Office of the Mayor

Mayoral Speech – New Zealand Consulate, Guangzhou
The Journey to Lan Yuan film excerpt screening
Thursday, 4 May 2017

What you are seeing today is an excerpt of the film *The Journey to Lan Yuan* – a documentary made by Toitū: Otago Settlers Museum & The Dunedin Chinese Garden staff members Will McKee and Seán Brosnahan.

It was shot in China and Otago last year.

The full documentary of *The Journey to Lan Yuan* is a 150 minute comprehensive look at the specific relationship between Guangdong and Otago, which goes back to the 1860s, when the first Chinese miners arrived for the Otago goldrush.

The film is based on the research of Dr James Ng – himself originally from Taishan County in Guangdong, and now living in Dunedin.

This is not the first time the history between Dunedin and Guangzhou has been documented in film. But it is the first time we have done it from the Dunedin end as it were. The previous documentary was made from here in 2014.

When the film concept was being developed, the Chinese community in Dunedin specifically requested Seán Brosnahan be the presenter for the film. He has worked on six different exhibitions with the Chinese community during his 28 years as a curator.

During their time filming in China, the team from Toitū was very grateful for the assistance they received from the Chinese Overseas Affairs Office and the New Zealand Consulate in Guangzhou.

They also found the locals of small villages around the province were very gracious and gave plenty of assistance to find specific sites relevant to Dunedin Chinese.

Despite its very modest budget, the film has been enthusiastically received in New Zealand, with over 4,000 people attending screenings at Toitū museum. It is now permanently on display in Lan Yuan, the Dunedin Chinese Garden.

In time, the Museum of Overseas Chinese in Guangzhou wishes to show the translated film permanently.

*The Journey to Lan Yuan* is now considered a taonga or treasure by Otago’s Chinese as it tells the story of their back and forward journeys from Guangdong.

It is also a record of part of our city’s heritage from this area of the world.

It opens our community’s eyes to just one of the strands of our city’s cultural makeup that isn't Scottish. Despite the fact that Scots founded Dunedin, many other cultures
and nationalities contributed to its development and success – the Cantonese Chinese among them.

I hope you will enjoy this excerpt and that it will inspire you to see the full length version when it goes on display here.

**Dave Cull**  
**Mayor of Dunedin**