

members back in China. They also nurtured a continuing interest in China's political affairs. During the anti-Japanese war of resistance from 1937 to 1945, Chinese throughout the state sponsored fund-raising activities for China war relief. Individual Chinese, often at considerable sacrifice, toured the country in search of the much-needed funds. One of the first and most successful of these was Mary Eng of San Antonio.

Mary was the first Chinese baby born in Shreveport, Louisiana, and the first Chinese student to graduate from high school in Shreveport. She had the first Chinese wedding there when she married Joseph Eng in 1940. While she was still in high school, Mary's father sent her to the village of Toy Sun, in China, to learn to speak and to write Chinese. Then she returned to Louisiana to finish high school.

In 1937 Mary began the career of public service that was to continue for the remainder of her life. She made an extended tour of southern states making speeches before civic and other service clubs on behalf of needy Chinese refugees.

Shortly after their marriage, the Engs moved to San Antonio and soon began holding open house the year round for servicemen and students. In 1944 Mary organized the Young Chinese League, a social and civic club where the younger generation could meet in the chaperoned situation required by Chinese custom. The young people often met at her home for parties and dances. Floats decorated by league members won awards in numerous parades.

Mary Eng was the representative for the San Antonio Chinese community during HemisFair '68. She has been named one of the outstanding women of the year in San Antonio.

In the 1970 Census, Dallas County recorded the third largest Chinese population in the state. Only six Chinese residents of Dallas County were listed in the 1880 Census, but the population began to expand considerably with the wave of immigration in the wake of the Communist takeover of China in 1948 and 1949. In that period many students and professional people fled their homeland. Representative of this group were Ting and Shirley Chu.

In the 1970's the Chus sought a modern solution to an age-old problem, the conversion of energy into useful power. The kind of energy studied was solar energy, and the site of their research was the School of Engineering and Ap-

plied Science at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

The Chus, natives of Peking, left the mainland in 1948. But they didn't meet until Shirley became Ting's student at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. Their three children were born in Pittsburgh, and Ting was employed for a time there as manager of the semiconductor department of the Westinghouse research laboratory. At one time Shirley was the only woman in the United States in possession of a U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration contract for research in solar energy.

The city of Houston is now one of the four or five large Chinese population centers in the United States. Although Chinese Texans preferred residence in urban areas, there were few in Houston until the depression years of the 1930's. A general southward movement of Chinese in the United States brought job hunters to Houston. A second group came with the wave of immigration following World War II.

From 1943 until 1968, although thousands of Chinese emigrants entered the United States as exceptions, the formal limit was 105 Chinese a year. In 1968, the immigration laws were once again changed. The national quota system was abolished and a grand total was set of 170,000 people per year from anywhere, with a 20,000 person limit per country. Chinese immigrants were finally fully on par with others. The change in law probably helped account for the 1970 Harris County total of 3,677 people.

Years before, one of the pioneer Chinese immigrants in Houston was Harry Gee, Sr., who arrived in 1915. He had immigrated to the



Harry Gee and family.



United States in 1909 at the age of 14. Before settling permanently in Houston, he moved to Detroit, where he operated a Chinese restaurant. In 1919 he returned to Houston and opened the Peking Restaurant. Gee returned to China in 1926, married, and brought his bride back to Houston. Harry Gee, Jr. developed into one of Houston's outstanding attorneys, serving at one time as assistant attorney general in the state capital.



Dr. Joyce Fan and her family.

Chinese Texans have long been conscious of the value of education. A high percentage of young Chinese Texans are college graduates or are attending college. One of the recognized Chinese educators in Houston is Dr. Joyce Fan. Dr. Fan was born in Foochow, Fukien, in 1919, the daughter of a Baptist missionary. She received her higher education in America—at Wheaton College and the State University of Iowa. She held teaching positions at universities in Iowa, Illinois, California and Texas. Her husband, Dr. Paul Fan, was appointed as head of the Geology Department at the University of Houston.

## A CHINESE NEWSPAPER ESTABLISHED

The Houston *Southwest Chinese Journal* is one of only three Chinese-English language newspapers in the United States, the others being in New York City and San Francisco. Gene Lee began the *Journal* in February 1976, and it proved successful beyond expectations.

Lee migrated to this country as a student from southern China in 1949. He served two years in the Armed Forces, became an American citizen, married a German girl, Hedy, and returned to Houston to open a grocery store. The couple opened a printing shop and stationery store. Recognizing the excellent possibilities for a Chinese newspaper in Houston, they set about the task of

establishing the *Journal*. Chinese newspapers are read backward from their English counterparts. The front page is in the position of the last page of an English language newspaper. The fold is on the righthand side, and the paper opens from the left. The headlines usually read from top to bottom, although they can be aligned horizontally. The body type reads from top to bottom, right to left. Lee uses 5,600 different characters in type,

although there are at least as many as 12,000 Chinese characters in all.

There are several Chinese dialects, but fortunately all Chinese is written the same—only the pronunciation of the characters is different.

## CHINESE ART AND ARTISTS

Chinese art expression has been esteemed for thousands of years. Many persons of Chinese descent have continued this tradition in Texas. One of the most successful artists and designers in the state is Rose Chin Wong, known to art patrons as R.C. Wong. She was born in Boston in 1915 and it was in Boston that Rose met her husband, Fred Wong, the second son of Don Wong of San Antonio. The couple lived first in San Antonio but moved to Austin in the late 1950's.

Although she was always interested in art, Rose did not become a serious painter until her children were grown and she was able to study art at The University of Texas. Her first exhibit was part of a group of paintings shown by the University Art Department at Laguna Gloria Gallery in 1959.

As Rose Wong she helps design the apartment complexes her husband constructs. As R.C. Wong she has a large following in south Texas for her landscapes, portraits and still lifes executed in both pastels and oils.



Hsiao-Hsia Tsai began the study of calligraphy as a Chinese girl of three. She continued this difficult art form through her high school years. By the end of World War II, she had received a B A degree from the National College of Arts in China and was awarded a scholarship to study in America.

She spent almost a year in parts of India before finding transportation to America. It was there, however, that she became acquainted with India's foremost artist, Goojar, and she posed for several portraits by him.

Finally in the United States, she studied at the University of Oklahoma, where she received a Master of Fine Arts degree, and at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi. She and her husband, Dr. Charles C. Hobbs, make their home in Corpus Christi.

Hsiao-Hsia Tsai began exhibiting regularly while in college. Her paintings, mainly abstracts in oils, have been shown in major cities of the United States as well as in China, India and Canada and in almost all of the countries of Europe.

David Yee of Houston is considered one of the foremost art experts in the United States. He is also the owner of one of the finest Chinese art collections in the country. He is coauthor of a book that is used as a standard reference work by numismatists, and he is an art consultant to universities and other institutions.

Yee arrived in the United States from China as a youth of 14 in 1928. Because of his interest in art, he enrolled in the Boston Art Institute. He is well-known for the beautiful watercolors which he paints at his home in Houston.

Yee lived in San Antonio for many years, working as a grocer and restaurant owner. He retained his interest in art, however, and began collecting rare Chinese art and artifacts while very young. His collection includes bronzes, jades, porcelains, paintings, sculptures, classical calligraphy, pottery, currency, stamps, books and antiques. He plans to make it a permanent museum collection as his contribution in return for his American citizenship.



David Yee.



R.C. Wong.





*Chinese family.*

### **CHINESE TEXANS ENRICH CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Chinese Texans have displayed numerous noteworthy traits that have made them welcome wherever they have settled in the state. Because of their close family ties and their respect for tradition, they have rarely been involved in any kind of crime. They have long adhered to a program of mutual assistance, and they take pride in the fact that their names have not been placed on welfare rolls, even during the Depression.

They have shared the culture of the cities and

towns in which they reside. Although small neighborhoods of Chinese exist in many areas, there are no Chinatowns, as such, in any of the towns and cities of Texas. When the Chinese came as immigrants, they settled and remained as respectable members of the community. They brought with them many remnants of traditional rites and customs that have continued as sources of interest and enjoyment to their neighbors throughout the state.



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———. "Pershing's Chinese Refugees in Texas." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, vol. 62, no. 4, pp. 467-488. Texas State Historical Association, Austin, 1959.

Briscoe knew several Pershing Chinese refugees personally. He made good use of both primary and secondary source material.

Farrar, Nancy. *The Chinese in El Paso*. Southwestern Studies, Monograph No. 33. Texas Western Press, El Paso, 1972.

Written by a native El Pasoan and high school history teacher. There are no wasted words in this excellent ethnic study.

Gordon, Marlene. "When You're <sup>華</sup>僑 ... You Try Harder." *San Antonio*, vol. 8, no. 11, pp. 36-42. Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, San Antonio, 1974.

By a talented researcher and a gifted writer. Students of Chinese in Texas are in her debt for this work, which includes numerous personal interviews of contemporary San Antonio Chinese.

Kung, Shien-Woo. *Chinese in American Life*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1962.

Contains little information relating directly to Texas, but the general background is quite useful. Includes almost all phases of Chinese life in America, including organizations.

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A fine overall assessment of Chinese life in San Antonio up to World War II. Describes a number of customs no longer practiced. Interesting and informative.

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An outstanding work by the recognized authority on Chinese in Texas. The author details many instances of discrimination and harassment of Chinese, particularly during the early days of their residence in the state.

Woo, Kenny. "The Chinese Colony in San Antonio." *The Junior Historian*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 6-8, 12. Texas State Historical Association, Austin, 1955.

*The Junior Historian*, now *The Texas Historian*, has produced articles of the highest quality from its inception, and this short article is no exception. The author identifies by name many important local Chinese, including the first Chinese families in San Antonio.



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