

## **Colorado's Celestials**

Katie Adamson

Graduate student, University of Colorado at Denver

This presentation is an examination of the history of the Chinese population in Colorado starting with the earliest written accounts following the 1859 Gold Rush up to the mid-twentieth century. Along with railroad construction, Chinese immigrants came to Colorado to participate in the mining industry. Racism and exclusion confined them to placer mining in the mountain towns, but that did not stop the Chinese from being industrious and successful. In particular, based on primary research, I will discuss the life and family of Chin Lin Sou, arguably the most successful nineteenth century Chinese immigrant in Colorado. His life and position in the Denver community warranted him respect and today he is remembered in stained glass in Colorado's Capitol Building. He was known as the first mayor of Denver's Chinatown and his daughter was the first Chinese-American child born in the territory that would become known as Colorado. I will also look at the Chinese community in Central City, with an in-depth look at the tragedy of the Central City Fire. Based on the evidence uncovered during my research, I will offer explanations for the origin of the fire that was blamed on the Chinese community. There will also be a short discussion of the 1880 Halloween riot, Denver's first race riot which was directed at the Chinese community. I hope this study can illuminate the contributions of the Chinese community to Colorado and promote future study of the subject.