

McPhee, Jordan PREM:EX

From: Alaimo, Marie GCPE:EX
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2016 9:11 AM
To: McPhee, Jordan PREM:EX
Cc: Merrifield, Katy PREM:EX; Kerr, Carleen GCPE:EX; Chawrun, Jessica GCPE:EX; Gleeson, Kelly T GCPE:EX
Subject: MIT Kel. NR for tomorrow
Attachments: NR_MTW_Commemorative Monuments_Kelowna_Dec 3 2016-FINAL.docx

For Stop of Interest event – targeting 10:45am.

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
[release number]
Dec. 3, 2016

Ministry of International Trade
and Ministry Responsible for the Asia
Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism

Commemorative monument honours Chinese Canadian pioneers

KELOWNA –A commemorative monument unveiled today in Kelowna recognizes the contributions of Chinese Canadians to B.C.'s rich cultural, historical and economic mosaic.

The large granite monument has been installed within the pioneer section of the Kelowna Memorial Park Cemetery to reflect the 2014 apology delivered on behalf of the B.C. legislative assembly to Chinese Canadians for historical wrongs committed by past provincial governments.

The monument will also serve as a permanent reminder of the racism, discrimination and hardships faced by Chinese Canadian pioneers who lived and worked in the area during the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Many pioneers also worked in Kelowna's agriculture industry on farms and in orchards, and some of their descendants still live there.

The monument is the first in a series of up to 15 markers – interpretive signs, plaques and monuments – that will be established in communities throughout B.C. in coming months. Locations were recommended by the provincial Legacy Initiatives Advisory Council (LIAC), which provides advice to government on B.C. Chinese legacy projects. Government is providing \$100,000 in Chinese legacy funding for the provincial monuments project.

As one of several provincial Chinese legacy projects completed or currently underway, the commemorative monuments project resulted from a report on the Chinese historical wrongs consultations. The report includes a recommendation for one or more regional plaques or monuments to be created to commemorate the positive contributions of Chinese Canadians to B.C.'s history, culture and prosperity.

Extensive provincial consultation with British Columbia's Chinese Canadian community, including a community forum held in Kelowna in January 2014, led to the decision to erect this monument; government heard from local community members who were directly and indirectly impacted by historical discriminatory legislation.

The Kelowna monument was created in consultation with the community, and in particular, the Kelowna Freemasons. The monument project responds to the B.C. government's commitment to create a Chinese legacy for all British Columbians.

Quotes:**Teresa Wat, Minister of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism**

"Kelowna's commemorative monument beautifully preserves the apology made in the legislature for historic wrongs committed against Chinese Canadians by past provincial governments. It also signifies the important role B.C.'s Chinese community has played in shaping British Columbia into the great province it is today and it's fitting that Kelowna should be the first community to erect a commemorative monument."

Norm Letnick, MLA for Kelowna-Lake Country

"This event is in recognition of the Chinese Canadian pioneers who helped to shape Kelowna, even though during the building of the railway and for years afterward they were subjected to unacceptable racist policies. Today, this monument ensures that everyone who sees it and reads the inscription knows that racism and discrimination will not be tolerated in B.C. and more so, that Kelowna recognizes and values its Chinese Canadian community."

Shui Lee, Chair, Kelowna Freemasons and LIAC Member

"Many of the Chinese Canadians being remembered today were victims of racist laws and policies that permanently separated them from their families in China – my great grandfather was one of them. This monument honours their memories and their sacrifices and stands as a permanent reminder of their contributions to Kelowna and to B.C."

Quick Facts:

- In 1788, the first Chinese workers to come to British Columbia landed in Nuuchahnulth territory (Nootka Sound). They were part of Captain John Meares' expedition to build the first year-round, non-indigenous settlement.
- Today, B.C. is home to more than 460,000 Chinese Canadians, 11% of B.C.'s population.
- Government's implementation of recommendations in the Chinese Historical Wrongs Consultation Final Report is guided with advice from the Legacy Initiatives Advisory Council (LIAC)
- The LIAC was created by government to assist with the Chinese legacy projects. It works with Chinese Canadian communities and other key partners to advise government on project implementation and to ensure that the projects are known and communicated throughout the province.

Learn More:

For more information about the Chinese legacy projects visit

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/multiculturalism-anti-racism/chinese-legacy-bc>

Media contact:

Media Relations

Ministry of International Trade

250 889-3922

McPhee, Jordan PREM:EX

From: McPhee, Jordan PREM:EX
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2016 9:46 AM
To: Harmata, Becky LASS:EX
Subject: Fw: MIT Kel. NR for tomorrow
Attachments: NR_MTW_Commemorative Monuments_Kelowna_Dec 3 2016-FINAL.docx

Fyi

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the TELUS network.

From: Alaimo, Marie GCPE:EX <Marie.Alaimo@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2016 9:10 AM
To: McPhee, Jordan PREM:EX
Cc: Merrifield, Katy PREM:EX; Kerr, Carleen GCPE:EX; Chawrun, Jessica GCPE:EX; Gleeson, Kelly T GCPE:EX
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