SQUARE AND CIRCLE CLUB RECORDS 1924-2003 (bulk 1954-1999)

Collection number: SFH 13



San Francisco History Center San Francisco Public Library 2009

Table of Contents

Introduction	on	3
Organizat	ion History	4
-	l Content	
_	ent	
_	scriptions	
Container	List	7
Series 1:	Administration, 1931 - 2002	7
Series 2:	Correspondence, 1932 - 2001	9
Series 3:	Community Service Projects, 1950 – 2001	10
Series 4	Fundraisers, 1952 - 2002.	
Series 5:	Member Events, 1959 – 1999 (bulk 1984 - 1999)	11
Series 6:	Financial Records, 1924 – 2003	
Series 7:	Publicity/Press, 1953 - 2001	

Introduction

Access

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

Copyright has been assigned to the San Francisco Public Library. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the city Archivist. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the San Francisco Public Library as the owner of the physical items and the copyright.

Collection Number

SFH 13

Size

8 cartons, 1 oversize flat box (ca. 9.0 cubic ft.)

Processed by

Rachel Taketa

Date Completed

May 2005

Updated March 2009 by Wendy Kramer.

Preferred Citation

[*Identification of item*], Square and Circle Club Records (SFH 13), San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

Related Materials

Researchers are encouraged to view the catalog holdings of the San Francisco Public Library for related materials, particularly, <u>Unbound Feet</u> by Judy Yung and <u>Bridging the Pacific: San Francisco Chinatown</u> and Its People by Thomas W. Chinn.

Materials Transferred

Photographs (12 folders) have been transferred to the San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection.

Conservation Note

During processing, the entire collection was re-foldered and re-housed in acid-free folders. Some metal staples remain. Pages were removed from binders and notebooks. Photographs were removed to the San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection.

Organization History

The Square and Circle Club derives its name from an old Chinese couplet translated as "In deeds be square, in knowledge be all-round". The Square and Circle Club is believed to be the oldest active Chinese women's service organization in the United States and has served the San Francisco Bay Area for over 80 years. Comprised primarily of professional women of Chinese descent, the mission of the club is to promote local community issues, provide monies to organizations and persons in need, and act as a social fellowship for the club members.

The Square and Circle Club was formed in 1924 by a group of seven young women: Daisy Wong Chinn, Jennie J. Lee, Ann Lee Leong, Ivy Lee Mah, Bessie Wong Shum, Daisy K. Wong, and Alice Fong Yu. The group originally came together to raise funds for flood and famine victims in China and the first fundraiser was a benefit dance that successfully raised \$250 for relief packages. After the success of the event, the Square and Circle Club turned their attentions to the local San Francisco community, embarking upon what has become a much respected and longstanding philanthropic tradition.

Early service projects focused upon orphans, healthcare, and educational activities. Fundraising for projects at Laguna Honda Hospital, the Chung Mei Home for Chinese Boys, the Mei Lan Yuen Home and the Ming Quong Home for Chinese girls, took the form of raffles, benefit dances and variety shows. From the late 1920s through the early 1940's, the Square and Circle Club produced many well-attended events that showcased popular themes, dances and music of the era and provided funds for the many service projects of the club. "It Happened in Zandavia", presented in 1933, was the first such musical and featured boys from the Chung Mei Home performing alongside the women of the club. Above and beyond raising money, members often volunteered their time to a variety of community projects including assisting with local tuberculosis screening and visiting the patients of the Laguna Honda Hospital. In addition to serving the community, Square and Circle Club also organized dinners, picnics and anniversary parties for the growing numbers of members. While the club's main focus was local service, the women did become active in larger volunteer arenas such as involvement with the Chinese War Relief Association, supporting a bill promoting rights of entry and U.S. citizenship to Chinese persons, and voicing staunch support of boycotts against Japanese products during World War II.

After World War II, the women of the Square and Circle Club continued to further the philanthropic activities of the club while pursuing their own educational and career advancement. The musicals and variety shows continued to be very popular with titles such as "Goo Ma Steps Out", "Once Upon a Holiday", "Song of Dynasty" and "My Fair Co-ed". The club's popular fashion shows and New Years Eve Charity Balls began during this time and continued with great success. Always innovative in their fundraising ideas, the club launched the publication of a Square and Circle Cookbook in 1976, Cooking with Square and Circle, which sold out its 5,000 copies and went into a third printing.

Many of the members have been individually recognized and awarded for their community leadership and accomplishments. The club's first president, Alice Fong Yu, was the first Chinese American teacher hired into the San Francisco Unified School District, and after a long and respected career in elementary education and speech therapy, had a Chinese immersion school named for her in 1996, the Alice Fong Yu Alternative School.

The Square and Circle Club's mission to "promote and foster philanthropic projects and community service" has remained unchanged since its inception in 1924. Through its fundraising efforts and volunteer projects, the club has provided support for YMCA and YWCA camperships; scholarships to City College, San Francisco State University, Mills College and the annual Close-up Washington, D.C. program; equipment for On Lok Senior Health Services and Chinese Hospital; and funds for the Asian Women's Shelter, Chinatown Youth Center, San Francisco Public Library, Chinese Education Center, the Chinese Newcomers Service Center, and Laguna Honda Hospital to name a few. In 2004, the Square and Circle Club donated their archives to the San Francisco Public Library's History Center.

Scope and Content

The collection documents the activities of the Square and Circle Club from 1924 – 2003. The club began in 1924 and is one of the largest and oldest Chinese women's service organizations still active in the country. These documents provide insight into the organization of the club and the many service projects they have undertaken over the years. In addition to the operations of the Square and Circle Club, the collection also gives evidence of the evolving needs of the Chinese community in San Francisco and gives a detailed look into the way the club answered these needs.

Materials include the Square and Circle Club's constitution and bylaws, meeting minutes, clubhouse records, correspondence, committee files, fundraising materials, financial records and publicity. The meeting minutes yield much information on the organizational decisions made by the club, from changes in bylaws to dispersals of monies within the local community. The collection has a particularly notable section of annual fundraising projects and activities, including photographs and historical materials about the San Francisco Bay Area. This club is still active and more materials will be deposited in the future.

Arrangement

The material has been arranged into 7 series: 1) Administration, 2) Correspondence, 3) Community Service Projects, 4) Fundraisers, 5) Member Events, 6) Financial records, and 7) Publicity/Press.

Series Descriptions

Series 1: Administration, 1931 - 2002

2.5 cu ft

Divided into four subseries: 1.1: Constitution and Bylaws; 1.2: Minutes; 1.3: Committee Files; and 1.4: Facilities. Arranged in reverse chronological order within subseries. Meeting minutes and committee files constitute the bulk of this series; the club's community activism is evidenced throughout the minutes, and the committee files detail how the club functioned to achieve its philanthropic goals.

Series 2: Correspondence, 1932 - 2001 2 cu ft

Arranged in reverse chronological order, with sent and received correspondence filed together.

This series contains correspondence documenting the Square and Circle Club's extensive community contacts and influence. Includes informal letters and cards from club members, as well as communications and solicitation letters from outside organizations that provide insight into the evolving needs of the area over a 69-year period. Of particular note are the letters from American soldiers in Korea (1951-1952) and the correspondence between the club and Judy Yung, author of <u>Unbound Feet</u>, which features the women of Square and Circle Club.

Series 3: Community Service Projects, 1950 - 2001

Arranged in reverse chronological order.

Series 3 (cont.)

This series focuses upon the club's standing service and donation commitments that were administered by the service committee. These commitments include scholarships, camperships, hospital volunteering and On Lok Senior center donations. As-needed aid to various requesting institutions are also included. See also Series 2: Correspondence for possible overlapping materials.

Series 4 Fundraisers, 1952 - 2002

1.5 cu ft.

Arranged chronologically by project.

This series contains detailed files of the club's service projects undertaken by the service committee. These projects include fashion shows, variety and musical shows, rummage sales, "phantom tea parties", New Year's Eve benefit balls, and the Square and Circle cook book. Each project in this series may include financial reports, ledgers, correspondence, invitations, press, and planning documents. Of particular note are the photographs of the 1961 New Year's Eve Charity ball and the files of the early variety shows and plays such as the 1959 play "My Fair Co-ed" and the 1953 "Goo-Ma Steps Out", complete with scripts and playbills.

Series 5: Member Events, 1959 – 1999 (bulk 1984 - 1999)

0.5 cu ft.

Arranged chronologically.

This series contains files on social and celebratory events planned by the Program Committee for the members of the club. Includes planning notes, correspondence, financial reports and invitations for the various events. Of particular note are the files on the 75th Anniversary of the club, which includes invitations, press, notes, and extensive planning documents.

Series 6: Financial Records, 1924 – 2003

1.5 cu ft.

This series details the club's accounting and allocation of monies to events and organizations. Account books and ledgers from 1924-1952 have suffered some water damage and are partially illegible. Because treasurer' reports and budgets were included on club meeting agendas, some also may be found attached to minutes in Series 1. Some financial records, as they pertain to fundraisers or member events, may also be found in Series 4 and 5.

Subdivided into 6 subseries:

Subseries 6.1: Treasurer' Reports

Further subdivided into annual and monthly reports, then arranged chronologically.

Subseries 6.2 : Budgets

Arranged chronologically.

Subseries 6.3: Donations

Records of donations made to the club, arranged chronologically.

Subseries 6.4: Tax records

Arranged chronologically.

Subseries 6.5: Account Books and Ledgers

Account books include a variety of financial records, including expenditures, receipts, sales, and other financial records. Ledgers contain entries of debit, credit, and other financial transactions. Some volumes are specific to the General Account, Service Account, or Clubroom Fund. Arranged chronologically.

Subseries 6.6: Miscellaneous financial records

Arranged chronologically.

Series 7: Publicity/Press, 1953 - 2001 0.5 cu ft

Arranged by format. Newsletters and clippings arranged in reverse chronological order.

This series contains the club's newsletter, the *Square Circular*, and newspaper clippings about the club. Various documents created for publicity or for informational purposes, such as the club motto and pledge, are also included in this series along with the Square and Circle song: an instrumental piano song with accompanying typed lyrics.

Container List

Series 1: Administration, 1931 - 2002

Subseries 1.1: Constitution & Bylaws

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
Box 1	1	Bylaws, Friendship Fund	1946
	2	Constitution and Bylaws	1949 – 1998, n.d.
	3	Constitution and Bylaws Revisions, Ballots	1981
	4	Constitution and Bylaws Revisions, Notes	1987, 1998
	5	Constitution and Bylaws Strategic Planning Notes	1997-1998

Subseries 1.2: Minutes

Arranged in reverse chronological order.

Container	Folder	Folder Title	Date
Box 1	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	Minutes, Board Minutes, General Minutes, General Minutes, General Minutes, Board Minutes, General Minutes, Board Minutes, General Minutes, General Minutes, General Minutes, Board Minutes, General Minutes, General Minutes, General Minutes, General Minutes, General	July 1998-July 1999 July 1998-July 1999 July 1996-June 1998 July 1996-June 1996 July 1994-June 1996 July 1993-June 1994 July 1993-June 1994 July 1992-June 1993 July 1992-June 1993 July 1990-June 1992 July 1990-June 1992
	18	Minutes, Board, 1 of 2	July 1989-June 1990

Subseries 1.2: Minutes (cont.)

<u>Container</u>	Folder	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
Box 1	19	Minutes, Board, 2 of 2	July 1989-June 1990
	20	Minutes, General	July 1989-June 1990
	21	Minutes, Board	July 1988-June 1989
	22	Minutes, General	July 1988-June 1989
	23	Minutes, Board	July 1987-June 1988
	24	Minutes, General	July 1987-June 1988
	25	Minutes, Board	July 1986-June 1987
	26	Minutes, General	July 1985-June 1987
	27	Minutes, Board	July 1983-June 1986
	28	Minutes, General	July 1983-June 1985
Box 2	1	Minutes, Board	July 1979-June 1983
	2	Minutes, General	July 1979-June 1983
	3	Minutes, Board	July 1975-June 1979
	4	Minutes, General	July 1975-June 1979
	5	Minutes, Board	July 1970-June 1975
	6	Minutes, General	July 1970-June 1975
	7	Minutes, Board	July 1965-June 1970
	8	Minutes, General	July 1965-June 1970
	9	Minutes, Board	July 1962-June 1965
	10	Minutes, General	July 1962-June 1965
	11	Minutes	July 1959-June 1962
	12	Minutes	Jan 1955-June 1959
	13	Minutes	1958
	14	Minutes	March 1952-Dec 1954
	15	Minutes	Jan 1950-Dec 1951
	16	Minutes	Jan 1949-Dec 1949
	17	Minutes	Jan 1948-Dec 1948
	18	Minutes	Jan 1947-Dec 1947
	19	Minutes	July 1943-Dec 1946
	20	Minutes	Jan 1941-June 1943
	21	Minutes	Sept 1935-Nov1940
	22	Minutes	Jan 1931-August 1935

Subseries 1.3: Committee Files

Arranged by committee, then in reverse chronological order.

Container	Folder	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
Box 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13	Committee Files – Ad-Hoc Committee Files – Evaluation Committee Files – Membership, Applications Committee Files – Membership, Attendance Committee Files – Membership, Reports Committee Files – Nominating Committee Files – Officer Duties Committee Files – Program	1961, 1973, 1987 1965 - 1973, 1991 1986 - 1990 1991 - 1992 1985 - 1988 July 1975 - Nov 1976 1973 - June 1975 1968 - 1973 1952 - 1968 1985 - 1994 1961 - 1962 1973 - 1988 1980 - 1992
	10	Committee Tites Trogram	1700 1772

Subseries 1.3: Committee Files (cont.)

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	Folder Title	Date
Box 3	14	Committee Files – Service	Dec 1997 – Nov 1998
	15	Committee Files – Service	July 1981 – Oct 1989

Subseries 1.4: Facilities

Arranged by type.

Container	Folder	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
Box 3	16 17 18	Facilities – Custodian Files Facilities – Insurance Policies Facilities – Lease	1958 – 1997, n.d. 1959, 1988 – 1993 1943, 1991 – 1997

Series 2: Correspondence, 1932 – 2001 Arranged in reverse chronological order.

Container	<u>Folder</u>	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
Box 3	19	Correspondence	Jan 1999 – Feb 2001
	20	Correspondence	Feb 1997 – Dec 1998
	21	Correspondence	Aug 1994 – Sept 1996
	22	Correspondence	Aug 1993 – May 1994
	23	Correspondence	July 1992 – June 1993
	24	Correspondence	July 1989 – April 1992
	25	Correspondence	July 1988 – June 1989
	26	Correspondence	July 1987 – June 1988
	27	Correspondence	June 1986 – June 1987
	28	Correspondence	July 1984 – May 1986
	29	Correspondence	July 1982 – June 1984
	30	Correspondence	July 1981 – June 1982
	31	Correspondence	July 1980 – June 1981
	32	Correspondence	July 1979 – June 1980
	33	Correspondence	July 1978 – June 1979
Box 4	1	Correspondence	July 1977 – June 1978
	2	Correspondence	July 1976 – June 1977
	3	Correspondence	Jan 1975 – June 1976
	4	Correspondence	July 1974 – Dec 1974
	5	Correspondence	July 1973 – June 1974
	6	Correspondence	July 1972 – June 1973
	7	Correspondence	July 1971 – June 1972
	8	Correspondence	July 1970 – June 1971
	9	Correspondence	July 1969 – June 1970
	10	Correspondence	July 1968 – June 1969
	11	Correspondence	July 1967 – June 1968
	12	Correspondence	July 1966 – June 1967
	13	Correspondence	July 1965 – June 1966
	14	Correspondence, "The Heaven's Angels"	1965
	15	Correspondence	July 1964 – June 1965
	16	Correspondence	July 1963 – June 1964
	17	Correspondence	July 1962 – June 1963
	18	Correspondence	Jan 1962 – June 1962
	19	Correspondence	July 1961 – Dec 1961

Series 2: Correspondence (cont.)

Container	<u>Folder</u>	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
	20 21 22 23 24 25	Correspondence Correspondence Correspondence Correspondence Correspondence Correspondence	July 1960 – June 1961 July 1959 – June 1960 July 1958 – June 1959 July 1957 – June 1958 Jan 1956 – June 1957 July 1953 – Dec 1955
Box 5	1 2 3 4 5	Correspondence Correspondence Correspondence Correspondence Correspondence	July 1952 – June 1953 July 1951 – June 1952 July 1948 – June 1951 1942 – 1948 1932 – 1933

Series 3: Community Service Projects, 1950 – 2001 Arranged in reverse chronological order.

Container	<u>Folder</u>	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
Box 5	6	Community Service	Jan 1999 – 2001
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	
	7	Community Service	1996 – Nov 1998
	8	Community Service	1995
	9	Community Service	Jan 1993 – Nov 1994
	10	Community Service	Aug 1991 – Dec 1992
	11	Community Service	July 1990 – June 1991
	12	Community Service	Jan 1990 – June 1990
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	
	13	Community Service	July 1989 – Dec 1989
	14	Community Service	Jan 1989 – June 1989
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	
	15	Community Service	
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	June 1988 – Dec 1988
	16	Community Service	Jan 1988 – June 1988
	17	Community Service	July 1987 – Dec 1987
	18	Community Service	May 1986 – June 1987
	19	Community Service	July 1984 – July 1986
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	
	20	Community Service	July 1983 – June 1984
	21	Community Service	Jan 1983 – June 1983
	22	Community Service	July 1981 – Dec 1982
	23	Community Service	July 1980 – June 1981
	24	Community Service	June 1978 – June 1980
	25	Community Service	Jun 1976 – Aug 1977
	26	Community Service	April 1970 – June 1975
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	
Box 6	1	Community Service	Jan 1962 – Dec 1969
	2	Community Service – (YMCA Committee	Feb 1950 – Nov 1961
		photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	

Series 4: Fundraisers, 1952 - 2002

Container	<u>Folder</u>	Folder Title	Date
Box 6		Show "Once Upon a Holiday	1952
Don't		Show "Goo-Ma Steps Out	1953?
		Chinese New Year Festival	1954
		Show "Song of Dynasty"	1954
		Rummage Sale	1958
		Show "My Fair Co-ed"	1959
		Fashion Show "Imperial Palace"	1960
		New Year's Eve Ball	1960
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	1071
		New Year's Eve Ball	1961
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	1062
		Fashion Show "Imperial Palace"	1962
		Gourmet Dinner Easkier Show "Discothoguel Coital	1964
		Fashion Show "Discotheque! Gaite!	1965
		New Year's Eve Ball	1966
		Fashion Show "Meandering Modes"	1968
		Arts and Fun Fair	1968 1970
		Rummage Sale Fashion Show "Ye Gladde Rags"	1970
		Dinner/Dance "Hawaiian Holiday	1972
		Rummage Sale	1973
		Fashion Show "Noel d'Elegance"	1973
		Rummage Sale	1975
		Anniversary Album	1975
Oversize Flat Bo	X	New Year's Eve Ball Poster	1976
Box 6		Cookbook: Correspondence	1977-1981
		Cookbook: Notes & Planning	1977
		Cookbook: Sales Records	1977-1981
		Fashion Show: "Panache"	1978
		Rummage Sale	1980
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	
Box 7		Luau	1980
		Fashion Show: "Spring Perspectives"	1985
		Bingo Night & Raffle	1986?
		T-shirt Project	1989
		Fashion Show: "Kaleidoscope of Fashion"	1988-1990
		(Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	
		Fashion Show: "The Emerging Woman"	1991
		Fashion Show: "Fashion Renaissance"	1993
		Phantom Tea Party	1994
		Fashion Show: "Kimono Couture"	1996
		Phantom Tea Party Fashion Show: "Elements of Fashion"	1997
		Phantom Tea	2000 2001-2002
		Annual Dinner Dance	1969
		50 th Anniversary, Chinese New Year,	1707
		Commemorative Tea	1974
		Dinners, Trips, Anniversary	1978-1981
		Anniversary Dinners, Christmas Parties	1984-1990
		·	

Series 5: Member Events, 1959 – 1999 (bulk 1984 - 1999)

Arranged chronologically.

Container	Folder	Folder Title	Date
Box 7		30 th Anniversary 35 th Anniversary (Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection) Anniversaries, Birthdays (Photos removed to SF Historical Photo Collection)	1954 1959 1990-1996
		75 th Anniversary: Invitation	1999
		75 th Anniversary: Planning & Publicity Member Events	1999 2002-2003

Series 6: Financial Records, 1924 – 2003

Subdivided into six subseries, then arranged chronologically.

Subseries 6.1: Treasurer's Reports

Subdivided into annual and monthly reports, then arranged chronologically.

Container	Folder	Folder Title	Date			
Box 7		Annual Reports Monthly Treasurer's Reports Monthly Treasurer's Reports	1958 – 2003 1960– 1970 1971 – 1997			
Subseries 6.2: Budgets Arranged chronologically.						
Container	Folder	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>			
Box 7		Budgets	1959 – 1997			
Subseries 6.3: Donations Arranged chronologically.						
Container	Folder	Folder Title	Date			
Box 7		Donations Received	1974 – 2003			
Subseries 6.4: Tax Records Arranged chronologically.						
Container	Folder	Folder Title	Date			
Box 7		Tax Records	1967 – 2003			
Subseries 6.5: Account Books and Ledgers Arranged chronologically.						
Container	Folder	Folder Title	Date			
Box 8		Ledger	1924 – 1932			

Subseries 6.5: Account Books and Ledgers (cont.)

Container	<u>Folder</u>	Folder Title	Date
Box 8	<u>Folder</u>	Ledger Account Book Ledger Account Book Service Fund Ledger Club Room Fund Ledger Ledgers Ledger Ledger Ledger	1933 – 1938 1939 – 1947 1948 – 1952 1948 – 1956 1953 – 1958 1958 – 1959 1958 –1961 1961 –1967 1967 –1973
		Service Fund Ledger General Fund Ledger Miscellaneous Ledger Sheets	1973 –1974 1973 –1975 1987 –2003

Subseries 6.6: Miscellaneous Financial Records

Arranged chronologically.

<u>Container</u>	Folder	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
Box 8		Miscellaneous Financial Records	1981 –1989

Series 7: Publicity/Press, 1953 – 2001

Arranged by type, then in reverse chronological order.

Container	Folder	Folder Title	<u>Date</u>
Box 8	1	Circulars	1995-1997, 1998–1999, & 2001
	2	Circulars	Jan 1991 – Oct 1994
	3	Circulars	Feb 1989 – Dec 1990 (bulk 1990)
	4	Circulars	July 1983 – Dec 1988
	5	Circulars	July 1981 – June 1982
	6	Circulars	June 1952 – March 1956
	7	Clippings	1954 – 1960
	8	Pins	n.d.
	9	Slogans/Memorabilia	n.d.
	10	Song – instrumental with typed lyrics	n.d.