



唐府

TANG
FU

Issue No. 8 / Spring 2024



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 - Sunday
12 pm to 4 pm
Second Sundays Free



Featured Character written by
Mi Fu 米芾

離別 [Lí bié] depart

離開 [Lí kāi] leave

離婚 [Lí hūn] divorce

寸步不離 [Cùn bù bù lí] inseparable

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Mi Fu as depicted in a 1107 CE painting by Chao Buzhi
晁補之 (1053-1110)

Mi Fu (1051-1107) was a Chinese painter, poet, and calligrapher who was born during the Song dynasty. He became known for his style of painting misty landscapes. This style would be deemed the "Mi Fu" style, and involved the use of large wet dots of ink applied with a flat brush. His poetry was influenced by the famous Chinese poet, Li Bai and his calligraphy by Jin dynasty master calligrapher Wang Xizhi. Mi Fu is regarded as one of the four greatest calligraphers of the Song dynasty. He was noted to have an eccentric personality, including a mania for cleanliness.

Director's Letter:



Dear Esteemed Members of the SDCHM Community,

With the dawning of a new year, I look back at the last eight months since joining the SDCHM as Executive Director and am incredibly grateful for the remarkable individuals I've had

the pleasure of meeting. I started out not knowing more than a handful of folks in the entire San Diego region. Since then, it has been my pleasure to engage with thousands of amazing people: from honored long-standing community members, welcoming SD residents and all of the inquisitive museum visitors from around the world.

I am proud to share that our exhibits, educational programs, and community events have not only garnered significant new attention but we continue to gain momentum furthering the museum's mission in fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of Chinese history and heritage in the vibrant city of San Diego and the greater Baja California region.

As we look forward to 2024, I invite each of you to join us as we come together in solidarity for all those who

have gone before us, to help us honor our traditions and continue to foster positive cultural exchanges within our diverse communities.

I would be remiss if I did not express my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated staff, volunteers, docents, board, and donors. You are invaluable in sustaining our mission. It is through your selfless contributions of time, energy, and funding that we continue to make strides, impacting the San Diego community in a meaningful way.

As we look toward the future, I envision the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum as a dynamic hub of cultural exploration and education. My goal is to continue to expand our outreach initiatives, increase and strengthen our partnerships, and provide enriching experiences that resonate with people from all walks of life. I encourage each of you to take an active role in our journey. Whether it's through volunteering your time, attending events, becoming a museum member, joining our Board of Directors, or making a donation, your involvement is integral to our continued success.

I extend my deepest appreciation for your continued support and enthusiasm. Together, let us continue to write a story that not only pays homage to our past but also shapes a more vibrant and interconnected future. I hope to get a chance to personally thank each and every one of you.

With heartfelt gratitude and best wishes for the new year ahead,

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

Message From Our Chairperson:



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

As the new year is upon us, I want to send you all a greeting for the holiday season! For those of you who have had a chance to visit the museum recently, you can see the improvement of our exterior, our garden, and the sidewalk. We are making continuous improvements to the facilities, with the hope to attract more visitors from near and far.

I also hope that you have had an opportunity to meet

our new Executive Director, Jacinta Wong. She joined the museum in April and has been working diligently to connect the museum with the larger San Diego community.

We are now showing an exhibition that features snuff bottles at the museum. Please come to see these exquisite bottles and you will surely be captured by the beauty of our exhibition. We are also very pleased to offer our Chinese American Experience and Beyond Zoom lecture series with our partner, the Chinese Cultural Center at San Diego State University. We have drawn participants from all corners of the world and have continued to receive wonderful feedback from our participants. This is a thriving program and we invite you to join us on this journey.

I also want to take a moment to express my deepest appreciation to our docents and volunteers. You have pulled such heavy weights for the museum. We know that you have taken time out of your busy schedules to go to the museum to serve the community. Words are not sufficient enough to convey the gratitude we have for you.

Have a healthy and happy holiday season! Come and visit us!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thy Leung'.

Upcoming Exhibitions

Poem “Li Sao”, Qu Yuan & the Dragon Boat Festival

離騷，屈原，端午節

From March 29, 2024 to August 25, 2024

By: Lily Tou Birmingham



The poem “Li Sao” (離騷) or “The Lament” is the longest known Chinese poem written by Qu Yuan (340-278 BCE), some 2300 years ago. The story alludes to a patriotic civilian with high morality, who was not appreciated by the king. He was forced into exile and eventually drowned himself in the Milou river, in a statement of adherence to his integrity and to an ideology that was ahead of its time. Qu Yuan lived during the Warring States period (475-221 BCE) - a time when various regions fought for territory.

He wrote “Li Sao” during his exile, and his death inspired the Dragon Boat Festival. Qu used aromatic plants and the concept of beauty as symbols and metaphors in his poem to express his political ideals and aspirations. His distinctive personality is revealed through the poem. Through calligraphy, paintings, photos and interactive displays, the exhibition aims to illustrate Qu’s writing, connecting it to the festival that commemorates his legacy.



Beauty by Zhang Da-Chien (1899-1983)



Peony by Yun Shouping (1633-1690)

Glamour and Grace: The Anna May Wong Legacy Unveiled

From March 1 to March 10, 2024

By: Jacinta Wong



Have you ever heard about the famed Chinese American actress, Anna May Wong? She was born Wong Liu Tsong in 1905 Los Angeles and emerged as a trailblazing figure in Hollywood, becoming the first Asian American movie star. Growing up in her family's laundry, she played in the streets as film studios like Biograph, Selig, and Vitagraph in Southern California began to emerge. She was enchanted with the captivating world of cinema and began her journey in the industry at the tender age of 14, as an extra. She swiftly climbed the ladder, landing her

breakthrough role as the “Mongol slave” in the renowned 1924 film, *The Thief of Bagdad*. This pivotal moment catapulted her to be recognized as a rising star. During her four-decade career, Anna May Wong's talent graced over 70 films, television shows, theaters, and radio programs. Although she often fought being limited to smaller roles that fit the Asian stereotypes expected by white producers and audiences, she eventually became recognized as an iconic Asian American actress who helped blaze a trail for new generations of performers. Her groundbreaking contributions echo through time, as realized by her recent image selected for the U.S. Mint's American Women Quarters. She is the first Asian American to grace U.S. currency! Additionally, her legacy was also celebrated with the launch of a commemorative Anna May Wong-inspired Barbie doll by Mattel in June 2023.

Exhibiting a remarkable capacity for self-reinvention, Anna May Wong's legacy defies stereotypes and acts as a touching reminder of the significance of Asian American representation. Our upcoming pop-up exhibition features exclusive, original studio-produced lobby posters, once proudly displayed in theaters during her groundbreaking film screenings.

Art of Chunming Yu

From September 20, 2024 to March 2, 2025

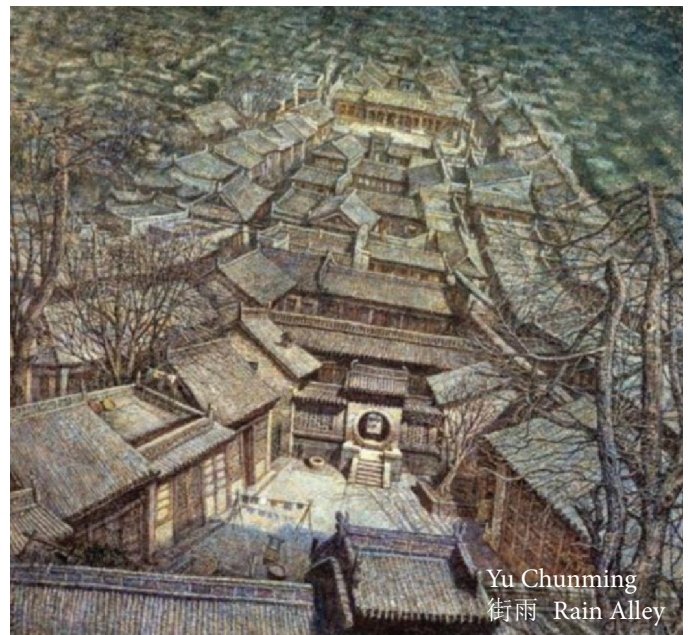
By: Lily Tou Birmingham

Yu Chunming (b.1955) graduated from China Academy of Art in 1982 and served as a professor in the department of architecture at Nanchang University from 1982 to 1996. Originally trained as an oil painter, Professor Yu held more than two dozen solo exhibitions in galleries and museums, and his paintings of traditional Chinese architecture have been collected by institutions around the world. Later, Professor Yu became a visiting scholar in the East Asian Studies department at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1997 where he specialized in the history and culture of regional folk houses in China.

Yu Chunming is an artist of two worlds. Trained in the traditional art forms of his native China, he has also been greatly influenced by traditions of the West, particularly the Baroque era. His paintings are a stylistic fusion of Eastern iconography, vintage points, and perspective coupled with the subtleties and emotional power of light through a layering of chiaroscuro, the interplay of light and dark.

The museum is glad to have the opportunity to welcome Professor Yu. SDCHM museum community members

may remember a 2018 special exhibition titled *World in Porcelain* featuring Professor Yu's collection of fine Chinese export porcelain.



Yu Chunming
街雨 Rain Alley

Student Art Show

On March 16 & 17, 2024



Opening on March 16, 2024, in collaboration with the San Diego Chinese Art and Cultural Society, SDCHM will proudly present the SDCACS Youth Art Competition 2024. This exhibition showcases a collection of artworks on paper and canvas created by students from schools across San Diego County. We invite everyone to immerse themselves in the vibrant and diverse world of young artists (ages 5-18).

For more information about the San Diego Chinese Art and Cultural Society, please visit their website: <http://sdchineseartcultural.org/>

APHD Walking Tours



After a few years' hiatus, we have re-initiated our monthly walking tours of the Asian Pacific Historic District. They will take place on the first Sunday of each month at 11 a.m.

On the tours, we explore the few remaining sites of San Diego's historic Chinatown, as well as those representing the Harlem of the West, Japantown, and little Manila in downtown San Diego. Tours are led by a museum docent, and involve walking approximately 8 blocks of the surrounding district. Topics include the history of specific buildings and sites as they relate to local Asian American immigrant populations and the conditions of life that those populations experienced in San Diego during the late 1800s to early 1900s.

Please check out our website calendar to sign up (pre-registration is required).

Book Club



Our Book Club unites the SDCHM community through shared readings, which explore various facets of the Chinese and Chinese American experience. We held our most recent book club meeting on October 28th, discussing *Rabbit on a Bumpy Road*, by local legend Tom Hom. For our next book, we plan to discuss *Paper Wife* by Laila Ibrahim.

Refreshments are served at each Book Club discussion, and meetings are followed by a docent-led tour of our museum. Please check out our website calendar for updates about future book club meetings and to sign up.

Symbolism of Beauty in the Poem “Li Sao”

By: Lily Tou Birmingham

What makes “Li Sao” so special? It is in the vocabulary Qu Yuan used, the metaphors and symbols he applied, that show much deeper emotions. No one could criticize the king in those days, so he had to use indirect methods. He wrote vivid scenes containing hidden messages to express his concern and love for the Chu State. That’s why he has been honored as the father of Chinese romantic poetry.

In the poem, beauty can be interpreted as the King or Qu Yuan himself. But the concept of beauty has more roles to play in his writing. Beauty as a concept applicable to a ruler would be reflected in an honorable, virtuous, and wise leader, who knows how to benevolently rule his kingdom. However, Qu Yuan’s King Huai of the Chu State was not depicted as a good king. It may be worth noting the Chu State collapsed only 50 years after Qu Yuan committed suicide. Qu saw the fate of his country clearly, but he felt powerless to change it. It became a tragedy. Let’s look at the symbolism Qu Yuan imbues in the concept of beauty. “世溷濁而不分兮，好蔽美而嫉妒：The muddy, impure world, so indiscriminating, seeks always to hide beauty, out of jealousy.” This “hiding beauty” means ostracizing talented people, preventing them from doing good work. The king and ministers of Qu Yuan’s Chu State were corrupt. They did not consider the benefits of commoners and did not care to distinguish between good and evil.

“忽反顧以流涕兮，哀高丘之無女：Then I looked about me and suddenly burst out weeping, because on this holy high hill there is no fair lady.” Here, the concept “lady” was used as a metaphor for ministers, and the “holy high hill” represented the Chu State, Qu’s home state. Qu actually said there were no good officials in the Chu State, for which he was sad and shed tears. In Chu culture, mountains, rivers, trees, and grass all have gods. Only with gods can there be blessings and good spirits. It is sad that there is no fairy mountain and no goddess. This phrase, in the poem, serves as a metaphor for the sorrow of a country without a benevolent king and good ministers. In the poem, Qu Yuan went on to search for a wife. He references a man looking for a wife, a beauty. Seeking these beauties symbolized his desire to find others who shared his ideology, a good king who would adopt his reforms and ministers who were like-minded. He describes three marriage proposals:

“吾令豐隆乘雲兮，求宓妃之所在：I made the cloud god ride off on a cloud, to seek out the dwelling-place of Lady Fu.” In the first proposal, Lady Fu was a potential

good mate. She was beautiful, but lacked manners. She did not appreciate or respect Qu, so he gave up.

“望瑤臺之偃蹇兮，見有娥之佚女：I gaze at a jade tower’s glittering splendor and spy the lovely daughter of the Lord of Yu-Song.” Qu asked a poisonous dove, a metaphor for slanderous thieves, to help him. Qu’s second proposal failed due to corruption and lies.

“及少康之未家兮，留有虞之二姚：Before they were married to Prince Shao Kang, Lord Yu’s two daughters were there for the wooing.” Abject with disappointment, Qu lost the confidence to even try to propose in his third attempt.

Qu was less and less convinced that something would work out, given the problematic environment. He lamented that the morals of the world were bad. From his perspective, there was no more hope. Qu asked an oracle to tell his future. The oracle said, “Beauty is always bound to find its mate. This is not the only place where you can find your lady.” The two beauties were the minister and the king. The oracle advised Qu to go far away to find a good king, since no one appreciated him in the Chu state. The images of beauty used in the marriage proposals represented how hard Qu was trying to find a good king and his disappointment with his failures. It’s his way of explaining his desperate situation without ever mentioning the king and the ministers.



Cloud goddess on the dragon ride by Fu Baoshi (1904-1965)

My Central Asian Dream— Kyrgyzstan Days

By: Zheng-sheng Zhang, Ph.D

When I was in graduate school many years ago, I came across a reference to the Dungans and my curiosity was immediately piqued. Over the years, my interest remained unabated, and I dreamt of going to Central Asia one day. In 2021, I received a Fulbright scholar award, which allowed me to go to Kyrgyzstan to study the Dungans, a long-cherished dream. The Fulbright Award was initiated by Senator Fulbright after World War II. It aims to promote friendly relations with other countries.

Kyrgyzstan and Bishkek

Kyrgyzstan is one of the five Central Asian countries and a former republic of the Soviet Union. It has a population of just over six million. More than 90 percent of it is mountainous, with peaks over 7,000 meters, numerous glaciers, and alpine lakes. The natural beauty earns it the reputation of being the “Switzerland of Central Asia”. The capital Bishkek is a beautiful and livable city. There are parks and tree-lined boulevards everywhere, and operas, symphonies, and ballets are of high quality and very inexpensive!



Inner Tianshan



Dungan bride

The Dungans

Dungans are Muslims who fled from Northwest China in the late Qing Dynasty after a failed uprising. They number about 160,000, mainly settled along the Chuy River on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. They still retain customs and language of the late Qing time. The Dungan script is unique, written in alphabetic script rather than Chinese characters.

In addition to its popular cuisine, the most distinctive custom of the Dungan people is their wedding ceremony. The bride's dress still retains characteristics of the late Qing Dynasty. Soon after my arrival, I was invited to a Dungan wedding.



Dungan classroom

I visited the largest Dungan School in Aleksandrovka, the largest Dungan settlement. Seeing the flowing Russian script on the blackboard, who could guess that it was writing the Chinese dialect of Central Plains?

I also visited two Dungan villages in Kazakhstan: Dunganovka in Taraz and Masanchi on the Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan border. In Dunganovka, I was showered with hospitality; in Masanchi, I was warmly received by the curator of the local Dungan Museum. He introduced me to a well-known poet/teacher and a Dungan elder with encyclopedic knowledge of Dungan culture.

Dungan Research

Much deserves to be studied in Dungan, including its history and folklore, the Dungan language and its evolution and preservation. Dungan has been listed as an endangered language, so it is imperative to document it. My own research has been on the evolution of the language and its script.

The stay in Central Asia has broadened my horizons. The ‘-stan’ countries are by no means monolithic. It has been over a year since I came back, but I still think about those happy days in Central Asia, having never thought that this often overlooked part of the world can have such a hold on its visitors.



TCAE+B Lecture Series Schedule

January 20, 2024

"The Literati Influence on Contemporary Chinese Art"

Elaine Pierce

February 18, 2024

"Li Sao: 2,300-Year-old Literary Gem Still Shines Today"

Dr. San-Pao Li

March 16, 2024

"Dragon Boat Festival and the Symbolism in Poem 'Li Sao'"

Lily Birmingham

April 20, 2024

"Lowdown Productions Documentary Screening"

Felicia Lowe

May 18, 2024

"Maritime Silk Road"

Li-Rong Lilly Cheng

June 15, 2024

"Rulan Chao Pian: Ethnomusicologist & Mentor"

Professor Liang Lei

RECENT EVENTS AT THE SDCHM



In the past few months, the SDCHM has been a hub of activity, hosting a range of events that showcase some of the rich cultural offerings that make up the Chinese American experience and connecting with many new San Diego residents.

In August, we held a closing ceremony for our recent exhibit featuring Maestro Jahja Ling. The event was a lovely celebration of the Maestro and his remarkable career. Over 60 attendees were treated to wine and hors d'oeuvres along with a beautiful pipa performance by local musician, Lu Liu. It was an unforgettable evening with the Maestro that paid tribute to his legacy.

Adding a touch of tradition to the mix, the SDCHM also organized a Chinese tea ceremony fundraiser to celebrate the official opening of our snuff bottle exhibit, *Miniature Treasures of the Qing Dynasty and Beyond*. This immersive experience provided attendees with a glimpse into the ancient art of tea preparation and an exclusive demonstration of Yixing Zisha clay teapot making, followed by docent-led tours of our beautiful new exhibit. The *Miniature Treasures Tea* proved to be a delightful afternoon filled with exquisite snuff bottles, cultural enrichment, delicious food tastings, and heartwarming conversations.

As the nights grew longer, the museum collaborated with Asian Story Theater and embraced the spooky season with an event that sent shivers

down the spines of attendees - Asian Scary Theater! Through chilling tales and eerie ambiance, participants were transported into the realm of Asian folklore and horror, creating an unforgettable experience that merged cultural storytelling with the thrill of the unknown.

These recent months have been a testament to the SDCHM's commitment to fostering cultural awareness and community engagement. Through the lens of music, traditions, and the art of storytelling, the museum continues to serve as a vibrant space for connection, learning, and celebration. As we look to the future, we hope that the SDCHM can remain a dynamic organization, offering unique experiences to captivate and uplift the diverse communities it serves.



MINIATURE TREASURES TEA



ASIAN SCARY THEATER



SCHOOL & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

By: Elizabeth Hensley C.



Since July 2023, we have had the pleasure to serve over 150 students and community members, who have either visited the museum or received a Classroom Exhibit Presentation or workshop in their classrooms and community centers.

In addition to these programs with schools and community groups, we've been able to get the word out about our education programming to the San Diego Public Library System. After our Executive Director, Jacinta Wong was invited to speak at a meeting of Youth Services Librarians in August, we have been able to formalize a partnership with the San Diego library system. Through this partnership, we provide our Classroom Exhibit Presentations for free at libraries or via Zoom. We also provide a range of hands-on activities at libraries, from fan making to calligraphy workshops. Over a dozen different libraries across the city, from Malcolm X Library in Southeastern San Diego to the San Ysidro branch to the Carmel Valley branch Library have requested programs ranging from adult lectures to youth Chinese Zodiac craft workshops in early 2024. Expect for us to be quite busy at the local libraries in January and February!

In addition to providing onsite or remote programming for libraries, we also make available different traveling exhibitions, drawing on several different themes. Soon after we de-installed our pop up exhibition at Rolando Library (featured in Tang Fu no.7), we received a request from the Linda Vista Library, where we installed a display on the importance of the Dragon in Chinese iconography and culture. Most recently, we've installed two pop-up exhibitions at the Rancho Peñasquitos Library, which are available for viewing until the end of the year.

Finally, we'd like to highlight our participation in the City's Discover & Go Program. This is a program that allows any San Diego resident 16 and over with a library card in good standing to visit select San Diego museums and attractions for free. Since we started this fall, over 35 library card holders and their families have taken advantage of this program and visited the SDCHM, expanding the museum's circle in the greater San Diego community.

SEQUEL TO LIFE OF NORMA MAE CHAN

By: Madeline Quin

“Not now, Auntie Mae. Another time.”

“Maddie, this was your grandfather. He was a good, kind, generous man. He was NOT drunk. He was not an alcoholic.”

At the time of this conversation, I was writing a profile about my 97-year-old aunt for the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum. This was a story about her, but she had wanted to include a statement about George Ah Quin, her father/my grandfather.

George Ah Quin had died early in his 40s, from a stroke. Previous strokes had affected his speech such that he often slurred his words. People unfamiliar with the devastating effects of strokes had dismissed such slurred words as drunken behavior.

This had really bothered my aunt, but I had never met my grandfather and, again, this profile was supposed to be an article about her. Besides, I reasoned I could save the info about grandfather for a follow-up on Auntie Mae for her 100th birthday in a few years. She was in great health and lived by herself in her same home of 70+ years.

In my mind, I could already see that Auntie Mae's 100th birthday was going to be spectacular with all sorts of flowers and an amazing ten-course meal. Except, it didn't happen. COVID-19 took over and my dear Auntie Mae died unexpectedly during a brief stay in a nursing home. I could not even visit her during the COVID-19 pandemic but I also didn't expect her to die so unexpectedly.

Auntie Mae's daughter, my cousin Sharon, had given me the fragile letter carefully preserved by Auntie Mae to show all who would read it, this piece of evidence of George Ah Quin's generosity to people asking for money. In this case, it was from his younger brother, Henry, who had asked for money to pay for a medical bill. This was not the first, nor would it be the last time Henry sought George's money. The letter came at a time when George was trying to pay his own medical bills for his family's newest addition: my dear

Auntie- Mae. Money was very tight for George and his family, but he still gave Henry the money.

Maybe it was for this very reason Auntie Mae kept and carefully preserved this letter. This 100-year-old letter was her keepsake, providing an insight regarding events at the time of her birth and it was a reminder to all George Ah Quin descendants of this generous, selfless ancestor. In 100 years' time, the advances of modern medicine have helped ease the trauma of stroke victims and their families. We have since learned that slurred speech is a symptom of a stroke, NOT necessarily a sign of drunkenness.

So although there was no 100th birthday celebration for Auntie Mae, I would like to take this opportunity to fulfill her last request in the year of her 100th birthday: George Ah Quin worked hard, sacrificed much, and was painfully misunderstood at the end of his life.



San Francisco Cal
Dec. 26, 1923

Dear brother George,

I haven't written to you for nearly a month now. I hope you and the rest of the family are all well at home. Don't you have heard of my little boy Junior's sickness. The poor boy has pneumonia and he is now staying at the Mary's help hospital. His condition is very serious and the doctors say there is still hope. We are all hoping for the best now, and the doctors are doing their best in hope of saving his life.

The reason I am writing you this time is that I want you to advance me \$250. I have to have money to give my little boy the best treatment there is possible here. I will pay you back as soon as I make that amount to your dear brother.

Please keep this to yourself and if you can spare the same spirit at home as you can.

I certainly owe you many favors of which you have helped me in the past. Now I do hope that in the future that I may have the chance to repay some of those favors to you in return.

Thinking these few lines will find you & the rest of the

San Francisco
December 26, 1923

Dear Brother, George,

I haven't written to you for nearly a month now. I hope you and the rest of the family are all well at home. Don't you have heard of my little boy Junior's sickness. The poor boy has pneumonia and he is now staying at the Mary's help Hospital. His condition is very serious and the doctors say there is still hope. We are all hoping for the best now, and the doctors are doing their best in hope of saving his life.

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Please keep this to yourself, and if you can spare the same, send it as soon as you can.

I certainly owe money favors of something .. you have helped me in the past. Now I do hope that in the future that I may have the chance to repay some of those favors to you in return.

...

Your loving brother
Henry

folk in the best of health & happiness
Cora, Geraldine, Junior & myself
all send their love to you
and all at home.

Your loving brother
Henry

address. Henry Quinn
922 - Grant Ave.
San Francisco
Calif.



COLLECTION MANAGEMENT UPDATES

By: Kristof Marsolais

The Collections Management team has been busy in recent months. As we work to improve our collections space, we have been working hard to re-organize and create more space in the former library. Our main goal is to declutter the space by identifying and relocating old administrative files and other boxes. Fortunately, we uncovered a number of documents that provided valuable insights into certain collection objects.

Additionally, we were able to accession items to the collection that had been donated prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. One particularly intriguing addition to our collection was a pair of ivory tusks with intricate carvings and inscriptions on the back. More recently, we received the donation of a stunning Cantonese-style wedding dress, which will be on display in the upcoming Li Sao exhibition.

FACILITY UPDATES

By: Mu-Ting Huang



Chuang Garden

Many thanks to Marie Raftery and Dr. Bob Rubenstein, along with their gardener Roberto, for donating plants from their own garden, trans and planting them in the soil at 404 Third Avenue to help beautify our Chuang garden. Now the garden looks so much more vibrant and green! We are so glad that visitors continue to enjoy the tranquil sounds of the waterfall as they wander through our improved garden.



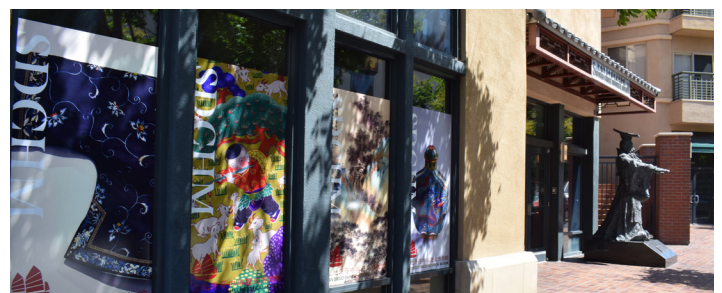
We have also taken measures to add bars to the shelving in one of our storage spaces, which serve as a safeguard in addition to the netting that was previously installed. This measure is crucial, especially for the delicate porcelain objects and stoneware housed on those shelves. This will ensure their safety during potential earthquakes. We plan to implement similar rails for all shelving in the future.

Furthermore, the staff and I have been diligently working to upgrade the entire label system for our permanent exhibit in the Mission Building to offer a more user-friendly visitor experience. Our plan is to introduce a QR code offering virtual information regarding museum exhibits in English, Spanish, and traditional Chinese characters.



Exterior improvements

The museum's exterior windows have recently been decorated with graphics inspired by from our collection,s providing beautiful window coverings which help provide a splash of color and connect our two 2 buildings visually. We have received many compliments about how the new windows attract pedestrians' eyes and entice them to visit the museum when walking by.



Volunteer Profile



Vivian trained as a docent at the museum in 2022 and has been volunteering at the SDCHM since April of that year. She serves at the museum nearly every Saturday and also assists with special events.

Her father was a naval aviator. When she was growing up, she was fascinated by the treasures that he brought back from his trips to Hong Kong and Japan. Vivian has lived in San Diego at several different times throughout her life. She can remember visiting Quon Mane and Woo Chee Chong back in the day!

Vivian has frequently visited Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China. She collects Chinese textiles, such as baby hats and collars, ear muffs, shoes for bound feet, belt-bags, and robes, which she enjoys displaying in her home.

Vivian started her career teaching, later transitioning to serve as an executive for a national beauty salon company, owning a Jack-in-the-Box franchise, and managing real estate investments. In her retirement, she enjoys world travel, and has taken over 30 trips to diverse regions.



Remembering Murray K. Lee: Our Storyteller 李國光

Our storyteller, Murray Lee, passed away on the morning of November 25, 2023. Murray was a key member of the planning committee when the museum was in its early stages. He served as a museum curator and was the former editor of the society's newsletter. He was also involved in different efforts to advocate for Chinese-American veterans. He served in multiple capacities in our organization's history over the years. Murray dedicated many hours to the task of conducting research and interviews about the history of the Chinese community in San Diego. His efforts resulted in a book titled *In Search of Gold Mountain: a History of the Chinese in San Diego, California*

尋找金山。Murray's book is the quintessential resource on the history of the Chinese immigrant community in San Diego. It serves as a textbook for our docent training program at the SDCHM!

Murray and his wife, Gladys Lee volunteered for the museum and were frequently found helping the museum welcome visitors and explaining the history of San Diego's historic Chinatown. We are indebted to his numerous contributions and his meticulous account of the early history of San Diego Chinese community. His legacy will live on and we shall miss him and carry him in our hearts.



In Memory of Agnes Chuang

A pair of stone lions sit on two sides of the corner of Third Avenue and J Street in downtown San Diego, right in front of the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum. The male is called Alex and the female is called Agnes. They greet visitors from near and far and are a landmark in our beautiful downtown. The pair are named in honor of Alex and Agnes Chuang who donated them to the museum.

Agnes Chuang spent many years volunteering for the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum. She passed away recently after battling years of respiratory challenges. During her years of volunteering, she served as a docent, educator, chef, receptionist, janitor, and general volunteer. Nothing was too small or too big for her. I remember fondly how she taught me to slice a watermelon, to fry potstickers, to make a moon cake, and to decorate the garden. She and her husband, Alex Chuang, our founding director, considered the museum their home away from home. They spent an enormous amount of time, resources, and efforts to make the museum the museum of today. We will all miss her. She was a volunteer extraordinaire.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

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