

# Ottawa Chinatown 1931 ~ 2014

## 渥太華唐人街 1931 ~ 2014

David Chuenyan Lai 黎全恩

Ottawa had a Chinese population of about 170 in 1911 and did not have a Chinatown. The Chinese community grew slowly until it had a population of about 300 in 1931.

### Old Chinatown, 1931-1970s

In 1931, a small Chinatown, consisting of three grocery stores, two laundries, two recreation clubs, and one gift shop, developed on Albert Street between Kent and O'Connor streets. By 1941, Ottawa's Chinatown had not expanded territorially, although its business establishments had increased to twelve: four restaurants, three laundries, two grocery stores, and three other shops. In addition, it had four organizations: the Oriental Club of Ottawa, Dai Lou Club, Moo Chung Chinese Club, and the Chinese Nationalist League. An anti-Japanese organization, formed in Chinatown in the late 1930s, was reorganized as Chinese Community Association of Ottawa (*Jijing Zhonghua Huiguan*) after the Second World War was over.

Chinatown continued to decline after the 1940s. As it was near Ottawa's town centre, old buildings on Albert Street were gradually replaced by high-rise office buildings. By 1961, only four Chinese restaurants and one grocery store remained in operation. After they closed down in the 1970s, Chinatown on Albert Street no longer existed.

### New Chinatown, 1982-

During the late 1960s, a few Chinese merchants began to operate small businesses on Somerset Street West, a commercially zoned street in Centretown Ward and Dalhousie North Ward. By 1974, Chinese stores and restaurants such as Wah Fatt Barbecue Shop and Grocery, China Restaurant, Shanghai Restaurant and Sun On Grocery had been set up on the northern side of Somerset Street West in Centretown Ward.

Throughout the late 1970s, a large number of new Chinese immigrants came to Ottawa; its Chinese population increased from 3,060 in 1971 to 8,205 in 1981. Many started to live and set up business on Somerset Street West in the ethnically diverse Dalhousie North Ward which was a run-down lower-income residential neighbourhood. In 1971, for example, 54 per cent of its residents spoke English as their mother tongue, 22 per cent spoke French, 17 per cent spoke Italian, and the remaining 7 per cent spoke Portuguese, Chinese, East Indian dialects and other languages. They operated small family corner store businesses along Somerset Street West from Bronson Avenue to Rochester Street.

1911年，渥太華的華人人數只有約170人，唐人街尚未形成。直至1931年增至約300人，華人社區才開始緩慢形成。

### 舊唐人街（1931 - 1970年代）

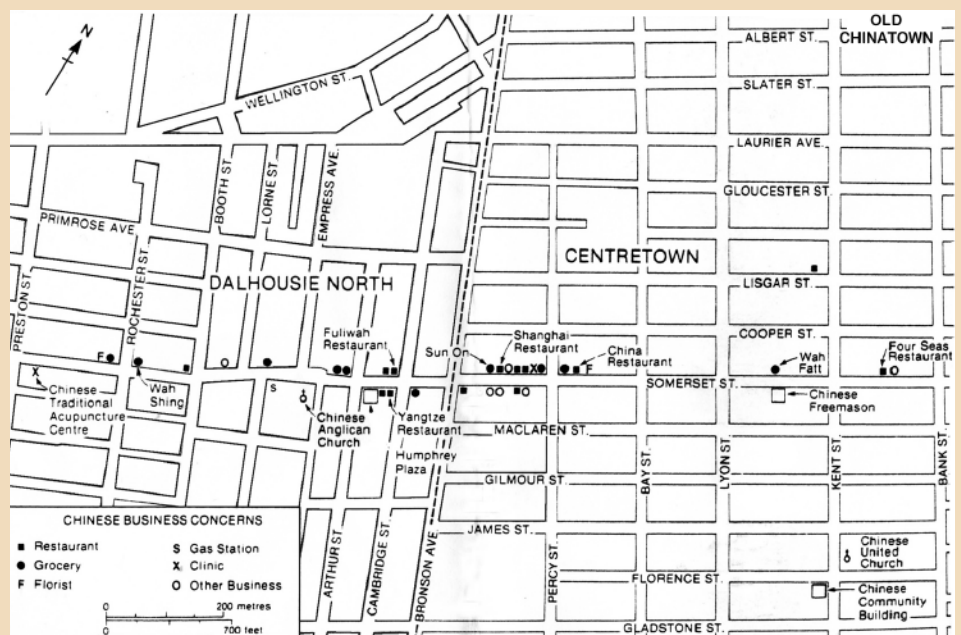
1931年，一個小規模的唐人街在肯特街與奧康那街之間的亞伯街，初見雛形，當中包括三家雜貨鋪、兩家洗衣店、兩家娛樂場所和一家禮品店。直至1941年，區域上沒有明顯擴大，只是商店增加至十二家 -- 四家餐館、三家洗衣店、兩家雜貨鋪及三家其他商店。另有四個會所：渥太華華人俱樂部；大樓社；武松社及中國國民黨支部。此外，1930年後期成立的抗日組織，在二次大戰結束後，改組為加京中華會館。

1940年代以後唐人街持續衰落。由於地處渥太華市中心，亞伯街上的很多舊樓都相繼被高層寫字樓所取代，在1961年時，僅剩四家華人餐館和一家雜貨鋪尚在營業。1970年代後亦相繼結業，亞伯街的唐人街也不復存在。

### 新唐人街（1982 - ）

1960年代後期，個別華人商家開始在中心區和戴豪斯北區內的森馬錫商業街經營小生意。至1974年，不少華人店鋪和餐館相繼在中心區內的森馬錫西街北邊開業，當中包括華發燒烤店、中國餐館、上海餐館和新安雜貨鋪等。

1970年代後期，大量新華人移民湧入渥太華，導致華人口從1971年的3,060人劇增至1981年的8,205人。很多新移民開始在戴豪斯北區內的森馬錫西街開業謀生。當時，該區



Ottawa's Chinatown, 1986  
一九八六年的渥太華唐人街



Humphrey Plaza  
金馬行大樓

businesses had spread along the street in the two Wards. There was no cohesive grouping of Chinese business concerns on the street, therefore Somerset Street West was not perceived by the public, including the Chinese themselves, as a New Chinatown.

On 16 April 1980, City Council designated Dalhousie North Ward as a redevelopment area and Somerset Street between Bronson Avenue and Preston Street would be improved. The designation resulted in unprecedented commercial growth of Chinese businesses on Somerset Street in the early 1980s. In 1982, for example, the Hum family purchased a few old buildings, demolished them, and constructed Humphrey Plaza, a two-level commercial building. Scores of Chinese restaurants, grocery stores, gift shops, florist shops, beauty parlours, and offices were established in new commercial buildings or renovated houses on Somerset Street West. South of it, an eight-storey Ottawa Chinese Community Centre was officially opened in 1982 at the corner of Kent and Florence streets. It consisted of forty-six apartment units, a community hall, a Chinese library, and an office for the Chinese Community Association of Ottawa. Somerset Street West became known as Chinatown to many Chinese residents but not to many Italian residents in Dalhousie North Ward where there were Italian, Indian, Vietnamese and Thai businesses on Somerset Street. In 1981, for example, Italians accounted for about 11 per cent and Chinese only 4 per cent of the Ward's residential population.

In February 1986, a Chinatown Development Committee was set up by representatives of eight Chinese organizations and several



A Vietnamese Grocery  
越南雜貨店

Meanwhile, an undetermined number of Chinese merchants and investors from Toronto and Montréal moved to Ottawa. They purchased old houses on Somerset Street West, converting them into commercial premises for their own businesses or to rent out.

By 1980, about ten Chinese



An Italian Restaurant  
意大利餐廳

Chinese community leaders. It requested City Council to undertake a study of developing a Chinatown on Somerset Street West. The request was readily approved and used as a part of Mayor Jim Durrell's campaign platform in the fall of 1985. The Ottawa

屬於衰落的低收入居民區，住著很多不同族裔的居民。以1971年為例，當地54%的居民以英語為母語，另有22%講法語，17%講意大利語，餘下7%則講葡萄牙語、華語、印度語或其他語言。新移民大多在邦臣大街至路車打街之間森馬錫西街一帶經營。與此同時，華商和投資者從多倫多和滿地可市遷至渥太華，在森馬錫西街附近收購舊樓，修葺翻建成新的商業樓宇經營生意或出租。截至1980年，約有十家華人商

鋪分散建立在中心區和戴豪斯北區內的森馬錫西街，因尚未成行成市，甚至當地華人，也未將森馬錫西街稱為“唐人街”。

1980年4月16日，渥太華議會通過決議將戴豪斯北區確定為重建區域，並美化由邦臣大街至俾斯頓街之間的森馬錫西街。因此，1980年代初期，該決議為森馬錫西街內的華人生意帶來前所未有的興旺與繁榮。以1982年為例，譚氏家族購買了多幢舊樓，拆除後改建為兩層高的金馬行。另外，不少華人餐館、雜貨鋪、禮品店、鮮花店、美容院和辦公室陸續在森馬錫西街的新商業大廈或重建的屋宇內開張經營。另外，在肯特街與佛倫斯街交界處，八層高的渥太華華人中心也於1982年正式投入使用，當中包括四十六個居屋單位、一個大堂、一個中文圖書館以及渥太華華人社區協會的辦公室。至此，當地



An Indian Restaurant  
印度餐廳

華人已認同森馬錫西街為唐人街。但居住在戴豪斯北區一帶的意大利居民並不認同，因為該區的森馬錫街還有很多意大利、印度、越南和泰國的商店。以1981年為例，意大利人佔了該區居民總人口的11%，而華人只佔4%。

1986年2月，八位僑社代表和多位華人僑領成立“唐人街發展委員會”，要求渥太華市議會，進行發展森馬錫西街為唐人街的研究。他們的要求順利獲得市議會通過，並成為1985年秋季德路占競選市長的平台。隨後，渥太華規劃委員會著手計劃發展森馬錫西街為唐人街的研究。同年四月，戴豪斯區社區協會、柬埔寨協會、越南社區協會、渥太華華商協會聯同其他幾家機構，成立“森馬錫街公民委員會”。閱過規劃委員發展森馬錫街的研究報告，認為該研究過分強調唐人街的發展，而應該考慮多元文化的因素，包括其他族裔如越南、日本、老撾等商業。一位意大利餐館老板擔心人們會認為在唐人街內不可能有意大利餐廳，但一位印度食品店店主卻相信其商店會在唐人街獨樹一幟。在市議會內部，對該項研究報告也存在分歧的意見。肯特市議員認為應該強化唐人街的獨特性，否則，如



Ottawa Chinese Community Centre  
渥太華華人社區中心



Planning Committee started working on the Terms of Reference for the proposed Somerset Street Planning Study which would develop a Chinatown on Somerset Street West. In April, the Dalhousie Community Association, Cambodian Association, Vietnamese Community Association, Ottawa Chinese Business Association and other organizations set up the Somerset Street Citizens' Committee (SSCC). After reviewing the draft of Planning Department's Study proposal, the Committee felt that the proposed study put too much stress on development of a distinct Chinatown, and wanted the study to reflect a more multicultural approach, including other ethnic groups such as Vietnamese, Japanese and Laotian. An Italian



A Budding Chinatown, 1980s  
1980年代唐人街

restaurant merchant worried that people might assume that there could not be an Italian restaurant in a Chinatown but an Indian food store owner felt that his store

would stand out in a Chinatown because people coming to Chinatown would want to try something different. Within City Council there was also a division in opinion about the proposed study. Alderman Darrel Kent supported a better-defined Chinatown because if all ethnic groups were included in the development plan, Somerset Street would become just another commercial business strip. However, Alderman Diane Holmes opposed the Chinatown idea because many businesses along Somerset Street were not Chinese. Eventually in August 1987, City Council approved a feasibility study to consider all possible themes for Somerset Street West. An interim report was completed in October and pleased neither residents nor merchants in the Somerset Street area. Finally, Ottawa Planning Department decided to drop the idea of creating a New Chinatown on Somerset Street and left it to develop on its own.

## Chinatown Gateway Project

In July 2006, some Asian community leaders proposed to Mayor Bob Chiarelli that a Chinatown Gateway be constructed at the junction of Somerset Street West and Cambridge North streets. Accordingly, a Chinatown Gateway project team was formed in August under the banner of the Somerset Street Chinatown Business Improvement Area (SSCBIA). The Chinatown Business Improvement Area (BIA) represented about ninety stores and sixty property owners on Somerset Street from Bay to Rochester streets. (Later, the BIA was extended to Preston Street). City Council approved a request by representatives of the BIA to name Somerset Street within the BIA, "Tangren Jie" (Chinatown).

On 3 October, 2006, the Gateway Steering Committee was formed with Marilla Lo, a BIA director, as the chair, and Lawrence Lee, President

將各個族裔都納入考量當中，只會讓森馬錫街成為另一條普通的商業街道。對此，賀馬女市議員則持不同意見，她反對唐人街的概念，理由是森馬錫街有很多不是華人的商鋪。最後，議會于1987年8月通過決議，進行研究森馬錫西街所有可能性的發展主題。同年10月，一份臨時性的研究報告完成，卻並未獲得居民和商家的認可。最後，渥太華規劃局決定放棄在森馬錫西街建立新唐人街的計劃，而讓其自由發展。

## 唐人街牌樓計劃

2006年7月，多位亞裔僑領向史亞利市長提議在森馬錫西街和劍橋北街交界處修建一座唐人街牌樓。為此，森馬錫街商業促進區於八月成立了“唐人街牌樓計劃小組”。“唐人街商業促進區”是森馬錫西街由海灣街至路車打街之間約九十家商店和六十位業主組成（促進區其後擴展至柏士頓街）。市府批准促進區將區內的森馬錫街稱為“唐人街”。



An Initial Concept of the Chinatown Gateway  
渥太華唐人街牌樓最初構想

2006年10月3日，“牌樓策劃委員會”正式成立，由商業促進區理事長盧寶珠擔任主席、渥太華華人獅子會會長李永華任副主席。策劃委員會獲得渥太華市政府首筆啟動資金支持後，向三級政府申請資助，並得到了聯邦議會特姆議員的鼎力支持。



Portail du Chinatown d'Ottawa  
渥太華唐人街牌樓

各項的籌款活動，如高爾夫球賽及2007年9月25日的興建牌樓籌款晚宴。參與牌樓計劃的社團包括：森馬錫街唐人街商業促進區、華人獅子會、渥太華華人社區協會、龍岡公所、渥太華加華聯會，以及其他一些亞裔社區代表。利德蕙參議員任牌樓榮譽贊助人。

2008年10月17日，牌樓協會主席李永華，鄧家昌及其他幾位理事，在市長辦公室拜會中國駐加拿大大使蘭立俊及渥太華奧比安市長，共同商討牌樓計劃的實施細節。考慮到渥太華和北京是友好姊妹城市，商議決定請北京負責牌樓設計、建造物資捐助並提供建築諮詢和專業技術人員，而渥太華則負責提供土地。三級政府，渥太華唐人街商業促進

2006年11月，奧比安獲選榮任渥太華市長，傾力支持唐人街牌樓計劃。2007年6月27日，渥太華市審議通過牌樓計劃，並給予牌樓計劃捐助人免稅收條。於是，黎寶珍、王文婉、李愛貞、楊黃麗明及其他理事，隨即策劃各



Bilingual Street Sign of Chinatown  
唐人街的雙語路牌

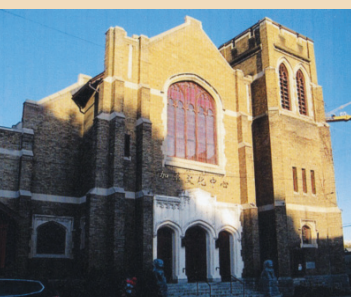
In November 2006, Larry O'Brien was elected Mayor of the City of Ottawa and gave his full support of the Chinatown Gateway Project. On 27 June 2007, Ottawa City Council approved the Gateway Project and provision of tax receipts for donations. Katie Ng, Winnie Wang, Angie Kwan, Theresa Wong Yan and other directors started organizing various fund-raising campaigns such as a Golf Tournament and the Gateway Kick-Off Gala Dinner on 25 September 2007. Community associations participating in the Project included SSCBIA, Chinese Lions Club, Ottawa Chinese Community Association, Lung Kong Association, Federation of Ottawa Canadian Chinese Organizations and other representatives from the Asian community. Senator Vivienne Poy was the Honorary Patron of the Project.

On 17 October 2008, Larry Lee, Chair of Gateway Association, together with Albert Tan and other directors, met Ambassador Lan Lijun and Mayor O'Brien in the Mayor's office to discuss the details of the project. As Ottawa and Beijing are twinned cities, Beijing would design the gateway, donate construction materials and provide architectural consultation and crews whereas the City of Ottawa would provide the land. The three levels of governments, Ottawa Chinatown BIA, and the community together donated over \$919,000 to the construction of the Gate. The Chinese government donated the gate materials and sent workers and technicians to Ottawa to help build the arch. The Ottawa Chinatown Gateway was officially dedicated on 7 October 2010. Canada and China established diplomatic relations on 13 October 1970. Hence, the official opening



Business of Other Ethnic Groups in Chinatown  
唐人街的其他族裔商店

of the Gate also marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the two countries' diplomatic relations. The Gateway is in the centre of the BIA on Somerset Street West, which, in 2012, consisted of about 50 Chinese businesses, about 30 Vietnamese businesses, 3 Italian businesses, 3 Korean businesses, 2 Japanese businesses, and about 30 businesses of other ethnic groups.



Chinese Cultural Centre  
中華文化中心

of the Ottawa Chinese Lions Club, as co-chair. The Steering Committee obtained a start-up grant from the City of Ottawa and drew up an application plan to request funding from the three levels of government. Its application was actively supported by Federal MP Paul Dewar.



Chinese businesses in Chinatown  
唐人街的華人商店

區及市內社會共捐助919,000元興建牌樓經費，中國捐贈牌樓材料並派工人前往渥太華協助興建工作。2010年10月7日，渥太華唐人街牌樓正式落成揭幕。1970年10月13日，加拿大與中國正式建立外交關係，牌樓落成揭幕，成為加拿大與中國建交四十周年的獻禮。牌樓位於森馬錫西街商業促進區的中心，截至2012年，該區共有約五十家華人商店經營，另有三十家越南商店、三家意大利商店、三家韓國商店和兩家日本商店以及三十多家其他族裔的商店。

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This document is part of a series of companions to *A Brief Chronology of Chinese Canadian History: from Segregation to Integration* which presents a national overview. These documents offer a more detailed account of specific Chinatowns that are an integral part of Canada's history.

“加拿大唐人街系列”是全國性的華裔歷史文獻 -- 「加拿大華裔歷史紀要：從隔離至融合」的附帶冊子，為個別的唐人街作更詳細介紹，因為唐人街的歷史是加拿大歷史中不可忽略的部份。

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Project Executive 項目行政: Dorris Tai 戴珍華 | Artwork Consultant 平面設計: Winnie Leung 梁允寧

Chinese Translation 中文翻譯: Liang Xiaomei 梁笑媚



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