



## State Library Virtual Exhibit Focuses on Artifacts of Chinese Settlers in 1800s

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**Sacramento, Calif.** – The California State Library is pleased to announce the opening of its newest online exhibit, The Skaar Collection, an assemblage of cultural artifacts related to Chinese settlers who lived in the Grass Valley area in the mid-1800s.

The objects give viewers a glimpse into the lives of Chinese immigrants who came to Northern California during the Gold Rush era. The collection includes an ivory and brass balancing scale used by miners and merchants; colorful gaming cards and Mahjong betting or counting sticks made of bone or ivory; a jar made of carved horn with silver inlay; and photos of men in traditional Chinese clothing.

“For nearly 170 years, Californians have come here from all over the world,” said Greg Lucas, California State Librarian. “Today, 27 percent of Californians were born in another country – about the same percentage as it was during the Gold Rush and early years of statehood. The Skaar Collection helps us better appreciate the lives of some of those early Californians, whose shoulders we stand on today.”

Sven Skaar (1898-1973) was a collector, amateur historian and novelist who lived in Nevada City, California. He operated the historic Ott's Assay Office as a museum there from 1963 until his death. His collections center on California in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The collection can be viewed at California State Library's [Skaar Collection Exhibit](#).

Since its launch in 2011, [Google Arts & Culture](#) has put the collections of more than 2,000 museums at your fingertips. This is an immersive way to explore art, history and the wonders of the world, from Van Gogh's bedroom paintings to the women's rights movement or ancient temples. The collections are accessible to all online, digitally preserved for future generations.

# END RELEASE TEXT #

**About the State Library:** Founded in 1850, the California State Library has an extensive collection of documents from and about the state's rich history, ranging from books, maps, miners' diaries, newspapers, and periodicals to photographs, paintings and posters. The State Library also holds federal and state publications, is home to the Bernard E. Witkin State Law Library and the Braille and Talking Book Library, and serves as the lead state agency for library-related services throughout California. [State Library website](#)