

CALL FOR WRITERS

Lougheed House



Application deadline: **January 15, 2021**, 11:59 pm

Chinese immigrants were attracted to Western Canada to work on the construction of the CPR in the early 1880s but faced racist government policies and discrimination. In 1885, a discriminatory \$50 head tax was enacted by the federal government. The tax, which doubled in 1902 and increased tenfold in 1903, was in place until 1923 when it was replaced by the Chinese Immigration Act, or the Chinese Exclusion Act. From 1923 until its repeal in 1947, immigration from China was severely restricted.

Despite this, by 1885, Calgary's first Chinatown was emerging. Chinese residents were concentrated along 8 Avenue between 2 and 4 Street SE. There were residences, laundries, restaurants, a grocer, and a tailor.

In 1892, one of the worst instances of anti-Chinese hostility in Alberta occurred in the first Chinatown, the 1892 Smallpox Riot. One Chinese resident had contracted smallpox in Vancouver. Upon his return to Calgary, he fell ill and nine Calgarians were infected. Fearing the spread of the disease, a mob of 300 men attacked a Chinese laundry, vandalizing property and injuring two men. The North West Mounted Police stepped in and offered the barracks as refuge for the targeted Chinese men. For three weeks, they sheltered there.

The second Chinatown developed on 10 Avenue between 1 and 4 Street SW, centred on the Chinese Mission at 215 10 Avenue SW. Due to the restrictions on immigration, the majority of Chinese people living in Calgary were men who came for work. In 1910, of a population of nearly 500, only three of them were women. Many Chinese men in Calgary simply could not afford to bring their wives and families over to Canada with them.

In 1910, property values in the area increased due to new developments and many of the Chinese tenants were expelled, forcing them to move to the third, and current, location of Chinatown.

Lougheed House is looking for writers to compose short stories about these first two iterations of Chinatown. The stories should be between 750 and 1500 words. The stories can be fictional but must be grounded in historical research and must be connected to a specific location (building, block, or street) in historic Chinatown. The sites do not need to still be in existence. Some examples include the Chinese Mission and laundry mentioned above. Lougheed House staff are available to assist with research related to specific locations and storylines.

The stories will be recorded and will form part of an exhibit on early Chinatown in Calgary at the Lougheed House. They will also be made available digitally as part of a self-guided walking tour.

Interested writers are asked to send submissions in writing which include:

- one to two paragraph proposal;
- recent and relevant writing samples;
- the name and contact information of the writer, including a brief CV (no longer than two pages).

Timeline:

Application deadline: January 15, 2021

Notification of selection: February 1, 2021

Submission of story: March 29, 2021

Recording of story: April 2021

Exhibition: May 6 to June 13, 2021

Writers will be paid a fee of \$600 for their work. This fee will cover the writing and reading of the story for an audio recording. Lougheed House will be responsible for recording and editing the audio. Artists will also be asked to participate in an artist's panel where they will share excerpts of their work and openly discuss their discoveries and inspirations while working on the project. This public artist's panel will be presented either live or through a digital platform, depending on current public health guidelines.

For more information on the Lougheed House, please go to lougheedhouse.com or visit us at 707-13 Avenue SW, Calgary AB.

Submissions should be sent by **January 15, 2021** by email to:

Caroline Loewen, Curator

cloewen@lougheedhouse.com