

# NEWS'N NOTES



## Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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

JUNE 2019



*Pictured above: women from Gay Yuen's family including her grandmother (left photo), and mother (middle photo).*

## Building Identity, Character, and Values: Lessons Learned From the Women in My Life

*June's Monthly Meeting speaker is Gay Yuen.*

A first generation immigrant who arrived in LA at age 6, Gay will tell the stories of the women in her family and how they impacted her cultural identity, her activism, and her passion for the pursuit of the history of the Chinese in America.

Again this month, CHSSC will be meeting at the CACA Lodge:

Wednesday, June 5, 2019  
6:30PM (check-in and refreshments), 7:00PM (program) to 9:00PM  
Chinese American Citizens Alliance LA Lodge (behind Phoenix  
Bakery)  
415 Bamboo Lane  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Parking available on the street (meters run until 8:00PM) and at  
Bamboo Plaza and Mandarin Plaza. For any questions, please contact  
[info@chssc.org](mailto:info@chssc.org).



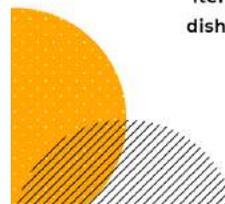
SAVE THE DATE, TELL YOUR FRIENDS,  
AND WE'LL SEE YOU THERE!

## CHSSC'S FIRST YARD SALE!

Organized by the Raffle and Silent Auction Committee  
All proceeds go to the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15  
7:30AM - 1:00PM  
620 S. WESTBORO AVE.  
ALHAMBRA, CA 91803

The sale will include lots of Asian  
items: a treasure trove of vases,  
dishes, paintings, and even small  
jewelry.





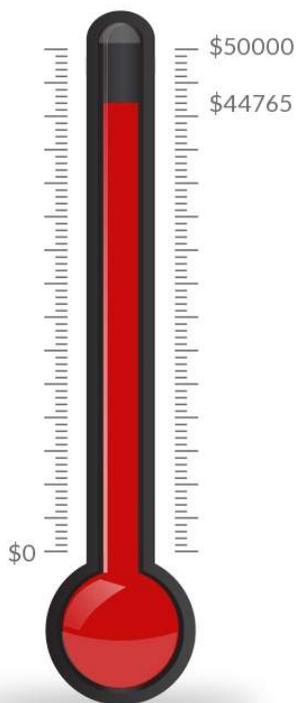
# President's Letter

As Asian Pacific Heritage month ends, the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California finishes six months of successful fundraising. Our yearly Golden Spike Awards Dinner was held at the Ocean Star Restaurant. Our five honorees, Russell Leong, Frank Shyong, Oliver Wang, Elaine Woo, and Helen Zia, spoke to a mesmerized audience. Moneys raised at the dinner are used for our yearly operating funds.

I am happy to announce that with the help of generous donors, CHSSC has raised \$44,764.70 at the time of printing. In October, we received a pledge of a \$50,000 matching grant. I am hopeful that we can raise the additional \$5,000 needed to receive the match within the next couple of months, and we can begin the necessary work on our historic houses.

Sincerely,  
Susan Dickson  
President, CHSSC

## Special thanks to...\*



- Richard Chinn, *IMO Wing Mar*
- Shirley Chu Ng & Dean Ng
- Susan Dickson, *IMO Wing Mar*
- Dr. Allen King Wong
- Albert & Margaret Lew, *IMO Wing Mar*
- Joyce Mar, *IMO Wing Mar*
- Benjamin & Doreen Nakayama, *IMO Wing Mar*
- Karen Neubert, *IMO Tyrus Wong*
- Andrea Ohta, *IMO Wing Mar*
- Yep H. Wong, *IMO Wing Mar*
- Judy Woo, *IMO Wing Mar*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS

- Susan Dickson, President
- Donald Loo, Vice President
- Linda Bentz, Secretary
- Teresa Chung, Treasurer

Gordon Hom, VP for Programs

Eugene W. Moy, Membership Secretary

### MEMBERS AT LARGE

- John Chan
- Wendy Chung
- Cindy Fong
- Laureen Hom
- Henry Leong
- Winifred Lew
- Franklin Mah
- Felicia Tabing

## 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-Americans community in support of a better appreciation of the rich, multicultural society of the United States.

**CHSSC's Capital Campaign continues, please help us meet our \$50,000 goal. Visit [chssc.org](http://chssc.org) to donate.**

\*as of May 24, 2019



JUNE 2019

## Ten Mile Hike to Celebrate the Contribution of Chinese Railroad Workers on the Transcontinental Railroad

By Tennyson Kwok

This year is the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Golden Spike Ceremony, originally held on May 10, 1869, celebrating the formal joining of the first Transcontinental Railroad Track which joined the Union Pacific from the East and the Union Pacific from the West. Up to 20,000 Chinese worked on the Central Pacific, and up to 2,000 perished during the endeavor.

In April 1869, Charles Crocker of the Central Pacific accepted a bet of \$10,000 against Thomas Durant of the Union Pacific that his predominately Chinese crew could lay 10 miles of track in one day, bettering the 6 miles in one day effort by the Union Pacific's predominately Irish work crews. The Central Pacific won by laying 10 miles and 56 feet of track in 12 hours on April 28, 1869, near the final joining of track in Promontory, Utah. This is a record that still stands today.

The National Park Service has a museum at Promontory, with recreation of the tracks, and has regular summer reenactments of the Golden Spike Ceremony. A few miles from the museum is the end of the "10 Miles in One Day" route. The entire roadbed from 1869 has been preserved and is accessible by auto. All track and ties had been removed in 1942, as the iron in the tracks vital to the war effort. Numerous relic metal spikes and other artifacts are on the roadbed.

An organized group hike was conducted on April 28, 2019 along the entire route, exactly 150 years afterwards to the day of the historic event. The hike leader was Jack Shu, and his birthday is also April 28th, which inspired him to organize the hike. About 22 participated on the hike. The age range was from 73 years old down to high school students. On the day of the hike, it was quite windy (15-20 mph) and cool (approximately 50°F). Off trail, we had to dodge

cow pies, and occasionally the free range cattle. Numerous relic metal spikes and other artifacts were seen on the roadbed.

Ken Eng, Rick Eng and I were the CHSSC members in attendance. We started hiking at 9:30 am, and finished about 3:30 pm. At the 6 mile point, Jack Shu was interviewed by a local TV news crew, and the segment was shown on the evening news.\*

At the end of the hike, our legs were sore, but all of us were very proud to have been a part of history.



\*Link to the interview: <https://www.ksl.com/article/46541046/group-honors-chinese-transcontinental-railroad-workers>



# Chinese Laundry at Yosemite's Pioneer History Center

By Linda Bentz

On May 17, 2019, a meeting was held at CHSSC to discuss interpretation of a Chinese laundry located in Yosemite's Pioneer History Center. Sabina Diaz, Chief of Interpretation and Education, secured a grant from the Yosemite Conservancy to open the laundry to the public. Attendees included Susan Dickson, Eugene Moy, Linda Bentz, Jack and Mary Ellen Shu, Yen Yen Chan and Sabrina Diaz of the National Park Service, Alan Solomon, and Sue Fawn Chung, emerita University of Nevada Las Vegas.

The Chinese laundry building was built in 1917 about 500 feet northeast of the historic Wawona Hotel complex. The 1.5 story building is rectangular with a gable roof, and the exterior measures 28x40 feet. The structure ultimately became a repair shop for wagons, or Carriage Shop, and is currently used for storage. The Chinese laundry is one of the few original buildings in the Pioneer History Center. Additional historical structures were moved to the Center between 1955 and 1964.

Future preparations to open the Chinese laundry to the public include the addition of interpretive signage



near the building, training of docents to describe the building and its function, and designing free standing exhibits. CHSSC and Sue Fawn Chung, will assist with ensuring historical accuracy, exhibitions and promotion for this important site. Storyboards for interpretation will be completed during the summer of 2019, and the project will be completed by January 31, 2020.

# Yosemite Trip

July 12-14	July 15-17
Historic walking tours, hiking, and visiting Chinese pioneer sites.	Backpacking to Sing Peak

Dates are dependent on weather and trail conditions. See the Community Calendar on the back cover for more information.



# May Meeting Recap

Four USC Film and Television M.F.A. students presented short films themed around their study abroad in China. By Felicia Tabing



Four filmmakers from USC that participated in a global exchange program to Beijing screened their films for the May meeting. As a student in this program, each filmmaker partnered with a student in China to produce a film during their trip. Three of the filmmakers, Christina Jun, Santiago Herran, and Lauren Quirarte were present during the meeting to present their films and for an Q&A after the screening.

The first film was Christina Jun's *Master of Comedy* about an American expatriate named Jesse in

Beijing mastering the art of *xiangsheng* (相声), or "cross-talk", the local comedy art form. Her film followed Jesse as he prepared, performed, and taught the local comedy to other foreigners. Jesse discusses navigating the local comedy scene and culture as a foreigner, and how he brings connections between cultures through the comedy art form.

Next, we saw Santiago Herran's film *Hutong Man* about a man living within old, narrow alleyways continuing to live in the old way. He is seen carving seals, while his mother is shown walking around talking to strangers, inviting them to eat. He has children, but seems reluctant to work and the film shows his dry humor. For example, after a meal his wife prepared, he was asked which was his favorite dish. He responded by saying it was the one he made, of which there was no such dish.

Lydia Lane's film, *The Gays*, was described by the present filmmakers as being controversial, as the USC and Chinese faculty were worried about making a film featuring homosexual themes, and such movies

were discouraged from being produced in the past. The film featured several gay men discussing their love life, each story dramatically different. Simon is shown preparing to go to a club, puts on some makeup, and talks about meeting his boyfriend, Mr. Q, and how they told each other they liked each other. Simon's story in the film ends sadly, as he describes Mr. Q as his soulmate, yet Mr. Q's parents did not accept him being gay, resulting in Mr. Q marrying and having children, but Simon is still waiting for Mr. Q. Nick is a British expatriate, shown doing comedy while wearing high heels, and in interviews speaks lovingly about his husband. Nick's story ends happily, as he describes their parent's acceptance of being gay, and finally marrying his husband at the British Embassy.

The screening ended with Lauren Quirarte's film *Motherland* which featured Lauren going back to China and meeting her family there. Her mother did not feel connected to parts of the family, and didn't talk about them, so Lauren sought out to learn about this side by meeting relatives in China facilitated by her aunt. The film shows Lauren preparing to meet her family by buying gifts instructed by her aunt, meeting the family, and reflecting on the visit with her mother.

After all of the films, three of the filmmakers were available for a long Q&A, as the audience stayed and asked many questions. During this, the filmmakers also discussed their experience in the global exchange program, working with their Chinese partners in making the film, and issues with the language barrier and cutting the film. It was a very interesting program, and the filmmakers brought to the audience insight on what it is like to be a film student and the struggles and challenges in deciding on the topic and gaining support to make a film.





## RECENT OUTREACH AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES:

### Walking tour, Children's Community School, Thursday, 5/9

Docent and former board member Linda Chong led a group of 18 third graders plus adults from a progressive school in Van Nuys: "our students are studying Chinese Americans' role in Los Angeles, both historically and present day, as part of their cultural study of Los Angeles."

### Asian American Task Force program, Wednesday, 5/15

Board member Eugene Moy provided a talk, *The History and Contributions of Asian Pacific Islanders in Riverside County*, to a gathering of nearly 100 community health professionals and advocates from the Riverside area as part of their program, *Celebrating Heritage, Diversity, & Wellness*. The AATF is a committee of the Cultural Competency Program at the Riverside University Health System-Behavioral Health.

### Walking tour for team CFO, Saturday, 5/18

We provided a 2+ hour Chinatown walking tour for 17 L.A.-based contract accounting professionals who work for various agencies. Docent-in-training Felico Li observed.

## UPCOMING:

### Photo Day, Friday 6/14

See Community Calendar for more details.

### Lecture at CAM, 1:00 PM Saturday 7/27

Board member and archaeologist Linda Bentz will speak on Chinese abalone merchants and fisherman in 19<sup>th</sup> century Santa Barbara. Details and RSVP at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lecture-chinese-abalone-merchants-and-fishermen-in-19th-century-santa-barbara-tickets-60165315077>

### Arcadia Library talk, 2 PM Sat 8/17

Board member Eugene Moy will present a talk, *Early Chinese in Arcadia (and beyond)*. Free registration at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/arcadia-history-lecture-early-chinese-in-arcadia-and-beyond-tickets-62283298021>



Pictured at top: Eugene Moy with UCLA panelists from the Chinese American Culture Night in May. The student-run production is put on by the Association of Chinese Americans and this year addresses mental health in the Asian-American community.

Middle: May 18th walking tour for team CFO.

Bottom: photo of the planning committee for the upcoming development of the historic Chinese laundry building in Yosemite. Read more about this meeting on page 4.



*Clockwise from above: the five Golden Spike Honorees pose onstage with CHSSC President, Susan Dickson, and Assemblymember Ed Chau (from left: Susan Dickson, Elaine Woo, Frank Shyong, Helen Zia, Oliver Wang, Russell C. Leong, and Assemblymember Chau); Guests at the Golden Spike listened to speeches by the honorees while enjoying the food at Ocean Star Restaurant. We were fortunate to be one of the last banquets held at the establishment; John Jung and Donna Lee, two CHSSC members, take a moment to pose for a photo.*



*Below: On May 10, 2019, people from across the country journeyed to Promontory, Utah to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the first Transcontinental Railroad. The event is significant to history and train enthusiasts, and Asian Americans alike. CHSSC members were there to represent our society.*

*All photos courtesy of O.C. Lee*





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*Please help us save paper and postage,  
Email us to indicate your preference for an online newsletter at [info@chssc.org](mailto:info@chssc.org)*

## Community Calendar

### **Wednesday, July 12-Monday, July 17, 2019**

#### **Yosemite Trip**

In 2013, we began our program of summer journeys to discover the wonders of Yosemite National Park. Join us this year. We will combine three days of programming to include ranger-led hikes, informative talks, and heritage planning discussions. Experienced backpackers are invited to join the three-day hike to the top of 10,552' Sing Peak, named in honor of Tie Sing. Sing was backcountry chef who catered the Mather Mountain Party which was instrumental in the eventual formation of the National Park Service.

July 12-14—Historic walking tours, brief hikes, and visits to Chinese pioneer sites.

July 15-17—Hike to Sing Peak.

See [chssc.org](http://chssc.org) for up-to-date information. Contact [info@chssc.org](mailto:info@chssc.org) for more details.

Other contact information: Helen Quon regarding cabin arrangements ([hyquon@gmail.com](mailto:hyquon@gmail.com)); JackShu ([jkshu52@gmail.com](mailto:jkshu52@gmail.com)), or Yenyen Chan ([Yenyen.Chan@nps.com](mailto:Yenyen.Chan@nps.com)) regarding space on Wilderness Permits and the Sing Peak hike itinerary.

### **Friday, June 14, 2019—10:00AM-2:00PM**

#### **Photo Day**

Come to CHSSC to help identify people in the unlabeled photographs from our archives. Light lunch will be provided. Parking available on the CHSSC lot. All are welcome.

415 Bernard St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

### **Saturday, June 15, 2019—9:00AM-1:00PM**

#### **CHSSC's First Yard Sale**

The sale will include lots of Asian items, vases, dishes, paintings, and even small pieces of jewelry. Come

### **June 16, 2019—12:00PM-3:00PM**

#### **CAM Family Day—Cyanotypes**

Create prints with sunlight in a hands-on activity inspired by the cyanotypes of Wu Chi-Tsung, a featured artist in the Chinese American Museum's *Lightscaapes* exhibit. Experience the fascinating exhibition and make your own cyanotype prints. All materials will be provided. Free and open to the public.

Chinese American Museum  
425 N. Los Angeles St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012