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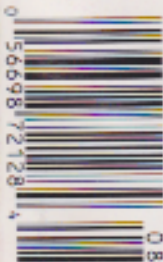
THE 3RD ANNUAL SEARCH FOR SUCCESSORS

MEET VANCOUVER'S
ANDREA ENG
AND 13 OTHER
EMERGING
CANADIAN BUSINESS
LEADERS

CELEBRATING

60
1928
1988

YEARS OF
CANADIAN
BUSINESS





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ng's goal: "I'd like to see Vancouver develop into a major Pacific Rim city"

ANDREA ENG

East marries West in the work of this star realtor turned cultural matchmaker

For BC political leaders, the shortest route to the Orient is through super-saleswoman Andrea Eng. Whether advising a Vancouver trade mission or a provincial delegation out to lure investment, 32-year-old Eng can help out with her list of solid business contacts, pointers on etiquette and advice on dealing with investor anxiety. It's all part of her vision for her town. "I'd like to see Vancouver develop into a major Pacific Rim city," says Eng. "That's certainly where the future of this city and province lies. It's just a process of convincing the powers that be."

It was Eng's beauty and charm that won her first runner-up in the Miss Canada pageant in 1978. But it was her formidable powers of persuasion that enabled her to sell more than \$40 million worth of apartment buildings, condo sites, strip plazas and office buildings in 1987, earning her a coveted place in the top 10 realtors of her firm, Colliers Macaulay Nicolls Inc. In addition to her sales work last year, she also chaired the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association, served on the boards of the Chinese Cultural Centre, the Sun Yat-Sen Garden Society, a federal-provincial government task force on the Pacific Rim, and the Vancouver Economic Advisory Commission. She also made a couple of trips to Hong Kong to convince potential entrepreneurs and investors that BC is the place to be in Canada.

Beyond all of that—and stolen moments with her husband, labor lawyer Gabriel Somjen—Eng produced a pamphlet on how to do business with the Chi-

nese and gave countless speeches and seminars to local business people. Vancouver Mayor Gordon Campbell says: "She has contributed not just to the commercial but also to the cultural and social life of our city."

Eng's rise is evidence of the demise of the old discriminatory Vancouver in which Chinese immigrants had few chances to play for high stakes. "The provincial focus on the Pacific Rim means real acceptance for the Chinese people," says Eng.

That acceptance has been enhanced by Vancouver's interest in wooing Hong Kong investors. With its Cantonese-speaking population of 180,000 to 200,000, its temperate climate and proximity to Chinese communities in California, Vancouver is a favored destination for Hong Kong Chinese anxious about the political atmosphere when China takes over the Crown colony in 1997. These deep-pocketed and demanding business people represent two-thirds of Eng's clientele, making her one of a handful of Canadian "gatekeepers" to the new Hong Kong money.

Eng's background has equipped her for this role: she describes herself as having "a Canadian side and a Chinese side." She grew up, she says, in a "typical Chinese family, maybe more traditional than some," that emphasized achievement in scholarship and business. Her father, Jack Eng, was a top residential real estate salesman who took five-year-old Andrea to open houses when he shopped for listings. Her mother, Edna May Eng, owns and operates Success Realty Ltd. in Vancou-

ver's Chinatown. Both Andrea and her brother, Jordan, also a realtor, grew up digesting deals.

Andrea was one of only three Oriental students at Vancouver's exclusive Crofton House girls' school. Afternoons and weekends, she learned Cantonese at a Chinese school. What time was left after study was devoted to piano, ballet and figure skating lessons, and later to acting and modeling classes. After high school, it was on to the University of British Columbia where, she says, "because of the family business, I went into urban land economics."

After university, Eng dabbled in public relations and television before taking her father's advice and turning to real estate. By 1981 she had become the first woman on Colliers' 40-man commercial sales team. She didn't mind being in a man's world, but she observes: "You have to be a hundred times better than the men to be at the top of the heap."

If Eng is better—and she's certainly at the top of the heap—it's because she's demanding. "I'm impatient," she admits. "What I like about my job is that I control all the factors. If a deal doesn't happen, I have no one to fault but myself." When the deal does come together, it's worth the hours of negotiating, the midnight calls, the talk. "Doing deals is a real high for me," she says. "The biggest challenge is matching the buyer to the seller."

She often meets that challenge by relying on her Hong Kong contacts, but one of her biggest deals, the Tudor Manor apartment building, which she sold for \$5.7 million, was an exception. "There wasn't a Chinese

developer with the expertise to develop it," explains Eng. "Two-thirds of my clients are offshore, but I still have a third left. I want to do deals with locals." Eng eventually sold the property next to Tudor Manor, Surfside, to a Hong Kong firm for \$6.8 million.

Eng sees herself as part of a tradition of Chinese businesswomen beginning with the great empress dowager at the turn of the century. "In Hong Kong, some of the most powerful business people are Chinese ladies." She particularly admires Sally Aw, head of a multinational communications empire, and Lydia Dunn, chairman of Hong Kong's trade development council, and a director of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp.

Aw and Dunn are well known in Hong Kong as much for their philanthropy as for their wealth and business savvy, and the lesson hasn't been lost on Eng. "I'm not a philanthropist, because I don't have a lot of money," she says, "but I give my time, which is more valuable to me right now. It's just a matter of priorities." Among Eng's top priorities is the synching of her vibrant community with the larger Canadian fact—a development that, she believes, will enrich both Canadian Chinese and non-Orientals. "I encourage new immigrants to get involved in the social and cultural life of the city. I want them to let people know that they've chosen Canada for its quality of life, and that they want to be part of Canadian life. I believe the Chinese should get outside their own culture and let people see that there's no myth or mystery about us. We're just Canadians, just real people."—MARGARET CANNON