



News Release

For Immediate Release
July 28, 2015

Contacts:
Paul Hammond, 916-849-0679
California State Railroad Museum or
Cheryl Meyer, 916-445-2560
California State Railroad Museum
Foundation

Railroad Museum to Highlight Important Role of Chinese Workers in Building the Transcontinental Railroad during Special Author Presentation on September 16

SACRAMENTO – California State Parks and the California State Railroad Museum are proud to present a special author presentation and book signing opportunity by Robert S. Wells, author of *Voices from the Bottom of the South China Sea*, on Wednesday afternoon, September 16, 2015.

The compelling and illustrated non-fiction book by Wells highlights the largely untold story of a tragic shipwreck in 1874 off Southern China that killed hundreds of Chinese who were just hours away from reuniting with their families after years of helping to build the Transcontinental Railroad. Based on lost records that were recently discovered and pieced together by the author, the historical book captures the lives of the Chinese passengers when they spent years laboring in California building the railroad, mining silver, growing food, and seeking their fortune.

In fact, many Chinese workers during this time played critical roles in building the Transcontinental Railroad. While many Chinese workers were already in California as part of the Gold Rush, many more came to California as a result of an ambitious recruitment effort directed by five influential Sacramento businessmen and political figures – Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, Mark Hopkins, E.B. Crocker and Charles Crocker. Their goal was to find an inexpensive labor force to build the Central Pacific railroad eastward to connect with the Union Pacific. Included as a matter of course were hazardous working conditions such as blasting and cutting through hard granite, blizzards and extreme cold, and the high altitudes of the Sierra.

The special presentation will begin at 2 p.m. in the Museum's East Theater and is included with Museum admission: \$10 for adults, \$5 for youths (ages 6-17), and children ages five and under are free. The book *Voices from the Bottom of the South China Sea* will be available for purchase in the Museum store. For more information, please call 916-323-9280 or visit www.csrmf.org

Every Californian should take steps to conserve water. Find out how at SaveOurWater.com.

Subscribe to California State Parks News via e-mail at info@parks.ca.gov or via [RSS feed](#).

California State Parks Mission

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.



[Facebook.com/CaliforniaStateParks](https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaStateParks)

www.parks.ca.gov



[@CASStateParks](https://twitter.com/CASStateParks)

1