

The Chinese Youth Fellowship (16 April 2021)

The Chinese Youth Fellowship was formed in Washington, DC in about 1954. This is its story.



The founder of the Chinese Youth Fellowship was a prominent Episcopalian Bishop named Quentin Huang, then living in Washington with his wife, a son, and two daughters. Bishop Huang saw a need for social outlets for Chinese young people in the National Capital, and he began to host get togethers in the basement of his rowhouse near the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Calvert Street NW. Before long, the group was holding parties, bowling outings, and picnics such as one in 1954 in Rock Creek Park, where the photo on the previous page was taken. The index for the photo was prepared by Peter Hui, a member of the Fellowship, as it is now called.

A factor leading to the creation of the Fellowship was that a young man named Frank Chen was dating Bishop Huang's older daughter, Joy Ann. At the same time, Frank was acting as a mentor to several younger Chinese teenagers who had arrived in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s. The need of these young people for opportunities to socialize was likely discussed by Frank and Bishop Huang.

The Fellowship's meetings at Bishop Huang's house were social in nature, not religious, despite Bishop Huang's status in Episcopal Church. Sherwood "Woody" Chu recalled that "Father Huang would give us a short talk (non-religious) about some aspects of life. Then some of us would leave and four of us would stay to play one round of bridge." Later Bishop Huang moved to an apartment on 16th Street and to Pittsburgh in 1955 or 1956, but by then Fellowship members had taken on the mantle of responsibility and starting then, and in the many decades since, members have organized their own events.

The Fellowship included the following:

1. Frank Chen
2. Sherwood "Woody" Chu
3. Walter Goo
4. Henry Ho
5. Stephen Ho
6. Peter Hui
7. Tong Hui
8. James Hum
9. Richard Kuo
10. Chi Fong Lin
11. Geeming Lin
12. Bing Lieu
13. Korbin Lieu
14. David Pond
15. Freddie Sun
16. David Tseng
17. Ta Hsung Tung
18. Jackson Yang

The oldest of the original members, Peter Hui, is shown at right sitting on the hood of his 1942 Oldsmobile, bought in 1951, with his mother, and brothers Ben and Tom. Peter was the first to acquire a car and a well-paying job, as a



draftsman at the Navy Yard. His willingness to give rides to friends was a boon to other members. Ta Hsung recently said Peter was “a really good ‘big brother’ to the rest of us back then and still today.”

The photograph below, taken at the Fellowship’s 1955 picnic, includes the Fellowship’s core members plus an assortment of friends, brothers, sisters, and girlfriends.



Standing: Unknown, Michael Yao, Benjamin Koo, Jackson Yang, David Pond, Tommy Lee, Jack Huang (son of Bishop Huang), unknown, Henry Ho, Tong Hui, Ta Hsung Tung, unknown, Chi Fong Lin, Roger surname unknown, Geeming Lin, Freddie Sun, Peter Hui, Peter Lu.

Kneeling, at left: Walter Goo. Kneeling in mid-photo; unknown, David Pond, Katherine Hsu, Alice Huang (in vertically striped top). Seated: unknown, Maimie Chung, Jay Kuo, Connie Chung (in front of Maimie and Jay), first name unknown Cheng, Nancy Tseng, Ruth Wong, June Chung, Li Cheng, unknown, Deana Bau, Ming Chang with Charlotte Chung.

Many Chinese Americans who grew up in the 1950s, including several members of the Chinese Youth Fellowship, were able to attend elite institutions like MIT, in the case of Peter Hui, and Harvard, in the case of Woody Chu and Walter Goo, MD. Stephen Ho, brother of Henry, was the first Chinese American to graduate from the Air Force Academy. Other members graduated from first-rate universities in the Washington, DC area such as the University of Maryland and George Washington University. Among them were Henry Ho, Geeming “Jimmy” Lin, Ta Hsung Tung, and Jackson Yang.

Although the Fellowship was considered an organization for young men, from the beginning young women were active participants in its social activities. Alice Huang, daughter of Bishop Huang, has had a prominent scientific career in the field of microbiology and medicine. Connie Chung, youngest daughter of the five Chung sisters, has had a prominent career in television journalism. Her eldest sister Josephine Chung, who married William “Bill” Chen, was a civic leader in her Florida community until her death in 2008. Other Chung sisters married men who reached high ranks in the U.S. military.ⁱ

Putting aside the stellar academic and professional accomplishments of the Fellowship members and other Chinese Americans, first and foremost the Fellowship “had great members, who became life-long friends,” in the words of Ta Hsung Tung.

In front row: Freddie Sun, Henry Ho, David Pao, Stephen Ho, James Hum. Second row: Jackson Yang, Chi Fong, Geeming, Ta Hsung Tung, Peter Hui. Third row: Sinclair Hui.



Below: front row: Stephen Ho, Geeming Lin, Lillian Huang, Julie Fangming Ho, Henry Ho, Peter Hui. Jackson Yang, Freddie Sun, Ta Hsung Tung, James Hum, David Pond, Chi Fong Lin, Sinclair Hui.





Left: at a picnic in 1969, Stephen Ho, Frank Chen, Peter Hui, a friend, and Jackson Yang (leaning against tree). Seated: Geeming Lin, Ta Hsung Tung, Henry Ho.

At the same 1969 picnic: Frank Chen, Hank Shan Lin (oldest of four Lin brothers), and Henry Ho



3 June 1973 picnic at Carderock,
Maryland: In background, Irene
Hui.

In foreground:

Woody Chu, Ta Hsung Tung, and
Bing Lieu.



At the 1973 Carderock picnic were Ruth Lieu, Lillian Lin, and Yunmei Lin Tung, holding Bryan.



At the same 1973 picnic: Henry Ho and Linda Horton. Between them, Peter Hui's sister Kitming Chow peered at the photographer. At right were FiFi and Chi Fong Lin.



Below, June 9, 1975: Jackson, Peter, Irene, Ming, and Jackson's daughter Alice.



Postscript by Compiler of this History of the Chinese Youth Fellowship

My husband, Henry Ninghan Ho, was an active and appreciative member of the Chinese Youth Fellowship from its inception in 1954 to his death in 1987. His life was greatly enriched by the many friendships he formed and solidified as a member. A few months before Henry died, the group gathered for a banquet at the Far East Restaurant in Rockville, Maryland. Henry enjoyed several happy hours of normal laughter and conversation with old friends.

While working this year on a long overdue biography of Henry, I concluded that, while the Fellowship would certainly be discussed in his biography, it deserves its own history.

As I am writing this in 2021, Fellowship members have been convening together regularly for 67 years, a remarkable history for any organization. It was my good fortune a few years ago, one Friday at noon, to be enjoying the sumptuous food arrayed at the Bamboo Buffet in Rockville when I recognized Ta Hsung Tung. I reminded him that I am the widow of Henry Ho. My daughter Colleen and I were invited to join a long table of friends, old and new. My second husband, Carl, also enjoyed some Bamboo Buffet lunches with Fellowship friends. These congenial gatherings were suspended in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

We all hope that, in the near future, the enjoyable Fellowship luncheons might resume. Many thanks to Ta Hsung for organizing them. And many thanks also to members who contributed information and photographs to this brief history of the Fellowship.

Linda Horton, Rockville, Maryland
lrhorton@comcast.net

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Sources

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 - b. Time magazine article
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3. Alice Huangⁱⁱⁱ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice_S._Huang
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/science/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/huang-alice-shih-hou-1939>
4. Chung sisters:
 - a. Josephine; her husband, William Chen.
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 - b. Charlotte; her husband, Ming Chang (who died in 2017):
<https://advancement.wm.edu/news/2018/chang-scholarship.php> and
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 - c. June; her husband, John Fugh
 - d. Maimie (Mimi) Barron
 - e. Connie Chung; her husband, Maury Povich

ⁱ Charlotte married Ming Chang, a U.S. Navy admiral, while June married John Fugh, the first Chinese American to attain the rank of general in the U.S. army. See information under Sources, above.

ⁱⁱ Quentin Huang was the youngest Episcopalian Bishop in Kun Ming (昆明) before the communist takeover of China. He escaped China and came to the United States by way of India.

From Time Magazine: Religion: Challenge in Kunming (citation under Sources, above), Monday, Aug. 26, 1946

Eight bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church gathered together last week for the sacred act of laying on of hands. The place: All-Saints-by-the-Sea in Santa Barbara, Calif. The occasion: the first consecration in the U.S. of an Oriental bishop. Episcopal bishops are usually consecrated in cathedrals, but China-born Rt. Rev. Quentin K. Y. Huang, who studied for the ministry in the U.S., had deliberately chosen the tiny (300 communicants) church at Santa Barbara. Reason: for several years it had been the only guaranteed source of financial support for relief work he directed in China.

For slender, 44-year-old Bishop Huang, who had arrived from China wearing a discarded G.I. uniform, the colorful service of consecration was both an end and a beginning. It was a reward for Christian work during the misery of war. Somehow, he survived 265 bombings unscratched while he helped refugees, conducted services, directed an ambulance corps. He found time also to work among American soldiers, became known to thousands of G.I.s as the "Bishop of the Burma Road."

Quentin Huang, who before the war had been rector of a parish in Nanchang for about ten years, will be Bishop of Kunming, a diocese covering the two southeast provinces of Yunnan and Kweichow. Almost one and a half times as large as California (158,297 sq. mi.), it has an estimated population of 24,000,000; 20% of its people are tribal, all are poor. Only a handful are Christian. Said Bishop Huang after his consecration: "Our opportunities are many, our challenges are great—and our needs in personnel and funds are enormous."

ⁱⁱⁱ Alice Huang has chaired the biology department of many top universities (Caltech the latest one) and her husband David Baltimore is a Nobel prizewinner. She has donated more than \$200,000 to the 80-20 organization to promote the cause of Asian Americans.