



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

February 2008

February Program

Wednesday, February 6, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m.

The Chinatown Files

The Chinatown Files, Amy Chen's first film, is the culmination of many years of work. She said, "The idea for *The Chinatown Files* first came to me after I read a startling footnote in Peter Kwong's *Chinatown*, New York. His book mentioned an **obscure treasury act, The Trading With the Enemy Act**, forbidding Chinese Americans from sending money home to their relatives in the 1950s and 1960s and noted that a newspaper editor and three laundry workers were arrested and jailed for violating this act."

The movie is one hour long, and will be followed by sharing of personal experiences during the cold war period.

Open to the public, RSVP not necessary

Castelar Elementary School Multipurpose Room
840 Yale Street, Los Angeles Chinatown.
Enter from College Street between Yale and Hill Sts.

Archiving Your Family History Follow-Up

Work on your photos, documents, tapes, and archival materials, using the info from the January meeting. Use this meeting as a deadline to gather your "stuff" together. Sort, label, inventory, copy, etc. during the meeting. We will have scanners and computers on hand to help. We may have a few archival supplies, but you should try to bring some in for your own use. Discussion while you work of areas where you need assistance to research and preserve your family history. We will meet each month, with a speaker, or training, or support and work focus. Next meeting, 2/16 @ 1:30 p.m. at CHSSC.

Around CHSSC

Los Angeles Times Article:

"An Emotional Custody Dispute Over History"

David Pierson of the Los Angeles Times telephoned CHSSC office asking for Irvin Lai's and Susan Dickson's telephone numbers. They are two of the key people on the Ad Hoc Sub Committee advocating for the proper burial of the remains of Chinese, and artifacts uncovered at the excavation site of the Los Angeles' subway tunnel. Two days later an article that appeared in the Los Angeles Times on January 24, 2008.

Pierson wrote:

"The hundreds of brittle bones were buried in a forgotten cemetery with intricate ceramics, jade jewelry and opium pipes. They were the last earthly possessions of what could be dozens of Chinese workers too poor to have been buried back in China and too little-known to merit headstones. Some more than a century old, they offer an irresistible window into a dark chapter in Los Angeles' history."

"Historians and some local elected officials say they should be carefully preserved and studied in order to build a better narrative of how early Chinese immigrants lived in America."

(continued on page 3, "Custody")

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"Chinese American Stories" Enthralls Audience

"Funny and poignant," "inspirational," "creative and enjoyable," "powerful," "excellent," "enlightening," "from the heart," "very entertaining!!!"—these were some of the kudos heaped on "Chinese American Stories," the Chinese Historical Society's first membership program for the year. More than 130 community members attended the event held at Castelar Elementary School, 840 Yale Street in Los Angeles Chinatown on January 9, 2008.



Henry Ong, far right front row, and Chinese American Stories cast.
Photo by Maria Alegria Abonita.

From the opening number, I Enjoy Being Chinese performed by CHSSC's own Jack Ong, to Denesa Chan's lyrical interpretive dance piece (*Two Little Mangos: An Excerpt of a Family en route*), the two-hour long jammed-packed program kept audiences enthralled in their seats. "This is one of the best cultural events that I have ever attended. This program should be vigorously supported by the City," said an audience member. "I'm amazed by all the Asian talent!!" remarked another.

Stories presented that evening were developed and collected in an eight-session writing/oral history workshop conducted by playwright Henry Ong. The workshop and the presentation were made possible, in part, by a grant from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, and co-sponsored by the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California.

Participants also found the workshop process "wonderful." Said Anna Gee (who read *A Few Questions for My Mother* at the presentation): "The class experience was very valuable to me ...

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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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(*"Chinese American Stories," from page 2*)

(because of) the diversity of participants, all Chinese Americans but such differences in ages, backgrounds and experiences." Another reason is the "atmosphere of openness in which people could share things that were meaningful to themselves, often with touching, sometimes even heartbreaking honesty."

Other presenters include Andrea Apuy (*Dad*), Albert Chang (*How Do You Tell A Hispanic Chinese American*), Linda Chong (*Electric Shadows*), Lin Duong (*Ah Lin, ah* and a poem entitled *Zhong*), Edward Gunawan (*X/Y*, directed by Keo Woolford), Ann Lau (*In the Shadow of the Bamboo Curtain*), Sutoyo Lim (*What's in a Name?*), Joyce F. Liu (*Sex*), Elizabeth Pan who read Judy Soo Hoo's *Red Pant Suit and My Life as an 'Eskimo,'* and Pamela Wu (*You're Not Chinese*).

Two workshop participants presented mini-plays: Mark Jue's *Carrying the Torch*, about the three-generation men in his family who inspired him; and Carin Chea's *ABC God*, exploring what it means to be American-born Chinese. Jack Ong also ably directed and starred in (with Carin and Andrea Apuy) *ABC God*.



From L to R, CHSSC President Kenneth L. Chan, Mike Fong, and Henry Ong.
Photo by George Meyers

The evening was dedicated to the memory of the late Judge Delbert Wong, whose son Marshall presented three short moving pieces on his father's later years, highlighting his devilish sense of humor (*Planning for Our Final Years, Funeral Shopping and One Long Day, Four Calls*). Beloved community member and mother of Marshall, Dolores Wong was present and acknowledged with warm applause from the audience.

Mike Fong, Councilman Ed Reyes' field deputy, was on hand to deliver certificates of recognition to volunteers who helped immensely to make the evening possible, including stage manager Stephen A. Ott and videographer George Meyers.

For those of you who missed the unforgettable performance there will be another chance to see it at the Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena, California, tentatively scheduled for Friday evening, April 11, 2008. Stay tuned.

(*"Custody Dispute," from page 1*)

"But a local citizens' committee established to advise the Metropolitan Transportation Authority on the find believes the most respectful thing to do is rebury the 128 sets of remains as soon as possible."

Judy Chu, vice chairwoman of the California state Board of Equalization was quoted as saying, "It would be further dehumanizing for them to be buried without any attempt to identify them. They died alone without family to comfort them and make sure their time on this earth meant something." Chu's sentiment is echoed by the local Chinese community. Los Angeles' Metro Transportation Authority's Board of Directors will have the final say in the coming months regarding the remains and the artifacts uncovered in the subway tunnel.



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HOW TO STORE AND CARE FOR YOUR HOME MOVIES AND HOME VIDEOS

By Lance Watsky and Lynne Kirste

1. KEEP TRACK OF YOUR FILMS AND

TAPES. Whether you store them in your home or pay for outside storage at a vault, be sure to check in once in a while to make sure your films and tapes are where you think they are. Labs and storage facilities can go out of business and well-meaning family members can rearrange rooms and closets.

2. LABEL YOUR FILMS AND TAPES. Include the title, date made, reel number, running time, complete or incomplete, type of element (for example, "original 8mm film" or "DVD copy of 8mm original"), sound or silent, and your name, address and phone number. Write some notes about the content and keep the notes in a plastic bag next to the materials or in a paper or computer file linked to the materials. (Do not put film into plastic bags! The bags are for paper only.)

3. STORE FILMS AND VIDEOS IN A COOL, DRY, CLEAN, SAFE PLACE where the temperature and humidity will not vary too much. Would you store a bag of flour there? If not, don't put your film there!

COOL: Hot attics, garages and car trunks are bad choices. A cupboard or drawer inside your home is preferable, and cooler areas are even better. The optimal temperature for tapes is about 60 degrees Fahrenheit. With film, the colder you keep it, the more you will increase its lifespan. Every degree colder is a plus. Do not put films or tapes into refrigerators or freezers – the humidity will damage them. Both films and tapes must be allowed to slowly come up to room temperature before they are played.

DRY: Low humidity is as important as low temperature. Store your materials away from laundry facilities, bathrooms, kitchens and other humid parts of the house. Don't keep them in a shed, garage or basement where they aren't well insulated from rain

or where they're in danger of flooding.

CLEAN: Dust, dirt, chemical fumes, rodents and insects can damage your materials. Store films and tapes away from paints, cleaners, exhaust fumes, dirt, and areas undergoing construction or remodeling.

SAFE: Keep your materials in a part of the house where you spend time so you'll be aware if there's a problem such as a fire hazard or a leaky roof that could cause flooding. Keep materials safe from being accidentally thrown away by storing them in nice containers and labeling them well so it's clear that they're valuable items, not unwanted junk. Add instructions to your will or on a paper inside your box of films designating what you would like done with your films or tapes if anything should happen to you.

4. FILMS: KEEP IN PLASTIC CANS AND ALLOW AIR CIRCULATION. Archival plastic cans are best for films and are not too expensive. You can buy them where film supplies are sold, or using the Internet. Coated metal cans are okay too. Do not keep films in rusty or dirty cans. If your home movies are in cardboard boxes, it's okay to keep them in the boxes. You can take them out and put them in cans, but if you do, be sure to copy anything written on the boxes such as dates, places and so forth. Store 16mm film on plastic cores, not on reels. Over time, reels will cause spoking of 16mm film. 8mm and Super-8mm films are best off on plastic reels inside cans. Take film out of plastic bags. Remove rubber bands. Use a minimum of tape. If there are content notes in the can with your film, put them inside a plastic bag and leave them in the can. (Do *not* put the film inside the bag.) The goals here are to allow the film air circulation (so no plastic bags!) and to keep it away from any materials that might become sticky (like aging tape) or release acids (like aging cardboard or paper) .

5. TAPES: KEEP IN PLASTIC CASES AND AWAY FROM MAGNETIC FIELDS. Plastic shells help protect tapes from damage, dust, and water. Store away from magnetic fields that could affect the signal. Make protection copies (see #7). Migrate your data as technologies change (see #9).

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6. STORE FILMS - FLAT; TAPES - ON SPINE.

Store film cans flat and don't put too much weight on top of the cans (or air will not be able to circulate). Store videotapes along one spine, not flat.

7. MAKE PROTECTION COPIES. Make duplicates of your tapes or digital files and keep copies at different locations. This way if anything happens to the tape at your house, you will have a backup copy someplace else, such as your office or a friend's house. Make sure the copies are stored properly at their remote locations and that the people keeping them for you understand their value and won't misplace them or throw them away! If you have duplicate film elements, you can store them at different locations in the same way. For example, keep the original yourself and store a print with your best friend.

8. COPYING FILMS TO DVD. This is a great way to make your material easier to view, and a great way to give copies to friends and family. You can find a list of transfer facilities at www.homemovieday.com. To be sure that care is taken with your films, bring them to a facility that will handle them properly. Many of the big drugstores offer cheaper transfer services, but if you feel that your films are priceless, make sure they're treated that way! And remember, after you make a transfer, **always keep your original films!** The films will outlast whatever medium they're transferred to.

9. WHAT ABOUT CHANGES IN TECHNOLOGY (B) WILL ANYONE STILL BE ABLE TO PLAY MY DV-CAM TAPES IN THIRTY YEARS? Remember 78 rpm records, 5-inch floppy discs, dinosaurs...? Pay attention to changes in technology and transfer your images to a new format when the format they're on is in danger of becoming obsolete. Even if your DV-Cam tape is still in good shape in thirty years, you will probably have a hard time finding equipment that will play it. Technology changes fast and data migration is a job that never ends. But it's worth it to make sure your

home movie will live on! Always keep your original master tapes as well as the new format transfers.

10. WON'T EVERYTHING DIGITAL

BASICALLY LAST FOREVER? No. Although the ones and zeroes of digitized images may sound timeless, those ones and zeroes have to be stored in the real physical world somehow. B for example, on a DVD, a digital videotape, or the hard drive of a computer. DVDs and videotapes can age badly, sustain damage, and become unreadable; hard drives can crash. And of course the formats will eventually become obsolete (see #9).

11. CONSIDER PLACING YOUR FILMS AND VIDEOS AT AN ARCHIVE.

Moving image archives care for films and videotapes so they can be seen and enjoyed for generations to come. The mission of most archives is to store, preserve, catalogue and make accessible the materials they hold. This work is undertaken in the spirit of cherishing and protecting our collective cultural and artistic heritage, not for profit. The archive stores your materials free of charge. Some archives will make copies of your films for you. Home movies are an important part of our cultural heritage and many archives collect them.

12. HOW TO CHOOSE AN ARCHIVE TO CARE FOR YOUR WORK.

There are many moving image archives, large and small, all over the world (see an extensive list at www.loc.gov/film/arch.html). Many archives collect home movies. Archives often collect images of particular topics, geographical areas or groups of people. Pick an archive that suits you and your materials. One with temperature- and humidity-controlled vaults will be best for your films.

Reprinted with permission from Lance Watsky of UCLA's Moving Images Archive Studies (MIAS), and Lynne Kirste of the Academy Film Archive. See "Announcements" on page 6 for opportunities to study in the MIAS Program.



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Historical Chinatowns

Update on The Railyard Project

In the January 2008 News 'n Notes was an article on The Railyard Project of Sacramento, California. Steve Yee, Chair of the Yee Fow Museum, sent the following update:

"We wish you a prosperous and joyous Chinese New Year! And, as the Year of the Rat unfolds, this promises to be a time of progress and reward for the efforts of the past year."

"This is certainly true for the Friends of the Yee Fow Museum. We thank you all for your generous support and find this an auspicious occasion to update everyone as to the progress we have made."

"The year 2007 ended with the Sacramento City Council and Thomas Enterprises in agreement that the Chinese legacy needs to be commemorated in The Railyards of Sacramento, the largest infill redevelopment project in all America and home to the early Chinese pioneers of Yee Fow."

"As the new year began, the Friends of the Yee Fow Museum formed an Advisory Board to determine legal structure, business strategies, political and community funding strategies as well as the physical design of a Chinese-Californian center within Sacramento's Railyards. The Advisory Board consists of state and local officials, business leaders, and community activist that have background in the areas of Chinese American history, culture, or trade."

"Through a series of meetings at Stantec, Inc. who has members that serve on the Advisory Board, a vision of a Yee Fow Center for History, Culture, and Trade is being programmed."

"Of course these are preliminary concepts and it is our pleasure to keep you informed as well as to receive your input and comments. We are honored and grateful for your support and wiliness to join this civic undertaking to aid in the understanding of the Chinese

heritage and contributions to California's history, as well as to grow businesses and trade relationships to impact California's economy.

"Gung Hay Fat Choy and May Everything in Life Go Well."

Acknowledgements

- Dolores Wong donated a small table to CHSSC.
- Dolores Wong, Winnie Lew, Frieda and Alan Wong, and Yvonne Chang provided snacks for the January 2008 program.

Announcements

Reminder: **Scholarship application** due March 21, 2008. For details see www.chssc.org/Scholarship/Application2008.pdf, or read announcement in the January 2008 issue of News 'n Notes.

Chinese American Stories, presented at the meeting last month, January 9, 2008, will be performed again at the Pacific Asia Museum, tentatively scheduled for Friday evening, April 11, 2008. Stay tuned.

UCLA's **Moving Image Archive Studies** is a graduate program that can be a great opportunity for the Chinese American community. For more information please go to www.mias.ucla.edu/. The Program Coordinator, Lance Watsky was a feature speaker at CHSSC's Archiving Your Family History workshop. His contact information:
lwatsky@tft.ucla.edu
Ph: 310-206-4966; Fax: 310-825-3383

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Membership	Application
Name: _____	Membership and Other fees (Membership is from January 1 to December 31)
Address: _____	_____ New _____ Renew
City: _____	Senior (60 +) and Student With Gum Saan Journal + S/H* \$32
State: _____	Silver With Gum Saan Journal + S/H* \$57
Phone: _____	100 x 100 Club With Gum Saan Journal + S/H* \$112
Email: _____	Diamond With Gum Saan Journal + S/H* \$312
Visa/MC #: _____	Donation (tax deductible) \$ _____
Expiration Date: _____	Total _____ \$ _____
Signature: _____	

Join us today by filling out the form above and mail to CHSSC, 415 Bernard St., Los Angeles, CA 90012
Or fax it to our office, 323-221-4162.

Community Calendar

February 5, 2008, 7:30 p.m.

Chinese Garden Lecture: Poetry and Calligraphy in the Garden

Lecture by Yang Ye, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at U.C. Riverside.

The Huntington Library

Friends Hall

1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA 91108

Free

FENG SHUI
DOS AND TABOOS



ANGI MA WONG

Sunday, February 17, 2008,
2:00 p.m.

Lecture on Feng Shui by Angi Ma Wong

Pacific Asia Museum
46 N. Los Robles Avenue,

Pasadena, CA 91101

Lecture is free with admission
to the museum

\$7 general admission, \$5 seniors and students
RSVP: 626-449-2742, x20

(continued on back page)

("Community Calendar," from page 7)

February 16, 2008

7:00 p.m.—potluck dinner

8:00 p.m.—Demonstration of Chinese Floral

Arrangement by master arrangers from Taiwan

Free with a dish to potluck dinner

Space limited

RSVP required for security purposes, 310-779-8908

Pacific Asia Museum Auditorium

46 N. Los Robles Avenue

Pasadena, CA 91101

February 23, 2008, 11:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

The First Phase Chinese Garden, Liu Fang Yuan

opens to the public, and

Chinese New Year Festival

The Huntington Library

1151 Oxford Road

San Marino, CA 91108

\$15 Adults

\$12 Seniors (age 65+)

\$10 Students (age 12-18 or with student I.D.)

\$6 Youth (age 5-11)

Groups of 15 or more: \$11 per person

(626) 405-2100

April 11, 2008 (date to be confirmed)

Chinese American Stories

Repeat of the CHSSC's January 2008 presentation

(See page 2 for review)

To be produced by Andrea Apuy

Pacific Asia Museum

46 N. Los Robles Avenue

Pasadena, CA 91101

Gung Hay Fat Choy

Gung Tsee Fah Tsai

Happy New Year of the Rat



**Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California**

415 Bernard St.

Los Angeles, CA 90012-1703

