



Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History

The Chinese Fishing Village: An Early Settlement on Monterey Bay



Pacific Grove, CA – Now through Aug 29, 2009, the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History is presenting the exhibit *The Chinese Fishing Village: An early Settlement on Monterey Bay*. This exhibit tells the story of the Chinese Fishing Village in Pacific Grove and displays for the first time artifacts from the Maritime Museum, the California History Room, the Stanford Hopkins Marine Station, and the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History. This exhibit features portraits of the Chinese Village residents, taken sometime around 1900 by C.K. Tuttle, a Pacific Grove Pharmacist. The photos were probably taken for use on certificates of residence, mandated by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This Act denied American citizenship to all resident Chinese, and those without the certificate faced deportation. Made permanent in 1902, the Act was repealed in 1943. The exhibit also presents a model fishing junk, artwork, as well as rare artifacts from Stanford University's archaeological excavation of the Hopkins Marine Station, led by Stanford PhD candidate Bryn Williams. Many of these artifacts demonstrate how the Chinese Fishing Village residents were not a separate isolated group, but rather intermingled and contributed to the commerce of the day.

Old Monterey was not only home to the Californios, but to Chinese immigrants who settled into fishing villages and camps along the coast in the 1850s. The largest village was on the site of Hopkins Marine Station in Pacific Grove. These expert fishermen built a small fleet of traditional boats and pioneered the first successful industrial fishing operation in Monterey. Their large daily catches of abalone, fish and squid were sold all over California and as far away as China. Thousands of pounds of annual catch led to large flows of income for both the Chinese, and the town of Monterey. However, success led to inevitable loss, as both their industry and their village site proved too valuable to ignore. Caught in the crosshairs of the statewide anti-Chinese immigration movement, the village was forced out of existence by a 1906 fire, and eviction by the landholder. Villagers dispersed, and likewise, their once-thriving coastal community seemed to disappear into the fog.

In 1879, Robert Louis Stevenson wrote, "And yet the boats that ride in the haven are of strange outlandish design; and, if you walk into the hamlet, you will behold costumes and faces and hear a tongue that are unfamiliar to the memory. The joss-stick burns... and a man guiding his upright pencil from right to left across the sheet, writes home the news of Monterey to the Celestial Empire."

Aug 20, 7pm-8pm

Archaeology of the Chinese Fishing Village at Pt. Alones, Pacific Grove.

A lecture by Bryn Williams, doctoral student at Stanford University, about his archaeological findings from the former Chinese fishing village at Pt. Alones, now the site of Hopkins Marine Station.

For more information about this exhibit and its related events,
call Lori Mannel at (831) 648-5718, or visit www.pgmuseum.org.
The Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History is located at Forest & Central Avenues.
It is free to the public on Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.