



Locke Foundation Newsletter 樂居鎮基金會

Preserving Locke's history and legacy

www.lockeca.com

Summer 2013

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Main Street Sizzles at Asian Pacific Cultural Festival

On May 11, 2013, the Asian Pacific Cultural Festival kicked off with resounding drum beats by Eastern Ways as their colorful lions frolicked on Main Street. The day was filled with mesmerizing entertainment under balmy skies. Crowds enjoyed meandering around the arts and crafts vendors, community outreach booths and food stalls. Loki Rhythm provided mellow music throughout the day. See acknowledgements on Page 6. (Photos courtesy of LF and Margie Ganger)



Crowds throng various vendor booths



Taiko drummers from Stockton



World music by Loki Rhythm.

Contortionist Wayne Huey in the barrel squeeze.

Eastern Ways lions in finale.



New Locke Photographic Building Survey

Story By Stuart Walthall, photos by James Motlow



Main Street Locke in 1970's



Main Street Locke in 2013

A historically important project is taking place in Locke. The primary purpose of this project is to catalogue all of Locke's architectural structures with photographs. The Locke Centennial Building Survey, sponsored by the Locke Foundation, shall offer an up-to-date visual representation of each building in Locke.

Over the years there have been a number of photographic surveys conducted in Locke but unlike previous surveys this modern one shall involve digitally capturing (whenever physically possible) all four sides of each Locke building. A new system of identifying and cataloguing each structure is being adopted by the LCBS which aligns the new survey with the numerical system used in the Locke Walking Tour. Plus, the new images are in color.

The Centennial Building Survey is also cataloging archival photographs and architectural renderings of Locke structures which will then be presented side-by-side with



Locke Residence 1970's



Locke Residence 2013

the new images currently being catalogued.

The LCBS is being spearheaded by Locke resident photographer James Motlow, co-author of BITTER MELON: Stories from the Last Chinese Town in America. Motlow is not only devoting his photographic skills to the project, but he has also created a unique system where each individual building has its own digital file.

This modern building survey will be a valuable resource in a number of ways. Current buildings can now be compared with older images of the same structure in order

to determine if any deterioration has occurred. Also, issues of modifications to buildings can be addressed by using older images of the structure as a guideline to determine if any proposed modifications might change the historical context of the building. The LCBS will also be offered as a resource to historians, students, authors,



James Motlow

artists, and the public in general. The LCBS will serve as a foundation for the second phase of the Centennial Survey: The Locke Building Genealogy Project, a program designed to catalogue the history of each building in Locke. The Building Genealogy Project will create a 100 year timeline for each historic structure of the town. This timeline will then be systematically "filled in" with the historical data pertaining to the building. This historical data will include information such as: the identities of families and family members who lived in a given building along with dates in which they occupied it. Plus, any biographical information pertaining to the family will be entered in the building's timeline. Information on Locke businesses and owners will also be gathered and time-lined.

Also included in the Locke Building Genealogy Project will be any archival materials that relate historically to the buildings and people of Locke. Such materials include: newspaper and magazine articles, books, documents, film, oral histories, and much more.

Both the Locke Centennial Building Survey and the Locke Building Genealogy Project are long term programs designed to be on-going and open-ended. Information will continuously be added to both surveys and then presented to the public.

But in order to present effectively this important historical information to the public, the Locke Foundation needs your help. The Foundation is currently seeking volunteers who are skilled with computers and web site design. The LF is also seeking financial donations to be used toward these two meaningful projects. But most importantly the Foundation is seeking historic Locke materials.

The public is being asked to lend any photographic or printed materials to the Locke Foundation. These items will be digitally duplicated and returned to the lender. The Foundation is more than happy to come to your house and digitally record any items that you may wish to share.

LOCKE CENTENNIAL BUILDING SURVEY Wish List

- *Historical Photos of Locke
- *Historical Materials Related to Locke
- *Volunteers Skilled in Web Site Design
- *Contact Information of Individuals Who Have Lived in Locke
- * Cash Donations to Help Fund the LCBS

For those interested in contributing to the LCBS Wish List may do so by using the following contact information:

Locke Foundation
Attn: LCBS
P.O. Box 1085
Walnut Grove, CA 95690
916-776-1828
Or

jdmotlow@yahoo.com and stuartwalthall@aol.com

The town of Locke will be commemorating its centennial in 2015. We sincerely hope you will be coming to Locke to join us in this year-long celebration. In the meantime the Locke Foundation would appreciate your generosity, your skills, and your continued support of the town of Locke.

Save the Date
Locke
Centennial Celebration
2015



WHAT A LONG STRANGE TRIP

Locke Artifacts Returned After Nearly 80 Years

By Stuart Walthall

Part 1

Most families have a skeleton or two in the closet. Whether it's a bootlegging grandma or a shotgun wedding, nearly all of us have grown up in a household where certain subjects are addressed in hushed tones. But there is one Northern California family whose private skeletons spent most of the time out in the barn.

The story begins almost eight decades ago when a 22-year old cub police reporter working for the now-defunct Sacramento Union Newspaper was invited to come along to witness a bust. The year was 1935 and the young reporter was Joe Cullivan. He was notified by the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department that a raid was about to take place in the notorious "Chinatown" of Locke. He decided to be there to cover the story.

The purpose of this particular raid along with the identity of the targeted establishment and its owner has been lost to history. However, since the bust was going to come down in mid-1930s Locke, it's a good bet the raid had something to do with one or more of the other activities known to occur in the back rooms of Locke's thriving businesses: illicit enterprises such as gambling, prostitution, and opium... take your pick.

Police raids were nothing new to Locke. Since its founding, Locke had been a frequent target of Sacramento County's constabulary. Whether the police intervention was initiated in order to enforce the letter of the law, or prompted by some political agenda, or maybe with the hope of a payoff, it was commonplace for the authorities involved (or in this case a cub reporter!) to help themselves to any items of value. If someone wanted a souvenir, *they lifted it*.

It is because of this archaic attitude of entitlement that many of Locke's precious historic artifacts have been removed and dispersed to parts unknown, seemingly never to return. How rare it would be that any items procured through such shady acts of *quasi-legal* thievery would ever find their way back to Locke. But recently that's exactly what happened.

On that day back in 1935 when the Locke bust came down, Joe Cullivan did indeed help himself to a couple of souvenirs. He grabbed a beautiful gong along with a large hand-held brass cymbal, both commonly used during ceremonies and celebrations within the Chinese community.

Joe took these items home and presented them to his wife, Jessie. The fact that these gifts from her hus-



Jessie (Cullivan)
Heinzman

band were stolen goods was never lost on Jessie Cullivan. However, she couldn't help but notice what beautiful additions they made to her home's modest décor. Jessie even spruced up the large gong by hand-painting it with a few cryptic Chinese symbols that she had copied from one of her mahjong pieces. And for the next ten years or so, the gong stood watch over Joe and Jessie's living room.

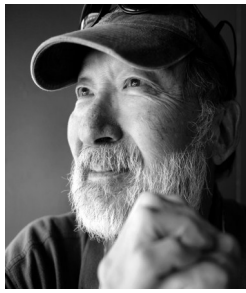
Things did not work out for Joe and Jessie, but before the couple divorced and parted ways they had five children: daughters Pat, Ettamarie, Kate, and Barbara; and son Michael. All five children are alive and still living in Northern California. Joe Cullivan died in 1956. Jessie remarried in 1954 and became Jessie Heinzman. She and her new husband Lewis then settled in the Sacramento area. Jessie's children grew up and started lives of their own. The gong and cymbal, having outlived their aesthetic appeal and novelty, were now relegated to Jessie's barn where they languished for the next 60 odd years.

Jessie never stopped feeling guilty about the gifts of stolen merchandise she had received and harbored. They were reminders of a failed marriage and symbols of an act of thoughtless indiscretion. Now they lay hidden in an old barn.... *and in the back of Jessie's mind*. She dreaded public scrutiny and even feared legal consequences associated with ownership of such stolen goods. Even more, she had defaced one of the historic items with her hand-painted embellishments.

Embarrassment, apprehension, and prompts by her own children for the return of these pilfered artifacts led to lifelong simmering remorse within Jessie's heart.

Part 2

Jeff Kan Lee is a native son of Locke with quite a Locke pedigree. His grandfather Lee Bing founded the town of Locke in 1915. Lee Bing was Locke's most influential businessman and community leader. His many entrepreneurial and political interests stretched from Locke to Oregon. Jeff Kan's father Ping lee, who died in 2011 at the age of 93, was considered the unofficial mayor of Locke as well as serving as the cultural ambassador of the Delta's



Jeff Kan Lee

Chinese population. Ping Lee was born upstairs in what is now the historic Moon Café located on Main Street (Building #11 Locke Walking Tour).

Jeff Kan Lee, now 68 years old, along with his brother Darwin and sister Gayle, had grown up on Key Street where their unique double house was fondly remembered as the Kan Compound. (Building #49 LWT)

Jeff's parents Ping and Grace Chow Lee raised their children in an environment rich in the traditions of their own parents' homeland: the Pearl River Delta, Guangdong Province, in China.

Jeff spent his youth much the same as all the other young boys born in post-war Locke. He ran the streets under the watchful eyes of the elder Chinese residents. He attended local schools, explored the sloughs, worked odd jobs, and drove the levees. After graduating from Courtland High School in 1963, he went off to the University of California, Berkeley.

Jeff had originally attended Cal as a life science major. However, after joining the Daily Cal newspaper staff with the sole intention of using the university's dark-room facilities, he realized that he was smack in the middle of the Free Speech Movement. Jeff was now dedicating his photographic skills to the radical U. C. Berkeley publication during the beginning of the counter culture revolution. The position suited Jeff well and he soon switched his major from life science to photojournalism. He attended Cal for another two years but because the university did not offer an undergraduate degree in journalism, Jeff decided to transfer to what was then called Sacramento State College (now California State University, Sacramento) in order to attain his degree. Jeff's father Ping was not happy with this decision. Ping wanted bragging rights to a son who graduated from Cal.

Jeff excelled at Sac State and was soon offered a position as a staff photographer for the Sacramento Union, where he worked for the next two years. Then in 1968, he accepted a position in Santa Rosa, California at the Press Democrat. Jeff Lee spent the next 45 years working at the Press Democrat where he received national recognition for his photography. (Jeff retired earlier this past year).

Being a photographer for a hometown newspaper gave Jeff Lee ample opportunities to cover a diverse assortment of subjects. Big stories and small, local and regional, city and rural, Jeff photographed them all.

It was in the early 1990's that Jeff received an assignment that was not only interesting, but fateful. His assignment was to shoot photographs for an article about a spunky lady who owned and operated a unique farming en-

terprise in Petaluma. Her operation not only had a pumpkin patch but also included a beekeeping business. Plus, she offered a program designed to educate the public about honey bees.

Jeff drove to the farm and exchanged introductions with its owner. Her name was Ettamarie Peterson. Jeff conversed with Ettamarie and the two became friends. It was through this chance encounter that these two individuals' lives would intersect many times throughout the years. It was not until 2011, during a casual conversation, that Jeff mentioned to Ettamarie that he was born and raised in Locke. Ettamarie's words that followed might best be described as *sheepish*.

She told Jeff the story of her parents and of the stolen Locke artifacts. It seemed that providence and fate had been drawing these two friends together, yet it took over 20 years before their Locke connection was finally made.

At the time of their conversation about Locke, Ettamarie's mother Jessie Heinzman was still alive at age 95 but remained reluctant to return the gong and cymbal. She still carried the embarrassment and guilt from what transpired during and after the night of the Locke bust in 1935. A year or so later though, on December 20, 2012, Jessie died.

How unfortunate that it took the passing of Jessie to finally bring the historic treasures back home to Locke. Rather than being treated with ignominy, as Jessie may have expected, she most certainly would have been welcomed as a dignitary and a friend.

Epilogue

Shortly after Jessie's passing, Ettamarie contacted Jeff Kan Lee. She had conferred with her siblings, and each wholeheartedly agreed that it was time to return the gong and cymbal. It was decided that the reunion of the artifacts and the town would be celebrated with a ceremony. On March 30, 2013 the Cullivan Clan, along with their extended families, piled into their cars and drove to Locke for a day of gratitude, friendship, and closure.

The Locke Foundation hosted the ceremony at the Locke Boarding House/Visitors Center. Foundation Chairman Clarence Chu was there to welcome the guests. The ceremony was followed by a walking tour of Locke and a luncheon at the Locke China Garden Restaurant.

In attendance were three of Jessie's five children: Ettamarie Peterson and husband Ray from Petaluma, Kate Quick and husband John from Alameda, and Pat Neu from Lodi. Also attending were Ettamarie and John's two children: son Lou Peterson and his wife Dodie, and daughter Karen Nau. Lena Tan, family friend and past city councilwoman for the City of Alameda, along with James Motlow,

Long lost Gong returns to Locke

...continued

photographer of all things Locke, were also present for the ceremonies. And of course there was Jeff Lee, along with his partner Cheryl Burnette.

Ettamarie, Kate, and Pat presented the long-lost gong and cymbal to the Locke Foundation, which accepted them on behalf of the Town of Locke. The three sisters were then presented with lifetime memberships in the



LF chair Clarence Chu and sisters Kate Quick, Pat Neu, and Ettamarie Peterson with gong. Photo courtesy of Jeff Kan Lee.

Locke Foundation. The Locke artifacts, after a long strange trip, were home again. The debt had been settled with interest paid in friendship.

Ettamarie, speaking for her entire family said: "We feel so good about finally returning these things!"

The infamous gong and cymbal can be seen at the Locke Foundation Visitors Center.

New LF Memberships

Katie and John Quick
Ettamarie and Ray Peterson
Pat Neu
Celestine Fong
Janice Wong
Holly Walthall
Dan Harris

Free Chinese Calligraphy Lessons



Free Chinese calligraphy lessons are available once a month at the Joe Shoong Chinese School in Locke, taught by Anita Lo. All supplies furnished.

Next free lesson will be held on Sunday, June 16, 2013, 11am-noon. No registration required.

(Photo courtesy of Locke Foundation)

May 11 Locke Festival Kudos

The Festival committee consisted of Clarence Chu, Eileen Leung, Joyce Eng, Stuart Walthall, Brock Alexander and Eva Chu.

Many thanks to volunteers including Sacramento Marhalika Lions and Leos, Chris Spencer, Deborah Mendel, Dan Harris, Alex Eng, Woo Family (Darrel, Nancy and Allison), Colton and Irisa Zhang, Kazuyo Morishita, Wayne Miller, James Motlow, Mark Szilagyi, Mike McCuen, Teri Lopez, Anita Lo and Alfred Yee.

Donors of raffle and poker tournament prizes included Clarence Chu, Stuart Walthall, Pat Braziel, Joyce Eng, Eileen Leung, Kim Choy, Sacramento Food Co-op, Sprouts, Rice Bowl Restaurant, Diane Thomas, Wai Moy, Al's Place, and Delta Discovery Cruises. We apologize for any omissions.



Gung-Gung is here!

Written and illustrated by Brock Alexander

It was 1952, and we were at war in Korea. The average woman in America was married at 20 years of age, and gas cost 25 cents a gallon. Car seats belts were introduced, and Sister Theresa became Mother Theresa and began her charity work in India. It was also the Chinese Zodiac year of the Dragon.

It was a typical afternoon in Locke, California. And at the back edge of town sits the King's House. You will still find it there today just before the Community Gardens. It's a small modest house, but big on charm. It's not all fixed up like a new home, but it's well kept.

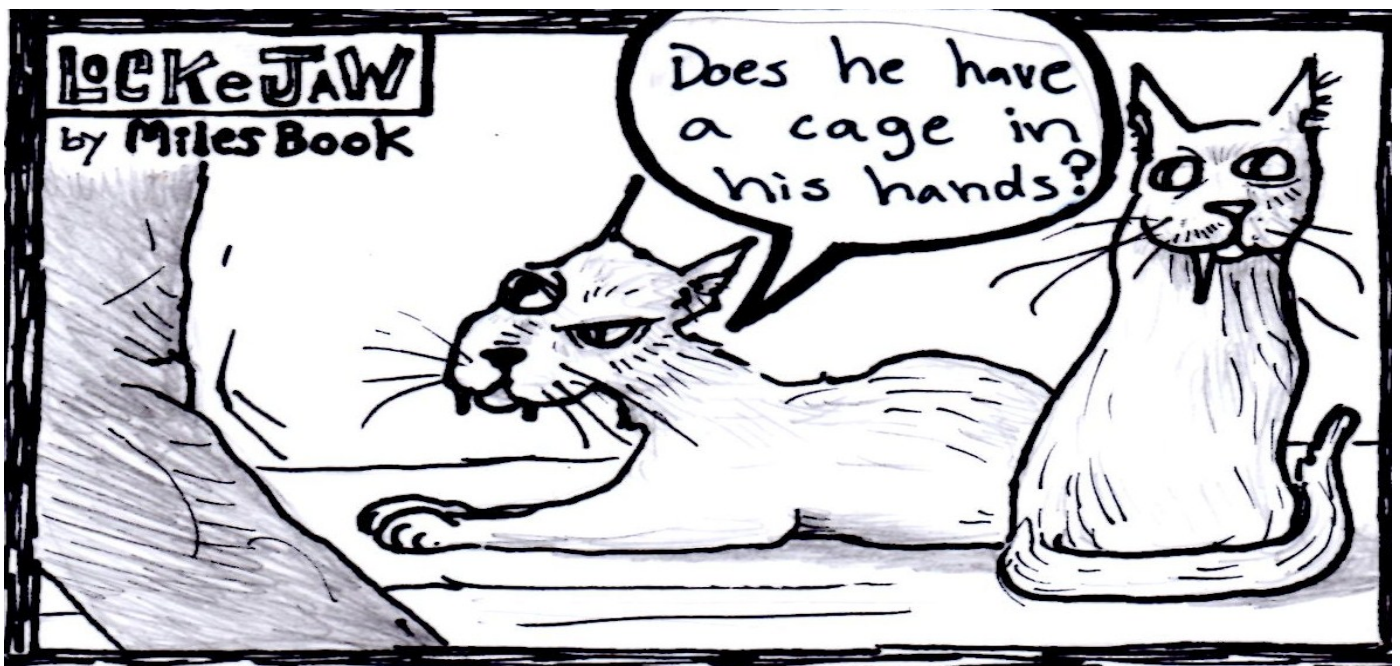
Connie King is in the kitchen hosting company with coffee and cigarettes. The latest gossip fills the room like Delta fog. In the living room her young son Kim is at play. Kim being a very gifted boy is only two years old, but can already talk. He also could use chopsticks at the age of one. It's at this point that Kim ran into the kitchen to tell his mom that "Gung-Gung (grandpa) is here!" Gung-Gung had passed away some years ago! Kim being so young made it highly unlikely that he had made up this story. So with little hesitation Connie went into the living room to confront Gung-Gung. The soft sunlight was glowing threw the white shier curtains. Connie faced the location where Kim had saw Gung-Gung and then spoke these words "you need to leave, your holding on to this world!"

After that day Kim King would never see Gung-Gung again. But like many of us in Locke, he lives with this Ghost story still today. Ghost beliefs are closely associated with traditional Chinese religion and respect for ancestors. Confucius said "respect ghost and gods, but keep away from them."

Special thanks to Kim King for sharing his story. The son of Locke's grand dame Connie King, he grew up in Locke, attended elementary school in Walnut Grove and Joe Shoong Chinese School. He graduated from UC Berkeley and worked for 32 years in local government in Sacramento administrating socio-economic programs in low-income housing, homelessness, affirmative action, job development, commercial revitalization, strategic planning, and historic preservation.



Illustration of Connie King home on Key Street



Locke Foundation Membership Application/Renewal

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Mailing address _____

Email address _____ Tel () _____ Fax () _____

I would like to volunteer for the following activities:

Boarding House Duty _____ Publicity _____ Computer tasks _____

Write newsletter articles _____ Grant writing _____ Collect artifacts _____

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. 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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