

Author McCunn Explores APIs in Civil War

Award-winning author Ruthanne Lum McCunn uncovers a little known facet of Chinese American history when she presents *Hidden History: Asians and Pacific Islanders in the American Civil War*, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 10 a.m. to noon, at the Alhambra Civic Center Library.

In recent years, researchers have learned that approximately 300 Asians and Pacific Islanders served in the Civil War. McCunn's latest book, *Chinese Yankee*, tells the true story of Thomas Sylvanus (Ah Yee Way), a Hong Kong orphan who was sent to America in the mid-1850s for schooling but was enslaved in Baltimore. He ultimately fled to the north and fought in the Freedom Army.

Through her novels and nonfiction writings, McCunn has worked to illuminate compelling stories of Chinese in America. She published her first novel, *Thousand Pieces of Gold*, in 1981 and has won numerous accolades, among them the American Book Award. Her books have been translated into 13 languages.

Born in the United States and raised in Hong Kong, McCunn is of Chinese and Scottish descent. She graduated from the University of Texas and has taught at Cornell University, University of California at Santa Cruz, and University of San Francisco.

Open to the public free of charge, the Sept. 12th program is presented by the Chinese Family History Group of Southern California in partnership with the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Chinese American Museum, and Chinese Historical Society of Southern California.

The library is located at 101 S. 1st St., Alhambra. Parking will be available in the Alhambra Civic Center lot. For directions, call (626) 570-5008 or go to www.alhambralibrary.org/hours.html.