

唐府 TANG FU

Issue No.7 / Fall 2023

MISSION BUILDING

404 Third Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101

DR. SUN YAT-SEN MEMORIAL EXTENSION BUILDING

328 J Street San Diego, CA 92101

MUSEUM HOURS

Friday, 12 to 4
Saturday, 12 to 4
Sunday, 12 to 4

2nd Sundays Free



FEATURED CHARACTER

Written by 趙孟頫
Zhao Mengfu (1254-1322)

空 [Kōng] empty
空氣 [Kōngqì] air
空曠 [Kōngkuàng] open, hollow



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Zhao Mengfu (趙孟頫; 1254–1322) was a Chinese calligrapher, painter, and scholar during the Yuan dynasty. He was a descendant of the Song dynasty's imperial family. His work was greatly appreciated by the Confucian-inspired Yuan Emperor Renzong. Zhao was an official member in the Yuan court.

He was married to Guan Daosheng, who was also an accomplished poet, painter and calligrapher. His rejection of the refined, gentle brushwork of his era in favor of the cruder style of the eighth century is considered to have brought about a revolution that created the modern Chinese landscape painting. His landscape style focuses more on a literal laying of ground. This pattern of organization makes his paintings appear very simple and approachable. It was this characteristic that so many people valued about his style.

Director's Letter



Dear Friends and Supporters of the SDCHM,

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the generous SDCHM community for your unwavering support of the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum. It is with great honor and excitement that I assume the role of Executive Director at this esteemed institution. This incredible opportunity resonates deeply with my personal passion as an advocate for peace through education and celebrating our cultures through our shared narratives.

The San Diego Chinese Historical Museum stands as

a vital bridge, connecting our past with the present and paving the way for a brighter future. Together, we have the power to engage in meaningful dialogue, fostering understanding and appreciation for the rich heritage and contributions of the Chinese community in San Diego and beyond.

In the few months since I began, I have been working diligently with our committed board, dedicated staff, and supportive volunteers to guide our collective efforts to fortify the SDCHM's position as a beacon of knowledge, inspiration, and cultural exchange.

I invite each and every one of you to join us on this journey. Together, we can create an environment that inspires lifelong explorations, encourages collaborations, and honors the diverse tapestry of Chinese history and heritage. Your continued support and involvement are vital to our success, and we are deeply grateful for you on our shared mission.

I am humbled by the opportunity to serve as Executive Director of the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum, and I am confident that, with your support, we will continue to accomplish great things. Let us embark on this next exciting chapter together, as we write a story that not only honors the past but also shapes a more inclusive and harmonious future.

With sincere appreciation and anticipation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacinta Wong'.

We continue to present our monthly Chinese American Experience and Beyond zoom lectures and have received wonderful feedback from numerous participants. Please tune in when you have time. In addition, we are planning a new exhibit focusing on snuff bottles from local collections, which will be unveiled in the Fall season.

We have a new Executive Director, Jacinta Wong. Please help us welcome her. I also want to express my appreciation to all the volunteers, docents, staff and our board members for pulling such heavy weight in these challenging times.

As always, we love to hear from you and look forward to meeting you in person at the museum.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn Chou'.

Message From The Chair



Dear Members and Supporters of the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum,

The spring season is upon us and we look forward to seeing more visitors in the summer. The museum, in collaboration with the Chinese Cultural Center at San Diego State University, have been

exhibiting the Lifetime Achievements of Maestro Jahja Ling. The exhibitions will be ongoing until the month of August. Please find time to visit.

The museum hosted a gala on the 23rd of April, 2023 at the Golden Island Restaurant. Over 300 people attended the event to honor Maestro Jahja Ling. Special thanks go to Lynn Chou and Lillian Chu for co-chairing the gala. The event featured the AmeriCal Youth Symphony.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS



Miniature Treasures of the Qing Dynasty & Beyond

From September 1, 2023 to February 25, 2024

By Lily Tou Birmingham

The rise of snuff (biyan 鼻煙) or tobacco powder taking, and the subsequent use and collecting of snuff bottles (biyanhu 鼻煙壺), was a phenomenon occurring at the beginning of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912).

Precisely when tobacco first reached China is not documented. When trade routes expanded, the habit of pipe smoking proliferated throughout the country, and the demand for locally grown tobacco intensified. In the early 17th century, the farmers in Fujian began to cultivate tobacco for the domestic market. Initially, pipe smokers were among the lower classes of people, but when smoking was taken up by soldiers at the time of the Manchu conquest, the habit became pervasive.

While pipe smoking was socially acceptable among the upper

classes, and within the Palace confines, it became evident that it was an unsophisticated habit enjoyed by all and sundry. The importation of snuff resulted in the welcome abandonment of pipe tobacco by upper class smokers, since snuff taking was perceived as both stylish and elegant.

Starting in the late 17th century, fine Portuguese snuff arrived in China, along with lavish European snuff boxes as presentation tributes for the Qing emperors. Taking snuff became popular in the elite class of people. It may have been stylish to carry a snuff box, but it was not practical as snuff did not remain fresh for very long, when it was exposed to the Beijing climate. It was more elegant to offer the finest snuff from a bottle, with its airtight stopper and ivory spoon. The palace started producing the snuff and the snuff bottles during the Kangxi Emperor (1661-1722), and the general public followed. By the 19th century the middle and upper classes took snuff and collected snuff bottles, especially in wealthy merchants,

who wanted to separate themselves from the lower classes of peasants and laborers, by adopting the fashionable habits of the Qing elite.

Due to their small size and endless designs, snuff bottles became popular gifts and people started collecting them. When China opened to the Westerners, they collected snuff bottles as well. Our exhibition will have some items from the museum collection and more from the private collections. To highlight the history of scholar collectors in the Qing Dynasty, the exhibition will set up a small scholar's room, and a summary of the late Qing dynasty history.



Poem 'Li Sao', Qu Yuan & the Dragon Boat Festival

離騷, 屈原與端午節

From March 29, 2024 to August 25, 2024

By Lily Tou Birmingham



The lyrical poem “Li Sao 離騷” or “the Lament” is the longest Chinese ancient poem and was created 2,300 years ago by a legendary author, Qu Yuan 屈原 (339-278 BCE), whose death inspired the Dragon Boat Festival. It is a romantic poem, incorporating the poet’s own political ideology, encounters, passions and aspirations, in which the poet’s distinctive personality shines. Qu Yuan lived during the

Warring States period (475-221 BCE) - a time of strife when various regions fought for territory and political power. He was a patriotic poet and court official until he was exiled by the King based on slanders. Later, his state, Chu 楚 was corrupted and conquered by the First Emperor Qin Shi Huang 秦始皇. Qu decided to end his life in the Milou river, when the state of Chu was defeated and forced out of their capital. The legend has it that people raced to the river and fed the fish with zongzi (rice dumpling), so Qu’s body would not be eaten by the fish. As time goes on, the racing boat evolved into a dragon boat design for an annual event. It is the origin of the Dragon Boat Festival. Qu’s highly original and imaginative romantic lines with unstoppable power had an enormous influence over Chinese poetry. He created lines varied in length and expression, departed from the fixed form used then, and became the first poet with his name attached to his works.

The great Chinese historian, Sima Qian 司馬遷 wrote that Qu Yuan left a wealth of knowledge to future generations, and his noble character, patriotism and his literary achievements have had far-reaching influence. In literature, a tragedy has the strongest emotional impact on people. Although the typical Western tragic hero clings to life and is not willing to die, Qu Yuan died for his ideology, which, in many ways, was ahead of his time. People praise Romeo and Juliet’s love that was beyond life and death. It is understandable how a

talented patriotic poet of eastern culture might make the ultimate sacrifice for his insistence on integrity.

One famous line in the poem is “Long had been my road and far was the journey; I would go up and down to seek the light. 路漫漫其修遠兮，吾將上下而求索。” This light is the ideology, advancement and truth. Qu’s spirit of “seeking” has become a noble spirit believed in and pursued by future generations in China.

Qu used exaggerated metaphors, historical examples, symbolism of plants, and mythological events referring to his moral and patriotic ideals. Many calligraphers copied Li Sao and many writers adopted Li Sao to discuss their own patriotism of their own time. The powerful emotion expressed in this poem has a strong impact on people. We attempt to show Qu’s ideals, dilemmas and the beauty of his writing; and why people continue studying “Li Sao”. Our exhibition will include calligraphy, paintings, photos and live plants.

This exhibition is a collaboration of SDCHM, SDSU Chinese Cultural Center, and the Wind Eave Cultural Association. An exhibition named “Immersive Li Sao” will take place in the Black Box Theater at SDSU in June 2024.



Connecting with ‘Li Sao’ 離騷 Through Plants

By Lily Tou Birmingham

In the magnificent poem “Li Sao” there are two types of imagery: “Beauty” and “Aromatic Plants” 美人與香草. The image of “Beauty” can be interpreted as the King, or the author, Qu Yuan himself. Qu Yuan wrote: “The sun and the moon do not stay long; spring and autumn alternate each other, time flies. 日月忽其不淹兮，春與秋其代序；the vegetation is dying out, and I am afraid of the beauty’s twilight 惟草木之零落兮，恐美人之遲暮。” This “Beauty” might be the King, who is declining as time goes by. There is regret and sorrow. On the other hand, the beauty’s twilight could also mean Qu Yuan is getting old. He lamented that time flies and he is getting old. From being congenial and sympathetic with King Huai of Chu 楚懷王 to being jealous, because of the villain’s slander, he is now adrift and unfulfilled. The images of the beauty in “Li Sao” are complex and make the poetry subtle and vivid.

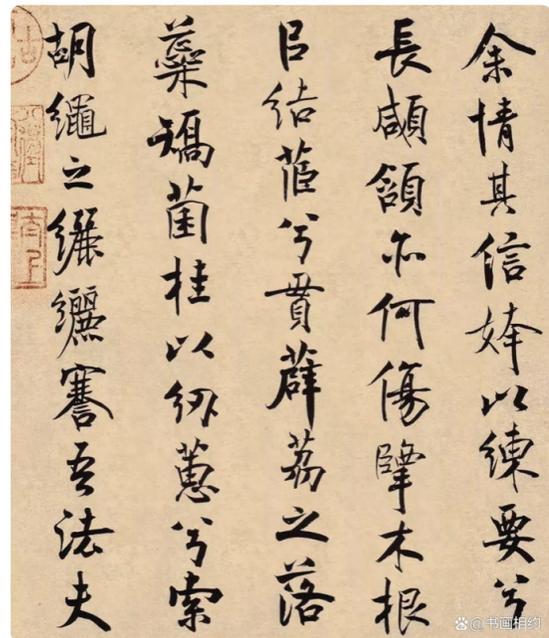
“All the women are jealous of my exquisite beauty, and rumors say that I am good at wantonness. 衆女嫉余之娥眉兮，謠諑謂余以善淫。” Qu Yuan expressed his emotions by imagining himself as an abandoned wife, so the whole poem is mournful and desolate, as if weeping and complaining. Using the husband and wife as a metaphor for the monarch and ministers not only fits the situation at that time, but also conforms to traditional Chinese concepts of yin and yang.

The “Aromatic Plants” imagery has multiple purposes. The opening of the poem is about his life, telling that he has noble characteristics and high moral qualities, and at the same time, he pays attention to his acquired self-cultivation. Qu Yuan said: “I dress in scented Chinese Angelica, and twine orchids as my garland 扈江離與辟芷兮，纫秋蘭以為佩。” The poem is filled with a wide variety of herbs, which serve as decorations and enrich the image of “Beauty”. At the same time, the image of “Aromatic Plants” refers to the honorable character and personality, which is opposite to bad grass. So plants symbolize both sides of the political struggle.

In early years, Qu tried to reform the government but failed. King Huai demoted Qu and sent him into exile. The court officials lived in envy and malice, so Qu became depressed. “I drank the dew of magnolia in the morning, and ate the petals that dropped from chrysanthemums in the evening. 朝飲木蘭之墜露兮，夕餐秋菊之落英。” Qu wanted to stay pure and beautiful in his mind, and live a simple life with nature.

In China, this line has become the symbolism of scholars who want to live with nature and not get mixed up in politics.

Later, in the poem, Qu indicated that he could not trust the villains who would break his treasure out of jealousy! The court environment had changed so much that some people he educated and trusted before were no longer on his side. So he continued: “The time is chaotic and changeable, how can I linger here any longer? The orchid and angelica have lost their fragrance, and the basil has turned into bad grass. 時繽紛其變易兮，又何可以淹留？蘭芷變而不芳兮，荃蕙化而為茅。”



Another example in plants : “I plucked soft basil leaves to wipe my welling tears that fell down like rivers and wet my coat front. 攬茹蕙以掩涕兮，沾餘襟之浪浪。” His work was expressive and heart wrenching.

Aromatic plants are common in San Diego’s native plants. San Diego receives about 10 inches of rain annually on an average, which makes the area a semi-arid climate, or semi-desert. One of the unique habitats in San Diego is Coastal Sage Scrub, which is along coastal terraces and foothills of southern California, typically below 3,000 feet elevation. This habitat is aromatic with a diverse assemblage of grasses and shrubs such as California sagebrush, black sage, white sage, monkey flower, California sunflower, etc. Hiking or resting among these native plants and flowers is an exhilarating experience. If you can imagine sitting

among the scented plants that Qu Yuan sat over 2300 years ago, it connects you with the poet. Then, the plants in his poem and what they represent come to life.

What is more interesting is that almost all plants in Qu Yuan’s poem still exist today. Some are popular Chinese medicine in dried plants or roots. Once the Chinese common names are identified from their ancient names in the poem, their Latin names can be matched up. The results are glorious live plants that are all native to China or Asia, and a true connection with Qu Yuan. It becomes exciting, to say the least. Here are photos of sample plants from the poem. We will have Chinese flower paintings, enlarged plant photos and live plants in the exhibition in 2024.



ANNUAL BANQUET in Honor of The Achievements of Maestro Jahja Ling

By Elizabeth Chaney & Paulina Serra

We extend our gratitude to all who graced our Spring 2023 banquet in honor of Maestro Jahja Ling. The evening was nothing short of unforgettable. SDCHM Board Chair, Li-Rong Lilly Cheng opened, acknowledging the banquet co-chairs, Lynn Chou and Lillian Chu, whose efforts to pull together a very ambitious program merit all of our respect. Lilly then introduced our Executive Director, Jacinta Wong, and all members of our Board of Directors.

The program opened with three pieces performed by the American Chinese Youth Symphony (美華青少年交響樂團). Founded in 2017 by Ma Ping and Artistic Director and Permanent Conductor, Dr. Yangsheng, 40 members of the orchestra joined us onstage at Golden Island. Following the symphony, banquet guests enjoyed solo performances by soprano Elizabeth Jin, cellist, Max Tao, and young soprano, Eva Mather.

After the musical sets, artists Kegen Li (李克恭) and Yuen Chik Tam (譚元稷) stepped up in front of easels onstage. Banquet guests observed as they created works in ink: “Chasing the Waves (逐浪天涯)” and “Lucky Rabbit Welcomes the Spring (瑞兔迎春).” Just before the culmination of the evening’s program, we were pleased to welcome the American Chinese Youth Symphony back to the stage, where they performed four works. During this set, we were greatly honored when Maestro Ling stepped onstage, where he conducted the youth orchestra’s interpretation of a piece by Johann Strauss Sr.

The evening ended with a very special activity, as Maestro Jahja Ling joined Li-Rong Lilly Cheng on the stage, where they engaged in an interview. Following the conversation, Jacinta returned to the stage, presenting a special Lifetime Achievement Award to Maestro Ling. With the award, we included an Honorary Lifetime Membership card. Maestro Ling received his card with glee, promptly whipping out his wallet, where he deposited it. Since then he has been able to come and visit our Museum twice!





HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHINESE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE & BEYOND

By Li-Rong Lilly Cheng

The Chinese American Experience and Beyond lecture series started during the pandemic. The TCAE&B program is in collaboration with the Chinese Cultural Center at San Diego State University. At the time, both the museum and the university were closed. The zoom platform not only provided a new opportunity to serve the community but a broader reach through cyberspace since participants could join us from anywhere on the planet.

This program has covered a range of topics from the Chinese diaspora to the Jews in Shanghai to acupuncture. Speakers come from all corners of the world including the Netherlands, Malaysia, England, Germany, Berkeley, Boston, New York, San Francisco and many other locations. They have brought their personal stories and expertise. In addition, we also provide discussants for each session.

The discussants brought their expertise to widen the scope of the topics. Participants joined us from all over the globe. We continue to receive excellent comments from the participants. For the most part, the sessions were recorded and they can be retrieved from Youtube. Some of the topics are so in depth they become lecture series such as our China³ series, the Jewish people in China min-series and the Chinese Americans@SDSU lecture series.

The planning of the Chinese American Experience and Beyond programs takes a long time and requires seamless execution. We continue to improve our outreach and content. To improve the comprehensibility of our program delivery, we have also added Chinese written language captions. Programming is already set for all of 2023 and most of 2024.

Please let us know if you have special topics and interests to suggest.

Upcoming TCAE&B Lectures

June 17, 2023

My Kyrgyzstan Days
By: *Jeff Trace*

July 15, 2023

Xuanzang and the Real Journey to the West
My Kyrgyzstan Days
By: *Prof. Zheng-Shang Zhang*

August 19, 2023

Number 6 of the Jewish People in China mini-series
By: *Susanne Hillman*

September 16, 2023

"In Flagranti Collecto: Caught in the act of Collecting The Lure of the Chinese Snuff Bottle"
By: *Courtenay McGowan*

October 21, 2023

Yuan Ming Yuan
By: *Patricia Yu, Ph.D*

November 18, 2023

Snuff Bottles from San Diego
By: *Clare Chu*

December 17, 2023

Jews of North Borneo and Shanghai Jews in the Philippines
By: *Rosalie Lala Corpuz*

January 20, 2024

Ink Worlds: the Literati Aesthetic in Historical and Contemporary Chinese Art
By: *Elaine Pierce*

February 17, 2024

Treasures in the Ancient Poem 'Li Sao'
By: *Dr. San-Pao Li*

March 16, 2024

Symbolism of Beauty and Plants in 'Li Sao'
By: *Lily Birmingham*

April 20, 2024

Qu Yuan's Influence in Chinese Literature
By: *Wenny Chang*

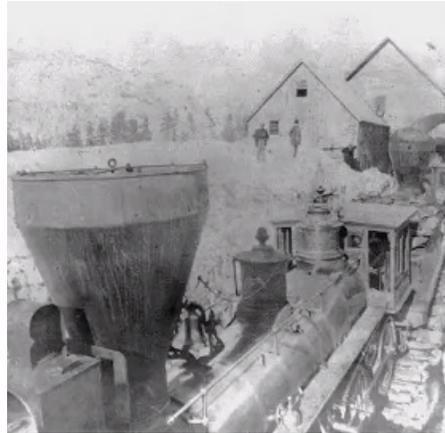
May 18, 2024

What Does 'Li Sao' Mean to Us Today
By: *Lilly Cheng*

June 15, 2024

Rulan Chao Pian: Ethnomusicologist and Mentor
By: *Robert Stein*

Past TCAE&B Lectures



The Story of Lim Lip Hong (1840/43-1920), Railroad Contractor, Mine Owner, Rancher, Butcher, and Venture Capitalist

On January 21, 2023, historian Sue Fawn Chung recounted a series of overlapping stories, centered on Lim Lip Hong, an immigrant who arrived in San Francisco from Guangdong at the age of 12 in the mid-19th century. Hong worked in a wide variety of trades across the state, from mining to labor contractor work, eventually becoming quite prosperous and setting a foundation for his family's development.

Decoding Chinese Opera

On April 15, 2023, theater scholar John Lowe discussed the origins of Classical Chinese Opera), breaking down the conventions of staging, the visual cues, musical instruments, and melodies of the art form for audience members. He was joined by Yan Ma (Ph.D. University of Hawaii at Manoa), who contributed to the discussion from her research on post-cultural revolution era performance.

Endowment Fundraising

Endowment funds play a crucial role in enabling us to sustain our operations. As is often the case with nonprofit organizations, we understand that grant awards and regular donations are often insufficient to sustain museum operations. We have encountered certain limitations regarding the legitimate use of nonprofit properties for generating rental income. Consequently, our initial step involved the sale of the warehouse and studio property located on Second Avenue. This successful sale in December 2022 has provided us with a \$1.8M income boost, which was added to our endowment fund. However, despite this significant progress, our current resources remain insufficient to support the ongoing operations of the museum. To establish a sustainable endowment, it is advisable to withdraw no more than 4% from

an endowment fund annually to maintain its sustainability. Presently, our endowment stands at approximately \$3 million. Considering our projected needs and typical annual income, our target is to raise the endowment to a minimum of \$5 million. We are thrilled to highlight the numerous changes and improvements that have taken place at the museum recently. However, to sustain our operations and ensure continued growth, we have set a goal of raising an additional \$2 million for the endowment fund within the next two years. To achieve this, we are planning to launch several significant fundraising initiatives, the details of which will be announced soon. Your support in these endeavors would be greatly appreciated.

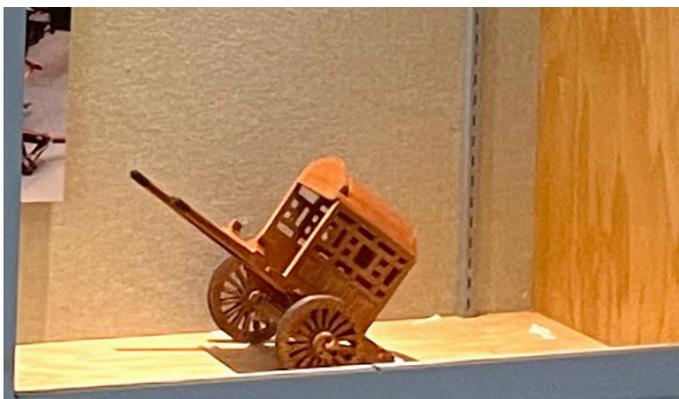
SCHOOL PROGRAMS

By Yessenia Perez

Rolando Library

In hopes of expanding our impact on the San Diego community, we were invited to mount a display cabinet at a local library. The 'pop-up exhibit' display about early San Diego Chinese fishing communities is currently available for the public to see at the College-Rolando Branch Library, located at 6600 Montezuma Road in San Diego. Being one of San Diego's busiest libraries, we are thrilled to be a part of their rotating displays. The panels in our display tell the history of the early San Diego Chinese immigrants, their contributions to the local fishing industry, and also show details about the design of the junk or Chinese sailboat they used.

Thank you to Branch Manager, Trevor Jones, Youth Librarian, Jessica Buck, and the entire staff at the College-Rolando Branch Library for hosting our exhibits.



Education Outreach



We have been actively working with the schools around the county, renewing past relationships and cultivating new partnerships. So far this year, we have been able to reach over seven hundred participants. We have provided Classroom Exhibit Presentations to libraries, senior centers, and grade schools. In addition to presentations, we have been carrying out museum and walking tours with the help of our docents. Our goal for the rest of the year is to continue to deliver on our mission of preserving and celebrating Chinese art, culture and history, along with the Chinese Americans' contributions to San Diego.



Poway Library

Thank you to the Poway Library's Branch Manager Kathy Jung, for inviting us to be a part of this year's Chinese Lunar New Year. On January 28th, the library hosted their annual Lunar Celebration with Lion Dancers, entertainment and crafts aimed for families to enjoy. Our board member Diane Carlos was able to help facilitate a fan making activity for children. It was a great event with over 600 people in attendance. We are looking forward to being a part of this event again at next year's celebration.

San Diego Museum Council Updates

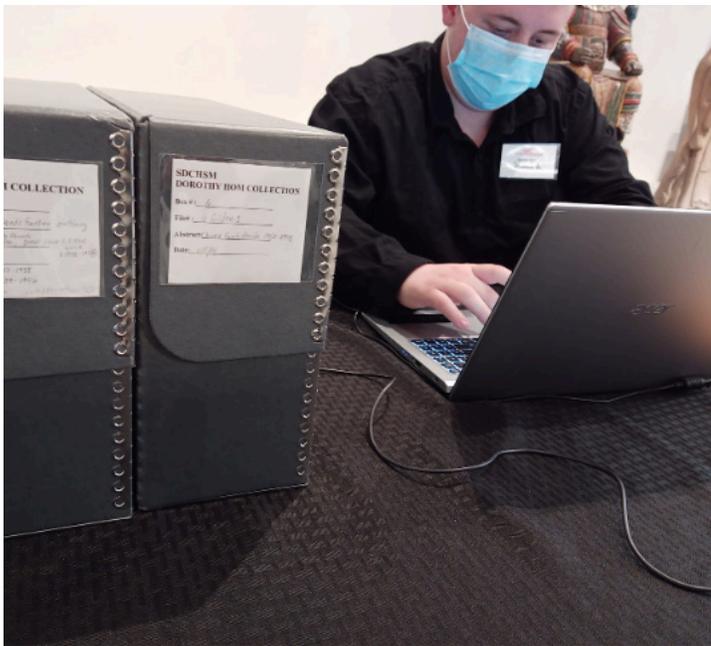
This February, as a member of the San Diego Museum Council, the SDCHM participated in Museum Month 2023. This allowed 50% off admission fees to any guest who presented a Museum Month pass when they visited during the month. Be sure to pick up your Museum Month pass at any public library or download from <https://sandiegomuseumcouncil.org/specials/museum-month/> and get a half-off discount when you visit our museum or any of the 60+ participating institutions across the county.

From May 1-18, we participated in the Museum Council's BIG Exchange, a program that gives members of participating organizations reciprocal admission to more than 40 museums, historic sites, gardens, and cultural centers across the County. Check out <https://sandiegomuseumcouncil.org/specials/the-big-exchange/> for more information about the BIG Exchange. Please purchase or renew your membership to the SDCHM, in order to be able to take advantage of the BIG Exchange in 2024!



Archive boxes compiled by Dorothy

By Joseph Ahlstrom & Elizabeth Hensley Chaney



In Spring 2022, we received a phone call from Shahed Dowlatshahi, Audiovisual Preservation Manager at California Revealed. California Revealed, he informed us, is an initiative of the CA State Library, which helps heritage organizations digitize, preserve, and provide online access to materials that document the state's history. With Shahed's encouragement, we decided to apply to California Revealed's Digitization and Preservation Assistance Program. We prioritized, in our application, documents that had been compiled by our co-founder, Dorothy Hom. For many years, these boxes, containing documents that concerned the history of the local Chinese community, were static in storage. We reviewed, cataloged the contents, and submitted our application to CA Revealed in August, learning that Dorothy's materials were accepted for digitization through the program in November 2022.

Joseph Ahlstrom (undergraduate history major at Point Loma Nazarene University and SDCHM volunteer) prepared the materials that were shipped to the CA State Library in March 2023. We are waiting for the digitized results to be shared (projected for December 2023). Joseph shares his observations:

It has been an excellent opportunity to learn more about community members. As a history major, it is fascinating to me.

In particular, K. T. Wong stands out. These documents show just how hard Kei T. Wong worked for both the Chinese community and San Diego at-large. For example, I recall two pay stubs for Kei T. Wong from the San Diego Unified School District. I was surprised to learn that he had taught in addition to his work as a minister. The second fascinating document I found was the charter for the Boy Scout Troop that he led. It reveals a lot about how Wong engaged with the community, and also shows a great deal about the Boy Scouts as a group. Particularly, one of the three commitments listed at the top of the page was 'Americanization,' which leaves no nuance.

Another notable document was the coroner's report from Chinatown at the turn of the 20th century. The interpreter for many of the cases was Ah Quin, who describes each of these men as if he knew them personally. He gives an account of their personal lives, and helps explain why they died. The accounts emphasize problems facing the Chinese community in San Diego and the United States, like those who felt hopeless because they were unable to visit their families or bring them to America. While solemn, it is an incredibly important document to reveal the strife facing Chinese Americans.

The boxes are fascinating in that they contain so many small details about the lives within this community.



Collections update

By Kristof Marsolais

Our museum has been busy with several updates and projects. We recently installed a new HVAC system in our collections facilities to maintain optimal temperature and humidity levels for sensitive materials such as paper and textiles. During this time, we moved several paintings from storage and updated our Collection Management System. Additionally, we added two shelving units to our storage facility and relocated Ah Quin’s trunk, which contains personal belongings such as an abacus and mahjong set, from a rental storage unit to our museum.

James Kemp’s textile collection is almost fully cataloged, with only two more boxes to photograph. We also completed the deaccession of 80+ wooden objects, which are currently in storage until we determine an appropriate method of disposition.

In preparation for our upcoming fall exhibition, **“Miniature Treasures of the Qing Dynasty & Beyond”** over 80 snuff bottles were examined and cleaned by our exhibition development team. The exhibition will feature over 100 snuff bottles ranging from the Ming Dynasty to Modern era.

We also made updates to our permanent folk art exhibition, including rotating objects and incorporating new jade, cloisonné, and textile pieces. The section now features a glass pane often found in Chinese lanterns, replacing our paper cuttings display. Our intern, Joseph Ahlstrom, contributed to the selection of Nephrite and Jadeite pieces for the exhibition. We also updated the Cloisonné section to feature a Ruyi scepter that pairs with the spiritual section next to the display.



OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



New Executive Director *Jacinta Wong*

Meet our new Executive Director Jacinta Wong! With over 20 years of management experience in the nonprofit and government sectors, Jacinta made a significant impact within the City of Chicago. She played a vital role in creating innovative programs across various City departments such as the Board of Ethics and Department of Buildings.

Most recently, Jacinta served as the Deputy Director for the Chicago City Clerk's CityKey Program. Her contributions were instrumental in successfully implementing and expanding the City's new municipal identification program. Growing up on the vibrant South Side of Chicago, Jacinta has a long history of being actively involved in the dynamic community of Chicago's Chinatown.

Now, as the Executive Director of SDCHM, Jacinta brings her wealth of expertise and enthusiasm to lead the museum into an exciting new era. In her role, she will collaborate closely with the SDCHM Board to develop and execute the museum's strategic plan. Jacinta will oversee our dedicated team of staff and volunteers, ensuring the smooth operation of the museum, managing its finances and spearheading fundraising efforts. She is excited to work on reaching out to the larger San Diego community through impactful outreach initiatives.

With Jacinta at the helm, SDCHM is poised to flourish, fostering cultural understanding and working to preserve the rich heritage of San Diego Asian Historical District.



New Board Member *Diane Carlos*

Diane Carlos is an educator with over 30 years of experience teaching in the San Diego Unified School District. She holds a BA in Social Science from the University of San Diego, and an MA in Education from the same academic institution. For more than 10 years Diane has served as a docent at the San Diego Museum of Art, where she contributed to the formation of that institution's school programs. She has dedicated over 50 hours volunteering at the SDCHM since May 2022 to help support the museum. Through her volunteer role, Diane interacts with museum visitors and has also lent her expertise as an educator to programs for schools and community groups.

Facility Updates



Storage facility HVAC

To ensure the preservation and conservation of delicate materials like paper and textile, it is crucial to maintain a precise range of temperature and humidity. To achieve this, we took measures such as installing a dehumidifier. However, we recently went a step further and hired a company to install secondary HVAC in our Extension building collection storage room. With the temperature and humidity levels now remotely controlled, we can ensure optimal conditions for storing these sensitive materials. This has not only given us the proper control over the storage room but also allowed us to conserve energy in the gallery.

Chuang garden pond

During COVID the pond suffered due to lack of attention. Since the museum has reopened, the small waterfall reservoir has been drained, cleaned, and refilled with fresh water. Chemicals were added to help maintain water quality. Furthermore, the old pond pump was replaced and a daily timer was set up to run the waterfall. Our goal is to restore the original pond, but not the creek, as it would require a pump so large that it occupies an entire outside storage room and requires much more water and electricity.

Second Avenue building

In December 2022, the property located at 541 Second Avenue was sold due to its underutilization. In order to facilitate this transition, museum staff dedicated over 250 hours into relocating the collection items from the building and organizing cleanup efforts. Many of the items previously stored in the Second Avenue building were successfully relocated to a rental storage unit situated on 16th Avenue.

Exterior improvements

We are currently undertaking enhancements to the exterior of the Mission building, working on revitalizing its visual appeal. As part of this endeavor, we power washed the walls to brighten their appearance. Additionally, we have embarked on repainting the three metal gates at the Mission building. Through these efforts, we aim to breathe new life into the property, ensuring that its exterior radiates its original beauty and charm.

The SDCHM would like to recognize the support of Jean Cheng for all of her help to restore the beauty of the museum.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

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