



QUESNEL & DISTRICT MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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New C.S. Wing photography exhibit to run April 10 to September 6, 2008
Showcases cultural and social diversity of Quesnel in the early 1900s

Quesnel – A new photography exhibit that provides a stunning and unique glimpse into the social fabric of Quesnel in the early 1900s is set to open at the Quesnel and District Museum and Archives.

Upstairs at Wah Lee's: Portraits from the C.S. Wing Studio consists of 30 framed contemporary photographs digitally printed from the glass plate negatives created by Quesnel's first professional photographer Chow Shong (C.S.) Wing. The images were selected by Faith Moosang for their aesthetic quality and documentary interest from a much larger collection of original negatives by C.S. Wing housed in the Quesnel and District Museum and Archives.

The exhibit opens Thursday April 10 at 7 p.m. with a special opening reception, complete with a curatorial talk by Moosang, and runs until September 6, 2008. Funding to create this special exhibit, which will travel to other museums and art galleries throughout British Columbia after it closes in Quesnel, was provided by The Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation, The Spirit of BC Arts Fund, the Quesnel Community Foundation and the Friends of the Quesnel and District Museum and Archives. It is also one event of many the Museum is hosting that helps celebrate the City of Quesnel's 80th anniversary.

"This exhibit promises to provide a fascinating glimpse into what life was like in Quesnel in the early 1900s," said Mayor Nate Bello. "I am consistently impressed with the calibre of displays and programming our museum offers and I urge people to visit and learn more about our storied past."

Wing was born in Quesnel circa 1890 into the Chinese merchant family that ran the Wah Lee Store in Quesnel. As a young man he established a photographic studio on the upper floor and was the first professional photographer in Quesnel (active c. 1910-20). His portraits of local residents – Chinese, First Nation and Caucasian – speak profoundly of the economic, religious and social forces of acculturation at work in this young frontier town, but also reflect a casual intimacy that existed between individuals of diverse cultural background.

"This exhibit offers an incredible glimpse into early 20th century Quesnel life, its cultural diversity and unique social interactions," added Museum and Heritage Commission Chair Lorna Townsend. "It's also a wonderful complement to our CD Hoy photography collection. We are blessed as a community to have had such a fascinating and important time in our history so well documented."

The Quesnel and District Museum and Archives is funded by the City of Quesnel and offers a growing range of programming and exhibits.

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