

JULY 2021

SUMMIT TUNNELS 6 AND 7, SUMMIT CAMP SITE NAMED AMONG AMERICA'S 11 MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES FOR 2021

[Note: our monthly program schedule is on summer recess; we will re-commence in September with new history programs]

On June 3rd, the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced its annual list of national heritage sites that are at risk of destruction or irreparable damage. <https://savingplaces.org/press-center/media-resources/americas-11-most-endangered-historic-places-2021-list-unveiled#.YN8xvX51AyA>.

As our readers are aware, the first transcontinental railroad was completed 150 years ago, on May 10, 1869. The 690 mile western leg of the transcontinental was constructed by the Central Pacific Railroad, for which 80-90% of the workforce was Chinese. In addition to building across hot dese



TK Gong

Nevada mountain range, where 13 tunnels needed to be carved through solid granite. The Sierra crossing was accomplished over a two year period from 1866-1867, including through severe winter weather. Tunnel 6, at 7000 feet elevation near present-day Truckee was the longest, at 1,659 feet. Nearby are Tunnel 7, and a Chinese railroad worker camp site.

Unfortunately, the active railroad route has long bypassed the old tunnels, now owned by the Union Pacific Railroad. Because they are accessible to the public, the Tunnels 6 and 7 have unfortunately been subjected to graffiti and other vandalism. Preservationists have been actively advocating for designation of the tunnel and camp sites on the National Register of Historic Places in the last few years.

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10160999297256102&substory_index=0&id=26937096101

Being named on the “11 Most Endangered” list will hopefully generate greater awareness of the value of these sites in our national heritage, and attract funding to preserve them. For more information, and to visit, see <https://1882foundation.org/historic-preservation/> and <https://www.jmpeltier.com/california-truckees-historic-donner-summit-railroad-tunnels/>



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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During the pandemic, CHSSC has been forced to conduct our elections online. At the June board meeting, a slate for 2021-22 was chosen. During the month of July, nominations for both officers and board members at large will be accepted. Nominations should be sent via email to info@chssc.org. If the slate is contested, we will have an online vote at the end of August. The new board will seated on September 1, 2021.

Slate 2021-2022

Board of Officers

President: Susan Dickson

Vice President: Ricky Leo

Vice President, programs: Gordon Hom

Secretary: Cindy Fong

Treasurer: Franklin Mah

Membership Secretary: Angela Lancaster

Members at Large

Linda Bentz

Caitlin Bryant

Bak Jong

Grace Leo

Felicia Tabing

Howard Wang

(There are 3 unfilled positions for members at large).

Donations In Memory of Angi Ma Wong

BY NORMAN WONG

Donations have been made to CHSSC from Angi Wong's friends on behalf of their dedication to opposing violence of AAPI and their appreciation of receiving Angi's timely book *Night of the Red Moon*, fiction memorializing the 1871 LA Chinatown Massacre. May we never forget and hope that a lesson has been learned.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Susan Dickson, President
Eugene Moy, Vice President
Laureen Hom, Secretary
Franklin Mah, Treasurer
Cindy Fong, Membership
Secretary

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Linda Bentz
Caitlin Bryant
Gordon Hom
Bak Jong
Angela Lancaster
Felicia Tabing
Howard Wang

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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Grace Leo is a corporate controller in the automotive industry. She has a passion for community service and Chinese American history. She is currently serving as President of the Ventura County Chinese American Association, Secretary for the Ventura County Chinese American Historical Society, and a Board Member of the Camarillo Family YMCA. She is a member of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance SoCal Gold Medal Committee where she personally delivered the Congressional Gold Medal to many living Chinese American WWII Veterans or their families. She has also served on the Board of Directors of two organizations, the 5 Star accredited Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce where she worked on the Auto Center and Economic Development committees and Legislative Advocacy Forum, and Rotary Club of

Oxnard where she received the Paul Harris award, one of the highest honors that Rotary bestows, in recognition of her outstanding contributions exemplifying the highest ideal of Rotary "Service above self".



Ricky Leo is a retired electrical engineer who worked in the commercial aviation industry. He is a graduate of the University of Wyoming and the California Institute of Technology. He is married to Grace and they have one daughter, Jennifer. He has a passion for learning, helping others and Chinese American history. He is a member of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance SoCal Gold Medal Committee where he and his wife have personally delivered the Congressional Gold Medal to many living Chinese American WWII Veterans or their families. His own father is was a WWII veteran who earned a Silver Star. He has supported his wife with her many work and volunteer activities.

CHSSC Website

Have you seen the new and improved CHSSC website? We have added many new features including:

- Online exhibit: A Vision of Justice: Tyrus Wong & the Cultural Continuum of New Chinatown
- All issues of News 'N Notes (1979 to 2021)
- Updated Chinatown Remembered Project (Chinese in Los Angeles circa 1930s to 1940s)
- Community events
- YouTube links to monthly meetings
- Information about CHSSC Outreach
- CHSSC Preservation and Landmark Recognition Activities
- Founding and History of Chinatown Heritage Center
- Lists of CHSSC publications



Chinatown Heritage Center

Please visit <https://chssc.org> to see all of the latest news from the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California.



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CHINATOWN CONNECTIONS: A SUMMARY OF OUR JUNE MEETING

CHSSC was privileged to have community representatives make detailed and informative presentations regarding the need and challenges in Los Angeles Chinatown during the pandemic. Peter Ng, CEO of Chinatown Service Center, gave a summary of services provided by this distinguished community non-profit. The agency was established in 1971 to service a community seen as a port of entry and stepping stone for immigrants. It provides social services, financial help, tutoring, elder services, and immigrant services to the entire community. Health Care began in 1991, replete with medical, dental, and vision services provided by volunteer doctors. Affordable housing has been established in two locations, administered by a third party. Satellite centers have been established in Monterey Park and the San Gabriel Valley. During the pandemic, CSC has helped over 50 small businesses secure loans, established Covid-19 test sites, and currently sponsors a vaccination site in LA Chinatown.

Mei Lau, President, and Ernest Lee, Vice-President, of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) teamed to tell us more about the genesis and mission of their organization. Established in 1889, the CCBA worked to help Chinese navigate the American legal system due to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. In 1938, the Chinatown Corporation donated land to CCBA and, in 1950-51, construction of their current building was completed. There are 27 associations under CCBA, either with surname or village association. CCBA has sponsored piano, painting programs and established a language school. It serves as a mutual aid society. CCBA strives to focus on issues facing Los Angeles Chinatown, namely, affordable housing and the lack of a full-service supermarket since 2019.

Thy Mai, President, and Martin Wong, longtime member of F.A.C.E.S (Friends and Alumni of Castelar Elementary School) gave us a snapshot of the activities that served to enrich and support the school. When the pandemic closed all public schools, F.A.C.E.S provided 600 bags of school supplies at the beginning of the school year in 2020. Live person events pivoted to online, including fundraising, grants, social media, and a larger website presence. There was an emphasis on acquiring devices and hot spots for all students. 60% of Castelar's student population is below the poverty line. Food assistance became a focal point, a shift from the group's previous focus on support for the instrumental music program. In addition, "F.A.C.E.S. Presents", an online interview series, became a tool to disseminate information. In the 2021-22 school year, there is hope for a mix of in-person and online support.

Eugene Moy served as moderator. We thank all of the participants for their careful preparation and informative presentation.



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Costello Collection: New Transcontinental Railroad Archaeological Collection

The Archives Committee is pleased to announce that we recently received a new archaeological collection from archaeologist Julia Costello. Between 1983 and 1984 Julia and her husband Jeff Tuttle surface collected artifacts from a Chinese camp at Donner Summit. Between 1865 and 1869 Chinese construction workers building the transcontinental railroad occupied the work camp. The camp was located using historic accounts, maps and surface surveys.

The Costello Collection complements the Evans Chace Collection also curated by CHSSC. The Evans Chace collection was originally created in 1967 when archeologists Paul G. Chace and Bill Evans surface collected artifacts from Chinese work camps at Donner Summit. These collections provide intimate information into the lives of 19th-century Chinese railroad workers pertaining to their diet, leisure activities, and cultural practices. A finding aid for the Evans Chace Collection can be found on the Online Archive of California at:

<https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8s46z54/?query=Chace+Evans+Collection>.



Sample of Double Happiness pattern rice bowl from Evans Chace Collection



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In Remembrance of Howard Fong

Howard Fong passed away in Alhambra ca. May 31. He was born and raised in the town of Auburn, 35 miles northeast of Sacramento. In nearby Dutch Flat, in 1869, his paternal great grandfather was a rice broker to the Chinese railroad workers.

Howard's early career was in teaching. After serving in the US Army (1961-1964), he attended the University of California, Berkeley and received a BS degree in finance (1968). He obtained an MBA in finance (1977) from San Francisco State University. He was a lecturer in finance at San Francisco State University (1972-1977); and in accounting at Lincoln University, San Francisco (1977-1982).

Switching careers, he obtained a Postgraduate Advanced Professional Certificate in investment management (1983) from Stern School of Business, New York University. For several years, he worked as a securities analyst on Wall Street. He then returned to Silicon Valley and got into venture capital for tech and bio-tech startups. While working on a project to finance a film, he fell into acting, after uncredited roles in the movies *A Better Tomorrow II*, and *Wall Street*. Later, he studied at Jean Shelton Actors Studios in San Francisco.

No matter how small his role, whether he was credited or not, Howard loved and relished every scene that he was in. Besides commercials and TV, he appeared in films such as *The Joy Luck Club*, *The Laser Man*, *La La Land*, *Crash*, *Zen Noor*, and *Ku Fu Theatre*. He was also an actor and playwright at East West Players, and wrote the play *Yut Ho*, debuted at David Henry Hwang Theatre in 2009.

Howard once served on the board of CHSSC as financial secretary. Albeit always late, he was a regular at our Wednesday night monthly meetings, Ching Ming Festival, and Chinatown parade. He knew everyone, had many stories to tell, and always ready to lend a helping hand with a big smile. He will be missed.



Donations

In Memory of Angi Ma Wong

Clark and Shirley Chow
Harriet Huang
Warren and Magdalene Lee
Ming and Maria Lai

In Memory of Ruby Ling Louie

Susan Dickson
Robert Lee
Margie Lew
Warren and Magdalene Lee
Emma Louie
Ben and Doreen Nakayama
Lily and Richard Wong
Warren and Magdalene Lee
Dorothy Fue Wong

In Memory of Isobel Lew

Margie Lew

In Memory of Eleanor Y Sue

E.E. and Kimberly Lum

In Memory of Helen Yee Tom

Vicki and Eric Young
Dorothy Schoon

In Memory of Edna Young

Dorothy Schoon

Kenneth Pon

Judy Sai



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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Website: www.chssc.org

*Please help us save paper and postage,
email us to indicate your preference for an online newsletter at info@chssc.org.*

Community Events

Saturday, July 24, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. PDT

Li Wei Yang, Curator of Pacific Rim Collections at the Huntington Library will introduce You Chung “Y.C.” Hong, a prominent immigration attorney during and after the Chinese Exclusion era in California. Li Wei will give an inside view of case files and documents from the Hong Family Papers, a special collection containing over 7,600 case files. Hong was a tireless advocate of equal rights for Chinese Americans and worked to overturn the Chinese Exclusion Act. Registration begins July 10th.
www.chinesefamilyhistory.org/next-meeting.html