

Guide to the H. K. Wong Oral History Collection M2021

Department of Special Collections and University Archives

2019

Green Library

557 Escondido Mall

Stanford 94305-6064

specialcollections@stanford.edu

URL: <http://library.stanford.edu/spc>

Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: Department of Special Collections and University Archives

Title: H. K. Wong Oral History Collection

Creator: Wong, H.K. (Henry Kwok)

Identifier/Call Number: M2021

Identifier/Call Number: 19155

Physical Description: 1 Linear Feet(one carton: 6 open reel audiotapes, 58 audiocassettes)

Date (inclusive): 1966-1983, bulk 1975-1980

Abstract: Collection of oral histories about the history of Chinese immigrants in the American West conducted by H. K. Wong, as well as recordings of radio programs interviewing Wong and others.

Conditions Governing Access

Open for research. Material from this collection has been digitized and is available in the Special Collections reading room.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Wesley Wong; 2014. Accession MSS 2014-057.

Biographical / Historical

Henry Kwok Wong (born April 29, 1907 in Portsmouth Square, San Francisco, died January 13, 1985 in San Francisco), better known as H.K. Wong, was heavily involved in Chinatown's business and civic associations. Between 1957 and 1984 he worked for associations such as the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (known as the "Six Companies") and Chinese Chamber of Commerce. He was a journalist for many publications such as *Chinese Digest*, *Chinese World*, *East West*, and *Asian Week*. He was also a businessman: he owned several businesses including Ti-Sun Company Hardware & Furniture store, and the Polk Pacific Building Supply Company, and was a co-owner of the Empress of China restaurant. Most importantly he was a founding member and enthusiastic supporter of the Chinese Historical Society of America in 1963. Wong had a long standing interest Chinese American history: along with friend William Hoy, he wandered through gold mining sites of the late 19th century, abandoned Chinatowns, and old Chinese temples, often collecting artifacts that served as the foundation of the CHSA Museum's collection. His great passion was doing oral interviews, something that was hardly done prior to the 1960s. He collected some of his favorite interviews in *Gum Sahn Yun (Gold Mountain Men)*, published posthumously in 1987. Wong's contributions certainly did not go unnoticed. In 1978 he received the Jefferson Award from the American Institute for Public Service and the *San Francisco Examiner* named him one of the 101 most memorable San Franciscans for the 1887 to 1987 centennial year.

--adapted from <https://chsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Bulletin-Summer2013.pdf>

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], H. K. Wong oral history collection (M2021). Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California.

Scope and Contents

Collection of oral histories about the history of Chinese immigrants in the American West, as well as recordings of radio programs interviewing Wong and others. The oral history interviews were conducted and recorded almost entirely by Wong himself while traveling around California and the West, ostensibly for the Chinese Historical Society. Much of the information was included in Wong's book *Gum Sahn Yun / Gold Mountain Men* (<https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/2292606>). Participants were asked to discuss their families and experiences involving immigration, work, and education. Many interviews were recorded with the children of Chinese-American pioneer Ah Louis (who came to the United States in 1870) and chronicle in detail both Louis family and San Luis Obispo history. Two members of the Louis family (George "Prince" Louis and Helen Wong Jean Louis) had careers as vaudeville musicians, and several recordings feature solo and group performances. Hugh Liang, another musician who was part of a touring vocal group known as the Chung Hwa Comedy Four, is also recorded both in interviews and playing music with George Louis. Other notable conversations are with Senator Hiram Fong and cinematographer James Wong Howe. Actor, art collector, and Chinatown emissary Ching Wah Lee is also on some of the radio programs.

Interviews are mostly in English with some in Chinese (Cantonese and possibly other southern dialects) and some in a little of both. They are frequently introduced with dates and places by Wong. Recordings are interrupted by breaks, sometimes for several minutes. Tapes were also re-used, and some evidence of prior content is audible. There are also speed issues, probably due to battery depletion during recording.

Conditions Governing Use

While Special Collections is the owner of the physical and digital items, permission to examine collection materials is not an authorization to publish. These materials are made available for use in research, teaching, and private study. Any transmission or reproduction beyond that allowed by fair use requires permission from the owners of rights, heir(s) or assigns.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Chinese Americans -- History
Lee, Ching Wah, 1901-1980
Howe, James Wong
Fong, Hiram, 1906-2004
Louis, Ah, 1840-1936

Series 1. Louis family (San Luis Obispo)

Related Materials

Stanford Special Collections also holds a small collection of business records from the Ah Louis Store in San Luis Obispo: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8br8zq7/>

carton 1,
tape 001, Side B
carton 1, tape 010

Young Louis talks about the S.P.R.R. Cuesta Tunnels July 23, 1980 

Young Louis, San Luis Obispo #1 #2 HKW 1979-03-02 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. HKW interviews Young Louis 3/23/79

carton 1,
tape 011, Side A

Young Louis #3. San Luis Obispo 1979-03-27 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. HKW interviews Young Louis 3/27/79

carton 1,
tape 011, Side B

Young Louis #3. San Luis Obispo 1979-04-02 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. 4/2/79 HKW relates ceremony honoring Louises with citations read by Mrs. Wong Way Chu(?); HKW interview with Young Louis, dub


carton 1, tape 012

Stella Louis #1 + #2. San Luis Obispo 1979-04-02 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. HKW interviews Stella Louis

carton 1, tape 013

Young Session #4 1979-04-02 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. 4/2/79 HKW relates ceremony honoring Louises with citations read by Mrs. Wong Way Chu?; HKW interview with Young Louis

carton 1, tape 014

Toby Louis #1 + #2. San Luis Obispo 1979-04-02 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. HKW conversation with Professor Yen Lu Wong discussing Young & Stella in context of SF Chinatown cultural event, grant; 9:24 HKW interviews Howard "Toby" Louis, youngest son of Ah Louis.

carton 1, tape 015

Toby Louis #3 + #4. San Luis Obispo 1979-04-02 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. HKW interviews Toby Louis

- carton 1, tape 016 **Walter Louis #1 + #2. San Luis Obispo 1979-04-02** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family history. HKW interviews Walter Louis
- carton 1,
tape 034, Side A **Walt & Prince 4/1/79 Together Playing 1979-04-01** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family. George & Walter Louis (& others?) play and sing standards & Hawaiian music
- carton 1, tape 040 **Helen Wong Jean 1979-07-24** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family history. HKW interviews Helen Wong Jean Louis
- carton 1, tape 041 **George Louis (Prince Wong), Ton W. Lee 1980-03-10** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW at lunch with Louis and Lee
- carton 1,
tape 042, Side B **George Louis (Prince) #3 1979-09-29** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family history. HKW interviews George Louis
- carton 1, tape 043 **Prince Wong/Waln - Geo Louis, Oswego, Oregon 10/9/1979. Prince + Co. Hawaiian Music Etc. 1979-10-09** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family. George Louis and others playing Hawaiian music and standards - ukulele, electric guitar, singing ; break Side A 29:58 - 37:30
- carton 1, tape 044 **Young Louis, Helen Wong Louis Jean, San Luis Obispo 1980-07-23** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family history. HKW interviews
- carton 1, tape 045 **Prince Waln (George Louis), Hugh Liang 1983-08-04** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family. Music by George Louis with Hugh Liang (and others - singing, ukulele, piano) at Empress of China, informal jam session of old standards
- carton 1, tape 047 **Young Louis, Stella Louis, Toby Louis, San Luis Obispo 1978-10-14** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family history. Side A: 10/14/78, HKW narration, invited by Young & Stella Louis for Young's 85th birthday ; Side B: interview with Young Louis, gap 17:10-36:40
- carton 1, tape 048 **Young & Stella Louis, San Luis Obispo, CA. 1st Time 1978-10-15** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family history. HKW interviews Young & Stella Louis
- carton 1,
tape 049, Side A **Young, Toby, Stella Louis Re: May 9/23/79 San Luis Obispo ; George Louis, (Prince), 104/79 Electric Organ, Tigard, Oregon 1979** 
 Scope and Contents
 Louis family history. HKW interviews Toby Louis ; HKW interviews George Louis ; George Louis plays organ

carton 1,
tape 049, Side B

George Louis (Prince), Van & Gang : Musical Fun Lake Oswego, Oregon 1979-10-09 

Scope and Contents

Louis family. begins about 6:00, George Louis and others playing music and singing

carton 1, tape 050

George Louis (Prince) 1979-09-20 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. HKW interviews George Louis 9/20/79

carton 1, tape 051

Story of Ah Louis & Chinese in California 1979-03-02 


Scope and Contents

Louis family history. San Luis Obispo County Historical Society 3/2/79. President Dan Creager introduces speech by Gene Smith (Morris Eugene "Gene" Smith), followed by further remarks by Creager

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Louis, Ah, 1840-1936


carton 1,
tape 054, Side A

Odds/Ends As Noted. H.K. on mike 1/19/79 Louis, San Luis Obispo 1915 ; 1/79 KGO H.K. 1979-01-19 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. 1/19/79 HKW relates prior conversation with Stella & Young Louis re: driving to San Francisco ; music ; partial dub of HKW on radio ; other speaking

carton 1, tape 063

Helen Wong Jean. Program 7/79 #1 ; #2 Classic 1979-07-01 

Scope and Contents

Louis family history. Muffled off-air recording of TV documentary on Chicago Chinatown feat. Helen Wong Jean (Louis) ; Helen Wong Louis playing piano

carton 1, tape 064

Helen Wong Jean - #1 Classic 7/80 ; #2 Pop 1980-07 

Scope and Contents

Louis family. Jean playing piano

Series 2. California - Marysville


carton 1, tape 019

Joe Kim, Bok Kai Temple Marysville #1 + #2 H. K. Wong 1979-04-06 

Scope and Contents

HKW interviews Kim 4/6/79 in English and some Chinese

carton 1,
tape 026, Side A

Bok Kai, Personal 4/6/79 1979-04-06 

Scope and Contents

HKW at Bok Kai Temple in Marysville with Joe Kim, and interview in Chinese and English


carton 1, tape 038

Joe Lung Kim Describes Deities 1979-04-06 

Scope and Contents

HKW interviews Joe Lung Kim (b.1900), caretaker of Bok Kai Temple in Marysville 4/6/79

carton 1, tape 035

Joe Waugh Sr. 3/3/79 Preliminary Talk, H. K. Wong 1979-03-03 

Scope and Contents

HKW interviews Waugh in Marysville, California in English and some Chinese

carton 1, tape 036

Joe Waugh Sr. 1 Side 1979-04-07 

Scope and Contents

HKW interviews Waugh (b.1896) in Chinese

carton 1, tape 055

H. K. 3/4/79 About 2/2 Bomb Day, His Token of Good Luck 1979-03-04 

Scope and Contents

HKW relates trip to Marysville, 1957 Bomb Day

Series 3. California - North Bay (Sonoma, Napa)

carton 1, tape 021

Shuck Chan, Napa. Early Days, Uncle, Dad, Farm Days as Cook, Got Married, Bride to S.F., The Temple, Wagon Train 1979-03-10 

Scope and Contents

HKW interview with Chan (b. 1895) in English and a little Chinese

carton 1,
tape 030, Side A

Fred Wing, Sonoma, Mrs. Wing 1978-12-02 

Scope and Contents

12/2/78 HKW interviews Fred Wing (Wing-Fon Tow, 1908-1993) in English and some Chinese, also his wife Nancy Wing (Man Sz Ng b.1919) in Chinese

carton 1,
tape 030, Side B

Wah Lee Ma, Sonoma [& Fred Wing in San Francisco] 1979-08-08 

Scope and Contents

"Great Grandma" interview/conversation in Chinese ; Boy Tow Lim(?) and others in Chinese, Sonoma ; San Francisco, Freddie Wing follow-up interview in English and some Chinese 8/8/79


carton 1,
tape 031, Side A

Sonoma - Lum 1982-04-13 

Scope and Contents

Conversation with unidentified historian in English re: Chinese in Sonoma 4/13/82

carton 1,
tape 031, Side B

Sonoma - Lum 1982-04-13 


Scope and Contents

HKW interviews man (probably Lum Mu Fong?) and others in Chinese and some English in Sonoma, California

Series 4. California - Central Valley (Fresno, Bakersfield)

carton 1,
tape 009, Side A
carton 1, tape 017


Bakersfield - Harold/Vy + other events ; HK's Rambling 1979 - Wes Letter to HK - Vi-Hal - Dan + Vy - 7/14/79 Bowl 1979 

Sing Lum, Bakersfield #1 HKW 1979-03-28 

Scope and Contents

HKW interviews Sing Lum (b.1904), also his wife Mae in Bakersfield, California 3/28/79

carton 1,
tape 018, Side A

Edith Jung, Bakersfield 3/29/1979 1979-03-29 

Scope and Contents

HKW interviews Jung (b. 1911) in Bakersfield, California

carton 1,
tape 024, Side B

Louie Kee, Wong, Chinese School 1969-04-13 

Scope and Contents

Chinese in Fresno, California. HKW, Wong, & Harold Lai, Jr.[?] interview Kee (b. 1881) in Chinese 4/13/69 ; interview with Wong San Chong[?] in Chinese

carton 1,
tape 024, Side A

Charlie Wong '69 Fresno 1969-04-01 

Scope and Contents

Chinese in Fresno, California. Side A: HKW & Allen Wong interview Charles W. Wong (b. 1892) in Chinese and English 4/1/69 (noisy recording)


Series 5. California (Locke, Grass Valley, Weaverville)





- carton 1, tape 020 **Edward Tin Loy. H. K. Wong, Phil Choy. Grass Valley 1967-02-09** 
 Scope and Contents
 2/9/67 HKW & Choy interview Tin Loy, 5th generation Chinese American, with some later HKW narration
- carton 1, tape 025 **Moon Lee #1 + #2 1979-12-15** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW interviews Lee (b. 1903) in Weaverville, California 12/15/79
- carton 1,
tape 026, Side B **Moon Lee Continued 1979-12-15** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW interviews Lee (b. 1903) in Weaverville, California 12/15/79
- carton 1,
tape 029, Side A **Peter Owyang re: Locke, HKW 1979-03-17** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW interviews Owyang (b.1912) in or near Locke, California 3/17/79

Series 6. Hawaii





- carton 1,
tape 022, Side A **Honolulu - Yim 4/4/81. Molokai - Chow 4/19/81 1981-04-19** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW interviews Hung Chum(?) Yim (b.3/22/93) with wife, mostly in Chinese. Ends abruptly
- carton 1,
tape 022, Side B **Honolulu - Yim 4/4/81. Molokai - Chow 4/19/81 1981-04-04** 
 Scope and Contents
 Mike Douglas Show ; 12:50 Clarence Chow interview
- carton 1,
tape 023, Side A **Honolulu Senator Hiram Fong 4/1981 1981-04-04** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW interviews Fong, other speakers
 Subjects and Indexing Terms
 Fong, Hiram, 1906-2004
- carton 1,
tape 023, Side B **[big band performing at Monarch Room of Royal Hawaiian Hotel in Waikiki] 1981-04-04** 
 Scope and Contents
 live performance of big band performing at Monarch Room of Royal Hawaiian Hotel in Waikiki, chatter

Series 7. Oregon, Arizona, Colorado, Canada

- carton 1,
tape 027, Side A **N. K. Wong 7/23/79 Phoenix, 1st. 3 Minutes H. K. Comments ; N. K. Wong 2/19/80 1979-07-23** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW introduces and interviews Wong and his wife in Chinese and some English in Phoenix, Arizona









-
- carton 1,
tape 027, Side B **N. K. Wong 7/23/79 Phoenix, 1st. 3 Minutes H. K. Comments ; N. K. Wong 2/19/80 1980-02-19** 
- Scope and Contents**
HKW introduces and interviews Wong and his wife in Chinese and some English in Phoenix, Arizona
- carton 1, tape 028 **Kee Brown, Astoria 1971-05-23** 
- Scope and Contents**
HKW interviews Kee Brown Wong in Astoria, Oregon 5/23/71 in English and some Chinese (runs very fast)
- carton 1, tape 057 **H. K. Wong Talk, Society Meeting, Denver Pioneers 1979-12-21** 
- Scope and Contents**
12/21/79 HKW speech for Chinese Historical Society meeting re: Chinese in Colorado
- carton 1, tape 059 **Mrs. Charlie Quan Interviewed about 1979 circa 1979** 
- Scope and Contents**
11/25/76, Sandy Nicholson interviews Quan (b.1889) in Toronto through interpreter

Series 8. Ton W. Lee (San Francisco)

- carton 1,
tape 009, Side B **Ton W. Lee 1979-05-28** 
- HKW & Dan Chu interview 80-year old Tan W. Lee re: immigration, Angel Island, education in China (runs fast)**
HKW & Dan Chu interview 80-year old Tan W. Lee re: immigration, Angel Island, education in China (runs fast)
- carton 1, tape 032 **Ton W. Lee #1 + #2 SF 5/28/79 ; 7/15/79, 8/25/79 1979** 
- Scope and Contents**
HKW interviews Lee 7/15/79, resumes 8/24/79 at Empress of China
- carton 1,
tape 033, Side B **Ton W. Lee at Empress of China 1979-08-24** 
- Scope and Contents**
HKW interviews Lee re: PPIE, high school
- carton 1,
tape 034, Side B **1980 Ton W. Lee #4 1980-03-10** 
- Scope and Contents**
HKW interviews Ton W. Lee 3/10/80

Series 9. Radio & Television

- carton 1, tape 003 **Interview about the Empress of China restaurant in San Francisco May 29, 1966** 
- Scope and Contents**
Interviewer "Bill" talking with HKW about new San Francisco restaurant Empress of China, probably for radio program.
- carton 1, tape 008 **Copy of "News Radio Report's The Year of the Hare of The Celestial Rabbit" for H.K. Wong** 
- Scope and Contents**
Several short radio pieces put together by KCBS NewsRadio in San Francisco about the beginning of the year of the hare in February 1975. The new year celebrations in San Francisco are discussed. Dave Mackelhadden hosts, and actor/artist Ching Wah Lee, businessman and community leader H. K. Wong, and former parade organizer Wayne Hu all provide soundbites on the various pieces.

- carton 1,
tape 033, Side A **H. K. Wong, New Year, KGO Owen Spann 3/3/77 10:06 A.M. ; Ching Wah Lee 8/23/79
PBS 1977, 1979** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW short radio interview about Chinese New Year Parade ; part of documentary about
 Chingwah Lee (very muffled, quiet) ; brief speaking in Chinese
- carton 1,
tape 042, Side A **HK in Los Angeles, KIEV 3/26/79 1979-03-26** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW on KIEV Los Angeles radio program with restaurant critic Paul Wallach
- carton 1, tape 046 **History of Chinese Painting ; 100th Anniversary of Chinese in America. From Walter
Louis** 
 Scope and Contents
 dubs of television documentaries, muffled
- carton 1, tape 052 **H.K. Wong PBD Sun, 5/14/78 2nd appearance: Start of Miss Chinatown USA 1958,
Start of Chinatown NY, 1947 Tennis, 1953 Parade ; Memories PBD Sun 5/21/78. Ching
Wah Lee: 1906 Fire, T3-Chinese Historical Society of America, Good Earth, Kong
Chow Temple 1978-05** 
 Scope and Contents
 "Memories" programs hosted by Harvey Wong, series in cooperation with Chinese
 Historical Society. Side A: guest HKW (dub elsewhere?) ; Side B: guest Chingwah Lee
 Subjects and Indexing Terms
 Lee, Ching Wah, 1901-1980
- carton 1, tape 053 **H. K. Wong KGO talk Sunday 9p-11p Bob Trebor 1978-06-11** 
 Scope and Contents
 HKW radio interview in San Francisco
- carton 1, tape 058 **Buddy Hatton/H. K. Wong Chinese Food Interview. KSFO, Golden West Broadcasters
1982** 
 Scope and Contents
 re: Empress of China, HKW one of "founding directors" interviewed by phone, circa 1982
- carton 1, tape 060 **H. K. on Owen Spann 1975 etc. KGO 6/25/75 9:05AM ; Taped Music 1975** 
 Scope and Contents
 Side A: short HKW radio interview re: Asian Art Museum exhibit ; Side B: off-air recording
 of program about exhibit ; excerpts of speech at opening of exhibit ; resumption of off-air
 recording ; music
- carton 1, tape 061 **H. K. Wong Interview KABL with Lorraine Louie, Host 1978-02-05** 
 Scope and Contents
 "Interdimensions" radio program interviewing HKW & Chingwah Lee about Chinese New
 Year Celebration in San Francisco, ends Side B 15:00 followed by beginning of different
 program (Lou Davis, "Opinions '78") about American Indian Movement
 Subjects and Indexing Terms
 Lee, Ching Wah, 1901-1980

Series 10. Miscellaneous

- carton 1, tape 004 **"Speak Chinese" instruction by M. Gardner Tewksbury, voiced and recorded by
Robert N. Tharp December 27, 1956** 

carton 1,
tape 018, Side B

**China Tape Gourmet Food Promotion This Side Only [commercial music recording]
1980-01-15** 

Scope and Contents

Instrumental Chinese music

carton 1,
tape 029, Side B

**Empress of China Lunch, Bill + Naomi, Mom, Dora Lee, Young & Stella Louis
1980-01-20** 

Scope and Contents

conversations at luncheon 1/20/80 ; HKW narration

carton 1, tape 037

James Wong Howe Interview 1975-11 


Scope and Contents

HKW interviews Wong Howe at noisy restaurant, probably Empress of China (runs fast and gets faster, ends 23:49) ; HKW family celebrating New Year

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Howe, James Wong


carton 1, tape 039

Hugh Liang 1982-08-23 

Scope and Contents

starts 6:17 HKW interview with Hugh Liang (at Empress of China?), mentions signing release

carton 1,
tape 054, Side B

Richard Fong 1979-05-13 

Scope and Contents

music etc. ; HKW interviews Richard Fong in Chinese

carton 1, tape 056

[illegible, on Ampex 60 minute, little content] 1980 

Scope and Contents

8/11/80 HKW attempt to record interview with C.K. (Creighton Kit?) Leong (b.3/29/98) - introduction only ; 3/27/81 follow-up on Ruby Jan, passed away 12/80, interview with sister Mable - introduction only