

Locke Foundation Newsletter 樂居鎮基金會

Preserving Locke's history and legacy

lockefoundation@frontiernet.net

Fall 2017

www.locke-foundation.org



Locke Foundation Fundraising Banquet



Hong Kong Islander Restaurant
5675 Freeport Blvd, Sacramento

Saturday, October 28, 2017, 6 pm-8 pm

Banquet, raffle, silent auction proceeds to support Locke Foundation projects

\$500 for table of 10, \$55 for individual

Prepayment required by October 21; tickets will not be issued.

Table assignment based on receipt of full payment. If you cannot attend, your donations will be gratefully accepted.

Download ticket order form from LF website:
www.locke-foundation.org

Contact Anita Lo at 916-208-2849 or 5159anita@comcast.net if you have questions, or if you are planning to pay by credit card. Please email her when your registration has been mailed.



Spotlight on Fiddletown: Jimmy Chow Story

By Stuart Walthall



Jimmie Chow. Amador County Archives.

Fong Chow Yow was born in Fiddletown on October 27, 1885. Since the boy was born in the U.S., his legitimacy to permanently reside there was assured at the time when most Chinese were excluded from entering the country.

The Geary Act of 1892 required Chinese to obtain a certificate to prove legal resi-

dency, something no other group was required to do. Chew Kee complied with the extended final deadline for registration.

Chow Yow grew up immersed in Chinese culture, nurtured by his adoptive parents. His adopted father taught Chow Yow to read Chinese, which enabled him to assist Chew Kee with ordering, stocking and selling merchandise.

Like other children in town, Chow attended Fiddletown's one-room school house. It was probably there that he got his American nick name *Jimmie*. (At that time it was called the Oleta School. In 1878 the town's name was changed to Oleta. The name Fiddletown was restored in 1932). Jimmie was still attending school at age thirteen, but like many children in the town, his education ended early because of economic necessity and lack of transportation to high school in Sutter Creek.

Chow Yow began receiving letters from his birth family in China when he was around twenty years old. Now that he had reached maturity, the family continuously pressed him to send money and "return home". Chow Yow, as the first-born son, bore the filial duty to respect and honor his parents, a duty deeply ingrained in Chinese culture. It was expected that he would help support the family.

Chow worked hard to save money for his family. Receipts and correspondence found in the Chew Kee Store demonstrate that Chow was a dutiful son who regularly sent money "home" to China. Through the years, Chow received several similar letters (written in Chinese) from his family imploring him to send money and to return home.

Jimmie Chow stated in his sole interview, conducted in 1956 when he was seventy-two years old,

that he never went to China. Like many Chinese men in the U.S. he remained a bachelor for his entire life. Eventually Chow broke off all communication with his family in China.

By 1920 Jimmie was the only Chinese person in Fiddletown, apart from an elderly 82 year old servant who worked for a local family.

Many local residents welcomed Jimmie into their homes. Since he was a bachelor, he was

invited for dinner and holidays. As he aged he suffered from painful arthritis. Friends would cut wood for his stove, take him to doctor's appointments, and even replace his leaky roof in the 1950s.

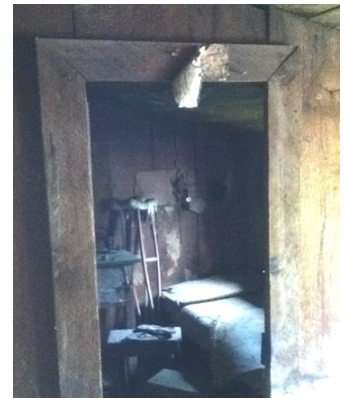
Jimmie's arthritis worsened and he was in and out of the hospital. On April 25, 1965, at the age of eighty, Jimmie Chow died of leukemia. He left \$570, no debt, and no will. Unlike the many Chinese residents who preceded him, he was buried in the Fiddletown public cemetery.

His gravestone, placed by local residents reads: "Chow Fuong Yow (sic), Native of Fiddletown, Affectionately Known as Jimmie Chow".

The legacy of this quiet, frugal, and modest man is in his home, the Chew Kee Store, with all its remaining contents- a continuity of more than one hundred years of Chinese living transplanted to this little town, far from mother country. Just as significant, the life of Jimmie Chow stands as testament of the ability to successfully bestride two very different cultures, working and living as an American while still retaining his traditions and connections. Fong Chow Yow, or Jimmie Chow, was Chinese American long before the term came into popular use.

Elaine Zorbas, author

Many thanks go to Elaine Zorbas for generously granting permission to republish text from her fascinating, succinct and eloquent book: *Banished & Embraced - The Chinese in Fiddletown and the Mother Lode*.



Jimmie Chow's bedroom and crutches S. Walthall

Elaine Zorbas is also the author of *Fiddletown: From Gold Rush to Rediscovery*; forward by Kevin Starr. She received a B.A. in History from the University of California, Berkeley and a Master's in Library Science from the University of Southern California. She formerly headed the research department at Pasadena Public Library. Elaine and her husband live on a small farm in Fiddletown, where they grow fruits, olives and walnuts.



To purchase books by Elaine Zorbas: www.lulu.com or from Mythos Press, PO Box 566, Plymouth, Ca. 95669. Books also available at the Chew Kee Store.

Best of The Delta 2017

Public Spot
Locke

You have been chosen by area residents as
The Best of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. You were selected by
vote as the people's choice in your specific line of business through a non-
scientific poll. We are proud to make this award on their behalf.
July 2017



Locke voted Best Public Spot by
Delta Visitors Bureau in 2017

One Year Later in Locke

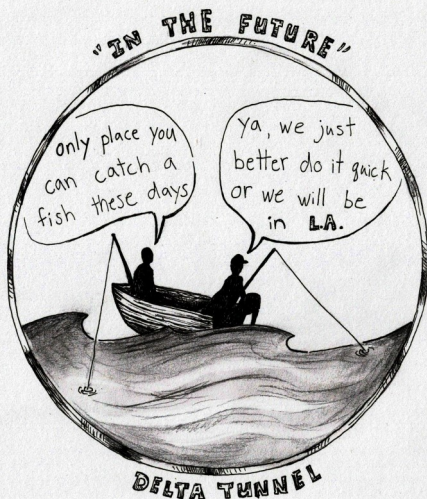
On July 3, 2016, a fire destroyed most of the building at 13931 Main Street, displacing several families and a retail business. Today, a year later, the building has been mostly rebuilt to its original style. The current owner is Virgil McKenzie, CEO of Energy Savings California. There will be 3 residential units and one retail space on the ground floor.



July 3, 2016. Photo by James Motlow.



May, 2017. Photo by Joe Chan.



Volunteers needed at Boarding House

We are looking for persons who are passionate about Locke's legacy and willing to work at least 4 hours per month in the BH to greet visitors, answer questions and sell gift items. Training will be provided.

If you are interested and available, please email your contact information to lockefoundation@frontiernet.net

Will Delta Tunnels Destroy Locke?

The official name of the project is called California Waterfix but to locals it's simply referred to as The Tunnels, as in **STOP THE TUNNELS!** Two monstrous 40-foot diameter tunnels buried 150 feet underground and running 35 miles through the upper end of the North Delta between Freeport and Rio Vista.

Championed by Gov. Jerry Brown, this \$68 billion tunnel project would take water out of the Sacramento River before it flows into the California Delta and pipe it to the State Water Project and federal Central Valley Project to be sold to growers in the southern San Joaquin Valley and urban users in Los Angeles.

Missing from most public dialogue are details buried within the 40,000 page state Environmental Impact Report.

Some Issues To Consider

- * The state EIR predicts 14 years of construction to complete the project.
- * Hundreds of heavy diesel truck trips will occur daily for the duration of construction, taxing roads, bridges and the nerves of local residents.
- * Seismic effects caused by truck traffic, excavation, dredging and steel pile-driving will cause physical degradation and possible destruction of historic towns like Walnut Grove and fragile Locke.
- * Historic homes will be razed and water wells drained.
- * Massive traffic bottlenecks occurring over a period of 14 years will deeply impact restaurants, stores, galleries, wineries and marinas.
- * Movement of farm equipment along already dangerous levee roads will create an even more dangerous situation and dramatically affect farming operations.
- * There is no mitigation in the California Waterfix plan to repair homes, property, levees and entire towns which **WILL** be degraded from this project.

Referred to as "Isolated Conveyance Plan", three immense intakes are scheduled to be constructed along the east side of the Sacramento River. The first being located across the river from Clarksburg, another adjacent to Hood and one north of Courtland. The state's EIR indicates there will be tens of thousands of pile-strikes daily. Levee roads will be deconstructed and moved. Widespread sound, dust and seismic activity will occur near these towns for years on end.

Another scenario proposed within the Waterfix tome is the "Through Delta Conveyance"- code

words for two huge intakes and fish screens to be constructed at Locke and Walnut Grove. If this "Dual Conveyance Plan" project proceeds the results would be devastating to these two legacy communities. The entire east-side River Road between Locke and Walnut Grove would be irreparably altered due to the placement of intake/fish screens spanning the two towns. The historic Locke Boathouse, constructed in 1909, would be torn down in the process. Existing docks and riverside infrastructure removed and historic structures would be shaken to their foundations. An enormous forebay would be constructed behind the town of Locke which would be used as a water intake facility to supply the tunnels.

Numerous lawsuits have been filed against the state by local governments, environmental organizations and a variety of private interests but it remains to be seen if these lawsuits will deter this project. California Waterfix is a shell game being played out by powerful and greedy interests whose sole objective is to rob the life blood of our beautiful California Delta, regardless of the lives and precious environs ruined in the process. If Waterfix proceeds, there will be no turning back.

Stop the Tunnels. Stop the Intakes. Stop the Fish Screens.

You can voice your concerns to the State of California Commission: Delta Stewardship Council at: 916-445-5511 or Amanda.bohl@deltacouncil.ca.gov.

The Locke Foundation Newsletter would like to thank Scott Thomas Anderson, Barbara Daly, Gene Beley and James Motlow for information supplied and text extracted from their works. Locke graphic created by Beth Chape.



Hypothetical depiction of damage to town of Locke from Tunnels Project.

Jeff Gillenkirk Memorial

Jeff Gillenkirk passed away in November, 2016. He was the co-author of Bitter Melon, and champion of Locke's historic legacy.

A scholarship fund has been established through the Locke Foundation in his memory. Application forms for the Jeff Gillenkirk Memorial Scholarship Fund will be available in March, 2018, on the Locke Foundation website. Listed below are donors:

Chan, Ron
Chong, Ron
Chu, Clarence
Eng, Joyce and Alex
Fong, Lorraine
Kan, Darwin and Lili
Lo, Anita
Lum, Honey
Mah, Daisy
Minnick, Sylvia Sun
Soo Hoo, Melanie
Wagner, D. R.
Wong, Virginia
Woo, Darrel and Nancy
Woodward, Kelley

Bodhi Plaque

On May 20, 2017, the Bodhi Temple of Sacramento presented Locke Foundation with a beautiful collage composed of 12 red Chinese Zodiac symbols. The gift was accepted by Stuart Walthall on behalf of Locke Foundation. It is currently displayed at the Boarding House.

The artwork was inspired by the Venerable Master Hsing Yun, founder of Fo Guang Shan Buddhist monastery which has temples on five continents. He is famous for his "one-stroke calligraphy" which is demonstrated by this artwork.



Photo courtesy of Joe Chan

In Memoriam

Yin Kwan Soon Chan
1912-2017



Mrs. Yin Kwan Soon Chan, 95 year-old resident of Locke, passed away on July 13, 2017. Born in Heungshan in Guangdong province, China, she immigrated to Locke in 1969 with 2 daughters and a son to join her father, Saer Choy Soon, a farm worker in the Delta.

A single mother, Mrs. Chan worked in local fruit orchards and packing sheds. It was not easy to survive on seasonal jobs; she also cleaned houses and did odd jobs. She saved enough money to pay for rent, food, basic needs and school supplies for her children. She tended her community garden area with Chinese vegetables and fruit trees. She grew the largest winter melons and greenest vegetables. She was quite the cook, with fried chicken, sesame balls, ti-leaf wrapped dumplings and soups from the bounty of her garden being family favorites. She even kept the neighborhood cats well fed.

The oldest resident of Locke for a long time, she remained a sweet and gentle soul; She is survived by 6 children, 15 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held for her on August 26, 2017, in San Francisco. The family has suggested remembrances in her memory be given to Locke Foundation.

Annual Locke Tradition: THE GATHERING

Photos by DR Wagner, article by Stuart Walthall

The yellow-orange light of evening now comes a bit earlier with each setting sun. The gardens are flourishing but fading. Summer threw its last few dragon-breaths just to remind us who rules the mid-year. But now those simmering sweat-months are behind us. It's time to finish the harvest. Then we can slow down. Then we can rest. However, when the calendar turns to September there is a quickening in Locke. It is time for The Gathering.

It happens when the call goes out. Spontaneous, yet anticipated. And anyone can call it. "*This evening SHALL be The Gathering*". Preparations begin forthwith.

Proper clothing must be selected. Practical, durable and most importantly... fashionable. One participant sports a pair lucky red socks. Another wears an ancient T-shirt flashing a menacing image. And another comes decked out in a gossamer summer dress accessorized with sequined sandals. The defending champion shows up in tattered cut-off blue jeans containing a sacred purie marble stored in the rarely used change pocket and a bright orange Elmer Fudd hat. The kids participants wear what they always wear—something dirty.

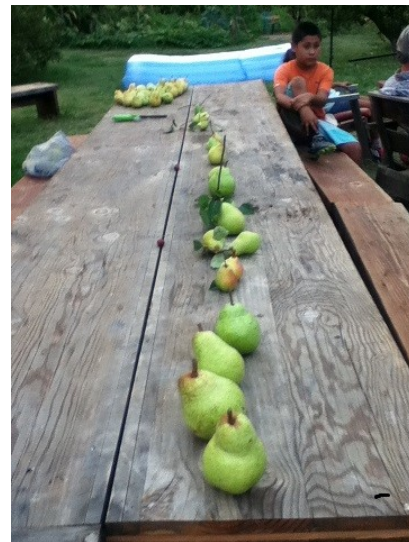
The Gathering is now in its fourth incarnation. Through the years it has strained relationships and tested friendships. It has been the source of contention, controversy and bitterness. It has yielded both heartbreak and triumph. It is an opportunity to grow as a human being—mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. The Gathering exposes us to ourselves.

The goals of The Gathering are simple (on the surface): Win as many of the Sacred Four Categories as possible. Whoever garners the most glory is declared Grand Gathering Champion. However, each of the Sacred Four Categories are fraught with Demons of Subjectivity. For this reason a suitable unbiased, honest and forthright Judge must be chosen for The Gathering. This year's Judge was unanimously chosen due to his supreme aestheticism and his unimpeachable ("Can I get you another glass of wine, James? I have some good stuff I can bring over") character: James Motlow.

The Sacred Categories in The Gathering Adult Division are: #1. Biggest Pear, #2. Best Pair of Pears #3. Ugliest Pear and #4. Pear Which Most Resembles a Human Body Part (participants in the kids division usually refer to this category simply as "Butt Pear"). The Kids Division categories are: Smallest Pear and Butt p... er Human Body Part Pear. (Kids can move up the full Adult Category status after one year of Gathering experience. It Takes a Village).

The actual Gathering happens rather quickly: 30 minutes in the Orchard of Destiny. Contestants line up at the border of the arena clutching their gathering vessels as the official Keeper of Time stands ready. Then the shout goes out. The results are a blur. The pack immediately splits

up and heads in every direction. Most contestants have certain affinities for specific types of pears. Last year's Champion seems to have a knack for finding hideous looking pears. Another contestant may go strictly for the biggest pear or perhaps take a moment to thoughtfully choose the best pair of pears. The kid participants shriek and scream in the distance as though they are finding gold nuggets. And after 30 minutes the shout goes out again. The Gathering is over. Time to head back. Time to display one's trophies on The Table of Judgment.



The Table of Judgment S. Walthall

Presentation is the key. To ensure anonymity each contestant is given an identification number to be written on his/her entries. Each Sacred Category has a specific area at the Table of Judgment and entries are placed together for diligent comparative inspection by The Judge.

Judge Motlow exhibited astounding scrutiny, offering (long-winded) explanations and opinions regarding each entry. All participants and attendees were impressed with Motlow's (excruciating) attention to detail.

Then the winner of each category was announced followed by enthusiastic applause (murmurs). Biggest Pear: a no brainer. It towered over its competition. Best Pair of Pears: tough choice. Subjective indeed. However, all entries were worthy. A tasteful yet diminutive pair took the prize. (The Asian themed pair should have won). Ugliest Pear was also a gimme. I'm surprised the Judge even touched it. Pear Most Resembling a Human Body Part: this one could have gone any direction too but in the end, after much handling by Judge Motlow, the winner was declared and The Grand Gathering Champion was crowned.

Winners in the Kids Division garnered as much attention, photos and applause as the adults received. They

Clarence Chu to receive CACS Award



The Gold Mountain Celebration is the Chinese American Council of Sacramento's (CACS) event to recognize and honor two outstanding individuals (or organizations) in the community with the awarding of the Frank Fat Founder's Award and the induction of an honoree into the CACS Hall of Fame. The Frank Fat Founder's Award was established by the CACS Board in 1997. The award is to acknowledge those in the community who have given more than just their time, but also that special "something" back into the community. The 2017 recipient of this prestigious award will be Founding Members of CACS.

The Hall of Fame was established in 2004. Induction into the Hall of Fame is a lasting tribute to those individuals (or organizations) that have achieved the next level of commitment in giving back to the community. The 2017 Inductee will be Locke's own Clarence Chu.

Born in Canton, China, Clarence grew up in Hong Kong. In 1970 he came to California to attend college. In 1977, he and his family purchased the Locke property from the heirs of George W. Locke, consisting of 500 acres including the town of Locke. Clarence became the general manager and co-owner of the Locke property.

Clarence worked together with the Sacramento County Housing and Redevelopment Agency throughout the years. In 2001, he spearheaded the effort to convince the County to successfully unify the land and building ownership in Locke. In January, 2005, the building owners in Locke were able to purchase the land and received their grant deeds.

Clarence later purchased several buildings in Locke and converted them into museums to preserve them. These buildings included Joe Shoong Chinese school, Jan Ying Chinese Association Building, and Dai Loy Gambling house. Today his vision is to allow visitors the opportunity to go inside the buildings, learn the history of the buildings, and capture the experience of what living in Locke was like during the old days. In 2008 he sold one building to the California State Park and recommended that they restore and turn it into a visitor museum center for the community. Today it is called the Boarding House Museum. Clarence has been a strong advocate for preserving and perpetuating the legacy of the nation's only surviving rural Chinese town.

Friends are invited to attend the 30th anniversary of CACS on Saturday, October 14, 2017, at Sacramento Asian Sports Foundation in Elk Grove, from 5:30 pm-8:30 pm.. For ticket sale, please contact Brenda Fong at bjfong1950@yahoo.com.



will make worthy contestants (opponents) at next year's Gathering.



Are red socks lucky?



Brock displays Winning Body Part and Ugliest Pear



Judge Motlow scrutinizing Best Pair of Pear entries

Locke Foundation Membership Application/Renewal

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Mailing address _____

Email address _____ Tel () _____ Cell () _____

I would like to volunteer for the following activities:

Volunteer docent _____ Donor _____ Visitor Center Volunteer _____

Contributor to newsletter _____ Media contacts _____ Landscape maintenance _____

Membership Dues: circle one

_____ \$25 Individual Annual/\$200 Lifetime

_____ \$50 Family or Non-Profit Organization Annual/\$300 Lifetime

_____ \$100 Business Annual/\$500 Lifetime

Make check payable to Locke Foundation. Please return this form with check to Locke Foundation, P. O. Box 1085, Walnut Grove, CA 95690. Contributions are tax deductible to extent allowed by law. Tax ID: 20-0364281.

Office use only:

Date application received _____ Membership Year _____ Renewal _____

Locke Foundation
P. O. Box 1085
Walnut Grove, CA 95690

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