



NOVEMBER 2010



Tyrus Wong preparing one of his handcrafted kites for flight.



A special birthday cake. Photos by O.C. Lee

## Tyrus Wong Celebrates His 100th Birthday

Renowned artist and long time society member celebrated his 100th birthday by flying his custom designed kites by the Santa Monica pier.

Tyrus Wong (黃齊耀 born October 25, 1910) is a painter, muralist, ceramicist, lithographer, designer and kite maker. As a film production illustrator in the film industry, Wong has worked for Disney and Warner Brothers. Wong's most famous work was for the Disney animated classic, Bambi.



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Wong was born in Taishan, Guangdong, China. When he was 9 years old, he and his father emigrated to the United States, and never again came into contact with Wong's mother and sister. While attending Benjamin Franklin Junior High in Pasadena, his teachers noticed Wong's artistic ability and he received a summer scholarship at the Otis Art Institute. He was hooked and decided to attend Otis full time where he graduated in 1930.

He has done everything from working as a greeting card designer to Warner Bros. film production illustrator, from drawing set designs and storyboards for several movies to being a Disney inspirational sketch artist. It was his lush pastels that served as inspiration for Bambi where he was the lead artist of the project. Later, he designed Christmas cards, where some have sold over 1 million copies.

Some of his well known paintings include Self Portrait (late 1920s), Fire (1939), Reclining Nude (1940s), East (1984) and West (1984). He once told an interviewer that he's a "lucky artist."

"Tyrus Wong: A Retrospective" was an exhibit at the Chinese American Museum (December – October 2004) in Los Angeles showcasing his work. According to the museum, "This exhibit showcased the works of Tyrus Wong... is one of the earliest and most influential Chinese American artists. In his long, pioneering career as a local artist, Wong is a seasoned painter, muralist, ceramicist, lithographer, designer, and kite maker. The exhibit also featured Wong's imaginative kites, which he has been building and flying for the past 30 years. Drawn from public and private collections, several of the pieces chosen for this exhibition have not been shown publicly since the 1930s."

In 2001, Wong was given a Historymakers Award by the Chinese American Museum and was inducted in the Disney Legends.

## Board of Directors

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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, multicultural society of the United States.



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## The China Mail Steamship Company and Angel Island

Author and Professor Robert Barde will speak about the steamship company that Chinese American businessmen established to ensure mail and goods were able to be exchanged across the Pacific. He will also speak about the immigrant experience at Angel Island.

Wednesday, November 3, 2010 7:00 p.m.

Castelar School  
840 Yale Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Free parking - enter via College Street

*The event is open and free to the public.  
Refreshments will be served.*



Bob Barde is Deputy Director of the Institute of Business and Economic Research at the University of California, Berkeley.

His book, *Immigration at the Golden Gate: Passenger Ships, Exclusion, and Angel Island*, was published by

Praeger/Greenwood in March 2008. An earlier version of the chapter on "The Life and Death of the China Mail" won the Kortum Endowment Award in 2004 for Pacific maritime history.

Prior to working on *Immigration at the Golden Gate*, Barde was co-author (with Susan Carter and Richard Sutch) of the "International Migration" chapter in the new *Historical Statistics of the United States, From Earliest Times to the Present, Millennial Edition* (Cambridge, 2006), of which he was also managing editor.

Chinese American Citizens Alliance &  
Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

*Invite You to Attend a  
Community Memorial Tribute  
& Celebration Honoring*

## Irvin R. Lai

Civic and Community Leader

Civil Rights Advocate • Revered Church Elder



Saturday, November 6, 2010, 9:45 am – 11:00 am

First Chinese Baptist Church  
942 Yale Street

Los Angeles Chinatown 90012

(Parking in rear: access from Adobe Street off of College.)

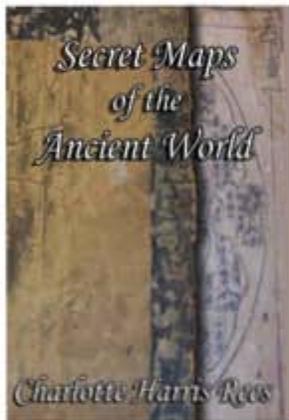
Prominent community members and leaders will celebrate and give recognition to the life and dedication of Irvin R. Lai. Most notably remembered as the leading spokesman for California's landmark 'Roast Duck Bill' in 1982, Irvin Lai had a significant and enduring impact in fighting for fair and equal opportunities of Chinese Americans in Los Angeles. Irvin Lai advocated for human rights as well as for cultural awareness and understanding for all. Come and learn more about his heroic contributions that brought greatly improved educational opportunities, health services, and community safety to Los Angeles Chinatown. Learn also of his years of service and leadership in his church and the USC community near his business in South Central Los Angeles.



## Honoring Her Father by Finishing His Quest

On Sept. 13, 2010 Charlotte Harris Rees, author of *Secret Maps of the Ancient World*, spoke at Cerritos Public Library about the early arrival of Asians to the Americas.

Mrs. Rees' father, Dr. Hendon Harris, Jr., was born in 1916 in Kaifeng, China to missionary parents. He became a missionary himself. In 1972 he found in an antique shop in Korea, an ancient Asian map which led him to write a book of almost 800 pages – *The Asiatic Fathers of America: Chinese Discovery and Colonization of Ancient America*. That book contends that by 2200 B.C. Chinese had reached the Americas by sea.



However, in the 1970's few people accepted Harris' theories. Then in 1981 he suddenly died of a stroke. For decades his map collection gathered dust under his son's bed.

Since early 2003, Rees, an independent researcher and a graduate of Columbia International University, has intensely studied the possibility of very early arrival of Chinese to the Americas. Initially a skeptic of her father's theories, Mrs. Rees' research on this subject was

originally to prove for herself whether he could have been right. In 2003 she and her brother took the Harris Map Collection to the Library of Congress where it remained for three years while being studied. In 2006 Rees published an abridged version of her father's book which cites several early Chinese texts demonstrating knowledge of a beautiful, large continent to the east. Harris wrote: "The history of Asia is written into the stones of America and into the bodies of its early people."

In 2008 Rees completed *Secret Maps of the Ancient World*. (She explains that at least 29 similar maps are in prestigious museums and collections around the world so the "secret" has been hidden for years in plain sight.) Her book springboards from her father's text and brings together many academic studies conducted in the past 30 years which point to early arrival of Asians to the Americas.

Those studies include DNA, ocean currents, early Chinese maritime capabilities, and art, customs, and archeological finds on both sides of the Pacific. *Secret Maps of the Ancient World* also shows some of the Shang and pre-Shang Chinese writings found in the Americas.

Dr. Cyclone Covey, History Professor Emeritus, Wake Forest University, who for over 55 years has studied the early history of America and the Chinese connection, has been her research mentor. Dr. Hwa-Wei Lee, who retired in 2008 as Chief of the Asian Division of the Library of Congress, endorses *Secret Maps* and has been her advisor.

Rees has appeared in numerous international news articles and on television and National Public Radio in the United States and Canada. Her speeches on this topic have been given in many prestigious locations including The Library of Congress; the National Library of China and Tsinghua University, Beijing; Zheng He Symposium in Melaka, Malaysia; the University of London; Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, BC; Stanford University; University of Maryland; and City University of New York. *Secret Maps* is listed by WCILCOS – the World Confederation of Institutes and Libraries for Chinese Overseas Studies.

Recently asked why she is doing this research, Rees responded that she was sorry that she had doubted her father on this while he was alive and wanted him to get the credit for being the first to realize the true meaning of the map. "Also," she said, "We all need to know the truth of our country's history."

The power point lectures of Rees are delivered in layman's language with enthusiasm and conviction. Her web address is [www.HarrisMaps.com](http://www.HarrisMaps.com)



Charlotte Harris Rees and attendees of the September 13th lecture.



Save the Date:

Annual Chinese Historical Society  
of Southern California  
Holiday Potluck  
Wednesday, December 1, 2010

Location to be announced.

*Bring your friends!*



*Call for volunteers!*

Saturday, November 20, 2010 9am

**Workday**

*Repairs and cleanup*

throughout the Campus at  
411 & 415 Bernard Street

Call: 323-222-0856



Special acknowledgements to :

Steve & Ella Leong  
Ruby Ling Louie

*for their generous donations  
in support of Portraits of Pride II.*

Winifred Lew

*for her generous donation  
in support of the CHSSC library.*

Steve Wong

## The Story of Tsinoy: Chinese in the Philippines

On Wednesday, October 6, 2010, Susie Ling, CHSSC lifetime member and Associate Professor of History at Pasadena City Collage, captivated the audience with her historical presentation of "The Story of Tsinoy: Chinese in the Philippines." Co-sponsored by the Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS) - Los Angeles Chapter, Professor Ling's talk also showcased a collaboration of the two historical societies in kicking off Filipino American History Month.

"Tsinoy," defined by Professor Ling as "Chinese Filipino" living in the Philippines dates back even before the "pre-1521" Spanish colonial period. With her stunning photographs and research of these "Tsinoy," Professor Ling reveals more than 400 years of Chinese influence intermixed with Filipino food, language, place/space, names, and religion, as well as historic accounts of early immigration and intermarriage. Interestingly, the first Spanish-established Chinatown in the Philippines was located in Parian, now known present day as Binondo, a district in Manila.



Professor Susie Ling during her presentation. Photo by O.C. Lee

Professor Ling was born in Taiwan and also raised in Los Banos in the province of Laguna in the Philippines. Her compelling research not only reflects a passion for her own cultural heritage and love of history, but uncovers a rich mixture of two worlds - delicious and enticing as eating pancit (noodle dish) and lumpia (egg roll).



## Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

415 Bernard Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Phone: 323-222-0856 Email: [chssc@hotmail.com](mailto:chssc@hotmail.com)  
Web: [www.chssc.org](http://www.chssc.org)

*Help us save paper and postage, email us for your online newsletter at [chssc@hotmail.com](mailto:chssc@hotmail.com)*

### Community Calendar

**Wednesday, November 3, 2010 6:30pm Free**  
**Meet guest speaker Robert Barde author of**  
**"Immigration at the Golden Gate: Passenger Ships,**  
**Exclusion, and Angel Island".**  
Castelar School, 840 Yale Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Thursday, November 4, 6:30- 10:00 p.m.**  
**CHINESE AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL**  
Special screening of *Confucius*, meet producers, directors and cast members. Reception at 6:30, film at 8pm. The story of one of China's greatest thinkers and educators. Starring Chow Yun-Fat and Zhou Xun. English subtitles. 46 N. Los Robles Ave, Pasadena, CA 91101 [www.pacificasiamuseum.org](http://www.pacificasiamuseum.org)

**Saturday, November 6, 2010, 9:45 am**  
**Community Memorial Tribute & Celebration**  
**Honoring Irvin R. Lai**  
This public event will focus on Irvin Lai's leadership and activism for the Chinese American community. Prominent community leaders will speak on their experiences and memories working with Irvin.  
First Chinese Baptist Church, 942 Yale Street, Los Angeles Chinatown 90012  
(Parking in rear: access from Adobe Street off of College.)

**Saturday, November 6, 2010, 3:00 pm - \$12**  
**Community "Stories from Chinese America: An Arthur Dong DVD Release**  
National Center for the Preservation of Democracy  
111 N. Central Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90012  
[www.vconline.org](http://www.vconline.org)

**Sunday, November 7, 2010**  
**Last Day for Arthur Dong's "Hollywood Chinese Exhibit"**  
CAM at El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument  
[www.camla.org](http://www.camla.org)

**Thursday, Nov. 18, 2010 / 6:00pm – 8:00pm**  
**Envisioning America: New Chinese Americans**  
**and the Politics of Belonging**  
Book Talk and Signing with Tritia Toyota  
CAM at El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument  
[www.camla.org](http://www.camla.org)

**Wednesday, December 1, 2010 7:00pm**  
**CHSSC Annual Potluck**  
Location to be announced.

**Saturday, December 18, 2010 / 6 p.m. – 2 p.m. & 6 p.m. \$25**  
**Celebrate CAM's 7th Anniversary!**  
Paper Son ~ performed by Byron Yee  
National Center for the Preservation of Democracy  
111 N. Central Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Ticket info: <http://camlapaperperson.eventbrite.com/>  
[www.camla.org](http://www.camla.org)

**Save the Date:**  
**Annual Chinese Historical Society**  
**of Southern California Banquet**  
**Saturday, May 21, 2011**