

Centennial Celebration of Lee Association of Calgary 1910 -2010

By Paul K.P. Wong
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The Lee Association of Calgary was established in 1910, firstly named as "Tung Shing Fon". There was a small group of Chinese people who joined together to protect their personal safety and property. They did understand that the importance for them to be united and take care of each other as to against the bullies from the extremists. Therefore, they were the first clan association established in the very small Chinese community in Calgary at that time.

In the beginning of the "Tung Shing Fon" was established, the location was in the site of 1st St. & 17th Ave. SW, in the district of Mission where the Lee brothers held meetings in order to contact with the clan come from their homeland. They also set up for the clan's welfare needs, as to cope with the harsh living environment. Subsequently, the clan association moved to 2nd Ave SE after a short while when the present Chinatown was established in 1910. They then renamed their association as "Lee Longxi Tong", and provided family services, and more benefits for the numbers of Lee clan. In 1928, some members of the association suggested to raise funds to purchase their own property. Afterwards they bought the house in the 2nd Ave SW, and renamed it once again as "Lee Association of Calgary" and it remains the same until today.

In April 1980, the association with the Calgary Chinatown Development Foundation and the Chinese Public School, joint contract to build a low-cost building. It is the "Bovside Manor" that solved the housing problem for those families with low income. According to the Association Chairman, Dan Sun-ming Lee said that the association was from 50s to 70s in last century to help those Lee's immigrants who first came to Calgary. He also mentioned, when the Chinese National League of Canada, Calgary Branch (KMT) established in 1913, there were a lot of members from the Lee Association. Besides, since the Chinese Public School founded in March, 1939, their association has been giving support for the school. From then to now, the association has many professionals who keep maintaining the pride of the Lee family.