

City archaeology dig to start in Chinatown

By [Emily Sweeney](#) Globe Staff, July 1, 2019, 11:06 a.m.



An archaeological dig is scheduled to begin this month in Chinatown. ((MATTHEW J. LEE/GLOBE STAFF))

What officials are calling the first archaeological dig in Boston's Chinatown neighborhood will kick off with a special groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday.

The excavation work will begin July 8 at 6 Hudson St., which is a vacant piece of land

near the Chinatown gate, according to the archaeologist's office.

But 6 Hudson St. wasn't always empty.

According to the city archaeologist's office, that location was originally the site of a 3.5-story rowhouse that was built in 1841. The first occupants of the rowhouse were middle class families of English descent, and by the 1860s it had become a boardinghouse for low-wage workers. Syrian immigrants called 6 Hudson St. home from 1899 until the 1920s, and the first Chinese immigrant was documented as living there in 1924. In 1929, Ruby Foo opened a Chinese restaurant called Ruby Foo's Den on the ground floor.

While the building at 6 Hudson St. has been gone for decades (it was demolished in the late 1980s), the city archaeologist hopes the excavation will uncover artifacts that tell the stories of the different immigrant communities who lived and worked there over the years.

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Tuesday's groundbreaking event will start at 12 p.m. and will be co-hosted by the Friends of Boston Archaeology, the Chinese Historical Society of New England, and the Chinese American Heritage Foundation. Among those scheduled to speak are Tiffany Foo, author and granddaughter of Ruby Foo, At-large City Councilor Annissa Essaibi-George, and City Archaeologist Joseph Bagley, who will discuss the goals of the excavation.

Updates from the dig will be posted on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) along with the hashtags #digbos and #digchinatown.



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