



Saratoga Historical Foundation

PO Box 172, Saratoga CA 95071

July 2014

Pioneering the Valley: The Chinese American Legacy in Santa Clara Valley New Exhibit Opens July 13 with Reception

The Saratoga History Museum presents the traveling exhibit, "Pioneering the Valley: The Chinese American Legacy in Santa Clara Valley." The exhibit and reception for the opening takes place July 13 at 2:00 PM at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road. The free exhibit will run from July 13 through October 26.

The exhibit provides the history of the Chinese American Community in the Santa Clara Valley from the 19th century to today with highlights of community achievements. Partnering with the exhibit will be local information on Saratoga people and history.

Reception from 2-4 PM

The reception will feature Mayor Emily Lo; Historian Connie Young Yu; Brenda Wong, president of Chinese Historical Cultural Project; zither music by Hong Tai; and the Tamkang drum team.

Gu-Zheng, or zither is a traditional Chinese stringed



instrument usually made of phoenix tree wood. It has a rectangle sound box and a surface in a curve with tight strings. It is played by strumming or plucking the strings, either with fingers, or using a tool.

The Tamkang drum team are part of the Tamkang University Alumni Association and combine the art of

Chinese dance, Kung-Fu, Tai Chi with the art of drumming.

Light refreshments will be served.

About the Exhibit

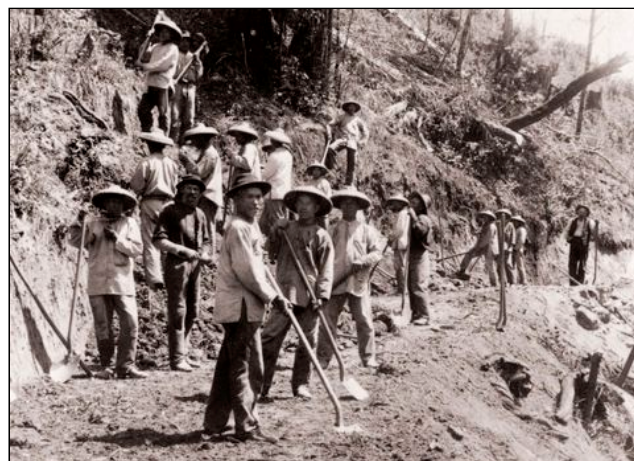
The exhibit was created by the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project and is an extension of the Chinese American Historical Museum. Also on loan are artifacts from the Almaden Quicksilver Mine Museum.

The 14-panel exhibit begins with the Chinese coming to the US during the period of 1850-1931 and settled in their own communities known as China Town. Struggle for equality ensued and in 1882, US lawmakers passed a law prohibiting the Chinese from becoming citizens. The exhibit includes information on how the Chinese went to court to fight against this inequality.

Also covered is how the Chinese shaped the Santa Clara Valley's economy and culture. Farming, building roads, building the railroad were all areas of early contributions. The Chinese have since contributed heavily in the area of high technology, leadership—including Mayor Aileen Kao, the first Chinese female to be mayor in Saratoga—and culture, including Saratogan Vienna Teng.

A timeline in the exhibit shows the parallel histories of San Jose, the US and China.

The Saratoga History Museum is open from 1-4 Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Museum admission is free.



Big Fundraiser for the Saratoga Historical Foundation

The Saratoga Historical Foundation is seeking donations of high end items to sell at an estate sale. The fundraiser for the Foundation is scheduled for August 23 from 9-3 PM at the Saratoga History Museum (20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road).

If you have collectibles, toys, art work, jewelry, vintage items, holiday decorations, antiques, Shabby chic items, ladies accessories (such as scarves, hats, belts, hand bags), houseware goods, garden accessories, small furniture, or plants—give us a call. You can drop off items during the Museum’s normal hours—Friday, Saturday or Sunday from 1-4 PM beginning now. Items will be collected up until July 20. Or you can call Fund Development Director Bob Himel (408)-867-9727 or email roberthimel@att.net



to arrange a pick up time.

Items that are not wanted for the sale include bedding, large pieces of furniture, clothing, shoes, books, appliances, exercise equipment,

electronics items or luggage.

This is a perfect time of year to clean out the garage or closet. Your donation will go towards funding a new, outdoor blacksmith exhibit planned for the museum.

Saratoga Historical Foundation Officers

The mission of the Saratoga Historical Foundation is to preserve the unique history of Saratoga for the education and enjoyment of the community.

Executive Committee

Annette Stransky, President
Bob Himel, Vice President
Ron Hagelin, Recording Secretary
Open, Treasurer

Newsletter

The Saratoga Historical Foundation newsletter is produced 6X a year. If you have comments or suggestions, please call 408-867-7468 or e-mail: annette@saratogahistory.com

How to Reach Us

The Saratoga History Museum, McWilliams House and schoolhouse are located at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road and open from 1-4 PM Friday through Sunday. Call 408-867-4311 to arrange group or docent-led tours. Be sure to visit our gift shop. Visit our website:

According to Laurel Perusa, a member of the Estate Sale committee, “This will be a wonderful, fun event. People who donate will have the satisfaction of donating items for a good cause as well as having more space. People who attend the estate sale will find some great bargains— maybe help a college student furnish a dorm room or find a treasure that they can’t live without.”

There are four ways you can support this effort: one, you can donate items; two—volunteer to help; three, come and buy something; and four—donate money. All donations are tax deductible and go to a great cause.

Board Openings—and Thanks



Two members are stepping down from the Saratoga Historical Foundation board of

directors. Sue Barrera is thanked for her role as Social Director. Barrera’s enthusiasm and support over the last year will be greatly missed. All events were supported with good food and style.

Katie Alexander, board member since 2011, is also leaving her position as Director of Archives and Collections. Alexander has fielded the many research questions received each month by the Foundation with both accuracy and timeliness. This effort has enabled photos from the museum’s collection to be included in many books and articles as well as helped researchers find information about Saratoga. Along with a committee, Alexander also spearheaded creating an electronic inventory of the museum’s collection with description and photos. The information is now stored on a computer for researching and producing exhibits. Katie is best known for the photos and captions printed in the Saratoga News on old Saratoga. Thank you, Katie!

Board Openings

Maybe this is the year you would like to participate in formulating the Foundation’s direction by joining the board of directors? Open positions include treasurer, social director, and archives and collections director. If interested, please call Annette Stransky at 408-867-7468 or e-mail info@saratogahistory.com to find out more information.

2014 Calendar of Events

Now-Oct. 26	Pioneering the Valley: The Chinese American Legacy in Santa Clara Valley ---new exhibit at the Museum
July 4	Celebrate at Kevin Moran Park
July 13	New exhibit and reception, 2-4 at the Museum
July 26	Open House from 1-3 PM at the Museum
August 23	Estate Sale!! 9-3 PM at the Museum
September 6	MidAutumn Festival at the Museum
October 4	Heritage Day at the Museum

Celebrate Independence Day Saratoga Style



Patriotic music, singing, and a parade all add up to an old fashioned Independence Day celebration in Saratoga. The free event will be held on Friday, July 4 from 9:30 to 11 AM at the Kevin Moran Park at 12415 Scully Avenue in Saratoga. Mayor

Emily Lo will give the welcome speech and Council member Chuck Page and Vice Mayor Howard Miller will emcee. Stop by the Saratoga History Museum table! Join in the fun. Free popsicles and flags for children!

Free Reception for New Exhibit on July 13



Music, light refreshments, and more will take place at the Museum on July 13 in celebration of the new exhibit. Stop by and see the exhibit and your friends!!

July 26 Open House at the Museum- Membership Drive

Bring a friend and come to the Open House on July 26 from 1-3 PM at



the Museum. We're recruiting new members and volunteers. Help us preserve Saratoga's rich history. Membership dues help provide the many services we provide such as lectures, newsletter, and events. A wide range of volunteer activities are also available—make this the year you volunteer!!

August 23 Estate Sale



Just in case you missed the article on page 2 of this newsletter—be sure to contribute to the success of this fundraiser for the Saratoga Historical Foundation! Drop off donated items during Museum hours (Friday, Saturday, or Sunday from 1-4 PM); come buy something on August 23 from 9-3PM; volunteer to help with the estate sale!! The day promises to be great fun.

Remembering Evelyn (Lyn) Johnston



Lyn Johnston recently passed away. She was curator for the Saratoga History Museum for over a decade in the early days. Her warm smile was recalled by SHF members almost as much as her signature gingerbread people at the Christmas open

house.

Many Saratogans remember her for "The Horses Mouth" art gallery on Big Basin Way. She was very talented in painting, sculpture and other art forms-- some of which were chosen for California Design shows.

In Memoriam

Ray Sampson
Evelyn (Lyn) Johnston

Abolitionist John Brown's Daughters in California by Author Bonnie Laughlin-Schultz

Buried alongside Mary Brown in the local Madronia Cemetery are her two youngest daughters, Sarah Brown and Ellen Brown Fablinger. Mary Brown moved to California in 1864, five years after the execution of her husband John Brown in the wake of his failed attempt to arm slaves at Harpers Ferry in 1859. Though technically a failure, his raid is often said to have sparked the Civil War. It also made his family famous, infamous even.

In 1864, Mary Brown traveled with son Salmon's family and her three youngest daughters Annie (age 21), Sarah (age 18), and Ellen (age 9) overland in a covered wagon, hoping to bring her daughters to California, which she described as "a new country." Annie had worked alongside Brown's raiders in the summer before Harpers Ferry and had just returned from working at a contraband school in Virginia. Sarah and Ellen, as Brown's youngest daughters, had little direct participation in his antislavery work, but they had been raised to believe strongly in the antislavery cause. At the age of five, Ellen penned a poignant letter (likely with Sarah's help) to her imprisoned and condemned father to tell him that she hoped they would meet in heaven; it was reprinted in newspapers throughout the north.

The Decision to Move

In 1864 Mary looked in some ways to start over, far away from the harsh climate of upstate New York and far from the war-torn rest of the country, but the lives of she and her daughters were always affected by their connection to the radical abolitionist agitator John Brown. The Browns first moved to Red Bluff. The community there at first welcomed them and even raised funds to buy them a home. Sarah found work as a teacher and Ellen attended school, and the Brown women became active in the local Good Templar society. But just six years after

they arrived, they abruptly moved, driven away by attacks in the local Sentinel paper. One article railed against John Brown "the horse thief and murderer"—and a copy of the paper was specially delivered to the Brown house.

Living in Rohnerville

The Browns moved to the Eureka area, with Mary, Sarah, and Ellen settling in Humboldt County in Rohnerville. (Annie settled with her family in nearby Petrolia, while Salmon and his family eventually settled in Oregon.) Sarah continued to work as a teacher in Rohnerville, while Ellen finished her schooling and met Fortuna schoolteacher James Fablinger. They married in January 1876, and five years later, their growing family along with Mary and Sarah arrived in Saratoga.

Rohnerville, Sarah declared, was "a very poor place for a woman to make anything," and James Fablinger, too, struggled to support his growing family. In 1881, Sarah took a steamer from Eureka to Saratoga to investigate if it was a better location.

Needing Support

Throughout the 1870s and in the decades that followed, Sarah and Ellen became increasingly aware of

the criticism directed towards John Brown and their own resulting notoriety. When Brown biographer James

Redpath wrote letters seeking donations for them in 1871, Salmon and Sarah Brown joined together to rebuff him harshly. They placed a letter in the Humboldt Times, informing the editors that they had been "startled and deeply chagrined" by this report of their poverty. They explained, "We take this method of saying to all whom it may concern that John Brown's family ... are all well and are doing well, and wish to maintain decent self respect."

In their adult years, both Sarah and Ellen were sensitive to their family connection to John Brown. Hurt by all the criticism of their father in the years since his death, they first purchased a home in Saratoga that was isolated on a mountain outside town and attempted to begin an orchard. A reporter interviewed Ellen in 1881 and wrote of her anger at local men who had taunted her with a rendition of "John Brown's Body." Although one-time Confederate sympathizers were at first hostile to the Browns, they soon welcomed them, again raising money to help pay a mortgage. Though Sarah hated to accept such charity,



Top: Mary Brown; Sarah Brown; Ellen Brown Fablinger shown in frame

Continued from page 4

she felt that they had no choice; their efforts to cultivate an orchard became increasingly difficult. Ultimately they left their mountain home on Bohlman Road to move into Saratoga, where they lived near the site of the current Civic Center. Ellen, James, and their children remained there even after Mary Brown's death in 1884. Sarah left to work at the U.S. Mint in San Francisco for a time, but then she, too, returned to Saratoga.

Ellen Fablinger—The Youngest Child

Much of Ellen's adult life is obscured from historical memory. As a wife and mother of eight, she lived a quiet, unrecorded life of work on behalf of her family. She turned away one interviewer who came seeking material about John Brown and his family in 1908, and very little of her correspondence survives. More information can be found about Sarah's adult life, in part because she never married.

Sarah Brown

In Saratoga, Los Gatos, and San Jose, Sarah established a place for herself as an art teacher, artist, orchard worker and fruit packer, and, ultimately, as a missionary-mentor-teacher to the growing Japanese community. In 1907, she was accredited by the American

Missionary Society in San Francisco and began learning a little Japanese. Finding meaning in her work, she told one reporter that she intended to spend the rest of her life in this work, "doing what I can for the people I have learned to love." Upon beginning it, she said, "I had really no purpose in life and something said to me here was my opportunity to accomplish good." She continued, "I have now a great many pupils. They come and go, as the fruit season fluctuates, but always there is room for all and I am



Caption: charcoal drawing by Sarah Brown hanging in the Saratoga Museum. Other paintings and drawings by Brown are also on display.

never idle any more." If she drew inspiration from her father's radical egalitarianism, she kept it to herself. Others were eager to make this connection, however—understandably, as Sarah's work implicitly endorsed a radical creed regarding race prejudice.

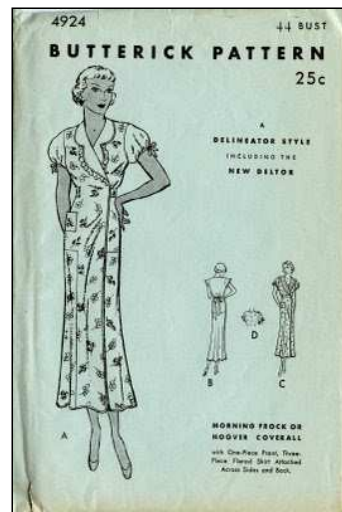
John Brown's youngest daughters died a month apart in the summer of 1916. Sarah suffered from cancer and lived her last months in Ellen's home. Within a week or two of her death, Ellen was visibly ill. Their funerals reflected the lives that they had created. Ellen was buried in a private ceremony, while Sarah's public service was held at the overflowing Congregational Church, where local Japanese laborers, their children, and other community members crowded in to pay their final respects. They share a joint plot at the Madronia Cemetery close to Mary Brown's tombstone.

This article was written for the Saratoga Historical Foundation by Bonnie Laughlin-Schultz. Bonnie Laughlin-Schultz is the author of "The Tie That Bound Us: The Women of John Brown's Family and the Memory of Radical Abolitionism." Copies of the book can be purchased at the Saratoga History Museum's gift shop.

The Origin of the Hoover Apron

President Herbert Hoover and his wife Lou lived in Palo Alto for many years. Graduates of Stanford University, the Hoovers eventually donated their residence to the university.

Many people are familiar with the Hoover dam, named after Herbert Hoover but what about the Hoover apron?



A frequent assumption is that the term Hooverall or Hoover apron came into being during the Great Depression when Herbert Hoover was president. Some remember that during the Depression, Hoover aprons were handed out by relief agencies. But the term Hoover apron was known as far back as during World War I. Starting in 1917 and continuing to about 1920,

Herbert Hoover held various U.S. Government positions related to food. It is believed that a publication from his organization recommended aprons with cross-over fronts as an efficient means of keeping clothing clean. The rest is history.

Chinese Railroad Workers Honored At Last



The Transcontinental Railroad, completed in 1869, is one of the greatest engineering achievements in U.S. history and transformed the nation. The 12,000 Chinese laborers, who were the major work force of the Central Pacific were never given due recognition for building the most dangerous and daunting section of the railroad, digging, tunneling and blasting their way through the Sierra Nevadas to the desert of Utah.

History was re-made in Washington D.C. on May 9, a hundred and forty-five years after the completion of the Transcontinental. Chinese railroad workers were officially recognized by the federal government. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez inducted Chinese railroad workers into the Department of Labor's Hall of Honor, stating: "They were not just building a railroad, they were helping to build America." Norman Mineta, former Mayor of San Jose, Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Commerce, delivered an inspiring speech, connecting the history of Asian workers to current issues of civil rights and human rights.

As the representative of descendants of railroad workers, I was given the honor of unveiling the plaque with Deputy Secretary Christopher Lu. On cue, we pulled down the cover. There it was, along with legendary American leaders: CHINESE RAILROAD WORKERS. The first Asian Americans on the wall. I felt the applause and cheering rocking the hall. I expected the moment to be bittersweet, but it was a triumph.

Speaking on the program before the ceremony, I shared this story of my great-grandfather:

"After the railroad's completion, there was no longer a demand for Chinese workers: only that the Chinese must go. There were labor riots, the burning of Chinatowns, and most devastating of all, the Exclusion Act of 1882. This federal law prohibited the entry of Chinese laborers and denied the right of naturalization to citizenship to persons of the Chinese race.

The Chinese workers who remained to call his country their home could not become Americans. But they knew their sons and daughters could.

My great-grandfather arrived at the age of 19 in 1866 as a contract laborer for the Central Pacific. He acquired building skills, a few words of English, and learned about teamwork. And that it was possible, despite the hardship and racism, to survive and to dream of a better life. He took the train to San Francisco and worked in a general store. He became manager and sent for his wife and started a family.

The railroad gave him this foothold in America.

Despite being born in America, his sons, traveling on business, were treated like aliens, interrogated and detained.

In his immigration testimonies on their behalf, my great-grandfather declared he was a merchant, never a laborer, not even that he was a foreman on the Transcontinental Railroad. It was only through oral history, his telling the true story to his son who told his daughter, my mother, who told her children – that I know my ancestor, Lee Wong Sang, worked on the Iron Road.

The Chinese building the railroad finally has its rightful place in U.S. history. The Department of Labor has written it on the wall, and it cannot be denied or erased."

Article written by Connie Young Yu.. Connie Young Yu is the author of Patchwork History, published by the Saratoga Historical Foundation and Chinatown San Jose, USA, History San Jose. She is a historian with the Chinese Historical Society of America and the Stanford Chinese Railroad Workers of North America Project. She serves on the Board of Trustees of Hakone Foundation.

Photo caption: The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta and Connie Young Yu at the induction ceremony of Chinese Railroad Workers into the Hall of Honor, Department of Labor, Washington D.C. May 9, 2014

Give That Man a Cigar— From Gilroy?

In the 1870's, Gilroy became known as the tobacco capitol



of the United States and had the world's largest cigar factory. The factory produced over 1 million cigars each month.

James D Culp established the Consolidated Tobacco Company, a three-story brick cigar factory on Monterey Street in Gilroy. At one time over 370 Chinese were employed and rolled 900-1.5 million cigars,

known as cheroots, each month.

The factory also processed chewing and smoking tobacco.

The factory included areas for drying, packing, and manufacturing rooms. Curing houses were located about a quarter of a mile from the factory. Culp also patented an innovative process for curing tobacco leaves.

At that time the population of Gilroy had 26% Chinese of the estimated of 3400.

In 1879 the law was revised and Chinese labor was outlawed in state-licensed corporations. Culp moved his factory north of Hollister to San Felipe but it soon folded.

Trivia Pursuit: Origin of the Word “stogie.”

A long, thin, inexpensive cigar originated in mid 19th century and was originally called a stoga or shortened from the word Conestoga, an area near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The stogie was favored by drivers of the Conestoga covered wagons that originated in Pennsylvania.

On the Street Where You Live--- Burns Way

Burns Way was named after Saratogan Danny Burns.



Burns was a local artist, according to Michael Whalen, whose artwork was reproduced by Tiny Westphal in his printshop.

Burns volunteered for the French Air Force at the start of WWI.

He flew fighter planes in a unit called the Lafayette Escadrille made up of volunteer American aviators.

The squadron proved the benefits of aerial combat to both sides. Before World War I, planes were not considered for combat.

Not all American pilots were in Lafayette Escadrille; other American pilots fought for France as part of the Lafayette Flying Corps.

How does Lafayette factor? The United States entered World War I for many reasons, but this rationale was often framed within the context of supporting friends, such as France, who had come to America's aid at a time of great need.

This sentiment is reflected in the words of an American lieutenant colonel Charles Stanton who remembered the enormous contribution of Marquis de Lafayette. Following a parade through Paris amidst the enthusiastic and welcoming French people, Pershing, Stanton, and the American troops arrived at the grave of the Marquis. Though the words are often incorrectly attributed to Pershing, it was Stanton who then said the ultimate return-the-favor quote:

“Nous voila, Lafayette” (“Lafayette, we are here!”)

The Rengstorff House, Haunted?



Today the Rengstorff House in Mountain View looks very elegant. But the 1887 Victorian home was once reputedly haunted. Henry Rengstorff, a German immigrant, made a fortune in farming and shipping grain. He became one of the founding fathers of Mountain View.

After Rengstorff died the house went to his grandson, Perry Askam. After Askam's death, the house was sold to the Newhall Development Company and a series of tenants soon took up residence.

But then the thumping began to be heard at night; crying children; and passerby's reported seeing a woman in the window.

People refused to rent the house and it became vacant. A medium, Sylvia Browne held a séance and added to the stories. She saw a man in a wheelchair; then a man being strangled during the séance.

Once the house was moved to its present location in Shoreline Park and renovated the stories of ghosts went away. Or did they?



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One of The Flying Brothers Karamazov Visits Saratoga



Talented Paul Magid recently visited Saratoga and stopped by Betty Pecks for lunch. Magid is a Saratoga High and University of Santa Cruz graduate. While attending the University of Santa Cruz he became a street performer and founded the Flying Brothers Karamazov in 1973. The group combines comedy,

technology and wraps it all up into an entertaining, memorable performance !

Among their repertoire is something known as the "Terror Trick" in which they gradually introduce nine very strange items—a cleaver, a torch, a salt shaker, a ukulele, a skillet, a fish, an egg, a block of dry ice, and a bottle of champagne (which they call a "time bomb")—then juggle them all at once only to end up cooking the fish and the egg in the skillet and drinking the champagne.

A favorite routine of the act is to have the audience recommend juggling three items. If he can juggle the items successfully for ten throws, he wins a standing ovation from the audience. If he fails, alas, he receives a pie in the face.

The group has also performed an adaptation of Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors at Lincoln Center in New York. The show was televised on PBS.

The group has also made appearances on television on the Jerry Seinfeld show and in the movie, The Jewel of the Nile.

In 1983, Magid co-founded the New Old Time Chautauqua. Chautauqua began in New York in the 1870s when Sunday school teachers provided lectures on morals. It quickly grew into a movement that included lectures, drama, dance, music, and other types of entertainment by traveling troupes. According to Magid, this type of cultural exchange was the forerunner of adult education.

The advent of film and television ended the travelling troupes.

The New Old Time Chautauqua revives that old time entertainment. According to Magid, it builds community through laughter, entertainment and delight. It has a 30 plus year history of bringing its unique style of vaudeville entertainment to rural communities around the Northwest and beyond.

We're hoping they'll appear some day in Saratoga!

