Chinese Summer Festival ’98

July 19, Sunday
10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Sixth Annual
Free Admission

Sponsored by the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project and the History Museums of San Jose

at the
Historical Museum in Kelley Park
1650 Senter Road
San Jose, CA 95112

On Sunday, July 19, the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project (CHCP) co-sponsors the ever-popular Chinese Summer Festival with the History Museums of San Jose. This one day event celebrates the rich Chinese heritage alive in the Bay Area. As always, there will be something for everyone at this year’s event.

Don’t miss the Dim Sum Dragon Parade featuring the Dragon of Hearts Delight, CHCP’s award winning dragon. Although the dragon has only been with the CHCP for two years, its base is much older. The story of how the dragon received its scales (not to mention its name) is a story that any CHCP member will gladly share.

For more information, call (408) 287-2290

- Tour the Ng Shing Gung Temple
- Taste Asian food
- Participate in hands-on activities
- Watch martial arts demonstrations
- Take in the dragon dance and parade
- Shop for Eastern arts and crafts
- Enjoy Chinese opera and acrobats
- Hop the trolley

Inside The News
Chinese Summer Festival .................................. 1
Board of Directors ....................................... 2
Building Update ........................................ 2
Welcome New Staff ..................................... 2
Historical Highlights .................................... 3
Member’ News .......................................... 4
Special Events .......................................... 4

History Museums of San Jose
1650 Senter Road
San Jose, CA 95112-2599

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Welcome New Staff

Senior Curator of Collections
Ailda J. Bray, of Pacifica, joined us as senior curator of collections on Monday, June 22. She will supervise all collections and archives employees and will be responsible for supervising and managing all aspects of the museum's collections, including cataloging, registration, conservation, care, exhibition and access.

Ms. Bray comes to us directly from the Oakland Museum of California, where she was registrar and traveling exhibit coordinator for the "Gold Fever" exhibition. From 1995 to 1997 she was registrar and senior registrar with the Bureau of Exhibits at the San Francisco International Airport. She was a project manager for the Society of California Pioneers in 1994 and collections manager for the Mexican Museum of San Francisco from 1991-1993.

Ms. Bray holds a bachelor's degree in anthropology from San Francisco State University and a master's in museum studies from John F. Kennedy University. She has facilitated the following traveling exhibitions and special projects: "The Jews of Sanjóro" for The Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum in Berkeley, "Rusia, His, & an Era The Pacific Coast League 1903-1958"; and "Strength and Diversity: Japanese American Women" at the Oakland Museum of California.

Ms. Bray combines outstanding technical skills and experience with a strong commitment to using artifacts creatively to serve the broadest possible audiences. She will be with us for a short time before she returns to the Oakland Museum for two weeks to direct the creating and shipping of "Gold Fever" to its next destination.

Facilities Director
Mary Stokes joined the History Museums of San Jose on May 26, 1998, as the new facilities director. Ms. Stokes, formerly senior development officer of the Redevelopment Agency of the City of San Jose has over 20 years of diverse professional experience in special events coordination, project management, business and trade association management, and local government coordination.

Ms. Stokes has a degree in marketing/merchandising from the University of Arizona as well as study programs at the University of Helsinki in communications and relations.

Ms. Stokes was the manager of national identification services and training services for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), a national trade association in Washington DC. With NRECA, she coordinated over 200 training programs, conferences, conventions and trade shows. She was also involved in the trade association products marketing and merchandising.

At the first executive director of the East Santa Clara Street Business Association, Ms. Stokes helped organize programs and retail efforts for over 200 businesses and property owners. With the association she created and organized events and promotions, conducted membership drives, produced newsletters and provided liaison services to the city of San Jose. Ms. Stokes also helped develop the Redevelopment Agency's first Storefront Improvement Programs.

For the past nine years, Ms. Stokes was the senior development officer and an assistant to the executive director with the Redevelopment Agency of the City of San Jose. Ms. Stokes was responsible for implementation of the agency's marketing/communications programs, events production, vendor and consultant contracts and preparation of special events budgets. Ms. Stokes managed over 50 groundbreaking, grand opening and special events. She was also involved in the downtown parking program, sidewalk cafe permit program and community outreach. Ms. Stokes also worked with a number of multi-cultural groups including the Hispanic, Vietnamese, Portuguese and Black Chambers of Commerce.

Site Manager
Dorien Washington joined us on June 15, 1998, as the new site manager for the History Museums of San Jose. Ms. Washington is a lifelong resident of the Bay Area and currently lives in Morgan Hill with his three daughters. He is a big sports fan and plays baseball, football and basketball when he is not working at HMSJ.

Mr. Washington will perform daily site management duties and will also double as a handyman.

Please join the volunteers, members, directors and employees in welcoming Ailda Bray, Mary Stokes and Dorien Washington to the HMSJ family.

Board of Directors

Raymond Ostby Appointed
The History Museums of San Jose is pleased to announce the appointment of Raymond Ostby to the Board of Directors. Mr. Ostby is currently the chief financial officer (CFO) at QuickTurn, and also serves as the incoming president of the Silicon Valley Chapter of the National CFO Organization. He is especially interested in the history of electronics and the Santa Clara Valley, with a particular interest in the past as it relates to the present and the future. Mr. Ostby has served as an honorary member of the board on the Silicon Valley Charity Ball, Welcome, Raymond Ostby.

Jerome Munday Resigns
It was with regret that the History Museums of San Jose Board of Directors accepted the resignation of board member Jerome Munday. Mr. Munday has been a member of the board since January 1997, and has also been an active member of the volunteer core at the History Museums since 1988. Mr. Munday has served the museums in a variety of ways, from working in the archives to counting money for special events. He will be missed.

Building Update

The One-Room Schoolhouse
The 127-year-old one-room schoolhouse, Santa Ana School from Hollister, now stands tall on the museum's grounds between two oak trees—with its roof in place. Skilled workers from Hessl Phelps Construction Company of San Jose, donated their time and materials on May 16 to make this possible.

While workers swarmed the schoolhouse pounding nails and raising the roof, over eighty people, sponsored by numerous supporters, walls the museum grounds in the third annual Walk for Education fundraiser for the restoration project. The San Jose State University College of Education Alumni Association received over $25,000 in pledges to the schoolhouse from this walk.

The money raised will help complete the schoolhouse in 1890s period furnishings, and provide materials for children to revive a school day experienced by children in the Santa Ana School in the 1890s.

Honoring a teacher with a $100 donation to the schoolhouse is a wonderful way to contribute to the project. A contribution to commemorate a retirement or simply recognize years of service, will permanently display the educator's name in the schoolhouse foyer. For more information, call (408) 924-3642/3603. The One-Room Schoolhouse will be dedicated on the museum grounds Saturday, September 26, in an all-day public celebration.

Photo courtesy of Leonard Espiner

Ledie Masunaga and Franklin Maggi catch the existing roof-raising activity.
Ruth Comfort Mitchell was one of the few Las Gatos/San Jose writers who could claim to have grown up in the area. Her father John S. Mitchell was a well-to-do San Francisco hotel man whose family spent the summers and weekends in Las Gatos. Ruth's first literary effort to be published appeared in the Las Gatos Mail when she was only thirteen. A poem to her favorite town, it began:

The Rockies may be grander, And the Alps are more sublime, And things are far more wonderful In far off foreign Climes, But for rich and national beauty And simple rustic grace, On all the earth broad surface Las Gatos is the place!...

Several of her later novels would also have local settings.

Ruth was born in San Francisco on July 21, 1882, and, except for a brief period at the living Institute in that city, was entirely reared and schooled by her nannies and grandparents. At the age of sixteen she took private lessons in writing from W.C. Morrow. Ruth spent most of her young adult years traveling and developing her writing skills. She spent a year and a half living in Europe, then traveled extensively in Canada and Mexico as well.

She was 32 when she married Sanborn Young, an Easterner who owned a ranch near Fresno. The couple lived there for several years while Ruth endured the isolated country life of a rancher's wife, an experience that would be useful in her later literary efforts. She came to have a love of animals, particularly dogs and horses, during these years.

LITERARY SUCCESS

After years of effort Ruth broke into print in 1916 with the critically acclaimed Night Court and Other Verse. Her first novel, Play the Game was published in 1921. Following this, a new book by Ruth Comfort Mitchell would become almost an annual event. She wrote about family life and the vicissitudes of young love. Every story had a happy ending. Many of her short stories appeared in Ladies Home Journal, Women's Home Companion, Redbook and other publications directed towards a women's audience. Her novels included such titles as: Jane Journeys On (1922); A White Stone (her favorite) (1924); The Wishing Carpet (1926); Call of the House (1927); Army With Banner (1930); Blue for True Love and Curtain (1929); Fire (1930) and Water (1931).

She wrote a series of historical novels set in San Francisco: Old San Francisco, and one set in 1840s San Jose titled The Legend of Sure Doe (1933). This book is dedicated "to the Honorable James D. Phelan, a devoted student of California past, a constructive influence in her present, and a cherished heritage in her future." This dedication, made four years after the Senator's death, was a moving gesture to the Saratoga neighbor who gave much encouragement to the young writer.

YANG SIE SAN FENG

With her literary career under way Ruth convinced her husband to leave the ranch and build their dream home in Las Gatos on land given to her as a wedding present by her father. Their unique oriental style house at 16660 Cypress Way was inspired by a Chinese play written by Ruth. The house has oriental decorative motifs and pagoda roofs. The carved wooden decoration in the interior was supplied by craftsmen from Chinatown in San Francisco. The home is four stories high and encompasses 5,000 square feet. It was jointly referred to as a "bungalo." The couple named their home "Young See San Feng" which means "Young's Home in the Hills." This extraordinary house is a Santa Clara County landmark, and it is one of the few local landmarks to be included on the Department of Interior's Historic American Building Survey.

POLITICS AND PARTICIPATION

Sanborn Young was drawn into politics when his friend Dr. Charles Wayland convinced him to serve on the Santa Clara County Grand Jury in 1923. This group was looking into gambling, prostitution, liquor violations, slot machines and illegal traffic in narcotics. As chairman of the Morals Committee, Young was appalled by the seemingly carefree way the County was handling narcotics offenders. He saw in this enterprise his friends to back him for a seat in the State Senate where he could draft stronger legislation to stamp out drug trafficking.

During his three terms in the State Senate Sanborn Young became an authority on drug matters, and he and Ruth were sent by President Hoover as U.S. delegates to the International Conference of the Limitation of the Manufacture of Drugs in Geneva. Ruth lived with her husband in Sacramento during his time in office, and she became very involved in Republican Party politics. Like her neighbor Kathleen Norris, Ruth went on the campaign trail on behalf of Herbert Hoover and other Republican candidates.

Her last novel They Shall Come Again published in 1944, was a possible reflection of her Pro-America isolationist philosophy. It was about a mother's determination to keep her son from entering military service—until Pearl Harbor.

Ruth continued her active social life until her death on February 18, 1954. Her husband lived a decade longer, dying at the age of ninety in 1964.

As a literary person Ruth Comfort Mitchell cut quite a swath during a time when romance novels grappled the needs of home bound women who made regular trips to their local lending libraries. As a professional woman writer she was an excellent role model, and she never ceased to share her experiences with new audiences. It is ironic that she has gone down in literary history, not for her many accomplishments, but for her revolutionary stance to The Grapes of Wrath, perhaps the greatest novel to come out of the California experience.
Members' News

Welcome
to the newest members of the
History Museums of San Jose.

John Angell
Ken Check
Jim & Suzanne Crawford
Mark Marietta
Diana & Lee M. McLaughlin
Judy & Jeff Steinberg

Endowment Fund Donations

The Endowment Fund of the History Museums of San Jose gratefully acknowledges the receipt of the following donations:

In Memory of:
DeWitt E. Hogle
Helen Ulrich Hall

In Honor of:
Anne Louise Heiglo
Julie Fifer

Gifts to the History Museums of San Jose to honor someone on a special occasion, or as a memorial, may be sent to the History Museums of San Jose Endowment Fund, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose, CA 95112-2599. A letter of acknowledgment will be sent to the person being honored or the family of the deceased.

Special Events

Civil War Memorial

The History Museum at Kelley Park war teeming with activity on Memorial Day weekend. The clash of swords, swish of horses and boom of cannons captivated thousands of visitors at the fifth annual American Civil War event at Kelley Park. Co-sponsored by HMSJ and the National Civil War Association (NCWA), hundreds of uniformed soldiers and costumed civilians camped on the museum grounds and agricultural area, where they thrilled visitors with reenactments from the Battle of Chancellorsville.

Other popular activities included children’s games from the 1860s, town hall demonstrations—an early form of baseball, period fashion shows, veteran memorial services, and lectures ranging from politics and war strategies to women’s underewear of the 1860s.

Portuguese Festa

On Saturday, June 6, the Portuguese Heritage Society of California hosted the second annual Portuguese Festa at the Kelley Park site. The celebration kicked off with a grand decorated parade, marching bands and 3,000 lb. corn tamales. Hundreds of visitors enjoyed lively music, brightly attired dancers and traditional Portuguese food and beverages throughout the day.

The Portuguese Imperio, opening soon to the public, welcomed visitors in for a moon peak of the exhibit. The imperio is a replica of the first permanent solar sail built on Santa Clara Street in San Jose.

Each year Festa around the Bay Area celebrate the role of Portugal during the Era of Discoveries, while recognizing the contributions the Portuguese have made to our communities.

History Museums of San Jose

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$1,000 Mission Circle
$500 Pueblo Circle
$250 Tower Circle
$100 Century Circle
$50 Contributor’s Circle
$45 Family/Grandparents
$35 Individual
$35 Senior Citizens (1 or 2) 

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If you are employed by a matching gift company please obtain the appropriate form from your employer.

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Make checks payable to: HMSJ, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose 95112-2599

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