

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Celia Y.F. Lee
 Chinese Name: 李張雲珍
 Date of Interview: 12/9/80
 Interviewer: Bernice Sam
 Others Present: None
 Language: English
 Summarizer: Suellen Cheng

Interview Number: 136
 Number of Tapes: 1
 Length: 48 Minutes

Contents

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	Tape: <u>1</u> Side <u>A</u>
1	001-005	Introduction.	
	006-017	Chinese name was given. Celia Lee's (CL) parents came from Soochow, China. She was born in Soochow in 1912.	
	018-020	CL was brought to Shanghai when she was three years old.	
	021-025	CL went to a Methodist Mission Girls School in Shanghai.	
	026-042	CL learned English as a girl in high school. She stayed in Shanghai until 1939. In 1933 she came with her father to the Century of Progress Chicago International Exposition to exhibit her father's jade collection.	
2	043-058	CL spoke Soochow dialect at home in China. In Soochow people were gentle and even-tempered which helped a girl to become more feminine.	
	059-063	CL's husband is Dr. Henry Y. Lee. She has one son and one daughter.	
	064-072	CL came to American to live in 1939.	
3	073-077	In 1939, CL came to help her father in the Golden Gate Exposition.	
	078-086	CL worked in the office of International Family Relief in Shanghai.	
	087-107	CL always took Chinese herbs when she was sick in China.	
4	108-121	CL always preferred things Chinese. For recreation, CL read books, listened to Chinese music, and played the piano.	
	122-147	In 1940k CL's father exhibited his jade pagoda for the benefit of the March of Dimes at the May Company. CL met Henry Lee and his sister. CL married Henry in 1940. The wedding was western style, except she wore a Chinese bride gown.	

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	148-165	CL married Henry because he was a doctor and wanted to serve in China. Because the Sino-Japanese War broke out, they decided to stay in America.
	166-186	CL joined the China Society of Southern California where she was a program chairperson for eight years. Because of Lily Quan's introduction, CL joined the Los Angeles Chinese Women's Club in 1945. CL spent a lot of time with her two daughters. CL was also active with several auxiliaries of different hospitals.
6	187-203	CL was interested in Chinese painting and Chinese music. She joined the Chinese Opera Club. Later, CL and her friends organized the Southern California Chinese Opera Society.
	204-217	The members were Chinese opera lovers. The group performed for the Chinese school and for the benefit of different organizations.
	218-227	CL also participated in the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association activities.
7	228-252	CL played Chinese first violin and Moon Pepa. Since her auto accident in 1973, she has confined herself at home, except occasionally helping out with different organizations.
	253-263	CL regretted very much that her homeland was not safe for her family to go back. But she did not regret choosing America to be her second home.
	264-274	CL and her husband visited mainland China in 1975. She could not see that she could leave her family in America to stay in China.
	275-288	CL has two half sisters and one half brother still living in China. CL has her own sister and her brother's children and grandchildren in the United States.
8	289-303	CL still corresponds with her relatives in China.
	304-317	CL thanks god that she did not have to work out of necessity. CL did work not for financial purposes but to work for her own satisfaction.
	318-339	Los Angeles Chinatown has a better appearance than San Francisco Chinatown. CL and her family always went to Chinatown to meet friends. Now Chinatown is too crowded. Usually she went to Chinatown for social occasions.
9	340-361	There are more new immigrants, students, and refugees in Chinatown.

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1 Side A
Tape: 1 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	362-371	CL heard that Lily SooHoo's husband (Peter SooHoo) was very prominent in Chinatown.
	372-382	CL did not do too much community work during World War II. She was raising her children at the time.
	383-389	Steak during the Second World War was about 25 cents a pound. Today a good cut steak costs about four dollars a pound.
10	390-415	Chinese believed in a good education for their children. Chinese sent money to China. They also saved money and hoped to return to China.
	416-423	CL was never politically minded.
	424-433	During the Second World War, CL gave speeches to different clubs.
	434-455	CL's Jewish friends are similar to Chinese in their family life.
11	456-481	CL would not have preferred interracial marriage 30 years ago. Even now she does not encourage interracial marriage.
END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A		
1	001-003	Blank.
	004-007	CL lived too far away from Chinatown to send her children to Chinese school.
	008-015	It is rather ignorant of certain people to only think of Chinese as laundrymen.
	016-021	CL and her husband hoped that their son would become a doctor, but he did not do so.
	022-034	CL is happy with what she did.
2	035-042	The most difficult time CL had was when she and her husband learned that they had to adjust to her husband's diabetes.
	043-060	CL was very fascinated by the beautiful sights in American when she first came to Chicago with her father. Later she enjoyed visiting different scenic places of America.
	061-068	CL has many good American friends who are very warm and open minded.
3	069-079	CL's husband was practicing in Los Angeles when they were married. His family was in Los Angeles. CL is always contented in Los Angeles.

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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	080-110	When CL was young she never liked Japanese because of the Japanese invasion in China.
4	111-153	In 1975 when CL went back to Shanghai and Soochow she saw the old schools still in existence. She visited the Pao Tai Bridge. she did not see any destruction in her village.
5	154-186	CL's father's name was Chang Wen Ti. He was born in Soochow. His family escaped from the Boxers Rebellion to Soochow. Parents' backgrounds were discussed.
6	187-204	Father was an apprentice in a silversmith shop. He was recruited to a mission school where he learned English.
	205-220	Father learned jade carving from Soochow University Second Middle School. He learned the jade trade from his uncle. They sold jade to the Japanese.
	221-228	Father first taught at school. Later he formed a company to buy, design and sell jade.
	229-237	A more detailed story about CL's father can be found in the Lapidary Journal of the 1965 August issue.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE B

END OF INTERVIEW

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