



## July/August 2006

CALENDAR OF CHSA EVENTS & EXHIBITS

### CHSA Summer Youth Programs

Details on page 4.

### August 12 *Images of America: San Francisco's Chinatown* Book Launch Party

Celebrate the release of the new pictorial publication by CHSA. CHSA Museum, 1-4 pm.

**August 29** *Chop Suey on Wax: The Flower Drum Song Album* exhibition opens.

### September 9 *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*

Panel discussion with Ling-Chi Wang and Felicia Lowe. Co-sponsored by Pathfinder Press and SF Eastwind Books. CHSA Learning Center, time TBA.

### All CHSA events in free to the public

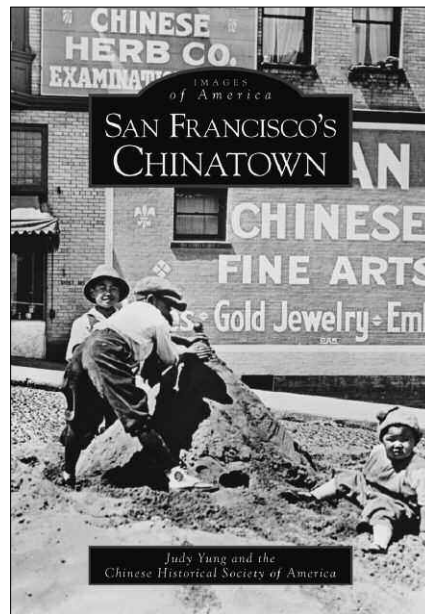
For more info, call (415) 391-1188 or visit [www.chsa.org](http://www.chsa.org)

## Images of America: San Francisco's Chinatown

At last! Arcadia Publishing's popular *Images of America* series has finally released a book for *San Francisco's Chinatown*, authored and edited by historian **Judy Yung** and the Chinese Historical Society of America. Drawing from private collections and public archives, the images and accompanying text and captions tell the historical and cultural story of the oldest and most famous Chinatown in the world.

"I wanted to show how this place that visitors see as foreign and exotic is, in fact, a vibrant Chinese American neighborhood with a complex history and rich cultural legacy," explains Yung, professor emeritus of American Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz and a native of San Francisco Chinatown.

"The book looks beyond the Oriental façade of Chinatown to show the realities of daily life, including a community's struggle



for survival against racial hostility, Exclusion laws, two major earthquakes, and urban redevelopment."

The book also features a street map listing key sites that are mentioned in the book, for a self-guided historic Chinatown walking tour.

Arcadia Publishing's *Images of America* series uses archival photographs and brief essays to celebrate local history and encourage community preservation.

*Images of America: San Francisco's Chinatown* will be available for purchase on July 21 at the CHSA bookstore and through local book sellers. A portion of the proceeds go to CHSA. The book will be "launched" at the CHSA Museum on Saturday, August 12, 1 pm. The event is free and open to the public; guests will include lenders to the project and those featured in the book. ☺

## Chinatown Rising

CHSA 2006 Gala Dinner and Dance

Saturday, September 30

In marking the centennial of the Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire, the Chinese Historical Society of America will celebrate the resurgence of Chinatown into the vibrant and resilient community it is today.



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In Memoriam  
**Col. William F. Strobridge**  
(1929–2006)



**B**orn in Windsor, Vermont, **William Strobridge** died peacefully in San Francisco, on April 26, 2006 after a last battle with Parkinson's Disease.

A veteran of the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War, and Chief Historian at the Center of Military History in Washington, D.C., Col.

Strobridge retired from the U.S. Army in 1980. He worked as a historian at Wells Fargo Bank from then until 2002.

Col. Strobridge became a member of the Chinese Historical Society of America in 1975 and served on the Board of Directors from 1982-1983 and 1990-1994. He was the author of numerous books and articles on the history of the U.S. military, the Far West, Southeast Asia, and Chinese Americans. His survey study of Chinese Americans who served in World War II was published in the September 1982 issue of the CHSA *Bulletin*. He served as an advisor to Thomas Chinn's book *Bridging the Pacific: San Francisco Chinatown and Its People*. Col. Strobridge was also an active member of the VFW Chinatown Post. A memorial service was held at the Presidio Post Chapel on May 13.

We also note the passing of **Edna Chinn**, longtime member and sister of CHSA founder Thomas Chinn. ☞

**Community  
Celebration for  
Rolland Lowe**

**O**n Saturday, June 17, Chinatown organizations, patients, family, and friends gathered to celebrate Dr. Rolland Lowe's decades of service to his community and his medical practice. After graduating from UC Berkeley in 1951 and serving in the US Army Medical Corp in Korea, Dr. Lowe began his surgical residency at UC San Francisco. He chose to establish his practice in Chinatown, where he has since served as Chief of Staff and Surgery at Chinese Hospital and attended a regular stream of patients for forty-three years.

Dr. Lowe is equally respected for his philanthropic work. He was the first Chinese American to serve on the Board of Trustees of San Francisco Foundation and the Council of Foundations. Dr. Lowe was instrumental in the founding of the Chinese Community Health Plan, Chinese Culture Foundation, and CYC. He has supported CHSA through his family's charitable foundation, the Lawrence Choy Lowe Memorial Fund. ☞



Dr. Lowe (l) with CHSA Executive Director Sue Lee

## Chop Suey on Wax: The Flower Drum Song Album

New Exhibition  
Opening August 28  
Frank H. Yick Gallery

**A**rguably the most famous depiction of San Francisco Chinatown, the Rodgers and Hammerstein-produced **Flower Drum Song** sent Grant Avenue and its personalities around the world. Based on the novel by journalist C.Y. Lee, *Flower Drum Song's* story of generational conflict and romance grossed millions and was nominated for Oscars and Tonys for its film and stage productions.

Following the hit musical, record labels issued dozens of renditions of the score, in genres as varied as jazz, swing, classical orchestra, and pop. Filmmaker Arthur Dong (*Sewing Woman*, *Forbidden City USA*) has collected these albums, which will be shown in **Chop Suey on Wax**. Examining the imagery of the album artwork and the arrangement of the music, the exhibition will show the variety of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

Book Event & Panel Discussion  
Saturday, September 9, CHSA Learning Center, time TBA



*Demonstration by Chinese New Democracy Alliance, July 10, 1960.*

**A** little-known but important chapter of Chinese emigrant history is told through interviews with three Chinese Cubans who became generals in Cuba's revolution in **Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution** (Pathfinder Press, 2006.) The three men discuss their roles in the 1959 Cuban Revolution and the events that followed, the development of domestic policy, and in foreign missions to Angola and South Africa.

Editor and interviewer Mary-

Alice Waters will talk about the book and its creation during this insightful panel discussion. Fellow panelists include professor emeritus L. Ling-chi Wang, Asian American Studies, UC Berkeley, and Felicia Lowe, filmmaker who traveled to Cuba twice to trace the roots of her grandfather (as told in the film *El Barrio Chino*) who will discuss the broader history of Chinese immigration and communities in Cuba.

This event is co-sponsored by Pathfinder Press and Eastwind Books of San Francisco. ☞

## Chinatown Rising

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



We'll gather on **Saturday, September 30**, from **6pm -12 midnight** at the **San Francisco Marriott**. We'll go back to the days following the quake, exploring how Chinatown rose from the ashes. Join us in the ballroom, decorated to evoke the atmosphere of Chinatown. Hear from turn-of-the-century entrepreneur and marketing maven Look Tin Eli as he announces his vision for the new "Oriental City."

CHSA has commissioned jazz pianist Jon Jang to compose an original work. Experience his live performance accompanied by images from CHSA film archives and the new book *San Francisco's Chinatown*. All guests receive a complimentary copy of the book.

On September 30, join us in celebrating the century since the quake. Be a witness to Chinatown's transformation into an icon for the city of San Francisco and Chinese America. Reserve your tickets now. Invite your friends! For more information, call (415) 391-1188 ext. 101, or email [gala06@chsa.org](mailto:gala06@chsa.org). ☞

## Preservation of A-Files at the National Archives

A report from Chinese American community genealogists Jennie Lew and Jeanie W.C. Low on the movement to permanently preserve the historic century-old "Alien Files" ("A-Files"), comprised of early immigration case files.

### At CHSA's **Branching Out the Banyan Tree** conference last October, over a dozen Chinese American historical advocacy organizations submitted a joint letter to U.S. Archivist Allen Weinstein of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and the Commissioner of the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Service (USCIS, previously known as INS, the Immigration and Naturalization Service.) This letter called for the immediate addition of the older Alien Files to NARA's permanent collections, for increased federal funding for the preservation of the records, and for their permanent storage at NARA's Pacific Region facility in San Bruno.

Though there was a previous agreement to keep the records in California, recent meetings with NARA and USCIS officials indicate that the over 35,000 cubic feet of A-Files may be moved and stored in the limestone caverns of a NARA facility in Lee's Summit, Missouri.



Courtesy of Steve and Jeanie Low. Lo Tuck A-File. National Archives and Records Administration.

These files are not limited to those concerning the Chinese, but also include those related to Japanese picture brides, Filipino WWII freedom fighters, and parolee files for German, Italian, and Japanese residents and their families.

Congressman Tom Lantos (D-San Mateo, California) has given his assurance that the points outlined in the October 2005 preservation petition letter will be given high priority, as has US Archivist Weinstein. However, the cooperation of the USCIS is required to guarantee that these documents will be kept in California, where they will be accessible to researchers and families alike. The community will be kept informed as further clarification is sought with the USCIS.

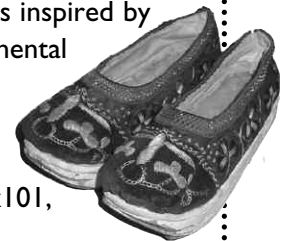
## Summer Programs for Youth at CHSA Thursdays, July 6–August 31

### Storytime for Kids

**Enjoy folktales** from around the world. Hear stories from China, Africa, India, and more! 9:30 am–10:00 am, ages kindergarten–3rd grade (maximum 60 people)

### Stories & Artifacts

**History comes alive** in your imagination as CHSA docents tell stories inspired by museum artifacts. Hear the stories of the Gold Rush, the Transcontinental Railroad, and other moments in Chinese American history. 10:30 am–11:30 am, ages 4th–8th grades (maximum 25 people)



To schedule a group, please contact Candace Tom at (415) 391-1188 x101, or by e-mail at [info@chsa.org](mailto:info@chsa.org). All programs are free with museum admission.

# The Annie Soo Spirit Award

## HONORING UNSUNG HEROES



**T**hanks to the generous support of her family and friends, CHSA has re-named its annual volunteer appreciation **Spirit Award** as the **Annie Soo Spirit Award** in honor of her 80th birthday. Annie, winner of the Spirit Award in 1999, has been part of CHSA since the 1970s, serving as board director and secretary, *Bulletin* editor, and monthly lecture coordinator.

The newly-named Annie Soo Spirit Award is given annually at CHSA's January volunteer appreciation luncheon. Award winners are the "unsung heroes" of CHSA, giving of their time and talents and working beyond the call of duty to preserve and promote Chinese American history. Past winners include **Stanley Tom** (1998), **Annie Soo** (1999), **Ted S. Wong** (2000), **Sarah Choy** (2001), **Emma Woo Louie** (2002), **Laura Lai** (2003), **Bruce Chin** (2004), **Calvin Fung** (2005), and **Lorraine Dong** (2006). ☺

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## Chop Suey on Wax

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

ways that Chinese Americans and Chinatown were depicted in the 1960s—as American as baseball and apple pie, as Chinese American as the fortune cookie, and as exotic as pagodas and dragons.

The exhibition will be accompanied by exciting original programs exploring the impact of *Flower Drum Song* on Chinese America. On November 5, pianist Jon Jang will be joined by Charlie Chin and poet Genny Lim to perform pieces reflecting on *Flower Drum Song*, followed by discussion with the artists. CHSA is also convening a panel of creative individuals and academics to further delve into the meaning of *Flower Drum Song* to the Chinese American community. Stay tuned to the next *Bulletin* or to [chsa.org](http://chsa.org) for details. ✎

The CHSA *Bulletin* is published bi-monthly. To contribute articles about Chinese American community and historical news and events, please submit articles to [mlouie@chsa.org](mailto:mlouie@chsa.org).

Editor: Marisa Louie || Design: Elaine Joe



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