



# NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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Chinatown Heritage & Visitors Center: 323-222-0856

JULY 2007

## Around CHSSC

### Election of Board Officers and Directors

At the general meeting of June 6, 2007, the following were elected CHSSC Board of Directors and Officers for the term 2007-2008. They will serve from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

President—Kenneth Chan

Vice President—Gilbert Hom

Vice President for Programs—Eugene Moy

Treasurer—Benjamin Nakayama

Secretary—Albert Chang, M.D.

Membership Secretary—William Gow

### Directors-at-Large

Pete Chinn

Ernesto Con

Susan Dickson

Irvin Lai

Three Directors will serve out their second year:

Jeannie Liu

George Yin

Donald Loo, Ph.D.

Congratulations to those elected and those who will serve another year. Thank you to Betty Gaw and Munson Kwok for their years of services on the Board. **There are three open positions,** Financial Secretary (1-year term), two Directors-at-Large (one 1-year term and one 2-year term). The three open positions can be appointed by the Board of Directors. If you would like to or know of anyone who would like to serve on the Board please contact us at 323-222-0856.

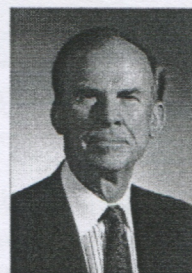
## New Exhibition

As recent as the 1960s and 1970s, minorities in the United States were denied loans from mainstream bankers on the basis of their ethnicity. Far sighted Chinese American community leaders got together and established financial institutions in Los Angeles Chinatown.

Preston Martin was instrumental in helping minorities in starting financial institutions. He was Chairman of the Federal Home Loan Bank in 1969-72, and California's Savings and Loan Commissioner in 1967-69. In 1962, while a faculty member at the University of Southern California, Martin was engaged to advise F. Chow Chan in starting a savings and loan. Cathay Bank was opened for business in 1962, followed by East West Bank in 1972. Chan remained active in serving the Chinese American community until his death in 2001. Martin passed away May 30, 2007. Their legacies will live on.



F. Chow Chan



Preston Martin

A new exhibition, Los Angeles Chinese American Banking Pioneers, has been installed at the CHSSC Heritage Center. You can also see the exhibition online at [www.chssc.org/honorees/honorees.html](http://www.chssc.org/honorees/honorees.html).





# Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

July 2007

## Wells Fargo Bank Re-Opens Branch in Los Angeles Chinatown



From L to R, are Wilson Velasquez, L.A. Chinatown Branch Manager; John W. Wong, Immediate Past President of CHSSC; and Wells Fargo Los Angeles Regional Manager. Posing with a blow up of a check presented to CHSSC on the occasion of the Bank's re-opening of Chinatown Branch. Thank you, Wells Fargo, for partnering with us to achieve shared goals in the community.

## Chinatown Remembered: An Oral History Project

*By William Gow  
Oral History Project Director*

The CHSSC has just finished the inaugural quarter of its *Chinatown Remembered Oral History Project*. This project was developed to address two fundamental issues:

- (1) the need to document the stories of the older generation in our community before it's too late, and,
- (2) the need to attract younger members to the Society.

Over the course of a ten-week period four interns, James Lee, Scott Chan, Nancy Thai and Jennifer Tang worked on the society's current project to document the stories and lives of the Chinatown

*(continued on page 3)*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Officers

Kenneth L. Chan, President  
Gilbert Hom, Vice President  
Eugene Moy, V.P. for Programs  
Ben Nakayama, Treasurer  
Dr. Albert Chang, Secretary  
William Gow, Membership Secretary

### Members at Large

Pete Chinn  
Ernesto Con  
Susan Dickson  
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.



(*"Chinatown Remembered," from page 2*)

community as it was in the 1930s and 1940s. Each intern was paired up with one of our four community partners, Charlie Quon, David Lee, Jennie Taylor and Peter Soo Hoo Jr. The interns worked to document the lives of this older generation on digital videotape.

Despite the 1930s and 1940s being a pivotal period in the history of our community, little has been done to record the stories of this first generation Chinese Americans in Los Angeles. Over the course of the next year, the Society has a goal of documenting in detail the lives and experiences of at least 20 former residents of the Chinatown area. Each one of our participating resident will sit for a series of three videotaped interviews about their life and experiences in the area in the 1930s and 1940s. All community members will be asked the same general set of questions around a number of key issues. At the end, the stories of the former residents will be edited down into a series of short video documentaries that will be available on the Society's website.

While we currently have a robust and active membership, the Society wants to attract more college students and the younger generation into our organization. Indeed, the need for younger members, with the energy and time to take up duties in the Society can be seen nowhere more clearly than on the Board of Directors, which has been working with a number of unfilled seats for a few years now. While all aspects of the CHSSC are important, the Society must begin to move membership to the forefront of our concerns and begin to think of new ways to expand our membership to a new generation. The *Chinatown Remembered Project* is one attempt to do this.

There is much that you, the reader, can do to help this program be successful. If you are a former resident of the area who remembers what Chinatown was like during the 1930s and 1940s, contact the Society and sign up to be interviewed. If you know any college students whom you think would be interested in participating in the program direct them towards us and we will work with them to see if they can receive college credit through their home

institution for working on the project.

Finally, the project is in desperate need of your donations. We will need to raise between \$10,000 and \$20,000 to purchase needed equipment in order to update our website and edit the videos in a professional manner. All donations, small or large, will be acknowledged on the *Chinatown Remembered* website when it is launched in September of 2008. If you are looking for a worthwhile cause to support, what could be more important than preserving our community's history. Your support, whether through stories or outreach or donations is welcomed and severely needed. Help our community preserve the past properly.

If you would like to help, please contact project director Will Gow [wgow@ucla.edu](mailto:wgow@ucla.edu) or Yvonne Chang at [chssc@earthlink.net](mailto:chssc@earthlink.net) or call the CHSSC at (323) 222-0856.

### Spoken Word

By Scott Chan



Scott Chan reading Spoken Word at the Society's June program meeting. Photo by Tom Eng

I'm Chinese American and let me be heard  
To tell you a story through this spoken word.

It's about a UCLA senior standing right before  
you now,  
Led to the historical society by William Gow.

He gave me a camera and then opened a door,  
A door to the past, present, future and more.

(continued on page 4)





*("Spoken Word," from page 3)*

To question the PAST was what we were told to do  
Learning about history and stories that were true.

But I say listen here! We need a change of view  
(read this last part slowly)

The point is to question the PRESENT through  
these interviews.

It all seems so simple, a present from the past.  
Understanding where we are by understanding  
what's elapsed

But I look around me today and I see some  
disparity.

Jenny, David, Peter, Charlie..

They talked about a close-knit community.

When times got tough and meals weren't on the  
table,

They'd feed you, home you, and not give you a  
label.

You were a fellow Chinese American sister and  
brother

And because there were so few of them, they tried  
to help each other.

But wait really quick, is this all for real?  
What type of past does our present conceal?

What does our community look like today?

Aren't we lyrically audible

Aren't we politically viable

Aren't we academically capable

Aren't we successfully living and

Growingly marketable?

Heck, aren't Chinese Americans just everywhere?

But I feel this "success" is where it all starts  
Where we lose sight of the past, and of our own  
hearts.

There's an important lesson I learned about our  
community.

We've lost sight of the struggle, acting now as if  
with immunity.

Our pasts gave their blood and sweat, to get where  
they are.

Getting an education was not possible by far.

People had to work hard, in order to stay alive

Waiting tables, pushing carts, and ironing longer  
than nine to five.

It's because of this common struggle, that they  
bonded as a people.

Looking beyond society's labels of poor and feeble.

It was only together that they were able to survive,

And it makes me wonder now, why don't WE have  
that drive?

What we need today is to pick up that struggle that  
they once fought for.

We can no longer be complacent, while opportunity  
knocks on our door.

Our community is so vast, and so spread apart,  
But I think we all need to take a step back and hit  
restart.

We need to realize that our present comes from our  
past.

And as great as we have it now, it may not last.

It won't last if we keep watching out for just our  
own backs.

We need to help each other out, no time to relax.

It all starts with us, it's never too late.

Let's take control of our presents and change this state.

Even though many of us are well off, many still  
hurt.

Even though we're skaters, actors, doctors and  
politicians,

America still doesn't fully understand us, we don't  
really have representation.

So again I say, I am Chinese American, let me be  
heard,

Our Community needs to come as one, that's the  
final word.





### Acknowledgements

- Long time CHSSC supporter **Kyra Woo** made a generous donation of \$25,000 representing four \$5,000 donations in the name of each of her four grandsons as well as herself.
- **Winnie Lew, Lupee Chee, and the Friends of Chinatown Library** provided refreshments at the June monthly program meeting
- **The University of Idaho's Asian American Comparative Collection** donated a copy of *Chinese Servants in the West: Florence Baillie-Grohman's "The Yellow and White Agony"* (2007) by Terry Abraham. He is also a contributor to *Chinese American Death Rituals: Respecting the Ancestors* (2005). There is an introductory essay by the editor, describing the little-known contribution of Chinese servants to the development of the North American West.
- **Howard King** upgraded his membership to the Diamond Level (\$300). Thank you.
- CHSSC members **David and Yukie Lee** made a donation in memory of their sons, David Jr., and Steven, toward the UCLA Internship project on oral history. Mr. and Mrs. Lee made a donation earlier this year in memory of their sons when they renewed their membership. Thank you.
- CHSSC Life Member **Margie Lew** gave a gift membership to her friend.
- Chinatown Firecracker Run Committee donated a portion of its 5K run proceeds to CHSSC. Thank you to the Committee and the participants of the 5K run.

### Historical Chinatowns

#### Driven Out But Not Without A Fight

On June 11, 2007, Professor Jean Pfaelzer gave a book reading of her book *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against the Chinese Americans*. CHSSC co-sponsored the event with the Organization of Chinese Americans Los Angeles Chapter.

When Professor Jean Pfaelzer was teaching American Studies at the Holmboldt State University (HSU) in Oregon, she noted a complete absence of Asian American students. When she asked around, she was told that Chinese parents would not send their children to HSU because ninety years ago the Chinese had been driven out from Eureka, Holmboldt's county seat. Professor Pfaelzer's initial research confirmed that in 1885 all Chinese residents were expelled from Eureka.

Some thirty years later, Professor Pfaelzer decided to find the story of the missing Asian students from HSU. She found that "thousands of Chinese people were violently herded onto railroad cars, steamers, or logging rafts, marched out of town, or killed." They were driven out of towns from Seattle to Los Angeles, to the Rocky Mountains. Indeed, Professor Pfaelzer found that between 1850 and 1906, there were systematic efforts at ethnic cleansing of the Chinese Americans. All told there were nearly two hundred roundups.

The Chinese Americans fought back in court and outside of the court. They refused to sell their vegetables denying white households and hotels fresh foods. They returned laundries neatly folded but not cleaned. There were strikes, mutinies and in some cases the Chinese simply refused to leave.

Currently Jean Pfaelzer is professor of English, East Asian studies and American studies at the University of Delaware. *Driven Out* is published by Random House in 2007. It can be purchased at the CHSSC book store at \$25. Credit card payment can be accepted by telephone, 323-222-0856, or fax, 323-221-4162. Please add \$5 for shipping and handling.

—Yvonne Chang, CHSSC Staff





### Announcements

#### Chinese American Oral History Workshop Offered

This workshop is independent of the *Chinatown Remembered Project* directed by Will Gow for college interns (see page 2). Playwright Henry Ong will partner with the CHSSC to present a free writing workshop to collect the oral histories of Chinese Americans. It is a free workshop made possible, in part, by a grant from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA). Participants will explore their own personal stories and how these stories relate to the Chinese American community in Los Angeles.

The workshops will be held from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on selected Wednesdays at the CHSSC's Heritage Center at 415 Bernard Street, Los Angeles Chinatown. Workshop dates are as follows: August 29, September 12, 19, 26, October 10, 17, 24 and November 14. **Anyone interested in participating in the workshop please call Henry Ong, (323) 665-7612.**

At the end of the workshop, participants will share their stories in a presentation at CHSSC's monthly meeting on January 9, 2008.

Henry Ong is an internationally-produced playwright, whose signature play, "Madame Mao's Memories," was performed in Singapore, Longond and Edinburgh, as well as many U.S. cities including San Diego. Ong received DCA grants ten times, has conducted many oral history projects, including last year to collect the oral histories of Filipino Americans. Some of the other works are "Fabric," "Sweet Karma," "People Lie Me," and "The Old Lady Who Popped Out of the Sidewalk and Became a Christmas Tree."

Additional information on Ong can be obtained from his website, [www.henryong.freeola.com](http://www.henryong.freeola.com).

#### Huntington Library Chinese Garden Docent Training Program

Huntington Library's Chinese Garden has been given a name, Liu Fang Yuan, Garden of Flowing Fragrance. If anyone is interested in becoming a Liu Fang Yuan docent please visit their website, [www.huntington.org](http://www.huntington.org). Training is scheduled for three hours each Wednesday morning, from September 5, 2007 through January 30, 2008.

#### Eighty and Over

If you were born in China, at least 80 years old, and would like to tell the story of old age and its meaning, please contact:

Barbara or Barry Shaffer Photography  
818-744-3839 (Barbara)  
818-744-3840 (Barry).

The photographers will interview their subjects during photo shoots. The aim is to capture the beauty of old age in imagery and to record personal stories and collective wisdom. Please visit their website [www.barryshafferphotography.com](http://www.barryshafferphotography.com).

The forums for its initial exhibition are in the preliminary stage with conversation at The Skirball Center. The plan is for the exhibition to travel throughout public spaces in Los Angeles such as the foyer of the California Endowment, the University of Southern California's School of Gerontology, the foyer of City Hall, the Los Angeles Downtown Library and UCLA School of Medicine, etc.

This project is independent of CHSSC. We neither endorse the project and the photographers nor guarantee their quality.



# Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

July 2007



## Community Calendar

### **Bone Marrow Drives**

Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches  
Various locations throughout Los Angeles area  
Information: (888) 236-4673  
[www.asianmarrow.org](http://www.asianmarrow.org)

Thursdays, 3:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.

### **Chinatown Farmers Market**

727 N. Hills Street, Los Angeles Chinatown

Through August 2007

### **Exhibition: 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](http://www.bowers.org)  
(714) 567-3600

Through November 2007

### **Exhibition: Daily Rituals: Himalayan Art in Practice**

Pacific Asia Museum  
46 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA  
\$7 general admission, \$5 seniors and students  
(626) 449-2742

Friday, July 13, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

(Fireworks at 9:00 p.m.)

Saturday, July 14, 12:00 noon to 9:00 p.m.

(Fireworks at 9:00 p.m.)

Sunday, July 15, 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.

### **30th Anniversary of Lotus Festival**

Echo Park Lake, Park Avenue between Glendale Avenue and Echo Park Boulevard, Los Angeles, (Near Dodger Stadium).

**Parking** at Logan Street School, 1711 W. Montana Street between Lemoyne and Montana Streets; Echo Park Baseball Diamond, 1632 Bellevue Avenue, between Temple Street and Glendale Boulevard.

### **The mission of the Lotus Festival**

is to develop, promote and create an atmosphere of understanding of the **Asian and Pacific Islander communities** in Southern California. There will be one evening and two days of cultural sharing. The Festival seeks to preserve and enlighten the public with a sampling of distinctly different and unique Asian and Pacific Islander culture and traditions through displays, art, music, dance and food.

Thursday, July 26, 2007, 8:00 pm

### **Movie - The Fish Fall in Love**

The Fish Fall in Love tells the story of political prisoner Aziz, returning after 25 years to take possession of his family estate only to find his former flame, Atieh, is now running it as a restaurant. Director Ali Rafiee uses the language of food to tell a story of passions over generations. English subtitles.

Pacific Asia Museum

46 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

\$6 members of Pacific Asia Museum, \$10 non-members

Reservation: 626.449.2742 x 31

Thursday, August 9, 2007, 8:00 pm

### **Persian Dance**

Led by Artistic Director Shida Pegahi, Ney Nava Dance Theatre has been performing fine Persian classical and contemporary dance since 1994. They will bring their beautifully costumed classic dances to Pacific Asia Museum for an evening of timeless beauty.

Pacific Asia Museum

46 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

\$15 for members, \$20 for non-members.

Reservation: 626.449.2742 x 31

*(continued on back page)*



(“Calendar”, from page 7)

August 9 through 25, 2007

Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays only

**The Thumping Claw One Act Series**

*Peanuts*, written by Judy Soo Hoo

*Jupiter and Nebula*, written by Wesley Du and  
directed by Ricky Pak

*Elevator, Elevate Her*, written and directed by Jason  
Fong

A Rabbit and a Tiger Production

Actor's Playpen Theater

1514 N. Gardner Street, Los Angeles, CA 90046

Parking Lot parking

\$20, purchase online,

<http://www.plays411.com/newsite/show/plays.asp>

Select Upcoming, The Thumping....

\$22 at the door

Reservations—323-960-1053

**Words of Wisdom**

People may not always remember exactly  
what you did, or what you said, but they will  
always remember how you made them feel.

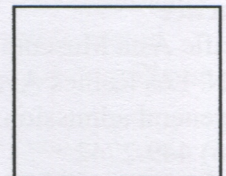
—Cy Wong, Past President of CHSSC



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August 2007

## August Program



**Saturday**

**August 25, 2007**

**4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**415 Bernard Street  
Los Angeles Chinatown**

**RSVP by 8/24: 323-222-0856**

Parking in garage across the street from CHSSC,  
between Hill and Broadway.

**Special guest: C.Y. Lee**, author of *Flower Drum Song*.

**Note:** September program speaker to be announced

## Around CHSSC

The conference room at the CHSSC's Heritage Center has been expanded by combining two rooms. The remodeling idea was originated by past CHSSC President Irvin Lai. The entire project was done by volunteers, Philip Hom a long time Society supporter, his brother Gilbert Hom, and Eugene Moy, Vice President and Vice President for Programs of CHSSC, respectively. An air-condition unit was installed, donated by Benjamin Nakayama, Treasurer of CHSSC.

The conference room was recently used by UCLA Asian Studies Center staff for their one-day retreat. It will be used for the upcoming oral history workshops. (For details, see [www.chssc.org](http://www.chssc.org), or the July issue of News 'n Notes.) The room measures 12' x 28' with a partial kitchen. It can accommodate 16 persons around the conference table. CHSSC is looking into the feasibility of using the conference for classes in Mandarin, arts and crafts, cooking, etc.

## Acknowledgement

- Paul and Emma Louie donated a copy of *The Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly*, Vol XLII—No. 3, September 1960. On page 239 is the article "The Celestials and the Angels: A Study of the Anti-Chinese Movement in Los Angeles to 1882."

## Inside this issue:

*Tacoma's Chinese Reconciliation Project*

2-4





### Historical Chinatowns

#### Tacoma's Chinese Reconciliation Project

Have you wondered why there is no Chinatown in Tacoma, a major city in the Pacific West of the United States? There was a Chinese community called Little Canton in Tacoma in the late 19th century but the residents were rounded up and driven out of town at gun point. The article below was forwarded to the CHSSC by Steve Yee, Friends of the Yee Fow Museum of Sacramento.

—Yvonne Chang, CHSSC Staff

#### Tacoma plans a Chinese-style garden to help bind century-old wounds

Tuesday, April 3, 2001

By ELAINE PORTERFIELD

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER REPORTER

TACOMA -- They had come to the West for jobs and to escape poverty and starvation at home in China.

Everywhere, they'd face oppression and hatred. But only in Tacoma would one searing act of racism against them become so infamous as to result in an actual title -- "The Tacoma Method."

It happened Nov. 3, 1885. On that day, the mayor, the sheriff, the fire chief, a judge, the head of the Young Men's Christian Association and hundreds of other men -- at the sound of a prearranged signal blast from local mills -- rounded up 200 Chinese immigrants and marched them at gunpoint to the railroad station.

The immigrants were placed on a train to Portland. The next day, their homes and possessions were burned to the ground. Afterward, anyone of Chinese ancestry was actively discouraged from settling in Tacoma, an prohibition that continued until the 1920s.

Today, a Baptist minister, a Taiwanese immigrant and a group of Tacoma citizens and elected officials are seeking to heal the wounds opened by the actions of that mob 115 years ago through the creation of what is being called the **Chinese Reconciliation Park** on the city's waterfront.

(continued on page 3)

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