

to the kitchen where his own meal would be waiting for him.

Year after year Brownie lived on, an important member of the family. When former boys came back to visit, one of their first questions was always, "Where's Brownie?" But as the years passed, the little dog with the sparkling eyes and the wagging tail became less and less active. A privileged character, he was permitted to lie around in any spot he chose. We do not know how old he was when he came to us, but he was not a puppy. He stayed with us twelve years. That was a pretty good life span for any dog; but his memory will linger on for many, many years to come.

Honoring Dr. Shepherd (con't.)

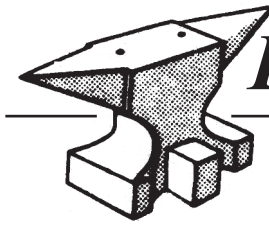
construction of the Eastshore Highway forced Dr. Shepherd to find a new site for the home. He found one on Elm Street in El Cerrito and successfully raised the money needed to build the new home. The home that Dr. Shepherd built in El Cerrito was much larger than the home in Berkeley.

The beautiful new Chung Mei Home opened its doors in 1935. Over the years almost 700 Chinese Boys whose parents were not able to care for them



The Home in 1935 El Cerrito Hist. Soc. Coll.

lived in the Chung Mei Home. It remained open until 1954. At their insistence, the plaque was largely paid for by contributions from the Chung Mei Boys. We thank both the Boys and the Chamberlins for keeping the remarkable story of Dr. Shepherd alive.



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Honoring Dr. Charles R. Shepherd

Founder of the Chung Mei Home

6 PM Tuesday, June 21

1800 Elm Street, El Cerrito

Last spring when the Chamberlin Family invited the public to tour the just-restored campus of the old Chung Mei Home, the former residents of the home made a special request. They asked if it would be possible to install a plaque honoring Dr. Shepherd, or "Captain," as they always called him.

The plaque is now done and it will be unveiled at a special ceremony on June 21 at 6 PM. Everyone is welcome, but to attend you must RSVP to Tom Panas at either (510) 526-7507 or tmpanas@yahoo.com. There will be tours and we will serve punch and cookies.

The Chung Mei Home was originally opened in West Berkeley in 1923 by Dr. Charles R. Shepherd. Several years later the planned (please see back page)

The El Cerrito Historical Society is a volunteer, non-political, non-profit corporation that has as its purpose the preservation and appreciation of the history of El Cerrito. It does this by providing educational and research opportunities; by collecting of historic photographs, documents, artifacts and cultural objects; by advocating the preservation of historic resources in the city; and by encouraging others to help further these aims. Anyone may join; dues are \$25 (Household member), \$60 (Sponsoring member), and \$300 (Life member).

IN MEMORIAM - BROWNIE

from the Chung Mei Chronicles, April 1954

It was a chilly night he first came to us, forlorn, hungry-looking and a bit uncertain of his reception. A psychiatrist might have pronounced the little fellow suffering from a sense of insecurity, or a definite feeling of rejection. Perhaps that was so, for all known facts indicated that he was tossed out of a passing car by someone who was either pretty hard-hearted or else convinced that the group of shouting, singing boys around the blazing campfire would welcome the little waif with open arms.

It was during the summer of '42. We were encamped at Brentwood, engaged in harvesting fruit and vegetables. The daytime hours, when we worked in the fields and orchards, were sweltering hot; but the evenings were plenty chilly. So it became a nightly custom to gather around a big campfire for a bit of relaxation before turning in.



El Cerrito Historical Society Collection

One evening, as we sat about the brightly burning pile, there suddenly emerged from the darkness this eager little dog with big wondering eyes which seemed to say, "May I join up?" I don't know who first saw him, but simultaneously several boys extended invitations

to come - and he came, with eyes that sparkled, and a bushy tail that was wagging fit to fly off. From that moment the little dog became mascot to the gang, and by common consent became known as "Brownie." One of the boys, Robert Chan, cut up an old sweater and made a jacket for him to wear on chilly evenings. The little unwanted waif was "in."

When time came to break camp and go home, Brownie went with us. He soon became an important part of our family, and an object of pleasure and amusement to callers, who he never failed to greet with enthusiasm, a wagging tail and big brown eager eyes. In response to a pat on the head, or a word of affection, he would literally tremble with delight.

Wherever the Chung Mei boys went Brownie wanted to go. To many places, particularly to the hills on hikes, he was permitted to accompany his two-legged pals; but one place was "verboden" - the school yard. So Brownie had to be instructed, and this is the routine he learned and carried out faithfully for several years. When the grammar school formation fell in in the morning, Brownie took up his position at a respectful distance to the left. On the word "carry on" he led off and held his lead all the way down Hill Street, along San Pablo Avenue to Potrero. Here, at the traffic lights, he stopped and waited until every boy was safely across. Then he turned and trotted home. Sounds like a fairy tale? Dozens of Chung Mei boys and citizens of El Cerrito will tell you it is true.

Brownie had another routine which he worked out himself. When the bell rang for meals he would trot to the dining room door, dutifully stand or sit while the boys took their places around the tables, and thanks was returned. As the boys took their seats he would amble through the dining room and out