



Royal BC Museum asks Indo-Canadian community to check accuracy of displays

Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies at UFW and other groups invited to comment on museum's logging exhibit

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Members of the Indo-Canadian community inspect one of the displays at the Royal B.C. Museum on Nov. 21. (Royal B.C. Museum/Facebook)

Members of B.C.'s Indo-Canadian community invited to the [Royal BC Museum](#) in Victoria on Nov. 21, inspected the museum's displays to determine if they accurately portray that community's history and role in B.C.'s forestry industry.

"It's a little bit of history in the making, literally in a sense," said Satwinder Bains, associate professor and the the director of the [Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies](#) at the

University of the Fraser Valley.



A note left on the exhibit from the "intervention" on Nov. 21. On the museum's Facebook page it said: "[I]f you encounter masses of sticky notes festooning the walls of our galleries, fear not: it's not the work of timid vandals - it's probably the fruits of some vigorous community involvement." (Royal B.C. Museum/Facebook)

The event was organized by the centre, along with the museum and the David Lam Centre at Simon Fraser University, and is the first step in the process of possibly updating some of the exhibits.

Long history in logging

Bains, speaking to [All Points West host Robyn Burns](#) before the event, said most of the focus would be on the logging exhibit, which is one of the museum's largest

displays.

She said the display is currently more "European-centric."

"Our community has been in the industry right from the beginning, right from the 100 year history that we have in British Columbia," she said.

"So we thought that would be an appropriate place for us to intervene initially, and then hopefully we can build a more robust, a more vibrant historic panorama of our community."

Bains said they are gathering some documents, such as tickets from the Indo-Canadian loggers when they came over to Canada on ships, as well as letters.

She said the men who worked in the logging industry were isolated, but also formed communities, and lived and worked with other communities including Japanese- and Chinese-Canadians.

'Trials, tribulations facing racism'

"We want to share those stories of their trials, tribulations facing racism, facing lower wages than European people, and yet persevering against all odds, against the adversity that they faced, with a real sense of purpose, and that amazing energy they had through that time, we want to capture that and we want to honour that."

Bains said the event grew from both the Indo-Canadian community's desire to see more of their history reflected in the display, and the museum coming to realize that "certain communities certainly are missing."

"The Indo-Canadian community has had an outsized but unheralded impact on British Columbia's culture and economy, and we welcome this engagement with our galleries as a form of critical dialogue with those who have been who have been left out or

written out of our history," said museum CEO Jack Lohman in a statement released after the event.

To hear the full interview click on the audio labelled: [Royal B.C. Museum asks Indo-Canadian community to check accuracy of displays](#)

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