

KGC Newsletter

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KGC Newsletter team:

EDITORS: EPP Level 6 students
Lucy and Reiko

PAGE DESIGN: Stanley Yau

Contact information:
Kester Grant College
2412 Laurel Street,
Vancouver, BC V5Z 3T2
Tel: 604-877-0355
Fax: 604-877-0375
E-mail: info@kgc.bc.ca
Web: www.kgc.bc.ca

Students are encouraged to submit
letters to our editors. The editors
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to newsletter@kgc.bc.ca

BCIT INTERNATIONAL OPEN HOUSE 2003



BCIT International Building



Food - Culture - Crafts - Costume - Music



Canadian Idol finalist Karen-Lee Batten

KGC Students reach new heights!!



Rock Climbing in BCIT's Gym

Photos by Stanley

The History of Chinese Immigration in Canada

By Lucy



Hello, my name is Lucy. As an international student from China, I know that there are many Chinese people who have chosen to live in Vancouver. In fact, the Chinese have become one of the biggest ethnic groups in Canada, and the number of Chinese Immigrants in Canada is still increasing every year. It is quite an interesting phenomenon, so I decided to look into the history of Chinese Immigration in Canada and to share my findings with other KGC students.

It was said that the first foot print in Canada of the Chinese happened in 1788 when British explorer John Meare landed on Vancouver Island with 70 Chinese carpenters from Macao. After more than half a century, the first wave of Chinese immigrants to North America came for the gold rush in San Francisco in 1848. During that period, the Chinese faced many difficult situations including the imbalance of the rapid population growth and the lower agricultural productivity. Also, because the Qing dynasty lost the Opium War with Britain, they had to follow what Britain asked them to do. Therefore, the situation in China became unstable. In order to escape this situation, many Chinese left their homes to come to Canada to look for a new life. On July 28, 1885, the first group of Chinese arrived in the Fraser River Valley, Victoria, B.C.. This was considered the beginning of Chinese Immigration in Canada.

The first Chinese arrived in Victoria, BC, 1858



In early times, the Chinese workers helped Canada to construct many public projects including the construction of the CPR (the Canadian Pacific Railway) which was to connect Canada from coast to coast. 15,700 workers were involved in constructing this project. This period was also influenced by racial discrimination. Chinese workers were

The Chinese workers were working for CPR



treated badly; they were paid half the wages of white workers. Because of the poor living conditions, the heavy work and the cold climate, many of the workers died. There was also a "head tax" to prevent Chinese from entering Canada.

Though Chinese suffered many hardships in Canada, they never gave up. During the depression years after WWI, many Chinese supported their lives by running their own businesses like restaurants and laundries. Vivienne Poy, the first Chinese-Canadian appointed to the Senate, devoted her February 1999 inaugural speech to the history of the Chinese in Canada. She said " Many prairie farming families owed their lives to the credits given to them by the Chinese store owners in their purchase of daily necessities during those difficult years. "

In addition, it was said that 500 Chinese-Canadians served during the Second World War in the Canadian army. In 1941, China and Canada became war allies together with the United States and British allied countries. " This marred the beginning of a change in attitude of white Canadians towards Chinese-Canadians." After the war, there was a movement to repeal the Exclusion Act of the Chinese. By the end of November 1946, " The Committee for the Repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act" was formed. In 1947, Chinese Canadians regained the right to vote in federal elections with some limits because of the pressure from many groups. In 1967, The Immigration Act gave the Chinese the same immigration rights as other groups. The Chinese finally were admitted to Canada as everyone else. Because of a negative image shown of the Chinese by CTV, on January 26, 1980, 2500 people marched from the university of Toronto to CTV' s headquarters which was the largest protest march in Chinese Canadian history, and it resulted in the foundation of CCNC (the Chinese Canadian National Council). The

CCNC played an important role in helping the Chinese to ask for and get justice for the Head Tax which had been implemented more than a half a century ago. Chinese to ask for and get justice for the Head Tax which had been implemented more than a half a century ago.

Although the history of Chinese Canadians was filled with hardships, the Chinese hadn't given up. They kept fighting for their rights. The process was slow and painful, requiring courage and a firm belief in equality. While researching about Chinese Immigration in Canada, I learned that Chinese Canadians played a role in helping Canada to develop in the last hundred years. Though Chinese Canadians suffered a lot in the past, things are much better now. Unlike the early settlers, the new Chinese Immigrants are often wealthy educated people with valuable skills. They become accustomed to living in a new country much easier than before, and they can either get good jobs or study at the schools they choose. Some Chinese are even very active in politics. Because of the improvements in the policies that Canada has made, all minorities, including Chinese Canadians, in Canada are really encountering good opportunities and great challenges to develop themselves. They will surely have bright futures.

Notice: all the information for this newsletter comes from the following websites
www.cbc.ca/news/in_depth/Chinese/migrants.html
www.ccnc.ca/tornoto/history/info/content.html



In 1967, Chinese were finally given the same rights as others



Alaska Wild Land Adventure!



What image do you have when you think of Alaska? Cold? Yes, it's very cold in winter time; it gets -40C to -50C in winter. But Alaska has four beautiful seasons. It also has beautiful short summers which can be intense. In the summer of 1998, my friend and I decided to travel through Alaska. It was one of the greatest travels that I have had in my life. I'd like to share my great experience with you. It was mid August of 1998 that my friend and I first landed in Fairbanks, Alaska where we were supposed to join one of the camping tours. We were planning to camp through the Interior, South Central, and South West of Alaska. There were 10 of us plus one guide who drove our van through out our journey. We were quite an International group including two Canadians, three Americans, two Italians, and two Japanese, plus a French guide who had lived in Alaska for five years. Before we headed out, we all loaded our luggage, food and tents on the top of the van. We were going to spend 12 days camping from place to place. We started from Fairbanks and traveled to Kodiak Island, Anchorage and back to Fairbanks via Denali National Park. As you know, camping is so much fun, but there is much work at the camp sites; first we all had to set up our own tents, unpack some of our stuff, prepare all our meals, and clean up the dirty dishes. It was not like staying at a hotel with full service; each of us had to take on responsibility for



www.uaf.edu/museum/exhibit/galleries/hoshino

keeping the camp in order for the whole group. Fortunately, we were all experienced campers, and we instantly became a great camping team.

First, we headed to Kodiak Island which is located below the Gulf of Alaska. We had to take a domestic flight directly to Kodiak Island. Kodiak Island is famous for bear watching, so we were all looking forward to seeing actual wild bears there. We stayed on the Island for two nights, but unfortunately we could only see one bear at very far distance. You might be wondering if we weren't scared of bears. The answer is Yes and No. We all wanted to see actual wild bears in Alaska, but at the same time, we also didn't want to accidentally encounter them because we knew that it would be dangerous. As we can be surprised at a sudden encounter, bears are the same; that is how most dangerous incidents occur. One afternoon, we had been having a nice hike on top of a hill where wild blueberries were growing all over. So, we decided to pick berries to make nice blueberry pancakes for a breakfast. But we had to be very careful when picking the berries because as we love berries, bears also love them! Please don't misunderstand me about bears. They usually don't attack people without a reason, and as long as we let them know we are here, they usually don't come near to us unless they are extremely hungry. Bears have attacked people or come near people because somehow they learned they have food. So, you should never feed wild animals! If we want them to respect us, we should respect them as well and respect their territories. We should realize people are outsiders who are visiting the bears' territories in the wilderness. Thus, while we were picking berries, we needed to let the bears know that we were there, so we talked to each other loudly and even sang songs. Fortunately perhaps because the bears didn't like our singings, we didn't have any incidents, and we could have wonderful blueberry pancakes the next day. After three days of great visiting on the Island, we took a ship back to the mainland. The ship was



quite big, and it even had showers. As you can expect, we hadn't taken a shower for three days, and everyone just loved the idea of taking a long hot shower!

One night, all of our camp mates were sitting around a fire at a camp site and enjoying a chat after dinner. It was a very beautiful clear night, and we could see millions of stars above us. You could even see shooting stars every five minutes; I didn't know so many shooting stars occur in one night. In Japan, we say if you make a wish when you see a shooting star, you will get your wish. We all started to make our wishes; we could make tens of wishes because there were so many shooting stars on that night. It was such a peaceful night; chatting with nice people and the fire kept us warm. It seemed like I didn't need to make any wishes after all. This was the time I wanted for my holiday. Everybody felt the same, so we stayed up late that night. When we were all enjoying a quiet and calm moment in front of the fire, one of the team mates screamed "the northern lights!" Yes! There were the northern lights above us! Greenish white color of lights moving like a flowing curtain all around us! We all lay down on the ground and gazed at it. The northern lights were constantly moving like a light breeze; it even looked like as if the lights were waving to us. It was one of my dreams for this trip; seeing the northern lights in Alaska, and I could get my wish. It must have been a shooting star wish come true!



After a few more days of camping, we finally arrived at Denali National Park. Denali National Park (also called, Denali National Park and Preserve) is 6 million acres large; it's larger than the State of Massachusetts. Denali, means

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“High One” in Athabascan native language because the park includes Mount McKinley that is 6,194m high and known as “the roof of North America”. Mt. McKinley also crowns the 960km long Alaskan Range. Although Denali National Park and Preserve is bigger than the State of Massachusetts, there is only 136.5km of road and most of the preserve is virgin land; you have to hire a bush pilot to drop you off in most of the areas. This is why Denali is called one of the world's last great frontiers for wilderness adventure. But don't worry. You will enjoy enough adventure just by taking the park's shuttle bus for 136,5km. We stayed at one of the camping sites in Denali National Park for four days. That was one of the most fascinating camping experiences of my life. The farther we went into the park, the more space opened up as big as the sky.



Another dream for the trip was to see Mt. McKinley with my own eyes. However, weather in Denali is extremely variable. Often changes in weather occur without warning. We had sun, wind, rain, and clouds on the same day! Because of the variable weather changes in the park, Mt. McKinley is also known as a very difficult mountain to see as a whole. Most of the mountain usually is covered by cloud. You also need luck to see the whole mountain. And we had the luck! (I got another shooting star wish!) We could see



it completely, even its snowy summit! Indeed, it was beautiful! I took so many pictures of the mountain as I was fighting with my camera. Mt. McKinley was slowly being covered by cloud again. It was just a few minutes of luck!

You can't drive your own car inside the park, so you have to either walk or take the park's shuttle bus which runs every 15 minutes, and you can get on and get off anywhere you want. As we were riding this shuttle bus, we were amazed how many wild creatures we encountered: moose, caribou, black bears, grizzly bears, doll sheep, squirrels, marmots, picas, and lots of wild birds! Although we couldn't see many bears on Kodiak Island, we could see them here; black bears and grizzly bears. Plus, we didn't have to be scared of them because we were inside a bus.

One day, my friend and I decided to take a



hike to one of the mountains in the park. Although it was mid August, the season in Alaska already started changing to autumn. Permafrost ground underlies many areas of the park, where only a thin layer of top soil is available to support life. Because of the character of permafrost, only the thinnest layer of the topsoil thaws each summer to support life. The park is above the tree limit; this means a 30cm tall spruce tree can be as old as 30 years. Therefore, the park consists of two major plant associations, taiga and tundra. We could see red, orange, and yellow color carpeted ground. Seeing the 360 degree of wilderness space open up in front of us, I felt I was in the hub of the universe. I am such a tiny point in this universe, and my worries and problems are nothing in front of this space. I was crying and smiling with mixed emotions. We sat down on the top of the hill, and we just looked out into the scene before us without any words being spoken..

It has been five years since I first landed in Alaska, and I went back twice since then: in July 1999 and in January 2000. Both trips were also very exciting and adventurous. I met so many interesting people during these trips, and I am still in contact with some of them. The trips to Alaska made me think more about nature and the environment. The wilderness in Alaska is so vast, and it has not changed much since ancient times. But once we start to destroy its nature, it won't take much time to cause harm. I hope it will remain the same as it is now for centuries. Please don't misunderstand Alaska, and don't reject it as just a cold place. Alaska has one of the world's last great wildernesses, and it has so many wild creatures that you can see. If you visit Alaska, it will change you forever.

Source from:
[Http://www.denali.national-park.com](http://www.denali.national-park.com)

Pictures from:
<http://www.alaska.com/akcom/galleries/activities/v-6/>

[Http://www.uaf.edu/museum/exhibit/galleries/hoshino/subj-timebear.html](http://www.uaf.edu/museum/exhibit/galleries/hoshino/subj-timebear.html)
[Http://www.geo.mtu.edu/weather/aurora/](http://www.geo.mtu.edu/weather/aurora/)