

OCTOBER 2023

An Evening with Lisa See Wednesday, October 4, 6pm

Join us for dinner at Golden Dragon Restaurant and a book discussion with bestselling author Lisa See on her newest book, *Lady Tan's Circle of Women*, a captivating journey into the world of the Ming Dynasty. Her historical novel was inspired by the true story of a woman physician from 15th-century China and is a triumphant reimagining of the life of a woman who would still be considered remarkable today.

Purchase your tickets at <https://chssc.org/event/an-evening-with-lisa-see/>

STEP INSIDE: Lady Tan's Circle Of Women



Jointly sponsored by:



The China Society of
Southern California



Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California

南加州華人歷史學會



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President's message

We had a great program in September. Dr. Will Gow and his summer interns did a fantastic job of presenting their findings from the recently-released census from 1950 as it applies to the Chinese Americans living in the East Adams district of Los Angeles. The program is not available on our YouTube channel so you will have to wait until our book on the Five Chinatowns is released to learn about it.

In August, one of our members, Irene Lam, arranged for a tour of historic sites in Northern California for members of our board. David Lei, Vice Chairman of the Chinese American Community Foundation, and Anna Eng, a lecturer at both UC Berkeley and San Francisco State University, were our tour guides. I would like to thank Irene, David and Anna for this wonderful opportunity to connect with our past and be proud of the accomplishments of our ancestors. Seeing something first hand has such a powerful impact, far more than just reading about it in a textbook.

I was fortunate to participate in a walking tour of Chinatown led by Eugene Moy. The tour included the director and staff of the USC US-China Institute, which hosts the Lingnan Chan Fellows. Students from Lingnan University were able to learn about the history of Chinatown to better understand their time in Los Angeles.



From back row, left to right:
Chaoqun Jin, Clayton Dube, Glenn Osaki
Crystal Hsia, Gene Moy, Vicki Higgins
Ricky Leo, Ming Wai Carly Sin, Olivia Lei
Amina Meirasbek (USC cap), Grace Leo, Gemma Fa-Kaji

Ricky Leo

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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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October Meeting

Our October monthly meeting is a joint dinner/program co-sponsored with the China Society of Southern California. It features bestselling author Lisa See, who will discuss her latest book *Lady Tan's Circle of Women*.



About Lisa See

Lisa See is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Island of Sea Women*, *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane*, *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*, *Peony in Love*, *Shanghai Girls*, *China Dolls*, and *Dreams of Joy*, which debuted at #1. She is also the author of *On Gold Mountain*, which tells the story of her Chinese American family's settlement in Los Angeles. See was the recipient of the Golden Spike Award from the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California and the Historymaker's Award from the Chinese American Museum. She was also named National Woman of the Year by the Organization of Chinese American Women.

Walk Down Memory Lane: Moon Festival 1990

The Moon Festival celebration was brought back to LA Chinatown on Labor Day weekend in 1990. CHSSC was a joint sponsor with the Chinese Cultural and Community Center and the City of L.A. Cultural Affairs Department. While CHSSC provided numerous volunteers, the Cultural Affairs Department provided funding as well as technical support and tech management. CHSSC president, Sue Yee, was Festival co-chair. Crowd estimates ranged from 2,500 to 5,000.

The venues for the Moon Festival ranged from Central Plaza to Castelar St. Elementary School to Yale Street. The vision for the event was part entertainment, part education and outreach to all visitor segments. The performing arts included groups of musicians playing Chinese instruments, 3 groups of children doing Chinese folk dance, the Bread and Puppets theater, and the East Wind Lion Dance Group. The Kwun Opera performed Chinese opera in the Castelar Multi-purpose Room for a large group of senior citizens while their grandchildren chased each other around the room. Artisan groups included a popular calligraphic arts booth. The weekend events also included poetry-reading and storytelling. A highlight of the festival was the dramatic telling of Moon Festival myths by noted author and playwright Frank Chin. The evening was capped off by moon viewing from a telescope located on the Castelar school yard.



L to R: Munson Kwok, CHSSC Charter Member, Christine Ung with Mayor Tom Bradley's office, Pat Lee, Chinese Chamber of Commerce (1990) with a proclamation from Mayor Tom Bradley.



Miss Chinatown and her court at Moon Festival (1990)



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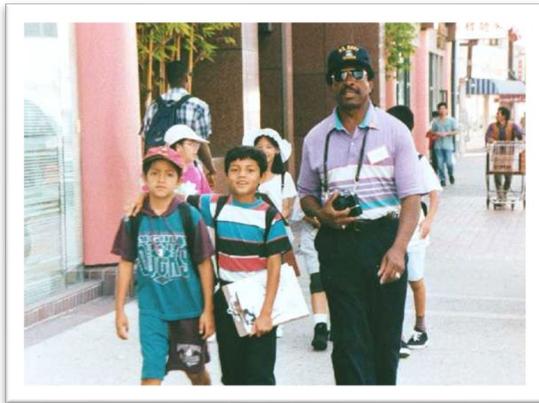
CHSSC Walking Tour Training Program

Do you want to know more about LA Chinatown? You can become a participant in our new docent training program. The two-day training, which will be led by our walking tour coordinator, Eugene Moy, will start in November. Trainees will use the new walking tour guide that was created by Eugene, Susan Dickson, and Riona Tsai.

The walking tour program began in 1981. The City extended an invitation to participate in L.A.'s Bicentennial. We jumped at the opportunity and quickly organized a planning committee. The committee included Angi Ma Wong, Eugene Moy, Charles Wong (CHSSC Charter Member), Munson Kwok and Suellen Cheng. They were aided by Ella Quan, Helen Young, Bill Mason and Emma Louie. Through the years, classes of students of all ages as well as interested adults toured Chinatown with our docents to see the daily life of Chinatown. They visited temples, gift shops, herbal stores, markets, and, sometimes, restaurants. Visitors walked by the school, the library, the hospital, and many murals along the way. We remember the many dedicated tour guides who have helped during these years: Bill Chun-Hoon, Cy Wong, Louise and Herb Leong, Peggy Wong, and Linda Chong (to name a few).



First group of docents trained for the walking tour (1981)
First group of docents trained for the walking tour (1981)



Walking tour with Cy Wong (1996)



Walking tour with Bill Chun-Hoon (1996)

In 2019 CHSSC received a grant from the Society of Architectural Historians. Originally, the grant was to fund buses of students from disadvantaged neighborhoods to tour Chinatown as well as to fund training of docents as well. When the pandemic prevented students from attending school, CHSSC decided to make an online walking tour on our website. Subsequently, with the help of a donation from Marjorie Chun-Hoon in memory of her husband, Bill, CHSSC designed a 65-page docent training manual which was printed in September 2023.

This past year the requests for walking tours of Chinatown have multiplied. If you are willing and able to help us provide tours of Chinatown, please consider joining our training program. The exact dates of the training will be determined once we see how many people are interested. Please contact us at info@chssc.org.



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CHSSC Trip to Historic Sites in Northern California

This small group field trip, organized by CHSSC member Irene Lam, included Board Members Linda Bentz, Susan Dickson, Grace Leo and Ricky Leo as well as Irene. Our tour guides David Lei and Anna Eng graciously shared their time, expertise and knowledge about Chinese culture and history and mapped out an incredible itinerary.



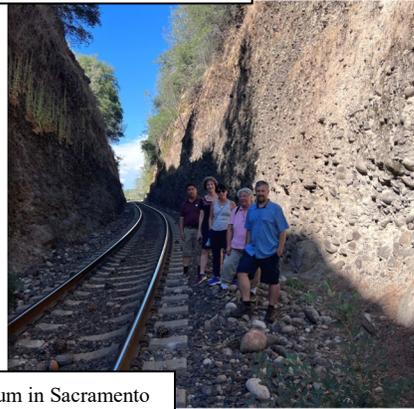
Tour of San Francisco Chinatown led by David Lei included the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, "Chinese Six Companies".



Tour of the restored Bing Kung Tong in Walnut Grove and the town of Locke by Douglas Hsia and Anna Eng.



Gold Mountain exhibit at The California Museum in Sacramento and the Joss House and Bloomer Cut in Auburn.



Golden Drift Museum in Dutch Flat with docent Anne Holmes.



Chinese Catfish Pond at Donnor Summit.



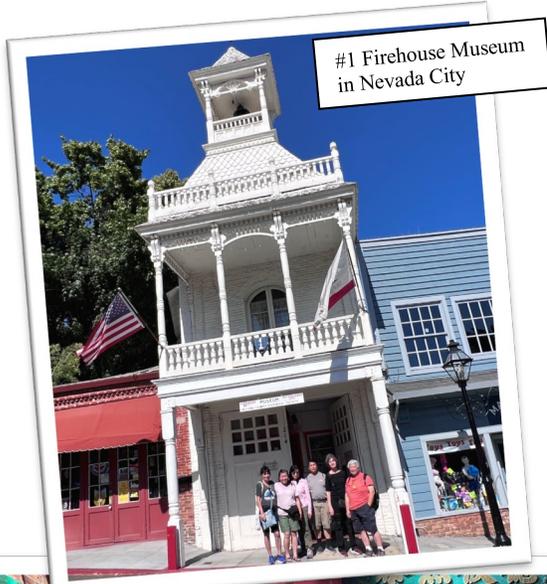
Entrance to one of the historic Summit Tunnels.



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CHSSC Trip to Historic Sites in Northern California (cont.)



#1 Firehouse Museum in Nevada City



Chinese American Museum of Northern California, the Suey Sing Building, the Chinese School Museum and the Bok Kai Temple (pictured) in Marysville.



Chinese Temple in Oroville.



Exhibit honoring the Chinese railroad workers, California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento.

Donations for September

In Memory of Pauline Yee Lum

Al Iba Family

Al Lum & Family

Lum Family Trust (Judy Lum)

The Families of Chung & Pansy Wing

Marilyn Yee

In Celebration of Margie Lew's 102nd Birthday

Margie Lew

Donations

William J. Minderhout

National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)



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Upcoming Events

October 1, Family History Month Open House – Sahyun Library, 316 Castillo St, Santa Barbara

The Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society is celebrating the 25th anniversary of Sahyun Library by hosting a Family History Month Open House on Sunday, October 1, 1-4 pm. CHSSC hosted a table last year and we plan on being there this year. Please join us!.

October 6-8, Yosemite Pilgrimage

CHSSC has been conducting a pilgrimage to Yosemite National Park since 2012 in order to discover and highlight the contributions of the Chinese in the development of the park. For more information, contact Eugene Moy at info@chssc.org.

October 7, Chinatown Neighborhood Night Market

Join Chinatown Community for Equitable Development's (CCED) second annual Chinatown Neighborhood Night Market on October 7, 5-9 pm, and support legacy small businesses of Chinatown.

October 28, 18th Annual Los Angeles Archives Bazaar – USC Doheny Memorial Library

Experience the diversity of stories that make Southern California such a place of discovery. At the Los Angeles Archives Bazaar, presented by L.A. as Subject and the USC Libraries, anyone with an interest in the region's history will find something of value. A broad array of institutions and archives will have experts on hand to show off their collections and answer questions. This is a free event open to the public. Parking is available on campus.

October 28, The History of Tsinoy Chinese in the Philippines

Susie Ling, Associate Professor of History at Pasadena City College, is the featured speaker. Saturday, October 28, 12:00 – 2:00pm, Albert O. Little Community Center, 18750 Clarkdale Ave, Artesia, CA