

80th Anniversary of 1929 Stock Market Crash: A Call To Record Oral Histories

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"We lost our house. Had to move in with our grandparents," repeated retired physicist Tom Howe when asked about his recollection of the 1929 Stock Market Crash and the ensuing Great Depression. One month ago, a ten year old boy from Sacramento, California (whose family wishes to remain anonymous), repeated the same words.

High unemployment rates, unprecedented government bail-outs and this year's deep recession make the 80th anniversary of the 1929 Stock Market Crash all the more poignant. Many now can relate to the first hand experiences of those who lived during that tumultuous time.

Historical activist and author Margaret Chai Maloney, is launching a site (www.1929anupperclassaffair.com) asking readers to share their own or their families' stories, experiences and photos relating to this time period. The website also contains pertinent information like a dictionary of popular era words, a bibliography of related works, videos, period music and photos. Chai Maloney's recently released novel 1929 AN UPPERCLASS AFFAIR, poignantly recreates the last decadent days of the roaring twenties, stock market crash & depression.

To Chai Maloney, the oral histories from this period provide a fascinating understanding not only of the time period, but also provide coping mechanisms that worked for those who had difficulties. In working on her novel, Chai Maloney encountered so many accounts from the Great Crash period that echoed those of today that she felt it was important for the resonating voices to be shared.

Somewhat surprisingly she also heard encouraging stories. "Just as there are people today like a number of hedge fund operators and bankruptcy lawyers, who have flourished financially during these economically challenging times, I interviewed people whose families flourished during the Crash of 1929 and Great Depression. Candy manufacturers and some factory owners particularly fared well," explained Chai Maloney.

In fact, during an interview, Beverly Howe, whose father manufactured gloves, responded, "What depression? What crash? As a child, my father regularly brought me silk dresses from Paris and fur coats. Growing up in New York, during this period, I did not see any poverty until my mother, sister, and I went through India on a round-the-world trip in 1934."

Given the age of those who lived during the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and the Great Depression, there is a real urgency to gathering these stories and recollections before it is too late," asserts Chai Maloney, who studied history at Mount Holyoke College and Oxford University.

To share your account or family stories on this period, log onto www.1929anupperclassaffair.com and click on the blog/submit your story tab or mail your story to:

Margaret Chai Maloney
P.O. Box 71
Palo Alto, CA 94302

For more information please contact: Justine Tang at 1929 Productions or visit:
www.1929anupperclassaffair.com
Email: info@1929anupperclassaffair.com
Contact: Justine Tang – 917-658-2604