

Book draws on childhood

WE ALL have childhood memories swirling around in our heads. Fortunately, Duncan Chin not only has a head full of memories of his growing up in Watsonville during the 1930s and '40s, but he has the ability to put those images on paper.

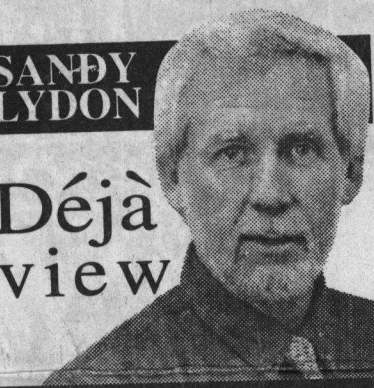
Chin is also very restless. (Judging by the accompanying photograph of Duncan as a boy, he has always found it difficult to stand still.)

Several years back, during boring church sermons, he began to make pencil sketches of his Watsonville childhood on the back of the Sunday church program. Local clergy need not cringe — Chin lives in Southern California. His wife, Anna, suggested he use a sketch book. Fortunately the minister's sermons continued to be boring and before long Chin's sketch book was full. Knowing of my interest in the history of the Chinese in the region, Chin sent me a set of photocopies of the sketches. I showed them to George Ow, Jr., who suggested that the drawings ought to be published. The result is a book of Chin's sketches and memories published by the Capitola Book Company that will be available in bookstores in early August.

What struck me about the sketches and Chin's wry commentary was the feeling and texture they captured of growing up in the Pajaro Valley during the Depression. Most of the folks

**SANDY
LYDON**

**Déjà
view**



I have interviewed in the region who were here in the '30s talk about the feeling of interdependence and community that they remember. Folks helped each other.

Cultural diversity echoes through Chin's work. We all have heard about California's multicultural present and future, but we often overlook the remarkable diversity in our past. The south Watsonville neighborhood where Chin grew up was a cultural and ethnic kaleidoscope — Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Slavs, Italians, Mexicans, Okies, Arkies, Texies — everybody was together in the agricultural lifeboat of Watsonville that carried them through the Depression.

Chin and his book "Growing up on Grove Street" will debut at 7 p.m. on July 31 in Room 435 at Cabrillo College. Chin will say a few words and autograph books,

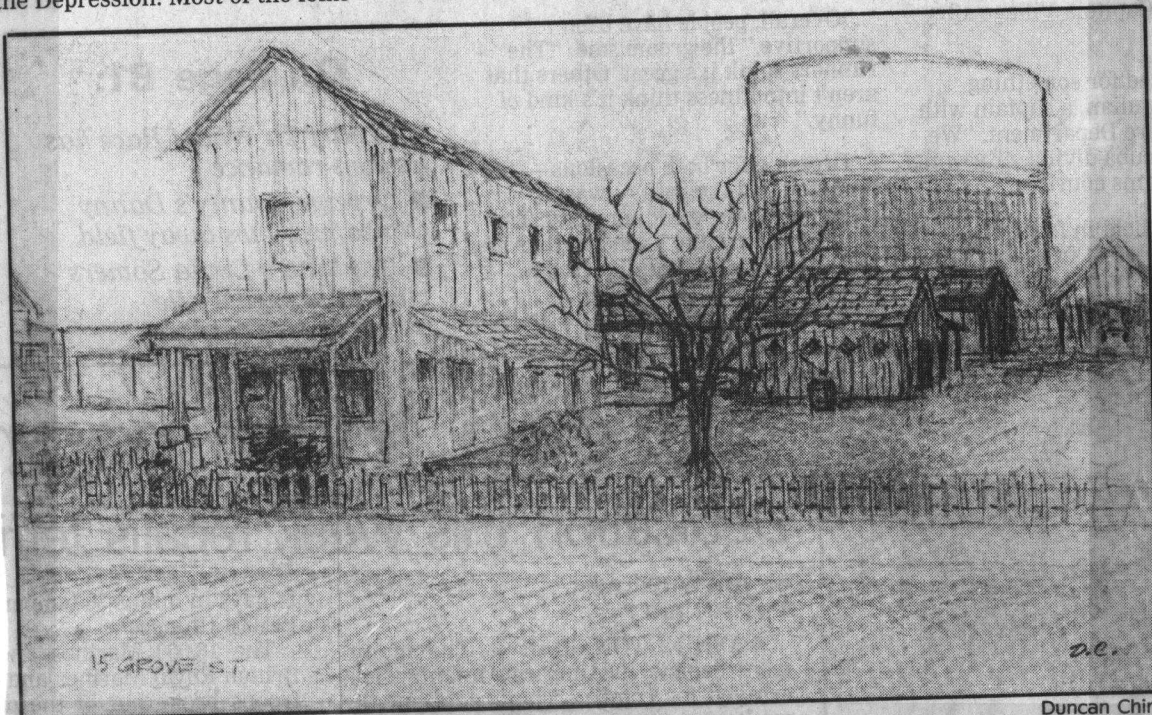
which will be available that evening at a special pre-publication discount.

And I hope that minister in Southern California continues with his boring sermons so Duncan can continue to sketch.

If you have a favorite photograph you would like to see used in this column, or one that you would like some help in identifying, send a copy (never send original photographs) to Déjà View, Sandy Lydon, care of the Santa Cruz County Sentinel, 207 Church St., Santa Cruz, Calif. 95060. E-Mail address: Salydon@aol.com. Sandy Lydon is a member of the history faculty at Cabrillo College.



Chin Family Collection
Duncan Chin, Grove Street, Watsonville, 1933



Duncan Chin

The house on Grove Street in Watsonville where Duncan Chin grew up