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Replica 19th c. Shrimp Junk Sails to Chart Overlooked Bay Area Immigration History

Chinese Whispers: Bay Chronicles Project to Retrace Shrimping Grounds/Camps in September 2014

Unique Public Programs at Richmond Craneway, Hunters Point EcoCenter and China Camp State Park

San Francisco – July 31, 2014 – This September, *Chinese Whispers: Bay Chronicles*, a partnership between [Chinese Whispers](#) and the [San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park](#), will explore the changes and dislocations in the cultural and ecological environment of San Francisco Bay with documented voyages aboard the replica San Francisco shrimping junk *Grace Quan*. NPS skipper John Muir, an artistic team (including a sound artist, videographer, and photographer) led by Chinese Whispers Artistic and Executive Director [Rene Yung](#), and a historical ecologist from the San Francisco Estuary Institute, will raise *Grace Quan*'s unmistakable tan-barked sails to visit Chinese shrimping grounds and locate historic shrimp camp sites on the modern landscape.

Three public programs will accompany the voyages, each in a historic Chinese shrimping area – at the Richmond Craneway (Saturday, 9/6, 10:30 am-5:00 pm), the EcoCenter at Heron's Head Park, Hunters Point (Saturday, 9/13, 1:00-3:30 pm), and China Camp Village (Sunday, 9/14, 2:00-5:00 pm). In addition to projections of video and sound captured during the voyage, historians, scientists, archaeologists and boatbuilders will explain the role of Chinese shrimping in Bay Area history, and each unique program will connect the local site to the larger history. The project will culminate in a SF Maritime NHP Visitor Center exhibit in the fall of 2015.

“The historic Chinese immigrant experience in America was marked by oppression and erasure of their contributions from national memory,” said Yung, who masterminded the interdisciplinary research and chronicling project. “The once-thriving Chinese shrimping industry and community around San Francisco Bay is one of these forgotten stories. *Bay Chronicles* will create an ecology of inter-connected parts that lifts that social amnesia, while honoring this pioneer community and San Francisco's maritime heritage.”

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The artistic team will chronicle the voyages with video, GoPro cameras, and multi-channel audio recordings (utilizing microphones attached to different parts of the boat). The collected material will be woven together with historical narratives, text, and imagery to create an in-park multi-media art installation that connects visitors with history in exciting and unexpected ways.

“The 43-foot vessel was named in tribute to the late Grace Quan, mother of Frank Quan, the sole remaining resident of China Camp,” according to John Muir, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park Curator of Small Craft, and leader of the team which constructed the boat on the shores of SF Bay using traditional Chinese shipbuilding techniques. “I think it’s very appropriate that the Park’s *Grace Quan* provides the platform for uncovering this fascinating, but forgotten, aspect of Bay Area history.”

Chinese Whispers is a community-based cultural organization pioneering a multi-platform approach to bring to light the role and experience of the Chinese who helped build the railroads, mines, and settlements of the American West. It brings this overlooked history to the public through an innovative program of research, community engagement, and storytelling and artistic productions.

Chinese Whispers: Bay Chronicles is supported in part by the Creative Work Fund and Center for Cultural Innovation, and is fiscally sponsored by Intersection for the Arts. For more information, call 415-648-1302, or visit chinese-whispers.org or at facebook.com/ChineseWhispers06.

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park includes a fleet of National Historic Landmark vessels, Small Boat Shop, Maritime Museum, Visitor Center, and a maritime research center. The park offers regular programs, sailing tours aboard the 1891 scow schooner *Alma*, and hosts a Sea Music Festival aboard the historic ships at Hyde Street Pier. For more information, call 415-447-5000, or visit the park online at nps.gov/safr or at facebook.com/SanFranciscoMaritimeNHP.

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