



PASSAGES

CONSTRUCTION STARTS AT IMMIGRATION STATION

Major construction for the first phase of the restoration of Angel Island Immigration Station is underway and expected to be completed in spring 2007. The barracks is undergoing a seismic retrofit, a building preservation, and improvements to handicap accessibility. The reservoir has been structurally reinforced to hold water for irrigation use at the Immigration Station site. Site retaining walls, underground utility systems, storm drainage and other improvements are also underway.

Other Phase I work includes creating a series of terraces to convey the size, function, and importance of the former Administration Building, as well as rebuilding the covered stairway connecting the Administration Building and barracks. Trees have been removed and trimmed to more closely replicate the historic landscape during the Immigration period.

When completed, Phase I of the project will restore and furnish the detention barracks to their appearance in the 1910s and 1920s. A new lighting system will be installed so that visitors can better view the poems etched on the barracks walls.

School and public programs will continue along the access road at the top of the site during the restoration efforts. For more information, call 415-435-3522.



Work on the stair leading to the hospital sidewalk.



Construction has begun on the footings for covered walkway that will lead to the barracks.

AIISF CO-HOSTS "CROSSING EAST" RADIO EVENT

On May 2, Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation co-hosted a preview event and listening session for the first Asian American history series on public radio, Crossing East. The series debuted on Public Radio International (PRI) stations during the month of May. Hosted by George Takei and Margaret Cho, and executive produced by Dmae Roberts, the series consists of eight one-hour documentaries on the history of Asian American immigration, from pre-Revolutionary days to post-9/11.

The preview event featured comments from series producers Dmae Roberts, Reese Erlich, Sara Kolbet, Stephanie Loleng, Robynn Takayama, Rainjita Yang-Geesle; scholars Bill Ong Hing and Judy Yung; and Pacific Times radio host Nguyen Qui-Duc. KQED and MediaRites Productions co-hosted the event. According to one event attendee, "the complexities of Asian-American history is ultimately very timely with this evening's program introducing me to a history I know little about...If anything, it will provoke me to learn more on this history."

Excerpts of the series are available online at

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CCHE FUNDS \$3.6 MILLION FOR SITE

A \$3 million grant request from the California Cultural Historical Endowment (CCHE) to further work on the Angel Island Immigration Station project has been approved. Funds from the first round of CCHE disbursements will be used for initial planning in the transformation of the Hospital building into a museum, interpretive center, meeting space, and research and genealogy center. This work is part of Phase II of the immigration station's preservation and restoration. AIISF and California State Parks jointly submitted the grant application, and learned of the award on April 27.

On April 28, CCHE revealed that for its second round of CCHE disbursements, it has allocated an additional \$622,842 to restore and preserve the Hospital building and acquire furnishings for the Barracks building. Final approval for the second round of disbursements from the CCHE board will be in July.

Funding for the CCHE grants comes from the first distribution cycle of Proposition 40 bond money. Proposition 40 called for the creation of a California Cultural and Historical Endowment to support the "acquisition, development, preservation, and interpretation of

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Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation's mission is to promote a greater understanding of Pacific Coast immigration and its role in shaping America's past, present, and future. Through an array of interpretive programs and educational partnerships, the Foundation preserves the Immigration Station site, a National Historic Landmark, as a place that honors the complex story and rich cultural heritage of Pacific Coast immigrants and their descendants.

President's Message

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Given the heated national debate on immigration being played out today, the story of Angel Island has never been more relevant. Angel Island's story is a powerful example of how misguided immigration policies of the past have affected our citizens and communities, and has relevance to the current policies. We should learn from the lessons of the past, so as not to repeat our mistakes in the future.

The United States is a nation of immigrants who came to this country aspiring to build a better life, for themselves and their families. Ellis Island was a waystation for millions of immigrants escaping political tyranny or economic hardship at home. America's open-armed acceptance of newcomers onto her shores stands in stark contrast to the reception of most of the immigrants who landed at Angel Island. Rather than welcoming Pacific immigrants, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and subsequent laws preventing Asians from freely entering the United States. But even an official cold shoulder was not enough to deter Angel Island immigrants from aspiring to the American dream.

More recently, the major sources of Pacific immigration have expanded to encompass India, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, and elsewhere around the Pacific Rim. It is to honor the spirit of these new immigrants, and remember the experience of past immigrants, that the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation is committed to

preserving the historical sites on Angel Island. The weathered buildings, the old hospital, and especially the poignant poetry carved into the barrack's walls all help to evoke the circumstances immigrants have always faced. Just as importantly, we are committed to the notion that public discourse and education are important to maintaining a democracy. The programs that we will hold at Angel Island and with our partners on the mainland, will educate us all on family history, spark and encourage knowledgeable debate on public policy issues, and help to renew a sense of civic engagement and pride in the diversity of our great country.

To this end, we are pleased to announce two grants totaling over \$3.6 million from the California Cultural and Historical Endowment for the preservation of the hospital and barracks buildings located at the immigration station site. The hospital building will be the primary place for future exhibits and programs. In addition, we thank the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, MCI Foundation and UPS Foundation for recently underwriting organizational development and education programming.

Angel Island Immigration Station, the Ellis Island of the West, has played an integral part in American history. We invite you to join with us to reclaim an important part of our past and to help shape in our future.

Sincerely,

Kathy Owyang Turner
President, Board of Directors

PASSAGES

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P.O. Box 29237, San Francisco, CA 94129-0237
(415) 561-2160 info@aaisf.org www.aaisf.org

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In The News

Kwok and O'Neill honored by Partners for Livable Communities

AISF's Executive Director Daphne Kwok and Golden Gate National Recreation Area Superintendent Brian O'Neill were honored in Washington, DC, at the Partners for Livable Communities "Bridge Builders" Annual Awards Dinner in December 2005. Partners for Livable Communities is a 30-year-old national leadership organization concerned with quality of life, economic development and equal opportunity in cities across America. Partners honors individuals who demonstrate the power and possibility created when people put aside differences and join together for a common goal.

AISF Testifies at Congressional Hearing

On November 28, 2005, Daphne Kwok, on behalf of the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, testified before an Oversight Hearing for the National Parks of California. Congressman Mark Souder (R-IN), Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources convened the hearing, held in San Francisco. Congressman Souder and his staff also visited Angel Island Immigration Station the next day to see the current conditions and preservation work.

Committee of 100 Members Visit Immigration Station

AISF arranged a special tour of the Immigration Station on April 23 for members of the Committee of 100 (C-100) visiting San Francisco during their annual conference. Attending were C-100 Chair Major General John L. Fugh (ret.), Kung-Lee Wang, Betty Lee Sung, Carolyn Chin, George Koo, Dennis Wu, Richard King and C-100 staff.

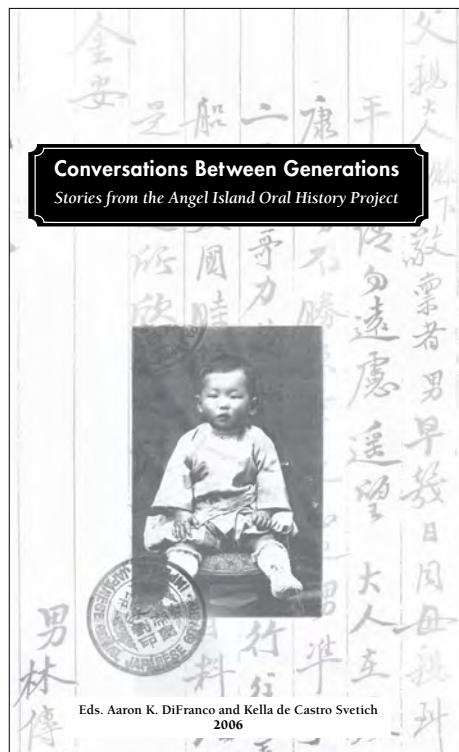


Conversations Between Generations: More Stories from the Angel Island Oral History Project

From 1910-1940, Angel Island Immigration Station was the primary port of entry along the Pacific Coast and tracked over one million people who came to the United States from across the Pacific Rim. Since 2004, the experiences, recollections and impressions of these immigrants have been collected by students of the University of California as part of the Angel Island Oral History Project. Organized by the Pacific Regional Humanities Center, one of nine regional centers established via a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) initiative, and the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, a caretaker of the National Historic Landmark site dedicated in 1997, this project seeks to preserve firsthand accounts of those who made the journey through Angel Island, to hear in their own words their stories of arrival, and to reclaim a fuller account of their trials and triumphs and their impact on the making of California and the nation. Recently the voices of those who made this journey have been published in a chapbook. Their stories continue a conversation begun long ago.

Sixty years have passed since the Immigration Station closed its doors and the exclusion laws were repealed, and many of these stories have already passed out of memory. Yet there are still many in the community who have come forward to share memories of their stay on the island, their reasons for making the journey, and their feelings about passing through.

We are grateful to all of those sojourners who volunteered to share their memories for this project. The words spoken, recorded, and edited in the chapbook's pages contain just a few of the stories that are the legacy of Angel Island. These oral histories were made in conversation with dedicated interviewers, volunteers who sought to know the people behind the history. This chapbook would not be possible without their hard work. We also thank the dedicated staffs of the Pacific Regional Humanities Center and the National Archives, as well as the staff of the Chinese Historical Society of America, which hosted a program in February 2006 where the stories that we were able to collect could be shared



with the public. The following are just a few of the chapbook stories:

Gwing Der
Arrived at Angel Island 1926, age 18
Interviewer: Phong Chau

I heard it from other people that we had to go to an island. But they didn't say "Angel"; they just said island. Now we know it's called Angel Island. The immigration official made an appointment for interrogation. They notified my dad the time they were going to interrogate me, so we knew when to go.

There was a room—they would announce the number and name: "Time for interrogation!" Then, you would go to the Immigration Department. There was a translator. He would ask, "What's your name?" I would answer, and then he would [tell] the immigration official. He would ask, "How old are you?" I would say, "15 years old"; then he would tell the immigration official, "15 years old." What's your name? How old are you? What's your dad's name? What's your mom's name? How many siblings? How was your house like? There were so many question[s]. The questions were very particular and special. How many rooms are in your house? How many windows? Questions like these. They wanted to see if my dad is right. If my dad said three, then it was right. But if I said one, then they would tell him, your son said one, but you said three. So

that was incorrect.... Back then, there were lawyers. So if you gave them money, then you wouldn't be asked as many questions.... There were some questions that we didn't prepare answers for—for instance, how many steps on the staircase in your house? How were we supposed to know the answer[s]?

[My mother] was in China. She didn't come. Back then, they didn't allow citizen men to bring their wives over. Then later, the President allowed [it]. Back then, only merchants could bring their wives, but not the citizens.

...Hui was the Chief cook. And whenever it was time for interrogation, he would pass the coaching papers to us... The coaching papers were given this way: since he was a cook, every day he put the coaching paper under the lid of a warming pot (which was used to hold tea)... When it was time for my interrogation, my dad had to send me the coaching papers. Every morning the cooks would shout—"There's something!" They would announce the number and the name.

... We were like in prison... At Angel Island, everyone didn't feel good period because we just wanted to land in San Francisco. We didn't know how long we had to wait until our turn to be interrogated and we didn't know what they were going to ask us. Everyone wasn't in a good mood and no one would talk about how he felt.

Dick Jeong
Arrived at Angel Island 1939, age 17
Interviewer: Anna Cheng

I came over in 1939, which is actually World War II. I came over because the Japanese took over our village so we went down to Hong Kong and stayed there for about a year and my father got us some money and bought the paper. Bought me a paper. I was young then. I didn't really care about coming over you know. But anyway, I came over in 1939... I got here on June 4th. So I stayed there until July 31, a little more than a month on Angel Island. I was really lucky because I was young and [the process was] very easy to do. A lot of people stayed there. Some people stayed there a year, a couple of years. I was granted entry on July 31—that's the day I landed in Angel Island, June 4th.

At that time, it's not cheap [for a paper son]; it's like \$30-\$40,000 right now [laughs]. Yeah so of course \$2,000 they have to pay bribery, or whatever you know, the guys does the paperwork, and everything else.... my phony father... has two

sons—actually, no, one son. He didn't want to bring him over so he sold the paper and he went back. He went back to China one time.... In those days, whenever the Chinese go back they call it "re-enter"; they will report that they have a son, never a daughter. Because it's always a son. The son is very important. So anyway, he went back to China sometime before '39, I think '39. So he goes on the record he had a son. So that [was] how [h]e sold the identity to me, to my father. I am not the only one. There are quite a few people like that. Because that time it was not easy to come over. You know they have prejudice and all kinds of discrimination.

David Leong

Arrived at Angel Island 1940, age 8

Interviewer: Christine Trowbridge

Going to the latrine at night was kinda scary because they say ghosts, you know [chuckles]. People there hung themselves and all that stuff. That was scary. I was afraid to get out of bed at night....people that was in their twenties or thirties, which is older than me, [told me] "there's people walking around there that shouldn't be there." And so—some of them, you know, were hanged. So I don't even want to recall how it is until I went back and visit the latrine [and saw] what it really looked like. [It was] a warning story, a warning story.

...I don't recall that anyone did take care of me. Once I got here a few days, I probably befriended someone. Very lonely, you know. Lonely at night but in daytime, playing, you could see things and playtime, it's not so painful.

Oral History Participants

AIISF is still seeking participants willing to tell their stories of arrival and detention at Angel Island Immigration Station. If you would like to know more about the Angel Island Oral History Project, please contact AIISF (415-561-2160, info@aiisf.org) or the Pacific Regional Humanities Center (530-752-9857, prhc@ucdavis.edu).

The Angel Island Oral History Project is made possible through funding from the California Council for the Humanities California Stories Fund. This article is based on the chapbook edited by Aaron K. DiFranco and Kella de Castro Svetich. The chapbook is available to friends of AIISF.

I don't recall how I understand it. I don't know if I did understand it, my life, or not.

Joseph H. Mori

Arrived at Angel Island 1924, age 2

Interviewer: Elizabeth Y. Kimura

[My parents] were all trying to make money, trying to get a better living. Because I think there was quite a struggle in Japan at that time. My dad had property [in Japan] but I haven't heard much about it, but that he had some property and that's all I know. I have no idea what he did in Japan. But over here, he had friends and the friend owned a laundry in Oakland or Alameda. So he worked there. [My mother] might have helped at the laundry sometime, but basically she was staying at home.

I had kept reading about [Angel Island]. The Chinese had carved their feelings on there, some poems, songs, things like that, which I think they finally decided they should preserve. So I have no idea what it was like physically there at Angel Island.

Just like historical subjects, places, and things that have happened, there's a need to keep some historical connection for new generations so they can understand why some people are so bitter, why some of them would be withdrawn and not discuss things that had happened. At least this way, there would be some record as to what transpired.

CCHE FUNDING *continued from page 1*

buildings, structures, sites, places, and artifacts that preserve and demonstrate culturally significant aspects of California's history and for grants for these purposes."

Angel Island Federal Funding Update

On December 1, 2005 President George W. Bush signed The Angel Island Immigration Station Restoration & Preservation Act (H.R. 606/S.262), authorizing up to \$15 million in future federal funding to preserve and restore the Angel Island Immigration Station. The bill represents a significant step toward obtaining federal backing for the restoration of the station. This legislation does not actually allocate funding for the project.

AIISF is working with members of the Senate and the House of Representatives on an Interior appropriations request for FY 2007. On May 18, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 5386, the Interior Appropriations bill appropriating \$250,000 for the Angel Island Immigration Station. The allocation is from the Save America's Treasures grant for the restoration and preservation of the hospital building. We thank House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) and Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey (D-Petaluma) for their leadership in this process. The Senate Appropriations Committee has not completed its process at this time.

RADIO EVENT *continued from page 1*

www.CrossingEast.org and the complete series is available for sale at the website. For more information, email info@crossingeast.org. We thank the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund and the Walter and Elise Haas Fund for supporting this event.

NARA 101: Family History Day at the National Archives, Saturday, August 5, 10am-1pm

Join AIISF's Descendants Club in association with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Pacific Region on Saturday, August 5, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM, at 1000 Commodore Drive, San Bruno, CA 94066-2350, for a special Saturday workshop to introduce you to the resources held by NARA's Pacific Region and how to access the files so you can uncover your family's journey to America.

You'll learn the basics; the kind of information that can be found from a ship's passenger lists, Naturalization records, and

other little used sources along with research tips. NARA archivists are willing to do preliminary research if participants have leads such as the name of the immigrant, name of ship and/or year of travel so files may be pulled for you to peruse on August 5.

NARA is typically closed on Saturdays and this workshop is a special opportunity to explore the archives on a weekend. Families are welcome, best suited for children 10 and above. Space is limited to 25 people. Please RSVP by calling (415) 561-2160 by August 1 to reserve a space at this special workshop.

Thank You

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Donations from October 22, 2005 to April 14, 2006

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 Far East Café
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 Keynote Speaker:
 Hon. Leon E. Panetta

In The News, continued

New Children's Books about Angel Island

Two authors have recently published children's books on the Angel Island Immigration experience. The first is *Landed* by Milly Lee, published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux Book Publishers. Mrs. Lee is a retired school librarian turned children's historical fiction book author and her books include *Nim and the War Effort*, an American Library Association Notable Book, and *Earthquake*. *Landed* is based on her father-in-law's experience on Angel Island.

Milly Lee told AIISF, "When I visited Angel Island with [AIISF's founder] Paul Chow, I was so impressed with his dedication and zeal to try to preserve this part of our history that I felt I had to find a way to help as well.

"I hope [readers] enjoy the story first, then look deeper into the book to think about the difficult journeys immigrants made to come to America. I hope they will take the time to read...more information about the history of Chinese

Americans [and] I hope readers will be curious enough to ask for family stories of their own."

The second new book is *Good Fortune: My Journey to Gold Mountain* by Li Keng Wong, published by Peachtree Publishers. In her book, Mrs. Wong gives an account of her journey to the United States from China through the Angel Island Immigration Station, and her settlement in Oakland Chinatown. The book is written for elementary school children. On April 15 the Oakland Asian Cultural Center and Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation co-sponsored a celebration of the book's release and Mrs. Wong's 80th birthday.

We thank Mrs. Wong's family for their help organizing the event and for generously donating the event's proceeds to AIISF.

Li Keng Wong said, "I was inspired to write the book because my family didn't know much of my life in China and my early days in the U.S.... I thought writing my book would help to fill the gap in California and United States history.... I hope that other people, after reading my book, would understand that the Chinese people [are] no different than any other people in searching for a better life in the United States."

Landed and *Good Fortune* join *Kai's Journey to Gold Mountain*, another children's book based on former detainee and San Francisco resident Albert Wong's experience on Angel Island which was published by the Angel Island Association in 2004. All of these books serve as resources for teachers and families to educate and share the Angel Island story with young people. Autographed copies of all these books are available for purchase at AIISF. For prices and to order any of the books, call (415) 561-2160.

