



Medicine Hat Clay Industries
National Historic District

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Media Release

For Immediate Release

Medalta Potteries collection featured on Virtual Museum of Canada website

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Medicine Hat – As part of the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) Community Memories project, the Historic Clay District has created an online exhibit for the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) website. The title of the exhibit is *Clay Chronicles: Stories from a Pottery Factory*.

The goal of the Canadian Heritage Information Network – an initiative of Heritage Canada – is to connect everyone with Canada's heritage. *Clay Chronicles* is a celebration of the people who worked at Medalta Potteries, which was one of Canada's most prolific producers of stoneware and pottery in the first half of the Twentieth Century.

According to the Virtual Museum of Canada website, one of the objectives of the Community Memories project is to "create a national online portrait of Canada's history by connecting individual local histories." Joyce Yamamoto, Collections Technician for the Historic Clay District, undertook the task of collecting and interpreting the information for the Virtual Museum of Canada. "Medicine Hat's clay factories represent one of Western Canada's earliest and most dominant industries in the first half of the twentieth Century. Any discussions about Canada's industrial development should acknowledge their contribution," explains Yamamoto.

Barry Finkelman, Executive Director of the Historic Clay District, shared similar thoughts on Medicine Hat's contribution to Canadian history. "Medicine Hat played a major role in the development of Canada – specifically the West. The rich legacy left behind by these factories is certainly noticeable in Medicine Hat through the city's brick architecture and wonderful work of our ceramic artists. However, that legacy reaches far beyond our city limits as most Canadians have childhood memories of stoneware or pottery from Medicine Hat."

The Virtual Museum of Canada is a gathering place for Canadian museums and is a powerful resource for educators, scholars and anyone interested in Canadian history. The creation of the *Clay Chronicles* online exhibit will reinforce Medicine Hat's place as a major contributor to Western Canada's industrial legacy. To view the exhibit, visit www.virtualmuseum.ca.

The Historic Clay District is one of eight tourism attractors in the Canadian Badlands, featured in AMA's "Alberta 100 Journeys" and is Western Canada's largest National Historic Site. The museum – in the Medalta Potteries National Historic Site – provides visitors a unique opportunity to visit a restored 1912 pottery factory, which once produced three-quarters of all stoneware in Canada. It is operated under the stewardship of the Friends of Medalta Society.

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