

# Barkerville

A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

HONOURARY PATRON: THE HONOURABLE IONA CAMPAGNOLO, P. C., O. C., O. B. C.

For Immediate Release

## **Pine Beetle Coalitions Support Barkerville's China Exhibit**

November 24, 2011 (Barkerville, BC) - What does an exhibit of historic photos travelling to China have to do with diversifying the economy in the central interior and northern British Columbia? It's not an obvious connection but it's one that both the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition and the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition, along with Premier Christy Clark, had no trouble realizing.

During the Cariboo Gold Rush, thousands of people from all over the world stampeded up the Fraser River to Barkerville in search of gold. One of the largest migrations was from the Wuyi County district in Guangdong province in southern China. The Chinese were involved in many mining ventures and businesses.

"The people of Guangdong have played an important role in the history of British Columbia," said Premier Clark, in a recent release.

"These cultural bridges will also help Northern B.C. develop strong commercial relationships with China, and will showcase Barkerville as a tourist destination."

Premier Clark, along with Acting Governor of Guangdong Province Zhu Xiaodan, witnessed the signing of an agreement between the Guangdong Museum of Overseas Chinese and Barkerville Historic Town during her recent bi-lateral meeting in China.

The two Beetle Action Coalitions also see the future economic opportunities that can be developed through the exhibit.

The Cariboo Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition (CCBAC) has funded \$50,000 towards the Barkerville China Exhibit recognizing the cultural, tourism and economic links to this area," said Steve Mazur, Director of the Cariboo Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition. "Projects like this are helping to mitigate the effects of the mountain pine beetle in our forest dependent communities."

The City of Prince George supported the project through a successful application to the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition for a \$50,000 grant for the development of a satellite exhibit to be gifted to the City of Jiangmen. The City of Prince George and the City of Jiangmen are pursuing a twinning agreement to further tourism, cultural exchange and economic development opportunities.



### **Barkerville Historic Town**

Box 19, Barkerville, British Columbia V0K 1B0 Canada • [www.barkerville.ca](http://www.barkerville.ca) • 1-888-994-3332

CHARITABLE REG. NO. 86376 6234 RR0001

# Barkerville

A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

HONOURARY PATRON: THE HONOURABLE IONA CAMPAGNOLO, P. C., O. C., O. B. C.

“The Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) believes that a thriving tourism industry will be a key contributor to a diversified and resilient economy,” said OBAC Chair, Don Bassermann.

“The *Who Am I?* exhibit will support our member communities in pursuing and benefitting from a regionally integrated and collaborative approach to developing the region’s tourism sector,” he added.

The travelling exhibit will contribute to the achievement of recommendations found in the OBAC Tourism Strategy ([www.ominecacoalition.ca](http://www.ominecacoalition.ca)); specifically to increase awareness of the nature and value of, and the opportunities associated with, tourism in the region, and to increase tourism in the region by using its features and attractions to full advantage.

Barkerville’s beautifully preserved Chinatown, its Chinese cemetery and its extensive collection of archival records, photographs, and artifacts – many brought to the Cariboo by immigrants from Guangdong – now comprise the oldest and largest collection of Chinese buildings and artifacts in North America. This includes the largest collection of pre-1900 written documents that are specific to North American activities and the oldest Chee Kung Tong building in Canada, which was designated as a National Historic Site in 2009. As western North America’s largest living history museum, Barkerville is indeed rich in Chinese-Canadian history.

The exhibit, entitled *Who Am I?*, explores the lives of Chinese migrants who came to Barkerville in the late 19th and early 20th centuries during the gold rush through photographs, dioramas and an interactive computer terminal. The intent of the exhibit is to reach out to these people’s descendants and gather stories to identify who they were, where they came from and went to, how they lived and when. By doing this, it is hoped that a greater understanding of the Chinese in the Cariboo will be achieved.

“The upcoming exhibit tour shows how our historical and cultural connections with the Chinese strengthen our economic ties now and into the future,” said Pat Bell, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation. “With this exposure, Chinese visitors are more likely to travel to Northern BC, bringing new dollars to our regional economy.”

There will be a ‘soft opening’ of the exhibit in Prince George at UNBC in June 2012 as part of Barkerville’s Fundraising Gala, and a send-off to China in at Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens in Vancouver in December 2012. The exhibit will open at



## Barkerville Historic Town

Box 19, Barkerville, British Columbia V0K 1B0 Canada • [www.barkerville.ca](http://www.barkerville.ca) • 1-888-994-3332

CHARITABLE REG. NO. 86376 6234 RR0001

# Barkerville

A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

HONOURARY PATRON: THE HONOURABLE IONA CAMPAGNOLO, P. C., O. C., O. B. C.

the Hong Kong Museum of History in January 2013, and from there tour to the Guangdong Overseas Chinese Museum in Guangzhou, and then to the cities of Jiangmen, Kaiping and Taishan, before finding a permanent home in Jiangmen.

The Barkerville Heritage Trust would like to acknowledge and thank the many groups and individuals across the province, but particularly within the regions, that have supported this project.

-- 30 --

## Media Inquiries

---

### James Douglas

Manager, Visitor Experiences  
and Public Relations  
Barkerville Historic Town  
Box 19  
Barkerville, BC V0K 1B0

250-994-3302 ext. 41  
888-994-3332 toll free  
250-994-3435 fax

[james.douglas@barkerville.ca](mailto:james.douglas@barkerville.ca)  
[www.barkerville.ca](http://www.barkerville.ca)  
[barkerville.wordpress.com](http://barkerville.wordpress.com)

Skype: barkerville.historic.town  
Twitter: @barkervillebc  
Watch: [youtube.com/barkervilletv](http://youtube.com/barkervilletv)



### Barkerville Historic Town

Box 19, Barkerville, British Columbia V0K 1B0 Canada • [www.barkerville.ca](http://www.barkerville.ca) • 1-888-994-3332

CHARITABLE REG. NO. 86376 6234 RR0001