

Fall 2015 CHCP PROGRESS

Educating, Preserving, and Promoting
Chinese & Chinese American History and
Culture in the Santa Clara Valley

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The Chinese and the Iron Road/Building the Transcontinental Railroad

By Al Low

Stanford University - Tresidder Memorial Union June 6, 2015

Sponsors: Chinese Historical Society of America/Sue Lee and Stanford University/ Prof. Gordon Chang

CHCP Attendees: Brenda Hee Wong, Debbie Gong-Guy, Lee Chin, George Chin, Ginger Lai, and Al Low

The event was held in the Tresidder Union on the Stanford University campus and attended by more than 200 attendees who included descendants, historians, researchers, genealogists, and many others wanting to learn more about the previously little-known and unheralded contributions by the thousands of Chinese in helping to complete the building of the Transcontinental Railroad.

After brief welcoming remarks from Stanford and the co-sponsors of the project, the Chinese Consul General, Luo Linquan, addressed the group welcoming the many overseas attendees to the project. He also recognized the contributions



The Chinese and the Iron Road (cont'd)

of the thousands of Chinese immigrants working on the Transcontinental Railroad and infrastructure projects such as levees for agricultural development, roads, rock walls, etc. that helped to develop California and other parts of the United States in the late 1800s. These hardworking immigrants often labored under extreme conditions and for low pay. He also commented on the global Chinese Diaspora and how these thousands of immigrants through their work effort were able to be successful wherever they traveled and labored.

Barbara Voss followed with a brief description of some of the initial findings at various archaeological sites associated with the Chinese railroad workers in different sites associated with the monumental task of completing their sections of the railroad from Sacramento to Utah.

Connie Young-Yu (CHCP Advisor/Historian) introduced the short film "The Work of Giants" which was produced for Donner Memorial State Park. In this film Connie, who is a railroad worker descendant and historian in her own right, and archaeologist Scott Baxter visited and explored various camp sites and some of the railroad tunnels manually built by these workers blasting their way through the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Many lives were lost but were not fully accounted for by the railroad officials.

Presentations were given by two railroad worker descendants, Paulette Liang and Russell Low. Their stories chronicled the severe hardships that their ancestors endured when they were recruited from the post–Gold Rush towns or directly from Canton to work on the railroads. After surviving working on the railroads, they branched out to the limited opportunities other businesses and industries afforded to them such as farming, laundries, groceries, etc. Faced with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, these Chinese males found reuniting with families in China very difficult, if not impossible. Many had to resort to using "paper

names" to try to circumvent the highly discriminatory immigration laws in existence at the time.

After the devastating 1906 San Francisco earthquake where all the official immigration papers were destroyed by fire, many seized the opportunity to claim U.S. citizenship (by birthright). With new official government documents verifying U.S. citizenship, many Chinese claimed larger families than they originally had. On "paper" all the named family members were U.S. citizens entitled to travel to China and bring their families who were temporarily residing in China back to the U.S. Many of the railroad workers could at last be reunited with their actual or "paper" families after they paid a "native" Chinese family for the right to use their "official family name" and arranged for the ocean passage to San Francisco of their actual family using their new "paper name." From 1910–1940 all Chinese passengers from Asia whether returning U.S. citizens and immigrants were processed through Angel Island to confirm their eligibility to enter the U.S. legally. Immigration inspectors were determined to "catch" paper sons/daughters using very lengthy and detailed interrogation methods to find inconsistencies in the answers to detailed questions given by the immigrant and "alleged" native family witness. To this day the "paper son/daughter" history in one's family is still a very sensitive confidential matter and sometimes not even discussed.

Charlie Chin, CHSA artist-in-residence, played his guitar and sang a song he wrote about working on the railroad – a thoughtful and melancholy rendition.

(Note: A booklet entitled "Voices from the Railroad" with stories by descendants of Chinese railroad workers is available for purchase from CHSA at http://chsa.org. More information about the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford can be found here: http://web.stanford.edu/group/chineserailroad/cgi-bin/wordpress/.)

2015 Speaker Series

Story of Chinese American Pioneer Workers on the Transcontinental Railroad in the 1860s

By Gerrye Wong

July 19 was a standing-room-only Speakers Series event when Andrea Yee and her daughter Linn Lee shared their family's story, beginning with the first immigrant to come over who worked on the Transcontinental Railroads in the mid-1860s. With a PowerPoint presentation, they were able to reconstruct the harsh life their first generation ancestor suffered through during discriminatory days, up through the present time when over 100 relatives have gathered for family reunions. Linn's sixth generation sons were there to enjoy the presentation along with over 80 rapt listeners and interested CHCP members and friends.

Lee said a crowning moment was when the family was able to memorialize that first ancestor at the Angel Island Immigration Station's Heritage Wall with a plaque chronicling many of the subsequent generations that have continued to live and prosper in California.

Among interested guests were Peoples Republic of China Deputy Consul General Zha Liyou, who expressed how moved he was by the telling of this Chinese American pioneering story, and how he hoped to be able to bridge China/U.S. relationships between the Chinese American citizens of Silicon Valley and his native country, China. Speaking eloquently, Mr. Zha said he was new to the area, having just arrived from a post in Washington D.C., but he looks forward to working with CHCP and supporting its role in preserving Chinese American history. He was accompanied by Deputy Wang Dong. Mr. Zha and Mr. Wang toured the CAHM prior to attending the Speaker Series presentation.



Chinese American Pioneer Workers (cont'd)

CHCP Advisor Connie Young Yu added information about her own ancestor who was a worker on the railroad, and Steven Lee spoke about his project erecting a statue memorializing the Chinese pioneers, who up to now have long been ignored in American history books for their important role in building the Transcontinental Railroad (http://crrwmemorialproject.com). CHCP will continue to present Speakers Series events and welcomes speaker suggestions for future times.

Committee members who assisted in hosting this presentation were Liz Fong Chew, Gerrye Wong, Debbie Gong-Guy, Brenda Hee Wong, Allan Low, Anita Kwock Wong, Yucaipa Kwock, Zeny Seid, Teddy Sue, Helina Chin, Chris Jochim, Celine Chan, Lee Liu Chin, and Barbara Why.

For more information about the Chinese railroad workers, please see the article "Chinese and the Transcontinental Railroad" posted on the CHCP website (http://chcp.org/virtual-museum-library/chinese-and-the-transcontinental-railroad-2/).







Upcoming Event

CAAM**FEST** SAN JOSE 2015

CHCP CO-PRESENTING

"CHINESE COUPLETS"

a film by Felicia Lowe

September 19, 2015 4:30pm dinner (optional) 6:00pm show time Camera 3 288 S Second St, San Jose, CA 95113

Free/validated parking structure on 2nd St. Enter on 2nd or 3rd St.



TICKETING INFORMATION

There are 3 different ticketing options:

\$12 Regular price at the box office day of

\$10 Purchase from caamedia.org using promo code CAAMSJGUEST

\$8 CHCP Group rate if you request through Peter Young by Wed., Sept. 16. Please include your name, number of tickets, payment method, and contact info of e-mail and phone number and send to peter.young@chcp.org.Your tickets will be at Will Call.

DINNER INFORMATION

4:30 p.m. Snack/dinner at Billy Berk's Restaurant

99 So. 1st St., San Jose

RSVP Restaurant is a short walk to Camera 3 Theater

Please text or call Shirley Tarantino at (408)712-1593 by Wed., Sept. 16.

http://chcp.org/events/chinese-couplets-documentary-camera-3-sj/http://caamedia.org/caamfest-san-jose-2015/chinese-couplets/

Upcoming Event



Chinese Historical and Cultural Project

中華歷史文物協會



celebrates



HELP Committee

Bravo to All the Talented Asians of Rancho Middle School!

By Brenda Hee Wong

On May 15, 2015, the multi-purpose room of Rancho Middle School in Milpitas was filled with applause and cheers from family and friends of talented student body performers during Rancho's Asian American Heritage Night. The cultures of Vietnam, Korea, India, Philippines, Tahiti and China were appreciated through costumes, dancing, and song. The accomplishments of contemporary Asians in the fields of art, music, politics, sports, fine arts, science, and academia were spotlighted in a student-created slideshow. CHCP is proud of being able to encourage Rancho's students to share their Asian heritage through the awarding of a HELP (Heritage Education Link Program) Grant.



The HELP Grant Award program began in 1994 through a grant donated by Dr. Jeffery and Susan Lew Lee. The committee's focus continues to provide grants to nonprofit groups in Santa Clara County in order to help defray the cost of projects that promote cultural diversity. HELP Grants can be applied for and awarded throughout the year. Applications can be accessed on the CHCP website (http://chcp.org/heritage-education-link-program-help-grants/).



Education

Stanford Research Presentation Features Market Street Chinatown

By Debbie Gong-Guy

Pearl Lun presented her graduate master's research paper "Of Cures and Nostrums: Medicine and Public Health at Market Street Chinatown" to an enthusiastic audience on May 18th at the Department of Anthropology, Stanford University. CHCP Directors Brenda Hee Wong and Debbie Gong-Guy attended and applauded her impressive achievement.

With her study of 191 medicinal bottles and other health products from the Market Street Chinatown site she formed a counterargument to the narrative of a disease-ravaged, contagious Chinese existence. The Chinese were not suffering from any more dangerous or exotic diseases than the white population. Lun stated that pain relievers, blood purifiers for inflammation/skin diseases, liver cures, and dental hygiene products, which were fairly normal at that time were found. She spoke of the special role that archaeology plays in uncovering narratives that are not necessarily preserved in the historical record.

Lun concluded that "the Market Street Chinatown collection speaks to a hidden chapter in the history of Chinese immigration, and more broadly, the American past: it provides significant insight into how medicine was practiced at this unique juncture of Chinese and Euro-American lives, the challenges of preserving health in precarious situations, and the aspirations for a good life."



In her presentation Lun expressed her sincere gratitude for the mentorship and support of Stanford Professor Barbara Voss and former Collections Manager Megan Kane. She especially acknowledged the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project and History San Jose for allowing her the privilege to work with the amazing Market Street Chinatown collection. Lun's research paper can be found on the Market Street Chinatown Archaeological Project website (https://marketstreet.stanford.edu).

Lun is a participating student of the Haas Center Community-Based Research Fellows Program. She graduated from Stanford in June and has moved back to Los Angeles in search of her next venture. We wish her great success!

Outreach

Math Whizzes Impress and Achieve

By Brenda Hee Wong

The Chinese Historical and Cultural Project (CHCP) was delighted to participate at the May 31 and July 25, 2015 abacus competition events' awards ceremonies sponsored by the Chinese American Abacus Association (CAAA). The first objective of CAAA, established in 1996, is to advocate the dissemination and development of mental arithmetic and abacus training for promoting cultural exchange.

In the United States' mathematics learning environment today, the term "abacus" may be heard only as part of a history lesson, for the abacus stemmed from the Shang/Zhou period, 1600–250 B.C. and became fully developed and popularly used by people in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties, 1271–1662 A.D. Continuous and vigorous efforts by abacus masters in the 20th century have transformed and evolved abacus calculation into a brand new way of using this ancient tool effectively.

From a historical context, the abacus was a tool used purely for commerce in Chinese culture. However, the technique and depth of skill required to master the abacus can help enhance mental computing abilities, build understanding of numerical changes, and develop many other critical learning skills. The abacus has blossomed into a training tool everyone needs and can learn to use today in the 21st century.

As one practices with the beads on an abacus, observing and reading the movements and results, then placing the image of the abacus in one's mind to follow the same patterns, concentration levels and learning ability rises and a very positive impact on overall learning occurs.







Math Whizzes Impress and Achieve (cont'd)

On July 24-26, 2015, CAAA hosted the 2015 World City Cup for the third time aboard the historic U.S.S. Hornet, docked in Alameda. International students from Taiwan, Malaysia, China, India, Vietnam, and Hong Kong arrived along with students from California, New York, and Michigan. All carried their small calculating tool made of wood and bamboo onto the allpowerful 30 thousand ton aircraft carrier which was strategic in recovering the astronauts from the first moon landing of Apollo 11 on July 24, 1969. The Hornet presented an immense contrast of size, technology, place and time for the 500+ attendees. During the morning session the Hornet's second deck was an impressive venue for the 200 competitors as their abacus beads echoed in the large hangar barge.

After the morning testing, the young and the "old" were treated to tours, demonstrations and presentations of a sailor's life aboard the floating historic state and national landmark. Sounds of awe, fun, and laughter filled the space where numbers of jet engines once roared. "Abacus Adventures Aboard the U.S.S. Hornet" was truly a fun, cultural, academic, historic and memorable event for all!

Public tours of the U.S.S. Hornet as a public museum are available 6 days a week, 12 months a year, at Alameda Point, Alameda.





CHCP PROGRESS NEWSLETTER

Fall 2015

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Teresa Lau Al Low Brenda Hee Wong Elyse Wong Gerrye Wong Judy Wong

Outreach

Valley of Heart's Delight

By Yvonne Ching

It has always been my pleasure to attend the annual "Valley of Heart's Delight" hosted by History San Jose as a fundraiser for their many worthwhile projects in the community with my fellow CHCP directors, Al Low, Brenda Hee Wong, Debbie Gong-Guy, Gerrye Wong, Carol Fong, Chris Jochim, Curtis Ching, and Patrick Kwok. The menu did not disappoint, especially the appetizers which for me started with oysters on the half-shell, an assortment of cheeses and salamis and an antipasto layout that was divine. The wine flowed freely throughout the evening as did the ambiance and goodwill.

The annual HSJ award is usually given to an outstanding individual in the community, but this year it was a celebration of all of us who collectively helped History San Jose in their many endeavors. Kudos to the many docents and ethnic "Houses" that make History Park a success. It was a celebration of diversity and in keeping with that theme the menu was made up of an Asian station, one with a Mexican flavor, and a Continental port.

The entertainment reflected the many ethnic groups that are integral parts of our society. The Vinh Son Liem Lion dancers, the Khamsin Belly dancers, the Mexican dancers, and the Akoma Drummers and Dancers dazzled us with their colorful costumes, polish and proficiency. The outstanding performance to me was the interpretation of "Amazing Grace" done in a solo dance that was so powerful and heartfelt that it left the



audience speechless and ended in a well deserved, thunderous applause.

History San Jose also gave special recognition to our late CHCP Co-founder Lillian Gong-Guy by announcing that the plaza in the park was dedicated to her earlier this year and henceforth is now known as the Lillian Gong-Guy Plaza. We at the CHCP table couldn't have been more proud. Lillian worked tirelessly with History San Jose through CAHM (Chinese American Historical Museum) as a founding member and trustee.

We hope that our CHCP members can find time to help in our many docent positions and activities that present themselves throughout the year. Until then, I look forward to more activities at HSJ and next year's "Valley of Heart's Delight" extravaganza.

Chinese American Historical Museum

APALI Tour

By Anita Wong Kwock

This summer the Asian Pacific American Leadership Institute (APALI) toured our Chinese American Historical Museum on Wednesday, July 9th. Students from Cupertino's De Anza Community College and surrounding local high schools select this highly acclaimed summer program to learn more about their heritage and community needs. Dr. Michael Chang, founder, leads his staff, interns and students yearly. CHCP this year was pleased to support APALI's HELP application with a grant to facilitate their field trip.

CHCP Directors and Trustees welcomed the group at History San Jose. For most of the students this was their first visit to the park. Greeting the APALI group were Directors Brenda Hee Wong, Yvonne Ching, Allan Low, Teddy Sue, Debbie Gong-Guy, Trustees Gerrye Wong, Hon. Patrick Kwok, and Anita Wong Kwock.



Student Docent Program

WANTED: HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO WANT TO BE CULTURAL AMBASSADORS FOR THE CHINESE AMERICAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

REQUIREMENT: ATTEND AN ORIENTATION/TRAINING ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2015

By Teddy Sue

We are looking for high school and college students who are interested in becoming Student Docent 'Cultural Ambassadors' for the Chinese American Historical Museum (CAHM). An orientation/training class will be held at the Fox Den Room (across the street from the CAHM) on Sunday, October 4th from 11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

High school students who have gone through the class will receive community service credits when serving as student docents. This would involve working one Sunday a month for 4 to 6 months. Student docents can also earn credits by working any Saturday for a History San Jose Special Event that CHCP participates in (e.g., Autumn Moon Festival, Lunar New Year Celebration, etc.).

Recognition awards are given to those who complete 20+ hours of community service at the museum. Students will have improved their self-confidence and speaking skills as they interact with and guide visitors through the museum.

If you or anyone you know is interested in becoming a Student Docent, please contact Brenda Wong (bjhwong@yahoo.com) or Teddy Sue (fandtsue@sbcglobal.net).

Committee Status Report

Timeline Committee

By Judy Wong

The Technology Exhibit Enhancement Committee (the "TEEC") is working with Vasquez Communications

Systems to enhance and extend the Timeline inside the Chinese American Historical Museum. The CHCP Timeline Committee (the "TC") is a subcommittee under the TEEC formed to research and recommend to the TEEC prominent dates, events and people in the regions of China, U.S. and San Jose/Santa Clara County from the years 2009–2014.

Over a course of four months (April through July), with Judy Wong serving as Chairperson, the CHCP Timeline Committee volunteers (Al Low, Anita Kwock, Brenda Hee Wong, Connie Yu, Debbie Gong-Guy, Helina Chin, Lee Liu Chin, Roger and Sylvia Eng and Yvonne Ching) met in person and via Google Docs to review, approve and format submissions to update the existing Timeline. Many hours were spent gathering the information, discussing the merits of each submission and voting on its inclusion in the Timeline. With entries approved, the TC then



refined the descriptions, gathered photos and obtained approvals from various sources for the inclusion of text and photos of living luminaries included in the Timeline.

Recommendations made by the TC went to the Board of Directors for input to the project vendor for inclusion onto the updated Timeline. The CHCP Board further reviewed the TC's spreadsheet of recommendations and then made suggestions for further improvements to the recommendations before submitting same to the TEEC for finalization of the updated Timeline.

The TC is pleased with its findings and hope museum visitors will enjoy learning the rich history of the Chinese people through the updated interactive Timeline currently in development.



Running the length of the wall as you enter the Chinese American Historical Museum is a pictorial timeline starting in 1850 that is divided into three parallel sections. The top row depicts American history, the middle row is the San Jose section and the bottom row depicts the history of China. By following the San Jose section and then referring to corresponding events in America and China during each period, one can see some of the economic, political and social relationships that have influenced Chinese history in America.

Committee Status Report

Technology Exhibit Enhancement Committee

By Yucaipa Kwock

The Committee has been meeting regularly since June 2014. Many months were spent researching, investigating, and securing an appropriate vendor to follow the project through its many multi-faceted steps of development. We received updated news of changes and progress of the project. In a recent email, news of 95% completion of code writing and the purchase of hardware equipment for the CAHM Technology Exhibit **Enhancement by Vasquez Communications** Systems (VCS) encouraged committee members. We look forward to reviewing their work as soon as they finalize their BETA build. VCS will hang the 55" touchscreen and meet with us to interact and test the hardware and data.



Profile - Teresa Lau, Director



Teresa was born in Hong Kong which is a melting pot of Chinese and Western cultures. She graduated from Brigham Young University in Utah with a Master's degree in Finance.

She relocated to the Bay Area around six years ago with her husband Benny and two daughters Sirina and Sabina. Her daughters performed in a number of CHCP events before Teresa joined as a CHCP director early this year, and Sirina was also one of our student docents.

Before residing in Cupertino, Teresa was educated both in Hong Kong and the U.S.A., and worked in Hong Kong servicing the APAC territories for more than ten years as the finance head for multinational companies. She is currently the finance manager of PerkinElmer Medical Imaging global.

Profile - Liz Fong Chew, CHCP Liaison to Director of Education at HSJ

It was a delight to be reacquainted with the Chinese Historical Cultural Project through its 25th Anniversary Event. My family, the Fongs, were being honored as the "Family Honoree." The prestigious title bestowed upon my family provided me with the eagerness to be involved with CHCP once again.

I have been a member of CHCP since 1989. At the time, I worked with many dedicated volunteers to create the Golden Legacy Educational Binder for the Santa Clara County Schools. Growing up in Sunnyvale as an immigrant flower child and in a Chinese traditional household helped shape my appreciation for Chinese culture. My father Y.K. Fong would start beating the drum beat for the traditional lion dance and then step out of the drumming mode and demonstrate the proper lion dancing moves. His enthusiasm motivated all the Fong children to embrace the Chinese Lion Dance. To this date, two of the siblings (Liz and Alan) have carried on his passion. The Orchard School Asian Cultural Dance Troupe is my passion. The dance troupe performs at schools, senior centers, festivals, parades, and cultural events.

Born in Macau, China (Portuguese colony at the time of birth), our family was the first Chinese refugees from China. Uncommon to have the entire family immigrate to the U.S., we were fortunate to have the opportunity. Sunnyvale was where I spent the majority of my young life in the chrysanthemum flower growing industry working in the fields.

My parents encouraged all the children to seek a college education. It seems that



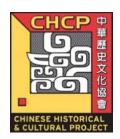
education was my calling in life. I secured a teaching credential from San Jose State University in Psychology and minored in Sociology and Asian-American Studies. I have enjoyed teaching diverse students in North East San Jose for over 38 years in many subjects. My love for middle school years, Algebra 1, U.S. History, AVID, and Student Council has always resonated in me.

Congressman Mike Honda has been a mentor to get me involved in politics during my college years and this carried me through the years. Economic, Education, and Ethnic Equality has been my agenda. In 1995 I was appointed as the Berryessa Union School District Board of Trustee. I was then elected and served as board member until 2002.

Raising a special needs child gives me opportunities to be involved in the special needs community. As coach for the Jr. Giants/PAL League, I enjoy working with special needs children having fun playing baseball. Getting non-profits on the road to success is another passion! Adelante IT Careers for the Deaf Population, The Children's Health Foundation, and GIST Cancer Walk For a Cure (GCRF) are my favorites. I am working very hard to support their efforts.

Membership Application	Membership Includes
Name	
Address	 Invitation to Speaker Series
City	 Invitation to Social Events
Zip Code	 Discounted Tickets to Cultural Events
Phone	CHCP Progress Newsletter
Mobile Phone	 Email announcements of Chinese cultural and
E-mail Address	historical events
Membership Level	Join CHCP & Volunteer to Help
 ☐ Individual Membership - \$40 ☐ Family Membership (2) - \$70 ☐ Donation in Memory/Honor of 	> Program Development
	> Program Coordinator
	Docent for Museum
	> Grant Writing
Mail Form & Check Payable to	> Education Program
CHCP – Membership	Community Outreach
P.O. Box 5366	Exhibit Enhancement
San Jose, CA 95150-5366	> Website
	> Social Media
CHCP is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization Fed. Tax ID # 77-0156509	> Other

Monthly Board of Directors' meetings are open to CHCP members to attend. For the date, time and location, please refer to the calendar on the CHCP website.



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