

February 2025

CHINESE TRUCK FARMING IN INLAND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: A LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGY OF LABOR, MOVEMENT AND EXCLUSION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025, 7-8 PM
ON ZOOM

San Bernardino Map

Urban Chinese Community

- ▲ San Bernardino Chinatown

Rural Chinese Truck Farms

- Cooley Ranch
- Golden Ranch

Lands with irrigation works

- 1888 Irrigation Map Legend

Swamp lands



Our speaker, Laura Ng, is a historical archaeologist who researches late nineteenth and early twentieth century Chinese migrants and their transpacific lives.

FREE TO ATTEND

RSVP VIA EVENTBRITE ON CHSSC WEBSITE: <https://chssc.org>



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

February 2025

RESILIENCE

In telling Chinese American history we share the many challenges that our earlier generations faced. We proudly point to the resilience of the pioneers in overcoming anti-Chinese politics. As of this writing, though, we have been witness to the shared pain and tragedy faced by all within the fire-impacted areas in Southern California. We extend our hearts and prayers to, and must stand in solidarity with, all people.

Due to the continuing fire and air quality impacts to our regional population, most of the events normally scheduled for this season have been cancelled or postponed. We were planning to march again in the Golden Dragon Parade, something that we have been doing since 1976, but that has now been cancelled, as has the Miss Chinatown Pageant. The Firecracker 5K/10K Run has been postponed.

In the meantime, we are grateful for the continuing support of our members and friends. Many responded to Giving Tuesday in November, and many others have provided donations, whether for end-of-year or in memory of one of our beloved members and friends. On behalf of the CHSSC Board of Directors, a grateful thank you.

Eugene Moy

Board of Directors

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Mission Statement

The purpose of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, Inc. shall be:

- to advocate for a wider understanding of the significance of the role of Chinese and Chinese Americans in the history of Southern California;
- to bring together people with a mutual interest in the Southern California history of Chinese and Chinese Americans;
- to perform all the functions required to acquire, preserve, and communicate knowledge of this important history; and
- to promote a better appreciation of our rich multi-cultural society.



Chinese Truck Farming in Inland Southern California: A Landscape Archaeology of Labor, Movement, and Exclusion

Abstract: In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many Chinese immigrants in inland Southern California labored on Chinese-operated truck farms known locally as “Chinese gardens.” These vegetable farmers provided a variety of fresh produce to Chinese and non-Chinese urban residents. A landscape archaeology analysis of Chinese-operated farms around the cities of Riverside and San Bernardino reveals that Chinese truck farming shaped the built environment in both the United States and China, anti-immigration laws impacted the movement of Chinese laborers without American citizenship the most, and that vegetable farms became part of a racialized landscape where harassment by law enforcement was common. Chinese truck farmers made invaluable agricultural contributions to inland Southern California and created alliances with non-Chinese landlords, but ultimately their visibility on the landscape made them continual targets of race-based exclusion.

Bio: Laura Ng is a historical archaeologist who researches late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Chinese migrants and their transpacific lives. These migrants often lived in segregated communities, but they also migrated back and forth between the U.S. and villages in the Pearl River Delta region of China. Laura is currently investigating racism and transnationalism at Chinese truck farms in Southern California and at the Evanston and Rock Springs Chinatowns in rural Southwestern Wyoming; the latter two sites are community-engaged projects conducted in collaboration with Dr. Dudley Gardner and Chinese American descendants.





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Donner Summit Camp Designated as a National Historic Landmark

By Linda Bentz

Chinese laborers worked high in the Sierra Nevada mountains to construct the western section of the Transcontinental Railroad. Built in the 1860s, the camp where Chinese laborers lived, known as Summit Camp, is the largest and longest-occupied site for Chinese workers. These men faced perilous conditions, inclement weather and worked tirelessly to blast tunnels to lay track through the rugged terrain. In the 19th century, this monumental



project drove western expansion and economic growth. Summit Camp is a testament to the courage and contributions of Chinese workers. In December 2024, the United States Department of the Interior designated the camp as a National Historic Landmark; the first site of its type specifically associated with Chinese American history to receive recognition.

The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California holds two archaeological collections from the Summit Camp: the Evans-Chace and the Costello Collections. A variety of artifacts are contained in these assemblages and include, pieces of clothing, shoes, opium/tobacco paraphernalia, munitions, gaming tokens, table wares, medicinal/alcohol bottles, digging tools, and other campsite items. The Evans-Chace and Costello Collections are open to the public for research. To make an appointment to view these materials please contact our archivists at info@chssc.org.



Dec 28 walking tour for the Chin family from San Diego and New Jersey. Assisting were Cindy Fong, Lily Wu, and Susan Sing.



Students from Social Justice Humanitas Academy from San Fernando toured Chinatown on Nov. 21



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Dorothy Lam Schoon



Although Dorothy Lam Schoon was born in New York City, she came to Los Angeles when she was an infant. She grew up in the East Adams/San Pedro St. section of LA going to a variety of LA schools and graduating from Polytechnic High in downtown LA.

She became a Schoon when she married Robert (“Bobby”) Gee Schoon, Jr (d. 2010). The young couple first lived in LA Chinatown on Yale St., before building their home in El Sereno, and eventually moving to other homes in the Silverlake area where they raised their two children, Gregory and Janis.

Aside from being a wife and mother, she also managed to work full time. Many years were spent working for So Cal Gas Co., followed by another career with TWA.

Dottie attended monthly CHSSC meetings in Chinatown, and was always eager to promote and preserve the heritage of the LA the Chinatown community, as this is where she spent her formative years as a young girl, first in Old Chinatown, followed by China City and then New Chinatown. She enthusiastically supported CHSSC through donations and her wish was to continue this after her passing.



Riverside Museum's Multicultural Council at Riverside City Council's declaration of Dec. 17 as Day of Inclusion, which includes recognition of Dec. 17, 1943 congressional repeal of Chinese Exclusion. Eugene Moy spoke to thank the City's support of Inclusion.



Air purifier used at CHSSC office, supporting archivists and volunteers in the office.



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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DONATIONS

Helen Chan | Glenn Chin

Jeff Chin | Sonia Chin

Patricia Dung | O. C. Lee

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The Lila Quan Family Trust

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In Memory of Steve and Ella Leong

Andrew Leong

In Memory of Kitty Lew

Marjorie Lee

In Memory of Christopher Tighe Merritt

Marjorie Lee

In Memory of Kenneth Yow

Marjorie Lee

In Memory of David Tong, Gary Fong (alumnus of the LA Drum and Bugle Corps

Linda Ching-Ikiri

In Memory of June Soo Hoo

Charles Chin

The Loys and the Comeveaux

In Honor of Susan Sing's Birthday

Kenneth Chan | Mei Ong

In Memory of Dottie Schoon

Cindy Fujimoto | Lawrence Gee

Celia Huey | Marilyn Huie

Brenda Kim | Kathryn Kwok

Andrew Leong | Gail and Elsa Leong

Martha Schoon | Martha Watson

Martha and Janis Leung

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Lester Moy | Jo Schoon

Martha Schoon | Jean Huey Soong

Carmen Wong | Charles Wong

Francis Wong | S.A. Wong

Marilyn Yip | Eric and Vicky Young



Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California

南加州華人歷史學會

2025 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

YOUR 2024 MEMBERSHIP HAS SUPPORTED THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

Virtual walking tour of Chinatown and walking tour training manual.

12th Annual Pilgrimage to Yosemite (heritage tour).

Where You Stand: Chinatown 1880-1939 exhibit at Union Station.

Three archivists working on our physical and digital archives and our library.

Organized and launched the online version of the Southern California Oral History project.

Summer intern research using 1950 census of the Old Chinatown area for our
"The Five Chinatowns" book project with partner UCLA Asian American Studies Center.



YOUR 2025 MEMBERSHIP WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

Renovation of our Chinatown Heritage Center.

Continue processing our archival and digital assets and uploading digital assets to the Online Archives of
California and Calisphere.

Continued community partner to UCLA

Continuing training of Library Science interns.

Safety and security of our information technology.

Continued documentation of Chinatown history.

Additional virtual and physical exhibits.



☐ New Membership	☐ Renewal
Name _____	
Address _____	
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Mail to: Chinese Historical Society of Southern California
411 Bernard St
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Membership Levels

☐ Regular	\$ 57
☐ 100x100 Club	\$ 100
☐ Supporter	\$ 300
☐ Senior (60+) or student	\$ 32
☐ Hardcopy newsletter	\$ 20

Donation (tax deductible) \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

To join or renew your membership by debit card, credit card,
or by using your PayPal account, visit our website at chssc.org.

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

Please make checks payable to CHSSC

☐ Check here if you would like our
newsletter sent via email.



**Chinese Historical Society
of Southern California**

411 Bernard Street, Los Angeles CA 90012

Community Events

Feb. 4 - panel, *Stand Up and Be Counted*, Al Lum book presentation and panel
For more details and RSVP, see <https://www.sccla.org/event-6018548>

Mar. 5 - CHSSC speaker, Sue Fawn Chung

Mar 8 – 62nd Annual Miss Los Angeles Chinatown Pageant,
<https://misslachinatown.squarespace.com/>

Mar 8-9 – L.A. Chinatown Firecracker Run 5K/10K
<https://tinyurl.com/vuk3uwff>

Mar 22, 1:00pm - 126th Annual Golden Dragon Parade, L.A. Chinatown
<https://www.lachinesechamber.org/2025-gdp>