



NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

415 Bernard St., Los Angeles, CA 90012; Voice: 323-222-0856;

Fax: 323-221-4162; Email: chssc@earthlink.net; Web: www.chssc.org;

Chinatown Heritage & Visitors Center: 323-222-0856

APRIL 2007

April Program

A joint program with
the Friends of Chinatown Library

Monday, April 23, 2007 @ 6:30 p.m.

Los Angeles Chinatown Branch Library

639 N. Hill Street at Ord Street

Once Upon A Time on Dragon Mountain

A Presentation by Jeff Chan

For nearly fifty years, lions and dragons have been roaring on a hilltop cul-de-sac in Monterey Park. These fearsome looking but colorful creatures owe their power and energy to Jeff Chan, who brought a new athletic style that has inspired at least a couple of generations of street performers in the Southern California Chinese American community. Jeff grew up in Oakland, CA and was trained in classical martial arts forms. Arriving here in the 1950's and while working full time for the California Department of Transportation, Jeff created a lion dance group that displayed techniques he learned from a local restaurant waiter. Over the years, the artistry of his groups has been showcased in countless parades, dinners, weddings, building and business dedications, and in movies and television. On this evening, Jeff will provide a preview of a biographical volume documenting his lion dance experiences. Come see many images of his lions and dragons in action, and learn about the technology and lore behind these special creatures.

Eugene Moy, VP for Programs

AROUND CHSSC

Spring 2007 Gala

Preparations for the Spring 2007 gala is in full swing. It will be held at the renowned Empress Pavilion on Saturday, May 12, 2007 starting at 6:00 p.m.

For the first 100 years of Los Angeles Chinatown and vicinity, beyond the resources of family associations, there were no financial institutions that served the Chinese American community due to various political and legal barriers. However, beginning in the 1960's, hard-working and far-sighted business persons and their associates broke through the barriers and began organizing many of the financial institutions that are prominent today.

We are offering four tiers of table sponsorship (10 guests per table) at this very special gala: Diamond (\$5,000) and Jade (\$3,000), both of which entitle sponsors to a pre-dinner VIP reception with our honorees; Gold sponsorship (\$2,000); and Silver sponsorship (\$1,000). If you cannot join us but would like to support this event, any contribution would be greatly appreciated. All contributions of \$1,000 or more will distinguish you as an event sponsor. Individual seats are at \$100 each. Please act now to ensure your reservation as well as acknowledgement in the program. As we are a 501(c)(3) non-profit, donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Supervisor Michael Antonovich's office has purchased a table and will present commendations to financial institutions at the gala. Please join us for this very special event that will recognize the rich heritage and remarkable contributions of Chinese and Chinese Americans in Los Angeles.

Please use the enclosed reservation form to RSVP.

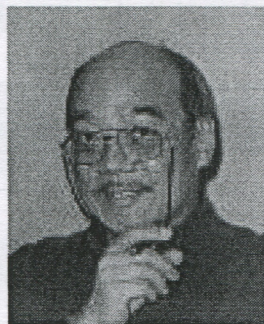
(continued on page 4)



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

APRIL 2007

Message from the President of CHSSC



J..W. Wong, President

The first and foremost date I want to remind you about is the date of our Spring Gala Dinner on Saturday, May 12, 2007. Your Board and especially the Dinner Committee has been working very hard to make this the premier event of Asian American Heritage Month. It will not only be a celebration of completing our first thirty successful years, it will take us across the threshold of a hopeful future.

This event will recognize the Chinese American pioneers in the banking and financial industries. It is often an overlooked accomplishment in that we take our daily banking needs for granted. It wasn't that long ago when the only funding my father could get for his laundry business came from the Wong Family Association. It was relatively inexpensive, friendly, and above all available. I hope you look forward to this event as much as I have in helping to put it together.

On another note, I would like to review the needs of the Society and especially that of the facilities on Bernard Street. We call this facility the Heritage Center and it not only houses our administrative offices and the "Portraits of Pride" project, but it also has one of the finest collections of early Chinese American artifacts in Southern California. The collection is currently stored in our archive building, the former garage, which is climate controlled but is in need of repair. The collection itself also needs further study and a full time curator. We hope to have these needs addressed in the near future.

Though these are immediate needs, there is also a list of things I call a "Wish List". Among the immediate contributions and donations I would like to see are **more docents** for our Chinatown tours, a **new photocopier** that doesn't jam, and an **air conditioner** to cool off our exhibit areas during those pesky hot summer days to name just a few items. We need you to step up to volunteer to serve as a Board member or Society officer. Yes, it is that time of year again when we must hold new elections. If you can't give a new HD Video Camera, then please give some of your **time, talent, and enthusiasm**. The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California needs your help.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

JW Wong, President
Kenneth L. Chan, Vice President
Eugene Moy, V.P. Programs
Ben Nakayama, Treasurer
Marlynn Ma, Financial Secretary
Dr. Albert Chang, Secretary
Pete Chinn, Membership Secretary

Members at Large

Susan Dickson
Dr. Betty Gaw
William Gow
Dr. Munson Kwok
Irvin Lai
Jeannie Liu
Dr. Donald Loo
George Yin

News 'n Notes Editor, Yvonne Chang

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.



Grave Markers Found at the Los Angeles County Crematorium



Grave markers with Chinese characters

On January 10, 2007, Peggy Beedle presented a talk on the grave markers found on the premise of the Los Angeles County Crematorium. Ms. Beedle has twelve years of experience in architectural and landscape history fieldwork, research, documentation, and management. She has served as an architectural and landscape historian for projects in California and Nevada as well as in other Great Basin, Rocky Mountain, Midwest and Upland South states. Below is an excerpt from her presentation at the CHSSC's January program.

Last summer the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services asked Applied EarthWorks to remove the Chinese grave markers that had been found along the driveway leading into the county crematorium. They found the markers had been used as a retaining wall.

Mapping was completed after all of the markers had been uncovered. Each stone was numbered and photographed. The next step was to remove the markers. The gravestones were located between two trees, so there were a lot of tree roots to deal with. After removal, they wrapped the stones in a protective padding to transport them back to the archaeological laboratory. The number of each stone was written on flagging tape, which was then tied around the stone.

Various methods of cleaning gravestones were researched. Some of the markers had been painted. The paint was tested for lead content and was found to be lead free. They found that baking soda was a non-caustic substance that would take most of the grime off of gravestones.

Some of the markers had concrete on them. However, this was very brittle and came off with washing and using wood picks. After the markers were cleaned, the fragments that were from the same markers were put together and photographed.

The names on one marker were English. One marker had only the letter B on it. Most of the markers had Chinese on one side only, or a combination of Chinese and English. On other markers the characters on one side had been obliterated when the markers were reused.

The Chinese characters were translated by Society member Ann Lau, and this data was correlated with the burial records, which gives information on the death and date of disinterment. Some of the fragmented markers do not have as complete information. Photographs of all of the markers and the translations will be available on the MTA website.* It is hoped that some persons might have information that can be used to complete the documentation for all of the markers.

* Photographs are now available on the MTA's Next Kin Outreach Program webpage at http://www.metro.net/projects_programs/eastside/postcards.htm

Acknowledgements

- **Ruth Lung, Winifred Lew, Johnny Yee, Esther Yee and Tim Siu** provided refreshments at the February program meeting.
- CHSSC thanks **Irvin Lai, Linda Chong, Gilbert Hom and Randall Bloch** for coordinating the Ch'ing Ming Festival.
- **Sum Sum Chan** designed the Spring 2007 Gala flyer and reservation form.



("Around CHSSC," from page 1)

CHSSC participated in the 108th Annual Golden Dragon Parade celebrating the Chinese Lunar Year of the Pig in Los Angeles Chinatown on February 24, 2007.



John W. Wong, President of CHSSC holding the American flag and leading the CHSSC entourage.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 31 and April 1, 2007, 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Cherry Blossom Festival

Please visit the CHSSC booth.

Los Angeles Little Tokyo

Through August 2007

Daily Rituals: Himalayan Art in Practice

Pacific Asia Museum

46 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

\$7 general, \$5 senior/student, Free to museum members

www.pacificasiamuseum.org, (626) 449-2742,

(continued on back page)

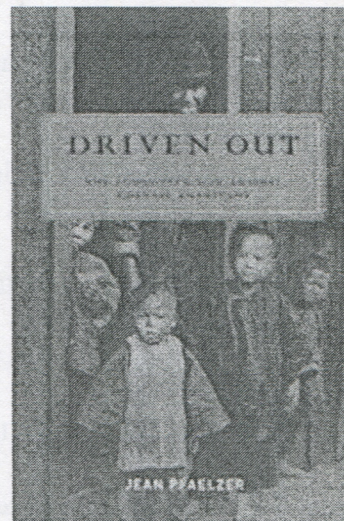
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reminder: Ch'ing Ming Festival at the Evergreen Cemetery, Saturday, March 31 from 11:00 to 2:00. This event is free to the public. There will be remarks by **Councilman Mike Eng** and a presentation on the Ch'ing Ming rituals. A roast pork and dim sum lunch will be served.

Correction: In the March 2007 issue, "Though few Chinese are still buried there..." is incorrect. There are no longer Chinese buried at the Chinese Shrine in Evergreen Cemetery.

Upcoming Programs

Program in May 2007 will be on the usual first Wednesday of the month, May 2, at 7:00 p.m. Location is yet to be determined. Please check our website for updates, www.chssc.org.



Program in June 2007 will be on Saturday, June 9, in the early afternoon. Exact time and location to be announced on our website, www.chssc.org and, in the next issue of newsletter. It will be a presentation on *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against the Chinese Americans*, a book authored by Jean

Pfaelzer, a professor of English and American Studies at the University of Delaware.

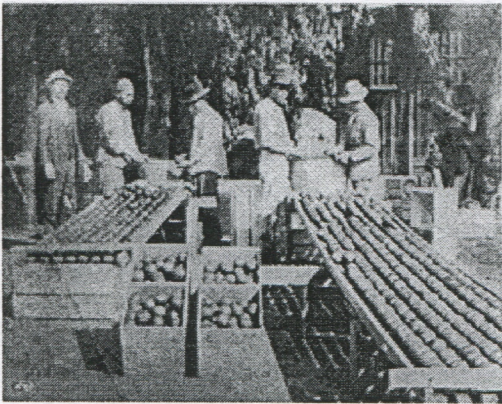


HISTORICAL CHINATOWNS

Riverside Chinatown

Immigrants from China first arrived in Riverside in early 1870s, and were employed in vegetable growing, domestic services, laundries, and in all aspects of the citrus industry. They were driven from downtown Riverside in early 1885. A substantial Chinatown nearby in the Tequesquite Arroyo was established later that year. .

About 350 to 400 permanent residents settled in Chinatown. The population swelled to more than 2,000 during harvest season. A fire in 1893 destroyed the original village. Riverside Chinatown was rebuilt with sturdier materials that included a temple, and a headquarter for the local Chee Kung Tong Society.



Historic images of Chinatown Archeological Site. Photo courtesy of the Riverside Municipal Museum

The Chinese not only contributed their labor but also knowledge to the navel orange growers. The Chinese offered solutions in pest control, packaging of various sizes of fruits, and accomplishing an even layer at the top. Anti-Chinese sentiment seldom resulted in violence in Riverside. The Chinese observed Chinese holidays such as Feast of Hungry Ghosts, Ch'ing Ming Day (also known as Chinese Memorial Day), and Lunar New Year.

By the 1920s, Riverside Chinatown was almost deserted because its residents either died or left for other places. The last shop closed in 1938 but one

resident; Wong Ho-Leun, bought the town and remained until his death in 1974. He was the son of a vegetable merchant who arrived from China in 1914. Wong ran the Bamboo Garden Restaurant and was a confidant of well-known Riverside political figures. After his death the last row of structures was demolished, leaving an empty site that was once a vibrant community that served the needs of local Chinese immigrants.

A book, *Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown* was edited and published by the Great Basin Foundation of San Diego in 1987. The book is available at CHSSC.



Historic images of Chinatown Archeological Site. Photo courtesy of the Riverside Municipal Museum

The City of Riverside Cultural Heritage Board designated Chinatown as a Cultural Heritage Landmark in 1976. The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California and a local Ad Hoc Citizens Committee led by Dr. Robert Poe successfully lobbied for an archeological excavation site in 1984.

References:

Bridging the Centuries: History of Chinese Americans in Southern California, Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, Los Angeles, 2001, pp. 68-71.

National Park Service U.S. Department of Interiors website, www.cr.nps.gov/nr/feature/asia/2006/chi.htm

- Yvonne Chang, CHSSC Staff

("Community Calendar", from page 4)

Through August 2007

Treasures from Shanghai: 5000 Years of Art and Culture

Bowers Museum

2002 North Main Street, Santa Ana, CA 92706

Tuesday - Sunday: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

\$19 general admission, www.bowers.org, (714) 567-3600

April 1, 2007

Chinese Floral Arrangement

Pacific Asia Museum

46 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Lecture only, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., free to museum members, \$10 non-members

Workshop, 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., \$40 for members, \$50 non-members, including materials and lecture.

RSVP: 626-449-2742, ext. 31,

April 2, 2007, 6:30 p.m.

Xinjiang—China's Northwest Treasure

The China Society of Southern California

Slide lecture by Professor Ted Crovello, on the traditions, the people, and the changes now taking place in this once remote area of China.

Dinner at the Golden Dragon Restaurant

(323) 463-1396; \$13, members; \$14, non-members

May 8, 2007, Tues., 7:30 p.m.

Rocks in Chinese Culture

Huntington Library

1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA 91108

A slide lecture that explores the use of rocks in Chinese gardens, where they serve as building materials, as sculpture, and as symbolic representations of mountains.

Free admission

May 26, 2007, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Second Annual US-China Sister Cities Conference

Theme: 21st Century Perspectives on China

Sponsor: the Pasadena Sister Cities

Host: Huntington Library

1151 Oxford Road

San Marino, CA 91108

Registration: \$30 including lunch, download form at www.socalsistercities.org and click on Members Coming Events button.

Information: Alan Lamson

amlamson@sbcglobal.net

Presentations on maritime China, the future of banking in China, and modern Chinese cinema.

Exhibits by sister cities of their exchange activities with China, and a presentation about the Huntington Chinese garden including a tour of the garden.



**Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California**

415 Bernard St.

Los Angeles, CA 90012-1703



Spring 2007 Gala
May 12 @ 6:00 p.m.
See Flyer Inside