

October 28, 2015

## For the first time, the Royal BC Museum opens an exhibition in a Chinese Metro station

**VICTORIA, BC** – In a first for a Canadian museum, the Royal BC Museum has opened a travelling photography exhibition, *Guangzhou to British Columbia: The Chinese Canadian Experience, 1858 to 1958*, at a major metro station in Guangzhou, China.

The exhibition, inside Yuexiu Park station, depicts **how the gold rush in BC's Fraser Canyon** sparked a long and enduring relationship between Guangzhou and BC, a relationship that encompassed the challenges of migration, the heartbreak and successes of settlement and the overcoming of discrimination by the Chinese in BC.

The exhibition runs from October 28 to November 28, 2015.

"The early Chinese Canadian pioneers depicted in this exhibition all have a unique story to tell – **and these photos bring their stories to life,**" said Premier Christy Clark. "This kind of cultural exchange is a great way to celebrate 20 years of sister province relations with **Guangdong Province.**"

"These compelling images speak to the false hope and struggle of early migration to **Canada from Guangzhou,**" said Prof Jack Lohman, CEO of the Royal BC Museum. "'Gold Mountain' was less lucrative than anyone could have imagined, but a number of these stories do end well with success in future generations outshining all other migrant narratives. The Royal BC Museum's photographic collections are important witnesses to the herding and discrimination of early settlers from China."

The photographs describe a lengthy narrative that began in 1858, an important year for Guangzhou. That year, with the city occupied by the French and the British, word of a gold rush in Canada convinced many migrants to journey to British Columbia.

The rise of photography coincided with this emigration, and the results, over a century, are depicted in the exhibition images: awe-inspiring images of both Guangzhou and British Columbia, of people, landscapes, cityscapes and work environments.

Yuexiu Park is one of the Guangzhou **Metro Corp.'s** central stations, with more than one million people travelling its corridors every month.

The metro exhibition sets the stage for a much larger exhibition, *Gold Mountain Dream! Bravely Venture into the Fraser River Valley*, from November 5 to December 20, 2015, at the Guangdong Museum of Chinese Nationals Residing Abroad. *Gold Mountain Dream!* is a travelling version of the popular *Gold Rush!* feature exhibition, closing November 1, 2015, at the Royal BC Museum.

Don Bourdon, Royal British Columbia Museum Curator of Images and Paintings, curated the *Guangzhou to British Columbia* exhibition.



The exhibition was created in partnership with the Guangzhou Metro Corporation, and with the support of the Government of British Columbia, the Francis Kermode Group and the Royal British Columbia Museum Foundation.

#### **About the Royal BC Museum**

**The Royal BC Museum explores the province's human history and natural history,** advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and history, telling the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Looking to the future, the Royal BC Museum will be a refreshed, modern museum, extending its reach far beyond Victoria as a world-class cultural venue and repository of digital treasures.

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