

Locke Foundation Newsletter 樂居鎮基金會
Preserving Locke's history and legacy

lockefoundation@frontiernet.net

Spring 2024

www.locke-foundation.org



Locke Foundation Presents

Asian Pacific Spring Festival

樂居鎮亞太春節聯歡

Saturday, May 11, 2024

11 am - 5 pm

Main Street, Locke, CA

Dragon & Lion Dance

Martial Arts

Taiko Drums

Dance

Music

Brush Painting

Arts & Crafts

Food

and more

Free Admission
Free Parking



2024
YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Locke Foundation is a 501(c)3
Organization

FEIN: 200364281

www.locke-foundation.org

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Locke Welcomes the Year of the Dragon

Article by Eileen Leung
Photos by Dorne Johnson and Pamela Tom

The Chinese New Year is also called the Lunar New Year or Spring Festival in China. The celebration spans 3 weeks, and each day carries a special meaning with a list of things you should and should not do. There are special foods prepared in each household and each region has its own specialties. The new year is a chance to start fresh, visit loved ones, have a family feast, enjoy local festivals, welcome the new year and share best wishes with each other.

Against all odds, the sun shone brightly on Sunday, February 18, 2024, for Locke's second annual Chinese New Year Festival. Even when weather reports foreshadowed hurricane winds and blinding rain, about 500 persons showed up in Locke to welcome the Year of the Dragon. Festive banners in red and gold adorned the buildings along Main Street.



In the opening ceremonies, LF president Stuart Walthall introduced special guests Henry Li, CEO of Regional Transit, Sacramento County Supervisor Patrick Hume, FM bank manager John Hospenthal, Alex Eng, president of Chinese American Council of Sacramento, and LF board members Darrel Woo, Eileen Leung, Honey Lum, Clarence Chu, Eva Chu and Mark Miller.



A dozen lions frolicked along Main Street teasing the old and young alike.

The 72-foot dragon wended its way down Main Street.



The piece de resistance was the lion and dragon dance performance by Eastern Ways. The 72-ft lion pranced through Main Street dazzling visitors. The lions stopped at selected business establishments to "pick the greens" to ensure a prosperous year. The business will tie a red envelope filled with money to a head of lettuce above the front entrance. The lion would approach the lettuce like a curious cat, consume the lettuce and spit out the leaves, but not the money.

A special lecture by Ronald Fong, president and CEO of the California Grocers Association executive director of the California Grocers Association, and David SooHoo, celebrity chef, traced the role Chinese immigrants played in the grocery and restaurant business.



Visitors to the Pearl interact with Alfred Yee after his lecture on Chinese New Year celebrations by overseas Chinese families.



Plum tree collage from art activity in the Chinese School.



The Capital Chinese Orchestra entertained visitors in the Jan Ying Association building with classical tunes on Chinese instruments.



Lily Zhu demonstrates bonsai, the Japanese art of growing and shaping miniature trees in containers, developed from the traditional Chinese art form of penjing (盆景).



In the Chinese School, children created artwork with Chinese zodiac symbols and made paper lanterns and plum blossom collages led by Pamela Tom.

LF thanks the CNY committee headed by Anita Lo, Stuart Walthall and Clarence Chu, with volunteers Mark Miller, Eva Chu, Eileen Leung, Pamela Tom, Betty Louie, Dee and Lili Kan, Joyce Eng, Eva West, Honey Lum, Kyle Johnson, Eugene Wong and Rubin Sanchez..

While the Lunar New Year has come and gone, the spirit of the Year of the Dragon continues to fire us up for the rest of the year.

Isleton Celebrates CNY

Photos courtesy of DPC

The town of Isleton held its Chinese New Year Festival on Saturday, March 2, 2024, on Main Street. A Delta town with population of 800, the community has a history of Chinese, Japanese and Portuguese farming.

Chinese began immigrating to Isleton around 1875, and at its peak, the Chinese section of the city had about 1,500 people and included a branch of the Bing Kong Tong. The city also had a Japantown, just east of Chinatown; the Chinese and Japanese districts are in the National Register of Historic Places. Actor Pat Morita of Karate Kid fame was born in Isleton in 1932.

Main Street was transformed into a stage where Eastern Ways dragon and lion dance troupe, Taiko Dan of Sacramento, and Capital Chinese Orchestra performed.

Isleton also broke ground on the Asian American Heritage Park and celebrated the grand opening of the "Revisiting Isleton's Forgotten Nihonmachi" exhibit at the Isleton Museum.



Wayward lion visits the Isleton Museum



Historic groundbreaking for the Asian American Heritage Park in Isleton.



Taiko Dan drummers

The Locke Boarding House Museum Makes Significant Strides

Article and photos by Stuart Walthall

Throughout its nearly two decades of existence the Locke Boarding House Museum (LBHM) has undergone numerous changes and upgrades. In fact, the first few years following the complete restoration of the Locke Boarding House in 2006 by California State Parks and Recreation, the Locke Boarding House was NOT a museum at all - it was considered an "artifact" meant for public display. (There are strict criteria for museums proper). On display were a dozen information panels located throughout the building, some historical photographs and a handful of relics gleaned from the California State Archives, few of which were from Locke. There were also four examples of early 20th century boarding house rooms created by State Parks. (These popular rooms are still on display.) However, much of the upstairs portion of the building, approximately 1000 square feet, remained unused.

Through a contractual agreement with State Parks, the Locke Foundation (LF) was given the go-ahead to utilize the entire Boarding House to fulfill its mission - To educate the public about the historical and cultural legacy of Locke. The LBHM was now prepared to become the focal point for the preservation and education of the Chinese immigrant experience of Locke and ultimately the entire Sacramento River Delta. The Locke Foundation has made significant strides to accomplish this mission.



Upstairs west rooms feature period garments and household items

For the past three years the LF Artifact and Archival Project (LFAAP) has been gathering, preserving, cataloging and displaying precious artifacts from Locke's past. Items from the vast LF artifact collection have been described, attributed, measured, digitally photographed and either displayed or archived. Thus far over 300 artifacts have been cata-

logged with many more yet to be described. Artifacts continue to be donated from local sources. The Locke Foundation and LBHM have become trusted entities where valuable artifacts can be donated with the assurance these items will be properly handled, preserved, permanently cataloged and respected. A dedicated team of volunteers have stepped up to accomplish the goals of the LFAAP.

The Locke Foundation is fortunate to have Dr. Sarah Heffner as a member of the team. She is a Senior Historical Archeologist with expertise in the fields of cultural resources management, historic preservation, and collections management. Her additional skills include archival research, artifact photography, and oral histories. Heffner has expertise on the daily lives of the thousands of Chinese laborers who worked on the Transcontinental Railroad between 1865-



Chinese fireworks

1869. Her research focused on the health, diet, and living conditions of the Chinese railroad workers.

Another valuable member of the LFAAP is Locke Foundation Director Mark Miller, California State Parks Interpreter with a degree in Anthropology. Miller has experience in the design and development of interpretive materials and facilities and handles museum curatorial duties for his Headquarters Section of State Parks.

Two recent team members have made significant impacts on the LFAAP and the overall appearance and presentation of the Locke Boarding House Museum: Darwin and Lili Ong Kan.

Darwin (Dee) is the grandson of Locke co-founder Lee Bing (1873-1970) and son of Ping Lee (1917-2011), considered the "unofficial mayor" of Locke. Dee was raised in Locke and operated The Big Store in nearby Walnut Grove for 40 years. He is a font of information regarding Locke and surrounding communities. He is also a skilled woodworker, creating display cases on movable stands which house delicate artifacts, printed materials and ephemera.



Upstairs tool farm implements display.

Dee's wife Lili graduated from National Taiwan University with a degree in Anthropology. She has amassed an extensive accumulation of Locke historical materials, particularly regarding Lee Bing. Her research has expanded the knowledge of Locke's distant past and has shed light on the lives of individuals whose influence impacted the history and culture of Locke and the Sacramento River Delta. With a helping hand from husband Dee, Lili has also spearheaded major renovations in the Boarding House Museum displays and signage.

Renovations include the unification of museum display exhibits. Specific themes have been assigned to designated areas: medicines, household items, fabrics and sewing, library, tools, etc. Extensive signage augments each display.

Another renovation is expanded seating located throughout the museum. Even a sofa has been added to the library area and brighter lights have been installed. The Locke Foundation encourages visitors to spend more meaningful time enjoying the exhibits in a relaxed environment.



Library area for leisure reading

Touch the clothing, peruse the library, take photos, hit the gong.

A fascinating new exhibit has been added to the LF rotation of displays: WALKING THROUGH THE TUNNEL OF TIME - Locke in 1925, 1926 and 1934. This exhibit consists of enlarged panoramic group photos captured during three important time periods. The photos contain the dates, the occasions, and most importantly the people who were there to participate in the events.

Visual images can be more powerful than words. These group photos represent important occasions that gathered townspeople together to either mourn or celebrate - men and women, young and old, all dressed up in suits, long dresses, uniforms, hats and good shoes. No one wanted to be left out. Did they spend all day preparing for the moment? Did everyone have the day off from school or from work in the fields and orchards, warehouses and stores? These questions are left to the imagination. However, these photos do offer a glimpse into the past and the possibility of meaningful links to future generations.

These photos not only offer vivid images of the past but also an opportunity to link WITH the past. Viewers are encouraged to closely examine each group photo with the intention of identifying possible ascendants and family associates. If an individual is identified, whether confirmed or not, that individual's image can be isolated with a colored sticky tab to be marked with the individual's name and phone number of the identifier.

The Locke Foundation encourages connections between all people, organizations, institutions, the past, present and future.

Please visit The Locke Boarding House Museum.

Hours of operation: 11 to 3 Saturdays and Sundays
Group tours during the week available by appointment: 916-776-1684 or 916-776-1828

Website: www.locke-foundation.org
Facebook: facebook.com/Locke1915



Enlarged panoramic Locke group photos from 1925 and 1934

2024 Scholarship Opportunities for Local High School Students

The principal mission of the Locke Foundation is educating the public about the rich history and legacy of the town of Locke and informing the public of the compelling Chinese immigrant experience that played an important role in the history of California and the nation. Another mission of the LF is to bring benefit to Locke and surrounding Delta communities.

For these reasons the Locke Foundation is pleased to announce the availability of four \$1,000 scholarships to be awarded to graduating seniors from Delta High School and Rio Vista High School. Deadline for applying is 5 pm, April 12, 2024. The scholarships will be awarded at the Locke Asian

Pacific Spring Festival on May 11, 2024. Information and application forms can be accessed at: www.locke-foundation.org/scholarship

(2023 scholarship winner Jacqueline Maldonado with Douglas Hsia and Clarence Chu)



The Chinese Tea Ceremony

Source: topchinatravel.com

China is widely known as the hometown of tea, with a tea history of around 4000 years. Although the Tea ceremony originates in China, though, it flourished in Japan. Therefore, when people think of tea ceremony, they first think the Japanese tea ceremony. Both Japanese tea ceremony and Chinese tea ceremony conform with the wisdom of oriental philosophy. Furthermore, Chinese tea ceremony reflects the central idea of Taoism, Confucian and Buddhism: inner peace.

Tea is an indispensable part of Chinese culture; the Chinese prefer drinking hot tea over soft drinks, and coffee. China is the biggest producer of tea in the world, but it exports much less than it consumes. Because the majority of Chinese tea is consumed by the Chinese. (Turkey and UK hold the records for highest consumption of tea per capita).

The purpose of the Chinese tea ceremony is not only to drink tea but also to learn and understand traditional Chinese culture. Therefore, the tea ceremony is the core of Chinese tea culture. By preparing and drinking tea, the tea masters show their personal thoughts and spiritual world.

There are three distinctive features of Chinese tea ceremony. First of all, from the way you practice tea ceremony, you show us what kind of person you are, your manners, personality, aesthetic view point, and even inner world. Secondly, Chinese tea ceremony requires peace and pureness. Thirdly, the tea ceremony in China calls for authenticity. The fine tea comes with the spring water, the natural environment, the authentic bamboo or wood tools, and the porcelain tea sets.

China is famous for tea houses, and now all overseas Chinese communities have tea houses. During its long history of development, Chinese tea culture has had 4 tracks of development: royal, literati, religious and folksy. Only the folksy tea culture is currently strong. For most common people, tea is the best thirst reliever, and this is the main function of tea. People go to tea houses to experience interpersonal communication more than to savor the taste of tea. That is why most tea houses are noisy, with loud chatting, mahjong, snacks, fast food, and other forms of entertainment. In some places, such as Suzhou, Beijing, and Chengdu, tea houses also play an important role for operas and storytellers. However, not all tea houses are noisy. "Pure tea houses" are increasingly quiet and elegant. They usually cater to businessmen, officials and white collar workers. Usually performed by women in teahouses, the tea ceremony is about tea drinking, as well as nurturing body and soul, learning Chinese culture and manners, and purifying the mind.

Kungfu tea is the name of the most typical tea art ceremony performed in China which requires sophisticated and adept skills. "Kung fu" is not related to the martial art; rather it means "making tea with skill". The most important thing of kung fu tea is the tea sets. There are at least ten tea sets for kung fu tea ceremony. The way to practice kung fu tea ceremony include five basic steps.

Step 1, prepare a bottle of boiled water. Step 2, put the tea leaves into the tea cup with hot water and soak for about 30 seconds, and then spill the water. Step 3, put the tea leaves into the tea funnel to filter out the impurities. Step 4, pour the hot water again, and use the cup lid to stir the tea leaves a little bit. Step 5, pour the tea into the tea funnel again, and it is ready to drink.

At the Locke Asian Pacific Spring Festival on May 17, 2023, tea master Lily Zhu performed the tea ceremony.



Why do Chinese prefer to drink hot water?

In China, not only is water best served piping hot, drinking it is also seen as a cure-all for ailments from the common cold to cholera. Why don't the Chinese seem to mind burning their tongues every time they take a sip? Even on the hottest day, they will not hesitate to drink hot water. As with most questions, the answer lies in history. Here's everything you need to know.

The Chinese custom of drinking hot water goes beyond simple preference. According to traditional Chinese medicine, every human body is made up of *yin* elements and *yang* elements. A person remains healthy when the *yin* and *yang* are balanced. However, if the *yang* gets too strong, the body's internal temperature rises, and that person becomes susceptible to any number of illnesses.

To treat these illnesses, the person must get rid of the extra *yang*, or the excess heat. The best way to do so is by consuming food and drinks in the *yin* category. Hot water, for example, is a *yin* beverage. It is believed to actually lower the body's internal temperature, restoring the balance and, with it, the person's health.

The Chinese have been drinking hot water since at least the 4th century B.C. At that time, hot beverages were seen to expel humidity from the body, while cold beverages could, naturally, cool the body down. But not everyone had access to the luxury of fuel for a stove. Thus, hot water was reserved for those who needed it the most, namely pregnant women, the elderly, and the sick.

It wasn't until 1862, however, that this connection was cemented as the golden rule of traditional medicine. That year, a cholera epidemic broke out in Shanghai, killing up to 3,000 people a day, many of whom were refugees from the ongoing Taiping Rebellion. From Shanghai, the disease spread northward, reaching the capital of Beijing.

The south, on the other hand, remained untouched by the disease. It was well known at the time that southerners drank more hot water than northerners. And while hindsight has made it clear that the real cause of cholera's northward travel was mail boats, the myth that hot water had spared the south spread as fast as the disease itself.

By the time of the Communist takeover in 1949, drinking hot water had already become a widespread preference among people of every geographic region and party affiliation. The Nationalists even promoted it in their 1934 guide-book *Essentials of the New Life Movement*.

In 1952, the new Communist government launched their nationwide Patriotic Health Campaign, with posters hung in schools declaring that "Children should cultivate the habit of drinking boiled water three times a day!"

And still today, it's hard to find a Chinese person without a thermos in hand and even harder to get cold water in Chinese restaurants. Doctors give advice to drink hot water no matter the severity of the patient's illness, and even as the popularity of traditional medicine declines, drinking hot water remains China's strongest vestige of the past.

Source: www.culturetrip.com

Locke Bids Farewell To A Talented Friend And Neighbor

By Stuart Walthall

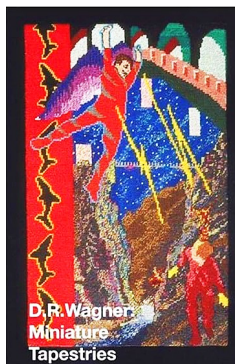


He was a poet and author of over 30 published books. He was a teacher, instructing design and poetry honors classes at UC Davis for 27 years. He was an artist, creating numerous needlepoint miniature tapestries. He was a musician, a writer and performer of songs. And he was a dear friend and Locke neighbor: D.R. Wagner.

D.R. was born in his beloved Niagara Falls, NY, in 1943. He moved to California in the 1960's and became one of the most influential artists in the Sacramento area. He made Locke his home in 2010. He passed away peacefully on Dec. 22nd 2023 following a short illness. He is survived by his twin daughters Annaliesa and Gabrielle.

As a poet he read with Jim Morrison of the Doors, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, d.a. levy, Michael McClure and numerous other luminaries. His works have been much-published and have appeared in numerous translations. He exhibited visual poetry in venues ranging from The Musee de Arts Decoratifs in Paris, the Louvre, to the Smithsonian in Washington D.C.

His needlework has been exhibited internationally, garnering many awards and included in numerous publications and museum collections. As a professional musician he sang, played guitar and keyboard with his band Runcible Spoon, which toured England and the Bahamas.



D.R.'s sphere of friends, colleagues and admirers remains enormous. His warmth and talent attracted a vast variety of individuals whom he influenced, guided and befriended. His passing ignited a cascade of heartfelt remembrances and a deep sense of loss from those whose lives he touched.

Locke will always remember its poet laureate - D.R. Wagner.

Updates on Town of Locke

Article and Photos by Stuart Walthall

Recent Locke activities, projects and accomplishments include upgraded fire suppression system; new \$100,000 wooden walkways; free bottled water to all Locke residents (until Locke antiquated water system gets hooked up the Walnut Grove's system); new gravel roads and pot-hole repairs; economically responsible payments of all utilities, insurance policies, town maintenance, bookkeeping services, tree cutting; fire alarm warning system and legal services.

Also, the staging of well attended and financially successful Locke Chinese New Year Celebrations and Locke Asian Pacific Spring Festivals, sponsored by the Locke Foundation.

Other Locke Foundation activities include: The Locke Oral History Project - capturing the stories of Locke's current and past residents; the Locke Artifact and Archival Program - collecting, preserving, cataloging and displaying Locke's precious artifacts; Docent-led historic tours of Locke (37 tours in 2023), the operation of the Locke Boarding House Museum (7000 visitors in 2023); The Locke Chinese Demonstration Garden (80 yards of premium organic soil recently donated by the Foundation for the Locke community gardens and the



Chinese demo garden renovation



New walkway from main Street to River Road.

Chinese Demonstration Garden); the Locke Scholarship Program- awarding scholarships to local high school seniors; publication of the Locke Foundation Newsletter, maintenance of the Locke Foundation website- the go-to website for Locke activities, historical articles, interviews, photos - a valuable resource for scholastic institutions, media, authors and the general public.

As a diverse low-income community with a population of 70, Locke has many of the modern-day challenges facing rural communities. Locke struggles economically while attempting to preserve and celebrate its historic and cultural legacy. Locke is the largest, most complete example of a rural agricultural Chinese American community in the United States (National Park service). Locke is unique. Locke is diverse. Locke is significant.

Locke Foundation Membership Application/Renewal

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Mailing address _____

Email address _____ Tel () _____ Cell () _____

I would like to volunteer for the following activities:

Guided tour docent _____ Boarding House Volunteer _____

Contributor to newsletter _____ Media contacts _____ Landscape maintenance _____

Donation: _____ Designated purpose (if any) _____

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
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