



Locke Foundation Newsletter 樂居鎮基金會

Preserving Locke's history and legacy

www.locke-foundation.org

Fall 2016

lockefoundation@frontiernet.net

樂居鎮

樂居鎮是美國一個最全面的中國華人農村社區。

在1915年之前，這個地方有四座建築物，位於樂居農場的一部份名叫“樂居埠”。 “樂居埠”後來簡稱“樂居”。 當1915年樂居埠鄰近的 Walnut Grove (汪古魯鎮)裏一個華人地區被一場大火吞逝後，流離失所的華人居民得到樂居農場主人允許，在樂居埠裏重建他們自己的市鎮。在租地上，這個華人社區進行建設一座郵政局，一間電影院，酒樓，食物市場，乾貨店，理髮店，及多項生意經營。樂居隨著歲月繁榮起來，興旺期間曾擁有永久居民六百人之多，和一千多名季節性勞動工人。

在二十世紀期間，這個華入市鎮有一段極盛時期。年間樂居居民為求生活，展出彈性及堅強不屈的精神。同心合力的華人居民抵抗了火災，洪水，貧窮，被歧視，被冷落，及被社會放棄空虛的痛苦。

在1971年，樂居被名列為 [國民歷史性地區]。在1990年，樂居更被名錄為 [國家歷史性地區里程碑]。1913年的外僑土地法例禁制中國華人買賣土地的權利。但在2005年，沙加緬度縣內分拆樂居的土地權，樓宇物業業主首次能夠購買座落於他們物業下的土地權。

在這個一百週年成立的慶典，樂居仍屹立見證它一百年前原居民的 精神及繼續體現發揮中國華人在加州省發展農作業的非凡貢獻。

樂居鎮基金會捐贈

Chinese Historical Marker for Main Street Park

In April 28, 2016. Native Sons of the Golden West donated a bronze historical marker honoring the historic legacy of immigrant Chinese to the town of Locke. It is prominently displayed at Main Street Park.



Locke Foundation plans to erect a similar bronze marker in Chinese text at the same park. Many visitors come to Locke who can only read Chinese. It is only fitting that a Chinese town have a Chinese marker.

To that end, LF is launching a campaign to raise funds to pay for the fabrication and installation of marker in Main Street Park.

A fundraising banquet will be held on Saturday, October 29, from 6-8pm at Hong Kong Islander Restaurant at 5765 Freeport Blvd in Sacramento.

See announcement on Page 3. Even if you cannot attend the banquet, please make a donation to support this worthwhile project.

Chinese translation of English text by Anita Lo.

Fire in historic Locke on July 3, 2016

Article by Stuart Walthall and photos by James Motlow

Most everyone has heard about it by now. There was extensive TV news coverage, replete with dramatic video and still images. And there were the newspaper articles and editorials. Social media buzzed with the event. There was a fire in Locke. A big fire.

One of the town's historic Main Street buildings, once known as the Ying Herb Shop, went up in flames. A panicked woman, trapped in the upstairs portion of the burning building, had to escape the inferno by climbing from her smoke filled balcony down a quickly found ladder provided by Douglas Hsia, who resided and operated a business from the downstairs portion of the burning building.

Stunned residents and tourists stood on Main Street and watched with horror as flames rose from the 2-story building, engulfing the balcony and climbing a nearby telephone pole, sending sparking and exploded power lines to the hose-drenched pavement below.



A dreadful thought was shared by those witnessing the horrific sight: If the fire continued to spread, this day (July 3, 2016) could be Main Street Locke's last day.

However, the winds that had blown capriciously all day suddenly blew favorably to the east. Fire crews from local and surrounding areas responded quickly and effectively, and Locke's fire suppression system, strategically located on the exteriors of all Main Street buildings, worked perfectly.

The fire was contained and limited to the single structure. Buildings adjacent to the fire and water damaged building were left unscathed. It was now time to help the victims of the fire.

As the ash settled throughout town on window sills and doorways, thoughts turned to helping those who lost their residences and most of their possessions. Locals rallied to help move salvageable belongings. Necessities were distributed to those who were literally left with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

A previously planned July 4th picnic and music party was staged in Locke's community gardens the following day with an added spontaneous twist. Several hundred dollars in donations was raised through the generosity of musician friends who arrived for the Fourth of July festivities.

Tricia Dale, Operations Manager at the Walnut Grove Branch of the Bank of Rio Vista, approached Locke Management Association (LMA) Directors James Motlow and Deborah Mendel to ask if the Association, which represents the town of Locke, would like to open a donation account at the bank on behalf of the victims of the fire. It seemed that by the following Monday the community minded folks of the Delta were already inquiring about where to



donate to their neighbors in need. The LMA immediately opened an account to benefit the families, and donations poured in. A record amount was received from the community over the course of the next month. Fire victims were truly thankful and touched by the outpouring of kindness, generosity, and support.

Sean and Teresita Stephens, owners the building, plan to rebuild. Their contractor has already drawn up plans and submitted them to the Sacramento Building Department and to the Locke Design and Preservation Committee in order to rebuild the entire collapsed second story 'in kind'.

The LMA is pleased to know that Locke's historic architectural will be preserved. But most importantly, Delta residents deserve recognition for their compassion and true community spirit.



LMA Secretary Deborah Mendel presents check to one of fire victims, Doug Hsia, who plans to contribute funds back to other victims and Locke Foundation

Locke Foundation 2016 Fundraising Banquet

*Hong Kong Islander Restaurant
5765 Freeport Blvd, Sacramento
Saturday, October 29 2016
5:30 pm-8:30 pm*

*Proceeds to benefit installation of Bronze Chinese Historical Marker
In Main Street Park, Locke*

*Banquet price:
\$450 for table of 10, \$50 for individual
Prepayment required by October 21; tickets will not be issued.*

LF Fundraising Banquet Registration Form

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Guest name (s) _____

Check or credit card (MC or Visa) accepted. PayPal is not available

_____ individuals @ \$50 = \$_____ _____ tables @ \$450 = \$_____

MC ☐ Visa ☐ _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Exp Date : _____

_____ I cannot attend banquet, but would like to make a donation.

*Make checks payable to Locke Foundation and mail to:
Locke Foundation, P. O. Box 1085, Walnut Grove, CA 95690*

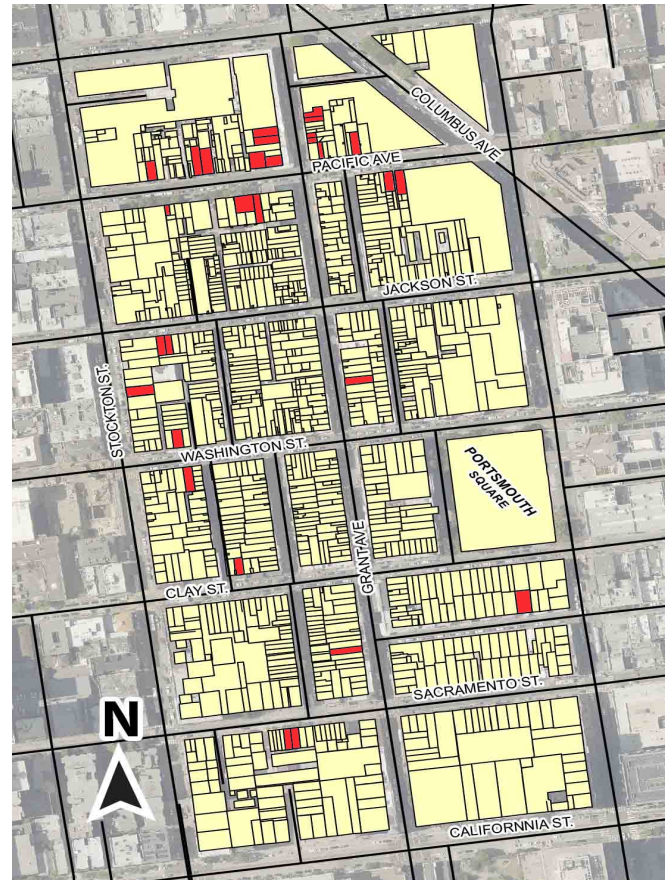
Chinese Workers in Tobacco and Cigar Industries

By **Mark Miller**, California State Parks interpreter and **Steve Kadle**, Board Supervisors commissioner for District 2 of Sacramento County Cemetery Advisory Commission and Certificated Interpretive Guide through the National Association of Interpretation.

Along with helping to build the transcontinental railroad and reclaim swamp land for farming, Chinese workers contributed to the creation of a number of new industries in California during the 1860s. Cigar making was one of these new industries. During the Gold Rush, along with all the other manufactured goods that came by ship was tobacco and tobacco related products. Boxes of Havana and Manila style cigars, chewing tobacco, disposable ceramic pipes, and loose-leaf tobacco were all imported by ship to San Francisco. This cargo was then loaded onto riverboats heading to Sacramento, the gold fields, and to the other new communities springing up throughout the region. While Captain John Sutter had experimented with growing Cuban tobacco seed, and California Indians had long harvested local varieties, the new immigrants to California were totally dependent on the chaotic import of tobacco to meet their smoking needs.

With the start of the Civil War in 1861, and the following embargo and destruction of the agricultural economy of the southern United States, tobacco grown in the United States became scarce. This opened a potential market opportunity for the new tobacco growers and cigar makers in California to dominate the industry both locally and nationally. To move the state away from an economic dependence on gold mining, and stimulate the creation of local industry, in 1863, the California legislature authorized grants to farmers to encourage the commercial production of various cash crops. One of these crops was tobacco. Even before the grants started, farmers in Sacramento County were trying their hand at raising tobacco. In a very short time due to the growing availability of locally farmed tobacco, along with imports, California started to develop its own cigar making industry. By 1869 tobacco and cigars were the 4th largest industry in California.

Seeing the potential for a highly profitable busi-



Stephen Kadle, Identified locations of San Francisco Chinatown Cigar Makers circa 1885 [Map]. 1:4500. Developed from "San Francisco Chinatown 1885" map by Willard B. Farwell, Published by A. L. Bancroft. Courtesy of David Rumsey map collection.



San Francisco Cigar Factory. Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, May 21, 1870. Courtesy of Library of Congress.

ness opportunity for tobacco in California, many people quickly set up companies to manufacture cigars. A number of experienced tobacconists who had come to California to seek their fortune in the Gold Rush, offered classes in San Francisco on how to make cigars.

As Chinese workers moved out of the gold fields and railroad construction work lessened, many would be employed in new industries located in the growing cities of California. In northern California, the manufacture of cigars was one profession in which many would find employment. A large number of those workers that had relocated to San Francisco, Sacramento, and Oakland would be quickly employed in the new cigar industry. In short order the Chinese Cigar Workers Union would be established. After only spending a few years as laborers in the new cigar companies, Chinese workers had enough experience to start their own cigar making companies. There would be an explosion of new



Chinese made cigar boycott artwork designed by the Cigar Maker's International Union No. 228, San Francisco, Copyright February 1886. Courtesy of California State Archives.

cigar factories owned and staffed by Chinese in local Chinatowns. By the 1870s, Chinese-owned cigar companies could be found in San Francisco, Oakland, and Sacramento. In an article about Sacramento's Chinatown, The Sacramento Daily Union on the 11th of January 1873 reported on twenty-five cigar makers working in five factories. Like other local cigar makers who styled their cigars as "Havana" or "Manila" types and used Hispanic motifs, many Chinese makers would also adopt names and label artwork that suggested a non-California origin.

Testimony provided to a California State Senate committee in 1877 put the number of Chinese employed in making cigars in San Francisco at 3,300, or about 91 percent of the workers engaged in the industry. Working in over 100 small workshops, the daily wage of these workers ranged from 40 cents to a dollar a day. With the price of a good cigar as low as a nickel, the cost of manufacture was always a factor. Cigar makers sought to keep the costs low by using both Chinese and women laborers in their factories.

However, this boom of tobacco growing and cigar making would be short-lived, lasting primarily from about 1870 to 1900. A number of factors would quickly bring to an end California's vibrant and profitable tobacco industry. While growing tobacco in California was relatively easy, curing the tobacco to the high standard needed for cigar manufacture was a serious problem. The Mediterranean climate of California, with long periods of low humidity, prevented many

growers from being able to successfully age and cure high quality tobacco leaves that could be used in cigar manufacture. Due to this problem, the number of local farmers growing tobacco soon diminished as they shifted to crops that were easier to grow and process for sale. The California cigar industry was soon dependent on the import of tobacco leaf from out of state.

The rising price of labor was the second major factor that contributed to the decline of the industry. The rise of anti-Chinese sentiments and violent protests against Chinese labor soon forced many white owned cigar factories to replace their Chinese workers with higher-paid white workers. In addition, white labor unions started a cigar brand boycott against any company not using white labor. In 1878, there was an attempt to pass a law, California Senate Bill 568, which would have mandated a statement identifying the race of the cigar makers, to be stamped in letters at least 3/8ths of an inch in size. While Chinese-owned cigar companies continued to sell their products, they were forced to go to greater lengths to conceal the origin of



Ming Lee Company, 906 Fourth Street Sacramento, Circa 1911. Courtesy of Center for Sacramento History.

their products.

The high cost of unionized white labor in California cigar factories would be challenged by low cost imports from the east coast that used cheaper non-unionized European immigrant labor and could be shipped to California by rail. With the need to import tobacco and the increasing costs of unionized labor, the California cigar industry soon started to wither away. Chinese workers shifted to a number of other industries like shoe and clothing manufacture that continued to be profitable. A few cigar factories did continue to use Chinese labor, but in secret, one being just outside the town of Gilroy, that continued in operation until the early 1900s. By 1910, while there were still many "California" cigar brands for sale, almost all were made in New York or other east coast factories. By this time, finding a true "California" smoke was an almost impossible task. What had seemed to be the start of a profitable industry for California in the 1860s was soon lost to the ashes of history.



White Labor label used on cigar boxes by companies certified as using only white labor by the Cigar Maker's International Union No. 228, San Francisco, Copyright June 1886. Courtesy of California State Archives.

Locke Foundation needs your help

Buy a Memorial Tile

Prime locations in the Memorial Park are still available for memorial tiles. Funds from the sale of memorial tiles help ensure the continued operation of the Locke Foundation. Your purchase is a tax-deductible charitable contribution. You can honor a current or departed family member, commemorate your family, celebrate an anniversary or even advertise your business or organization.

A donation of \$100 is requested for a 4" x 8" tile; \$200 for 8' x 8". Multiple tiles may be purchased for a single tribute. Logos may be used at additional cost. Order forms may be downloaded from our web site:

<http://www.locke-foundation.org/about/donate/>



Volunteers are needed

Here are ways you can volunteer:

1. Docent at Boarding House Museum: the museum is open on Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and selected public holidays. You will be greeting visitors, explaining town's unique historical legacy and selling gift shop memorabilia. You will receive training. We ask for commitment of at least one day each month for 4 hours.
2. Tour guide: Group tours of Locke are popular with school groups, church groups, senior citizens groups and history enthusiasts. You will receive training in Locke history. Tours typically last about one hour. You will be contacted when a tour is scheduled.
3. If you don't live near Locke, you can write articles for newsletter about your family's history in the Sacramento River Delta.
4. You can donate or loan family artifacts to the museum which represent life in the Delta during the last century.

Please email LF if you are available at lockefoundation@frontiernet.net

Bequest

A legacy gift is a planned future donation to a charity, given through a will or other form of designation. It is a decision that each person makes in his/her own financial planning. If you appreciate the work carried out by the Locke Foundation during your lifetime, please consider a gift that keeps on giving.

Your estate's gift to the Locke Foundation helps to ensure that Locke's historic legacy is carried forward in perpetuity. The Locke Foundation recognizes donors who demonstrate their support through a bequest or other planned gift. We encourage you to join this very special group of donors.

With a planned gift, you can make an impact on generations to come. Your attorney can help you design an estate plan that protects your family, preserves your property, and supports us. Contact the LF for more information:

lockefoundation@frontiernet.net.

New display at Boarding House

The Locke Boarding House Museum is pleased to present its most recent historic display: The Locke of Life. Created by a talented team of seniors from Monterey Trail High School in Elk Grove, this beautifully designed exhibit presents the story and history of Locke, its founders, and the town's early residents.

The historic display project was inspired by a fortunate accident when the team's teacher/mentor Maryville Poe became lost in the Delta and stumbled across the Locke. Their teacher then suggested to the team, all of whom are of Chinese heritage, the idea of creating an historic display and then entering it in the Sacramento County History Day competition. And after 6 month of preparation, thorough research, and highly detailed construction, the high school team entered their display in the competition.

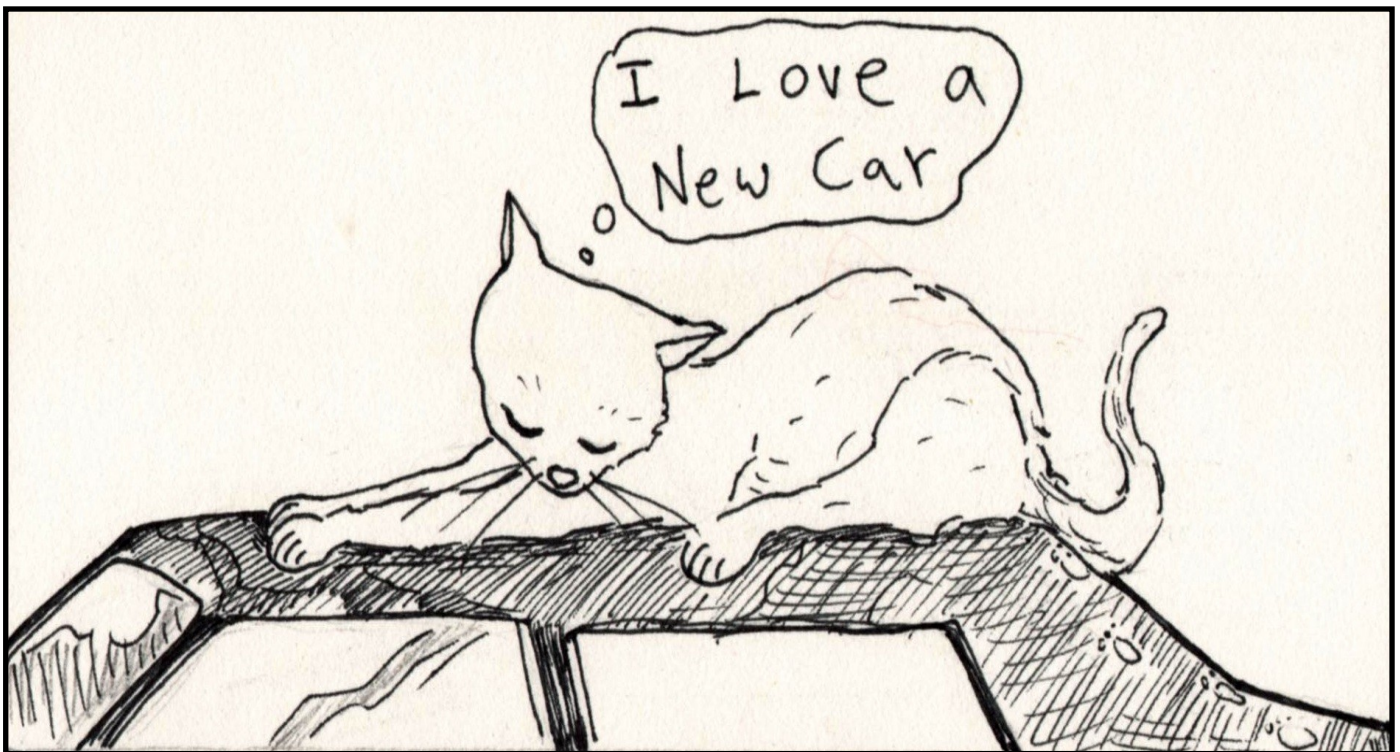
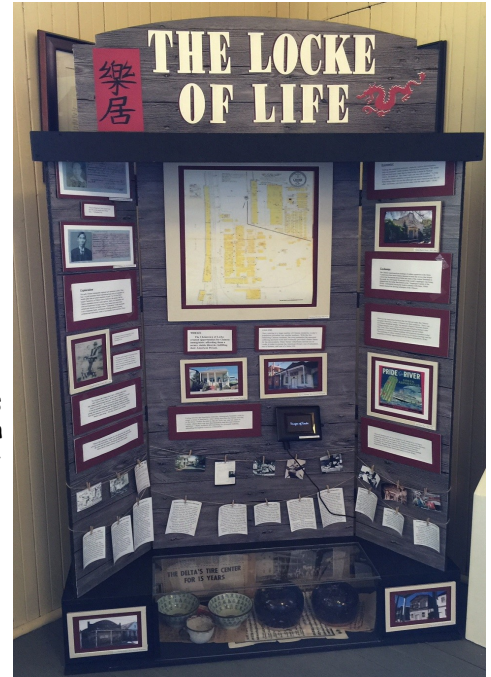


Helen Thai, Christine Hoang and State Historic Preservation Officer Julianne Polanco

It won first place in the Senior Group Exhibit category.

The team and their exhibit advanced to the California State History Day competition, where over 100 teams from throughout the state had entered historic projects. The Monterey Trail team advanced to the State finals. Although they did not win the State championship, they did receive a special award for California Historic Places. They had finished higher than any previous team from their high school had ever placed in the California History Day competition.

The Locke Foundation congratulates the entire team from Monterey Trail High School for a job well done. Their new display has already drawn much attention in the Locke Boarding House Museum. Thanks and appreciation go to team leader Christine Hoang and her teammates Courtney Chang, David Thong, Helen Thai, and Amber Lee.



Locke Foundation Membership Application/Renewal

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Mailing address _____

Email address _____ Tel () _____ Fax () _____

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

2016 Board

President: Stuart Walthall
Vice-Pres: Honey Lum
Secretary: Deborah Mendel
Treasurer: Clarence Chu

Directors: Brock Alexander
Eileen Leung
Dustin Marr
Darrel Woo

Newsletter: Eileen Leung
Stuart Walthall

Cartoonist: Brock Alexander