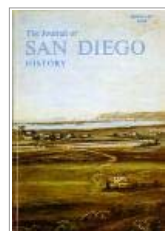


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SAN DIEGO'S CHINESE MISSION

By Elizabeth MacPhail

[Images from the Article](#)

The Chinese Mission had its beginning in 1885 when San Diego's Chinese population numbered several hundred, almost entirely male and huddled together in Chinatown, a part of the Stingaree or red light district. Alien Chinese kept strictly to themselves, seldom mixing with Caucasians. Since they were ineligible for citizenship, they had little incentive to become Americanized, either in thought or way of life. Most had every intention of returning to China and the families they had left behind as soon as they had made their fortune.

The Chinese Mission School offered them an opportunity to learn the English language, a necessity if they were to work or carry on business with the Americans. The dedicated Caucasian teachers at the Mission were the first to extend the hand of friendship to the lonely and isolated Chinese. For 75 years the Mission would be a place where Chinese could live, learn English, receive religious instruction and enjoy social activities among themselves and with their Caucasian friends.

The extent of the Mission's influence in the Americanization of the Chinese in San Diego can be seen by the fact that today the first American born Chinese and their descendants have merged into San Diego's various communities so that a Chinatown has long since ceased to exist.

The Chinese began coming to San Diego in numbers in the 1870's, especially after the anti-Chinese riots broke out in the north.

Many were fishermen who lived in shanties along the waterfront and sold their product house to house from baskets slung over their shoulders. When the Exclusion Act of 1882 stopped the Chinese from fishing outside of United States waters—or run the risk of being refused readmittance to the country—they were forced to confine their fishing to areas close to shore and many turned to farming in Mission Valley and in the Sweetwater area. Some of the Chinese opened laundries and small shops in Chinatown. Others worked in homes of the well-to-do as houseboys and cooks. There were few Chinese women and almost no families with children. It was inevitable that some Chinese would gravitate into the underworld of the Stingaree, in gambling and opium selling.

By 1881 there were about 150 Chinese living in San Diego.¹ In that year a great many began arriving from the north to work on the California Southern Railroad then being built from National City.² One of those who arrived was Ah Quin who supervised large groups of Chinese laborers on the railroad. In November of 1881 he married Miss Ah Sue of San Francisco,³ and his large family would be one of the first Chinese families in San Diego. He later became a wealthy restaurant owner and businessman and was known as the "Mayor of Chinatown" until his death in 1914.

San Diego's Chinatown grew rapidly in the 1880's because of the railroad boom when as many as 800 Chinese were working on the railroad.⁴ In 1885 San Diego had its own anti-Chinese movement. In December an Anti-Chinese Club was formed to protest the hiring of Chinese as long as a white man was out of work.⁵ The club was successful in persuading the San Diego Water Company to discharge all the Chinese in its employ and to employ white men in their place.⁶ Nevertheless, in 1887 a number of Chinese were recruited in San Francisco to work for the Coronado Beach Company on the building of the hotel.⁷ When work on the railroad and hotel was completed many left San Diego. In 1894, when the Geary law required the registration of Chinese aliens, 561 registered in San Diego County.⁸

Immigration of Chinese into California had been great from the 1850's through the 1870's. In 1860 one of every ten persons in California was a Chinese.⁹ Mostly laborers, they flocked to the gold fields of northern California and later to work for the Central Pacific and other railroads. Some established small businesses, restaurants and laundries. Employers sought them out because they worked hard for low wages and were sober, drunkenness being almost unknown among them. They worked so well and were so conscientious that the Caucasians who would not work so hard or for so little money fiercely resented them. The antagonism against the Chinese swelled into rioting in the mid seventies when the slogan was "The Chinese Must Go." Chinese were cruelly persecuted, even murdered, for no reason other than because of their industriousness and different

In 1882, the last year before the first exclusion act went into effect, 39,579 Chinese entered the United States. Five years later, in 1887, only 10 came in legally, and in 1900 only 1247 were admitted.¹³

After the exclusion acts became law, Chinese were smuggled illegally into California, many crossing the border from Mexico into San Diego. The Coast Guard often searched vessels coming north from Mexican waters that were suspected of having contraband Chinese aboard. When a ship was found to be carrying illegal Chinese it was seized and later offered for sale at public auction. If Chinese were found, they were ordered deported. However, some Chinese were able to escape detection and melted into the Chinese communities.¹⁴

The Chinese could not leave the country and then expect to return unless they had a re-entry permit which was issued only to "business men" and not to laborers. In 1895 Immigration officers in San Diego discovered a Chinese vegetable man had reentered on a merchant's certificate, after having returned on a visit to China. Investigation disclosed that Hung Far & Co. had been carrying on a profitable business of providing merchant certificates to laborers.¹⁵ One young Chinese, Lee Yung, a servant of U.S. Grant, Jr., made the mistake of crossing the border to Tijuana for a sulphur bath only to be arrested upon his return. Judge W. A. Sloane was employed by the Grant family to defend him and he was released.¹⁶

Because of the large influx of Chinese into San Francisco it was natural that concern for their welfare manifested itself first there. Most were illiterate and could not speak English and the need was great for schools to teach them English. The American Home Missionary Association saw this opportunity to fill a need and so it was that the teaching of English to the Chinese went along with the teaching of the Christian religion, Chinese Sunday Schools became a fad in San Francisco among the churches, and mission schools sprang up in outlying cities and towns populated by Chinese. In San Diego, the Presbyterian Church started a Sunday School for a few Chinese children in 1870, and it was said to be the first in Southern California.¹⁷ Several years later the Baptist Church began a Sunday School for Chinese. One of the teachers at the Presbyterian Church was George W. Marston who would be a staunch supporter of the Chinese Mission the rest of his life.

The Chinese Mission School in San Diego was the inspiration of a young Chinese resident by the name of Lee Hong who had come from San Francisco and was familiar with mission schools there. In 1885 he persuaded Dr. William C. Pond of the American Home Missionary Association, whose work was with the Chinese in California, to come to San Diego and organize a Mission School. Almost all the Chinese in San Diego were men, and the need was for a school to teach them to read, write and speak English.

Dr. Pond rented a house on the corner of 13th and F for use of the new mission school. Classes were held at night and on Sunday, and were taught by dedicated men and women who devoted their time free of charge. They not only taught English but helped in solving the many problems facing the solitary and lonely men in a strange and often hostile land. Dr. Pond visited the mission school regularly, watching its progress with interest, even after 1890 when the Congregational denomination took over the work in San Diego County. His interest continued for nearly fifty years until his death at the age of 95.¹⁸

Students at the Mission numbered as many as fifty at a time, both young and old men, who received their tutoring without charge. Religious instruction was given along with the language study. But 13th and F was too far from Chinatown, which centered along Third Street, so in 1901 the Mission moved to 663 First Street, between Market and G, on the edge of Chinatown. In 1907 it moved next door into property belonging to George W. Marston, which consisted of a one story building with a gabled roof that stood in front of a long dormitory containing tiny rooms along both sides of a corridor. The rooms were rented to Chinese men. The Mission now became a home as well as a school. Kenneth Jair, who saw the Mission for the first time in 1925, has described it as being a wooden building painted a dull green surrounded by a wooden fence with a gate in front. Inside, wooden chairs faced a low platform, or stage, covered with a rug. An old upright piano stood at one side. High against the front wall was a picture of Christ with crossed American and Chinese flags underneath. The room was lit by a few electric light bulbs which hung from the ceiling.¹⁹

One of the teachers at the Mission in 1907 was Mrs. Margaret Fanton, whose work with the Chinese would continue for more than forty years. She became Superintendent in 1911. Mrs. Fanton did far more than just teach English and Sunday School—she became Chinatown's first social worker. Chinatown, in the heart of the Stingaree, was a place avoided by "respectable people. Most of the Caucasian residents there were prostitutes, pimps, panderers and gamblers. It was also a hiding place for criminals coming in from out of town. The Chinese lived in ramshackle buildings alongside of cribs and parlor houses, and behind gambling and opium dens. Mrs. Fanton was well known to the Chinese as "Mother" Fanton. She was often seen, sometimes accompanied by her own two small children, going in and out of hovels and shanties in order to give physical or spiritual aid to the Chinese, both men and women, young and old. Families often lived in back of a storefront which masqueraded as a legitimate business while selling opium and illegal drugs, or which actually was a gambling establishment.

Seated in front of the store would be a watchman keeping an eye out for the police. If anyone who looked like a law man came into view, word was passed to get contraband out of sight: opium, illegal drugs, lottery or gambling equipment. Mrs. Fanton would leave her children with the watchman and go inside to the dwelling quarters to see what was the family's need.²⁰

Tong wars were not unknown in San Diego and Mrs. Fanton would be called to give aid and comfort to grieving women who had lost a husband or son in one of the conflicts. She was also called when new babies arrived, delivered at home under primitive conditions by a Chinese doctor. Mothers asked her to give their children an American name. So, there were several named Roland, Byron, William, for members of her family, and a number of girls were named Margaret in appreciation of her help.²¹ If any Chinese were in financial need she sought help from the Chinese Benevolent Society, churches or voluntary service agencies. The Chinese helped one another and were often too proud to seek help from outside their own community. Mrs. Fanton was a pioneer in social service work long before public agencies came into being.

The Mission was far more than a place to go for language instruction or to attend church services. It was a social gathering place for Chinese of all ages and a place for the wives to meet and socialize. When a few wives wanted to learn English, classes in the daytime were started for them.

The dormitory rooms were always filled to capacity with young men, mostly newcomers to San Diego and those recently arrived from China who had no other place to go. It was an opportunity to meet other Chinese and to find employment. Some entered the country as students to study in the public schools or to learn American business practices and then returned to China. The teachers at the school were especially anxious to help the students with their school work and to see they were given good instruction in the American way of life and in the Christian religion. It was hoped this education would be taken back with them to China to be passed on to others.

Since there were few Chinese women in San Diego, young Chinese men who wanted a wife had to go to Los Angeles, San Francisco, or even to China. Many preferred a wife born in China, believing the American born Chinese girl would not be subservient enough to suit them. Many marriages

were still arranged by the parents, both in China and in this country. The Chinese always married someone with a different last name in the belief this avoided intermarriage within a family. Marriage with a Caucasian was unthinkable. Divorce was practically unknown among the Chinese in America and it was not recognized in China. The first divorce case in San Diego's history, and one of the first in the United States, occurred in 1893 when Ah Duck, age twenty-eight, sought a separation from her husband, Lew Duck.²²

Prior to 1924 some Chinese men who were American born went to China and married and were successful in bringing their wives to the United States. This influx of foreign brides opened a new activity at the Mission—teaching them English, to sew and cook and to generally help them adjust to their new life in strange surroundings. But the Immigration Act of 1924 took this right away from the Chinese—the only nationality discriminated against in this regard.²³

The Chinese loved their fireworks and displayed them not only on the Chinese New Year but on many other special occasions. On the Fourth of July young men from the Mission would bring their supply of firecrackers and elaborate rockets to Mrs. Fanton's home on Park Boulevard where they would be shot off to the admiration of all the neighbors.²⁴

Mrs. Fanton resigned as Superintendent of the Mission in 1919 and was succeeded by Mrs. Anna Waldo. By that time, through the efforts of the Police and Health Departments, the Red Light District had been closed and the gambling and opium dens had disappeared. The Health Department, under the direction of Walter Bellon, had systematically destroyed all the vermininfested shacks in Chinatown and so the Chinese were better housed. Some had moved into the former parlor houses and better built cribs, and some new buildings had been constructed for legitimate businesses. Mrs. Fanton did not give up her social work with the Chinese, however, and became an authority on immigration problems. She was called on to help the Chinese fill out immigration forms to bring relatives from China. The Chinese businessmen always seemed to have many "nephews" whom they wanted to come to the United States and guaranteed them employment.²⁵ Some businessmen who went to China had difficulty getting re-entry permits. Mrs. Fanton was kept busy writing to Washington trying to untangle red tape to help with immigration problems. One day her Chinese vegetable man announced he was returning to China to get his wife whom he had married thirty-five years before. Mrs. Fanton fully expected to help him with an immigration problem. She was amazed to see him a few months later and when asked if he had brought back his wife he replied, "No. She too old and too fat."²⁶

In 1925 Mrs. Fanton went to China, fulfilling a long time dream. She took with her a long list of families of her Mission friends to visit while there, most of whom were in the Canton area. She was accompanied by a young Chinese girl, Agnes Lee, who had been living with her and whom she treated as a daughter. Agnes was going back to China to visit her family and intended to return. However, while in China she disappeared, never to be heard from again. Mrs. Fanton was gone several months, visiting Canton, Shanghai and Hong Kong, and was appalled and saddened by the poverty she found everywhere. Upon her return she resumed work at the Mission as a teacher and social worker.²⁷

The first pastor of the Mission was Reverend C. C. Hung who came from Honolulu to minister to the small congregation in 1925. His salary was paid by the Southern California Conference of Congregational Churches. Church services were then held in both Chinese and English. At that time there were about forty Chinese living in crowded conditions in the dormitory. About twenty teachers, most of whom were Caucasian, taught the language classes and Sunday School. By that time the Mission buildings were in a sad state of repair. The roof leaked and there were never enough buckets to catch the rain.

Reverend Hung, with the aid of Mrs. Fanton and Reverend Paul B. Waterhouse of the Congregational Conference, began a fund raising campaign for a new building. W. H. Porterfield, Editor of the San Diego Sun and brother of Mrs. Fanton, opened the campaign with a showing of a motion picture about China at the First Congregational Church on December 28, 1926. George W. Marston donated the land on which the Mission was located, and other substantial donations were made by prominent San Diegans including Miss Mary Marston and M.C. Pfefferkorn. One popular means of fund raising was having the little girls of the Mission Sunday School, dressed in their Chinese costumes, sing for church and fraternal organizations. This proved to be a lucrative way of raising funds from San Diegans anxious to help in the cause.²⁸ The Savoy Theatre, a legitimate theatre with a stock company presenting a different play each week, held a benefit performance for the Mission donating 25c from each ticket sold. These and other fund raising methods were so successful that within six months ten thousand dollars was raised by the Chinese people and their friends. The total cost of the building was about twenty thousand dollars, the balance being provided by the Congregational Conference.²⁹

The old Mission buildings were torn down in July, 1927, and while the new buildings were being built classes were held at the Chinese Benevolent Association on Third Street.

The architect chosen for the new buildings was Louis J. Gill, nephew, protege and partner of Irving Gill, noted California architect. The new Mission consisted of a large meeting hall with a stage, two small offices at the front, and a parlor and kitchen in the rear. Screens were used to partition the meeting hall into classrooms. A two story dormitory containing 18 rooms was built on the back of the lot.

A dedication ceremony for the Mission and dormitory was held on November 22, 1927, with all the ministers of the local Congregational churches assisting. Reverend Lawrence Wilson, Pastor of the Mission Hills Congregational Church, presided. The Service of Dedication was given by Reverend Wm. W. Scudder of the La Mesa Congregational Church, the Prayer of Dedication by Dr. Roy Campbell of the First Congregational Church, and the Benediction by Reverend William Forshaw of the Plymouth Church. Music was provided by the choir of the Mission Hills Congregational Church.

Reverend Hung spoke on the subject "The Chinese Mission and Its Program of Future Work". Representatives of the Congregational Conference who also spoke were Dr. George F. Kenngott and Reverend Paul B. Waterhouse. At the close of the dedication service the young men who were the first occupants of the new dormitory rooms proudly escorted the visitors through them. Each dormitory room had been dedicated by a friend of the Mission. It was an exciting time and the culmination of months of hard work by the supporters of the Mission. For the Chinese it was a dream fulfilled.³⁰

The dormitory rooms first rented for \$6.00 a month, with kitchen privileges and the use of the parlor for reading. The rent was raised to \$8.00 a month in 1945, and by 1953 it was \$18.00 a month.³¹ Some of the teachers who taught with Mrs. Fanton during Reverend Hung's ministry were Anna Waldo, Mrs. J. B. French and her daughter, Helen, Bess Herrin, Flora Baumann, Dorothy Mann, Florence Wong and Gertrude Jair Tom.

Soon after the new building opened Mrs. Fanton wrote:

"if the walls of a house could speak what interesting stories and experiences we might have heard from the old Chinese Mission...."

We would have heard of hundreds of Chinese boys and young men and girls passing in and out of its doors on their way to and from the orient, of the scores having formed their first contacts with Western civilization through the Mission, of the experiences of young men unable to speak English coming to San Diego direct from China; how they immediately found their way to the Mission to join the Americanization classes conducted nightly, and we would also have heard of the many happy parties and social activities participated in by American friends, teachers and Chinese students.... The night school, church, and social activities will continue just as they were before, only better, much better, and then to make it all secure, loving hearts and hands and minds will assist in the work. We all know the value of this type of community service for the Chinese people, and if China, as many believe, is to come into its own with other nations, largely through the influence of the Chinese educated in this country, who can say that the Congregational Mission of San Diego has not had a vital part in it.³²

Reverend Hung remained in San Diego only three years, but accomplished much in that time. He endeared himself to the Chinese and to all those who worked with him. He accepted a call to a pastorate in Detroit and from there went on to establish the Chinese Community Church of Washington, D.C., retiring in 1971. By the time he left San Diego there was a busy schedule of activities at the Mission, with Sunday School at 1:30 Sunday afternoon and worship service in both English and Chinese at 8 P.M. English night school was held daily except Saturday and Sunday at 7 P.M. There was a Chinese school for teaching of Chinese to the English speaking children every day, except Sunday, at 5 P.M. Christian Endeavor for the young people met on Friday evenings. There was always at least one social gathering each month.

In a parting statement to his congregation, Reverend Hung said:

"The Mission... has taught countless young men the art of speaking and writing English correctly so that they may be able to understand the American thought and customs and hence lead a more successful life in America.... To educate the Chinese people of San Diego has always been the steadfast purpose of the Mission. In addition to service as an intellectual institution the Mission is the social center of the Chinese community.... We come now to the most important phase of the work of the Mission, that of building up character and moulding young lives into respectable manhood and womanhood.... We may mention another phase of the work of the Mission and that is to bring about a better understanding and closer friendship between the Chinese and Americans by interpreting China to America and vice versa. Such work has tremendous importance as it concerns the future peace in the Pacific area and perhaps the world."³³

After Reverend Hung there were several pastors in quick succession. Reverend Lau Moon Kwong took over in 1929, followed by Reverend Hung Kwun Leong who served from 1931 to 1933. Reverend Leong was from Canton and a scholar. In addition to his regular duties he wrote and translated letters to or from China for his parishoners. His sermons in English and Cantonese were well liked and the Sunday School for the children flourished.

In the early 1930's the Superintendent of the Sunday School was Miss Helen F. Young, followed by Mrs. Delia Reinbold. Teachers included Gladys Hom, Lillian and Constance Lai, Pearl Seid, Jane Quon, Mrs. Roy French, Ty Barnes, Agnes Hom, Lila Hom, Katherine Lem, Katherine Tom, Rose Lee, Betty Reinbold and Clara Breed.

In 1933 the city population of Chinese was estimated to be around 400, most of whom attended the Chinese Mission for at least some of its functions. It was a place where the young people could get acquainted. More marriages were taking place between California born Chinese-Americans. Most of the Chinese men who were now arriving from China intended to remain, rather than to receive an education or make some money and return to China.

Reverend Leong was followed in 1933 by Robert Lee, who was formerly Secretary of the Shanghai YMCA, and who served only part time. The Chinese in San Diego spoke Cantonese while Lee spoke only Mandarin so no bi-lingual services were held.

In 1934 Reverend T.C. Shum of Oakland took over the pulpit. He was a talented artist and also an herbalist. In 1935-36 San Diego held its California-Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park and the Houses of Pacific Relations were inaugurated. These cottages were turned over to different nationalities as a means of demonstrating their native customs and accomplishments. One of the cottages became the Hall of China. The Chinese Youth Association of the Mission assumed the responsibility for maintaining the cottage and manning it on Sunday afternoons when it was open to the public.

A great change in the Mission occurred in 1937 when Reverend Kei T. Wong and his bride, Edith, arrived to take over the pastorate. When they first came they lived at the Mission and Edith was the first woman to live in the dormitory. She endeared herself to the young men by helping with the cooking and teaching them English as well as assisting the college students with their lessons.

Reverend Wong and his wife brought new life and spirit into the activities of the Mission. A Chinese Christian Women's Club was formed to provide a place where the women could meet and socialize as many Chinese women were timid about getting out from their homes. Still most of the Chinese lived in Chinatown or in the downtown area of San Diego and the Mission was within a convenient distance of their homes.

During the Japanese-Chinese war of 1937 the Chinese at the Mission raised funds and collected food to send to needy Chinese in the homeland.

In 1935 Mrs. Fanton had resigned as Superintendent of the Mission on account of ill health, although she continued until her death to serve the Chinese. She was succeeded by Mrs. Delia Reinbold who already was in charge of the Sunday School. Mrs. Reinbold, like Mrs. Fanton before her, went into the homes of the Chinese and encouraged the mothers to bring their children to Sunday School and to come to the Women's Club. If they were in need of help, financial or otherwise, she would arrange with a private charity or with other Chinese to provide for their need. Mrs. Reinbold opened her large home at 4769 Panorama Drive to parties for the children and social gatherings for the young people. She was soon known as "Mother" Reinbold to all the Chinese in the community who knew they could call on her with their problems.

A small pump organ replaced the old upright piano, and the first organist was Pearl Hom Seid, followed by Charles Shatto, the official city organist at the Balboa Park organ, who volunteered his time. Later Mrs. W.F. Reyer took over as organist and she became a beloved friend of the Chinese

people, remaining as organist after the Mission had become the Chinese Community Church in its beautiful new building on 47th Street.

Reverend Wong received only a small salary. The Congregational Conference provided \$30 a month and the balance was raised by the congregation. To augment his meager salary he taught Chinese language to the children and also a class in art. Later he taught a University Extension class in Chinese. Under his leadership Boy Scout Troop 101 was started, with Paul Yee, Sr., as Scout Master.³⁴

Reverend Wong was the first full time minister at the Mission and the first to enter into community life outside Chinatown. He became a leader in race relations activities in San Diego. He and his wife were greatly admired not only by the Chinese but by others who came in contact with them. He served during the years when the Chinese were still subject to oppressive immigration laws and he and his wife were knowledgeable about the immigration law and were helpful to the Chinese with their immigration problems. It was not until 1943 that the Exclusion Acts were finally repealed. But the quota system that was set up was just as effective a means of exclusion since only a few Chinese were granted entry.³⁵ However, of those entering the United States after 1943 the overwhelming number were female, helping to right the previous imbalance of male and female.³⁶ Under the War Brides Act of December 28, 1945, Chinese-Americans who had married in China could send for their wives and children who were allowed to enter on a non-quota basis. More than thirty War Brides came to San Diego as a result of this act. By this time there were about 600 Chinese families in San Diego County.

It was Reverend Wong who started Sunday services at 11 A.M. to coincide with other churches and he was anxious that the Mission should expand and grow into a full-fledged church. To that end he laid plans so that, by the time his service came to an end in 1946, the time was ripe for the little Mission to be called a church. Reverend Wong went to San Francisco as pastor of the San Francisco Chinese Presbyterian Church which he still serves.

Dr. Peter Lee succeeded Reverend Wong. Dr. Lee was ordained as a Baptist minister and returned to the United States in October, 1945, after having been interned by the Japanese in the Philippines. Dr. Lee arrived in early 1946 and on November 9, 1946, after the groundwork had been laid by Reverend Wong, the Mission became a church. Dr. Nelson Dreier of the Congregational Conference officiated at the Service of Recognition, assisted by other Congregational ministers in San Diego, Dr. Walter Stark, Dr. Lester Bond, Reverend John J. Barber and Reverend E. M. Shavers. The name was changed to Chinese Congregational Church. With this action the church broke its ties with the Congregational Conference that had overseen the Mission since 1890 and it became self supporting. Philip Hom was elected first Chairman of the Board of Trustees with Kenneth Jair succeeding him the next year and serving for the next nine years.³⁷

In 1948 Dr. Lee resigned in order to teach philosophy at San Diego State College. For the next two years the church was without a regular pastor. Reverend John J. Barbour, Pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church, filled the pulpit every Sunday after conducting services in his own church.

On July 15, 1950, Reverend Robert Fung, a graduate of the San Francisco Theological Seminary, arrived with his bride to take over the pastorate. During his years as minister the name was again changed to Chinese Community Church to indicate its nondenominational status.

On Mother's Day, May 10, 1953, Mrs. Reinhold was honored when a beautiful Communion table of oriental design was dedicated to her. At the special service of dedication one speaker said that whenever Mrs. Reinhold's name was mentioned, the reply would be "Mrs. Reinhold dai yut ho" meaning "You are number one good" or "You are tops!"³⁸ Also in 1953 a new organ was dedicated to the memory of "Mother" Fanton who had passed away in 1950 after more than forty years of devoted service to the Chinese.

During the 1950's the church flourished. Besides church services, in English and Chinese, and Sunday School classes for the children, there were the Ladies' Guild, Men's Club, Teenagers' Club and a Married Couples Club. Picnics and youth outings, and a Vacation Bible School were held in the summers. The big event of each year was the Christmas night service for the whole family. Religious services, a beautifully decorated Christmas tree, a Santa Claus and gifts for the children, made this an exciting time. These beautiful Christmas night services which began in the very early days of the Mission continue to this time at the Chinese Community Church as a fond tradition.

"Mother" Reinhold died March 18, 1956, and on Mother's Day, May 13, a special service was held in her memory. Glowing tributes to the work she had done and the love she had shown to her Chinese friends were given by representatives from the Junior and Senior High classes, the church school, Ladies' Guild, and the senior church members. The meeting room in the church was renamed Reinhold Hall, and a portrait of Mrs. Reinhold was unveiled.³⁹

Reverend Fung resigned the pastorate in 1957 in order to teach in the San Diego City Schools. Reverend Jow succeeded him. Jow had served for twelve years as pastor of the United Church of Christ in Honolulu. He was a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary. The Community Church, still commonly referred to as the Mission, had outgrown its quarters. Furthermore by the 1950's there was no longer a Chinatown the Chinese families had moved into all parts of the city and no longer lived within a close distance from the Mission. A new building committee was formed to look at possible sites for a new church.

On August 31, 1958, at a meeting of the congregation, the purchase of seven and one-half acres of land on 47th Street, at a cost of \$30,000, was approved. A drive for funds began immediately and contributions were solicited and received not only from members of the church but from others, in the Chinese and Caucasian community. Warren C.T. Wong, of Stockton, California, was chosen as architect of the new building and Arthur D. Decker of El Cajon was his assistant. In August, 1959, the old Chinese Mission building was sold for use by the Plaza Press.

Final worship service was held at the Mission January 31, 1960, at which time the original cornerstone was removed. Former pastors who were present were Dr. Peter A. Lee and Reverend Robert Fung. Honored guests were Roland Fanton and Evangeline Fanton Gilchrist, son and daughter of Margaret Fanton, and Elizabeth Reinhold MacPhail, daughter of Delia Reinhold. Margaret Fanton and Delia Reinhold will always be remembered for their dedication and love for the Chinese when they were in need of a helping hand and "mothering".

Today, suspended above the communion table in the chancel of the new church hangs a wood and stainless steel cross accented by lights. This cross bears the inscription that it was placed in memory of these two beloved women.

While the new building was under construction the congregation was offered a hall for their services at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Fifth and Nutmeg. The cornerstone of the new church was laid June 19, 1960, and the first service in the strikingly beautiful building—Chinese Modern in architecture—was held on September 11, 1960. At that time the church commemorated its 75th Anniversary while celebrating the completion of the sanctuary and classroom units on the new site at 1750 47th Street!⁴⁰

Today the Chinese Community Church stands as a proud memorial to the first Chinese who settled in San Diego. Many of their descendants are seeing the results of the work and dedication of earlier generations of Chinese-Americans and their Caucasian friends. At the Chinese Community Church classes in Chinese language and culture are taught by the Chung Hwa School of San Diego. Both children and adults attend the classes which are open to all races and nationalities. Both Cantonese and Mandarin dialects are taught. Whereas Cantonese was the language most frequently spoken by old time San Diego Chinese, Mandarin is today spoken by most of the professional people coming into the area.

The present owners of the old Chinese Mission at 643 First Avenue have envisioned a new commercial use for the buildings. They intend, however, to preserve the original architecture so that the memories which linger there will remain as a tribute to the gentle, hard working and ambitious Chinese-Americans of an early day.

Elizabeth C. MacPhail received her L.L.B. Degree from Balboa Law College, now California Western University. She is the author of articles and books on San Diego history; most recently *Kate Sessions, Pioneer Horticulturist*.

NOTES

1. *San Diego Union*, January 28, 1881, 4:2.
2. *Ibid.*, March 5, 1881, 4:3 (100 Chinese came down on the Senator to report to various railroad contractors) and March 19, 1881, 4:2 (250 Chinese are employed on the railroad).
3. *Ibid.*, November 29, 1881, 3:1 (marriage of Ah Quin to Ah Sue).
4. *Ibid.*, October 4, 1884, 3:1.
5. *Ibid.*, December 11, 1885, 3:2.
6. *Ibid.*, April 30, 1886, 3:1.
7. *Ibid.*, March 26, 1887, 5:1.
8. *Ibid.*, April 4, 1894, 5:4.
9. Betty Lee Sung: *The Story of the Chinese in America*, (New York: Collier Books, 1967) p. 42.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
14. *San Diego Union*, November 7, 1897; December 9, 1897; July 23, 1898.
15. *Ibid.*, October 2, 1895, 2:4.
16. *Ibid.*, August 30, 1894, 5:1.
17. *Ibid.*, May 5, 1870, 3:1.
18. San Diego History Center Library and Manuscripts Collection, Chinese Mission (Reinhold scrapbook); also, for more on Chinese Missions in California see William C. Pond, D.D.: *Gospel Pioneering, Reminiscences of Early Congregationalism in California 1833-1920*, (Oberlin, Ohio: New Printing Co., 1921) Chapter XII, The Orientals in California, p. 128.
19. Kenneth Jair Reminiscences: Chinese Community Church, Diamond Jubilee Booklet, published to commemorate its 75th Anniversary, September 1960. Also, interview with Evangeline Fanton Gilchrist May 19, 1976.
20. Interview with Roland Fanton, May 13, 1976.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *San Diego Union*, March 25, 1893, 5:2.
23. Sung, *Chinese in America*, p. 74.
24. Interview with Roland Fanton May 13, 1976.
25. Interview with Evangeline Fanton Gilchrist May 13, 1976.
26. Interview with Roland Fanton May 13, 1976.
27. Interview with Evangeline Fanton Gilchrist May 19, 1976.
28. *Ibid.*
29. Letter from C. C. Hung to Elizabeth MacPhail, April 9, 1975.
30. San Diego History Center, Library and Manuscripts Collection, Chinese Mission (Reinhold scrapbook).
31. *Ibid.*
32. Chinese Mission pamphlet dated August 22, 1928.

33. Ibid.
34. San Diego History Center Library and Manuscripts Collection, Chinese Mission (Reinhold scrapbook).
35. Sung, *Chinese in America*, p. 80.
36. Ibid., p. 85.
37. Kenneth Jair Reminiscences.
38. San Diego History Center Library and Manuscripts Collection, Chinese Mission (Reinhold scrapbook).
39. Ibid.
40. Chinese Community Church, Diamond Jubilee Booklet, September, 1960.



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