Prior to the Second World War, judo in Steveston was included within the structure of the Steveston Seinen-kai (Youth Club). The Officers of the 1927 Club were President Takeshi Yamamoto and Vice-President Seichiro Mizuguchi. Tom Doi was the Athletic Group Director of the Seinen-kai and also the leader of the Judo Division.

A room 30 feet by 40 feet was rented from the Steveston Japanese Language School to start the judo club. Steve Sasaki, the father of judo in Canada and head of the

Contents

A History of the Steveston Judo Club  1
Pilgrimage to Manzo Nagano’s Grave Site  4
Richmond Tall Ships 2002  6
New Denver Revisited  7
Nikkei Week  8
University of Victoria Conference  8
Toyoaki Takata, 1920-2002  8
Angler P.O.W. Camp 101  10

Continued on page 2
Vancouver Taiiku Dojo, was requested to give instructional assistance to this new club. Since proper tatami (judo mats) were unavailable, the floor was strewn with straw and then covered with canvas to give the judokas (judo students) a safe and hard surface to practice on. Since there was no central heating, judokas had to go to the club one hour prior to practice to fire up the wood stove to heat up the room. On some nights, when it was very cold, the canvas would be glittering with frost. These were the days when volunteers had to find wood, cut it up and haul it to the Steveston Japanese Language School. After a hard night’s practice the students and instructors always looked forward to a hot Japanese-style bath. This large, deep bath for four people was built by Seishi Mukai and Soichi Uyeyama and was heated by wood. The instructors only received tea and gas money as remuneration for volunteering their time and, in some instances, money.

Tom Doi was appointed as Chief Instructor of the judo club. The Head Instructor was Steve Sasaki of the Vancouver Taiiku Dojo. Other instructors were M. Takahashi, Y. Mukai, J. Edamura, S. Kamino, H. Kondo and Kanezo Tokai.

The dojo (club) operated from November through to April, the off-season for the instructors who were all fishermen. The Steveston Kendo Club used the facilities on alternate nights. However, bamboo slivers splintered from the kendo fencing swords caused injuries to the judokas, so the kendo club moved to another location, allowing the judo club to operate on a daily basis. The club at that time had a membership of 60 senior and 30 junior judokas.

A tournament was held in Steveston every spring with admission by donation. The monies raised were used to operate the club for the next year. The club would travel by truck under a special permit granted by the police to attend the various tournaments in the Lower Mainland. They would leave early in the morning whenever the tournament was in Mission or Haney and arrive back in Steveston around one o’clock the next morning. To participate in a tournament at Chemainus on Vancouver Island, the judo club would rent a seine boat (large fishing boat).

The normal tournament schedule for the day would be a Ko-Haku Shiai (competitors lined up by Grade), Dojo Shiai (team competition), Yudansha Shiai (black belt competition) and a Mudansha Shiai (under black belt competition). The judo competition rules established by the Kodokan Judo Institute were used for judging at the tournaments.

Tom Doi served as Chief Instructor from 1927 to 1940 and H. Nishi served in the same capacity from 1940 until the club was disbanded in December 1940. The Canadian Government considered martial arts a sport dangerous to national interests.

In British Columbia there were nine judo clubs before the war. These were Vancouver, Vancouver Kitsilano, Vancouver Fairview, Steveston, Haney, Mission, R.C.M.P., Chemainus and Woodfibre.

In 1932 Dr. Jigoro Kano, the founder of judo, visited Vancouver after visiting the United States, which was an honour and a privilege to all judokas. Dr. Kano recommended that the Vancouver Taiiku Dojo be renamed the Vancouver Kidokan and all the other clubs in British Columbia be considered a sub-division of the Vancouver Kidokan. For example, Steveston Kidokan Shibu would be a branch of the Vancouver Kidokan. In 1936 Dr. Jigoro Kano again visited Vancouver on his way to the Olympics being held in Ger-
many. He convened a meeting at the Nippon Club of Vancouver and outlined the principles of judo and a code of ethics for all judokas to follow. In short, he stressed that judo involves not just physical development but more importantly the development of the spirit or soul. Teaching the spirit of judo is very important in getting this sport accepted by the general public. Dr. Kano emphasized the primary objective of judo was to put forth one’s best effort and not in winning or losing. He developed the practice of judo into a system for training the mind and the body. He emphasized two principles: \textit{MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY AND MUTUAL BENEFIT AND WELFARE.}

Dr. Kano enunciated his code of judo on a brush statement written in 1938, which is on display at the Steveston Judo Club. He also wrote brush statements for the Vancouver and Vancouver Kitsilano Judo Clubs. Mr. Tom Doi kept the Steveston artifact during the war and returned it when the judo club was started again in 1953.

In 1938, Dr. Kano, although not feeling well, visited Vancouver on his way home to Japan from an International Olympic Committee meeting in Cairo, Egypt. At this meeting, the IOC agreed to hold the 1940 Olympic games in Japan, but it was cancelled because of the war. Unfortunately, on his way home from these games, Dr. Kano passed away aboard the \textit{HIKAWA MARU}. The Steveston Judo Club sent their condolences to the Kodokan Judo Institute, the headquarters of judo. Japan did not get the Olympic games until 1964 when judo was included for the first time.

The Canadian War Measures Act disbanded the Steveston Judo Club in 1940. The Steveston Judo Club members were very active in assisting the Japanese community during the trying days of evacuation. The members from the club ended up all across Canada and some never returned to the West Coast.

In 1949 the Japanese fishermen were allowed to return to the West Coast and they started coming back to fish. In early 1952, Yonekazu Sakai, a former judo member, met with Tom Doi and discussed forming a judo club. Tom Doi called a meeting of all pre-war black belts, which include Soichi Uyeyama, Seichi Hamanishi, Kanezo Tokai, Takeo Kawasaki, Kunji Kuramoto and Yonekazu Sakai. This group of black belts was instrumental in organizing the present Steveston Judo Club. The group did not have funds to buy tatami and to rent a facility. They requested a loan from the pre-war Steveston Japanese Fishermen’s Benevolent Society. Tom Doi and Takeo Kawasaki met with Genji Otsu, in charge of the pre-war Steveston Japanese Fishermen’s Benevolent Society funds, for a non-interest bearing loan. Otsu granted a loan to the group to start the club. In 1955 the Steveston Judo Club paid back the loan from the Steveston Japanese Fishermen’s Benevolent Society.

In the fall of 1953, the group rented the back room of the Steva Theatre and covered the floor with used tatami. The instructors were Tom Doi, Yonekazu Sakai, Kanezo Tokai, Soichi Uyeyama, Seichiro Hamanishi, Takeo Kawasaki and Kunji Kuramoto. The club started with a membership of 80 judokas (senior and junior).

At the beginning of the Club, the instructors volunteered their time and money to ensure a successful club. Club dues and monies raised at tournaments were used by the club to send athletes to tournaments to gain experience, to bring in instructors from elsewhere, to buy judo mats (one judo mat 6 feet by 3 feet costs $200 each) and other equipment.

The judo club kept moving to larger facilities to accommodate the growing membership. The club moved to the former pool hall at 3500 Moncton Street in 1954, to the Red Cross Hall on 3rd Avenue and Chatham Street in 1955 and to the Steveston Buddhist Church on Chatham Street in 1956. This constant moving was a deterrent to the growth of the club and so the Steveston Judo Club Ko-En-Kai (Booster Club) was formed to raise funds and secure a permanent building for the club. The Ko-En-Kai approached Mr. Ken Fraser, Manager of B. C. Packers Ltd., who agreed to donate the land owned by B. C. Packers Ltd for the building site.

About this time there was a drive to build a Steveston Community Centre. The judo club was approached to consider joining the community group instead of building a facility exclusively for the Japanese, as was the case before the war. After much discussion, the judo club agreed to join the Steveston Community Centre building fund and transferred the Steveston Japanese Fishermen’s Benevolent Society money ($15,000) into the Centre building fund with the following conditions. The Steveston Judo and Kendo Clubs, when the latter was formed, would have training facilities and the Centre would be completed within two years. The Steveston Community Centre was completed in 1957 and the Steveston Judo Club moved into the Centre and the Steveston Kendo Club was eventually organized.

The Steveston Judo Club kept growing and many of their athletes became Canadian champions and also won many medals on the international scene. Prior to 1971, discussions occurred of Richmond’s possible projects for the British Co-

\textit{Continued on page 4}
lumbia Centennial celebrations. The Steveston Judo and Kendo Clubs discussed with the Community Centre Directors a proposal for a Martial Arts Centre (first one of its type outside of Japan), which was subsequently submitted to the Richmond Centennial Society. The Martial Arts Centre became one of three Centennial projects in Richmond. Arnaulf H. Petzel, a German architect, designed the building. Petzel lived in Japan for 35 years and was profoundly influenced by Japanese concepts of form and space.

The Steveston Community Centre Society Fund Raising Committee was committed to raise $95,000 for the Martial Arts Centre. The Judo and Kendo Clubs held many fund raising events, solicited individuals and approached many organizations, local fishing and net companies, the Vancouver Japanese Businessmen’s Association and the Consul-General of Japan. When the building was completed, the Steveston Community Centre Society had raised $45,000 and the Steveston Judo and Kendo Clubs $40,000. The Clubs borrowed $10,000 from a bank and paid this back within two years. The Opening Ceremonies for the Martial Arts Centre took place on March 18th, 1972. Officials in attendance included the Consul-General of Japan, Richmond Mayor Henry Anderson, M.P. Tom Goode, M.L.A. Ernie Lecours, British Columbia Centennial Committee Chairman Laurie Wallace and President of the Steveston Community Society Ted Lorenz. Along with the dignitaries, the Steveston Judo and Kendo Clubs invited many high-ranking instructors from Japan. The Steveston Judo Club officially invited Sumiyuki Kotani, 10th degree black belt.

Since the Official Opening of the Martial Arts Centre, high-ranking international instructors, many of whom were Olympic and World champions, have visited and coached our members. These instructors have conducted national and provincial seminars and training camps, which have benefited Steveston Judo Club members and the community-at-large.

In 1973 the Steveston Karate Club was formed as part of the twinning with Wakayama City in Japan. Mayor Shozo Ujita, a 9th degree black belt in karate, sent a letter to Mayor Henry Anderson to include karate in the Martial Arts Centre. The Steveston Judo and Kendo Clubs cooperated by allowing the Karate Club to use their facilities on selected nights. The first exchange between the twin cities was a karate instructor, Mr. Takeshi Uchiage, who is still the Head Instructor of the Steveston Karate Club.

The Steveston Judo Club took 22 members to Japan for the first time in 1985. The members went to Tokyo and stayed at the Kodokan, the headquarters of judo. The team went to Wakayama City for 3 days, and then went on to Osaka and thereafter to Tokai and Kokusai Budo Universities. This was a dream come true for club members, affording them an opportunity to visit the birthplace of judo and to see some of the great and present judokas in action.

**Pilgrimage to Manzo Nagano’s Grave Site by Stan Fukawa**

Masako (my wife) and I took the Bullet Train from Shin Osaka to Hakata and transferred to the Express to Nagasaki. We were on a trek to the last resting place of a Canadian hero and a kind of ancestor to all Japanese Canadians. We thought it most fitting to honour Manzo Nagano as the first Japanese immigrant to Canada during the 125th year since his arrival, by making a pilgrimage to his grave.

When I told the Rev. Paul Nagano that we were planning to visit his grandfather’s grave, he advised us to let the Mayor of Kuchinotsu know that we were coming and I did so. Since I had earlier pictured us quietly slipping in and out of the seaside community to pay our respects as visiting tourists, I was not prepared for the warm and generous welcome and the formal recognition that we received. Of course, as I was
Continued on page 6
Richmond Tall Ships 2002 by Harold Steves

Nagasaki is also a wonderful tourist town and is worth two days on its own. Outside Nagasaki there are also Huis ten Bosch—the 17th century Dutch village theme park, the pottery towns of Arita and Karatsu, and the recreated 2000 year-old Yayoi culture community of Yoshinogari. All of these have international connections which you can read about and marvel in before you leave on your travels. The Kyushu Ceramic Museum in Arita is worth the trip to that town all by itself. If you’ve not ventured to this part of Japan before, you must go.

(For the address of the Kuchinotsu Town Hall, contact me at sfukawa@idmail.com.)

Steveston’s Historic Can- nery Row will host a flotilla of ma- jestic tall ships from around the world this summer during Richmond Tall Ships 2002.

First to arrive will be the magnificent four-masted Japanese training vessel, NIPPN MARU, tying up July 11th to 17th at the Number 3 Road Pier, just east of Steveston Harbour. This pier is being recon- structed by the City of Richmond especially for the NIPPN MARU, which is 361 ft long and requires deep-water moorage.

During her visit to Steveston the crewmembers and trainees of the NIPPN MARU will be hosted at the Steveston Martial Arts Centre and Japanese Cultural Centre. Events like dinner, softball game, tours, judo and kendo, etc are being considered. Any- one able to take cadets on a tour or help in any way should contact Kelvin Higo, who is helping organize events on behalf of Richmond Tall Ships and Jim Tanaka of the Wakayama Kenjin Kai, who is orga-
will be sailing to Steveston from a similar Tall Ship event in Yokohama, Japan. A third ship, the LADY WASHINGTON from Grays Harbour, Washington, is a replica of the first American ship to visit Japan. In 1750 she anchored at Wakayama and today has close ties with Wakayama and flies the flag of their Rotary Club.

Today the Port of Steveston remains Western Canada’s largest commercial fishing port and is home to several significant maritime heritage sites: the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site, the Britannia Heritage Shipyard, the Murikami house and boat works, and Garry Point Park. There will be festival events at each location.

One hundred years ago the world’s biggest and fastest clipper ships came to Steveston’s bustling Cannery Row to load salmon from more than a dozen canneries, and lumber from the Number 1 Road wharf. They raced around The Horn (the southern tip of South America) to be the first to reach the distant European market. Now the Tall Ships have returned to race down the coast from Steveston once again. So many spectacular ships under sail will be a sight to remember.

For further information call Harold Steves at 604-277-7759 or visit the official Tall Ships website: www.richmontallships.ca

---

**New Denver Revisited** Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Forced Relocation of Japanese Canadians July 26 - 29, 2002

In 1942, Japanese Canadians were forced out of the B.C. coast and relocated outside of the 100-mile radius of the B.C. coast. Many were sent to relocation camps, internment camps, and New Denver was one of them. New Denver is the only camp that still has internment houses, and also has the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre.

The year 2002 marks 60 years since the forced removal of Japanese Canadians from the coast of British Columbia. To commemorate the 60 years since this forced removal, the Kamloops & Area Chapter of the National Association of Japanese Canadians, in cooperation with the New Denver Kyanwakai and the town of New Denver are organizing a Reunion in New Denver and an Internment Camp Tour. At the same time, the Okanagan Buddhist Churches will be holding an Obon Service, and an Obon Odori (Festival dancing). We cordially invite all Japanese Canadians from across Canada to this Reunion/Obon to renew acquaintances and make new friends.

The Kamloops & Area NAJC is organizing this Reunion Tour and the tentative itinerary is as follows.

**Day 1** - Friday, July 26 - Leave Kamloops (or Kelowna) in the early morning by bus and travel to New Denver. On the way, stop at the Halcyon Hot Springs. Accommodation in New Denver and Nakusp.

**Day 2** - Saturday, July 27 - Leave in morning by bus on an Internment Camp tour (Roseberry, Sandon, Kaslo, Silverton). In evening, attend the Reunion Banquet in the school gymnasium in New Denver.


**Day 4** - Monday, July 29 - Bus back to Kamloops or Kelowna. Visit Bay Farm, Popoff, Lemon Creek, Slocan and Greenwood on the way home.

Tour package includes: bus transportation to New Denver from Kamloops (or Kelowna) and back, hotel accommodation on the 26, 27, 28 on a two-sharing basis, all meals on the 27th and 28th, including the banquet and entertainment (Uzume Taiko and Karaoke), and entrance into the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre. Cost is still to be determined, but will probably be in the $300 range. If enough interest, a bus will also leave from Vancouver with cost in the $350 - $375 range. If three or four share room, or if you drive on your own, cost will be less. If you wish a single room, cost is considerably higher.

Accommodation and eating facilities are very limited in New Denver. Hotels in New Denver, Nakusp and Silverton have been “block booked” by the Kamloops NAJC, and the Kamloops NAJC will be assigning the rooms, and catering most of the meals. If necessary, rooms will also be booked in Nelson, with bus transportation to and from New Denver.

If interested in attending, phone or fax to (250) 376-9629 or e-mail to najc.kamloops@telus.net or write to Kamloops & Area NAJC, 160 Vernon Avenue, Kamloops, BC V2B 1L6 and we will send you further information and registration forms. Even if you plan to be there on your own, and stay in campers or with friends, please register with the Kamloops NAJC if you wish to take in any part of the festivities. Register early as space is very limited. Deadline is June 20, 2002.

And, for those traveling from the East, you may also wish to take in the Vancouver Island Obon Tour which takes place on the following weekend, August 3-4. Make this the year that you “travel B.C.”
Nikkei Week 125

Planning for the Nikkei Week festivities this September are going ahead with the development of a program that should excite members of the Japanese Canadian community. There will be a celebration banquet on the first night, Sept. 14, followed almost a week later by the unveiling of the Fishermen’s statue in Steveston on Sept. 20.

There are plans for an Internment Reunion O-bento event possibly on Sept. 19, which can still change in many ways, depending on the kind of response that the Nikkei Week Committee is able to obtain from a sample survey of Internees. A taiko evening is under consideration.

Matsuri type events such as food-booths and folk dancing will occur on the week-end of the 20th to 22nd. The Museum will have an exhibition on the themes of 125 years since our first immigrant and 60 years since internment. Lectures, workshops and films will round out the program. Keep your eye on notices in the more frequently appearing Japanese Canadian news publications. Contact Stan Fukawa (604-421-0490) or Frank Kamiya (604-929-4476) if you have any questions or suggestions, as they are on the Nikkei Week Committee.

University of Victoria Conference

August 22-24, 2002 are the dates for the conference, “Changing Japanese Identities in Multicultural Canada.” Coming in the 125th year since Manzo Nagano arrived in New Westminster, the program covers a broad range of topics from immigration to oral histories, women’s issues, identities both internally and externally-imposed, media and politics, cultural retention, multiculturalism, economics, Japanese as a heritage language, religion, art, language policy, early entrepreneurs, youth and aging. Featured speakers include Roy Miki and Terry Watada. For the latest program updates, registration materials and recommended hotels, check the website: http://web.uvic.ca/~capijfk

Toyoaki Takata, 1920-2002 Eulogy by Stum Shimizu

Toyoaki Takata, eldest son of Kensuke and Mitsuyo Takata, was born on January 14, 1920, in the district known as Esquimalt, directly west of Victoria, Vancouver Island.

He grew up in a home not unlike many of the cottages seen in Ontario’s vacation country. As Toyo recalled it, the house and surroundings located in a woodland forest of towering hemlock, cedar, spruce and fir was a storybook environment. He often remembered about his good fortune to have grown up during his teenage years in this “near paradise”. Remembrance of the feeling for this place and environment stayed with him for the rest of his life.

Prior to the Takata family locating in their home in this woodland known as Gorge Park, Mr. and Mrs. Takata and Toyo went to Japan in 1925 and Toyo went to school where he received his early primary education in the Japanese language. They returned to Canada in 1927 and eventually his father and uncle negotiated a lease arrangement with the B.C. Electric Co. that owned the property.

With the encouragement of the Company, a Japanese garden was developed complete with eight teahouses of various sizes, a pavilion housing a confectionery store and several private reception rooms for private meetings, functions or dining, etc. There were ponds with water lilies, connecting bridges and stone lanterns located in appropriate places. It became one of Victoria’s spring and summer attractions, both for the local gentility as well as the tourists.

Toyo worked from time to time at the various activities associated with the business but his main job was as a cashier at the confectionery counter. He would be occupied on weekdays after school and on weekends from the time it opened on May 24 until closing, the day after Labour Day. The Japanese Tea Garden at Gorge Park was the place to have brunch or afternoon tea and during the busiest times, many Victoria Issei and Nisei were employed.

Toyo was kept busy with other responsibilities, including the requisite half hour daily homework on the Japanese language, this under the tutelage of his mother. He was also responsible for maintaining a good supply of wood to be used during the season in the wood burning stoves in the tea house kitchen as well as a supply for Japanese-style baths, several of which were attached to the family’s dwelling and stoked from the outside firebox located beneath the steel-sheeted bottom of the “Nihon buros”.

Toyo received his primary schooling at the Lampson Public School and secondary education at the Esquimalt High School. Because Esquimalt was a small community, many of his Grade 1 classmates graduated with him to become his high school classmates. Toyo spent 80 percent of his life and working career in Toronto, but he never lost contact with the men and women of his growing-up years. He made at least two to three visits to B.C. each
year to visit and reminisce with these old friends. His heart and soul remained in British Columbia throughout his life.

Toyo graduated in the spring of 1938 from Esquimalt High School and acutely aware of the gathering problems and possibilities of war in Europe, enrolled in the Sprotts-Shaw School of Commerce to learn the clerical and administrative aspects of office work, particularly typing. He expressed it this way – “When I’m drafted or conscripted, the last thing I want to do is to carry a rifle and kill someone with it.”

To celebrate graduation, his classmates decided to travel to Vancouver’s Hastings Park to take in the Pacific National Exhibition. This was during the busiest time at the Tea Gardens and his uncle was not overly sympathetic to Toyo leaving the pavilion store unattended. Toyo was able to find a replacement which met with his uncle’s approval. It happened to be my oldest brother, Kunio. So Toyo made his first visit to Hastings Park with his friends accompanied by younger brother, George, who somehow managed to be included. Toyo and George had a great time, the first trip that either had taken off the Island.

In April, 1942, the Takata family, now consisting of four brothers and two sisters joined other Japanese Canadian families from lower Vancouver Island, and Toyo ironically made his second trip off the Island to internment in Hastings Park. Toyo soon found employment in the B. C. Security Commission office and while his two younger brothers later went to Slocan to help prepare places for displaced families, Mother and Father Takata with two daughters and a younger son moved to Sandon. Toyo remained in Hastings Park almost to its closing date before joining the two brothers in Slocan. For several months he taught English at Glenmere High School, an Anglican-sponsored school for the displaced Japanese Canadian children. Shortly before moving to Toronto, the family was reunited in Sandon.

In August, 1944, his sister Toshie who had relocated to Toronto at an earlier date found accommodations for the family in Mimico. Toyo’s first job in Ontario was on night shift at the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co.

In May, 1945, the family purchased a house on Sumach Street in Toronto’s Riverdale Park area. Toyo after trying several other jobs eventually established a lithographing business, which he operated out of the basement of the family home.

In 2002, the 125th anniversary of the beginning of the Japanese Canadian community in Canada and it is fitting that we celebrate Toyo’s life today, a life so dedicated and so well lived.

Paul Kariya Heads Pacific Salmon Foundation

A salmon conservation organization has chosen Paul Kariya as the new Executive Director of the Vancouver-based Pacific Salmon Foundation. The foundation is a charitable organization that funds volunteer-driven projects to conserve salmon in communities throughout the province. Paul Kariya is on the Board of Directors of the JCNM.
With the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the anti-Japanese feeling in Canada only escalated. In March of 1942, the British Columbia Security Commission was established which resulted in the systematic round-up, detention, and forced evacuation of 21,000 law-abiding Japanese Canadians to interior road camps, farm labour camps, relocation sites, and prisoner of war internment camps. For those men who defiantly opposed the actions taken against them and the split up of their families, and who posed a military security threat in the eyes of the authorities, their fate resulted in banishment to prisoner of war camps such as Kananaskis-Seebe and Petawawa would eventually be transferred to Angler P.O.W. Camp 101.

On May 28, 1942, twenty-six year old Shigeo Yokota arrived at the Vancouver Immigration Building. For the next few weeks, he would be placed in armed detention with other Japanese Canadian men. The military and security authorities in charge were quickly moving on their goal of forceably removing all Japanese Canadians, especially men aged eighteen years and older, from within the 100 mile westcoast security zone. On June 16, he along with 189 other detained men were put on a military-guarded train bound for Angler P.O.W. Camp 101. Four days later on June 19, the train reached its destination in the wilds of Northern Ontario. Over the next four long years these prisoners of war, through no fault of their own or disloyalty to their country, would endure through one of the bleakest times of their lives. On May 25, 1946, nine months after Japan’s military surrender and the end of World War II, our father, P.O.W. # 187, and his remaining fellow internees, were finally released from Angler. Wearing the clothes they had first arrived with and carrying their belongings in suitcases and parcels, the men marched out the main, barb-wired gates of Angler P.O.W. Camp 101 and were marshalled onto a westbound train headed for Vancouver.

Through an agreement between the Dominion of Canada and General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Allied Commander, a total of almost 4000 Japanese Canadians, the majority having been born in Canada, were to be “voluntarily repatriated” to Japan. Beginning on May 31, 1946 there were a total of five deportation voyages to Japan. On June 16, 1946, our father was among over 1100 people who were loaded on board the second of these repatriation ships, the U.S. troop carrier, SS General MC Meigs. The SS General MC Meigs was earlier dispatched from San Francisco especially for this military assignment. On June 28, the ship arrived at the Japanese port of Uraga, which is located south of Yokohama. For many of the captive passengers it was their first trip to Japan which further added to an already uncertain future. Our father would not return back to Canada until 1951, but only after he applied for re-admission and it was verified by the Office Of The Commissioner, Department of Citizenship And Immigration in
Ottawa that he was a bona fide Canadian citizen.

Our late father kept very little written information on his internment years and rarely spoke about his four years in Angler. Only the dates and some short notes were kept, written on a plain piece of writing paper for his records. To find out more about this infamous P.O.W. camp, I reviewed key book sources such as Robert K. Okazaki’s “The Nisei Mass Evacuation Group and P.O.W. Camp ‘101’ “, Roy Ito’s “Stories of My People”, Yon Shimizu’s “The Exiles”, and was also delighted to learn some insight from 84 year-old Mr. Ken Hibi of Thunder Bay, Ontario who himself was also interned in Angler Camp 101. Mr. Hibi was born in Steveston as our father, and was kind and generous enough to respond to an inquiry I had made earlier to the Lakehead Japanese Cultural Association offices in Thunder Bay.

You will not find the former Angler P.O.W. camp on any road maps. From Thunder Bay, Ontario it is about 235 kilometers east on the Trans Canada Highway near the Angler Creek highway marker on the northern shores of Lake Superior. The town of Marathon, Ontario is a few miles east of the marker. Access to this site is along a rocky road off the Highway where one has to hike in by foot about a mile south until you reach the CPR mainline railway tracks. The remains of the infamous prisoner of war camp is now covered up with trees and heavy brush with very few clues to its past. But as Mr. Hibi, two other former Angler internees, Junichi Tanaka and Johnny Umakoshi, and a Japanese documentary film crew from NHK Wakayama City discovered in the fall of 1988, a small number of items found were undeniable. Articles such as rusty buckets, kettles, pots, a large kitchen stove, a broken toilet, and remains of a concrete water tower foundation were found. It took the men four hours from the time they pulled off the Trans Canada Highway to locate this long forgotten part of the Northern Ontario wilderness. For the visiting former Angler internees and their Japanese guests it was a successful all-day long journey, complete with a bento lunch.

Surrounded by hills, Angler P.O.W. Camp 101 was a large compound built on flat ground comprised of five main inmate huts. Four of the huts were living quarters, each with their own washroom, laundry area and showers. The fifth building housed the camp kitchen/mess hall and a library/school/shop area. There was also a detention facility, a recreation hall, an infirmary, and a canteen/supply hut. Each of the inmate wood-framed huts was in the shape of the letter “H”. The four living quarter huts held approximately 180 men per building. In front of the buildings was a large field for the men to assemble, exercise, and spend their free time. The camp guards and commandant had their buildings on the outside of the barbed-wire facility. But the most notable reminders about internment camp life were the six armed, guard towers surrounding and overlooking the compound, the three distinct barriers of barbed-wire fencing, and the notorious inmate uniforms made of denim material with their sewn, large red circles on the shirt backs and red stripes down the pant sides. The large red circles were actually meant to be easy targets for their armed captors. In the winter, the inmates suffered through the severe Northern Ontario temperatures and snow storms at times dropping to 60 below zero. According to Mr. Hibi, temperatures were so cold that if an inmate were to venture outside his hut and closed his eyes, the eyelids would be quickly frozen shut, and his exhaled breath would be instantly crystallized.

To maintain their spirits, the internees participated in martial arts such as judo and kendo, played in a small camp band, wrote haiku and studied English and Japanese. Mr. Hibi held an interest in kendo so assisted the chief kendo instructor.

Continued on page 12
In the summer, the men would play baseball in the open field, and in winter the inmates would be allowed, surprisingly as I learned, to ice skate on the flooded ball field. Although the men received their daily food allotments, during the winter months when the supply train would get bogged down in the snow, food would be rationed with only potatoes and bread available to eat. Mr. Hibi recalls eating eggs and toast often as well. On occasion, the inmates would receive from the Japanese Red Cross special care packages containing such items as rice, shoyu, and curry powder to help supplement their rationed food supplies.

Daily routine was very regimented, military style. This meant having to get up to reveille at 6:00 a.m., followed by breakfast, daily rollcall and headcount, garbage duty, morning work detail, lunch, afternoon work detail, supper, another headcount, and lights out at 10:30 p.m., with no one allowed outside until the next morning. Work details would consist of cutting down trees or unloading coal from boxcars. Strict camp rules meant that any inmates found outside their assigned huts after curfew would be fired upon by the armed guards. Just like in the military, the camp prisoners had to ensure their beds were made up neatly, the toilets, showers and laundry areas washed out daily, the hut floors cleaned, the hut stoves properly maintained, and even the camp infirmary had to be kept spotless.

Sadly, not all the Angler P.O.W.’s made it through safely. Two men died enroute to the Camp, five men died while interned, and five other men passed away shortly after their release. Forcibly separated from their families, these deaths can only be seen as nothing less than tragic.

Sixty years have now passed since honest, law-abiding Japanese Canadians were first rounded up by the authorities, stripped of their personal belongings and properties, separated from their families, and banished to destinations unknown and inhospitable to them such as Angler P.O.W. Camp 101. The once sprawling, armed compound which housed a total of 769 internees is now covered in dense bush and rarely visited. It appears the Northern Ontario wilderness has quietly reclaimed a significant reminder to one of the darkest times in Canadian history.