

Locke Foundation Newsletter 樂居鎮基金會

Preserving Locke's history and legacy

lockefoundation@frontiernet.net Summer 2023 www.locke-foundation.org

Locke Asian Pacific Spring Festival May 13, 2023

Photos by Dorne Johnson and Eva Chu

The first Locke Asian Pacific Spring Festival took place in 2011, before the LF began publication of the newsletter. We've come a long way.



Eastern Ways lions



Lily Zhu, tea ceremony



Liz Wong, zodiac puppets



Bayland Dancers



Little Sunshine Iu Mien youth dancers



Vietnamese opera singer MyDuyen Huynh



Stockton Taiko Drummers

Visitors thronged onto Main Street as Locke Foundation launched its annual Asian Pacific Spring Festival on a bright Saturday, May 13, 2023. Main Street was filled with booths from community organizations and arts and craft purveyors of the usual and unusual. Eva Chu, entertainment chair, lined up a host of performers, some favorites and some new groups.



Main Street lined with visitors and vendors

Marshall Gold Discovery State Park observes Ching Ming at Gam Saan Trail

Article by Douglas Hsia

Mining for gold in the Gold Mountain was perilous. When death through accident or illness took hold of a Chinese miner, his kinsmen would carry the misfortunate's body in a coffin through Sutter Mill, over the ridge down the hill. There was a nice fengshui spot facing the South Fork of the American River. It flowed to the West where all their home villages were looking out for his homecoming. The hillside had an alcove, making it an auspicious fengshui setting of green dragon on the left and white tiger on the right. With the backside to the hill, the land and its occupants were protected on three sides from all elements. The bodies were buried on the slope. They were usually a few feet deep, not as deep as the typical six feet under. A small headstone would be laid so that friends and kinsmen were able to pay respects, subsequently a good marker few years later for exhumation.

The practice of exhumation was necessary because our dead would want their remains to be returned to their home villages where their families lived. They would find a good fengshui place for permanent burial. A good fengshui and proper burial rituals including auspicious timing are very important for the dead. A proper burial ritual sends the dead's spirits smoothly to the gate of heaven. (Heaven is not the same as Christianity heaven). Without a smooth passageway, the spirits could be left out of the gate and become a wandering ghost without a home, a scenario one wants to avoid at all costs. When the spirit smoothly reaches heaven, from above, the spirits can take care of their living descendants, which a quality fengshui tomb setting can effectively facilitate. It explains the custom of burning paper money, worldly materials items such as paper house and paper domestic servants. They are all for the spirit to enjoy in the afterworld. A happy spirit would be a good caretaker for the descendants.

After two or three years in the existing gravesite, a bone collector would come at an auspicious time. He meticulously cleaned the bones, removed the decomposed flesh, and organize them in an order of toes to head, a strict ritual. He would then store them in a ceramic urn and prepare them to be shipped back to China.

When Chinese laborers entered America, it was mandatory for them to join a family association or district association based on their family names and villages where they came from. Part of their membership fee would be allocated to a fund to cover the expenses of funerary rituals of the ones who died overseas.

The trail leading from Lotus Henningsen Park to Monroe Ridge Trail was under construction in 2021. With State Park's modern technology and forensic canines, they were able to confirm the former burial sites of the Chinese miners on the slope. Respectfully, they consulted Douglas Hsia, a board member of Chinese Benevolent Association of Stockton for burial rituals. When Hsia came to the site and discussed the rituals, he basically confirmed what the State Parks Supervisor, Steve Hilton, of cultural resources program, already knew about the fengshui and its rituals.

Chinese names are rarely adopted in the States. We don't have any Wong Street, Chan Street or New Canton Street. San Francisco Chinatown is sitting on Stockton Street and

Grant Ave while latter was changed from Dupont Street after the 1906 Earthquake. Even in Locke, there is no Chinese street name. The two main streets are Main Street and Key Street. In view of the Chinese naming draught, Hsia brought three organizations together, Chinese Benevolent Association of Stockton, Locke Foundation and CACS to petition for the name Gam Saan for the newly constructed trail meaning Gold Mountain to commemorate the tens of thousands of miners who sailed across the Pacific. State Park generously accepted the petition, and it became the first Chinese name adopted under State Park jurisdiction. Weeks prior to the opening of the event in 2022, thanks to the Chinese media in Sacramento and Bay Area beating the drums, hundreds of visitors drove a good distance to witness the historical event. The event was also covered by some of the major news media but certainly a hot topic around the Chinese media.

Since the opening, reportedly there are Chinese Americans coming to the trail to pay pilgrimage as well as to observe the custom of taking a walk of good fortune. In Hong Kong and Southern China, there are always people taking a scenic walk during Chinese New Year period to observe the custom.

It would be nice to see Chinese Americans finding a place they could call their own in the State Park system while State Park's long-term strategy is to make its parks more attractive to diverse groups of Californians. It is therefore important to tell the story of the Gam Saan Trail to the public. In the forthcoming months, there will be more decent narratives to the public such as the History Day on April 8 where Hsia will be at Wop Hop Chinese Store Museum telling the story of Chinese 49'ers. With all the publicity work in the pipeline, we hope to build a fanbase for Gam Saan Trail and it will take on a life of its own.



Traditional celebration of Ching Ming includes whole roast pig with accompanying side dishes. Photo by Danny Lee.

In Memoriam: Alfred Chan 1924-2023

"Thank you for your service". Words uttered so frequently they nearly become reflex. But when spoken earnestly and thoughtfully, this short phrase can express abounding gratitude.... and respect.

There are those whose lives are defined by service - to country, to community, and to family. Individuals who have sacrificed their own freedom and convenience for the benefit of others. Alfred Chan was one such individual - one of the Greatest Generation.

Born in San Francisco, Alfred Chan grew up as a country boy in Courtland, CA. Life lessons learned in the Sacramento Delta prepared him well for life.



Alfred passed away on February 10, 2023. With his death, the Chan family's strongest generational bridge linking to its Chinese immigrant past also disappeared. Alfred was the eldest son of six siblings. He worked side-by-side with his father and knew firsthand what it was like to have humble immigrant roots. Together, he and his father toiled in the Sacramento River Delta laboring in the endless cycle of pear orchard pruning, picking, and packing.

Traditional Chinese values of love and devotion to family, hard work, silent suffering, and love of country were instilled in Alfred at this early age. Alfred's American born spirit, forged by the miseries of the Depression and World War II, gave birth to an uncomplaining work ethic that served him the rest of his life.

Being Chinese in the era Alfred lived was difficult. He attended segregated schools for Asians where speaking Chinese was a punishable offense. Alfred's first integrated educational experience was not until he attended high school. His ethnicity excluded him from purchasing movie theater tickets or being served in restaurants. He had to go to Chinatown to eat.

82 years later, Antioch's mayor issued a personal apology to Alfred on behalf of the city. Alfred reflected: "I hope this will never happen again. Our blood is red. We are no different. Please treat everyone the same".

Alfred served his country in WWII as a Navy Seabee on Midway Island. His practical skills of repairing and maintaining farm equipment served him well as a Carpenter's Mate 3rd class. At Midway he helped construct ammunition depots and airfields in preparation for the invasion of Japan.

He was a founding, charter, commander, and life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars East Bay Chinatown Post 3956 in Oakland, CA. For 50 years he tirelessly served Post 3956 and the Oakland Chinatown community.

Alfred was one of the first to receive the WWII Chinese American Congressional Gold Medal in the Bay Area. He was also selected for an Honor Flight to Washington DC to visit Veteran memorials as a thank you for his service.

Alfred leaves his beloved companion of 75 years, May (Tom), son Ron and his wife Luci, grandchildren Bryan and Jennifer, daughter Melanie and her husband William.

The Chan family requests remembrance donations be made to the Bay Area Honor Flight to fund tax deductible trip expenses for Chinese American veterans.

Send checks to: Honor Flight Bay Area Foundation, PO Box 391528, Mountain View, CA 94039. Write in the memo box "In memoriam: Alfred Chan".



LF awards 8 scholarships

Douglas Hsia

Locke Foundation's mission is to preserve and educate. In 2016, it inspired the former chair Clarence Chu and his sister Mrs. Ng Chu Lien Fang. The Chu family started with two scholarships with local high school, Delta High and Rio Vista High. It was so well appreciated that soon more sponsors joined the meaningful cause. Today, we are proud to have total number of eight scholarships. Through the program, we have been able to reach out to many years of high school seniors. The applicants were required to visit Locke and write an essay about the town. Our intention is to have the youngsters understand the town and build bonding to the town.

The program also helped the Locke Foundation open doors to build connections to all high school grades. Student volunteers were recruited to help stage Locke's signature event, the Locke Asian Pacific Spring Festival. At the end of the day, students had a great experience of community service and Locke received the volunteer efforts needed to make the event shine. It is a typical example of bonding through service.

Four years ago, board member Douglas Hsia was invited to give lectures about Chinese in the Delta to all 4 grades of Rio Vista High students. It was proven to have built awareness and connection, because subsequently, those younger students later became successful applicants of the scholarship.

For this year's scholarship presentation at the Asian Pacific Spring Festival, the program kicked off with scholarship alumnus Montana Olson of Rio Vista High sharing her experience of our scholarship. It was followed by award presentation to Delta High's Jacqueline Maldonado, she will attend UC Davis, major in psychology; Citlaly Estrada, Sac State, nursing. From Rio Vista High, Lily Burch to attend Cal Poly SLO, major in biological Sciences; Emily Ross, University of New Mexico, sign language interpretation; Antonio Bellante, Sacramento City College, aerospace engineering; Yolanda Montano, Sac State, Human Science; Valarie de Flores Diablo Valley College, Environmental Science; Bridget de Flores, Cal Poly SLO, Ag business of animal science.

The scholarship would not be possible without ardent sponsors of the program. Clarence Chu, Ng Chu Lien Fan, Stuart Walthall, Russell Ooms and Deborah Mendel, Norm and Flora Spalding have been continuously sponsoring scholarships year after year plus Douglas Hsia, Chevron and the latest addition by late James Motlow's estate.



Douglas Hsia with Jacqueline Maldonado of Delta High School and donor Clarence Chu.

Facelift for Locke's Wooden Walkways

Photos and article by Stuart Walthall

Strolling through Locke has always been a fascinating adventure. Picturesque Main Street, with its tilting buildings and ancient facades, evokes a bygone era-gazing tourists, shutterbugs, shops, bikers and cats. Main Street is the pulsing breath of Locke.

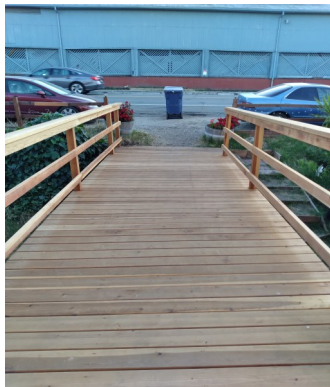
Find your way to the back of town and the diminishing din is palpable. Time slows. Quirky homes and porches, trees and flowers... and cats. Here is where the original Chinese residents grew their food, raised their families and lived meaningful, frugal lives. Backstreet is the quiet heartbeat of Locke.

However, traversing Main Street to backstreet, or River Road to Main Street, could be a somewhat perilous adventure in itself. Until now.

"Watch your step!"... Those who reside or visit Locke have heard that phrase before - a lot. It had become a Locke mantra. Decades of footfalls, weather and neglect had turned Locke's wooden walkways and stairways into treacherous catwalks - especially at night, or rainy days.... or after a visit to Al the Wop's. However, thanks to a \$100,000 grant from Sacramento County, Locke's perilous wooden pathways have been reconstructed.

The Locke Wooden Walkway Project began with an announcement from Sacramento County that funding for Locke pedestrian walkways had been budgeted. After contracts between Sacramento County and the Locke Management Corporation (LMC) were signed, a special account was opened at the Walnut Grove Branch of F&M Bank where funds were deposited. APR Accounting in Walnut Grove provided the bookkeeping services.

The LMC reached out to more than two dozen contractors to solicit bids for the project. Many contractors were reluctant to bid on such an unusual project: 300 feet of pathways to be leveled and graded; then pea gravel beds laid. 600 feet of 4x4 pressure treated runners placed, then surfaced with prime redwood 2x6 deck boards. In addition, special attention had to be paid to where the newly constructed walkways abutted the existing (fractured) concrete sidewalks, still in need of repair (next project).



New photo of the bridge to River Road.

Ultimately, only two contractors were willing to bid the project. However, it was with great fortune the chosen contract went to American Building Development of Roseville. Not only skillful and timely, the ABD crew were respectful and acutely sensitive to the historical significance of Locke. ABD accommodated the numerous details necessary to present an historic and aesthetic appearance of the project.

The \$100,000 funding seemed more than adequate for the replacement of the two walkways that connect Main Street to Key Street. And it was. But the project didn't stop there.

It was decided to replace the rotted wooden landing at the bottom of the north stairway that leads from River Road to Main Street. Upon reaching the stairway, it was determined that the stairway was in worse condition than the walkways and landing. So, the entire stairway had to be replaced. Then it became painfully obvious that the walkway (bridge) that connects River Road to the stairway was in horrid condition. Even dangerous. But funding was running low. In fact, there were not enough funds remaining in the LMC bank account to cover the final "bridge" construction.



Skilled artisans from ABD

LMC Treasurer Joe Prassa, who had worked closely with the ABD crew throughout the project, then met with Dmitriy Yarovenco, Chief Executive Officer of ABD Construction, to discuss the situation. What followed was another stroke of good fortune. Yarovenco graciously offered to finish the project using the balance of the funds. The project was then completed within budget and on schedule. (The Locke Asian Pacific Spring Festival was to be staged only two weeks from project completion.)

One final element still needed to be completed: a new archway located atop the stairway leading from River Road to Main Street, welcoming visitors to the town of Locke. With guidance of Locke resident and property owner Mark Miller, the archway was designed to compliment the facade and archway of Locke's historic Star Theater.

The supporting arch was not to be constructed of laminated wood or lumber cut to shape. This would not conform to historic architectural standards of Locke, founded in 1915. Redwood, immersed in boiling water over the period of two days was bent into the proper arc. Dentils, a series of closely spaced wooden blocks, were added to the base of the archway, mimicking those of the Star Theater arches. Century-old bead board was utilized to cover the frame of the archway. Next, antique style white ceramic light fixtures were wired and affixed to the base of the archway. Low energy (one watt) aesthetically appropriate light bulbs were used to illuminate the walkway and stairs. Yet to be added: The welcoming text to be painted on the archway. That decision will be made by Locke property owners.

Construction of the archway was funded by The Locke Foundation.

The Locke Management Corporation is grateful to Sacramento County for the generous funding supplied to complete this necessary and meaningful project. The LMC would also like to thank American Building Development, retired Sacramento County Supervisor Don Nottoli, Mark Miller, and LMC Directors Joe Prassa, Lisa Kirk and Stuart Walthall.



Before and after photos of walkway from Main Street to Key Street.



L: New stairwell and landing.
R: New archway facing River Road.

New Tile Wall erected at Memorial Park

Due to popular demand, the Locke Memorial Tile Project has once again expanded available tile space in Locke's beautiful Memorial Park with the addition of a new tile wall.

The four original tile walls, designed and created by Locke native Nelson Loo, have nearly sold out. Thus, Nelson has constructed a new wall waiting to be filled. One enters the park walking westward, symbolizing the Chinese immigrant experience. The new wall is located in the garden area located near the Park levee, with its native and indigenous Chinese vegetation - a symbolic representation of Gum Saan (Gold Mountain), the Chinese immigrant term for California.

Funds raised through tile sales help ensure the continued operation of the Locke Foundation, whose mission is to educate and preserve Locke's rich history, culture and legacy. Memorial tile walls are replete with messages of love, remembrance and respect, and shall remain as a tribute for generations to come. Tiles can display the names and dates of your departed loved ones, or of your entire family. You can also add a special phrase or comment, business or organization logo, armed forces insignia, or even a high contrast photographic image (additional cost). The Locke Foundation is happy to translate any words or numbers into Chinese or any language of your choosing. And for those you who do not live in the area, the Foundation is happy to photograph your installed tile and provide you

with an image. Just make sure you include your email address with your application.

SIZES AND PRICES FOR MEMORIAL TILES

4"X8" \$150

8"X8" \$300

For questions regarding custom tiles containing photographic images: please make note on application and provide a copy of photo.

Download tile application at www.locke-foundation.org/about/donate/

Or call: 916-776-1828

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| To the Memory of "Ho Yu" farm worker, bachelor | 怀念慈爱的父母 梁國欽 梅麗春 | NELLIE CHAN LOLA CHAN AU BEULAH CHAN WONG | TO JACK LONDON, AMERICAN ADVENTURER, AUTHOR/PHOTOGRAPHER CHINESE AND MEXICANS WOULD NOW BE HEROES ROBERT T. LEE, M.D. |
| Mindi Cheung 張敏英 | 1920-1990 1923-2012 | EUGENE CHAN, M.D. 2015 - LA NANCY SEO | |
| 香港中文大學校友校友會 (校友會) The Overseas Alumni Association of The Chinese University Of Hong Kong (Northern California) | When you drink the water remember the spring 飲水思源 Angie Eng AND Jerome Hugot | CARLOS UNSON YEE 2015 - MEXICO SIMON YEE - SANCHEZ | IN MEMORY OF ARCHIE CHAN "AC" 陳 SFC CHINA TOWN A FRIEND & BROTHER EVERY RIDE IN PEACE 12-29-1949, 1-26-2015 |
| 梁 FAMILY of George K.K. Leung & Helen H. L. Leung Macy M. S. Leung David M. C. Leung | JOSHUA SCHWARTZ JILL WILLIAMS FROM SATURN TO LOCKE | IN MEMORY OF HORACE OW WING FROM DALEY ROBERTA YEE FAMILY | PRESERVING OUR PAST FOR THE FUTURE MOROSHAM 譚耀華 ELAINE CHAN 譚淑珍 ALEXANDRA HAM 譚家欣 LAUREN HAM 譚家欣 |
| IN LOVING MEMORY OF YET WAI SENG KWOK CHINESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH SACRAMENTO VISITING PASTOR LOCKE CHRISTIAN CTR. | IN HONOR AND RESPECT TED AND ALICE MAH OF RICHMOND FROM US WITH LOVE J.J. CORINE EVA TYLER MELIA CYNTHIA | The Chinese? Proud, hardworking, honorable They built our railroads, the first bridges on the Delta. An admirable people: Phil Scarich | 紀念 余耀生、余耀林 余愛珍、陳曉敏 敬啟 CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA |

Happy Days at the Happy Café : Nytee's Story

Article by Carol Lee
Photos courtesy of Nytee Chan Young

Nytee (Chan) Young, the youngest of 6 children, was born on June 15, 1929 in Walnut Grove. Her siblings included Edward, Mary Ann, Wayet, Ruth and Amy. Her family moved to Locke when Nytee was age 3. There the family owned and operated Happy Café, which is currently where artist Ning Hou has his art gallery.

Nytee quickly and proudly attributes the Chan family's presence in America to her father, Chan Chuck Wing, and his perseverance. Chan's arduous journey to the U.S. began when he walked his way from Poo Shan village in Guangdong, China to Macau. When asked how long it took, he simply replied, "A long time". In Macau, Chan boarded a merchant vessel and arrived in New Orleans as a merchant seaman in 1906. Although he found a Chinese diaspora in Louisiana, Chan did not stay there long, eventually setting out for the west coast. Boarding a train with only a jug of water and a tin of crackers, Chan arrived in San Francisco just as his crackers ran out.



Sisters Amy, Mary Ann and Nytee with niece Deanne, on the south

In San Francisco he learned tailoring skills, which served him well later in life. Having entered the U.S. as a merchant seaman, Chan was free to go back and forth to China and eventually brought his wife, Lum Sue Ying, and their son Edward, age 4, to America. Chan was drawn to the Delta where his brother-in-law was a farmer in Courtland. Not cut out for farming himself, he settled in Walnut Grove where the family ran a mercantile store, selling items such as clothing and shoes. Amy and Nytee were both born there. When asked how Nytee got her unusual name, she said that her older brother Edward was inspired to use her Chinese name, "Yit Yee", 月雨, to come up with something easier to pronounce



Happy Café on 13964 Main Street approx. late 1930's.

In 1932 the Chans moved to Locke, where they took over the Happy Café. Mom, Lum Sue, was mentored by and learned to cook the restaurant dishes from the previous cook. Dad was the cashier there and greeted the patrons. Settling into life in Locke, Mary Ann and Ruth served as waitresses. For a short time Wayet transported lottery tickets to and from the gambling hall. The specialty of the restaurant was the fresh traditional noodles made by brother Edward. The noodle, known as "Jook-sing" noodles, is a rare type of Cantonese egg noodle that, if

still available, is more likely found in Hong Kong, Macau, and parts of Guangdong province. Literally translated, "Jook-sing" means bamboo rise, but sadly, the method is now a lost art. The flavor and texture are unique to the technique. To mix the dough, one end of a large diameter bamboo pole is mounted in a hole on the wall beside or in front of the mixing table. To knead the dough, Edward would mount the pole as if to ride a broomstick. With one end of the pole pivoted into the wall the other end was free to move. Edward would gallop on the pole, bouncing up and down, mixing the egg and flour into dough until it was the desired consistency. This technique would produce a large quantity of delicious noodles and wonton wrappers. Patrons might be served a dish of wonton and Jook-sing noodles. The restaurant menu was typically nothing fancy and would include chow mein, chop suey, and egg foo yung (Chinese omelet). As a young girl Nytee remembers accompanying Dad when he delivered hot ha gow (shrimp dumpling), siu mai (pork filled wrapper) and cha siu bao (BBQ pork bun) across the street to the Dai Loy gambling hall. On a good day when someone was winning or feeling lucky, she might be given a nickel or a dime.

While the rest of her family was working, Nytee and Amy were free to exercise their imagination and play to their heart's content. They were too young and would only get in the way. Happy Cafe was situated next to one of the first three original building of Main Street Lockeport erected in 1912. In 1915



The Chan Family in 1926 before Nytee was born. (Left to Right) Chan Chuck Wing holding Amy, Wayet, Edward, Mary Ann, Lum Sue Ying & Ruth.

the name Lockeport was shortened to the Chinese town of Locke, which the Chinese pronounced as Loc-Kee or translated as "happy place" or "happy living." One of Nytee's earliest memories of Locke was sitting on the lip of the walkway that bordered the street. Together with her new friend Lorraine (Chun) Fong they giggled as they tried to come up with all the swear words they had heard. In the summer Nytee would cross the levee road to the packing shed where it was cool under the support beams and where they explored among the big rocks by the water. She never told her mother.

With minimal "equipment" the kids were creative and played simple games. Without a ball, they improvised to play a game that resembled baseball. It all started by using the handle of a broomstick cut into two sections, a longer section that served as a "bat" and a very short piece that was the "ball". A little trench was dug in the ground up in the middle of Levee Street. One end of the smaller piece ("ball") was laid part way in the trench while the other end

rested outside the edge of the trench. The little piece was struck on its edge and was made to fly into the air. When the batter hit the ball, he or she ran to the bases. Simple. No real ball, no pitcher, no equipment...no big deal. The kids of Locke made do. Another game was pick-up sticks.



Locke kids at Pete's Place on floating platform. Circa early 1940s. Photo courtesy of Margo Soon.

Growing up in Locke included activities within the Baptist mission and with the missionaries. Nytee had the opportunity to visit one of them, Miss Dixon, in her living quarters upstairs. The apartment and furnishings were much different than that of her own home. The Church had a sewing group called the Willing Workers Club. It was there that she learned to embroider and enjoy the company of friends her own age. Miss Dixon would often serve cookies.



Willing Workers Club of the Locke Baptist Mission. Nytee front row 4th from the left. Circa 1938.

There was even a little play kitchen. Nytee developed a love of reading there, spending many hours a day in their small library. James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, especially *The Last of the Mohicans*, appealed to her because of the foreign influence and adventures of the main character, Alice.

Dad even purchased a set of *Encyclopedia Britannica* to facilitate study and education.

Venturing further, Nytee might go to the back of Locke. Weaving down the alley between the buildings, past the Baptist mission, the basketball court and water tower, she went over the rise of the railroad tracks.



Nytee (Chan) Young

On the other side Nytee remembers several shanty shacks. Whether the shanties were occupied or abandoned was a mystery. Nytee had arrived at Pete's Place at the slough. Beyond the gate there was a place unlike anything she had known in her small world, filled with terraces and rows of colorful tulips and assorted flowers. There were a couple of chairs on a fenced in floating wooden platform. Pete was a kind gentle German man who allowed her to pick a few flowers if she asked. Nytee would happily race home with them. Once, without his permission, she did pick one of Pete's rare and prized specialty tulip, which displeased him a bit. Nytee remembered little else of Pete and his

oasis. "It was so long ago."

Two memorable celebrations in Nytee's childhood were the wedding banquets, "bai jow", held in the restaurant. One was for the marriage of her oldest sister MaryAnn to Frank Leong. The other was her older brother Edward to his bride, Sylvia. They were wedding banquets with the traditional nine courses served. Friends from nearby ranches who cooked came to help Mom prepare the many delights, including shark fin soup, birds nest soup, roast duck, roast pig, a fish dish, and a chicken dish. There were so many in attendance that the restaurant ran out of space. The overflow from brother Edward's banquet was spread to the Bing Kong Tong (currently the Jan Ying Social Hall Museum).

Nytee also remembers sitting in the restaurant listening to the radio and hearing the announcement of the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Her brother Edward and sister Ruth both enlisted. During World War II almost every window in every home displayed at least one gold star, indicating there was someone in that household who was in the service.

During the time the restaurant was operating, it stayed open until 10pm. Customers looked forward to "siu yay", a late night snack. For a time the restaurant also had a soda fountain. However, Mom preferred to order the velvety "tofu fa" from Foon Hop Store across the street which she served with a savory soy sauce and oil drizzle.

It should be noted that Happy Café was more than just a place for meals and celebrations. When the restaurant closed for the day, several of Mom's lady friends gathered to play Mahjong. As a child Nytee remembers sleeping on Mom's lap during the late night games. She would later say



Robert & Nytee Young at 65th Wedding Anniversary in 2018.

that the late night sessions were the origin of her innate sense for the game and the intuitive ease with which she enjoys the game today.

When the restaurant closed its doors permanently, there was still an enamel basin filled with clean teacups in the kitchen...in anticipation. Friends were always welcome to come in for the warmth and comfort of a cup of hot tea. To supplement the family income canned goods, bread and some staples were sold. Dad used his tailoring

skills to make garments such as gabardine shirts and fur-lined vests for some of the gamblers. Dad also worked in the celery harvest. Mom worked seasonally in the packing shed. The upstairs access to the Chan family home was located across the levee/county road from the packing shed. There was a parking lot in front of the entrance of the house where there was a slotted wooden bench. As a child Nytee would gather a few loose pears and roll them back and forth on the slots to mimic Mom's work, pretending to sort and pack. These are a few of her pleasant memories of growing up in Locke. Brother-in-law Frank and sister MaryAnn were helpful when Nytee lived with them in Nevada City for a few years. They also gave her a weekly allowance during summers when she helped in the store.

Nytee graduated from Courtland High School (1947) with a Joe Shoong Scholarship to UC Berkeley (Class of 1951). She earned her Teaching Credential from CSU Sacramento and later a Master's Degree in Education. Nytee married Robert Young from Stockton and together they raised two sons. She taught in Stockton and Sacramento, and retiring after a fulfilling 30 years in education. Presently she is

Locke Foundation Membership Application/Renewal

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Mailing address _____

Email address _____ Tel () _____ Cell () _____

I would like to volunteer for the following activities:

Guided tour docent _____ Boarding House Volunteer _____

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_____ \$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.

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