



Above is one of the many pictures to be featured at the Halton Hills Cultural Centre at an exhibit showing the relationship between Canada and China. The exhibit is on from Jan. 11 to Feb. 26.

Submitted photo

## 100 years of Canadian and Chinese friendship on display this Saturday

A fascinating exhibit of archival photos covering 100 years of Canadian/Chinese relations will be launched by Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette on Saturday (Jan. 14) at 2 p.m. at the Halton Hills Cultural Centre.

Canadians in Chengdu (China) is a gift to Canadians from a group of Chinese historians, artists, and corporate donors. They began collecting and curating these photographs in 2007 to retain a period lost in China's post-revolutionary history.

The collection tells the story of courageous Canadian missionaries in China from 1892-1952, and their role in founding the West China Union University in Chengdu. Modern for its day, the university included the first Faculty of Dentistry in China. These Canadians loved China and worked under harsh conditions, contributing to the country's medical and educational modernization, and leaving a lasting footprint. Some are buried there, and many gave their children Chinese names out of deep respect.

Hundreds of Chinese graduates of the university helped develop a modern health care system in China after 1949 to present day. Today, West China Medical Centre at Si-

chuan University is one of the largest health care teaching centres in China.

The original display is now housed in a dedicated museum just outside the major city of Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province. It was honoured by two Canadian Governors General Michaelle Jean and David Johnston and featured at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing.

The exhibit is timely for the Town of Halton Hills. In a special ceremony on June 17, 2016, Mayor Bonnette and Secretary Dao Ming of Wenjiang District signed a historic agreement linking the two regions as Sister Cities.

How fitting for the Town of Halton Hills to kick off its year-long Canada 150 celebrations by hosting a cultural showpiece that celebrates not only our recent history with Wenjiang and Chengdu: but over 100 years of shared knowledge, skills and compassion, said Bonnette.

Keynote Speakers at the event: Mayor Rick Bonnette, Kevin Best, whose grandfather was the first Professor of Medicine at the University, and Marion Walker, event organizer who attended school in Chengdu.

The exhibit runs from Jan. 11-Feb. 26.

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