

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Gilbert Leong
 Chinese Name: 梁恩霖
 Date of Interview: 3/27/79, 4/5/79
 Interviewer: Emma Louie
 Others Present: None
 Language: English
 Summarizer: Stella Ling

Interview Number: 19
 Number of Tapes: 5
 Length: 3 Hours & 33 Minutes

Contents

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	Tape: <u>1</u> Side <u>A</u>
1	001-006	Introduction.	
	007-011	Gilbert Yeo Leong's (GL) Chinese name is Leung Yen Lum (梁恩霖). GL is 68 years old. He was born in 1911, the first year of the Chinese Republic. GL was born in Los Angeles.	
	012-015	GL graduated from the College of Architecture at the University of Southern California and followed a profession of architecture until today.	
	016-019	GL's wife is Florence See Leong. See is her maiden name. GL has one daughter named Leslie Ann.	
	020-030	GL's father came to the United States when he was a teenager. GL's father did not have a profession and came over to do different types of labor. His older brother was also in the United States. They dealt in produce. GL's father was the fifth boy in the family and this older brother was the first boy.	
	031-038	GL's father was born in 1878. He came to the United States when he was about 17 or 18 years old. He returned to China in his early twenties and met and married GL's mother.	
2	039-049	GL's mother gave birth to GL's older brother in 1905 or 1906 while in China. They then came over to the United States. GL's brother came to the United States when he was five or six years old so his parents were separated for that length of time. GL's mother and brother came by boat and were met either in Los Angeles or in San Francisco. GL's mother mentioned going to Angel Island.	
	050-054	GL's mother stayed on Angel Island for about a week or two.	
	055-059	GL's father came from Sun Wei Village. GL's mother was born in Canton -- she came from Sun Da.	


Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
2	060-063	GL's mother had a Chinese education only. It was highly connected to the Christian Church in China.
	064-068	GL's mother's family was very religious. Her father was some sort of a preacher in China. They were Baptists.
3	069-070	GL's father became a Christian through the influence of GL's mother.
	071-074	GL's father had only a basic education in Chinese. He learned Chinese for a few years before he had to go to work.
	075-077	For GL's mother, a good portion of the day was spent sewing and embroidering and the rest of the day was spent on Chinese studies.
	078-092	GL's father was introduced to GL's mother's family. The arrangements for marriage were made although the two of them did not meet until the ceremony. The arrangements were made between GL's father and GL's mother's father. GL's paternal grandfather was not involved in the wedding arrangements.
	093-094	GL's father was probably in his mid-twenties when he got married.
	095-113	GL's father had four children. GL had an older brother. He has both a younger sister and a younger brother. GL's sister is Marjorie Hee. His younger brother is Elmer Leung. GL's older brother's Chinese name is Leong Yun Kwong (梁恩光). GL is Leong Yun Lum (梁恩霖), and his younger brother is Leong Yun Chee, and his sister is Leong Kew Hung.
4	114-132	When GL's mother arrived in the United States, she settled down in Los Angeles. GL's father was already engaged in some type of work in Los Angeles. GL's father may have stayed in San Francisco briefly but many of the Chinese felt that there were greater opportunities elsewhere.
	133-150	GL's father always deal in produce. When GL was young, his father had a produce business in the City Market. Previous to that, many Chinese were vegetable peddlers. GL's father supplied produce to hotels and restaurants. At that time, Albert Kong was the well-known supermarket in the area.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	151-162	GL's father's dealings were all with the San Pedro and Ninth Street City Market. GL's father had a commission house in the City Market. They would buy from larger establishments from the Seventh Street Market. GL's father was making a middle man's profit.
	163-169	The Chinese farmers would sell their produce to the commission houses which would in turn sell it to merchants that brought the goods to hotels and to the neighborhoods.
	170-196	When GL was 16 or 17 years old, GL's family decided that they were tired of the produce business. They then tried their hand at the restaurant business in 1928. They took over a restaurant in Hollywood which was one of the big dine and dance places. They called it the Chinese Garden Cafe. They ran it as a family restaurant for ten to twelve years.
6	197-207	GL waited on tables. He had to wear a tuxedo. They had a five piece orchestra and a singer. They hired men waiters and Chinese chefs as well as a Western chef.
	208-213	The restaurant served Chinese food American-style.
	214-219	GL waited on tables and made enough tips on weekends to put himself through school. GL seemed to get better tips if he spoke pidgin English instead of college English.
	220-240	They ran the restaurant for ten to twelve years until the business was not good any longer. Those were the Depression years. At that time, it was the largest Chinese restaurant. They were busiest on Saturday nights. On Sundays, there was no dancing in those days. They gained a lot of experience in the restaurant business.
7	241-269	In 1933, they decided to start something in Chinatown, on Los Angeles Street -- facing the Plaza. The only contact they had with Chinatown was to go to church on Sundays from 2 to 4. GL always felt that the church services took the best part of Sundays. GL's mother also taught Chinese at the church during the week. Children would come in after school from 3 to 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. She taught about five or six grades. Everyone had to recite in unison the verses that they memorized.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
7	270-279	The restaurant in Chinatown was called the Soo Chow Restaurant. They rented a place on the second floor facing the Plaza -- their landlord was Tom Gubbins. He was a Euroasian and had a company called the Asiatic Costume Company. He hired the extras for the movies.
8	280-293	GL remembered looking down from their restaurant and seeing about a hundred people waiting to be hired as extras for the movies by Tom Gubbins. He got a 10% commission of the extra's pay. The pay was \$7.50 a day. Tom Gubbins would also equipt the extras with the proper costumes and props.
	294-295	Tom Gubbins also rented out rickshaws and wheelbarrows and other props for street scenes.
	296-300	Tom Gubbins hired Chinese predominantly although there were occasionally some Pilipinos, Koreans, and Japanese.
	301-329	Tom Gubbins hired extras for movies such as "The Bitter Tea of General Yen," "Good Earth," and other Pearl Buck stories. They also did war stories -- wars between China and Japan. Richard Loo became prominent during this time. It was also towards the end of the career of Anna May Wong. Victor Sen Yung used to also come around. GL used to see Chuck Yee and George Yee quite often. their older brother, Swan Yee, worked for Tom Gubbins. He often went to GL's restaurant to order food.
9	330-335	GL's restaurant enjoyed some good years, from 1933 on. The country was getting back on its feet again. GL's family worked hard.
	336-347	GL was able to return and finish college. GL waited on talbes. GL's sister was the cashier. GL's brother was the head waiter. GL's family was the nucleus of the restaurant business and they would hire waiters and cooks.
	348-365	Waiters and cooks would come around from other restaurants and ask for jobs. Old Chinatown was quite a settlement in itself before they built the Union Depot. They had tongs and family associations. People would call up and ask for cha nau () to be sent to their place. There was a cha nau chef along with two or three helpers.
	366-379	They had to stay up until about midnight on Saturday preparing the cha nau for Sunday. Every family member would specialize in one thing. GL and another young man

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	366-379	made ha gao. GL's sister made shu mai. The family had to pitch in -- particularly on weekends.
	380-392	At first, GL's family rented a house within walking distance to the City Market. The family then made a trip to China and when they returned they had to look for another house -- which they ended up buying.
10	393-403	GL's family was taken back to China on an ocean trip in 1919 and 1920 to visit their maternal grandparents. Six months after they came back to Los Angeles, GL's maternal grandfather passed away and his grandmother came and stayed with them for six or seven years.
	404-413	The only relation GL knew from his father's side was his father's older brother or GL's great uncle. GL's father had other brothers but they remained in China. One cousin came and lived with GL's family.
	414-422	GL's maternal grandmother lived with GL's family for six or seven years. She took care of the children so that GL's mother could go to Chinatown and teach Chinese at the school.
	423-427	GL's house was located on Tenth Street and Stanford Street, near the City Market.
	428-435	GL's grandmother took over the home duties -- she cooked, darned socks, and even taught GL some Chinese. GL did not go to Chinatown for Chinese lessons until he went to high school.
	436-442	GL went to high school across town -- to Lincoln High School. After school, he would get off at Chinatown to attend Chinese classes and then return home with his mother.
	443-464	When GL was born, his family shared a duplex with another Chinese family. The other Chinese family are pioneers of the Chinese community -- they were Milton Quon's mother's family. This was located five or six blocks east of San Pedro Street on a street called Paloma Street. GL was born at 16th and Paloma Street, not in a hospital.
11	465-470	There used to be an American midwife that attended to all the Chinese births.
	471-482	GL's family never lived in Chinatown. They always lived near the City Market to be close to his father's business. Their only contact with Chinatown was the church and Chinese school. Once a week, they went to Chiantown for Chinese provisions or "mai song."

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	<u>Tape 1 Side B</u>
1	001-009	After they made the second restaurant venture, the family looked for a bigger and nicer place to live. GL and his mother found a place in the Highland Park area. They still have it. It is a large 10-room colonial two-story house on a large piece of ground. For many years a landmark in that area.	
	010-027	Around the City Market, from Ninth to Twelfth Street, and from San Pedro Street to Central Avenue, the area was predominantly Chinese. There was a Chinese Congregational Church there that served the community. There were two or three restaurants over there -- New Moon, On Lok and Man Fok Low. Wing Chung Lung was one of the more popular Chinese markets in Chinatown, on Alameda Street. When the area was cleared out for the Union Depot, Wing Chung Low moved down to San Pedro Street.	
	028-031	The biggest concentration of Chinese, outside of Chinatown itself, was around the City Market.	
	032-038	GL attended grammar school at Ninth Street School. Many of the neighborhood children attended Chinese school. They honored Caroline Chan one of the teachers there. GL did not have her as a teacher -- she came a little bit after GL left Ninth Street School.	
2	039-054	The students at the school were Chinese, Mexicans, gypsies, Irish, and a pretty good cross section. In a classroom of thirty students, there would be five or six Chinese students while GL was attending that school. After GL's days, the percent of Chinese at the school increased. Still later, the Chinese population was even heavier. There were a lot of Anglos at the school.	
	055-065	After school, GL spent a lot of time studying Chinese while the other children were playing ball. Today, GL is grateful that he was made to study Chinese. GL studied Chinese at home. He went to Chinese school only after high school.	
	066-067	GL's mother even had some students that came to their house.	
3	068-076	One of GL's friends at that time was an Armenian boy. He now has a very busy television and radio shop. GL also had a lot of Japanese friends. They would come to GL's house after school and they would play together.	
	077-078	In college, one of GL's closest friends was a Japanese. The dances GL went to were attended by a mixture of Chinese and Japanese.	

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	079-084	GL and his friends would also go sketching and go play tennis.
	085-089	GL attended Lafayette Junior High School, east of Central Avenue and Fourteenth Street.
	090-099	While GL attended that school, there was a nice cross-section of people. When GL attended Lincoln High School, Robert Young attended the school at the same time -- he played in all the school plays. The girl that played opposite him is still married to him.
	100-106	Marie Wilson was the girl that went to junior high with GL. She was a very accomplished dancer. She was in the school plays. She then went to Hollywood. She was the star in the stage play "On The Black Out" in the 1940s.
4	107-116	Some of GL's friends would go home with GL to visit. GL did not go to other people's home very often. He had chores to do and did not have very much time to kill. GL's mother would assign chores for all the children.
	117-130	GL and his older brother also had to help out in the produce business. For a few hours after school, GL would dress up boxes of fruit by putting the best ones on top. GL's older brother had to work in the mornings before school.
	131-139	In those days, the produce business began at one o'clock in the morning. GL's father would go early in the morning to open up the stalls. GL's older brother worked a couple of hours before school. He would also help sometimes after school.
	140-148	In GL's family, their needs were all looked after including tuition, books, clothes, lunch money, music lessons, and car expenses. The children were trained to turn in the money they made into the family pot -- even the tips. From that, GL's mother would give them money for whatever they needed.
5	149-158	The first money GL ever made, he turned over to the family. GL got a two hundred dollar prize for a piece of sculpture at the County Fair and that was turned over to his parents. Yet, the children were never denied anything by their parents.
	159-167	Once GL's family got into the restaurant business, their weekends were occupied. Before that, they occasionally went on family picnics on the weekends. They may have gone either before the church service at two o'clock or may have left after church.

Interviewee: Gilbert Leong

Page: 8
1 Side B
Tape: 2 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	168-184	GL's family bought their first car in 1920. The brand name was Oberland. They bought their first sedan in the 1930s. In those days, there were not that many families.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE B

Tape 2 Side A

1	001-003	Introduction.
	004-010	There were about twenty or thirty families at that time. There were a lot of men whose families were back in China.
	011-015	The prominent family at that time was the Tee Leung family. Louise Larson Leung's family had a big house on Pico Street, which was used for meetings and dances for all the college students.
	016-021	The son-in-law was Peter Soo Hoo. The older daughter became the Vice Counsel for many years. Peter Soo Hoo was the founder of Chinatown.
	022-028	Of the families GL's family had contact with, there were about twenty or thirty families that had cars.
	029-035	GL's family went on a picnic on rare occasions. The church had a Fourth of July picnic which was the highlight of the whole season.
2	036-047	GL's family occasionally entertained at home -- sometimes relatives would come to town and usually it would be connected to the Church. Later on, GL's older brother's friends from college would stay for dinner at their house. Albert Quon used to work at USC the same as GL's brother.
	048-055	When GL was in junior high and high school, he joined some athletic activities but did not belong to any groups or clubs.
	056-061	GL never dated in high school. For one thing, there were not that many Chinese girls in those days.
	062-064	GL's school life was not that exciting.
	065-087	When GL was nine and his older brother was fifteen, their family went to China for only six months but GL's mother sent GL's older brother to Macao. He was sent to the school GL's mother went to and even had the same teacher. GL spent the six months in Canton and even had the same teacher. GL spent the six months in Canton and in Hunan with his grandparents. GL's older brother only

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	065-087	came back for vacations and the rest of the time was spent at school. The teacher's name was Chang Gee Boe. GL's mother was very proud that her first-born was able to go to that school. GL only remembers the teacher's name but not the name of the school. At that time, the teacher was rather well-known.
	088-090	GL spent most of the six months with his grandmother on the Lingnam campus. She was in charge of a girls dormitory there. The other children were still young -- four and five years old, so they stayed close to their mother.
	091-100	They were in China for six months. GL's brother was at school almost that whole time. Then their entire family returned to the United States together.
	101-103	GL's brother may have enjoyed the school because he was on his own. GL did not hear his brother talk about making friends at that school.
	4	104-110
111-117		GL's father went by the name Leung Geong. GL's father told GL that one would have a new name after marriage according to the Christian way. His name became Leung Gen San.
118-124		GL's mother's name was Woo Twai Lan. When she signed anything, she would use Woo See.
125-138		GL's family attended a small Methodist Church. There was a mission chair of them along the coast. An American superintendent would visit each mission two or three times a year. Each mission would have a Chinese minister. GL does not know how ordained these ministers were.
139-154		When the Chinese ministers retired, student ministers that spoke Chinese would take over. One of the student ministers was Lin Pee Lee from San Francisco. He served in GL's mission as a student minister. He had religious training either at a college level or at a seminary. He was active in YMCA work.
5	155-166	GL's mother started teaching Chinese in the mid-1920s and stayed with it for twenty-five years. She was paid by the home mission of the Church. She was paid twenty-five dollars a month. She was permitted to accept tuition from each student which was about two or three dollars a month. In those days, fifty or sixty dollars a month was subsistence.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	167-172	GL's mother taught Chinese every day of the week except Sundays. Classes on Saturdays went from nine to twelve in the morning. Classes on weekdays went from three to six in the afternoons.
	173-181	GL remembers going up to San Francisco so his mother could buy books from Fat Lin Gon See up there. Other times, they would send down Chinese brushes, muk in, and Chinese books. GL did not recall a Chinese bookstore in Los Angeles that would supply these things.
	182-189	Each church would have their own Chinese classes. In those days, these classes were taught in order to encourage the children to come to church. If the children attended school, they also had to attend Sunday services.
6	190-198	GL's mother had about twenty-five to thirty-five students. They were of different ages and different levels so she had about five different grades.
	199-202	While one grade was reciting in unison, the other levels would be writing or doing something else.
	203-211	GL's mother was also a member of a women's society. It was also affiliated with the church. It was called the Win One Circle. It was a pioneer women's club. The women were from three different churches -- the Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist.
	212-220	The women from these churches would meet once a month at someone's home. When the meeting was held at GL's house, GL had to help clean the place up. GL's mother would serve refreshments. This was a way of meeting women from the other side of town.
221-240	There were about twenty women involved in the Win One Circle. Mrs. Chan Kiu Sing was the leader of the club. She was the minister's wife. There were also different women from different churches. There was equal representation from each of the churches. The club would meet once a month. They would have a message and then sing songs and have refreshments. They also had charity activities. As far as GL knows, that was the first organization of Chinese women in Los Angeles.	
7	241-247	Since GL's mother did business in Chinatown, she participated in the Jung Hua activities, especially during the war years.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
7	248-268	GL's mother would go to different parts of the city to collect relief funds from pledges in the laundry and restaurant businesses. She did that for several years. she made these trips by herself. She could not drive and the children did not have time to drive her because of school. She would take the red car to these cities. There were other women involved in this but she was one of the more active participants.
	269-278	GL's father was also active in the church. He was converted to Christianity by GL's mother. He was converted after their marriage.
8	279-288	GL's father was very active in the CACA and also in the Kong Chow Association which is a village and provincial type of organization. People from the Sun Wei village were involved in this organization. GL's father served as the treasurer for many years. He was also the vice president.
	289-296	GL's father was an elder in the church. During the lean years when there was no minister, different elders would get up and preach for a particular Sunday. GL's father did it a number of times.
	297-312	The Chinese missions did not only have Chinese classes for the children but also night school for men. These men were either single or had their families in China. The classes were held to help them learn the English language so they could have better occupations.
	313-323	There were two or three American women that would teach English at night school. The men had a great gratitutde for these women that taught them English.
	324-327	GL's father must have learned some English by attending night school because he did not go to any public school. He also picked up some English from work.
9	328-342	GL's family spoke the city tongue of Cantonese. They were reprimanded if they replied in English. GL's mother also taught Chinese in the city dialect.
	343-366	The church was GL's social outlet at that time. The only relations GL had started in the church. GL has kept in contact with people that went to his church.
	367-375	GL met other church members through the classes and through social activities such as picnics or Sunday school socials.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	376-405	On Sundays, GL first attended Sunday school which was conducted in English. They had Bible lessons which were taught by appointed Sunday school teachers. As they got older, some of the students were appointed as Sunday school teachers. The second half of the service was a preaching service which was in Chinese. GL was exposed to the Chinese spoken language in that way. they would use an interpreter if they had an American man or woman preaching that service.
10	406-417	The church would have young people's groups which the Presbyterian Church called the Christian Endeavor, and the Methodists called the Epworth League.
	418-426	The League met one night a week.
	427-445	For a while, they had an evening service too but very few people attended. It was more like the different elders getting together to tell each other their experiences -- sort of like a community session of sorts.
11	446-462	The biggest celebration for GL's family was Christmas which was tied in with the church. Easter was tied in with the church. They would celebrate family birthdays. GL's parents would provide a little more sumptuous dinner for the occasion.
	463-486	they would go to a restaurant on rare occasions. There were only seven or eight restaurants in those days. The Chinese went to a restaurant to celebrate a birth or someone reaching an honorable age such as sixty or seventy years. Unlike today, people rarely went to restaurants in those days.

END OF TAPE 2 SIDE A

Tape 2 Side B

1	001-010	GL's family also observed the Fourth of July, and Thanksgiving. They would have a Thanksgiving turkey but Chinese usually prefer chicken. turkeys were not that prevalent in those days.
	011-016	During special occasions, GL's family would have meals that were half American and half Chinese style. For every day dinners, they would have two or three Chinese dishes.
	017-021	When GL was a kid, they did not have refrigerators so they were sent to the market to buy enough meat for that meal. All the supplies were gauged accordingly.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	022-025	Since GL's father was in the produce business, vegetables were no problem. The whole family was keen on vegetables.
	026-037	For breakfast, they would have toast and fruit half of the time. In a cold winter, GL's mother would cook rice for breakfast -- and they would have ham dan and lap chong, lap yok, lap pap. They also had ham yui. Since GL was eight years old, he stopped liking fish.
2	038-050	The Chinese women would make kok chai to exchange among the families. In those days, they did not have the choice of the complete line of Chinese food. They fell back on what they knew from the old country and carried on the traditions on the different festive days.
	051-060	They celebrated the Chinese "Geong" in May. In the summer they would have dai choyu go and leon fan. They could not buy those things in the market or in the restaurants in those days, the women had to make it.
	061-068	There were ice boxes in those days, but no refrigerators. GL's family had an ice box. Their first ice box was oak. They would put a twenty-five pound block of ice in there and the air would circulate. There had to be a tray at the bottom to catch the water.
3	069-079	Previous to the ice box, they would have cabinets with fly screens on them. That was kept on the back porch where more air would be circulating. Big batches of food would not be prepared and only enough would be made for the day's needs. They would usually not have any left-overs but if they did, they would place it in the cabinet and it would last at least over night.
	080-090	Chinese New Years was not a big celebration in GL's family. GL's mother was so Christian that she felt that Chinese New Years was more heathen and that if you were Christian, you should observe the Western calendar.
	091-102	There were not big celebrations in Chinatown until the 1930s. GL remembers the big Moon Festival around 1937 or 1938. There was a contest and a queen. Los Angeles Street was roped off and there were booths set up, and different foods sold. The event had something to do with raising money for the relief. Anna May Wong made an appearance.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	103-112	The Moon Festival was sponsored by the younger group that belonged to the Chamber of Commerce. All the neighbors pitched in. That was the first festival in Chinatown that GL recalls.
4	113-115	They roped it off from Sunset to where the Gan Yeh building is now. It was well attended.
	116-119	Beside the booths and food, there were lion dances and firecrackers. The first dragon may have come out during that time.
	120-136	There are some old pictures in the Archives that Bill Mason has which were taken soon after 1900 during New Years. There was some sort of parade too. It did attract some Caucasian friends.
	137-149	GL's father belonged to the CACA because they were supposedly native sons of the Golden State. In the early days, the CACA had great meaning because they looked out and lobbied for laws and backed candidates that would be beneficial to the Chinese.
5	150-154	Those that were in business in Chinatown belonged to the Chamber of Commerce so that they could get together and set up a code of ethics for business protection and business promotion.
	155-163	When GL's father was in the produce business, he belonged to a produce merchant association. The organization was formed to protect the members in their business transactions.
	164-166	The prices of the produce was set by supply and demand.
	167-170	When GL's family was in the restaurant business, there were not enough restaurants to have a restaurant association in the 1920s and 1930s.
	171-172	When GL's family opened their second restaurant in Chinatown in 1933, they were the seventh restaurant to open.
	173-177	Each restaurant set their own prices. If their prices were too high, they would suffer. It was supply and demand.
	178-183	GL's family was one of the first to offer the family style dinner. They printed up a fixed menu.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	<u>Tape 3 Side A</u>
1	001-003	Introduction.	
	004-009	Previous to that, people used to come to the restaurant and each person would order their own dish. Then they started ordering different dishes and sharing them.	
	010-017	the family-style dinner was a set menu. There was a house soup, and a variety of four or five dishes regardless of how many people there were in the party. That encouraged more people, especially families to go to the restaurant.	
	018-029	The dinner ranged from fifty cents to a dollar and a quarter. For a fifty cent dinner there would be fried rice, pork chow mein, a patty of egg foo young, two or three pieces of fried shrimp, house soup, and fortune cookies for dessert. For the top dinner, there was almond duck and almond chicken, fried rice, peas -- each dinner was a complete dinner except there were different dishes.	
	030-032	This was in the early 1930s -- then the prices went up.	
2	033-041	There were no unions at that time. The employer and the employee would negotiate the wages to be paid. Waiters were paid a minimum each week, their pay was mainly from tips.	
	042-056	Wages were not regulated and raises were not given regularly. The restaurant provided three meals a day for each worker. Generally, a man worked ten hours a day in those days. Some would work through the lunch hour and then take a two hour break before coming back. The cooks would also rotate.	
	057-075	Since GL's father was in the restaurant business, he did not have to make trips back to China. The supplies were purchased from the local suppliers or from San Francisco. They would buy supplies from San Francisco in larger quantities and the restaurant owner would invariably end up with a warehouse of some sort. Buying in large quantities would also be cheaper. They would order bamboo shoots, mushrooms, tea, dried bean curd, all in large quantities.	
3	076-083	The majority of the restaurant customers were Caucasians that would come down to Chinatown for a Chinese dinner. Since GL's restaurant served cha nau also, they had a good patronage of Chinese, especially on the weekends.	
	084-089	GL's father would be able to go to church on Sunday afternoons even though the restaurant was busy on the weekends.	

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	090-094	In the last fifteen or so years, most of the churches have their services in the mornings.
	095-099	GL's father belonged to the CACA and Gong Chow. When he was in the market business, he belonged to the merchants' association and when he was in the restaurant business, he belonged to Chung Hua.
	100-114	Since GL's father was a member of the CACA, he took great pride in voting which was something for a Chinese in those days. GL's father also attended some conventions. Some of the conventions would be in Los Angeles and some of the banquets were held in their restaurant.
4	115-124	GL was never a member of the CACA. One time, they filled the Breakfast Club on Los Feliz. These conventions were look up to as big things. They were held once a year and they would select different cities.
	125-127	GL does not know of any other of the CACA activities.
	128-136	GL's father read the Chiense newspapers avidly. He did not take part in any of the Chinese politics.
	137-150	GL's father was a Republican. Most of the CACA members were politically aware. The other Chinese participated very little and just went about their daily lives. Only in the last twenty years did the Chinese start running for offices. Gilbert Wong may have been the first.
5	151-165	GL's parents did talk about returning to China. If the Japanese war and the Communist takeover did not take place, most Chinese would have wanted to return to China to retire.
	166-168	GL's father's older brother was in the U.S. and did return to China.
	169-181	At that time, most of the Chinese sent money back to the other members of the family in China. Many sent money home to nephews and nieces for their education. For many years, GL's family received letters from their relatives telling GL's family what they needed.
	182-190	GL's relatives would ask for money to get married, to put a down payment on something, to send their kids to school. GL's father responded as well as he could.
6	191-193	GL's father did not own land in China.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	194-212	GL's mother also sent money back to her relatives. She would remember her parents and sisters during Christmas and New Years. She also sent for her younger brother to live with them and even put him through college. He was the same age as GL's older brother and they went to USC together.
	213-220	GL's family was small. There are not too many Leungs in Los Angeles.
	221-235	There were no serious illnesses in GL's family. For minor illnesses, GL's family believed in certain herbs but also went to Western doctors.
7	236-245	GL's mother would cook herbs in meat and give the children more nourishment. GLs was very small and asthmatic in his younger days. He put away a lot of Chinese herbs and bitter tea.
	246-258	There were a few herbalists in the town that GL's mother went to. There were about a dozen of them. Two or three of the most successful herbalists treated the Caucasian public -- such as Dr. Tom Leung and Dr. G.S. Chin.
	259-275	The herbalist would take the patient's pulse and look at their tongue and then listen to their symptoms. Then he would write out a perscription to be filled at the herb store. The herbalist would be paid in red paper money -- lei see. It was about three to five dollars.
8	276-287	Gee Ning Tong was one of the herb stores at that time. They would always manage to fill the prescription properly even though there were no numbers or names on the drawers. If the customer was willing to wait, they would brew the herbs in the back room. The customers would wait on the beautifully carved teak wood chairs.
	288-298	The herbs would be wrapped in white paper and folded at the corner with no strings or anything. There were always two dates or raisins included in the package to clear the mouth after drinking the tea.
	299-306	GL first thought about going into medicine until he found out that it required eight years of schooling.
	307-315	GL's older brother old GL that he may be interested in going into architecture. GL did not even know what architecture was. He did not draw in his younger years. He took a few violin lessons that did not take.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
8	316-324	GL then registered at USC as a freshman in architecture. The first year was very basic -- they studied the historical cultures. After the third year, they started designing classes.
9	325-338	During the Depression years, GL had to stop college and started working in the restaurant after his third year.
	339-360	After working a couple of years, GL returned to USC. GL won a summer scholarship at Shinnard Art School. After that summer, GL stayed two years studying modeling and sculpture from Merrell Gauge. GL was at Shinnard in 1933 and 1934. It was located just south of Seventh Street and Park View.
	361-364	It was quite an art school.
	365-375	GL's mother always wanted all her children to go to college. She was the motivating force. Even during the learn years, she would somehow scrape up the tuition to allow her children to go to school.
	376-386	In those days, it was ten dollars a unit at USC. For a whole year it was about 330 or 340 dollars.
10	387-400	Being native born, GL's family found that it was impossible to get any help from the University. The University would always give partial or full scholarships to the Chinese students from China. Yet, it was very difficult for the local Chinese to get any financial help from the University.
	401-408	GL went to USC because he wanted to study architecture. At that time, there were only three schools in the area with architecture courses -- U.C. Berkeley, Washington, and USC.
	409-422	GL's older brother, Edward, studied engineering at college. Because of the Depression, his education was interrupted and he was unable to graduate.
	423-431	GL's sister also graduated from USC. She studied liberal arts and was a music major. She played the piano at church. GL's younger brother went to college for three years but decided to work after that.
	432-456	Personally, GL did not experience any racial discrimination in his field. In architecture, if you have the talent, people would want to hire you.
11	457-463	Architects were apprentices for the first two years and earned very meager salaries in order to gain the experience and get into an office.

Interviewee: Gilbert Leong

Page: 19

3 Side A

Tape: 3 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
11	464-478	GL's first two or three months were in an office with no pay. He was like an office boy -- he ran errands, he traced, and after six months, he was given a little more responsibility.

END OF TAPE 3 SIDE A

Tape 3 Side B

1	002-014	The architecture graduates today are pretty well equipped to go to work after five years of school. They can be junior draftsmen after four or five years of schooling. This was not the case in GL's days.
	015-018	At that time, GL was tempted to go into motion picture set designing. He tried it for a year but a lull hit the studios and GL was let out and he never went back.
	019-020	GL started in architecture at the bottom and kept slugging.
	021-031	There was not a strong urge to bring his talents back to China. GL realized that he was born in the U.S. and that his knowledge of Chinese was meager. It would have been quite a hardship for him to try to make it in China. GL was content to take his chances in the U.S.
	032-041	GL participated in student clubs and in dances during college. They would have dances about three or four times a year -- usually after football games. This was among the Chinese students.
2	042-043	They also had meetings to discuss the dances.
	044-050	They usually went out in groups in those days. They did not do much steady dating.
	051-057	In those days, dating non-Chinese girls was not the thing to do. GL's first dates were with Chinese girls from school.
	058-064	GL met his wife after college. He met her because their businesses were on the same block. Her family had a Chinese importing business on the corner of the same block as GL's family restaurant.
	065-072	Her family also started a small restaurant that seated 90 people. It was located in the basement of their store. It was called the Dragon's Den and it became a very popular place.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	073-091	The brick walls in the basement were painted with many coats of fine paint. GL's brother-in-law had some artist friends that decorated the place -- one of the artists was Tyrus Wong, and the other was his Japanese friend. They painted Oriental murals covering all the walls in the restaurant. They painted figures in Oriental costumes and symbolic items. It was a work of art. A lot of the art-minded people loved to go there for dinner.
	092-099	In those days, there were no arranged marriages, although the children sought the sanction of their parents.
	100-111	When World War II came along, GL was just out of college and had about one or two years of experience. In those days, many of the people deferred for a while and did defense work. GL deferred for a year and was then drafted into the Army in 1943.
4	112-115	GL was in the Army for three and a half years. He was sent to the east coast.
	116-119	The Chinese were not segregated in the Army. There were units that were made up of completely Chinese -- GL did not belong to such a unit.
	120-124	Some of GL's friends were placed in these units and ended up in the Asiatic theater of war.
	125-129	GL's years were spent in Memphis, Tennessee. GL's wife, Florence, joined him and one of the children was born there.
	130-131	GL corresponded with his college classmates during the war years.
	132-137	GL's closest college friend was a Japanese boy. He was also in architecture but chose to go into the movies and became a movie director.
	138-145	In GL's School of Architecture, there was a man from Shanghai who GL went to meet at the San Pedro wharf. He had one suitcase and had five dollars in his pocket. He was a brave individual.
5	146-155	He already had a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from the University of Shanghai, and came to start another five years of architecture. Not only did he finish his architecture, but he returned and got a masters degree.

Interviewee: Gilbert Leong

Page: 21

3 Side B

Tape: 4 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	156-166	Being from the old country, the Western way of life was different for him. He excelled in engineering more so than design. GL never liked engineering. As a result, the two of them teamed up and started a partnership in Van Nuys which they operated for five or six years.
	167-170	they then moved back to Los Angeles. Unfortunately, he then died fo cancer at a young age.
	171-178	They started the partnership in 1951 and were together for five or six years.
	179-185	There were about twenty-five to thirty Chinese students at USC during GL's days.
6	186-191	There were a lot of Chinese students from China so there were two factions -- the FOB's (foreign born) and the ABC's (American born Chinese)

END OF TAPE 3 SIDE B

Tape 4 Side A

1	001-003	Introduction.
	004-009	Their dialects were different but other than that, they were pretty compatible.
	010-015	The students from China came to get an education and planned to return to China afterwards. They already had a Chinese background and when they returned to China they could go for high posts.
	016-019	The Chinese students from China were slightly older than the American born students. Some already had some college education in China before they came over.
	020-025	GL's best friend in college was a Japanese. They both liked to play tennis, to sketch and do watercolors, and GL's friend was willing to help GL's family out at the restaurant.
	026-027	GL's friend was heavy-set and muscular -- they had quite a time getting him in one of those tight white jackets.
	028-033	GL's parents accepted him. As long as he was GL's friend, he welcomed. He often visited GL's family at the restaurant.
2	034-042	It was not until the war years with Japan that GL's mother got involved with collecting funds for China relief. GL's parents still refer to that period as the "Rape of Shanghai." It was only natural for GL's parents to be against the Japanese.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
2	043-046	GL's mother did not direct any of these feelings towards GL's Japanese friend. He was all right as long as he was GL's personal friend.
	047-056	GL's mother spent all her extra hours canvassing the town in the red car to collect the monthly pledges. The money was brought back to the Chung Hua to record and send back to China.
	057-059	GL's mother belonged to the Women's Auxillary of the Chung Hua and was very active during those war years.
	060-073	There were no parades during the Sino-Japanese war since no celebrations were in order. There were a lot of meetings and pep rallies to stir up more Chinese citizens to support the war efforts.
3	074-076	Chinese throughout the country took the China relief drive very seriously.
	077-081	Japan fought and occupied China as early as 1936 or 1937 -- four or five years before the war was declared by the United States on Japan which was 1942.
	082-083	During all those years, GL's mother was actively involved in the war effort.
	084-101	A Chinese doctor from Singapore was studying at the White Memorial Hospital at that time. He went around to the service clubs to speak. He is Dr. Samuel Phang. He would speak about the war situation -- he was a political speaker.
	102-114	Around this time, Old Chinatown was being torn down to make room for the Union Depot and the Chinese businesses there moved up to North Broadway in 1938. The first ones to move were those east of Alameda Street. The ones west of Alameda Street had a prolonged stay because they did not have to move -- GL's family was in that group.
4	115-129	The first to move to New Chinatown were Grandview Gardens, Hong Kong Low (previously called Goy Ing Low), Man Jen Low, Tuey Far Low, and the art and curio stores. Yee Hong Guey was a little successful restaurant on Alameda Street. It did not hold more than thirty people. There was sawdust on the floor and people sat on round stools. It was originally a restaurant for the Chinese men with no families.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	130-143	The meals were fifty cents or less. They would have a ouse soup, all the rice they could eat, and one or two main dishes. The place was put on the map because Harry Carr was a feature writer at the Times and wrote about that restaurant. From then on, American clientele would start eating there. Another feature of that restaurant was the kitchen was exposed and there would be a line of people waiting to get in.
	144-157	When this restaurant moved to New Chinatown, they went to Hill Street and they kept the exposed kitchen. For many years there would be a line up at that place. They were a great success for about ten years until other Chinese restaurants opened up and competition wore them down. They were the first Chinese restaurant with an exposed kitchen.
5	158-167	GL's family did not move until 1946. In the meantime, they had a second restaurant in New Chinatown. It was called the Soo Chow Restaurant which they bought over.
	168-180	for that restaurant, GL used a gold pattern tea paper for all the walls. GL made some large theatrical masks for decoration. There is a picture of these masks in a book called "Los Angeles" by Gardine Louie.
	181-186	GL no longer has the masks -- they deteriorated finally. The restaurant was also sold, finally. It then went through several hands.
6	187-188	Richard Fong took it over for a while.
	189-194	Unfortunately, the restaurant is on a little street blocked off by Grandview on one end. It is far enough from Broadway that it is not very visible.
	195-203	GL's family enjoyed several years there. The China Society used to meet in that restaurant. They were served a special dinner. There were tables of ten.
	204-209	GL had nothing to do with either New Chinatown or China City because he was still in school at that time.
	210-220	Peter Soo Hoo is the founder of New Chinatown. While GL was in school, Peter Soo Hoo showed GL the plans for New Chinatown. Peter was one of the fraternity brothers of their fraternity. GL was not personally involved in Chinatown until years later when he had his own practice.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	221-234	GL did several association buildings such as the Gau Gong Association building and the Baptist Church. He also did the whole block where David Chow is. He did the showroom and the warehouse, and the living quarters for Mrs. Fong See who is GL's wife's step-mother. GL also remodelled other places like the Celestial and the Pagoda. GL also did some homes for Chinese in the Silver Lake area.
7	235-242	GL did the home for Dr. Edward Lee, for Dr. George Chan and for Lilly Soo Hoo, the vice counsel.
	243-248	GL also designed the Kong Chow building, which is now the East West Savings and Loans downstairs and the association hall of the Sun Wei village upstairs.
	249-263	At their old restaurant on Los Angeles, there was a little alley at the rear of the restaurant which could be entered from Ferguson Alley. There was a Gong Giau temple there. It was a two-story building -- the meeting hall was downstairs and the temple was upstairs.
	264-270	In the temple was a big Huang Kong figure, calligraphy plaques, embroidery trappings, long swords, and a big gong.
	271-276	When Chinatown had to move, all these things were stored in a warehouse for a number of years until the Gong Giau building was built in 1960.
8	277-285	On dedication day, the relics were taken out of storage and were paraded through the streets to the new building and installed in the new temple. It was quite a celebration.
	286-313	There is a caretaker at the temple -- he is the man you buy the incense, candles, and paper money from. The Chinese come to bai san and then they bring food and do their incantations. The worshippers are mostly women.
	314-322	Today, with the influx of Chinese from Taiwan and Hong Kong, the temple is a busy place.
	323-338	They bai san during certain days as stated in their almanac. There is a Goddess of Mercy there -- Kwan Yam. The main god is the Huang Kung -- he is over lifesize.
9	339-354	People from Kong Chow, Sun Wei, and Hok San are automatically welcomed to support the Kung Giau Association.

Interviewee: Gilbert Leong

Page: 25

4 Side A

Tape: 4 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	355-370	There are nominal annual dues of about four dollars a year. They have heong yau which is a donation to keep the oil burning in the temple. After people make a donation, they are given a receipt on a pink piece of paper, and a duplicate of that is pinned up on the wall.
	371-380	The Chinese that had to move because of the building of the Union Depot made up the majority of the people in Old Chinatown at that time.
	381-390	The Chinese knew they had to move so they formed a corporation and bought land in the North Broadway section.
10	391-408	The first buildings built in that area were Chung Hua Huay Gun and Y.C. Hong's Lee Hoo, which he leased, Man Jen Low, Tuey Far Low, Grandview, Yee Hong Guey and the Ging Hing and the CACA a little later.
	409-414	The CACA was in the Gan Yeh building and Ging Hing was on Los Angeles Street so both were east of Alameda and part of the second half that moved.
	415-461	In the Gan Yeh building there was the Chung Hua Huay Gun on the left and the CACA on the right. That was where some of the dances were held. The Bing Gung Tong was also on that block. The Gan Yeh building consisted of six stores. The section north of that were Chinese stores including the only Chinese drug store which was owned and operated by Dr. Chee. He was a pharmacist and a doctor. He also had a soda fountain and that was the Sugar Bowl. Now it is a fire station.
11	462-469	Upstairs from the drug store was a small restaurant called the Yin King Low.
	470-481	Next to the drug store was a rattan and bamboo place owned by the Lao family.

END OF TAPE 4 SIDE A

Tape 4 Side B

1	003-012	China City was built a little before New Chinatown was built. It was built along the lines of a movie set -- or what Hollywood thought what Chinatown would be like. The streets were zig zagged and mostly one-story shops and restaurants. It was quite a tourist attraction. There were rickshaws.
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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	013-019	The rickshaws would take the tourists around that area. There were art shops, restaurants, a linen shop, and a tropical fish store owned by Charlie Lux.
	020-030	Roland Gah's family operated a small restaurant in China City. There was also a place called The Junk whose interior was like a Chinese junk. It was operated by Lou Chan, who did bits in movies. It was operated like a bar.
	031-036	Tom Gubbins had a costume shop and a curio and art shop in China City. The shop is the same art store presently operated by GL's wife and her brothers.
2	037-051	New Chinatown was being built at that time and the architectural designs were made by a pretty well-known firm. It looked more substantial and the Chinese were proud of it. The old faction of Chinese did not think that China City was a credit to the Chinese as compared to the New Chinatown.
	052-054	Most of the larger establishments and the investments went to the North Broadway area. In China City, there were mostly small shops and renters.
	055-056	GL does not know who owned China City.
	057-062	New Chinatown gradually had the pull and the attraction and so it became more successful than China City. There were also a few fires in China City. After the fire, there was some slow rehabilitation.
	063-066	There was even an art gallery there. There were not many Chinese artists in those days -- there was Tyrus Wong and his Japanese friends: Benji Ukodo and Hidachi.
	067-071	GL exhibited several pieces of sculpture there. George Channalso exhibited there. It was a small gallery with five or six artists. They lost everything during the fire.
3	072-104	Chinatown on Spring Street developed after China City went down. It was more for Chinese food markets, meat markets, restaurants, and the Chinese motion picture theater which GL designed. It is called the Sing Lee Theater. It seats around 400 people with a sloping floor and a stage suitable for Chinese opera. On their opening night, a Chinese troupe from San Francisco performed there. This was around 1962. They no longer show live operas there anymore, just Chinese motion pictures.

Interviewee: Gilbert Leong

Page: 27

4 Side B

Tape: 5 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	105-114	When New Chinatown opened, there was a fanfare to promote the new businesses. There was a lion dance and the dragon dance on New Years. They started the parade business.
	115-119	GL remembers when some of the dragons were internally lit with batteries and there was smoke from the firecrackers. There were neon lanterns on the streets. There were food booths.
	120-130	GL does not often get a chance to design Chinese buildings but when the opportunity arises, GL uses Chinese styles in decoration or design in a restrained way.
	131-139	Since GL's wife's side of the family has always dealt in Oriental art, GL has an increased appreciation for these things.
	140-152	GL also appreciates good calligraphy. He also always had a liking for three-dimensional art and that is why GL works with clay and does sculptures.
5	153-176	Recently, GL has been involved with the Pacific Asian Museum in Pasadena. It is a unique small museum with a 100 percent Chinese building done in the Chinese palace style. The owner of the building was a very successful importer named Grace Nicholson. She wanted the building designed for her business. She had galleries, living quarters, guest quarters, an auditorium, and a garden there. Recently, GL has been a director at this place for three or four years. GL is the Chinese architect and there is a Japanese architect too. Their job is to preserve the building as it was intended.
	177-181	After GL's trip to China, he was very impressed with the courtyards in China. He saw an opportunity to remodel the 50 year old garden at the museum into an authentic Chinese courtyard.
	182-190	GL received a substantial grant from the C.F. Braun family.

END OF TAPE 4 SIDE B

Tape 5 Side A

1	001-003	Introduction.
	004-024	The Chinese courtyard gardens had huge rocks placed in strategic places. GL's job was to find these rocks which they did from Wichita, Kansas. One of the

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	004-024	founders of the museum had a ranch in Kansas and they got rocks from there. GL went to Kansas and saw a while field of these eroded rock formations.
	025-028	There were so many rocks that they did not know which ones to pick. They had to be realistic because the rocks had to be trucked back.
	029-034	As a result, they have seven or eight rocks at the courtyard. The courtyard is the only one of its kind in the U.S. The museum is located in downtown Pasadena, on Los Robles, half a block from Colorado Boulevard.
2	035-051	GL also belongs to the Chinese Historical Society. The members have a common interest in finding the roots of the Chinese Americans in California. One of the important functions of this society is not only to uncover history for the people of today and tomorrow but also to preserve it.
	052-057	GL has an office in Chinatown. Previous to that, GL had an office in the Los Feliz area. When GL did a Chinese supermarket for Jack Lee, he wanted a series of offices upstairs for Chinese professionals.
	058-061	The building has been done for 13 or 14 years. When it was completed, Jack Lee asked GL to be a tenant. GL planned to move in for only one or two years but he has been there ever since.
	062-066	Jack Lee's store is Yee SingChong. He has now become the most successful businessman in Chinatown.
	067-081	In the last few years, there has been a great influx of new people into the area -- first from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and recently from Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and so forth.
3	082-083	The Chinese were the great nomads -- or the Jews of the Orient so to speak.
	084-101	GL has noticed a great influx of Vietnamese. The loan applications in the East West Savings and Loans used to be immediately recognizably Chinese since they had the one syllable last names. Then came the northerners with a little different way of spelling. With the recent influx of the other Asians, there are names on the loan applications that are no longer the familiar Lee, Chang, and Wong.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	102-115	The Chinese moved to all parts of the world. Many of them changed their names so that they are not discriminated against. A wong down in Mexico tacked something on to the end of his name which is no longer recognizably Chinese.
4	116-133	The U.S. has always been looked upon as the great melting pot and it has been a land of opportunity for the Europeans. Now it seems as if the Asians are taking advantage too and they come for education and for business. This will all bring about a better life and a better world. Everyone has something to contribute. GL thinks that tomorrow will be better than today.
	134-147	Most of the Chinese ancestors that came to America came to seek better opportunities for work. The conditions in the Chinese villages were not that great at the turn of the century. The opportunity to go to Gin Sam, America, was the ambition of every Chinese.
5	148-149	GL does not know if his father had to borrow money to come to the U.S.
	150-165	In GL's family, all the children have English names. GL's mother gave her children Chinese names. She depended on the Chan Kui Sing family for guidance and help. GL thinks thta they were named by the Cheng family.
	166-173	GL often wonders about their names being so Americanized. GL asked Caroline Chan about it and she told him that they did the best they could. GL's mother would call them up the night before and that did not leave much time for research and such.
	174-182	GL's mother named GL's daughter. Her name is Man Gai En which is the name of a famous musician in Chinese history. GL's daughter is not a musician.
6	183-197	GL's daughters was not sent to Chinese school. When she was a child, GL's grandmother gave her some primary tutoring in Chinese. Later on, in college, she took an interest and had several Mandarin courses. She then went to Taiwan for several months. She taught English there and learned some Chinese in exchange.

Interviewee: Gilbert Leong

Page: 30

Tape: 5 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	198-208	In GL's college days, there were more men than there were women students. At USC, there was a Chinese student club. The ratio of women to men was 1 to 2 or 1 to 3.
	209-216	Half the women were foreign students and half were local born Chinese girls.

END OF TAPE 5 SIDE A

END OF INTERVIEW

- Americanization, 5A:5
 Angel Island, California, 1A:2
 Architects, 3A:10-11; 3B:1
 Architecture, 4B:2
 Arranged marriages, 3B:3
 arrangers of, 1A:3
 Art and Artists, 4B:2; 3B:3; 4B:4
 Asiatic Costume Company, 1A:7
 Assimilation, 5A:4
 Automobiles, 1B:5; 2A:1
- Bing Kong Tong, 4A:10
 Buck, Pearl, 1A:8
- Carr, Harry, 4A:4
 Celebrations and holidays
 2A:2, 11; 2B:1, 3-4; 4A:8;
 4B:4
 changes in, 2B:3
 eaten for, 2B:2
 Celestial Restaurant, 4A:6
 Cha nau (tea cake), 1A:9
 Chamber of Commerce, 2B:3, 5
 Chan, Caroline, 1B:1; 5A:5
 Chan, George (Dr.)
 residences of, 4A:7
 Chan, Kui Sing, 2A:6; 5A:5
 Chang, Gee Boe, 2A:3
 Chann, George, 4B:2
 Children
 and working mothers, 1A:10
 birth of, 1A:2
 Chin, G. S., 3A:7
 China City, 4B:1
 China Society, 4A:6
 China relief, 2A:7; 4A:2, 3
 China
 education in, 2A:3
 money sent back to, 3A:5
 return to, 1A:1, 9-10; 2A:2, 3-4;
 3A:5; 3B:1; 4A:1; 4B:5
- China
 Communist takeover
 Chinese American attitude toward
 3A:5
- Chinatown (Los Angeles)
 Vietnamese in, 5A:3
 and China City, 4B:2
 as tourist attraction, 4B:2-3
 attraction of, 4B:1, 2
- Chinatown (Los Angeles)
 buildings of, 4A:10-11
 businesses in, 1A:7, 9; 1B:1;
 4A:10-11; 4B:1, 3
 changes of, 5A:3
 founding of, 4B:4
 locations of, 1B:1; 4A:3-4
 move of, 4A:3-4, 5, 9
 population of, 2A:1
 restaurants in, 4A:4
 visited by Chinese Americans
 1A:11
 women in, 2A:6
- Chinese American Citizens Alliance
 2A:8; 2B:4; 3A:3
 conventions of, 3A:3
 social activities of, 3A:3
- Chinese Congregational Church, 1B:1
- Chinese Consolidated Benevolent
 Association
 women in, 2A:7; 4A:2
- Chinese Garden Cafe, 1A:5-6
 food served in, 1A:6
- Chinese Historical Society of
 Southern California, 5A:2
- Chinese churches, 2A:5, 9; 3A:3
 language spoken in, 2A:9
- Chinese language
 attitudes toward, 1B:2
 in homes, 2A:9
 learning of, 2A:9; 5A:6
- Chinese opera, 4B:3
- Chinese schools, 1A:3, 10
 attitudes toward, 1B:2
 class size in, 2A:6
 hours spent in, 1A:7; 2A:5
 sponsors of, 1A:7; 2A:5
 supplies for, 2A:5
 teachers in, 1A:10; 2A:5
 tuition paid to, 2A:5
- Christian Endeavor, 2A:10
- City Market, 1A:4-5, 11
 Chinese Americans in, 1A:1
- Correspondence
 with American friends, 3B:4
- Cost of living, 3A:1
- Courtships and marriages, 3B:2
- Depression, economic (1929-1939)
 1A:6; 3A:9, 10
- Discrimination, 3A:10; 5A:3

- Dragon's Den Restaurant, 3B:2-3
- East West Savings and Loans
architect of, 4A:7
- Education
and missionary, 1A:2
children sent to China for
2A:2-4
for adult, 2A:8
importance of, 3A:9
sex ratios in, 5A:6
- English language, 1A:6
learning of, 2A:8
- Families and family life, 1A:9;
1B:4-5; 2A:1; 2B:1, 3
as economic unit, 1B:5
father's roles in, 1B:4
language spoken in, 2A:9
members remaining in China, 1A:10
mother's roles in, 1B:4
size of, 1A:1, 3; 3A:6
women's roles in, 1A:10
- Family style dinners, 2B:5; 3A:1
price of, 3A:1
- Ferguson Alley, Los Angeles, 4A:7
- Fong See (Mrs.), 4A:6
- Fong, Richard, 4A:6
- Food, 2B:2
American vs. Chinese, 2B:1
ingredients used in, 2B:1
preparation of, 2B:3
- Foreign born Chinese, 3B:5-6; 4A:1
- Fourth of July, 2A:2; 2B:1
- Friendships
among Chinese Americans, 1A:8
with other ethnic groups, 1B:3;
3B:4; 4B:2
- Gah, Roland, 4B:1
- Gardens, 4B:5; 5A:1
- Gauge, Merrell, 3A:9
- Gee Ning Tong, 3A:8
- Good Earth, 1A:8
- Grandview Garden Restaurant, 4A:4
- Gubbins, Tom, 1A:7, 8; 4B:1
- Hee, Marjorie, 1A:3
- Herbal medicine
fee structure for, 3A:7
- Herbal medicine
herbs
preparation of, 3A:8
taste of, 3A:7
used in food, 3A:7
- patients
treatment of, 3A:7
training for, 3A:8
- Highland Park, Los Angeles
Chinese Americans in, 1B:1
- Hong Kong Low Restaurant, 4A:4
- Hong You Chung Building, 4A:10
- Housing patterns, 1A:9, 10
Chinese American clustering, 1B:1
structure size, 1B:1
- Ice box, 2B:2
- Immigrants and immigration, 1A:1;
5A:2-3
arrival, 1A:2
confinement upon, 1A:2
family separated by, 1A:2
mode of transportation, 1A:2
reasons for, 5A:4
- Kong Chow Association, 2A:8; 4A:9
dues and donations to, 4A:9
officers of, 2A:8
- Kong Chow Building
architect of, 4A:7
dedication ceremonies of, 4A:8
- Kong Chow Temple
locations of, 4A:7
- Kong, Albert, 1A:4
- Lafayette Junior High School, 1B:3
- Lai see, 3A:7
- Lee, Edward (Dr.)
residences of, 4A:7
- Lee, Jack, 5A:2
- Lee, Lin Pee, 2A:4
- Leong, Edward, 3A:10
- Leong, Elmer, 1A:3
- Leong, Florence See, 1A:1
- Leong, Gilbert
and Celestial Restaurant, 4A:6
and Chinatown buildings, 5A:2
and East West Savings and Loans
Building, 4A:7
and Gau Gong Association, 4A:6
and Kong Chow Building, 4A:7

- Leong, Gilbert
 and Pagoda Restaurant, 4A:6
 and Sing Lee Theater, 4B:3
 birth of, 1A:1
 birth of, 1A:10
 children of , 1A:1
 courtship and marriage of, 3B:2,
 daughter of, 5A:5-6
 education of, 1A:1, 3, 10;
 1B:1-3; 2A:2; 3A:8
 friendships of, 1A:8; 1B:2-4;
 3B:4-5; 4A:1
 grandmother of, 1A:10; 2A:3
 honors received by, 1B:5
 military service of, 3B:3-4
 occupation of, 1A:1; 3A:8, 11;
 3B:5; 4A:6
 organizations involved in, 4B:5
 organizations involved in, 5A:2
 parents of, 1A:1-5; 1B:2; 2A:4-8;
 2B:4; 3A:3-6; 4A:2,3; 5A:5
 recreational activities of
 2A:2, 9
 religion of, 1A:3, 7; 2A:9
 return to China by, 2A:2
 sibling of, 1A:3, 9; 1B:4; 2A:3;
 3A:10
 social activities of, 3B:1-,
 spouse of, 1A:1; 3B:2; 4B:4
 uncle of, 1A:1; 3A:6
 working experiences of, 1A:6, 9;
 1B:4; 3B:1
 Leong, Kew Hung, 1A:3
 Leong, Leslie Ann, 1A:1
 Leong, Yun Gee, 1A:3
 Leong, Yun Kwon, 1A:3
 Leong, Yun Lum, 1A:3
 Leung, Geong, 2A:4
 Leung, Tom, 3A:7
 Lin, Pee Lee, 2A:4
 Lincoln High School, 1B:3
 Ling Nam University, 2A:3
 Loo, Richard, 1A:8
 Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles
 2B:3
 Lux, Charlie, 4B:1

 Man Jen Low Restaurant, 4A:4
 Man, Gai En, 5A:5-6
 Matchmakers, 1A:3

 Marriages
 in China, 1A:3
 mate selection patterns in, 1A:3
 Medical practices
 Chinese medicine vs. Western
 medicine, 3A:6
 Methodist Church, 2A:4
 Midwives, 1A:11
 Ministers, 2A:4
 Ministers, 2A:8
 Moon Festival, 2B:3
 Movie industry
 Chinese Americans in, 1A:8
 Japanese Americans in, 1A:8
 Korean Americans in, 1A:8
 Pilipino Americans in, 1A:8

 Names and naming, 5A:3, 5
 Newspapers, 3A:4
 Nicholson, Grace, 4B:5
 Ninth Street School, 1B:1-2

 Occupation patterns, 3A:10-11
 and education, 2A:8
 On the Black Out, 1B:3
 Opera
 -Chinese, 4B:3

 Pacific Asian Museum, 4B:5; 5A:1
 founders of, 4B:5; 5A:1
 Pagoda Restaurant, 4A:6
 Phang, Samuel (Dr.), 4A:3
 Pidgin English, 1A:6
 Politics
 in local government, 3A:4
 Produce Merchant Association, 2B:5
 Produce business, 1A:4
 customers of, 1A:4
 family involvement in, 1B:4
 locations of, 1A:5
 operation of, 1A:5
 suppliers for, 1A:5
 working hours in, 1B:4
 Prominent families and individuals
 1A:8; 2A:1

 Quon, Albert, 2A:2
 Quon, Milton, 1A:10

 Rape of Shanghai, 4A:2
 Recreation, 1B:3

- Recreations, 1B:5; 2A:1
 Religious affiliations, 2A:7
 in Protestant denominations
 1A:2-3, 7; 2A:4
 Remittance, 3A:5
 Restaurants, 1A:7; 2A:11; 3A:1
 customers of, 3A:3
 family involvement in, 1A:5, 9
 food served in, 2B:5
 in Chinatown, 1A:7; 1B:1; 3B:2-3
 locations of, 1A:5, 7
 numbers of, 2B:5
 price charged in, 4A:4
 suppliers for, 3A:2
 workers in, 1A:5-6
 wage earned by, 3A:2
 working hours in, 1B:5; 3A:2, 3

 San Pedro Street, Los Angeles
 1A:10
 Shinard Art School, 3A:9
 Sing Lee Theater, 4B:3
 Sino-Japanese War
 Chinese Americans attitudes toward
 4A:2
 Soo Chow Restaurant, 4A:5, 3A:2-3
 locations of, 1A:7; 4A:6
 workers in, 1A:9
 working hours in, 1A:9
 SooHoo, Lilly
 residences of, 4A:7
 SooHoo, Peter, Sr., 2A:1; 4A:6
 Spring Street, Los Angeles, 4B:2-3
 Sun Wei, China, 1A:2

 The Bitter Tea of General Yen, 1A:8
 The Junk Restaurant, 4B:1
 Tom, Leung, 3A:7
 Tuey Far Low Restaurant, 4A:4

 Ukodo, Benji, 4B:2
 University of Southern California
 3A:8-10; 3B:5-6; 5A:6
 College of Architecture, 1A:1

 Van Nuys, California
 Chinese Americans in, 3B:5
 Vietnamese
 in Chinatown, 5A:3

 Wilson, Marie, 1B:3

 Win One Circle, 2A:6
 Wing Chong Lung, 1B:1
 locations of, 1B:1
 Women's organizations, 2A:6; 4A:2
 Women
 education of, 1A:2
 family roles of, 1A:10
 in Chinatown, 2A:6; 2B:2; 4A:2
 in churches, 2A:6
 in family business, 1A:9
 remaining in China, 1A:2
 Wong, Anna May, 1A:8; 2B:3
 Wong, Gilbert, 3A:4
 Wong, Tyrus, 3B:3
 Woo, Twai Lan, 2A:4
 World War II
 Chinese American involvement in
 3B:3-4

 Yee Hong Guey Restaurant, 4A:4
 Yee Sing Chong
 architect of, 5A:2
 Yee, Chuck, 1A:8
 Yee, George, 1A:8
 Yee, Swan, 1A:8
 Young, Robert, 1B:3
 Yung, Victor Sen, 1A:8