Southern California, the Movement led to the establishment of Asian American studies and social service agencies including Chinatown Service Center, Asian American Tutorial Project at Castelar, and Asian Women’s Center. *Gum Saan Journal 2025* focuses specifically on the stories of some Chinese American youth from this Movement.

The new GSJ includes oral histories of five activists including Steve Louie, the eldest son of CHSSC founders, Paul and Emma Louie, who co-edited *The Asian Americans: The Movement and the Moment* (2001). Steve said:

My parents got their first TV in the 1950s and we watched the Civil Rights Movement unfold. We always talked about the events around the dinner table. They said, “This is important. This is important for you as Chinese Americans. What do you think?” My younger siblings were probably not getting it, but I remember these conversations...

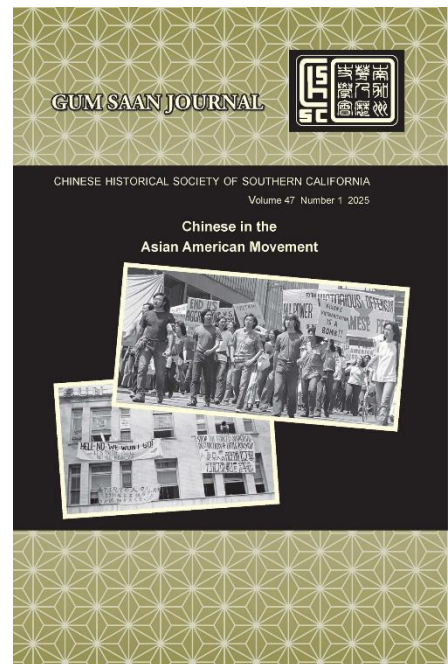
Kenyon Chan grew up working his parents’ tiny grocery store in El Sobrante of Contra Costa County. He shares:

That summer [in 1968], I called my father from D.C. In those days, long distance calls were quite expensive. My father said, “Hey, I think we saw you on TV. You were getting arrested!” I told them I was alright. They were actually quite supportive. They were proud that I was part of this national movement [Martin Luther King’s Poor People’s Campaign].

Dr. Chan would be inaugural chair of Asian American Studies at Cal State Northridge, and then Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Washington Bothell.

The other three oral histories are of Eddie Wong, 1970 co-founder of Visual Communications and former director of the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation. Dr. Sam Chan was District Chief with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Children’s System of Care. His parents were one of the first biracial couples after interracial marriage became legal in California in 1948. Judge Diane Tan (ret.) was raised in a laundry in South Central LA, and she was a typist for Hiram Kwan when she was a teen at Manual Arts High School.

Said editor Susie Ling, “In Asian American studies, we’ve all heard of Eddie Wong and his big footprints. But the first time I sat down to interview him, I was flabbergasted when he said, ‘I was eighteen then, I didn’t know what I was doing.’” Still, Eddie and all worked together to establish a grassroots movement built on integrity and sincerity. That also describes the founding of CHSSC – 50 years ago.





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December 9, 2024 CHSSC Holiday Potluck Gathering at Shadow Park in Cerritos. Thanks to Gordon Hom for the use of clubhouse facilities and menu planning. Thanks to Anita Lee and many others for setup and cleanup!



Photo by O.C. Lee





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Planning session for the celebration events for the 50th anniversary of CHSSC

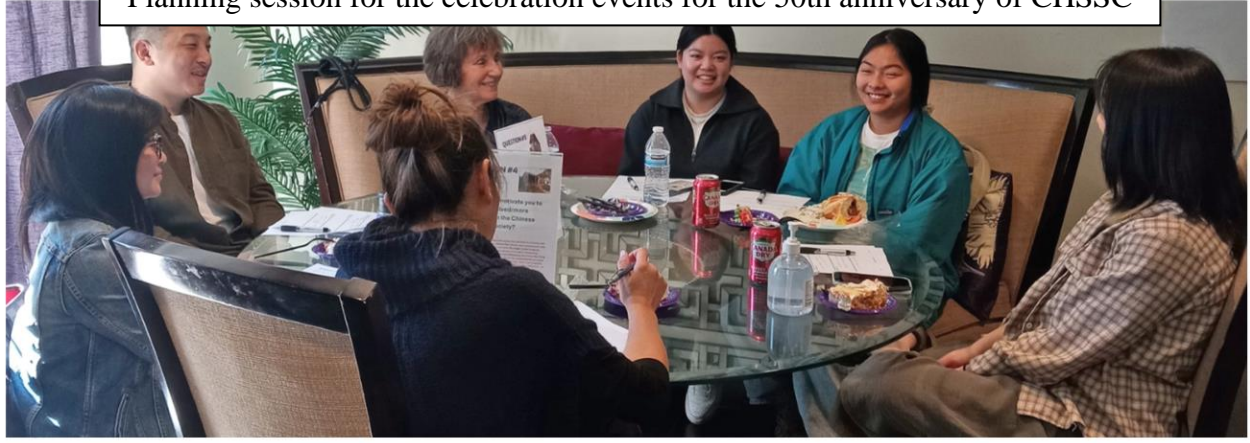


Photo by O.C. Lee



On November 12 the CHSSC and the China Society co-hosted a book talk by Karen Fang, moderated by Pamela Tom, at the Golden Dragon Restaurant. Copies of Prof. Fang's new book, *Background Artist: The Life and Work of Tyrus Wong*, were made available at a discount by Bob Lee, president of the China Society.

Photo by O.C. Lee



Photo by O.C. Lee

2025 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

YOUR 2024 MEMBERSHIP HAS SUPPORTED THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

Virtual walking tour of Chinatown and walking tour training manual.

12th Annual Pilgrimage to Yosemite (heritage tour).

Where You Stand: Chinatown 1880-1939 exhibit at Union Station.

Three archivists working on our physical and digital archives and our library.

Organized and launched the online version of the Southern California Oral History project.

Summer intern research using 1950 census of the Old Chinatown area for our "The Five Chinatowns" book project with partner UCLA Asian American Studies Center.



YOUR 2025 MEMBERSHIP WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

Renovation of our Chinatown Heritage Center.

Continue processing our archival and digital assets and uploading digital assets to the Online Archives of California and Calisphere.

Continued community partner to UCLA

Continuing training of Library Science interns.

Safety and security of our information technology.

Continued documentation of Chinatown history.

Additional virtual and physical exhibits.



New Membership Renewal

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Mail to: Chinese Historical Society of Southern California
411 Bernard St
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Membership Levels	
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	\$ 57
<input type="checkbox"/> 100x100 Club	\$ 100
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	\$ 300
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (60+) or student	\$ 32
<input type="checkbox"/> Hardcopy newsletter	\$ 20
Donation (tax deductible)	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____

Please make checks payable to CHSSC

Check here if you would like our newsletter sent via email.

To join or renew your membership by debit card, credit card, or by using your PayPal account, visit our website at chssc.org.

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



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