



NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

appreciation of our chinese american heritage • a non-profit organization • 1648 redcliff street • los angeles • ca 90026

CHSSC OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

"New Findings In Old Chinatown"
Speaker: Ms. Roberta Greenwood

Wednesday, October 3
7:30 p.m.

Multi-purpose Room, Castelar School
840 Yale Street, Los Angeles Chinatown

Ms. Roberta Greenwood, a renown archaeologist and a long time Society member, has exciting news for us about her recent digs in Los Angeles Old Chinatown. Her slide presentation will tell new stories about our community. Thousands of pieces of rice bowls, tea cups, children's toys, jewelry, stoves, tooth-brushes, and much more have been recently unearthed by Ms. Greenwood and her associates at the Union Station as part of the Metrorail project. Samples of these treasures will be shown in our October general meeting. Please come and examine the pieces. It is a rare occasion for discovery.

To quote the Los Angeles Business Journal, Ms. Roberta "Greenwood is regarded as among the best of a new breed of archaeologists who show up at the site of large public and commercial excavations to search for clues from the past." Her special interest in California Chinatowns is evidenced by her excellent work on Ventura Chinatown Project and many other projects involving the history of Chinese in Napa, El Paso, San Clemente, and Mother Lode country. Ms. Greenwood has authored numerous important articles on her archaeological findings and also has contributed to the Society's

September 1990

publication, Gum Saan Journal.

Parking is available on school grounds -- enter on College Street between Hill and Yale Streets.

MUSEUM PROGRESSES

The Museum of Chinese American History in Los Angeles (MCAH) project is rapidly becoming active on the local history scene. In recent months, MCAH has assisted the KCET Los Angeles History Project, provided materials for the "Chinese of Los Angeles" exhibit in the Rotunda of the Los Angeles City Hall, and gave work opportunities to several graduate interns in Asian American studies and Chinese American history.

The KCET effort, in which the Chinese Historical Society also participated via its representative, Emma Wong Louie, will culminate in the half hour first run showing on KCET, Channel 28, about the Chinese Americans of Los Angeles, sometime this November. All readers are urged to watch the schedule. It is believed that this is the first time a definitive video study of local Chinese American history has been done.

The City Hall Rotunda exhibit was developed by El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historic Monument, jointly with the City Archives. Co-

sponsors included the Society and the Friends of MCAH, the non-profit support group. Five display cases show photos and artifacts about the Chinese in Los Angeles. Some photos and objects are being shown for the first time. These are combined with some interesting historical archival documents, one dated back to 1871 regarding the Massacre.

The display opened September 4 at City Hall at a small reception hosted by City Council members Alatorre, Lindsay, Molina, and Woo. Attending were many community leaders and Society Board members. Welcoming the occasion was Councilman Michael Woo and Director General C. Y. Chang from Taiwan, Republic of China. The exhibit is on display until the end of September. Parts will be made into a MCAH travelling exhibit.

Summer interns funded by the Museum Fund include Mr. Haiming Liu and Mr. Michael SooHoo. Liu has been scanning Chinese newspapers as early as 1907 for articles on local Chinese. He is a second year intern. As a result of last year's studies with MCAH, he has been named a Rockefeller Fellow to pursue further studies on the Society's Sam Chang collection. SooHoo has been combing the City Archives for further documentation on the Chinese.

Earlier in the year, Timothy Fong, from UC Berkeley, helped to prepare planning documents for MCAH. The Museum has been able to develop an outstanding press kit as a result of the work of Susan J. Woo, a public relations trainee from UCLA.

On the public and media front, El Pueblo and Olvera Street's future has been debated by various elements of the Latino community. Leaders of the Chinese American community have walked the halls of City Hall to insure that the Museum project remained in the public consciousness. Councilpersons

Molina and Alatorre, originally representing two differing views, have now "agreed to agree" on El Pueblo's reorganization. Both have declared support for the MCAH project and the commitments in space and funding previously defined by the City of Los Angeles.

In the reorganization, El Pueblo Park becomes El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historic Monument. Administration leaves the Recreation and Parks Department and is taken up by a new Monument Authority, to consist of seven members appointed by Mayor Bradley. Various Chinese American leaders have voiced opinions that it is essential that fair-minded Authority members be appointed who appreciate the important role of the Chinese heritage in Los Angeles' history at El Pueblo.

Individual letters to the Mayor expressing such a view are important in the next few days. You can help. A sample letter is included in this news edition. Letters should be addressed to: Mayor Tom Bradley and a copy sent to Christine Ung, Mayor's Office, at the same address.

September 20, 1990

Honorable Tom Bradley
Mayor of Los Angeles
City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mayor Bradley:

We strongly support your consideration of appointing a person of Chinese American heritage to the new El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historic Monument Authority.

Old Chinatown has been a part of the Monument's history for over 120 years. A Museum of Chinese American History in Los Angeles is planned within the Garnier Building of the Monument to honor the participation of these Chinese pioneers in the building of Los Angeles. Therefore, we regard this request as entirely appropriate. It is within the spirit of exhibiting the rich and varied heritage of this area.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

cc: Christine Ung, Mayor's Office

CHINESE MOON FESTIVAL SUCCESS

From the comments of Festival goers and press observers, Chinese Moon Festival 1990 was a great artistic and public success. Crowd estimates ranged from 2,500 (Asian Week) to 5,000 (Chinese Daily News) on a beautifully sunny Sunday of the three day Labor Day weekend. The numbers were well above the anticipations of Festival planners for a first-time neighborhood ethnic event. Reaping the benefits of coincidence, this was also the weekend of a full moon, so necessary for the unexpectedly popular nocturnal Moon Viewing event, and also the opening of the citywide Los Angeles Festival, of which the Chinese Moon Festival 1990 was an integral part.

Chinese Moon Festival 1990 was funded in major part by the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, which also provided technical support and festival management. As part of the city's Cultural Affairs Department requirements, Chinese Moon Festival 1990 was characteristically authentic in the free performing arts, arts, and crafts offered visitors. Presentations adhered to the Chinese heritage and culture regarding the customs and activities of the season. Thus there was an unusual emphasis on the calligraphic arts, literature, poetry, and story telling. Notably (and thankfully) absent were the commercial sponsorships sometimes commonly visible at today's fairs and festivals. An undoubted highlight of the Festival was the dramatic telling of the Moon Festival myths by noted author and playwright Frank Chin, with a booming voice transmitted throughout the Yale Street venues and artisans booths by a Cultural Affairs P. A. system.

Other cultural highlights must include the magnificent Kwun Opera, a feast for sight and sound. The Kwun Opera

was to go on to rave reviews as an individual part of the Los Angeles Festival the next weekend, with many of the same musicians and performers who graced the much more modest Alpine Center stage. The East-Wind Martial arts group presented the immensely popular, highly exciting and disciplined show, for which they are well-known. Three groups of musicians and scholars played using traditional Chinese instruments. They exhibited a high quality of live performance, playing many of the well-known Chinese classical pieces as well as some "moon" tunes. Three groups of children's folk dancers also performed well (Castelar, Orange County, Methodist Church). They were an audience delight and provided many photo opportunities.

A highly publicized feature of the Festival was the colorful appearance of the strange Bread and Puppets theater and parade, which stepped off on Yale Street in mid-afternoon, just after Frank Chin's drama. This raucous, entertaining interlude was certainly a fine example of cross-cultural exchange offered by the Los Angeles Festival. It established that Chinatown is now very much a part of the diverse cultural network which is part of Southern California.

Perhaps the most unique event of the Festival was the night-time Moon Viewing event. The free Moon Viewing event featured the recreation of a traditional ceremony not publicly seen in Los Angeles Chinatown for 40, perhaps nearly 50 years. With narration, this tradition was demonstrated to the audience of over 700 in the Castelar schoolyard by Miss Chinatown 1990 Christina Gong and her Court while the (nearly) full moon beamed down from overhead. An

actual astronomical telescope was situated nearby, courtesy of Griffith Observatory, for free looks at the moon.

Earlier, Ms. Gong and her young friends had presented a ceremonial dress display at the fine Moon Festival Banquet at Miriwa Restaurant. Then the dinner goers conducted a casual but traditional lantern parade along Hill Street to the playground.

Foodwise, the hottest seller was mooncakes. Undoubtedly, these became a big attraction after the two curiously popular "Ken and Lel" outdoor shows, which demonstrated the making of the delicacies. "Ken" is Kenneth Chan, President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and "Lel" is Leland Chan, of Phoenix Bakery, purveyors of mooncakes, which were specially ordered by the Festival ahead of season.

Chinatown Moon Festival 1990 "put Los Angeles Chinatown on the map for a day." Mayor Tom Bradley declared September 2 to be "Chinese Moon Festival Day." Highly publicized, the result of a three month very effective and efficient Festival public relations committee, the Moon Festival accessed most news printed media, Chinese and English, in Southern California. Especially noteworthy were featured articles in Los Angeles Times by Grace Siao and by Barbara Hansen, the food editor. Also unique were followup news articles after the event, which do not often occur. There were street banners, pink in color, mailers, and flyers galore. Linkage with the Los Angeles Festival enabled Moon Festival to ride the curl of the publicity wave, controversial or positive, of the Los Angeles Festival itself.

As a result, Chinese Moon Festival 1990 drew a diversified audience which include a good percentage of non-Chinese visitors into Chinatown. In

addition, Chinese visitors and residents, including seniors and children, were seen attending the traditional performance events and the booths. A noontime start attracted many churchgoers. As a non-commercial festival, artisans were able to teach and attract participation by children. Especially popular were the Dough Doll makers, the ceramicist, and the shadow puppeteers.

In the end, Chinatown Moon Festival achieved to a great degree what planners and the Cultural Affairs Department had hoped. It was an event which was part entertainment, part education, and all outreach to all visitor segments. Dr. Willie Collins of the Cultural Affairs Department's Folk Arts Division gave the Festival high marks all round for achieving most of its goals.

There remain one-of-a-kind momentos of the Chinese Moon Festival 1990 for sale. (Available at the next Society meeting: Tee shirts \$10, booklets \$2.) One can still be a part of the Harvest Moon season since the true Autumn moon comes on October 3.

The Chinese Historical Society has been proud to be a joint sponsor for Chinese Moon Festival 1990 with its partners, the Chinese Cultural and Community Center of Greater Los Angeles and the Cultural Affairs Department. This was a major effort for the summer. The Society provided Festival planners, managers, financial management, money, public relations, festival expertise, and, above all, volunteers. A special tribute must be made to Sue Yee, who co-chaired the Festival Committee for the Society, and to co-chair Barbara Jean Lee, who represented the Cultural and Community Center. Thanks to all who participated.

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP

JONATHAN LEW, son of Chong and Isobel Lew, has completed a 10-week White House internship in the Office of National Service working on President Bush's "Daily Points of Light" volunteerism recognition program. He also completed a course in Leadership in Non-Profit Organizations at the Washington Center. His weekends were spent participating in various Asian American activities, attending the Conference of Asian Pacific American Leadership sponsored by past Washington, DC interns of Asian descent, and the national convention of the Organizations of Chinese Americans.

When he returns to Claremont McKenna College this fall, Jonathan will continue his involvement in Asian American affairs by starting an Asian Pacific newsletter, pushing for the establishment of an Asian American Resource Center, and heading the Asian Students Association for the five Claremont Colleges.

Jonathan is definitely a student who is proud of his Asian heritage, thanks in part to the CHSSC field trips and various cultural/historical activities, which Jonathan attended at a young age.

The Taoist Temple Preservation Society presents the 11th ANNUAL MOON FESTIVAL on Saturday, October 6, from 2-6 p.m. at China Alley in Hanford, California. No admission fee - free entertainment! Tours of Taoist Temple, authentic Chinese food, lion dancers, Tai Chi and Chinese folk dancing. Performances at 2 and 5 p.m.

The Archives Committee has received a donation from Mr. Russell Culley, Jr. of Rancho Palos Verdes. The donation

consists of a number of black and white photographs and three embroidered robes.

Mr. Culley's late father, Russell Culley, Sr., was a still photographer for MGM during the filming of "The Good Earth" and took photographs in China in 1934 from which MGM set designers could build sets for the movie.

His son contacted fellow Palos Verdes resident and past President Angi Ma Wong to make the donation.

Thank you, Mr. Culley, for contributing to our local Chinese American history.

MONTHLY WALKING TOURS BEGIN

CHSSC is providing monthly walking tours of Chinatown on every second Saturday. These tours are jointly supported with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and meet at 10 a.m. at Mandarin Plaza.

Please tell all your friends and inform them that reservations are a must. Call (213) 617-0396.

Our past President Ella Quan is coordinating the tour effort with the assistance of Gene Moy and Outreach Committee chairs, Cy Wong and Angi Ma Wong.

Sunset Magazine sent representatives to take the tour at the kickoff VIP tour in July. The magazine will feature the tours in their next issue. Watch for it!

"SAFARI TO AFRICA"

Leland Lee, a renown architectural photographer, will narrate and show slides on his recent trip to

Africa. Interested? Call Ella Leong (213) 838-6257 or Dolores Wong (213) 662-6081. Checks can be made out to Dolores Wong, 2416 Silverlake Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90039.

Date: Sunday, October 14

Time: 5:00 p.m. Slide show
6:00 p.m. Dinner

Place: Shangri-La Restaurant
VIP Room
313 Boylston Street
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 250-2288

Free parking on the rooftop.

Cost: \$16 per person

GUESTS WELCOME!

HAPPY 209TH BIRTHDAY, LOS ANGELES!

Some CHSSC members were celebrating the 209th birthday of the City of Los Angeles on September 3. A brunch and ceremony was held in the Old Plaza at El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historic Park. CHSSC had a table to display/sell/distribute their publications and free literature. A total of \$22 was collected for membership, Golden Years and Chinatown Walking Tour Maps. In attendance were Suellen Cheng, Jean Bruce Poole, Marianna Cushnie, Miriam Matthews, Kipham Kan, Richard Smith, Sue Yee, Beverly and Carlos Picazo, Mark Mehlert, Gene and Nana Cooper, Tom Eng, Michael Engh, Lillian Fong, and the Moys -- Gene, Susan, and Bernie.

"CHINESE OF LOS ANGELES"

There was an historic exhibit of photos and documents, "Chinese in Los Angeles" in honor of the 209th birthday of the City of Los Angeles.

A reception and viewing of the exhibit was held on September 4 in the City Hall Rotunda. CHSSC members enjoying the exhibit of Chinese history were Munson Kwok, Suellen Cheng, Mary and Stanley Mu, Stanton Mu, Lilly Lee, Cindy Fong, Charles Wong, Christie and Lou Bourdet, Beverly Hom, Kipham Kan, Gene Cooper, Kenneth Chan, Irvin Lai, Edith and Bob Jung, Katie Kwok, Tom McDannold, and Lillian Fong.

IN MEMORIAM

Daniel K. E. Ching passed away on July 26, 1990 after a three year battle with hemochromatosis complications. He was a native of Honolulu, Hawaii. A memorial service was held August 11 at Forest Lawn Glendale, interment in Oahu Cemetery, Honolulu, Hawaii. Dan is survived by a brother, William Ching, of Sacramento, California. For those of you who remember him, he was a former member of CHSSC until poor health prevented him from attending our meetings. Some of the slides on China City that were shown at the 1988 Fall Dinner program came from Dan's postcard collection.

Maye S. Wong, mother of Barbara Jean Lee, passed away on August 31. Memorial services were held on September 8 at True Light Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles and interment at Forest Lawn Hollywood Hills.

Society sends its condolences to the Ching and Wong families on the passing of their loved ones.

EDITOR'S NOTE

A very special word of thanks to Kipham Kan, who very diligently published and mailed last month's News 'n Notes single-handedly. Thank you, Kipham, for your assistance, time, and hard work in seeing that the newsletter was available to our members.

Thank you for your support of News 'n Notes -- staff contributors in this issue: Munson Kwok, Suellen Cheng, Angi Ma Wong, Ella Leong, Isobel Lew, Taoist Temple Preservation Society (Hanford, CA), and Lillian Fong.

VOLUNTEERS are urgently needed to work on the Conference of 1991. Interested, please call Stanley Mu (818) 346-2196.

ITEMS FOR NEWS 'N NOTES are always welcome! Please submit in writing no later than the 15th of each month to News 'n Notes Editor, 15744-25 Tetley Street, Hacienda Heights, CA 91745.

Bev M. Hom
News 'n Notes Editor

Dolores and Delbert Wong:

Society friends and members wish Judge Delbert Wong a speedy recuperation! We're thinking of you both!
