

TITLE: Researching the Chinese Presence in Atlantic Canada-Family and Place

This panel will address the topics of patterns of migration, Chinese artifact collection, emerging communities and descendants of pioneers, ethnic relations, identity issues and documentation. It will feature three panelists whose presentations will proceed from the regional (Atlantic Canada) to the civic(Halifax) to the family (Lees).

James H. Morrison: "Where East meets Eastern": Chinese early migration to Atlantic Canada".

Once the last spike was driven and the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed, the labour force recruited specifically for this purpose, turned their hands to another means of livelihood. Many of the extensive and now dispersed Chinese labourers journeyed eastwards with some making their way to the Atlantic side of Canada. By as early as 1891, there is evidence of their presence in Prince Edward Island and throughout the 1890's they arrived and made their homes in each of the three Atlantic provinces-Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland(becoming a province in 1949). This presentation will provide an overview of this migrant and at times transient population and their economic and socio-cultural influence on the Atlantic region.

Grace Bell: " Early establishment of the Chinese Community in Halifax 1890-1925".

Little has been done on Chinese immigration to the Atlantic provinces. It is hoped that by examining the establishment and growth of the Chinese community in Halifax, Nova Scotia greater attention will be focused on the contributions and unique experiences of the Chinese immigrants who ventured east of Montreal. Some of the subjects to be discussed in this presentation include local Chinese immigration and business patterns, legal issues, the establishment of Chinese organizations and the impact of the Christian community on Chinese immigrant's lives. This focus will show that a successful and vibrant Chinese community existed outside of the large cities of Vancouver and Montreal and was not constrained to a local "Chinatown".

Albert Lee: "The Lees: A Chinese family's century in Halifax"

Both Albert Lee's father and grandfather paid the Canadian Government's Head Tax in order to enter Canada- father Chuck Lee as a 9 year old in 1917 and grandfather Lee in 1906. Chuck was a "Chinese Broker" who assisted new Chinese migrants to the region and Albert was raised on his stories of the Chinese community in Halifax. Albert has carried out extensive Lee family history and through audio and visual sources will present an in-depth analysis of one family's century in Halifax.

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