



Locke Foundation Newsletter 樂居鎮基金會

Preserving Locke's history and legacy

www.lockeca.com

Winter 2014

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Harvest Moon Festival

The Locke Foundation held its annual fundraiser on Saturday, October 26, 2013, at the Jean Harvie Community Center in Walnut Grove. Over 100 supporters attended to enjoy fellowship, delicious lunch and fabulous entertainment. The Stockton Bukkkyo Taiko Drummers pounded out a carefully choreographed set of songs. Ms. Sharon Chan sang "I Dreamed a Dream" from Les Miserables.



Willis Tom sings his heart out about Locke memories

One highlight was a solo a capella rendition of "Memory" from the musical CATS by former Locke resident Willis Tom. A loyal supporter of Locke for many years, he reminisced of his coming of age in this town.

Many guests went home with valuable raffle prizes, including gift certificates to area restaurants and recreational ameni-



Stockton Taiko group beats out spirited performance.

ties. Local artists donated original works for the silent auction. Locke Foundation acknowledges volunteers who worked to make this event a success: Clarence Chu, Joyce and Alex Eng, Stuart Walthall, Brock Alexander, Diane Thompson, Lisa Kirk, Eva Chu, Justin Cairns, Wayne Miller, Sharon Fong, Anita Lo, Nelson Loo, and Dustin Marr.



Audience enraptured by stage entertainers

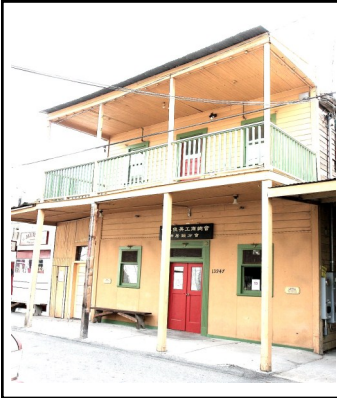


Kudos to Joyce and Alex Eng for elegant display of abundance of raffle prizes donated by generous sponsors.

LOCKE'S JAN YING BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

by Stuart Walthall

On October 19, 2013, a dedication ceremony was celebrated on Main Street when the town of Locke was presented with a beautiful new sign commemorating Locke's Jan Ying Benevolent Association.



A delegation of individuals from San Francisco representing the state

Jan Ying Building with new sign on Main Street Locke. Photo credit: James Motlow.

headquarters of the Jan Ying Association, along with representatives from the Fresno Chapter of the Jan Ying, traveled to Locke to conduct the dedication ceremony. Also present were Locke Foundation Chairman Clarence Chu and members of the community.

Locke's Jan Ying Benevolent Association dates back to the founding of Locke in 1915. The Jan Ying building, centrally located on the east side of Main Street Locke, was the social center and informal headquarters for the men from the Zhongshan District of China. The men could go the Jan Ying and converse in a dialect familiar to them. The field workers got mail there and received help in writing and translation when they needed it. They read Chinese newspapers, played friendly games of chess, dominoes, fan-tan, and mahjong. They enjoyed tea and sweets, and played musical instruments. Such was how they relaxed and killed time between jobs. Messages could also be left at the Jan Ying, friends located, and labor contracted for.

In 1990, the San Francisco headquarters of the Jan Ying Association decided to close down the Locke branch because the town's Chinese population was decreasing at a rapid pace.

In 2011, building owner Clarence Chu reopened the Jan Ying building as a museum, dedicating it to the

memory of the original Jan Ying Benevolent Association and its once thriving membership.

Fatefully, a fortunate turn of events occurred during Locke's 2012 Asian Pacific Spring Festival. While enjoying the festivities on Main Street, one Mr. S.Y. Lin was pleasantly surprised to see that the Jan Ying Association doors were once again open. As president of the Fresno Chapter of the Jan Ying Association, Mr. Lin promptly tracked down Clarence Chu, and the two men discussed the circumstances of the newly reopened Jan Ying building, now being presented as the Jan Ying Museum.

Upon returning to Fresno, S.Y. Lin notified officials at the San Francisco main headquarters of the Jan Ying Benevolent Association, informing them of Locke's latest museum. This aroused great interest.

It was decided that the Jan Ying Association as a whole should commemorate Locke's new Main Street addition. An attempt was initiated to locate Locke's original Jan Ying Association sign which had



Delegates from San Francisco and Fresno chapter of Jan Ying Associations proudly display replicated sign.

been returned to the San Francisco headquarters when the Locke Jan Ying closed its doors. Unfortunately, the original sign could not be located. It was then decided that a new sign replicating the original would be created and placed where the original once stood.

The original sign was replicated by utilizing old photographic images of Locke's original Jan Ying Association building. Sign.

TRANSLATION OF SIGN :
Jan Ying Benevolent Association of
America, Locke Chapter.



Interior of Locke's Jan Ying Association

This last October's sign dedication ceremonies held in front of Locke's Jan Ying Museum were both informative and meaningful. The beautiful new sign was placed above the main entrance of the building and then dedicated to those who occupied it so many years ago.

After the ceremonies Foundation Chairman Chu led the delegates on a walking tour of Locke.

The new sign now welcomes the visitors of Locke to come inside the town's newest museum and to enjoy the fascinating history and legacy of Locke's earliest social organization.

JAN YING MUSEUM
Main Street, Locke
HOURS OF OPERATION:
11:00 to 5:00 Wednesday through Sunday

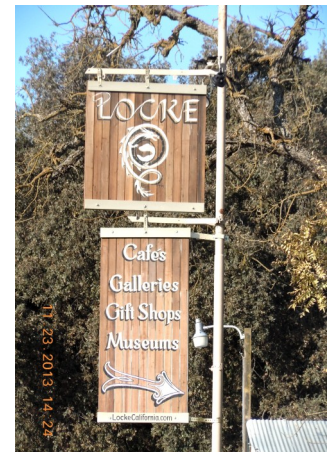
All Signs Lead to Locke

By Eileen Leung

Amidst hardly any fanfare, Caltrans workers installed 2 directional signs on Highway 160 leading to Locke on September 30, 2013. This was the culmination of two years of Locke Foundation's dogged indefatigable persistence working with Caltrans officials in Marysville. Now there are signs leading visitors from both sides of Sacramento River to Locke. (Photos courtesy of Clarence Chu.)



Local resident George Heiner designed and installed rustic sign directing motorists on River Road to visit Locke. (Photo credit: Eileen Leung)



Memorial Tile Wall Project Expands

The Locke Memorial Tile Project has been so successful that it has become necessary to add two more Memorial Tile Walls in order to meet popular demand.

The three original walls, designed and created by Locke native Nelson Loo, have sold out. Thus, Nelson has constructed two more beautiful walls. The new walls are located closer to the main entrance of the



Locke Memorial Park and stand adjacent to the Locke Monument- prime locations for viewing by visitors to the park.

Funds raised through memorial tile sales help ensure the continued operation of the Locke Foundation whose mission is the preservation, education, and celebration of Locke's colorful history, architecture, and culture.

Locke's memorial tile walls are replete with messages of love, remembrance, and respect, and shall remain as a tribute for generations to come.

The two new walls are ready to display the names and dates of your departed loved ones or the names of your entire family. You can also add a special phrase or comment to your tile. The Locke Foundation is happy to translate any words or numbers into Cantonese, or you can use any language of your choosing. Your memorial tile may also contain a business or organization logo, an armed forces insignia, or even a high con-



trast image of someone you wish to memorialize. And for memorial tile recipients who do not live in the area, the Locke Foundation is more than happy to send a photographic image of the installed tile upon request. Just make sure we have the recipient's email address along with your request.

SIZES AND PRICES FOR MEMORIAL TILES

4" by 8' Tile Three lines \$100
20 characters each line (including spaces)

8" by 8" Tile Six lines \$200
20 characters each line (spaces included)

The Locke Foundation invites you to visit Locke and check out the Locke Memorial Park. Relax in the park's seating area and enjoy the landscaping and native plants. View the Locke Monument placed within the park. And take a few moments to read and reflect on the meaningful words and images placed upon the tiles that adorn Locke's memorial tile walls.

Those interested in learning more about the origin and creation of the Locke memorial Tile Project may do so by visiting the Locke Foundation Web site at: www.lockeca.com and clicking on the Spring 2013 issue of the Locke Foundation Newsletter.

Order forms may be downloaded at www.lockeca.com. If you have any questions regarding the purchase of a memorial tile please feel free to call the Locke Foundation at 916-776-1661 The Foundation would also be happy to mail you a memorial tile application. Just leave your request and your mailing address at the phone number listed above.

See you in Locke.

From the Chinese Demonstration Garden

Photos by Deborah Mendel B

y Stuart Walthall



Cee Gwa (Luffa) Gourd and Blossom.

I thought those come from the ocean!" That's what most of the visitors say when they walk through Locke's Chinese demonstration garden and view a Cee Gwa (Luffa) hanging on a vine for the first time.

"Nope..... and people eat 'um too". "What?"

I love sharing such seemingly bizarre factoids with visitors who come to Locke and venture out to the back of town to check out the residences and gardening areas of the community.

"Well, they eat them when they are small.....around pickle size. Some folks think they taste a little like fresh peas. Some others say they taste more like a green bean".

The Luffa is a natural sponge that grows from a tropical vine. It grows up to three feet in length and has been used for centuries by people around the world. And yes, it is quite edible but one should eat it before its tangled fibers develop. I can attest to this fact because I once chopped one up, stir fired it, and ate half of it before realizing that my neighbor Jone Ho Leong had given it to me for use in my bath tub, *not my table!*

Luffa of several different species are consumed by people around the world, especially in Asia and Africa. Edible Luffa can sometimes be found in markets with Asian style vegetables. We like them sliced in a stir-fry or just sauteed in a little olive oil. Seasoning with a dash of soy sauce and cayenne pepper makes a tasty appetizer. The big yellow flowers have a crunchy green flavor similar to celery or cucumber. Luffa flowers make a colorful and unique salad.

For the last four years I have been growing Luffa in Locke's demo garden. It started with just a simple five foot tall teepee trellis that produced half dozen Cee Gwa gourds. Today the Luffas are grown on a structure made from pressure treated redwood 4 by 4's that stand eight feet tall and span 30 feet in length. The lush green vines completely fill the 240 square foot vertical area and are adorned with beautiful fist size yellow blossoms which attract a wide variety of bees, wasps, and even hummingbirds. A Luffa is ready to harvest when its green husk turns yellow and the gourd has lost most of its weight. Just peel off the skin, wash it with a hose, dry it in the sun, shake out the seeds, (save them for next season) and it's ready for use.

No one seems to be able to agree on how to spell

the name of the sponge: Luffa, Loofa, Loofah, Cee Gwa, Cee Gua. However, most folks have come to associate the Luffa with its most common usage: skin exfoliation.

During the late 19th century the Luffa's popularity grew as indoor plumbing became commonplace. Only a few decades before, the Luffa was used mainly for cleaning the black off of tea pots. Then came the late century craze for "friction baths". According to medical wisdom of the time,



Cee Gwa (Luffa) natural sponges grown in Locke

vigorous scrubbing drew poisons out of the body. Plus, the Luffa could "impart a healthy glow without chafing". Luffa sponges are great for washing items like large pots and other containers. We use them for cleaning almost everything, including cars, boats, plastic buckets, and anything that needs scrubbed but can't withstand steel wool. Non stick cookware is one example.

A large Luffa or a smaller piece on a handle or rope makes a great back scratcher. They can be cut into many shapes for scrubbing pads, padding, and other craft uses. The loofahs can be cut lengthwise with the core removed to make sheets of sponge material. These sheets of Luffa material can be sewn into items like table hot pads, sandals, bath mats, hats, or anything else you can imagine.

Today one usually sees Luffa sewn into a devise resembling a sock puppet, or perhaps placed at the end of a handle so it can scrub your back. This devise was actually patented as "an artificial arm, ended with an ersatz human hand that wore a Luffa mitt". So now you probably know more about Luffa than any of your friends will ever know. Liven up the conversation with a little Luffa-talk. Or better yet, bring your friends out to Locke and check the place out for yourselves.

Locke Centennial Project Seeks Photos from Former Residents

By Stuart Walthall

The Locke Centennial Building Genealogy Project, an ongoing program designed to catalogue the history of each building in Locke, is well under way. The LCBGP has created a 100-year timeline for each structure of the town. The timeline is systematically being "filled in" with the historical data pertaining to each building. This data includes: 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 regarding the family will be entered into the building's timeline. Information on Locke businesses and owners will also be time-lined.



*Looking north on Main Street Locke in the early 1970's. Note the trees that once shared the road.
Photo Credit: Tom Myers*

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

The Building Genealogy Project is being organized by Locke Resident Stuart Walthall. Those wishing to contact him may do so at: stuartwalthall@aol.com.

If any of you are past residents of Locke, or have family and acquaintances that have lived in Locke, the LCBGP would be very interested in communicating with you.

If you have any digitized images and materials you would like to share with these two valuable programs please send them to the above email address.



*4 Locke Kids: Alwyn Chan, Douglas Owyang, Whitney Marr, and Dustin Marr in front of the Yuen Chong Market in the 1960's.
Photo by "Kay the Butcher," Yuen Chong Market
Photo provided by Whitney Marr*

The Locke Centennial Survey Wish List

Historical Photos of Locke

Historical Materials Related to Locke

Contact Information for Past Residents of Locke

Volunteers Skilled in Web Site Design

Cash Donations to Help Fund the Projects

Those interested in contributing to the Locke Centennial Projects may do so by using the following contact information.

Locke Foundation

Attn: LCBGP

P.O. Box 1085

Walnut Grove, CA 05690

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 we would appreciate your generosity, your skills, and your continued support of the town of Locke.

DELTA AUTHORS CONVENE IN LOCKE

By Stuart Walthall

There's nothing really unique about a book signing. However, there *is* something special about a book signing when it features *ten* authors whose lives and works are all rooted in the Sacramento River Delta.

This unusual literary event took place November 30, 2013 and was sponsored by the Moon Café Gallery located on Main Street, Locke.

Several non-fiction works were presented during the event, the first being Bill Corp's *The Sacramento River Boating Guide- From Rio Vista to Knights Landing*. Corp's book is a fascinating travel guide highlighting 90 miles of cool places to eat, drink, and be merry. It also contains accurate charts, bridge clearances, launch ramps, and much more.

Another non-fiction work presented was Sally Ooms' *Finding Home- How Americans Prevail*. *Finding Home* is about people who have become dislodged from their center, the place they call home, and about how they have righted themselves. Also featured at the book signing event was the definitive Locke biography: *Bitter Melon- Inside America's Last Rural Chinese Town*, text by Jeff Gillenkirk and photographs by James Motlow. Plus, artist Chris Spencer was on hand to discuss and sign his beautifully illustrated work: *Historic Homes of the Sacramento River Delta- Sacramento River Delta Historic Society*, architectural renderings of significant Delta houses.

Among works of fiction showcased at the event was: *A Fairer Paradise- California River Delta Stories* by Randall M. Gutierrez, stories of the Delta brought to life through the colorful characters who live there. Another work of fiction was Kelan O'Connell's *Delta Legend*. Using humor, horror, and historical fiction O'Connell introduces readers to a region many know little or nothing about.

Also presented was Sally Small's *Pear Season- A*

Collection of Short Stories. The author insightfully and affectionately chronicles life in the Sacramento River Delta.

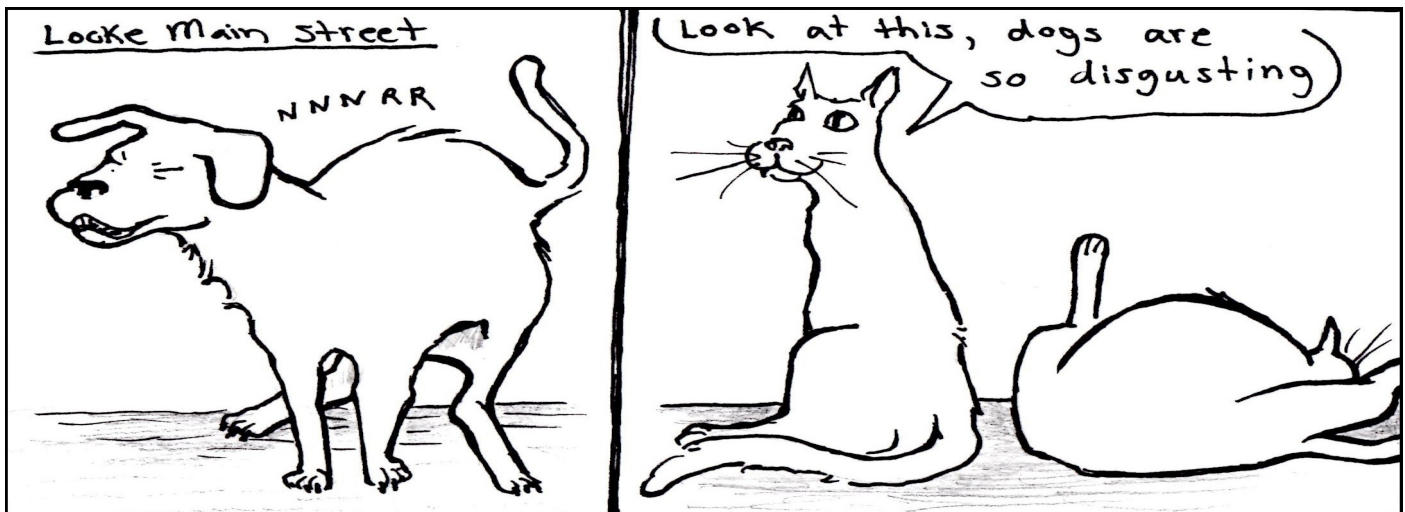
Poetry and prose were well represented at the Ten Delta Author event. Joseph Coulombe read from his recently published work of prose, *Letters of Intimacy and Devotion-In the Rose Garden*.

Locke resident D. R. Wagner presented readings from two of his many published works of poetry: *97 Poems* and *Breaking and Entering*, visionary explorations of the omnipresent music, beauty, mystery, and multidimensionality of life.

The Ten Delta Authors event was well attended and enthusiastically received. Authors had an opportunity to read from their works, offer insights into their creative process, and field questions and comments from the audience.



FRONT ROW (LtoR): Joseph Coulombe, D.R. Wagner, Randy Gutierrez, Sally Ooms, Bill Corp. BACK ROW (LtoR) Chris Spencer, Kelan O'Connell, Jeff Gillenkirk, James Motlow. Photo courtesy of Brock Alexander.



Locke Foundation Membership Application/Renewal

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Mailing address _____

Email address _____ Tel () _____ Fax () _____

I would like to volunteer for the following activities:

Event planning _____ Publicity _____ Membership recruitment _____

Write articles _____ Grant writing _____ Historical restoration _____

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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