

E-Newsletter of the Organization of Chinese American Women

February 2020



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(from Linda Devine, Editor)

Happy New Year and Happy Chinese New Year, the Year of the Rat! As always, thank you to those of you who submitted material for this issue. I also would like to once again thank my husband Ed for his work on preparing the photos.

I continue to encourage OCAW members to write articles or submit information for the publication if there is something you think would be of interest to the membership. I continue to want to publish a wide variety of material.

Please feel free to send me any suggestions or recommendations that you might have for any aspects of the e-newsletter. My email address is: devinefive@comcast.net

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News from the Virginia and Maryland Chapters

(from Chi-Hua Yang, Virginia and Maryland Chapter President, and Linda Devine)

Year-End Holiday Lunch

The Virginia and Maryland Chapters held a year-end holiday lunch on Monday, December 30, 2019, at the Golden Buffet and Grill in Baileys Crossroads, Virginia. It was organized by President Chi-Hua Yang, and

the purpose was to get together for some socializing and relaxation after the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, but also to discuss plans for our upcoming Chinese New Year celebration.



The restaurant offered a *huge* variety of dishes, neatly laid out on several long buffet tables. There was something for everyone, from appetizers to entrees to desserts, of both Chinese and American cuisine. We kept going back for seconds, and thirds, and...

We were happy to welcome new member Lily Qi who was at her first OCAW event. Lily successfully ran in the 2018 Midterm elections and represents District 15 in the Maryland House of Delegates.



Lily Qi (lower right)

We all had a wonderful time seeing one another again.

(Photos taken by Chi-Hua Yang and Glen Schwartz)

Chinese New Year Dinner

On Saturday, January 25, 2020, the first day of the Lunar New Year, OCAW-VA and MD members and their spouses and guests celebrated the occasion with a Chinese New Year potluck dinner. Coordinated by President Chi-Hua Yang, it was held in the 23rd-floor penthouse of Amy Lee's building in Alexandria, Virginia. We were able to gaze out of the room's large windows and enjoy a beautiful panoramic view of Washington, D.C. and Virginia.

We had fun visiting with one another and talking about a lot of different topics, while we dined on many delicious dishes that members had brought.





After eating, Virginia Chapter Vice President Alice Yee Way conducted a raffle to offset the cost of the room rental. Winners could choose large, lucky-red-wrapped chocolate candy bars if they had a sweet tooth, or beautiful Taiwan calendars, procured by Maryland member Camilla Ng.



Afterward, for any attendee interested, Camila also graciously spent time writing the person's Chinese name in neat calligraphy on a bookmark that he/she could take home.



(Photos on this page taken by Linda Devine)

It was a festive occasion, befitting the beginning of the new year. It is the Year of the Rat – specifically the Metal Rat, the first in the 12-year cycle of the Chinese zodiac. It symbolizes countless good fortune and luck.



Camilla Ng, Cathy Roberts, Linda Devine, Alice Yee Way, Wanda Eshleman, Noreen Hom, Amy Lee, Angelika Cole, Mimi Hom, and Chi-Hua Yang

(Except where noted otherwise, photos taken by Chi-Hua Yang and Glen Schwartz)

News from the New Orleans Chapter

(from Patricia Ellzey, President)

January Meeting and Chinese New Year Celebration

On Saturday, January 18, 2020, at noon, the New Orleans Chapter held its January meeting celebrating Chinese New Year at the Mandarin House Restaurant in Metairie, Louisiana.

Business included the re-election of the officers:

President – Patricia Hew Ellzey
Vice President – Yuling Khorsandi
Secretary – Jeanette Yip Hew
Treasurer – Nancy Chung

as well as the appointment of Nellie Yip Underwood to serve as the OCAW and China Representative to the Asian Pacific American Society's (APAS) Board of Directors. She will also serve as the Chair of our chapter's table at the Annual Asian Heritage Festival in the Audubon Zoological Gardens on May 30, 2020.

It was reported that the Annual APAS membership meeting luncheon was attended by Nellie Underwood, Dr. Trina Ren, and Patricia Ellzey on Saturday, January 11, 2020.

A discussion of this year's activities took place. Jeanette Hew and Nellie Underwood will co-chair them with the help of Mayling Hew. One of the activities will be discovering and learning about various Asian cuisines by visiting the many local Asian restaurants during the year.

Nilima Mwendo, representing the U.S. Census Bureau, was our guest speaker. She stated the purpose and the significance of the 2020 Census, as it affects all of the U.S. government funding of local projects. A motion was approved to set up a day with the assistance of the U.S. Census to hold a session to assist our local Asian community to register for the 2020 Census at the Chinese Presbyterian Church.

To add to the celebration of Chinese New Year and our local upcoming Mardi Gras, and also to the fun of the meeting, door prizes were raffled off and awarded to the following:

- 1st prize: Lucky Bamboo plant – Tien Ho
- 2nd prize: Year of the Rat necklace – Mangjee Yeh
- 3rd through 6th prizes: Mardi Gras masks with feathers – Dr. Lihua Zhang, Yvonne Louie, Nancy Chung, and Sandy Wong





Upcoming Event

The New Orleans Chapter will be promoting an upcoming event in March to the local Chinese community. Mr. Chun Wai Chan is a Principal ballet star who is originally from Guang Dong, China, and who has been distinguished in several International Competitions.

He will be performing with the Houston Ballet which is noted as one of the nation's best ballet companies by *The New York Times*. This performance is part of the New Orleans Ballet Association's 50th Anniversary celebration.

News from the Silicon Valley Chapter

(from Wendy Chang, President)

JW House Dinner is Served

On Thursday, November 14, 2019, Wendy Chang, Annie Chang, Edith Chang, Paulina Chang, Cynthia Ho, and Ding Yi served dinner at the JW House. JW House is located on the campus of Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara Medical Center. It welcomes families and individuals from area hospitals into their family for rest and self-care during the day or overnight while their loved one is in the hospital.



JW HOUSE
Hope • Hospitality • Healing

Please join us for dinner!
Thursday at 6:00 PM
Join us for dinner



Menu
Green Salad
Ton katsu (Japanese Style Fried Pork Cutlet)
Japanese Curry
White Rice
Tiramisu for Dessert!

Dinner provided and prepared by:
OCAW

“Dinner is Served” is a program where the JW House community provides home-cooked meals to their guests every night. OCAW reserved 6 dates to serve dinner at JW House in 2019. This was the 5th dinner that we had prepared this year.

We started cooking at around 3 p.m. We made Tonkatsu (Japanese Style Fried Pork Cutlet); Japanese Style Vegetarian Curry; Green Salad with Ginger, Soy, and Sesame Dressing; White Rice; and Tiramisu for dessert. With everyone’s help, we finished preparing dinner at around 6 p.m.



The guests at JW House enjoyed the Japanese inspired dinner. Although many hesitated to try the curry at first, they eventually sampled it and then went for seconds! It was heartwarming to see all the guests savor the meal.

Many commented that it was nice to sit down to a home-cooked meal after a hard day caring for their loved ones at the hospital. It is our way to help the community and also bond with our members.



JW House Dinner is Served Again

On Thursday, December 5, 2019, Wendy Chang, Annie Chang, Cynthia Ho, and Sophia Yang served dinner again at the JW House. This was the 6th and final dinner that we had signed up for this year.

As usual, we started cooking at around 3 p.m. This time, we heated up the Lasagna that we had purchased from Costco, and prepared Minestrone Soup, Garlic Bread, Green Salad with Parsley Basil Dressing, and Tiramisu for dessert.

Since we had purchased the lasagna, we finished preparing dinner way ahead of schedule. A lady volunteer dropped off a lot of Christmas cookies and icings to decorate the cookies. We used our spare time decorating the cookies and had a lot of fun. We were glad that we could help our community during the holiday season.



Please join us for dinner!

Thursday, December 5, 2019 at 6:00 PM



Menu

Green Salad

Lasagna

Minestrone Soup

Garlic Bread

Tiramisu for Dessert!

Dinner provided and prepared by:

OCAW





News from the Hawaii Chapter

Aloha, Phyllis N.T. Shea, 1993 OCAW Hawaii Chapter President

by Queenie Mow Chee

(Editor's Note: Queenie is a former Hawaii Chapter President, and wrote this article to honor Phyllis. Queenie is one of several individuals who was introduced to the Hawaii Chapter by Phyllis. This tribute also includes illuminating information about the origins and history of the Hawaii Chapter.

Queenie explains that "Aloha," in the Hawaiian language, means "hello, goodbye, and love.")

In December 2019, we lost one of our finest Hawaii Chapter Presidents, Phyllis N.T. Shea. Just shy of her 80th birthday, she passed away in her home unexpectedly.



Phyllis N.T. Shea

Phyllis had a long record of dedication and support to OCAW, from guiding us in financial matters to recruiting quality members. She served on so many other Foundations and Boards, but she always made time for our little group.

From 1993 to the present, the OCAW Hawaii Chapter always had a place for our Board Meetings in the conference room of Shea & Company, CPA's, Inc. Located in a building attached to the Ala Moana Shopping Center, with free parking, it was such a boon. Even after Phyllis retired, her successor and nephew, Reynold Lum, has continued that hospitality.

When the Organization of Chinese American Women was first established in 1977 with Pauline Tsui spearheading the task, Julia Chang Bloch wanted emphasis on public service, and Jeanie Jew sought to honor Chinese American women for their achievements and contributions to society, address their concerns, and remember their history. Phyllis epitomized much of what we wish to honor, leading an exemplary life in helping others and with humility.

Why did she choose to continue to support OCAW throughout the years so much? Here is a quick glimpse of how it all began.

In 1988, Mrs. Hiram L. Fong (Ellyn Lo Fong), wife of Hawaii's first U.S. Senator, came back to the Islands with OCAW founder Pauline Tsui, who was also born in Hawaii, along with co-founder Julia Chang Bloch, who was Ambassador to Nepal, with the purpose of helping to start a Hawaii Chapter.

Hawaii Chinese American women from a number of existing social clubs and societies as well as other individuals were invited to a gathering to hear about this organization. There were other OCAW chapters already established across the Mainland, and wouldn't it also serve a great purpose for the population in Hawaii? They emphasized Liberty, Equality, and Opportunity for Asian and Pacific American women.

A core group of Hawaii ladies answered the call, and in 1989, the OCAW Hawaii Chapter was started. Dr. Margaret Lee, a general surgeon at Tripler Army Hospital, was elected its first president. She was a good choice, having already lived and served as OCAW president back in California.



1997-1998 Hawaii Chapter President Yun Soong Jim with OCAW Co-Founder
Julia Chang Bloch, Ambassador to Nepal, in Honolulu (1998)

Over the next thirty years, the Hawaii Chapter saw many fine leaders, caring and talented members who did so much for Chinese American women and the Asian and Pacific community through various activities. They supported OCAW national endeavors in such programs as the Presidential Scholars Program for high school seniors to explore opportunities to work in the Federal Government in Washington, D.C.; providing scholarships for girls in rural China; and finding applicants to the then new Gates Millennium Scholars program.

The Hawaii Chapter participated in preparing Chinese immigrants for their U.S. Citizenship interviews; joined two other local civil rights organizations to hold a conference at the Hawaii State Capitol for high school girls to learn about the Legislative Process; and raised funds for flood relief in Chengdu, China, for medical supplies for independent medical physicians lending aid in Asia, and in support of the Bone Marrow Donor Registry Program of which there was a lack of awareness and support among Asian Americans. At Hawaii Chapter luncheons, the Chapter recognized various local Chinese American women who had made landmark achievements. Especially notable was the first female Asian Chairman of the Board of Hawaiian Electric Company, Ms. Connie Lau. A special luncheon was also held to honor Assistant U.S. Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, Mr. Bill Lann Lee, who also was the son-in-law of Hawaii Chapter member, Mrs. Nancy Yee. (A Phi Beta Kappa, Yale magna cum laude graduate and with a J.D. from Columbia University, Bill worked hard for equality and fairness for minorities for many years, from New York to California.)

Hawaii was so proud and privileged to host two OCAW Biennial National Conferences, well attended by national members in 1991 and again in 1999 when the Hawaii Chapter also celebrated its tenth anniversary. Photos follow of the 1999 event.



OCAW Ladies with First Lady Hillary Clinton's Representative, Sondra Seba (Chair for the Commission for Women), at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel on September 12, 1999. Ms. Seba was one of the keynote speakers at the OCAW Biennial National Conference held in Honolulu.



The First Lady of Hawaii, Vicky Cayetano (*far right*), opened the State of Hawaii Governor's Residence, Washington Place, to the OCAW Hawaii Chapter for its 10th Anniversary Reception on September 13, 1999. With her (*from left to right*): 1999 Hawaii President Rose Lee, Blossom Tyau, and 1997-98 President Yun Soong Jim, who also chaired the 10th Anniversary Celebration.



OCAW Hawaii Chapter 10th Anniversary Reception at the State of Hawaii Governor's Residence, Washington Place. Included in the photo are eight of the Past Hawaii Chapter Presidents, OCAW Founder Pauline Tsui, and Jeanie Jew.



Yun Soong Jim, Pauline Tsui, Jeanie Jew, and Television News Reporter Pamela Young

Jeanie Jew, Pauline Tsui, and Ellyn Lo Fong, wife of Senator Hiram Fong, who helped to encourage the establishment of an OCAW Hawaii Chapter



Senator Hiram Fong

1990 Hawaii President Christine Ling, Blossom Tyau, and Kimberly Oliveira



Phyllis Shea was indeed modest about her own accomplishments, but without her, many of us would not have joined OCAW, or served as officers.

She was the eldest in a family of eight children; she has five surviving sisters and had two brothers (deceased). Although she never married, she became the matriarch of the Shea family, treating all of her nieces and nephews like her own children. Born in Honolulu, she had a Catholic education, from grade school through college, and became a Certified Public Accountant. Some say she might have been the first Chinese female in Hawaii to become a CPA. In 1970, she founded her own company and had her own staff of accountants.

Careful and conservative, she earned the trust and respect of the community and so served as Trustee for the Chaminade University Education Foundation, Lanakila Rehabilitation Center, Hawaii Community Scholarship Program, and Hawaii Tax Institute Foundation. She was also a Board Member of Sacred Hearts Academy, Maryknoll School (her Alma Mater), Palolo Chinese Home, and ARC of Hawaii. Yet with all of these other commitments, she found time to nurture the OCAW Hawaii Chapter, serving as its 1993 President, but also as Treasurer, and for many years, Finance Committee Chair.

Some of her awards included Small Business Association Accounting Advocate - State of Hawaii, and Woman of Achievement by the American Society of Women Accountants Association in 1990. She was a life member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem.

Phyllis encouraged the Hawaii Chapter to work jointly with other organizations when their programs matched our mission:

To advance and advocate for Chinese and Asian Pacific American women by enhancing their educational, economic, social, and political environments, and by recognizing their achievements, potential, and contributions to the overall quality of life of the community.

Today, many of us have choices, and there are so many things that can keep us so busy. Please take the time to ponder over the importance of what we do, and be determined to make a difference. Remember Phyllis Shea.

From and About Our Members

Storytelling and Community Conversations

(from Veronica Li, former Virginia Chapter Secretary)

I was honored to participate in the Writers Panel/Workshop held as part of the **Chinese American Women in History Conference** (October 24-26, 2019) in Washington, D.C. My co-panelists were authors Leslie Li and Lily Liu. We talked about the importance of recording personal and family stories. As immigrants and descendants of immigrants, Americans are cut off from their ancestral land. Delving into the lives of the people we come from is essential to understanding ourselves. Chinese Americans need to weave our stories into the country's colorful tapestry and add our voices to the discussion about who we are and who we want to be.

A workshop followed the panel. The audience was split into groups to discuss and critique essays written by select participants. The day ended with a lively community "open mic," where anyone could step up and talk for five minutes. The stories told were in turn heart-wrenching, hilarious, informative, and inspiring.

The conference was organized by the 1882 Foundation. It states that the purpose of the event was to “explore a century of experiences framed by the enactment of the 1875 Page Act, that targeted Chinese women for exclusion, and the 1965 Hart-Celler Act, that finally enabled Chinese spouses and families to reunite.” At the opening reception, an award was given to OCAW in recognition of its continuous work advocating on behalf of Chinese American women and particularly for its role in establishing Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

About Betty Lee Sung, one of OCAW’s first members

(from Camilla Ng, former Maryland Chapter President)

At the Chinese American Women in History Conference, Betty Lee Sung was honored at the event with an award.

An author and activist, she also was Camilla Ng’s professor of Asian Studies at the City College of New York many years ago.

Congratulations, Betty!



Betty Lee Sung with daughter Tina Sung

(Photo taken by Camilla Ng)

(Editor’s Note: The OCAW Maryland Chapter contributed generously to this conference as a Jade sponsor, and the OCAW Virginia Chapter as well, as a Wood sponsor.)

Wintersweet

(from Chi-Hua Yang, OCAW-VA and MD President)



This plant is called wintersweet in the West, or Japanese allspice. It is from China, which calls it La Mei (winter plum). It has a strong scent.

Many families cut these plants and put them in their house during New Year's to provide good scents.

(Photo taken by Chi-Hua Yang)

Bayou Lacadee

(from Betty Butz, former New Orleans Chapter President)

(Editor's Note: Betty started a project which she calls "Bayou Lacadee." She plans to assemble an album consisting of 10 poems which she has written, accompanied by some illustrating photos which she has taken. Her first three poems were published in the November 2019 OCAW E-Newsletter. Here below is the next set.)

Love Doves

Perky Pucker perched near the shutters,
Preening proudly its pretty feathers.
Puffy Buffer dashed in a blurry sputter,
Alighting with a gentle flutter.

They cooed, sniffed, and nattered,
Gazed with bright eyes at each other.
After a flirty, flapping encounter,
They fluffed their feathers and flew together.

A twiggy bowl they built for peep ones,
In the thick shade of my garden sun.
Evergreen shrubs protected them in the bower
As a bird watcher brimmed with wonder.



Squirrel Chattee

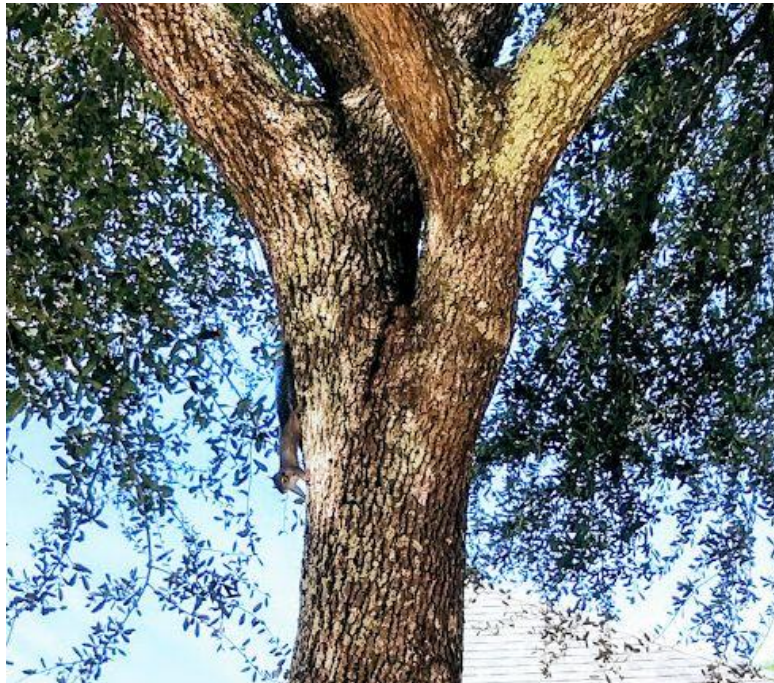
Squirrel Chattee lives in the crown of a live oak tree.
It sleeps soundly on a bed of acorns piled in a heap,
While it listens to chirpy warbler, wren, and cardinal tweets.
They all pause to cackles of gaggles of honking geese.

Just before Halloween, Olga brings rain in sheets
Amid twirls of wind and swirls of leaves.
Luckily, there is a dry spot under the eaves
With a small stash of nuts for keeps.

Lured by the scent of a peanut butter treat,
Chattee finds itself inside a metal cage. Good grief.
Slam! Snap! A trap door barely misses two trembling feet
Whose owner nervously sinks its teeth into the tasty eats.

A jovial fellow takes the cage with Chattee
On a motor trip on bumpy roads to the levee.
He opens the trap facing a grove of mature trees
Near the batture, not far from the ferry.

Chattee dashes in a flash. In a few daring leaps,
It scurries up a knotted branch. Sets itself free.
Gangs of bushy, bright-eyed critters freeze in glee,
As they make room for a new member in a chatty clique.



Tidy Turtle

Tidy Turtle dwells in a tiny muddy hollow
Near the gnarled roots of a sweeping willow.
Dawn songs of the swamp swallows remind it to waddle
Out of its huddle, to log onto a cypress saddle.

A pretty myrtle, blooming purple,
Sits upon a distant grassy knoll.
At the edge of the bayou where sleek nutria stroll,
The bend becomes mushier as it erodes.

Diving gulls, stilts, great herons and cormorants
Swoop in the water to spear shiny minnows.
Snails, cockles, mussels and clams hustle
To bury themselves in newly dug burrows.

Platoons of pelican parade near the middle
To corral fish into schools to pocket and swallow.
A solitary, leathery, grinning alligator
Glides idly next to slithering water cruisers.

When Tidy Turtle senses a menacing shadow
From its humble perch, into the water it goes.
It fast-paddles past tall mud bug castles
And dives back to its neat, cozy hole.



Our condolences

We regret to report that Lily Lee Chen, former OCAW National President, recently lost her husband Paul after 60 years of marriage.

Our sincerest condolences to Lily on this sad occasion.

Letter from Puanani Woo

Monday, January 6, 2020

Happy New Year, OCAW sisters,

Blessings in all that you do to sustain our magical Earth that is in distress as shown by the severe climate changes we are witnessing and for some, are living day to day.

Perhaps in one of our future OCAW E-Newsletters, all Chapters can write about programs they are doing to mitigate the severity of climate change in their community.

America's first transcontinental railroad system: On May 10, 1869 at Promontory Point, Utah, the 'golden spike' was struck which created America's first transcontinental railroad system joining the CENTRAL PACIFIC's railroad line from Sacramento, California with the UNION PACIFIC's eastern railroad line from Omaha, Nebraska.

Members of the CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA (CHSA), San Francisco, of which I am a Life Member since the mid-1970s, held a national conference in Salt Lake City on May 10, 2019 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the completion of America's first transcontinental railroad.

This massive railroad building project took about five years to complete: 1865-1869 . . . and during those years the American Civil War, April 1861-April 1865, was in full swing on our eastern and southern landscape. Life goes on.

Quoting Sue Lee, co-editor with Connie Young Yu, from CHSA's book titled, **Voices from the Railroad, Stories by descendants of Chinese railroad workers:** *"It was the work of giants, building 15 tunnels in the Sierra Nevadas, towing locomotives and rails for 28 miles over the summit and laying ten miles of track in one day. The courage and daring of the Chinese in doing the impossible has been omitted from American history. Setting the record straight has been the driving force of CHSA since its founding."* To purchase the book, go to: www.chsa.org

Jeanie Fong Lee Jew (Lee Mei Hor), OCAW National President, 1997-2001: With deep respect, I call your attention to the fact that Jeanie's grandfather, M.Y. Lee from Canton, China, was one of the first Chinese pioneers to help build the transcontinental railroad. See page 138 in our OCAW history book for this historical note which is part of APPENDIX 3, ASIAN/PACIFIC-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH, pages 135-146. Also, see page 11 of our OCAW history book which is a prelude to APPENDIX 3.

Puanani Woo
OCAW Hawai'i Chapter member

Exhibits at the New Chinese American Museum DC

by Camilla Ng

(Editor's Note: Camilla is a former Maryland Chapter President. She attended the opening reception of the Chinese American Women in History Conference which was held on Thursday, October 24, 2019, at the new Chinese American Museum DC (CAMDC). She had the opportunity to view two exhibits which she found very well presented and which she wanted to share with the readers.

The information below is credited to the CAMDC.)

Safe Harbor

For Jewish people escaping Nazi Europe in the 1930s, few countries were willing to take them in. During World War II, Shanghai, China offered a rare, safe harbor, sheltering almost 20,000 Jewish refugees. Life for these “stateless” in Shanghai would prove harsh and challenging, particularly under increasingly restrictive Japanese occupation. Confined to a “ghetto” by Japanese authorities, Jewish refugees found themselves caught between both theaters of the war. (CAMDC)

This exhibit featured the courageous intervention of Ho Feng Shan, the Chinese Consul General in Vienna who defied his own government and braved the Gestapo to issue thousands of exit visas to the Jewish refugees fleeing Europe. In the acclaimed documentary *Above the Drowning Sea* on Ho Feng Shan, Jewish refugees and the Chinese residents of Shanghai who helped them survive in China recount their experiences, terrors, and deprivations, as well as the remarkable friendships forged across cultures, friendships that survive to this day.

Setting the Scene

The first significant Jewish community in China was established in the 800s A.D. by traders from Persia who came along the Silk Road to Kaifeng, Henan province. After the Opium Wars, Iraqi Jews, also known as Sephardim, arrived in Shanghai from Baghdad and Bombay with the British. Made up of merchants and business people, this community would play a large role in providing aid and relief to the city’s Nazi-era Jewish refugees. After Russia’s October Revolution of 1917, about 6,000 to 8,000 Jews from Russia settled in Shanghai as well.



Jews of Kaifeng, late 19th of early 20th century.

After the establishment of the Third Reich in January 1933, the Nazi regime acted to isolate and segregate Jews from German society. The Jewish professionals were quickly expelled from civil service and the legal and medical professions. The Nuremberg Race Laws of 1935 revoked Reich citizenship from Jews, and prohibited marriage between those of German blood and non-German blood. A heightened urgency to escape came in November 1938 during Kristallnacht, when Nazis gutted 191 synagogues, ransacked Jewish businesses, and imprisoned over 30,000 Jewish men in concentration camps.

Refugee Flight

Although Jewish refugees did not technically need visas for China, Chinese and Japanese diplomats issued them anyway. This allowed Jews escaping Nazi persecution to prove their intentions to leave and to request permission to emigrate out of Germany and Austria. Most notably, Chinese Consul General of Vienna, Ho Feng Shan, issued thousands of visas. Chiune Sugihara, Japan's Acting Consul in Kaunas, Lithuania, also issued 2,000 transit visas to Polish Jews seeking escape.

Stripped of most of their assets by the Nazis before their departure, Jewish refugees took trains to port cities, most often in Italy, to board ships bound for Asia. From 1940 to 1941, refugees also crossed the Soviet Union on the Trans-Siberian Railway before sailing for Shanghai from Harbin, Shenyang, or Dalian.



Dr. Ho Feng Shan

Ho Feng Shan served as the Chinese Consul General from May 1938 to May 1940 in Vienna, Austria. After the Nazis annexed Austria in March 1938, most Jews felt a great sense of urgency to flee Europe. With Ho's visas, many Jewish refugees were able to reach Shanghai. Refugees also used Ho's visas to journey to other destinations including the United States, Palestine, the Philippines, and Cuba. Even after the building of the Chinese Consulate General was confiscated by Nazi officials, Ho used his own money to open a new office for the issuance of visas.

After the war, Ho continued his diplomatic career until he retired in 1973. He spent the remainder of his life in San Francisco before he passed away in 1977 at the age of 96. In 2000, Ho was named one of the “Righteous among the Nations” for his humanitarian courage by Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Center.

In 2008, the U.S. Senate also passed a resolution to honor Ho’s courage and humanity. The U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America’s Heritage Abroad placed plaques both in China and in Austria to commemorate Ho’s heroic deeds. In his Chinese-language memoir published in 1990, Ho remarked, “Seeing the Jews so doomed, it was only natural to feel deep compassion and from a humanitarian standpoint, to be impelled to help them.”

Breaking Barriers – Chinese American Women Pioneers

This exhibit celebrates the success of a number of Chinese American women who excelled in their careers and lives, who triumphed over hardship and overcame a myriad of obstacles. Some prevailed over anti-miscegenation laws; others had to fight against racial and gender discrimination in their respective fields. Most importantly, these women never let their status deter them from pursuing their passions. Each of these Chinese American women’s narrative is unique, their lives representing stories of triumph and trailblazing.

Polly Bemis – Western Pioneer (1853-1933)

Lalu Nathoy was born in rural northern China to humble farmers. When Lалу was 18, her family fell into financial destitution, and her father sold her into slavery for bags of seeds.

Lalu was smuggled into the U.S. and sold into prostitution at a public auction to a man named Hong King, who moved her to Idaho where she was forced to work in a dance house. She somehow won her freedom and found work at a nearby saloon and boarding house owned by Charlie Bemis. She and Bemis married despite a law prohibiting interracial marriage. They moved to an area along the Salmon River, and built a ranch there. They became known for their kind-heartedness and hospitality to miners and rivermen passing through. Their ranch was fondly referred to as “Polly Place.” Polly’s life story inspired the 1981 book and the subsequent 1991 film adaptation, *Thousand Pieces of Gold*.

Tye Leung Schulze – First Female Chinese American Civil Servant (1887-1972)

Tye Leung Schulze was born in San Francisco’s Chinatown. She faced segregation at a young age when she had to attend separate schools from her Caucasian peers. Schulze enrolled in school at the Presbyterian Mission with Donaldina Cameron as her teacher.

When she was 12, her parents arranged her marriage to an older man in Montana. Rebelling against their plan, Schulze ran away from home to the Presbyterian Mission, where Cameron took her in. There, Schulze assisted Cameron with her community work in freeing Chinese women from sexual slavery.

In 1910, Schulze took the civil service exam and became an interpreter for the new immigration station at Angel Island. She was the first Chinese American woman to become a civil servant for the federal government. In 1912, she cast a vote in the presidential primary, making her the first Chinese American woman to vote.

While working at Angel Island, Tye met Charles Schulze, an immigration service inspector. They wanted to get married but the anti-miscegenation laws in California prohibited interracial marriage. The pair eloped to Washington state, where there was no such law. However, when they returned to California, they had to resign from their jobs due to prejudice they faced. The couple eventually found work elsewhere.

Influenced by her former teacher, Schulze continued defending civil rights and doing community service in her later life. She continued to provide translation services in Chinatown, remaining a pillar of her community.

Dr. Mabel Ping-Hua Lee – Suffragist, First Female Economics PhD from Columbia University
(1896-1966)

Mabel Ping-Hua Lee was born in Guangzhou, China. When Lee was 4, Lee's father went to the U.S. as a missionary, and she and her mother to Hong Kong. There, she studied at a missionary school where she learned English. Lee won a scholarship to the U.S. and her family reunited in New York City.

Lee contributed to the suffrage movement at age 16 when she led a parade on horseback for the women's right to vote. She matriculated to Barnard College in 1913. Lee wrote about progressive feminist topics in the Chinese Student Monthly. She reported on the importance of women's education in "The Meaning of Suffrage" (1914). She gave several notable speeches, including her renowned "China's Submerged Half" speech, in which she bemoaned the inadequate situation of her female counterparts in China and called upon Chinese women to seek empowerment.

By 1920, women in the U.S. had successfully fought to gain the right to vote, but Lee was unable to benefit from it, as the Chinese Exclusion Act prevented her from gaining citizenship and thus the right to vote until 1943.

After graduating from Barnard College, Lee became the first woman to receive a PhD in economics from Columbia University. Her dissertation was published under the title, *The Economic History of China*. The Board of Council of Columbia University named Lee the University Scholar in Economics.

After her father passed away, Lee resumed his leadership over Chinatown's Baptist mission. She expanded the Chinese Baptist community, founding the First Chinese Baptist Church in 1954, which still stands today.

Anna May Wong – Actress, First Asian American TV Lead
(1905-1961)

Anna May Wong was a third-generation Chinese American, born in Los Angeles, California. Wong was raised above her family's laundry business. As a child, she was bullied for her race at school, which was predominantly white. Eventually, Wong transferred to the Chinese Mission School.

Wong often watched camera crews shoot around LA's Chinatown. At 14, she landed a role as an extra in *The Red Lantern* (1919). She was eventually cast as the romantic lead in *Toll of the Sea* (1923). Wong proceeded to star in many minor type-casted roles including an exotic "Mongol" slave girl in *The Thief of Baghdad* (1924) and a Native American girl in *Peter Pan* (1924). It was difficult for Wong to get leading roles because anti-miscegenation laws prohibited interracial on-screen kisses.

Wong left for Europe where she hoped to land more generous roles and was able to play a wider variety of roles abroad. She learned German and French fluently; critics actually assumed her lines were dubbed by a

native speaker. After Wong returned to the U.S., she appeared alongside Marlene Dietrich in *Shanghai Express* (1932).

Going to China to visit family, Wong reconnected with her Chinese heritage, learning Mandarin. However, she faced backlash there for her offensive portrayals of Asian women in Hollywood films. After returning to the U.S., Wong took non-stereotypical roles in lower profile films. During World War II, she acted in anti-Japanese propaganda films for the war effort. In the 1950s, Wong starred in *The Gallery of Madame Liu-Tsong*, making her the first Asian American lead of an American television series.

(Editor's Note: More stories of Chinese American Women Pioneers will appear in the next issue.)

The REACH Winter Lanterns

Photos by Camilla Ng

Editor's note: The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. held events in celebration of the Lunar New Year. After a concert by the Shanghai Orchestra one evening, the Chinese Ambassador lit winter lanterns on the grounds of The REACH.

The REACH glowed with the D.C. debut of approximately 100 stunning lanterns. A wonderful exhibition, the lanterns were crafted by Chinese artisans. The display was made up of 10,000 colored LED lights, including the Chinese Four Symbols and 12 Zodiac Signs, Panda Grove, Mushroom Garden, Floral Garden, and Jellyfish Lagoon.

The following photos of some of the lanterns were taken by Camilla.











Panama Canal Cruise (Part III)

by Cathy Roberts

(Editor's Note: Cathy is the National Vice President for Membership, and is also Treasurer of the Virginia Chapter.

She and her husband Dick enjoyed a lovely Panama Canal Cruise in April 2019. Part I of her article about their trip appeared in the September OCAW E-Newsletter, and Part II appeared in the November issue. The conclusion of their adventure follows below.

As in the last two e-newsletters, all photos in this article were taken by Dick Roberts.)

Huatulco, Mexico and Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

After a day at sea, the ship reached Huatulco, Mexico (the Fifth Port of Call). Huatulco has been inhabited since the pre-Columbian era and was revived as a seaside resort in the late 1980s. It has beautiful scenery, an

intriguing history, and a colorful culture. We left the ship and walked around the town to see the unique style of buildings, then went back to the ship. Again it was a very hot and humid day.



Shopping





Local church



However, the weather was delightful the next day, and we relaxed on the balcony and watched the ship sailing toward Puerto Vallarta, Mexico (the Sixth Port of Call), our last stop before our return to the U.S. Many tourists are drawn to this picturesque coastal village because of its turquoise waters, golden beaches, and endless sunshine.

Next morning, we departed the ship and hailed a cab for the center of the town. The weather was perfect, and we enjoyed wandering around downtown.





Performers Climbing Tower



Starting



A New Way to Unwind!

The Tower from a Distance



We walked along the beach toward the Los Milenios sculpture by Mathis Lidice. There were also a lot of other sculptures on display, and we took many pictures.



Cathy Roberts with one of the many sculptures they viewed.

This is one of a well-known collection of eight bronze chairs created by Alejandro Colunga for La Rotonda del Mar on the Malecon.

We enjoyed the Malecon. The city's boardwalk by the beach is lined with shops, restaurants, and artists selling their wares. After purchasing a beautiful embroidered tote bag, we took a cab back to the ship.



Leaving the Harbor

During the last two days of cruising at sea, we exchanged contact information with new friends and packed our belongings. It was a very enjoyable fifteen days: the food was good, the entertainment was excellent, and we enjoyed walking around the promenade deck. There was no traffic, no grocery shopping, no cooking, and no housecleaning. It was a truly carefree lifestyle.

The ship docked at Los Angeles, CA, and we went through the most challenging event – Customs and Border Protection. Then we were transferred by bus to LA International Airport. After being checked by TSA, we boarded the plane and flew home. By the time we landed at Dulles Airport, it was dark and we were exhausted. But finally, we were home. Home Sweet Home!



The End