



## *The Chinese of California: A Struggle For Community* Informative New Exhibit Examines Chinese American History



Museum visitors explore the main gallery of *The Chinese of California* exhibit at the California Historical Society in San Francisco, on display now through August 2008.

**C**HSA's groundbreaking new exhibit, *The Chinese of California: A Struggle For Community*, is now open at the California Historical Society.

Through a unique collection of artifacts, images, documents, and personal stories, *The Chinese of California* explores the complex history and unique challenges of Chinese Americans in their fight for civil

rights. As legislation exemplified by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 removed the constitutional guarantee of equal protection under the law for people of Chinese descent, discrimination and violent attacks intensified against them. Chinese Californians were thus left to fight for basic human rights—and for the very existence of their communities.

A first-ever collaboration of The

Bancroft Library of the University of California at Berkeley, California Historical Society, and Chinese Historical Society of America, *The Chinese of California* will challenge preconceptions about the Chinese immigrant experience by telling the story through the voices of Chinese Californians themselves.

Featuring a range of original materials from these leading institutions rarely seen by the public, *The Chinese of California* includes photographs, political cartoons, illustrations, letters, business records, and legal papers to share these stories:

- **IN OUR OWN WORDS:** California's Chinese American Press
- **REDEFINING AMERICAN IMMIGRATION:** The Chinese

### ABOUT THE EXHIBIT

*The Chinese of California: A Struggle For Community* is open now through August 30, 2008 at the California Historical Society, located at 678 Mission Street in San Francisco.

HOURS: Wednesday through Saturday, 12 noon to 4:30 pm

ADMISSION: Free to CHSA members with membership card, \$3 for the general public

FOR INFORMATION: call (415) 391-1188 x101 or visit [www.chsa.org](http://www.chsa.org)

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## Upcoming Events

### *Anna May Wong: Frosted Yellow Willows*

CHSA co-presents two screenings of the new *Anna May Wong* documentary on **March 16 at 6 pm** and **March 18 at 9:15 pm** as part of the San Francisco Asian American International Film Festival. This film screens in conjunction with *Long Story Short* about Larry and Trudie Long, the popular husband-and-wife nightclub act of the '40s and '50s. Tickets are \$10 at Sundance Kabuki Cinemas, 881 Post St, San Francisco. Visit [festival.asianamericanmedia.org](http://festival.asianamericanmedia.org) for more information.

### *Chinatown Stories: A Visual Presentation*

Judy Yung will read and discuss from her repertoire of books on **April 3 at 6 pm**, including *Unbound Feet; Unbound Voices; Island: Poetry & History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island 1910-1940*; and *The Adventures of Eddie Fung*. Special guest Eddie Fung will join her during a presentation on her latest book. Q&A

session and book signing will follow the reading. Admission is free at California Historical Society, 678 Mission St., San Francisco. Contact [pwong@chsa.org](mailto:pwong@chsa.org) or (415) 391-1188 x104 for more information.

### *Hollywood Chinese Theatrical Opening*

From **April 11-17**, at the Sundance Kabuki Cinemas in San Francisco and the Grand Lake Theaters in Oakland, journey through Asian American filmmaking with Director Arthur Dong's new film, *Hollywood Chinese*, about those who have graced the silver screen, including Anna May Wong, Nancy Kwan, James Hong, and B.D. Wong, as well as those who have made their mark behind the camera, from cinematographer James Wong Howe to directors Ang Lee and Justin Lin. For more information, visit [www.hollywoodchinese.com](http://www.hollywoodchinese.com)

### **Celebrate APA Month!**

Join us at CHSA on **Monday, May 12 from 6-8 pm** for the unveiling of *Civil Rights Suite*, the launch of the Annual Journal, live performances, and more! Free to members.

### **Tour of San Jose's Chinatown**

CHSA Board Member Dr. Rod Lum and Tour Guide Gary Holloway will lead a one-day coach tour on **May 18, from 8 am to 5 pm** of historic Chinatown sites in the South Bay, where Heilenville and other communities once stood. A stop at the replica of the 1888 Ng Shing Gung Temple will also be included. Tour fee TBD. The tour will depart from California Historical Society, 678 Mission St, San Francisco. Contact [pwong@chsa.org](mailto:pwong@chsa.org) or (415) 391-1188 x104 for information. ☎

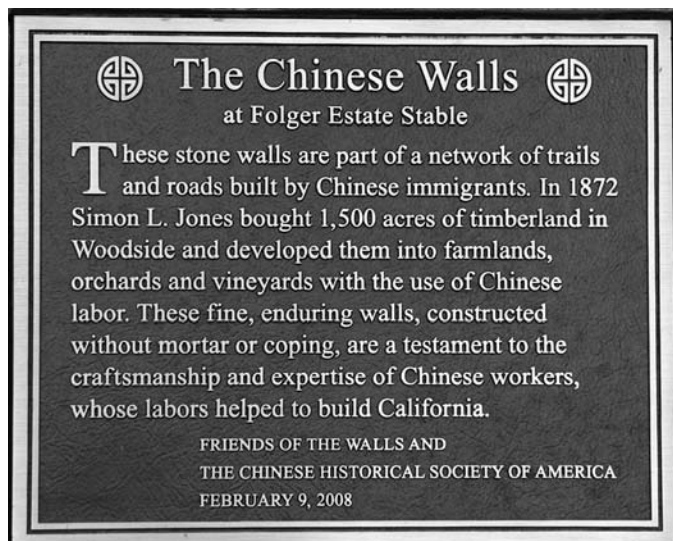
## Welcome, New Board & Staff Members!

**T**he first board meeting of 2008 was an exciting collaboration for new members and officers. Congratulations to the new team led by **Paul Fong, President!** CHSA is also thrilled to introduce our new part-time Programs Coordinator, **Pam Wong**. Pam is currently obtaining a Master's Degree in Museum Studies at JFK University. Prior to graduate school, Pam was Associate Youth Director at Cameron House from 2002-2006. ☎

## The Chinese Walls Historic Plaque Dedication

**A** commemorative ceremony and plaque dedication for *The Chinese Walls* honored 19th century Chinese immigrants who built the enduring structures of high walls and stone paths lining Folger Stable in Wunderlich Park of Woodside, CA, on February 9, 2008 at 2 pm.

As a joint collaboration of Friends of the Walls and CHSA, *The Chinese Walls* commemoration was spectacularly attended by community folks, CHSA members, media reporters, and featured the following notables: Susan Lang, *Folger Estate Stable Committee Co-Chair*; Sue Lee, *CHSA Executive Director*; Connie Young Yu, *Historian and CHSA Board Member*; and Daniel Quan, *Plaque Designer*. CHSA Artist-in-Residence Charlie Chin brought down the house with performances of “Dig for the Gold,” one man’s story in song of California’s Gold Rush, and “Roll on Down the Line,” a banjo piece about the Chinese



*A commemorative plaque, designed by Daniel Quan, was dedicated to the Chinese laborers who built the walls surrounding the Folgers Stable.*

workers setting a record of 10 miles of track done in one day during the building of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869.

*The Chinese Walls* comprise a network of trails and roads built by Chinese immigrants in the 1870s. In 1872, entrepreneur Simon Jones (who owned the property prior to Folgers Coffee heir James Folger

II) bought 1,500 acres of timberland in Woodside, which he developed into farmlands, orchards, and vineyards with the employment of Chinese laborers. Jones went on to establish S.L. Jones & Co., a successful import and export business in San Francisco with his Chinese partner, Fung Tang—a unique collaboration given the anti-Chinese climate in the era leading up to the Chinese Exclusion Act

of 1882.

Yet, Jones’ enduring legacy, *The Chinese Walls*—constructed without mortar or coping—still stand today as a testament to the craftsmanship and expertise of the Chinese workers. Presently, *The Chinese Walls* are part of the Folger Stable Historic District, as denoted in the National Registry of Historic Places. They are also symbolic of the vast contributions that the Chinese population made to the building of the American West, and California in particular. ☛



*CHSA Board Vice President Connie Young Yu stands with Susan Green and Susan Lang, both of the Folger Estate Stable Committee.*



*California Historical Society Executive Director David Crosson; Author Judy Yung; and CHSA Executive Director Sue Lee at the ceremony honoring 19th century Chinese laborers.*

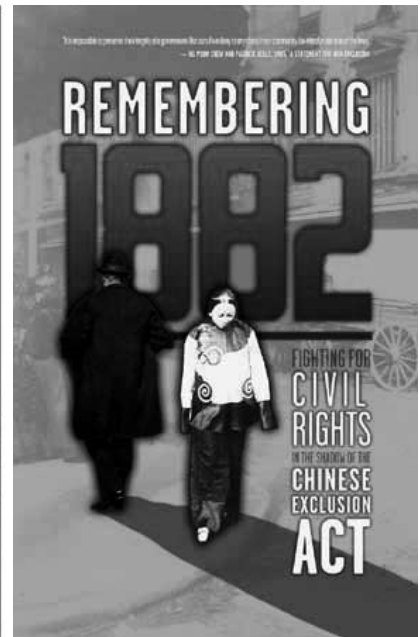
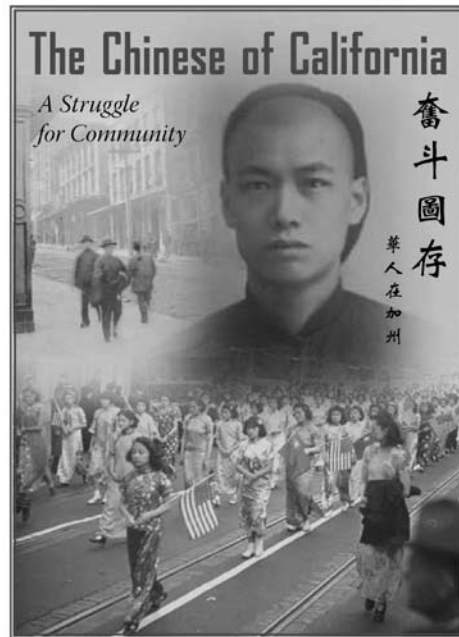
# Civil Rights Suite: Exploring the History of the Chinese American Fight for Equality

**K**icking off APA Month in May, CHSA will present the *Civil Rights Suite: Exploring the History of the Chinese American Fight for Equality*, a trio of exhibits scheduled for simultaneous display. Comprising the *Civil Rights Suite* is *The Chinese of California: A Struggle For Community* at the California Historical Society; *Remembering 1882: Fighting for Civil Rights in the Shadow of the Chinese Exclusion Act* in CHSA's Yick Gallery; and *To Enjoy and Defend Our American Citizenship* about the Chinese American Citizens Alliance in CHSA's Choy Gallery.

The *Civil Rights Suite* is a summation of many issues stirring within the current social conscience. Topics such as immigration, civil liberties, and American democracy are hotly debated ideas given the upcoming presidential election and the fifth anniversary of the Iraq invasion—and will prove to be more so in the near future with the changing demographic landscape. CHSA has been at the forefront of this social movement since its inception. The triumvirate exhibits of *The Chinese of California*, *Remembering 1882*, and *To Enjoy and Defend Our American Citizenship* further propel the organization as a first voice institution representing the Chinese American experience.

*Remembering 1882: Fighting for Civil Rights in the Shadow of the Chinese Exclusion Act* explores the historical debate around the Exclusion Act from its origins through its full repeal in 1968, as well as the civil rights struggle of Chinese Americans and their allies, and the historic importance of *habeas corpus* in the Chinese American community.

To recognize the passage of this



law, the Chinese Historical Society of America's *Remembering 1882* combines a traveling exhibit, a museum theater performance, and a symposium of legal and historical experts in an effort to:

- Celebrate the long-term positive impact of Chinese immigration on California's economic, social, and cultural status.
- Honor the vigilance of those who fought tirelessly against Exclusion while upholding democracy for Chinese and other disenfranchised communities.
- Examine the complex issues and conflicting interests surrounding the Exclusion of Chinese

*To Enjoy and Defend Our American Citizenship*, curated in collaboration with CHSA and the Chinese American Citizens Alliance (C.A.C.A.), is an exhibit chronicling the groundbreaking history of C.A.C.A.—the oldest civil rights organization in the Asian American community.

In the late 19th century, sentiment against Chinese Americans was at an all-time high. Many families were permanently separated by Chinese Exclusion and Jim Crow segregation was legalized a year later when the Supreme Court struck down the Civil Rights Act of 1875. In the following years, Chinese were forcibly driven out of cities all along the American West.

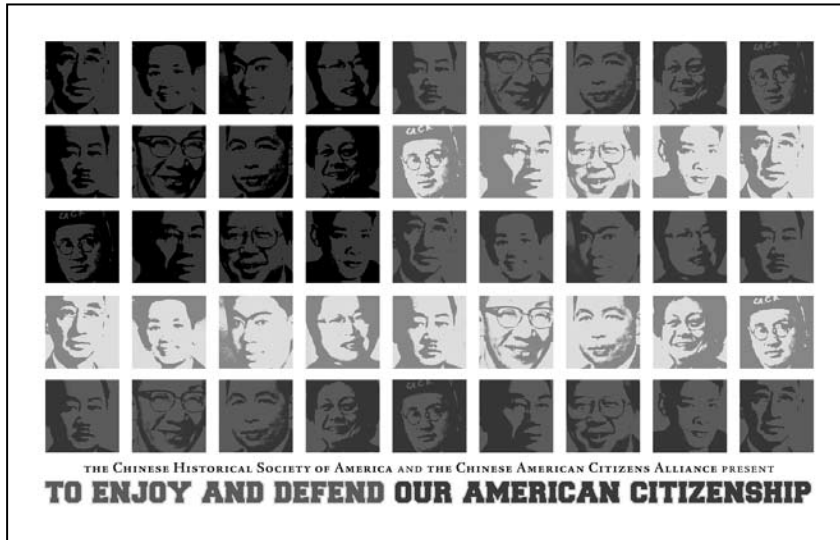
Against this backdrop, a group of whites established the fraternal organization Native Sons of the Golden West, whose membership was restricted to California-born white men. In San Francisco, a group of 185 Chinese American men noted in response that they too were born in California and incorporated as the Native Sons of the Golden State before reorganizing as the national organization of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance in 1912.

Racial discrimination and violent attacks intensified throughout the

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# Civil Rights Suite

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next decades, and community members faced the challenge of fighting for basic human rights. In *To Enjoy and Defend Our American Citizenship*, CHSA explores the experiences of C.A.C.A. in its groundbreaking work alongside groups such as the NAACP

to challenge discriminatory laws while creating the support systems necessary for survival in a segregated United States.

Meet Y.C. Hong (1898-1977), who in 1924 became the first Chinese American to pass the Califor-

nia State Bar exam and would be admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court. Also prominently featured is legendary civil rights crusader Walter U. Lum (1882-1961), the only Chinese American to have a street named after them (Walter U. Lum Place in San Francisco's Chinatown). In recent years, C.A.C.A. has carried on its civil rights legacy with its opposition to anti-immigration policies, racial discrimination, and hate crimes. The organization has also been actively involved in cases such as Vincent Chin's murder and Wen Ho Lee's prosecution by the U.S. government.

Please join CHSA in May as the *Civil Rights Suite: Exploring the History of the Chinese American Fight for Equality* is presented on behalf of everyone who has struggled for civil liberties. ☛

## "Chinese American Symphony" Tribute Well-Received

CHSA proudly sponsored Composer & Pianist Jon Jang's "Chinese American Symphony," as part of the Oakland East Bay Symphony's *Sounds of China* Lunar New Year celebration at the Paramount Theatre on February 22, 2008, 8pm. More than a thousand people attended this performance honoring an important part of Chinese American history. The announcement commissioned for the evening read:

As a proud sponsor of the  
Oakland East Bay Symphony . . .

The Chinese Historical Society of America congratulates Jon Jang for "The Chinese American Symphony"—a stunning achievement paying tribute to the Chinese workers who built the first transcontinental railroad in the United States.

We also commend the dedication of this symphony to Philip Choy, CHSA Board Emeritus who has played a leading role in preserving and celebrating Chinese American history for the last half century.

**CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA**  
965 CLAY STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94108  
415 391-1188 WWW.CHSA.ORG



# The Chinese of California: A Struggle For Community

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Exclusion Act and the Struggle for Equal Protection under the Law

- **EXPULSIONS AND ALLIANCES:** Forging community in Heinlenville, a San Jose Chinatown, 1887-1930s
- **CREATING COMMUNITY:** the Chinatowns of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Jose.

Since the exhibit opened, the media attention surrounding *The Chinese of California* has been enor-

mous. Notable impressions include: front-page coverage in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on Lunar New Year and a KQED-FM "Forum" interview with Michael Krasny featuring Sue Lee, CHSA Executive Director; UC Davis Law Professor & Immigration Attorney Bill Ong Hing; Professor Emeritus & Author Judy Yung; and David Crosson, CHS Executive Director. KTVU online also featured the exhibit, as well as Comcast TV's "Inside City Limits," and ethnic me-

dia press such as *World Journal*, *Sing Tao*, *Ming Pao*.

The influence of this exhibit is truly wide-spread. Beyond San Francisco, from the Sacramento River Delta to San Jose's Heinlenville, down to Los Angeles and other communities throughout the state, *The Chinese of California* reveals experiences of Chinese Californians as they join countless other immigrants in defining what it means to be a Californian and an American. ☞



*Sue Lee, CHSA Executive Director, and Phil Choy, CHSA Board Emeritus, wish everyone a happy Lunar New Year as they address the crowd during the exhibit opening of **The Chinese of California**.*



*Participating in the opening festivities are, from left to right: Peter Hanff, The Bancroft Library Deputy Director; Bill Watson, Overland California Trails Association Leader; Jeanne Watson, United Nations' International Council of Museums Committee Leader; Sue Lee, CHSA Executive Director.*

*A full house packs the main exhibit gallery at the California Historical Society during the new exhibit opening on the eve of the Lunar New Year.*



# In Memoriam

*Frances Quan Chun Kan and Enid Ng Lim*



**Frances Quan Chun Kan**, known in the 30's and 40's as a featured singer at Twin Dragons, Forbidden City, and Kubla

Khan night clubs in San Francisco, died peacefully in the company of her family on February 23.

Honored by the Congress of the United States and the California State Senate as a pioneer for entertainers who united to confront the discrimination against Asian Americans, she was also recognized by CHSA for these efforts. She was

featured in Arthur Dong's award-winning documentary *Forbidden City U.S.A.*

A childhood of singing with her father's Hawaiian musician friends led Frances Chun Kan to become one of the few Chinese Americans to embark on a show business career in the 1930s. She joined *Forbidden City* as a singer and performed there regularly between wartime tours of the United States on behalf of the Stage Door Canteen, the USO, and the Red Cross. Frances retired from show business in 1947. Born in 1919, Frances had lived in the Bay Area for nearly half a century. She is survived by her children Michele, Michael, and Celeste. ☛

**Enid Ng Lim**, Past President of CHSA and an advocate for San Francisco residents, especially those of Chinese ancestry, died on February 27.



A native San Franciscan, Enid was born in Chinatown, graduated from George Washington High School, and had a successful career in insurance business before embarking upon a life in civil service. She was an Administrator at Donaldina Cameron House before joining the Chinatown Community Development Center, where she oversaw transportation and environmental issues. Among Enid's most notable accomplishments was bringing the Muni #9 and #12 bus lines through Chinatown, as well as the addition of railings and lights to the Stockton Street Tunnel.

Enid's work expanded when she was appointed to various City commissions, including Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, Municipal Transportation Agency, and Access Appeals Board. She served on numerous committees and boards, and was a Docent at the newly renovated City Hall, a member of the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown, and a Co-founder of Friends of On Lok. Enid spent her last days at On Lok's Montgomery St. residence.

Enid is survived by her daughter, Jeanine, son-in-law, Greg, and granddaughter, Kati. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, March 22 at 2 pm at the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown, 925 Stockton Street, San Francisco. ☛

## Honoring the 2007 *Glamour & Grace Gala* Benefactors & Sponsors!

The spectacular event held at the Four Seasons Hotel, San Francisco on September 15, 2007 was made possible by the generous support of many people. A special thank you is extended to the Gee Family Foundation and May & Sinclair Louie. Much appreciation also goes to Him Mark & Laura Lai, Lui Foundation, and the following sponsors:



Save the Date for CHSA's  
*2008 Gala*

Four Seasons Hotel  
757 Market St, San Francisco  
September 20, 2008 at 6 pm

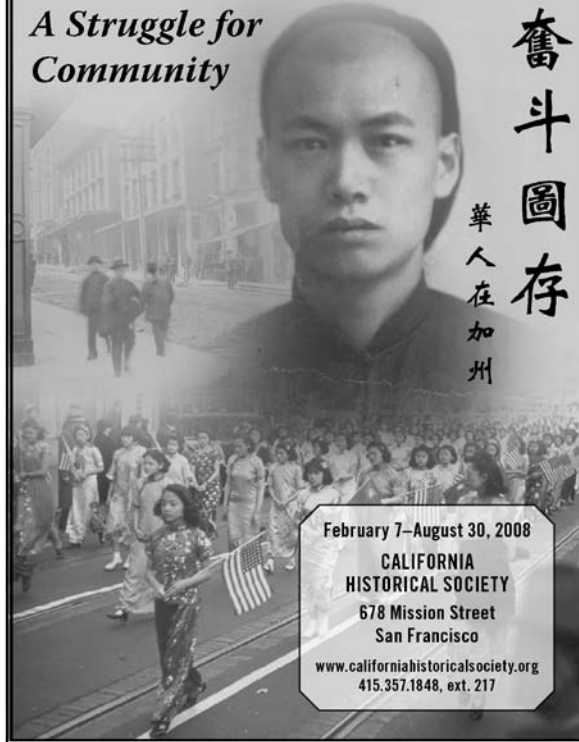
The California Historical Society, The Bancroft Library, and  
The Chinese Historical Society of America present

# The Chinese of California

*A Struggle for  
Community*

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February 7–August 30, 2008

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San Francisco

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415.357.1848, ext. 217

Please note that the CHSA *Bulletin* is now published quarterly rather than bi-monthly. To contribute articles about Chinese American community and historical news and events, please submit articles to [judy@chsa.org](mailto:judy@chsa.org).

Editor: Judy Hu || Design: Elaine Joe || Photographer: Dr. Donald Cheu



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