



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Lee Chinese-American Family Papers

NMAH.AC.0555

David Haberstich



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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Lee Chinese-American Family Papers
Date:	circa 1915-1970
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0555
Creator:	Mead, Virginia Lee
Extent:	0.3 Cubic feet (2 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Scrapbook, photograph album, published family book, photographic prints, and news clippings related to Virginia Mead's family.
Digital Content:	Image(s): Lee Chinese-American Family Papers

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Alison Shue (Mrs. John) Lee and Mrs. Poon Lam Mok (Grace Lee) of New York, through Virginia (Mrs. Robert H.) Mead of Washington, D.C., 1994.

Provenance

The Archives Center was alerted to the scrapbooks by Richard Ahlborn, Curator in the Division of Community Life (now Division of Cultural and Community Life), with whom they were originally placed on loan. Grace Lee is the sister of Mrs. Mead and Alison Shue is her niece. The collection was assigned NMAH non-accession no. 1994.3135, and is related to accession no. 1992.0634.

Processing Information

Collection processed by David Haberstick, undated.

Preferred Citation

Lee Chinese American Family Papers, circa 1915-1970, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research. The scrapbooks are in fragile condition. See repository for more details about handling.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of a scrapbook, a photograph album, and a published family book with Chinese text and reproductions of portrait photographs. The scrapbook and album contain clippings and memorabilia from the Lee family, which had emigrated from China to New York, and miscellaneous unmounted photographs. This material dates primarily from the 1920s to the 1940s, although a few items are as late as 1970. Most of the persons in the photographs are not identified, although travel pictures in such places as Hawaii and Haiti are captioned. However, a few newspaper clippings in the collection in which photographs apparently depict members of the Lee and Shue families and/or the articles relate to them.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into one series.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Family -- 20th century

Types of Materials:

Clippings
Photograph albums
Scrapbooks

Container Listing

Box 1 Lee Family Scrapbook, undated
Notes: Extremely poor condition, pages brittle. Contains news clippings, photographs, and other memorabilia from Lee family.

Box 2 Lee Family Family Photograph Album, 1917-1943
Notes: Album contains photographs, news clippings and other memorabilia concerning Lee family in New York. Color photoprints are fading. Album includes vacation pictures taken in Hawaii and Haiti, etc.

[Lee family portrait : Photoprint], [before 1922.]

1 Item (mounted; 8" x 12".)

Photographer: Ettlin Studio

Donor: Mead, Virginia Lee

Language: English.

Notes: AC0555-0000003.tif (AC Scan)

1994.3135 (NMAH Acc.)

Unrestricted research access on site by appointment.
Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.

Imprint at bottom of mount: Tarsy [sic?] / The Ettlin Studio / 17
Chatham Square, N.Y. / 8 Catherine St.

Gift of Alison Shue and Grace Lee.

Silvering at top; mount ragged.

Topic: Family -- 20th century

Place: New York (N.Y.) -- 1920-1930

Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1910-1920 -- Black-and-white photoprints --
Silver gelatin

Culture: Chinese Americans

[Studio portrait of Mr. Lee B. Lok. Black-and-white photoprint], [1942.]

1 Item (13" x 9".)

Photographer: Junyoon Studio

Creator: Mead, Virginia Lee

Language: English.

Notes: 1994.3135 (NMAH Acc.)

AC0555-0000004.tif (AC Scan)

Unrestricted research access on site by appointment.
Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.

Studio name in English imprinted vertically on mount near bottom
left of print, accompanied by Chinese.

Gift of Alison Shue and Grace Lee.

Topic: Chinese Americans

Place: New York (N.Y.) -- 1930-1950 -- Photographs

Genre/Form: Studio portraits -- Chinese American men

[Lee children in 1948 at the Golden Age Club in New York. Photograph.]

1 Item (10" x 8")

Creator: Ettlín Studio
Mead, Virginia Lee
Language: English.
Notes: 1994.3135 (Nonacc. No.)
Unrestricted research access on site by appointment.
Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.
Gift of Alison Shue and Grace Lee.
Topic: Chinese Americans
Place: New York (N.Y.) -- 1930-1950 -- Photographs

[Portrait of Mrs. Lee. Photograph.]

1 Item (10" x 8".)

Photographer: Ettlín Studio
Creator: Mead, Virginia Lee
Language: English.
Notes: 1994.3135 (NMAH Acc.)
AC0555-0000002.tif (AC Scan)
Unrestricted research access on site by appointment.
Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.
Gift of Alison Shue and Grace Lee.
Topic: Chinese Americans
Genre/Form: Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin
Studio portraits -- Women

[Portrait of Virginia Lee in a cheongsam dress. Photoprint.]

1 Item (unmounted; 14 x 11".)

Photographer: Ettlín Studio
Donor: Mead, Virginia Lee
Language: English.
Notes: AC0555-0000006.tif (AC Scan)
1994.3135 (Nonacc. No.)
Unrestricted research access on site by appointment.
Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.
Gift of Alison Shue and Grace Lee.
Topic: Costume -- Chinese
Cheongsam dresses
Genre/Form: Studio portraits -- Women
Culture: Chinese Americans

Box 2

Printed book with Chinese text and reproductions of portrait photographs.,
undated

Box 2, Folder 1

Scrapbook page with studio portrait of young Chinese-American girl on one
side, Chinatown parade, 1932

Box 2, Folder 1 [5 women, Ana Lee and sisters plus 2 others, Hotel Astor; November 15, 1936, 1936](#)
Notes: Captioned on verso: "Season's Greetings / 1936-1937 / To My Charming friends / Miss China / Ana Lee and Sisters / by L. George Villega" with later note, "Hotel Astor—11/15/36—N.Y. Times photo."

Box 2, Folder 1 Photoprint: Chinese American women carrying large banner, 1932

Box 2, Folder 1 [Portrait of a young woman, unidentified, circa 1930s](#)

Box 2, Folder 1 Photoprint: 8 young women in front of "Tea House" signs, by Bayshore Photo Studio, Bay Shore, L. I. (stamp on verso). Pen on verso: "Sep. 16 1935 / To Anna Lee / who made a fantasy / become a delightful reality / Ella H Rigney / and / Francis J. Rigney." Print is yellowing and fading., 1935

Box 2, Folder 1 Black album page, with 8" x 10" print of parade, showing woman carrying "Chinese Women's Parade" banner, with date in ink, 1932. Three snapshots of young people glued to verso. Large print is fading and yellowing, others are in reasonable condition., 1932

Box 2, Folder 1 Album page with various snapshots glued to both sides., 1921
Notes: One image, probably made by a boardwalk photographer, shows two men and two children in a 3-wheeled vehicle, with ink captions: "Atlantic City boardwalk" and "August 12, 1921."

Box 2, Folder 1 [2 unidentified photoprints, 8 x 10": \(1\) A highly decorated Chinese interior with ten male figures and \(2\) a portrait of 3 young women., undated](#)

[\[Mr. Lee B. Lok at his store, Quong Yuen Shing & Co. Photoprint\], \[ca. 1917-1918.\]](#)

1 Item (10" x 8")

Photographer: Ettlín Studio

Creator: Mead, Virginia Lee

Language: English.

Notes: 1994.3135 (NMAH Acc.)

AC0555-0000001.tif (AC Scan)

Unrestricted research access on site by appointment.
Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.

Mr Lee B. Lok in his store Quong Yuen Shing & Co, selling and buying World War I liberty bonds.

Gift of Alison Shue and Grace Lee.

Topic: World War, 1914-1918 -- Photographs

Liberty bonds

Stores, Retail

Chinese Americans

Place: Chinatown (New York, N.Y.)

New York (N.Y.) -- 1890-1920

New York (N.Y.) -- 1930-1950 -- Photographs

Box 2, Folder 1	Photoprint: 8 young women and a girl, wearing Chinese dresses, standing in a line, with ball-point ink caption on verso: East Islip, L.I. Suffolk County / William Wood Estate / Suffolk's Cancer Benefit / Tea house", 1935 August 31
Box 2, Folder 1	Photoprint: Three Chinese American men wearing cameras, standing outside a tree-shaded pharmacy, 1953 November
Box 2, Folder 1	Photoprint: children in classroom, some of whom are Chinese American, with banner, "Honor Banking Class / Bowery Savings Bank", 1953 September
Box 2, Folder 1	4 newspaper clippings with photographs, undated
Box 2, Folder 1	Loose album page with printed invitations, dated 1932 and 1933, on one side, and a printed Chinese item plus a newspaper clipping on the verso, "Chinese Girls and Their Fatherland" undated, 1932-1933
Box 2, Folder 1	Loose album page with two photoprints of groups on one side, one dated 1915, and a "barn dance" invitation, an actual leaf and a cutout of a pig, with pencil, "Florence Lee" and "Barn Dance—11/30/33" on the verso., 1915, 1933 November 30
Box 2	Scrapbook page with newspaper article about "Three Daughters of Mott Street Are Among 1500 in New Freshmen Class. Features Eva Lee, 1934-09
Box 2	Portrait of Virginia Lee Mead at age 10, undated
Box 2	Photograph of an unidentified women in a long dress, sitting on a table, 1943
Box 2	Photograph of Eva Lee born 1917, 1934