

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BARKERVILLE delegates make historic trek to China

Barkerville BC, November 17th, 2009 – Representatives from western North America's largest living history museum have made an historic trip to Guangdong Province, China.

Judy Campbell, CEO of Barkerville Historic Town, and William G. Quackenbush, Barkerville's Curator, joined Barkerville Heritage Trust liaison Lily Chow and a Canadian federal Senator in Guangzhou last week, marking the start of an eleven day research expedition aimed at better understanding Barkerville's beautifully preserved Chinatown and its extensive collection of archival records, photographs, and artifacts - many of which were brought by early Chinese immigrants from Guangdong province.

The trip – which commenced November 10th – was jointly arranged by the Barkerville Heritage Trust, Barkerville's operating and managing partner, and the Overseas Exchange Association of Guangdong Province, in order to provide Barkerville's management team opportunities to meet with Chinese tourism officials, government policy makers, and academic and museum professionals.

"We were honoured that a delegation from the Guangdong Overseas Chinese Affairs office visited Barkerville in 2006," said Ms. Campbell, Barkerville's Chief Executive Officer. "And this past summer the Chinese Consular General in Vancouver, Mr. Liang Shugen, helped us celebrate the designation of Barkerville's Chee Kung Tong building as a National Historic Site of Canada – an event that has already increased Chinese interest in Northern British Columbia and the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast regions."

"If we are to continue to build a meaningful relationship with China that will ultimately result in a cultural exchange and increased tourism to British Columbia, then it is important for us to return the visit we received from these Chinese officials in 2006, and to acknowledge the continued attention paid to us by the Chinese Consular General," Campbell concluded.

On November 11th, Ms. Campbell and Mr. Quackenbush traveled with Mrs. Lily Chow and Senator Lillian (Quan) Dyck to the Kiaping area of China's Guangdong Province, to visit the Senator's ancestral village. Senator Dyck's father - Yok Lee Quan - immigrated to Canada from Canton, China in 1912.

The group then moved to Jiangmen on November 13th, where Ms. Campbell and Mr. Quackenbush made a joint presentation to the Overseas Chinese Research Centre at Wuyi University. Selia Tan Jinhua, a researcher from Wuyi University who traveled to Barkerville this summer for the Chee Kung Tong dedication ceremony, later brought the Canadian delegates to the home villages of some of Barkerville's most prominent Chinese community members. The party returned to Guangzhou on November 15th to meet with the Director of the Guangdong Museum and other tourism officials.

This week Ms. Campbell and Mr. Quackenbush travel to Tianhe, Guangzhou to meet with the Managing Director of British Columbia's Trade and Investment Representative Office for South China before heading home to Barkerville on November 21st.

ABOUT BARKERVILLE HISTORIC TOWN

BARKERVILLE HISTORIC TOWN is the largest historic site in Western North America (www.barkerville.ca). Barkerville is provincially, nationally and internationally recognized for its historic significance associated with its place in western Canada's gold rush era and the role the gold rush played in BC joining Canada. Barkerville is widely known as a "must see" for travel itineraries in western Canada. The historic town is also a significant contributor to the Cariboo regional economy and is widely regarded as a unique component of the regional identity.

The Barkerville Heritage Trust, as Barkerville's operating and managing partner, works in conjunction with the Province of British Columbia, the owner and statutory guardian of Barkerville's heritage resources, to ensure that Barkerville is efficiently managed, entertaining and educational to visitors, and financially stable as the premier heritage resource and tourism attraction for the Cariboo. The ultimate aim is to maintain and enhance Barkerville's position as a nationally significant heritage resource and tourism attraction for British Columbia and Canada.

Barkerville is situated 80 km east of Quesnel, British Columbia in the foothills of the Cariboo Mountains, close to Troll Mountain Ski Resort and Bowron Lake Provincial Park. The nearby community of Wells (8 km from Barkerville) is the service and housing centre for the area (www.wellsbc.com) and is itself a dynamic cultural community, home of Island Mountain Arts, the acclaimed Toni Onley Artists' Project, the International Celtic Harp School (www.imarts.com), the dynamic indie music festival ArtsWells (www.artswells.com), and the Sunset Theatre (www.sunset-theatre.com). Wells is also situated close to a wide variety of winter and summer outdoor activities.

ABOUT THE OVERSEAS EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION OF GUANGDONG PROVINCE

THE OVERSEAS EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION OF GUANGDONG PROVINCE is a non-profit, non-government organization voluntarily set up by personages from various circles in Guangdong. With the vision of "strengthen the friendship, promote the communication, reinforce the cooperation", the association builds up a link for overseas Chinese, Hong Kong and Macau compatriots to improve the communication with Guangdong in the fields of commerce and trade, Science and technology, culture and education. Since the establishment of the association in July 1992, fruitful achievements have been reached to assist Overseas Chinese in investing, trading, setting up public welfare and charities in China, and to assist domestic enterprises and organizations in professionals recruitment, capital and technique as well as the setting up of their representative offices or agencies abroad. www.gocn.southcn.com/english.

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