

NEWS'N NOTES



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

411 Bernard Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: 323-222-0856 Email: chssc@hotmail.com
Website: www.chssc.org

JANUARY 2017

Guest Speaker

Jon SooHoo

Los Angeles Dodgers
Team Photographer

Wednesday, January 11, 2017
6:30 p.m.

*Castelar Elementary School
840 Yale Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012*

Free parking - enter via College Street
This event is open to the public.



At the first monthly meeting of 2017, we will be joined by Jon SooHoo, the official team photographer of the Los Angeles Dodgers. Jon's presentation will include some of his iconic photos and memories, as well as commentary on his long career in the Los Angeles sports scene.

Grandson of New Chinatown Founder Peter SooHoo Sr. and son of Peter Jr. and Lucy SooHoo, Jon SooHoo begins 2017 in his 32nd season as the official team photographer for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

SooHoo has been part of the Los Angeles sports scene since 1982, shooting most local major sporting events for United Press International including the Lakers, Clippers, Kings, Rams, Raiders, USC, UCLA, the NFL as well as races at the Auto Club Speedway as their contract photographer.

SooHoo has covered World Series, Super Bowls, National Championship Football Games, All-Star Games, Pro Bowls, the Daytona 500 and his favorite non-sporting event: the Space Shuttle launch from Cape Canaveral in Florida.

As the team photographer for the Los Angeles Dodgers, SooHoo spends approximately two-thirds of each year embedded with the "Boys in Blue" — whether at Spring Training, on the road with the team or covering home games at Dodger Stadium. His images have helped preserve team history since 1985.

SooHoo, most recently, accompanied legendary Dodger Baseball Hall of Fame Broadcaster Vin Scully to the White House to photograph him being honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama.

Once baseball season is over, you can find SooHoo running up and down the sidelines covering USC Football games for the Trojans athletic department. He uses his same trademark style of covering the behind the scenes with the Trojans as he does with the Dodgers giving fans an intimate look at the players.

SooHoo's images are viewed daily via social media with a current following of approximately 54,000 followers on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. Google Jon SooHoo and you can find his most recent entries.

When he is not covering sporting events, you can usually find him exchanging elbows in the gyms of Alpine Playground and Gardena High School.





Annual Christmas Potluck

On the night of December 7, 2016, CHSSC members and friends came together for festivities at Castelar Elementary for the Annual Christmas Potluck. There was quite a gathering this year. We almost ran out of food!

It was a pleasure eating delicious food, singing carols, and catching up with our fellow members and friends. Thank you to everyone who came and contributed to our modest potluck. We hope you all had a great time and look forward to another exciting year of activities with the CHSSC. Happy Holidays!



Meeting Sponsorship

Thank you to the President of the China Society, Jin Hing proprietor, and longtime CHSSC member, **Robert Lee**, for sponsoring our December monthly meeting. Your generous gift will ensure that CHSSC will continue to provide free monthly programs.

Message for future potential sponsors:

The CHSSC has and always will provide free programs to public. In the past, we have been able to account for our venue expenses through donations from our members and agreements with the leadership at Castelar. But due to measures from the school district, the CHSSC will have to incur an extra expense of 117.87 per meeting. To help subsidize these extra expenses, we are now giving our members and their businesses a chance to sponsor a meeting. A donation of \$100 is requested to sponsor a meeting. All donations are tax-deductible, and sponsors will be acknowledged in the following month's newsletter with their name or business logo. We appreciate your understanding and we hope to see everyone at our next meeting.

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.



JANUARY 2017

Dear friends of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California,

As the year closes, my task as the CHSSC Membership Secretary begins in earnest. We appreciate your previous generous support of CHSSC by joining our organization. We want to encourage you to renew your membership to support the mission and programs of CHSSC. The membership fee includes the receipt of our monthly newsletter, News 'N Notes, our yearly Gum Saan Journal, and discounts on our publications and products.

CHSSC has been one of the most active community organizations in Los Angeles Chinatown. It holds monthly meetings throughout the school year that are free to the public. As an educational organization, volunteers, as well as staff, conduct walking tours and attend local conferences. Our outreach also includes scheduling talks at surrounding venues and supporting local organizations. CHSSC continues to collect oral histories and other information about the history of the Chinese in America. At our annual fund-raising dinners we recognize and honor, with the Golden Spike Awards, exceptional accomplishments of Chinese Americans, organizations and institutions in Southern California: we have honored our community leaders, pioneering businesses of New Chinatown who continue to serve the community, and veterans who have offered their lives for the protection of the nation and its citizens.

This August we celebrated 41 years of accomplishments and comraderie. As we look forward, CHSSC needs to expand our vision. In the past, we have only been able to fund CHSSC through special donations from those committed to our mission. Therefore, I am hoping that in addition to your support through membership, that you will also consider giving a donation this year to support our mission.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Dickson
Membership Secretary

**Please Renew
Your Membership Now!**
Renew online! www.chssc.org/join/membership.aspx



**Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California**

南加州華人歷史學會

Membership

Silver

Monthly newsletter.
Free *Gum Saan Journal*.
Discount on field trips to historical sites.
Discount on publications and products.
Admission to Heritage Center during
non-public hours (call in advance)

100 x 100 Club

All benefits of Silver membership.
Invitation for 2 to special events.

Diamond

All benefits of 100 x 100 Club membership.
2 complimentary tickets to Annual Gala Dinner.

Student/Senior (60+)

All benefits of Silver membership.

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The purposes of the Society are:

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- 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.**

New Membership Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

Visa/MC # _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Silver	\$ 57.
<input type="checkbox"/> 100 x 100 Club	\$ 100.
<input type="checkbox"/> Diamond	\$ 300.
<input type="checkbox"/> Student or Senior (60+)	\$ 32.
Donation (tax deductible)	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 323-222-0856
Email: chssc@hotmail.com
Website: www.chssc.org

Make checks payable to CHSSC

We are a 501(c)3
non-profit organization,
tax ID: 95-3155357

I am interested in helping with:

- Programs
 Publications
 Research
 Publicity
 Fundraising
 Other _____



JANUARY 2017

118th Golden Dragon Parade

Saturday, February 4, 2017 - 12:00 noon

Participants must wear a red top and black bottoms.
Meet at Hill St. & Ord St. in front of the Chinatown Library



Join us in the Lunar New Year Festivities with the CHSSC! Take part in the 118th Golden Dragon Parade by marching with the CHSSC flag unit, or relax with fellow friends and members at the CHSSC headquarters on Bernard St. Every year, thousands of individuals line the parade route with many more watching the telecast. With over 100 years of tradition in Southern California, the Golden Dragon Parade has become the premiere cultural event for celebrating the Lunar New Year in the greater Los Angeles area.

The day of the Lunar New Year is the most celebrated holiday of the year for nearly 1.5 million persons of Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese descent in Southern California. It is celebrated with colorful festivals, parades, and most importantly, large family gatherings. It is also a time when ancestors are fondly remembered and families give thanks for their blessings. As always, the CHSSC wishes to do everything we can to keep these traditions alive, so that future generations can take part in them as well.

We invite you to be a part of this important annual celebration- as a spectator, participant, or sponsor.

For additional information
email CHSSC@hotmail.com or call (323) 222-0856

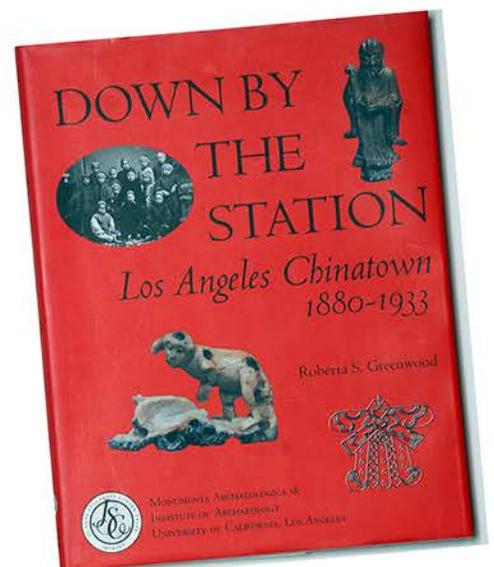
Recent Donation to the Library

From the estate of Bill and Natalina Chew, the Hoover and Ruby Ling Louie Library at the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California now features some new titles. Thanks to Joann Duray, a family friend of the Chews', who generously donated the following titles to our library.

Chinese Americans: The Immigrant Experience, by Dusanka Miscovic and Peter Kwong, *LA Unconventional*, by Cecilia Rasmussen, *Down By the Station: Los Angeles Chinatown 1880-1933*, by Roberta S. Greenwood, *The China Study: Startling Implications for Diet, Weight Loss and Long-Term Health*, by T. Colin Campbell, PHD and Thomas M. Campbell II, *Striking it Rich: Treasures from Gold Mountain*, by Debbie Leung Yamada, *Empire Express: Building the First Transcontinental Railroad*, by David Haward Bain, *This Bitter Sweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1869-1910*, by Sucheng Chang, *The Old Iron Road: An Epic of Rails, Roads, and the Urge to go West*, by David Haward Bain.

Among this collection of books is a difficult to find copy of the *Down By the Station* by Roberta S. Greenwood. *Down By the Station* summarizes the historical research, fieldwork, archaeological discoveries made by Greenwood in the excavation of the Red Line here in Los Angeles. The artifacts found can be currently found in the CHSSC archives. CHSSC members may now check out *Down By the Station* along with many of our other titles from the CHSSC library.

Not a member? Please see the form included with this month's News 'N Notes.





Archive Spotlight

Welcome to Archive Spotlight. This new column is provided by the Archive Committee, and we will focus on items contained in the CHSSC Archives. The first item we would like to share is a ledger from a Chinese store located in Mammoth Lakes, California. This artifact was donated to the Society in 1976 by Victor Plukas with Security Pacific Bank. It appears that the ledger is dated 1886, and contains information about merchandise sold in the store.

Can you read the page of the ledger shown below? We are seeking individuals who can read and translate this historical artifact and many others. Translating Chinese materials from the CHSSC Archive will contribute to our on-going mission of documenting Chinese American history. If you are interested in working with us please contact the Archives Committee at chssc@hotmail.com.

Next month we will spotlight archival material related to California built Chinese Junks from the Nash Collection.



The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California would like to express its gratitude for the generosity of

The Siu Family ❖ Bob & May Wong

for their recent donations towards our capital needs.



Notes on Chinese American History

A monthly column about Chinese American History by CHSSC member, William Gow.

In 1906, Sing Lee, a barber who worked near Appablasa Street in Old Chinatown threw a Christmas party at his shop for around forty of his friends. According to a Los Angeles Times article published on Christmas day of that year, Sing Lee's celebration included a Christmas tree that the barber decorated with "tinsel and gewgaws glitter, much to the delight of his guests." For the "score or more Chinese youngsters" in attendance, "there was candy and nuts" which made the youth "wild with excitement." The paper described Sing Lee as a "royal host" and wrote of the meal he served: "Probably never before has such a supper been eaten at a Christmas festival in Los Angeles." Yet at the same time that the article's author was admiring certain aspects of Sing Lee's celebration, the author also wrote about aspects of the festivities that confused him: "Under the boughs of the truly Christian Christmas tree squatted the image of a Joss, and from a smoldering censer curled the fumes of a pungent incense. The image seemed to mock the sentiment for which the cypress tree stood." The author also wrote that, "Mysterious steaming stews, whose contents could only be guessed, were served."

This article describing a Chinese American Christmas celebration in Los Angeles more than a century ago provides an opportunity to discuss the challenges of working with archival newspapers that both amateur historians and family genealogists will face. The Los Angeles Times, along with other digitized newspapers from the Southern California region in the early twentieth century, provides an excellent starting point for family history researchers looking to begin to expand their research from personal family records to public ones. Yet as the article about Sing Lee's Christmas party reminds us, even descriptions of seemingly innocuous events like Christmas parties during this period were clouded by the implicit and explicit biases of reporters and editors. While there was at least one Chinese American reporter working in Los Angeles in the first half of the twentieth century—Louise Leung—she was not active until the later part of the 1920s. As a result, reporting on the Chinese American community in Los Angeles during this period was usually by reporters with only a passing understanding of the community.

Run under the headline, "Chinese Tree Causes Glee: But Barber Lee Puts Joss Under It," the article about Sing Lee's Christmas celebration seems to express a type of awe that anyone in Chinatown celebrated Christmas. Of course, it should have come as no surprise to either reporters or readers of the city's papers that there were Chinese Christians in Los Angeles. As the paper's own reporting had shown over the prior year, there were multiple Christian missions working in Chinatown. In 1905, the Los Angeles Times had even run an article entitled "Chinese Christmas" that detailed the various Christmas celebrations held at the Methodist Mission in Chinatown. That individual Chinese Americans like Sing Lee should choose to celebrate the holiday on their own should not have been a surprise.

Along with this seeming disbelief over the presence of Chinese Christians in Los Angeles, the article also exhibits a type of disdain for the ways in which Chinese Americans seem to have adapted the celebration to their own needs without making any effort to find out from the celebrants themselves what the celebration meant to them. The author of the article seems to want to emphasize aspects of the celebration that are strange to him, pointing out the "joss" that "seemed to mock the sentiment for which the cypress tree stood," and describing the stews that were served as "mysterious." Despite the fact that the article is eleven paragraphs in length, the reporter did not ask questions of anyone in attendance to see how the guests perceived of the event. As a result, the Chinese American perspective on the event is completely missing.

These type of biases are common in early twentieth century reporting about Chinese Americans and they point to the importance of balancing public representations of the residents of Chinatown in newspaper articles like this with personal letters, oral histories, and family stories passed down in families. Chinese American genealogists can find important information about their relatives in local newspapers, and as more and more papers are digitized this information will become even easier to find. But as the article about Sing Lee's Christmas reminds us, these articles leave us with only an imperfect representation of an earlier period of Chinese American life.

William Gow is currently a doctoral candidate in Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley, where he is writing a history of Los Angeles Chinatown in the 1930s and 1940s. He has been a CHSSC member for more than a decade. He invites feedback, suggestions, or questions about the column and his academic work. William can be reached by email at wgow@outlook.com

New Chinatown, China City, and Hollywood Cinema:

*An Oral History of Los Angeles
in the 1930s and 1940s*

Do you have memories of Los Angeles
Chinatown in the 1930s and 1940s?

Have you heard stories from parents
or relatives from the period?

Would you like to have your oral history archived
at UCLA's Center for Oral History Research?

Graduate student William Gow, working with faculty advisor Professor Shari Huhndorf, is looking for community members to participate in recorded oral histories as part of his dissertation research in the Ethnic Studies Department at UC Berkeley. If you are a US-born adults who has memories about the Chinese American community in Los Angeles in the 1930s and 1940s, or if you are an adult who has heard stories about the Chinese American community directly from those who lived in Los Angeles in these decades, you may qualify to take part in this project.

To find out more information, email William Gow at williamgow@berkeley.edu or call William at 310-795-4730.



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Help us save paper and postage, email us for your online newsletter at chssc@hotmail.com

Community Calendar

Saturday, January 7, 2017 12:00pm – 3:00pm **21st Annual Charity Fashion Show**

The 21st Miss Los Angeles Chinatown Charity Fashion Show, showcased by the 2017 Miss Los Angeles Chinatown Pageant Contestants. The show features amazing LA-based designers, including Nichiq, Zoozie LA, Lilianna, See U Soon, Woman's Touch Apparel. They will also have merchandise for sale at the show. Proceeds will go to Home of Angels, a non-profit organization founded by parents with developmental disabilities children.

Exchange LA
618 S. Spring St. Los Angeles CA 90014

Sunday, January 8, 2017 2:00pm **Aviatrix Screening in the Museum of Flying**

A special screening of our extended version of the documentary *Aviatrix: The Katherine Sui Fun Cheung Story*. Katherine Sui Fun Cheung, was one of the first licensed Chinese women pilots in the United States in the 1930s. Katherine's daughter Dottie will be in attendance for Q&A. Tickets are available at the door, includes admission to museum. Adults \$10 / Seniors \$8 / Students \$8 Children(3-12) \$6
The Museum of Flying 3100 Airport Ave. Santa Monica, CA 90405 www.museumofflying.org

Wednesday, January 11 6:30pm
Meet Jon Soo Hoo, Official Photographer of the LA Dodgers
Castelar Elementary School
840 Yale Street Los Angeles, CA 90012
Free parking - enter via College Street
Refreshments will be served.
This event is free and open to the public

Tuesday, January 17, 2017 6:30pm **"Water Tossing Boulders" By Adrienne Berard**

How a Family of Chinese Immigrants Led the First Fight to Desegregate Schools in the Jim Crow South.
Cerritos Library
18025 Bloomfield Ave Cerritos, CA 90703

Saturday, January 21, 2017 **Chinese Family History Group of Southern California Meeting:** **Genealogy Detectives: Solving Family Mysteries** **Sharing Our Research Methods and Discoveries & Celebrating Chinese New Year.**

LOCATION: Chinese American Citizens Alliance (CACA)
415 Bamboo Lane, Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 628-8015 <http://www.chinesefamilyhistory.org>

Saturday, February 4, 2017 **118th Golden Dragon Parade**

Join us in the Lunar New Year Festivities with the CHSSC! Take part in the Parade by marching with the CHSSC flag unit, or relax with fellow friends and members at the CHSSC headquarters on Bernard St. With over 100 years of tradition in Southern California, the Golden Dragon Parade has become the premiere cultural event for celebrating the Lunar New Year in the greater Los Angeles area. We invite you to be a part of this important annual celebration- as a spectator, participant, or sponsor. For additional information email CHSSC@hotmail.com or call (323) 222-0856

Save the Date:
Annual Golden Spike Banquet May 20, 2017