

NEWS'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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Chinatown Heritage & Visitors Center: 323-222-1918

JANUARY 2005

VENTURA COUNTY CHINESE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Presents:

"COURAGE AND CONTRIBUTION: THE CHINESE IN VENTURA COUNTY"



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2005, 7:00 P.M.
CASTELAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Multipurpose Room

840 YALE STREET LOS ANGELES, CHINATOWN

(PARK ON PLAYGROUND, ENTER ON COLLEGE STREET BETWEEN HILL AND YALE STREETS)

The Ventura County Chinese American Historical Society (VCCAHS) will screen *Courage and Contribution: The Chinese in Ventura County* (2004) at CHSSC's February 2nd General Meeting. The film traces the area's Chinese settlers from the 1860s to the present day: Ventura's Chinese Fire Company; Oxnard's sugar beet factory; Chinese women; and the anti-Chinese movement. It also focuses on China Alley in Ventura and Oxnard as well as William Soo Hoo, the Oxnard native who was

elected mayor of that city in the 1960s. Eighteen people were interviewed for the hour-long film which spans a range of ethnicities, professions and experiences.

The history of Ventura County's Chinese residents is rarely addressed in historical studies of the region. VCCAHS launched this ambitious film project to help fill that void. The video documentary speaks of new beginnings, challenges and opportunities, and illuminates the plight of an immigrant community who persevered in the face of adversity.

A panel discussion follows the film.

Panelists will include Angela Soo Hoo, wife of former Oxnard mayor William Soo Hoo; Marie Louie, a member of the Lee family which is the earliest documented Chinese family in Ventura; Dr. George Yu, Chair of the Ventura County Chinese American Historical Society; the film's director, George Sandoval; and VCCAHS's historian, Linda Bentz.

Courage and Contribution: The Chinese in Ventura County presents Historian Linda Bentz's research on Chinese American pioneer families in Ventura and Oxnard. Ms. Bentz specializes in Chinese American history and Channel Islands history and is a longtime member of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. Director George Sandoval, President of WestEnd Productions, is also a writer and producer with an emphasis on instructional and promotional videos and documentaries.

The Ventura County Chinese American Historical Society was formed in December 2000 and is a division of the Ventura County Chinese American Association, created in 1970. The Historical Society's mission is to document and honor early Chinese settlers in Ventura County. In addition to Courage and Contribution: The Chinese in Ventura County, VCCAHS's major accomplishments includes sponsorship of a mural in Ventura that depicts nineteenth century Chinese life in the coastal city.

VCCAHS's website address is www.vccahs.org.



JANUARY 2005

AROUND CHSSC

PORTRAITS OF PRIDE AT LOS ANGELES CITY HALL

December 17, 2004

By Wing Mar, M.D.



(Ruby Kwong Lee, Dr. Annie Siu, CHSSC President Kenneth L. Chan, Councilperson Ed Reyes & James Bok Wong—Los Angeles City Hall)

On Friday morning, December 17th, First District Councilman Ed Reyes lavishly praised the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California before the City Council for its Portraits of Pride ("PoP") project. This was also an opportunity for CHSSC to visit the City Hall Bridge Gallery, where a PoP photo exhibit had been on display for about three weeks. Present were CHSSC President Ken Chan, Vice-President & PoP profilee Bill Chew, Natalina Chew, Eugene Moy, Randy Bloch, and PoP profilees Ruby Lee, Dr. Annie Siu and James Bok Wong.

Inside the marbled City Council chamber, a local Highway Patrol official who had been elevated to State Highway Patrol Commissioner was honored with a round of speeches. CHSSC's good friend, Councilman Reyes then presented a certificate recognizing the accomplishments of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, its Portraits of Pride project, and the new PoP book. After Councilman Reyes spoke, CHSSC President Kenneth L. Chan faced the legislative body and addressed them on the importance of the PoP project. He formally presented the elegant PoP volume to Councilman Reyes who was obviously appreciative. Council Aide Susan Wong, our chaperon, escorted us from the Council Chamber to the adjoining press room to wait to be photographed with Councilman Reyes.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Kenneth L. Chan, President
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Jeannie Liu
Dr. Wing Mar
Jack Ong
Frank Yee
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Donna Young

News 'n Notes Editor, Randy Bloch

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, multi-cultural society of the United States.

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(Portraits of Pride at City Hall, from page 2)

After the photo opportunity, we proceeded to City Hall Bridge Gallery, an enclosed pedestrian walkway wisely utilized as an exhibit space. After perusing the 25 PoP panels on the walls of the long corridor, we took several photographs and left a supply of informative flyers for passersby.

Our four PoP profilees were majestic with their official medallions before hundreds of interested spectators in the City Council Chamber. What we achieved at City Hall on December 17th was nothing short of a CHSSC public relations coup!

After alighting in Chinatown from our *Dash* bus around noon, Randy Bloch and I repaired to a local dim sum eatery for Randy's first exposure to *zongzi* (Chinese tamale). Perhaps next time it may be sushi at the Omni Hotel. Care to join us?

JANUARY REPORT

Visual Communications

By Maureen Bloch



(L.P. Leung and CHSSC Vice-President William Chew)

Just before he introduced the evening's program at our January Meeting, CHSSC Vice-President William Chew beckoned Mr. L.P. Leung to the podium. He then presented him with a certificate from Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn's office, recognizing Mr. Leung's community service and record of support of CHSSC's activities and initiatives. Mr. Leung was recently named director of the second CHSSC *Portraits of Pride* book project.

The centerpiece of the meeting was a presentation on Visual Communications ("VC") by Executive Director Leslie Ito, and Archivist Jeff Liu. With a variety of projects and programs, Visual Communications is the premiere Asian Pacific media center in the United States and is located in the David Henry Hwang Theater building in Little Tokyo.

Youthful and dynamic, Leslie Ito served on the Americans for the Arts' Board of Directors and worked as a staff member at the Smithsonian Institution. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at Mount Holyoke College and her Master's Degree at UCLA. Ito described Visual Communication's function as "an incubator for talented artists." She said VC supports independent artists through giving them access to equipment and training and a venue to show their work. Next May, VC Filmfest will showcase media artists from around the world at the Directors Guild in Hollywood and two Little Tokyo venues. VC also helps seniors bridge the digital divide by conducting a digital storytelling class and trains at-risk youth, such as continuation school students from Central High School in Los Angeles. Ms. Ito gave a detailed account of VC's current documentary, Grass Roots Rising which is a protest of the low wages of Asian American workers in the garment industry. Since its inception in 1970, over one hundred productions attest to VC's development and support of Asian American cinema.

Jeff Liu, VC's archivist, spoke next. Liu is responsible for cataloging and exhibiting three hundred thousand images of Asian American life that were collected over 35 years. VC's archives also house 150 films and videos and over 1,000 hours of oral histories. Mr. Liu has used the archives for exhibits at the Smithsonian Institution, libraries, and various venues in different ethnic communities throughout America.

VC's archives were founded in 1970 by educators, artists and community activists. They have been tapped for collections, books, exhibits and films. Liu stated VC's policy that its archives are "for access." The archives contain exceptionally rare photo albums of the Asian American experience of the 1800s. Liu reported he recently received a grant to catalogue the 300,000 images in the VC archives.

The evening included a showing of *Chinatown Two-Step*, a video about the Los Angeles Chinese Drum and Bugle Corps "Imperial Dragons" which existed for twenty-one years from 1954 to 1976. The film documents highly emotional behind the scenes exchanges of the performers—their determination, cohesiveness and heartbreak when they lost a competition to an inferior corps. The film's

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(Visual Communications, from page 3)

interviews illustrate the need the corps filled in Asian American teenagers seeking identity, and how it addressed a vacuum that might have been filled by gangs and prison. Many parents were involved in the corps, raising money and attending events. Some were reunited at the CHSSC meeting with friends and neighbors from the corps they had not seen in thirty years. Many Society members recognized Ella Quan and son Richard in the film at a corps meeting in Ella's classroom.

Ms. Ito distributed a Visual Communications event guide to all those attending the CHSSC January meeting. One article describes the efforts of a filmmaker in October, 2004 to enlist Sumatran artists for her latest project. Sadly, Sumatra was one of the areas hardest hit by the earthquake and tsunami of December 26, 2004. The publication also discusses VC's fundraising initiative to upgrade its offices. Stay tuned for the next VC garage sale which will "raise money for everything," including "a new kitchen sink."

LANDSCAPING PROJECT—PHASE II

By Dr. Betty Gaw

Despite the recent heavy rains, Phase II of CHSSC's Landscape Project was successfully completed and looks beautiful. The overgrown grape vines, fig tree, and Ficus tree have been neatly pruned along the east perimeter fence of 411 Bernard Street. With the weeds and accumulated leaves cleared, this sections now looks terrific.

The sprinklers on both sides of the driveway that divides the cottages have been upgraded. Clivias donated by Susie Ling, Cannas, and new Hibiscus hybrids known as Hotbiscus, have transformed these areas into a welcoming garden. The Landscape Committee thanks Dr. Wing Mar, Susan Hum and William Chew for donating the Hotbiscus plants which bear five-inch, gorgeous, brilliant blooms. Twice monthly garden maintenance of the Phase I and II improvements will upkeep the garden.

We ask you to consider supporting this effort by donating your plants to CHSSC. Chinese Magnolia known as Champaca, Chinese Jasmine, Orange Cannas, Hotbiscus, and other plants to be used in the garden landscape, are appreciated. You may contact the CHSSC office or email me at bettycgaw@hotmail.com. Your generous donations of plants and financial contributions will bring the garden to life and greatly enhance our pride

of ownership. Lastly, we extend a warm welcome to Board member Susan Hum who is the newest member of the Landscape Committee, joining Jeannie Liu and me. Susan will be an asset in Phase III of the Landscape Project..

AT LONG LAST—LOCKE RESIDENTS OWN LAND

By Christina Fa, M.D.
Chinese American Council of Sacramento

December 11, 2004 marked a milestone in Asian Pacific American history. Locke's Chinese residents could finally—for the first time EVER—own their land. Residents were given the "right of first refusal" to buy the land under their own house or business. For 81-year-old Connie King—born and raised in the Delta—she had fulfilled the dream of a lifetime. For \$5,400, she now owns the land under the two-story home she's lived in since 1949. The delay was largely due to California's unconscionably racist Alien Land Law of 1913, which barred those ineligible for citizenship from owning land. It was directed at Asian Pacific Americans, who were threatening White farmers with their success in California's agricultural industry.

December 11, 2004 marked a day of justice for Asian Americans, but it was bittersweet justice. Most of Locke's former Chinese residents are long gone. They were denied the American dream of owning their own land in Locke.

Locke symbolizes not only Chinese America, but Asian Pacific America. How many know that the first Asians came to the U.S. in the 1600s (Filipino Americans, in Louisiana)? Even fewer know that Chinese Americans fought in the Civil War. As a National Historic Landmark, Locke serves as a living reminder of Asian presence throughout American history.

It was the State of California who denied Locke residents their right. On December 11, 2004, it was the government who, at least symbolically, returned that right to Locke residents of old. Sacramento County Supervisor and CACS Advisor Illa Collin deserve special recognition for keeping Locke on the front burner of the County's agenda since the 1970s. On December 11th, Collin spoke about righting a wrong. Through the help of the County, residents of Locke, and advocacy groups such as CACS, its Chinese residents can finally call Locke their own land.

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NEW CHSSC MEMBERSHIP RATES

The current CHSSC Board of Directors has made many important accomplishments, including promoting publication of our new book, *Portraits of Pride*, and coordinating our successful annual Fall dinner. With the support of our membership, we will continue providing excellent programs and service to the community.

The Society's operational costs have increased dramatically over the years while donations and memberships have not correspondingly increased. After reevaluating our membership structure and fees, the Board has decided to adjust CHSSC's membership rates to meet the needs of a 21st century, growing non-profit organization.

The following changes in membership structure and fees are effective March 1, 2005:

SILVER - \$45 ANNUAL:

- Free monthly newsletter: News N' Notes
- Free walking tours of Chinatown (by appointment only)
- Free admission to our Heritage and Visitors Center
- Discount on field trips to Chinese American historical sites
- Discount on our history periodical: Gum Saan Journal
- Discount on publications and products
- Discount on special events and shows

GOLD - \$100 ANNUAL (SAME AS 100 X 100 CLUB):

- All benefits of Silver Membership
- Free history periodical: Gum Saan Journal
- One (1) free CHSSC pin

DIAMOND - \$300 ANNUAL:

- All benefits of Gold Membership
- Two (2) free tickets to our annual Fall <u>or</u> Spring dinners featuring prominent speakers

STUDENT/SENIOR (60 OR OLDER) - \$20 ANNUAL:

All benefits of Silver Membership

We have discontinued several levels of membership due to lack of interest and financial support but will, of course, honor all current "Life" and "Life Patron" memberships. We encourage these members to continue to support CHSSC through donations and/or encouraging new memberships.

We hope you agree that CHSSC is beneficial to the community and to you as a member, through its many programs and services. Thank you for your continued support.

2005 BOK KAI FESTIVAL IN MARYSVILLE

By Lucky Owyang

This year's Bok Kai Parade begins at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 12th. Bomb Day events start at 11 a.m. on Sunday, March 13th with the lighting of the bombs at 4:00 p.m. on First Street in Marysville's Chinatown. On Bomb Day, the following authors will hold book signings and make presentations at the Yuba County Public Library, located at 303 2nd Street, Marysville:

JoAnn Levy whose *Daughter of Joy* is one of her four Gold Rush fictional history novels;

Naida West whose *Red River of Gold* deals with the Donner Party;

Debbie Leung-Yamada who wrote Striking it Rich: Tales from Gold Mountain;

Carolyn Wing-Greenlee who co-authored a book about her inventor father, Dr. Thomas Wing; and

Wally Hagaman: an authority on Chinese deities used on altars in Chinese Temples.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GUNG HAY FAT CHOY—HAPPY NEW YEAR! YEAR OF THE ROOSTER – 4703

CHSSC's President and Board of Directors extend their sincerest wishes to our members and friends for a most joyful and prosperous New Year.

CHINESE NEW YEAR PARADE - FLAG BEARERS NEEDED

For 28 years continuously, the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California has carried the Stars and Stripes in the vanguard of the Golden Dragon Chinese New Year Parade in L.A. Chinatown. Please march with us again on Saturday, February 12th, as we assemble at 1:00 p.m. at the Chinese American Museum at

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(Announcements, from page 5)

El Pueblo Monument. Uniform of the day is red shirt or blouse, and black pants. Thank you!

WELCOME, NEW CHSSC MEMBERS

On behalf of CHSSC President Kenneth L. Chan, Membership Secretary Philip Tong and the CHSSC Board, we extend our warmest welcome to our new members: Marie Masumoto; and Life Members, Dr. Lois Wong Chi and Donald C. Hugh.

DONATION TO CHSSC OFFICE

Thank you to Dr. Betty Gaw for her generous donation of red coffee cups to the Society's office.

NEW ADDITION

Congratulations and blessings to Linda Chong and Gilbert Hom on the birth of their baby boy, Theodore. Theo weighed in at 6 pounds 6 ounces and is described by Gilbert as a "perfect baby."

DONNA YOUNG DECLARED WINNER OF CHSSC BOARD MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Final results:

Donna Young:	12;
Kenneth L. Chan:	11;
Jack Ong:	11;
Philip Tong:	10;
Dr. Wing Mar	7;
Dr. Betty Gaw:	5;
Jeannie Liu:	4;
Howard Fong	2;
Eugene Moy:	1;
Frank Yee:	MARIAN 1.

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING SNACK DONATIONS

We sincerely appreciate the delicious snacks provided for our January meeting by Al & Margie Lew, Dorothy Lew, Winnie Lew, Ruth Lung, Joyce Mar, Eugene Moy and Johnny & Esther Yee.

CHINESE AMERICAN DEATH RITUALS: RESPECTING THE ANCESTORS

We proudly announce the participation of longtime CHSSC member and friend, Roberta Greenwood in a new book examining Chinese American funerary rituals and cemeteries, from the nineteenth century to the present day. The volume was co-edited by Sue Fawn Chung of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and Priscilla Wegars of the University of Idaho. Information is available at http://www.altamirapress.com/ISBN/0759107335.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Through February 13th, Sunday

"WOODEN WONDERS: TIBETAN FURNITURE IN SECULAR & RELIGIOUS LIFE"

Pacific Asia Museum 46 N. Los Robles Ave., Pasadena Information: (626) 449-2742 x20; www.pacificasiamuseum.org

Through February 27th, Sunday

"PROOF" BY EAST WEST PLAYERS

David Henry Hwang Theater 120 N. Judge John Aiso, Little Tokyo Information: (213) 625-7000; www.eastwestplayers.org

Through February 27th, Sunday, Tuesday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

"(INVISIBLE): ANGEL ISLAND" EXHIBIT BY CINDY SURIYANI

Through April 3rd, Sunday, Tuesday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

"JOHN KWOK: LINE AND COLOR" EXHIBIT OF WATERCOLORS

Chinese American Museum 425 N. Los Angeles St. El Pueblo State Park at Olvera Street, L.A. Information: (213) 626-5240; www.camla.org

Through May 31st, Tuesday
"GATEWAY TO GOLD MOUNTAIN: THE ANGEL ISLAND
IMMIGRATION EXPERIENCE" EXHIBIT

Calif. State Univ. Hayward, University Library 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward Information: (415) 561-2160; www.aiisf.org

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(Community Calendar, from page 6)

Through May

"CHILDREN OF HEAVEN" EXHIBIT BY CINDY SURIYANI

Central Plaza, L.A. Chinatown

943 No. Broadway

"EAST WEST TRADING POST" EXHIBIT BY ANNIE SHAW

Gold Line Station, L.A. Chinatown

901 N. Spring St.

"BRIDGING THE PRESENT" EXHIBIT BY SHAN CHAO

L.A. Public Library, L.A. Chinatown

639 N. Hill St.

Information: (213) 680-0243; www.chinatownla.com

February 1st, Tuesday - March 27th, Saturday

"MOSTLY MISSISSIPPI: CHINESE RESTAURANTS OF THE SOUTH" EXHIBIT BY INDIGO SOM

Chinese Historical Society of America 965 Clay St., San Francisco Chinatown Information: (415) 391-1188; www.chsa.org

February 5th, Saturday, Parade: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.,

Festival: 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY ANNUAL LUNAR NEW YEAR PARADE & FESTIVAL

Valley Blvd., Alhambra and San Gabriel

Information: (626) 284-1234; www.lunarnewyearparade.com

February 7th, Monday, 6:30 p.m.

CHINA SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA - DINNER & PROGRAM

"CHINESE IVORY CARVINGS" BY DICK RUNDALL

Golden Dragon Restaurant

960 N. Broadway, L.A. Chinatown

February 9th, Wednesday

CHINESE NEW YEAR DAY – YEAR OF THE ROOSTER 4703

February 9th, Wednesday, 7:15 p.m.

PORTRAITS OF PRIDE – AUTHOR & PROFILEE BOOK-SIGNING

Torrance-South Bay YMCA

2900 West Sepulveda Blvd., Torrance

Information: (310) 325-5885

February 12th, Saturday, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

106th ANNUAL GOLDEN DRAGON PARADE

L.A. Chinatown

Information: (213) 617-0396;

www.lagoldendragonparade.com

February 12th-13th, Saturday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

CHINESE NEW YEAR FESTIVAL

L.A. Chinatown

Information: (213) 617-0396; www.lagoldendragonparade.com

February 13th, Sunday, 8:00 a.m.

27th ANNUAL L.A. CHINATOWN FIRECRACKER 5K/10K RUN/WALK

Broadway near College St., L.A. Chinatown

Information: (323) 256-1363; www.firecracker10k.org

February 13th, Sunday, 11:00 a.m.

PASADENA LUNAR NEW YEAR PARADE & FESTIVAL

Colorado Blvd., Pasadena

Information: (310) 442-2712; www.kscitv.com

February 14th, Monday, 6:30 p.m.

BOOK PRESENTATION AND SIGNING OF "LEO POLITI: ARTIST OF THE ANGELS" BY AUTHOR, ANN STALCUP

Chinatown Branch Library

639 No. Hill St., L.A. Chinatown

Information: (213) 620-0925;

www.lapl.org/branches/63.html

February 15th, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

CHINESE AMERICAN MUSEUM LANTERN FESTIVAL BANQUET

Big China Restaurant

911 No. Broadway, L.A. Chinatown

Information: (323) 721-0763; www.camla.org

February 19th, Saturday, noon-6:00 p.m.

CHINESE AMERICAN MUSEUM LANTERN FESTIVAL

Chinese American Museum

425 N. Los Angeles St.

El Pueblo State Park at Olvera Street, L.A.

Information: (213) 626-5240; www.camla.org

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February 19th, Saturday, 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

CHINESE NEW YEAR FAMILY FESTIVAL

The Huntington Library, Art Collections & Botanical Gardens

1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino

Information: (626) 405-2100; www.huntington.org

February 19th-20th, Saturday-Sunday, 11:00 a.m.

MONTEREY PARK LUNAR NEW YEAR LANTERN FESTIVAL

Garvey Ave. at Garfield, Monterey Park

Information: (626) 307-1458; www.ci.monterey-park.ca.us

February 25th, Friday, 6:00 p.m.

CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEW YEAR BANQUET

Empress Pavilion Restaurant 988 N. Hill St., L.A. Chinatown

Information: (213) 617-0396; www.lachinesechamber.org

March 12th, Saturday, 11:00 a.m.

BOK KAI PARADE

March 13th, Sunday

BOMB DAY

First St., Marysville Chinatown

April 28th, Thursday, - May 5th, Thursday

VC FILM FEST - THE LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM FESTIVAL

Los Angeles

Information: (213) 680-4462; www.vconline.org

October 7th-9th, Friday-Sunday

"THE CHANGING FACE OF CHINESE AMERICA" CONFERENCE

San Francisco

Information: (415) 391-1188, ext. 108; www.chsa.org

(Compiled by Donna Young)



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

415 Bernard St. Los Angeles, CA 90012-1703

> LIFEMember: Paid to Dec.31,9999 Gilbert Hom 2304 Hagen Drive Alhambra, CA 91803