



The *CHSA Bulletin* is published multiple times throughout the year. To contribute articles about Chinese American community and historical news and events, please submit articles to [info@chsa.org](mailto:info@chsa.org).  
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 CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA MUSEUM



**We deeply appreciate your support**

At this time we would be extremely grateful if you would consider a gift to support our work in the upcoming year. 2014 is shaping up to be another remarkable journey with these exciting new initiatives:

- Chinatown Memories Oral History Project
- Continuing Collaboration with the Stanford Chinese Railroad Worker Project recovering the stories of descendants
- 2014 Collections Preservation Project
- Continuing our free Museum Admissions program
- 2014 Marketing and Communications initiative

Your participation enables us to share the untold stories of Chinese in America with a broad international audience and ensure the place of our history within the American multicultural narrative.

**PLEASE RENEW OR PURCHASE A CHSA MEMBERSHIP TODAY!**

We also invite you to make a donation of \$1,000 / \$2,500 / \$5,000 or more. Employer-matches are especially welcome! All contributions are tax deductible (Federal tax ID #94-67122446). Contact us at (415) 391-1188.



**Bulletin 簡報**

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA MUSEUM Summer 2014 | Vol. 50, No. 2

**Chinese railroad pioneers given honors—still more work to be done**

CHSA is proud to share the triumphant moment of the induction of Chinese Railroad Workers in the Hall of Honor by the Department of Labor on May 9, 2014: 145 years after the completion of the first Transcontinental Railroad. In one bold stroke, the Department of Labor created a watershed moment changing CHSA's own narrative to fulfill our mission as steward of the Chinese American community narrative, and altering the Chinese American historical narrative itself.

In 1969, CHSA anticipated the 100th anniversary of the Golden Spike Ceremony in Ogden, Utah, and launched an effort to recognize the contributions of Chinese workers. With support and funding from the Chinese community, CHSA successfully produced and placed two plaques at both ends of the Central Pacific Railroad—Sacramento, CA and Promontory Point, Utah. CHSA President Phil Choy was invited to the official May 10, 1969 ceremony to speak but was abruptly pulled from the program. No speaker that day acknowledged the contributions of Chinese laborers to the Transcontinental Railroad.

The story of Chinese laborers working on the railroad is a cornerstone of Chinese American history. While we know what they accomplished—carving and blasting 15 tunnels through the Sierra Nevada in the worst



Video still by Henry Faybusovich and Rick Quan. Courtesy of Rick Quan

The descendants of Chinese railroad workers stood together on the stage during the Department of Labor's Hall of Honors induction ceremony in Washington, DC on May 9, 2014.

of winter conditions, grading road beds, and moving tons of rock, we do not know much about them as individuals. Even their names are relatively unknown. Payroll records only show the familiar "Ah \_\_\_\_"—no full names. Recruited by the Central Pacific Railroad from 1865-1869, thousands came from Toisan in Kwangtung Province. Hung Wa and Ah Toy were among the first group of workers in 1865. Chin Lin Sou, a leading Denver pioneer is known to have worked on the Transcontinental Railroad, then became a labor contractor and businessman.

We know the stories of a few descendant families, and they are at the core of CHSA's project to share stories and uncover new leads to more descendant



Courtesy Amon Carter Museum of American Archives, Fort Worth, Texas

Railroad workers Wong Fook, Lee Chao, and Ging Cui were at Promontory Point for the laying of the last rail in 1869.

families. There may be descendants who don't even know that their ancestor worked on the railroad.

The heightened awareness of Chinese Railroad Workers brought by the Hall of Honor induction is an opportunity to conduct research to identify more descendants.

CHSA supports Stanford University's Chinese Railroad Worker Project of North America and looks forward to newly recovered stories of our pioneering ancestors which will enrich and deepen our understanding of the building of the American West.

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## 2014 Voice & Vision Gala "Work of Giants"

The Chinese Historical Society of America cordially invites you to our 2014 Voice and Vision Gala on Saturday, September 20, 6pm at the Four Seasons Hotel in San Francisco.

Building on the momentous Induction of Chinese Railroad Workers to the Hall of Honor by the U.S. Department of Labor, this year's theme, "Work of Giants," will focus on the legacy of these pioneers. We will also recognize Stanford University's Chinese Railroad Worker Project of North America, share stories of descendant families and inspire community members to search for leads to more descendant families.



Please join us in celebration as we commit ourselves to recover the forgotten and lost accounts of Chinese in America, interpret stories, and weave them into the American historical narrative, affirming our essential role in the cultural fabric of America.

## Leland Wong brings art, food and the community to the museum



Photo by Robbie Sweeny

Here at CHSA we're thankful to have artist Leland Wong on board. He has been able to bring people to our museum through his photography, art, and food.

The recently crowned Dumpling King hosted a workshop during our May 3rd "APA Month Kickoff: Joice Alley Celebration and Cameron Carnival" featuring three types of dumplings: *jiaozi*, *guotie*, and *xiaolongbao* (pictured above).

The Learning Center was full of eager visitors of all ages, learning different dumpling cooking styles. Many stayed past the hour to mingle and eat the delicious food they all made together.

Wong is currently busy working on upcoming projects; a photography project and a mural honoring the Chinese railroad workers whose presence was missing in the iconic Promontory Point photo of the

Golden Spike Ceremony, inspired by his recent trip to Utah commemorating the pioneers.

If you were one of the people who attended last year's Winterblast, you're in luck: we are having another fundraiser just like it called Summerblast, coming to you June 28. Wong is working with CHSA staff on bringing you tons of delicious food, wine, live music and a good time. Keep your eyes peeled on our social media pages.

## CHSA's Main Gallery: a work in progress

As reported in our Fall 2013 Bulletin, Gordon Chun Design and CHSA are working to create an innovative model for CHSA's public presence. The changes to the museum have been transparent to our guests and visitors from all over the world.

As we make the transition, we are presenting artifacts from our Daniel K.E. Ching Collection, which show a range of depictions of Chinese Americans in popular culture. Some serve as a reminder of virulent anti-Chinese sentiment when Chinese were driven out of many early communities. Others are historical artifacts from places like China Camp showing every day objects.

Gordon Chun Design and CHSA staff have constructed a makeshift Angel Island immigration station supplemented by Lenora Lee's "Passages" projected onto a panel. The station allows visitors to experience what an immigrant Chinese would have had to endure in detention as part of the immigration process.

Frank Wong's miniatures that depict his interpretations of daily Chinese American life can now be seen throughout the gallery. Visitors of all ages marvel at the design and furnishings of each room which include a Chinese laundry, an herb store, and a single room (SRO). In fact, we are currently devel-

oping a life-size rendition of the SRO.

CHSA is still developing plans to improve the Transcontinental Railroad and "building the American West" stations.

While these changes are in effect, we still accommodate our guests who use our space for events like the North Beach Library Benefit, the CG Jung Institute of San Francisco Conference, and "Lost in Translation 2: Comedy Night at the CHSA Museum."

ALL PHOTOS BY CHSA STAFF



Visitors from all over the world are treated to our Jake Lee paintings, Frank Wong miniatures, Daniel K.E. Ching artifacts and more.

Mood lighting presented by Russell Wong, one of our frequent collaborators. He has generously donated his time and effort to create a better atmosphere at our events.



Frank Wong's SRO miniature is a result of his photographic memory and meticulous attention to detail. Viewers of his art are instantly transported to these scenes captured from his mind



With this stereoscope, you can view images of the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, part of our *Earthquake! The Chinatown Story* exhibit in April.