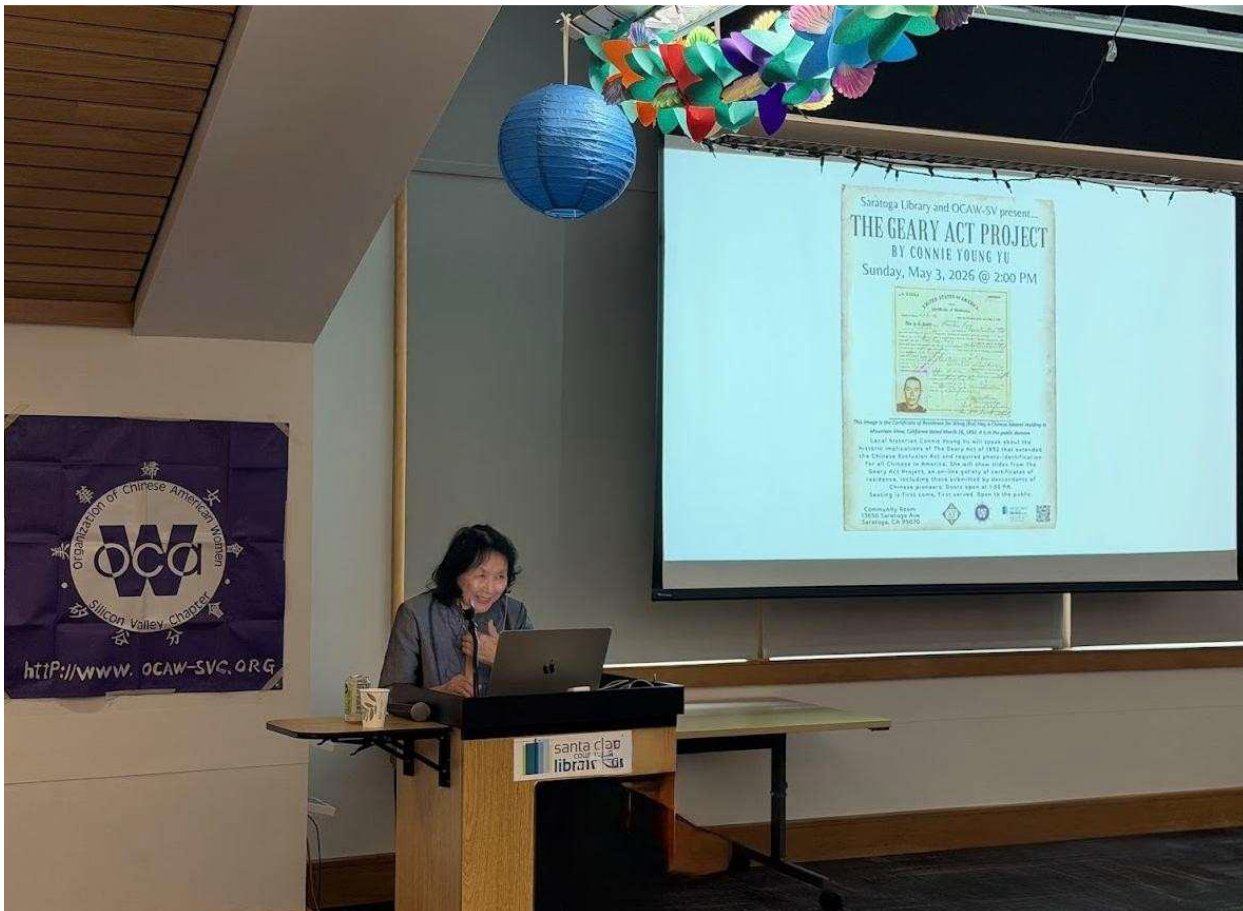


“The Geary Act Project” Presentation

(from Cynthia Chang, Public Relationship)

As part of the celebration of Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander Heritage Month (of May) as well as to promote greater public understanding of the history of Chinese immigrants, a history-themed presentation titled **“The Geary Act Project”** was held on Sunday, May 3, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. at the Saratoga Library in Saratoga, CA. It aimed to revisit this often-overlooked chapter of history and encourage reflection on its significance today.

This talk was presented by renowned Chinese American historian **Connie Young Yu**, who has long specialized in the study of Chinese American history, particularly the discriminatory policies imposed on Chinese laborers in the early years. Through historical documents, photographs, and other archival materials, the exhibition examines the impact of the Geary Act on the Chinese community and its broader implications for civil rights and immigration policy in the United States. It also highlights the resilience of Chinese immigrants and their struggle for justice and dignity.





The **Geary Act of 1892**, which extended and strengthened the provisions of the **Chinese Exclusion Act**, required Chinese residents in the United States to always carry residency certificates. Those who failed to do so faced detention and deportation. The law became one of the most significant examples of race-based restrictions in American legal history.

The talk began with the Geary Act and featured reproductions of identification documents carried by Chinese immigrants at the time, along with related historical records. These materials not only revealed the discrimination and surveillance Chinese immigrants endured under the law, but also demonstrated how ordinary individuals responded to these challenges.



(Photo taken by Sinyee Guh)

The event was presented by Connie Young Yu and co-sponsored by the Organization of Chinese American Women, Silicon Valley Chapter (OCAW-SVC) and the Santa Clara County Library District. Below is a brief description of Ms. Yu.

Connie Young Yu is a prominent Chinese American historian, author, and activist best known for her work in recovering and preserving the history of the Chinese immigrants who built the Transcontinental Railroad. As a great-granddaughter of a Central Pacific Railroad foreman, she has dedicated decades to ensuring that these laborers receive proper historical recognition.

The presentation was well received by the audience of about thirty people, followed by a lively Q&A about Connie's efforts of ensuring the recognition of Chinese railroad workers who built the Transcontinental Railroad.



Cynthia Chang and Connie Young Yu

OCAW-SVC continues to participate in community affairs and support projects related to preserving Chinese history, culture, and the contribution of Chinese immigrants to our country. Understanding history helps people better comprehend contemporary social issues and promotes greater mutual understanding across races and generations.

The video of the event can be found at the links below.

The introduction:

<https://youtu.be/HYjaOZA6IP8?si=QRBRbro4nCAzmTQh>

The presentation:

https://youtu.be/_Hn7HKi9bZQ?si=sDr_UR36E6QPHgig



(Photos taken by Sophia Yang unless noted otherwise)