



# News 'n Notes

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

WWW.CHSSC.ORG • (323) 222-0856

MARCH 2001

## Yong Chen Speaks about Chinese Experience in America

The book Chinese San Francisco 1850-1943 A Trans-Pacific Community introduces new perspectives from which to view the Chinese experience in America and opens up new possibilities for future exploration. The author, Dr. Yong Chen, during his lecture at the Society's March meeting opened up new possibilities for our working together. One could not but be impressed by Dr. Chen's credentials having studied history at Beijing University and Cornell University. But the audience was most impressed by Dr. Chen's offer to make himself accessible to the community, and as Associate Professor at the University of California at Irvine, his willingness to help gain access to resources in the University. Creating a genealogical tour of China similar to the roots program of the Chinese Historical Society of America, jointly working towards an indexing of the material at the National Archives Regional Center at Laguna Niguel, and exploring the full impact of the Chinese restaurant were a few ideas mentioned which are consistent with our goals and interest.

Dr. Chen said that the University's large Asian American student population, the largest in the UC system, could provide a fertile ground for the growth of Asian American Studies. UC Irvine today has the strongest faculty in Chinese American History in Southern California. It is our hope that with Yong Chen and the Chinese Historical Society we could make it one of the premiere programs in the nation.

## Rhythm of Flying

It was a peaceful Sunday afternoon with an occasional buzzing across the sky as I drove down near the Museum of Flying. I personally never gave much thought about wanting to fly a plane or to be a pilot when my parents bought me a brand new car. I was 16 and I didn't even know how to drive. It wasn't the case for Katherine Cheung.

At the age of 97, she was honored and inducted into the Women In Aviation International Pioneer Hall of Fame on March 4th, 2001. In her honor, Josephine Chien, who wrote a one act and played Katherine Cheung, performed "Into the Blue" in telling the story of the aviatrix. It was an emotional performance followed by the Hall of Fame Award presented to Cheung by Chinese Consul General, Mr. Lan Lijun with an introduction made by Dr Peggy Baty Chabrian who is the founder and president of Women In Aviation International.

At the age of 17, Katherine Cheung, was the first Chinese American female pilot after taking her 12 1/2 hours flying lessons in 1932.

*story continued on page 5*

## April Program

Wednesday, April 4th, 2001

7:00 PM

(early start time for this special program  
so please come on time)

Castelar Elementary school

multipurpose room

840 Yale St.

Los Angeles, Chinatown

(Park on playground. Enter on College St.  
between Hill and Yale Streets)

## James Hong

An Evening with the Man of a Thousand Faces

"Well, friends, I'm here. I'm going to give you an ear full about how I traveled from Minnesota, where I was born, to big L.A. and Hollywood, how I knocked on every door in show business and finally ended up with 478 movies and tv shows to my credit. Maybe you can pick up a few pointers and give acting a try. It's never too late. If not, I think you'll be entertained by my 'humor', and maybe I'll even do my old break dance for you. If any female in the audience wants to do the swing dance, we'll give it the old college try. By the way, I'm an old alumnus of USC, so welcome to all of you from that honorable university. Of course UCLA alumni are welcome too. Oh, we'll have a ball! There are free refreshments too, but no cigar smoking, please ... so I'm getting too Cheun Hey' (long winded) already, talk to you later."

## Programs for 2001

May, June - TBA

## Contents • March 2001

• Chinese San Francisco • China's Amelia Earhart • An Evening with James Hong • And More •





**Special Thanks for March refreshments to:**

Natalina Chew  
Joann Duray  
Winnie Lee  
Dorothy Lew  
Margie Lew  
Winnie Lew  
Ruth Lung  
Tim & Annie Siu  
Noel Toy Wong  
Johnny Yee

We apologize if we have inadvertently left anyone off this list.  
Your support is invaluable and much appreciated.

**CHSSC Annual Spring Dinner**

Come help us celebrate "BURNING THE MORTGAGE!" on Friday, May 11th, 2001 at Empress Pavilion Restaurant. Additional flyer information will be send out.

**Docents Needed**

Retirees, Semi-retirees, anyone with time 'weekdays' WE NEED YOUR HELP. CHSSC has been giving educational tours to students ages 6 through adulthood. The "tour" season has already started and docents are needed. The hours are from 10 a.m. to noon. If you are interested, please contact the office at (323) 222-0856 or call Ella Quan at (323) 255-6487

**25th Anniversary T-Shirts**

A limited number of 25th Anniversary commemorative T-shirts are still available at \$20 each or two or more at \$18 each, sizes come in medium, large, and extra large for sale at the Heritage and Visitors Center. Or you can order them by using the membership subscription.

**Feng Shui Dos & Taboos**  
by Angi Ma Wong

Past president Angi Ma Wong's newest book, Feng Shui Dos & Taboos, has become a best seller for both publishers Pacific Heritage (original) and Workman (gift). She will release Elsa Ditmar's California Coastal Adventures, A Guide to Beaches, Boat Trips, Islands & Maritime Museums under PH Books in March, a 104 page on sea-related travel opportunities.

Angi continues to give talks to community groups and gives the donation to CHSSC. Thank you, Angi, for your continued and generous support.

**The Lonely Queue**  
by Icy Smith

The Forgotten History of The Courageous Chinese Americans in Los Angeles by Icy Smith, Foreword by the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. This unprecedented pictorial history book presents the vibrant and diverse contribution of the 150 years of Chinese Americans in Los Angeles. The author worked with researchers and historians to document this remarkable history and to trace more than 200 vintage photographs, drawings and paintings depicting the struggle of making America their home. The book is now available at the Heritage House.

2000-2001

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*Appreciation of our  
Chinese American Heritage*

**CHSSC**

**P.O. Box 862647**

**Los Angeles, CA 90086-2647**

**Phone / Fax  
(323) 222-0856**

**www.chssc.org**

*A non-profit organization*





CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

## ANNUAL SPRING DINNER

*Come help us celebrate*

### **BURNING THE MORTGAGE!!!**

Thanks to so many of you, we were able to pay off the mortgage on the Bernard Street property,  
so we're officially celebrating at the Spring Dinner



Friday, May 11, 2001  
Empress Pavilion Restaurant  
988 North Hill Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles Chinatown  
6:00 p.m. Registration, No-Host Bar  
7:00 p.m. Dinner & Program



Join us as we honor Major Building Fund Donors  
Nine-course Gourmet Chinese Banquet  
Live Entertainment

**Proceeds from this dinner will benefit our Paid Staff (Personnel Fund)**

*The CHSSC is a non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization  
All but \$20 per dinner is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law*



Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ Tables of 10 people for me at the following level:

☐ Diamond (\$2,500)    ☐ Gold (\$2,000)    ☐ Silver (\$1,000)    ☐ Bronze (\$750)    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seats for me at the following level:

☐ \$250    ☐ \$200    ☐ \$100    ☐ \$75    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I am unable to attend but would like to make a donation to the Personnel fund: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY/ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks for total amount payable to:

CHSSC, PO Box 862647, Los Angeles CA 90086-2647  
Please note "PF" on checks







### Heritage West Books

Be sure to look over our titles and bookmark the website: [www.heritagewestbooks.com](http://www.heritagewestbooks.com). Our new mailing address is: P. O. Box 357, Keene, CA 93531. For more information please call (661) 823-1941, fax (661) 823-1888, or e-mail: [heritagewestbooks@heritagewestbooks.com](mailto:heritagewestbooks@heritagewestbooks.com)

### Family Discovery Gallery

The new Discovery Gallery re-creates the lives of the See family (On Gold Mountain fame) a local Chinese American family. Step back in time to July 4, 1937. When the See family celebrated their son Richard's seventh birthday, come and explore history in a fun fill family environment. Explore a Chinatown street scene. Help run the family's Asian import store. Work as a cook in the Dragon's Den - the family restaurant. Visit the family home to explore more about their lives. Begin your own family research at our special genealogy station. Currently open at the AUTRY MUSEUM OF WESTERN HERITAGE at GRIFFITH PARK across from the L.A. Zoo.

### Ancestors in the Americas

PBS, March 23 and 30, 9:00-10:00 PM ET

#### Check Local Listings

This is two-part series examines the history of early Asian immigrants to the Americas. Combining dramatic reenactments and composite voices with typical historical resources such as primary sources and scholar interviews, the program explores the experience of Asian immigrants and Americans from the 1700s to the 1900s.

On March 23, "Coolies, Sailors, Settlers: Voyages to the New World" looks at why and how people from Asia came to North and South America and connects developments in Europe and the Americas to Asian immigration.

Airing March 30, "Chinese in the Frontier West: An American Story" chronicles the arrival and experience of Chinese Immigrants in California, from the 1850s Gold Rush through the Exclusion Acts of 1882 and anti-Chinese riots in the latter part of century.

A companion website offering teaching guides, related historical documents, a timeline, additional resources and a bibliography, along with resources for researching family history, can be found at [www.cetel.org](http://www.cetel.org).

### CH'ING MING

Ch'ing Ming is a day for families to come together to hold a special remembrance of relatives who have passed away. On Saturday, April 7th, the Society will sponsor Ch'ing Ming Festival at the historic Chinese shrine in Evergreen Cemetery, 204 N. Evergreen Ave., Boyle Heights. Please call us at (323) 222-0856 or see the Ch'ing Ming item on the Society's website ([www.chssc.org](http://www.chssc.org)) for directions to Evergreen Cemetery.

In a special ceremony at noon, we will honor major donors to the Shrine Preservation Project and Society members Dr. Eugene Cooper and Dr. Paul Chace will share insights on the origins and rites of Ch'ing Ming, and Ch'ing Ming's role in America. Dim sum will be served. The event is free and open to the public.

Looking back a few years, we see that we almost lost the Shrine, the oldest surviving Chinese-built structures in Los Angeles. If so, we would have lost an important connection to the Chinese pioneers who themselves celebrated Ch'ing Ming at the Shrine.

So please join us Saturday, April 7th in not only celebrating our success in preserving the Shrine for future generations, but also keeping alive the memory of the courageous pioneers who built the Shrine, with the dignity they deserve. We are sure that all who attend will take home some special memories.

#### CELEBRATE CH'ING MING WITH US

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 7, 2001

Chinese Memorial Shrine in Evergreen Cemetery

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layout design by  
[www.spoonfuldesign.com](http://www.spoonfuldesign.com)

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**contact**

**Yvonne Chia**

**[ychia76@hotmail.com](mailto:ychia76@hotmail.com)**

**(310) 393-9185**

**333 22nd Street**

**Santa Monica, CA 90402**





Pacific Asia Museum presents Authors on Asia

April 1, 2:00 PM

Romulus Hillsborough discusses and signs,  
"Samurai Sketches:  
From the Bloody Final Years of the Shogun"  
In thirty vivid historical sketches, the  
author delivers gripping accounts of  
real events and people of the mid-19th  
century, during the bloody death throes of  
the Tokugawa Shogunate and the eve of the  
Meiji Restoration.

April 12, 7:30 PM

Richard Bernstein discusses and signs  
"Ultimate Journey: Retracing the Path of  
an Ancient Buddhist Monk Who Crossed Asia  
in Search of Enlightenment" In 629, the  
Chinese Buddhist monk, Hsuan Tsang left the  
Tank Dynasty capital Chang-AN (present day  
Xian ) and set off to India to visit important  
Buddhist shrines. Bernstein, a former New  
York Times correspondent in China, followed  
Hsuan Tsang's arduous trail in this out-  
standing narrative into the heart of central  
Asia.

April 22, 2:00 PM

Adeline Yen Han discusses and signs  
"Watching the Tree: A Chinese Daughter  
Reflects on Happiness, Tradition and  
Spiritual Wisdom"  
Ms. Mah's first book, "Falling Leaves: The  
True Story of an Unwanted Chinese  
Daughter" was an internationally best  
selling autobiography. In her new book,  
the author considers the many influences on  
her life as a child of the East and as a stu-  
dent and adult in the West. She explores  
centuries-old Chinese traditions and their  
legacy in modern-day China and the West.

*Authors on Asia programs are free, but reserva-  
tions are requested. For information and reserva-  
tions, please call (626) 449-2742 ext. 20  
at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena*

April 7th

Ch'ing Ming Festival  
at Evergreen Cemetery  
204 N. Evergreen Ave., 1st Street  
Boyle Heights, Los Angeles  
11AM - 1PM

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

April 21, 1:30-3:30PM

The Impressionist Rebellion

April 28, 1:30-3:30PM

Women and Impressionism: Models, Subjects,  
and Creators

*please check [www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org) for additional infor-  
mation. at 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles*

San Diego

May 17 - 20

26th Annual California Preservation  
Conference  
Co-hosted by California Preservation  
Foundation (CPF) and Save Our Heritage  
Organization (SOHO)  
(510) 763-0972

March 21 - April 15

East West Players presents:  
A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the  
Forum  
At 120 Judge John Aiso Street

April 6 - May 12

Carlee Fernandez / friends  
at Ah (Acuna-Hansen) Gallery  
427 Bernard Street, Los Angeles  
(323) 441-1624  
[econart@aol.com](mailto:econart@aol.com)  
Reception: Friday, April 6th, 6-10PM





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Thru May 27

**Superflat, 19 of Japan's most provocative artists whose work bridges pop culture and fine art in an exhibition seen for the first time outside Japan**

**at The MOCA Gallery at the Pacific Design Center**

**(213) 626 6222 or [www.moca.org](http://www.moca.org)**

## Flying

*story continued from cover*

She became a member of the famous 99 Club, a club established by a group of female pilots where Amelia Earhart was elected president.

In 1935, she received her international airline license and flew as a commercial pilot. In addition, she graduated from the California Conservatory of Music where she pursued her study as a pianist. Cheung never set any speed nor endurance records, but she continually entered air races and participated in airshows performing aerobatics around the country. In 1936, she participated in the Chatteron Air Races which was considered an honor flying along side with the top female pilots of its time.

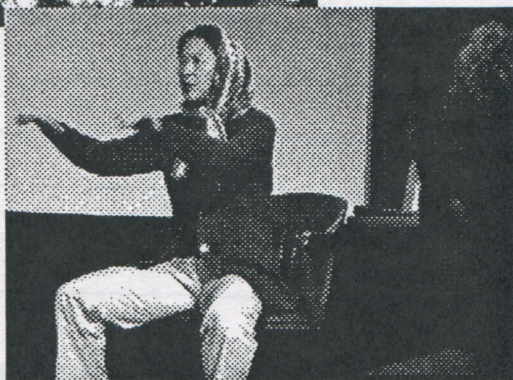
During the height of WWII, Cheung went back to her native country, China, to participate in the war effort teaching Chinese volunteers how to fly. At age 38, Cheung gave up flying after witnessing her new plane being crashed by an inexperienced pilot. She also promised her dying father that she would give up flying. Her only regret was never to have given the chance to have her own flying school.

Cheung is currently listed as the first Asian aviatrix in the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. She is also known as "China's Amelia Earheart" in the Beijing Air Force Aviation Museum.



From L-R:  
Chinese Consul  
General, Mr. Lan  
Lijun, Katherine  
Cheung, and Dr.  
Peggy Baty  
Chabrian founder of  
Women In Aviation  
International.

Josephine Chien,  
writer and producer,  
performed an emo-  
tional one act "Into  
the Blue" the story of  
Katherine Cheung.



## Philosophy of Gamble

It is a simple game of cards or something more than a book of Plato and metaphors of life?

He is a vagabond. I met him at an art opening at the Old Chinatown Barbershop. He is a man of many ideals rambling on about life simple philosophy to bystander who listen to his analysis of Plato's Cave Allegory. I didn't talk to him much, but his Buddha like feature defines him to be a man of many thoughts.

It was about two months later that I actually sat down and spoke to him at his Vagabond Trade School located behind the Old Chinatown Barbershop on 935 Sun Mun Way. He established the Vagabond School in 1999 and the school was criticized and the battle went on for 14 months with the city. The story ran on November 1999 in local Chinese newspapers.

In establishing this school he wanted to teach ordinary people card dealing and help them make a decent living in a gaming environment, and on top of that he wanted to give people opportunities to succeed. Is it a moral issue? Or a simple fact that making a decent living where everyone is entitled to are choices already being made by current living conditions. It is not what is right and what is wrong or what is legal and what is illegal, because Jimmy Wong has been through all life consequences. Nothing seems black and white anymore. The school closed on February right after Chinese New Year.

*(On a side note: The very same month when this interview took place in January Los Angeles Times Magazine ran an article "Gambling on Gaming" about a Palm Springs school called American Gaming Academy.)*

Jimmy Wong was born in China and came to the States in 1946 when he was 11 years old. He was pursuing law school, but ended up dropping out due to the lack of funding for tuition. He later received his Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism from UCLA.

"Getting a job in the field of journalism was very tough back in those days," he commented, "There wasn't a chance for me other than opening my own business."

Jimmy frantically look through his office cabinet and dug out an faded dingy yellow Los Angeles Times dated July 28th, 1968 and on the page is a photograph of Vice President Humphrey breaking open a fortune cookie at his Chinese fast food restaurant located in El Mercado.

It was the first Chinese fast food in Los Angeles back in the 1960s. He was a man of many talents: a chef, a gaming instructor and also was a proud owner of a chain of social clubs and restaurants around Los Angeles County, but eventually lost them all. I asked him how come he lost all his restaurants. He didn't make any comments on it and declined to say anything more about the sad story of his life.

Later on he was given the opportunity to write, he was playing black jacks at a local casino in Los Angeles when the owner of Poker Player Magazine asked him to write for him. His first column printed on November 3rd, 1986. He handed me a stack of his writing as I read the introduction to his column.

*... I weigh in at 330 pounds and it is all paid for in cash. ... I just want a place in the sun ... When I first played pai gow, it was to raise funds for charities ...*

His columns were about a twist of honesty in life and how in reality we are all part of the game and it is always a gamble taking all the risk and sometimes even losing. And at the end I quoted from Jimmy Wong, "When life is good everyone laughs with you, and when it is bad you will cry alone."



# Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

## Membership Application



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please include me on the membership roster that will

be available to members only

I am interested in helping with:

☐ Programs

☐ Publications

☐ Research

☐ Membership/Publicity

☐ Fundraising

☐ Volunteering

☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Membership:

☐ New

☐ Renewal

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instead of regular mail you will  
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Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

P.O. Box 862647

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