

New Chinatown museum opens in Portland

A seldom-told story of immigrants

By **KRISTIAN FODEN-VENCIL**
Oregon Public Broadcasting

The Portland Chinatown Museum opened in December with the aim of illustrating the seldom-told story of Chinese-Americans in the Pacific Northwest.

It's not a big museum and it's only open Thursday through Sunday — in the afternoons. But visitors can learn a lot about Portland's history as they walk through.

The exhibit called "Beyond The Gate" was first displayed by the Oregon Historical Society in 2016. The director there, Kerry Tymchuck, said it uses old Chinese opera costumes, rare artifacts, theatrical sets and texts to tell the story of contact and trade between



Museum curator **Jacqueline Peterson-Loomis** is a retired historian. She said about \$1 million was spent to renovate the building and open the museum.

China and the West — particularly in Portland.

"The role of the museum is not to be the chamber of commerce, not to be the tourism capital. It's to tell the truth. And they tell the truth in this exhibit. And the truth can sometimes be ugly.

And it was ugly here for many years towards the Chinese-Americans. There was a great amount of discrimination," Tymchuck said.

Jacqueline Peterson-Loomis is a retired historian and curator of the new museum. She said about \$1

million was spent to renovate and open the building.

The next goal, she said, is to pivot into a capital campaign to purchase the building. They've been offered an option to buy it at a fixed price. But they need to raise the money within two years.



Visitors get an idea of what some stores in Chinatown used to look like.

"So now we have to build an audience," she said.

Peterson-Loomis said the museum is both a labor of love and a risky bet. She said the whole thing was put together by mostly Chinese-American families, some fourth and fifth generation, who consider Portland to be their cultural home.

"One of the things that was so sweet, I thought, in

the last month or two was listening to these elders say: "You know, we wanted this for so long and we thought it was for us. But it's not for us. It's for our grandchildren," said Peterson-Loomis.

By the end of the 19th century, Portland's Chinatown was second only in size to that of San Francisco.

An annual family membership to the museum is \$75.

Oregon may export pot to other states

Associated Press

SALEM — Marijuana could take the next step toward joining pinot noir and craft beer on Oregon's list of famous exports, under a proposal likely to go before state lawmakers in the new year.

The Statesman Journal reported that the Craft Cannabis Alliance, a business association led by founder and executive director Adam Smith, is working with legislators to let Oregon start exporting pot to other legal-weed states by 2021.

Among them is state Sen. Floyd Prozanski, D-Eugene, who said he also plans to reintroduce provisions from Senate Bill 1042, a similar proposal that died in the statehouse in 2017.

This comes as the state's legal weed industry has

plummeting prices over the past year due to demand not keeping up with supply. Also at issue is whether bad actors are funneling marijuana into the lucrative black market.

The proposals represent how advocates are trying to move pot onto the forbidden superhighway of interstate trade, which is fraught with regulatory roadblocks. Oregon demands weed grown or sold here stay within state borders, and marijuana remains federally illegal.

Wholesalers could ship across state lines so long as Oregon's governor had made a pact with the receiv-

ing state to allow those deliveries, according to draft language reviewed by the Statesman Journal.

Still, opponents aren't convinced Oregon would find any takers. "I can't imagine any state would agree to do this with Oregon," said Kevin Sabet, president of anti-pot group Smart Approaches to Marijuana.

"It looks like a desperate attempt to tackle the out of control black market production that has happened in Oregon since legalization," Sabet said. "The state should be focusing on how to reduce overall demand and supply."

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