

## 2016 CHINESE AMERICAN GENEALOGY CONFERENCE

October 15-16, 2016

Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA)

215 Centre Street, New York, NY

### SCHEDULE

*(subject to change)*

#### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2016

**8:30 AM Registration Opens**

**9:00 AM Welcome & Opening Remarks**

**9:15 AM – 10 AM Keynote Address**

**Chinese American Genealogy Research: Principles & Practices**

**Speaker: Henry Tom**

Henry Tom was born in New York City and his entry into Chinese genealogy research started with a visit to his ancestral village in Taishan, China. Subsequently, he joined the online SiYi Forum as the Moderator for Location, established the Tom Genealogy website, and after compiling a 148 generation family lineage, he published "Tan Genealogy: Heritage and Lineage". While fluent in speaking the Taishan (Hoisanva) dialect, he cannot read or write Chinese or speak Mandarin Chinese. He demonstrates that one can successfully conduct Chinese genealogy research without having to be Chinese literate.

**10:15 AM – 11:15 AM**

**What's in a Name?: Pieces, Patterns, and Pitfalls as They Apply to Chinese Genealogy**

**Speaker: Patrick Chew**

Linguist Patrick Chew presents an overview of the complexity in the different types of names in Chinese genealogy, including the various structures of names, "paper names", and the monkey wrench of dialect(s) that get thrown into the mix.

**11:15 AM – Noon**

**Adventures in Writing Chinese American History**

**Speaker: Scott D. Seligman**

Knowledge of Chinese American history can help a great deal when uncovering your family's history. Through case studies, writer, historian, and genealogist Scott Seligman shares his research process and resources on uncovering the multi-generational stories of Chinese Americans within the context of Chinese American history.

**1 PM – 2 PM**

**Tips for Conducting Chinese Genealogy Research**

**Speaker: Tony King**

How do you search for information on your Chinese ancestors? This session explores the resources available, including archives (state, national, international) and other sources with an emphasis on genealogy websites, such as Familysearch.org, [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com), and other online resources to discover your Chinese roots.

**2:15 PM – 3:15 PM**

**Discovering Chinese Family History in Personal Documents, Ephemera and non-Traditional Sources**

**Speaker: Amy Chin**

Amy unearthed and documented her family's over 100-year immigration story for the New-York Historical Society's popular "Chinese American: Exclusion / Inclusion" exhibit which was also shown at the Oregon Historical Society and will become a permanent exhibit at the Chinese Historical Society of America in San Francisco in Fall 2016. Learn, through Amy's examples, how to interpret your own family holdings and mine lesser known public sources for leads in searching for your own family history.

**3:15 PM – 4:15 PM**

**Writing Your Family History**

**Speakers: Rozanne Gates, Suzanne Sheridan, and Amy Chin**

Collecting, researching, and preserving your family history is only part of the story. How do you organize and tell your family story in your own words? Rozanne Gates, writer and interviewer and Suzanne Sheridan, photographer and songwriter of The Legacy Project USA show us how we can each write our family history in compelling ways.

**3:15 PM– 5 PM**

**Small Group Consultations/Break-Out Sessions**

- Work directly with conference speakers, attendees and MOCA staff and volunteers to locate your ancestral village, get quick translations of family documents, trace a clan line, search for a Chinese Exclusion Act case file, navigate an online search, share tips and experiences, or find a long lost cousin (perhaps from among the other attendees!).
- Get hands-on instruction on how to safely preserve family documents, textiles, photographs, recordings and other materials so they will not disintegrate or degrade over time.
- Take a self-guided tour of MOCA's core exhibition, *With a Single Step: Stories in the Making of America* and special exhibition, *Sour, Sweet, Bitter, Spicy: Stories of Chinese Food and Identity in America*.

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**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2016**

**8:30 AM Registration Opens**

**9 AM – 10 AM**

**Interpreting Chinese Genealogy Books**

**Speaker: Tony King**

A Chinese genealogy book is considered the holy grail and ultimate source for your clan information and history. Understanding how to interpret the information will provide a plethora of information and facts pertinent to documenting your family's heritage and lineage.

**10:15 AM – 11 AM**

**Hoisanva: The Chinese Dialect Spoken by Most Chinese in America 1849 – 1965**

**Speaker: Gene M. Chin**

The majority of Chinese in North America from 1849 – 1965 originate from 7 contiguous counties within Guangzhou (Kwangtung) province, China. They are collectively known as the Sam Yap (3 county) & Sze Yap

(4 county) regions. Taishan (Hoisan) city/county accounted for more than half of these Chinese. In order to research effectively the romanized Chinese names found in Federal government records and to revert back to the appropriate Chinese characters for these names - this requires a Hoisanva dialect capability - Cantonese & Pinyin romanizations will not be phonetically accurate. In 1949, the new Chinese Communist government required a Hoisanva translator for the new ambassador from China.

*This session is generously sponsored by Asian American/Asian Research Institute, City University of New York.*

**11AM – Noon**

**Foo Genealogy Research: History, Progress and the Future**

**Speaker: Sun Hoo Foo**

Genealogist Dr Sun Hoo Foo discusses how he traced his lineage back 73 generations through the genealogy book and in the process, discovered the historic sites and temples of significance to his ancestors.

**1 PM – 2 PM**

**Deep Dive into Immigration Files and Documents**

**Speaker: Alan Chin**

By way of introduction, Alan Chin will show selections from a long-term photo essay and book project that he's been working on in Toisan, China, where his family and two-thirds of all Chinese Americans came from until the 1960s. Then, through a deep dive into the contents of his father's "paper son" file obtained from the National Archives (NARA) and his Confessions Program file received from the Department of Homeland Security (successor to the INS), Alan will examine the Chinese Confession Program (1956-1965) and its impact through the lens of his family.

**2:15 PM – 3:15 PM**

**Chinese Exclusion Act and Immigration Records at the National Archives**

**Speaker: Angela Tudico**

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) maintains thousands of immigration case files created during the Chinese Exclusion Act period (1882-1943) and after. Learn about whether your ancestor would have had an immigration file, how to find your records, and how these records can be useful for your genealogy research.

**3:15 PM – 4:15 PM**

**Finding and Visiting Your Ancestral Village in China**

**Speaker: Henry Tom**

The ancestral village, beyond finding your family heritage & relatives, is the primary source for your family genealogy books. The majority of Chinese genealogy books were destroyed by the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution (1966 – 1976). This presentation will assist you in planning and traveling to China to visit your ancestral village in China.

**4:15 PM – 5 PM**

**Small Group Consultations/Break-Out Sessions**

- Work directly with conference speakers, attendees and MOCA staff and volunteers to locate your ancestral village, get quick translations of family documents, trace a clan line, search for a Chinese Exclusion Act case file, navigate an online search, share tips and experiences, or find a long lost cousin (perhaps from among the other attendees!).
- Get hands-on instruction on how to safely preserve family documents, textiles, photographs, recordings and other materials so they will not disintegrate or degrade over time.

- Take a self-guided tour of MOCA's core exhibition, *With a Single Step: Stories in the Making of America* and special exhibition, *Sour, Sweet, Bitter, Spicy: Stories of Chinese Food and Identity in America*.

## 5 PM Closing Remarks



## SPEAKER BIOS

### Patrick Chew

Patrick Chew is the Internationalization/Localization Manager at Change.org and is a UC Berkeley alumnus with degrees in Linguistics, East Asian Languages and Literatures, and Altaic Languages. In his free-time, when he's not working on languages, linguistics, and tech, he's continuing his passion for genealogy, which has provided an integral grounding tie to his own heritage. By applying insights from his academic training (Classical Chinese literature and Chinese dialectology) and professional experiences dealing with tech, he hopes to contribute back to not only the community at large, but also help those that don't have the same resources available.

### Alan Chin

Alan Chin was born and raised in New York City's Chinatown. Since 1996, he has worked in China, the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Central Asia, and Ukraine, as well as extensively in the United States. He is a contributing photographer to *The New York Times*, contributing writer and photographer for *Reuters Analysis & Opinion*, and many other publications. He is also an instructor and adviser at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, his work is in the collection of the Museum Of Modern Art, and he is Co-Director of *Facing Change: Documenting Detroit (FCDD)*. Chin was nominated twice by *The New York Times* for the Pulitzer Prize for coverage of the Kosovo conflict in 1999 and 2000.

### Gene Chin

Gene Chin is a 26<sup>th</sup> generation Chin from Huang village in Toisan, China. Although Gene was raised in the U.S. and not literate in Chinese, he was taught by his father from childhood to memorize his family's history starting with the 18<sup>th</sup> generation of the Chin clan who founded his family's village in China. Over the course of a decade, Gene painstakingly translated and digitized his clan's genealogy record and created a family genealogy website [https://sites.fitnyc.edu/users/gene\\_chin/tree](https://sites.fitnyc.edu/users/gene_chin/tree). Gene also updated the records and began including names and records of female ancestors and family members (an uncommon practice in traditional Chinese genealogy). In the process, Gene developed a system of romanization for the Toisanese dialect of Chinese. He continues to maintain and update the Huang Village Chin Family records and assists others in their quest to seek out and reclaim their ancestral Chinese roots.

### Sun-Hoo Foo

Sun-Hoo Foo is a Clinical Professor of Neurology at NYU Langone Medical Center and runs several private practices in New York. He is an esteemed member of the Chinese American medical community. In his spare time, he pursues genealogy research on the Foo family and has done extensive work tracing the Foo lineage as well as the worldwide diaspora of the Fooks.

### **Rozanne Gates**

A professional photographer and award-winning singer/songwriter, Suzanne has indeed lived up to her advertising: “the best photographer in New York is...in Westport, CT”. As the co-founder of both The Legacy Project USA, Suzanne has used her photographic skills and talents to benefit many, many clients. Her sensitivity, compassion, humanity, and beauty are reflected in her photographs – of which there are thousands. Her songwriting skills have gained her several awards, including a John Lennon Songwriters Award. She has performed her Joni Mitchell/Leonard Cohen tribute concert in the US, Canada, and Australia. She will write a song written especially for you if you choose to include that in your Legacy Project.

### **Tony King**

Tony King was born and raised in San Francisco Bay Area. He descends from Chinese immigrants who came to California, Oregon, and Hawaii in the late 1800's. His focus over the past few years has been on Chinese genealogy. He has conducted research in such places as California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, Canada, Hong Kong, and southern China. He serves as a volunteer at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah assisting those who are searching for their Chinese roots. He retired after a 30-year career with the federal government and has resided overseas for more than a dozen years, including in Malaysia, Germany, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, and China (5 years).

### **Scott D. Seligman**

Scott D. Seligman is a historian, retired corporate executive, and career China hand, and he holds degrees from Princeton and Harvard. Fluent in Mandarin and conversant in Cantonese, he lived in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China and has worked as a legislative assistant in Congress, a businessman in China, and a communications director of a Fortune 50 company. He is the author of *Tong Wars: The Untold Story of Vice, Money and Murder in New York's Chinatown* (Viking Books, 2016), *The First Chinese American: The Remarkable Life of Wong Chin Foo* (Hong Kong University Press, 2013), *Three Tough Chinamen* (Earnshaw Books, 2012), the best-selling *Chinese Business Etiquette* (Hachette, 1999) and *Dealing With the Chinese* (Warner Books, 1989). He is also co-author of the best-selling *Cultural Revolution Cookbook* (Earnshaw, 2011) and *Now You're Talking Mandarin Chinese* (Barron's Educational Series, 2006).

### **Suzanne Sheridan**

As the partner of Suzanne Sheridan and co-founder of The Legacy Project USA, Rozanne comes to this work with many years of experience in the business of show business – as an actor's agent for 22 years (interviewing hundreds of actors); as Production Manager at the Westport Arts Center; as Director of Development at the Fairfield Theatre Company; and creator of “Shop Talk” (interviewing theatre professionals for theatre professionals) at the Drama Book Shop in New York City. She has authored the books “How to Succeed in the Business of Show Business...or everything they don't tell you in acting school but I will” and “A Tale of Courage in Red, White, and Blue – the Life Story of Ed Johnson,” “The Story of Elaine and Gerry Rosenberg,” “The Operatic Life Journey of Giovanna Malangone Ambrusco,” and “The Writings of Ann Galloway” – all for The Legacy Project USA; many newspaper and magazine articles; and press releases for many organizations including Ina Chadwick's MouseMuse Productions.

### **Henry Tom**

**Henry Tom** is an active Chinese genealogy researcher who has consulted on books, assisted other researchers and organized public Chinese genealogy workshops across the country. His entry into Chinese genealogy research started in 2005 with a visit to his ancestral village in Taishan, China. Subsequently, he joined the SiYi Chinese Genealogy Forum as the Moderator for Location and established the Tom Genealogy website. After compiling a 148 generation family lineage, he published “Tan Genealogy: Heritage and Lineage”. He was born

and raised in New York City and, while fluent in spoken Taishan dialect, he cannot read or write Chinese (which makes his Chinese genealogy abilities even more remarkable). Henry holds academic degrees in geography and had a career as a US Federal geographer. After retiring from government service, he worked for Oracle Corporation

### **Angela Tudico**

Angela Tudico is the Archives Specialist at the National Archives at New York City. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is the nation's record keeper. It is an independent Federal agency that serves American democracy by safeguarding and preserving the records of our Government, ensuring that the people can discover, use, and learn from this documentary heritage. The National Archives at New York City is an integral part of the tri-state area's internationally known network of research and cultural institutions. Holdings consist of Federal records from New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands dating from the 1680s to the 1990s.