



Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation

To Bring Alive the History of Santa Barbara for Present and Future Generations

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ADDITIONAL PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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Sharing Our Common Ground: Asian American History in Santa Barbara County

Three-part community lecture series continues with “Mollusks and Hot Irons: Chinese entrepreneurship in Santa Barbara”

(SANTA BARBARA, CA) – The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP) presents **“Mollusks and Hot Irons: Chinese entrepreneurship in Santa Barbara,”** a presentation by anthropologist **Linda Bentz** at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park, **Thursday, April 2, 2009 at 7:00 PM.** Part two of the three-part community lecture series, *Sharing Our Common Ground: Asian American History in Santa Barbara County*, **Bentz will discuss the history of fishing and laundries, two significant Chinese-led business in Santa Barbara.**

During the late-nineteenth and twentieth-centuries the area in and around the Santa Barbara Presidio was occupied by communities of Chinese and Japanese, coexisting side by side in what was a unique and culturally rich neighborhood. SBTHP is currently conducting research and community outreach to develop an exhibit on Asian American history in Santa Barbara, with a special emphasis on the Presidio area neighborhood. **According to SBTHP’s Associate Director for Historical Resources, Anne Petersen, “Exploring the experience of Asian Americans in Santa Barbara helps personalize the history of immigration, agricultural innovation, urbanization and World War II, all of which shaped**



Joss House at 19 Canon Perdido Street, Santa Barbara, 1927, by H.M. Davidson. Image courtesy of Elizabeth Hvolboll.

the development of California. At the same time, the history of Chinese and Japanese Americans in our community, many of whom lived side by side in the culturally-rich Presidio neighborhood, has many characteristics that are unique to Santa Barbara. We look forward to sharing these stories with the public.”

Linda Bentz is a freelance historical researcher and has studied four historic Chinese communities in California: Ventura, Oxnard, Santa Barbara, and Cambria. Bentz has worked with the National Parks Service and the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary investigating Chinese presence on the Channel Islands. Chinese fishermen, California-built Chinese junks, and Chinese American women and families are among her research interests. Linda researched and wrote the script for the documentary,

Courage and Contributions: the Chinese in Ventura County and has published essays in books, journals, and newsletters. She is currently the historian for the Ventura County Chinese American Historical Society, and writing a book about Chinese communities in Ventura County, *Hidden Voices: One Hundred Years of Chinese History in Ventura County*.

Sharing Our Common Ground: Asian American History in Santa Barbara County:

Part II

“Mollusks and Hot Irons: Chinese entrepreneurship in Santa Barbara” by Linda Bentz

Thursday, April 2, 2009 at 7:00 PM

Presidio Chapel at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara SHP

123 East Canon Perdido Street, Santa Barbara, CA

\$10 for adults | FREE for SBTHP members and 16 or under

Part III

“Where East Meets West in California:

Three Japanese American Communities in Santa Barbara County” by Kent Haldan, Ph.D.

A member of the Social Sciences Department at Diablo Valley College, Haldan will draw upon extensive oral history research from his doctoral dissertation *Our Japanese Citizens: A Study of*

Race, Class, and Ethnicity in Three Japanese American Communities in Santa Barbara County, 1900-1960, to highlight the Japanese American experience in Santa Barbara County.

Thursday, May 28, 2009 at 7:00 PM

Presidio Chapel at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara SHP

123 East Canon Perdido Street, Santa Barbara, CA

\$10 for adults | FREE for SBTHP members and 16 or under

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit www.sbthp.org or call (805) 965-0093

About the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP)—Since 1963, the mission of SBTHP has been to encourage the preservation of historic buildings and sites in Santa Barbara County. We have rebuilt major portions of Santa Barbara’s Royal Presidio, which we operate as El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park, and recently purchased the building that housed Jimmy’s Oriental Gardens, providing an opportunity to interpret the history of Santa Barbara’s Asian American community in the Presidio neighborhood. SBTHP has also restored and operates as an historic house museum Casa de la Guerra, the 1820s home of Presidio Comandante José de la Guerra. We are currently preserving the Santa Inés Mission Mills, the site of a future California State Park. These are but a few of the many projects SBTHP is presently pursuing—learn more by visiting www.sbthp.org.

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