



Nikkei Images

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Madam Butterfly, Margaret Harumi Iwasaki Peters

by Lynne Reiko Gardiner

So, we're history! We're only just sixty but a generation apparently already in the archives. My sister, Margaret Harumi Iwasaki, was born in Grace Hospital, Vancouver B.C., on May 10, 1942. She was the first daughter of Ina Fuji (nee Omura) and Ben Akira Iwasaki, whose family included Lawrence Wataru, born in 1933 and Cedric Eiji, born in 1937.

They had bought a house on Trinity Street near Hastings Park two and a half years before but were moved out because of the war. Akira was sent to a road camp in Solsqua, near Sicamous. Ina, now pregnant with Margaret, moved out to the family farm in Port Hammond so she

could have help with Lawrence and Cedric. Ina's brothers, sisters and mother were permitted by the authorities to remain at the farm until the strawberry crop was harvested.

After Margaret was born, Ina returned to the farm for a short while, then she and the rest of the family were moved to the horse stalls in the Hastings Park internment compound. Akira had returned to Port Hammond in late July and was hospitalized after suffering chest burns from a tarring accident while working. Upon recovery he moved into the horse stalls for about a week then the family was relocated by train to New Denver.

Ina's brother Shogo Frank Omura, sent earlier with his carpentry skills to help build the internment camp, saved lot 100, on the Slocan Lake waterfront by Carpenter Creek in the "Orchard" for their internment home. Akira's family of five, (I was born in 1943), was on one side of the shack and Shogo, grandmother Kiwa,

and Ina's younger sisters Alice Shime and Jean on the other side. Shogo and Masako first, then Kiwa and Jean moved to Toronto to join Ina's other brothers Shei, George and Tom. Ina's sister Alice moved with her husband Ken Ennyu to Montreal, as did Akira's cousin's family.

The Iwasaki family lived in the shack till 1945, then moved into the Bank Manager's house that was rented to Akira from his employer at Tear's garage. Margaret, nicknamed "Peggy" by the family, remembers a mansion of a house set in football-size grounds, big enough for softball and hockey, fronting a forest, "the woods". Both house and grounds looked considerably smaller and more modest on a return trip she made in the intervening years before the house was remodeled.

She started school and befriended neighbours Mary de Rosa and Evelyn Tippy. Spring was spent in the woods looking for ladyslippers

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Marg (right) and Lynne with their ribbons from the Trout Lake Meet. (Iwasaki Family photo, 1952)

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Announcements

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or sneaking a look at the hermit who lived in a shack by the lake. She and I tried to go to Sunday school on our own but a fierce barking dog scared us off. Summers were spent at the lake where bears sometimes came down. She remembers having communal baths, with her arms around Grandma's neck, kicking her legs and the frigid water of Slocan Lake when she had her first swim lessons. Winters were spent listening to the roar of avalanches in the surrounding mountains and tunneling through five to six feet of snow. She remembers shows at Bosun Hall and learning to skate on the frozen lake with Ceddie.

Shogo thought Akira, with a family of 7 now to support, Cheryl Kiyoko being born in 1945, would have a better chance of restarting in Vancouver, where former customers indicated they would return. When Japanese Canadians were allowed to return to the West coast in 1949 after the four-year moratorium, Akira and Ina returned to Vancouver at Easter to find a house. Lawrence had already returned to Vancouver,

working as a houseboy to finish high school at Magee.

The family moved back to Vancouver in May of 1949 to the Cedar Cottage area. Margaret finished Grade One at Lord Selkirk. Her athleticism began to show at an early age. She spent summers at Trout Lake and learned to swim there on her own. The lifeguard, Doug Hepburn, a weightlifting champion, would always row out to the second raft to tell her she shouldn't be out so far. Once when she was playing with me on her shoulders in chest deep water, she was pushed over and the lifeguard rescued her. She had to promptly tell them that I needed help since I didn't know how to swim yet and was floundering about gulping down water. A side benefit to swimming in Trout Lake was that Marg's eczema was amazingly cured.

Marg's strength and timing continued to develop. When I started school that September, a school bully would chase me all the time so Marg came with me and punched him in the nose. After receiving a bloody



Marg receiving the Beverly Bantam Award for Juvenile Athlete of the Month from Frank Barber with Ina Iwasaki in back (Iwasaki Family photo, 1956)

nose from a girl, he never chased me again.

The summer of 1952, when Marg was in Grade 4, she won 5 first place ribbons at the Trout Lake Swim Meet. Doug Hepburn presented her with her first medal for winning the top Aggregate award.

We were taking dance lessons under Grace Goddard at the time but Marg showed prowess and was soon taking toe ballet lessons under Kay Armstrong, a well-known ballet teacher in the 1950's. Marg came down with a severe case of pneumonia in the summer of 1953. She remembers she didn't miss any school but sat inside crying because the rest of us were down swimming in Trout Lake. She had lost a lot of weight and had damaged her lungs. Dr. Uchida advised mum to put her in swim lessons to regain her strength in a moist atmosphere. The following summer, Mum enrolled us in the Vancouver Province free swim lessons at Kitsilano pool. The head coach told mum that Marg showed potential and should join a swim club so we joined the Vancouver Amateur Swim Club in the fall of 1954. Our practises were in Crystal Pool, a pool that Japanese Canadians were not allowed to enter before the war.

Marg quickly advanced to the fastest group in the club by the second week. In December, Marg attended her first swim meet in Victoria at the Crystal Gardens Pool. She recalls her coach, Howard Firby, saying "If you don't swim fast you'll come in last." Marg came in second, out touched by the current B.C. champion. In the spring, she attended her second meet in Vancouver, Washington, beating the B.C. champion but losing out to the Pacific Northwest champion. By her third competition she was first in her age group and soon breaking records.

In 1955 we moved to Cambie Street so Marg and I

attended Point Grey Junior High for a year. Sir Winston Churchill opened in 1956 so we transferred there. Besides swimming, Marg excelled in field hockey and track. She was President of the Referees and organized the Mixed Volleyball Tournaments that were played Inter-High. She made the Honour Roll at Point Grey and Churchill for Academics and Service.

In 1956, when she was 14, she broke the U.S. age group record for the 14 and under 50-yard freestyle event. In July, she was awarded the

Beverly Bantam Juvenile Athlete of the Month Award and a case of Bantam peanut butter, a questionable award in those purer amateur days of competition. She was also named the Olympic Alternate Swimmer for the 1956 Olympic Games Team to Melbourne, Australia. She'd only been competing for two years at that point. In the spring of 1957, she attended the U.S. Nationals in Beverly Hills, California and placed third in the 100-yard freestyle.

She excelled in front crawl (freestyle), butterfly especially, and

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1960 Canadian Women's Olympic Team. From the left, Judy McHale, Sara Barber, unidentified man, Irene MacDonald (diver), Marg and Mary Stewart. (Iwasaki Family photo, 1960)

backstroke and would compete in those races as well as the individual medley, which combined all four strokes. She was a sprinter and swam the 50-, 100- and 200-yards and metre races and the 200 and 400 individual medleys. She competed locally in Vancouver and in Victoria, Everett, Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver Washington, and Portland in the fall and spring. In summer she competed in outdoor pools in Spokane and Kelowna, North Vancouver, West Vancouver and New Westminster. Our social group was the Swim Club, and traveling to the meets mostly by car was often a family event or vacation.

She continued to train in winter at Crystal Pool and summer at Empire Pool at the University of British Columbia. Our coach, Howard, lived close to us so he often drove us to training sessions in the summer, letting mum off some of the driving she did for us. We also car-pooled with Bill Slater, who lived close to us too.

At the age of 16, Marg was chosen for the 1958 British Empire Games in Cardiff, Wales. The team departed from Montreal to Liverpool on board the **EMPRESS OF ENGLAND** which had such a short pool they trained by swimming with a heavy rubber band around their waists. It took several days to get to Liverpool and the swim team members were the only members who did not get seasick. The bus from Liverpool to Cardiff took all day, but they did have a sightseeing stop at Windsor Castle. We were camping in Peachland at the time and when I opened Marg's letter to us I was very excited and impressed when she wrote that she had dinner with Prince Philip, and then on the next page overleaf she wrote "and six hundred other athletes." She purposely wrote it like that as a joke which I fell for.

British newspapers



Marg Iwasaki receiving a beautiful Japanese doll from Sumiko Ohara, a CPA stewardess representing the Canadian Nisei Association of Japan. The Japanese Association sent the doll to Miss Iwasaki in recognition of her outstanding success as a Canadian swim star and a good Japanese Canadian citizen. (Iwasaki Family photo, 1960)

interviewed her asking how it felt to be an Oriental on the team. Marg didn't know anything different, nor was she treated any differently so she didn't have anything to tell them. She won a Bronze medal in the 110 Butterfly, made the 110 Freestyle final, and was a member of the Silver medal Medley Relay team and the Bronze medal Freestyle Relay team. That year she was awarded the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce Junior Athlete of the Year Award. About this time one of the local sportswriters called her "Madam Butterfly" since she held the Canadian record for that event.

She was chosen for the Pan American Games in Chicago in 1959.

Mum, Dad, Cheryl and I drove out to be spectators. Tickets were easy to get because apparently Chicagoans weren't aware the games were on. Marg's relatively diminutive size compared to the American swim team now headed by Chris Von Saltza was striking.

In 1960, the year she graduated from high school and turned 18, she was chosen for the Canadian Olympic Swim Team heading for Rome, Italy. She competed in the 100-m Freestyle (placing 24 out of 32 of the world's best), 100-m. Butterfly (11th of 25), and the Medley Relay. Marg remembers meeting Muhammad Ali, still Cassius Clay then. He was a real

character, wore a bowler hat and strutted around with a cane, but was a friendly, affable person. He won his Gold Medal at Rome. The Rome Olympics were a magical experience for Marg. The athletes met and mingled in People's Square lit by hundreds of round gas balls in the evening. The Pope gave his blessings at the Vatican. The Closing Ceremonies were a spectacular event. As the Olympic flame was extinguished the audience lit rolled paper torches. Amid those flickering lights, from four of the Seven Hills of Rome, a brilliant fireworks display presented by Japan blazed out "Sayonara a Tokyo". The athletes of the world were called upon to gather again in 1964 in Tokyo.

Marg returned to start at the University of British Columbia a few weeks late. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Sociology,

and then received her Professional Teaching Certificate. She taught a split Grade 3 and 4 class at Sidaway School in Richmond her first year, then was transferred to Garden City School and taught Grade 5.

She continued her interest in the Olympic movement and went as a chaperone of the Canadian Delegation to the Olympic Youth Camp in Munich in 1972 and Montreal in 1976.

While she was teaching she was also a part time manager of her brother Lawrence's salons, Maison Lawrence Coiffures. Lawrence preceded Margaret as a British Columbia and Canadian Champion in Hairstyling. She left teaching to manage his salons from 1967 to 1978, and since his stroke in 1999, she continues to manage his finances and advocate for him.

She married Christopher

Knight in 1977 and moved to Edmonton. They separated in 1982 and she married Juergen Peters in 1984. In Edmonton she continued to manage beauty salons, first Hairloom for Redge Teague, a former employee of Lawrence's, then Propaganda, for a former employee of Hairloom.

She retired from work in 1995 and moved to Victoria. She and Juergen currently live in Saanichton, still on Vancouver Island, happily playing tennis and swimming in the clubhouse complex. She enjoys baking and gardening and looks younger than all of us. She feels it is fitting that dad, who arrived in the Port of Victoria on July 1, 1921 and mum, who was born in Eburne by the Fraser River, produced children who were proud to represent Canada, and whom Canada was proud to recognize as it's own. a

Carl Ogawa, Olympic Silver Medalist by **David G. Ogawa**

Carl Ogawa was born in Telegraph Cove, a remote town located in the northern region of Vancouver Island. During the war years, the family moved to Salmon Arm where his father operated a sawmill and Carl completed high school. Carl enrolled at the University of British Columbia in the fall of 1954 and stayed at Fort Camp, a collection of old army barracks located on campus. At the time, he had no intention of becoming involved in organized sports but was encouraged by a classmate to try out for the rowing crew as a coxswain. Little did he know that this decision would take him to various locations around the globe.

In the 1950's, the top university crew in the nation went on to represent Canada at international competitions. UBC had an established rowing program and won gold in the eight-oar with coxswain event at the 1954 Commonwealth

Games held that summer in British Columbia. For their impressive showing and convincing win versus England, UBC received an invitation from Prince Philip to attend the 1955 Henley on the Thames Regatta.

With the departure of graduating team members, a large number of rowing and coxswain recruits showed up at the beginning of the training season to fill the vacated seats. The numbers were eventually narrowed down to two, eight-oared Varsity and Junior Varsity crews. Carl was selected as the coxswain of the Varsity 8's. Every afternoon after classes, the crews would assemble at UBC for rides to the Vancouver Rowing Club located in Stanley Park. Practice would run from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. during the weekdays as well as early afternoon sessions on weekends. The crews would row from Coal Harbour to the Ironworkers Bridge (2nd Narrows) and back, avoiding other vessels,

seaplanes, and rolling waves. They only had a few fragile, wood rowing shells and the greatest danger was hitting deadheads in the harbour. Their head coach, Frank Read, would bark orders from a small fiberglass boat that would motor along side the shells. Mr. Read had been involved in rowing for years and set a goal for the crew at that time – to win Gold at the 1956 Summer Olympics.

A coxswain's duties are somewhat similar to those of a jockey. He determines when to raise or lower stroke rates depending on the time during the race as well as the crew's position versus other shells. Due to the offsetting of the oars in an 8, the starboard side always has a bit more torque than the port side (or vice versa), causing the shell to want to turn in one direction. The coxswain must maintain the correct direction by countering this torque with the use of a rudder while the oars are in the water. Any adjustments that are

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Olympic Rowing Teams on holiday in Hawaii. (Ogawa Family photo, 1956)

made during the gliding portion of the stroke disrupts the shell's balance, causing the oars to slap the water and reducing the shell's speed.

Their only race that year took place in late 1954 against the University of Washington Huskies on Lake Washington. The Huskies, who were well equipped with dozens of shells, a crew house, and years of experience, dominated. UBC returned home for more practice sessions in Coal Harbour and switched to dry land exercises at War Memorial Gym during the winter months.

The first big race in 1955 was the Western Sprints that took place at Newport, California in late May just after exams. It was a good test

for the Canadians to race against the stronger American university crews. They then set off to England to compete in the famous Henley on the Thames Regatta that they had been invited to the previous year. They arrived early to practice on the Thames and then went on to defeat the reigning champions, Russia, in the semi finals. On July 2, 1955, in the Henley Grand Challenge Cup Final, UBC lost to the University of Pennsylvania by approximately half a boat length. After the regatta, they visited the Russian Embassy, Windsor Castle and met the Mayor of London. It was then off for a week in Paris as well as a stopover in New York on the way home. After Henley, a number of members graduated and

left the crew. These seats were filled by members of the Junior Varsity team with the remaining JV's forming a 4-man without coxswain crew.

The following academic year of 1955/56 showed no let up in practices except for three weeks off at Christmas for exams and holidays and two weeks off for final exams in May. After practicing all season, the crew gathered for practice races against the University of Washington Huskies and the University of Oregon Ducks. In order to qualify for the Canadian Nationals, UBC had to fair well against the American crews. After defeating Oregon and embarrassing Washington, they earned a spot in the Canadian National Championships, held in St Catharines, Ontario. UBC surprised the confident Eastern Canadian crews by taking both national titles in the 8's and the 4's. They dominated their rivals by more than six boat lengths in their respective races. It was at this time that UBC was recognized as a potential powerhouse in the world of rowing and both crews would go on to represent Canada at the 1956 Summer Olympics.

The entire Canadian Olympic Team flew by charter to Melbourne with fuel stops in Hawaii, Fiji, Canton Islands and Sydney. After arriving at the airport, most of the athletes continued on to the main Olympic village located in Melbourne. The rowing and canoeing events were held at Ballarat on Lake Wendouree, some 80 miles inland from Melbourne. Due to this long distance from the Olympic Stadium, the Canadians and all of their fellow rowing competitors unfortunately missed the opening ceremonies as racing started the very next day.

Each race consisted of four crews, with the top two from each heat advancing. During the first closely battled heat, the Australians



Photo finish at the 1956 Olympic Games Eights final with USA (top), Australia (centre) and Canada (bottom). (Ogawa Family photo, 1956)

finished first followed by Canada and the USA with only a boat's length separating the three. With the USA finishing third, they were required to compete in the repêchage in order to advance to the semi-finals. In the semi-finals, Canada beat out Sweden while the USA, who had won the repêchage, defeated the Australians. The top four crews, Canada, USA, Sweden and Australia advanced to the finals.

The finals were held on November 24, 1956. It was a tight battle between the USA, Canada and Australia over the entire 2000-meter course. The USA, with an outstanding start, maintained their

lead and held on for the gold, with Canada taking silver and Australia bronze. The winning times were: USA 6 min. 35.2 sec., Canada 6 min. 37.1 sec., and Australia 6 min. 39.2 sec. Canada's 4's went on to win gold in their event, defeating the USA by 9.6 seconds.

The crew then traveled to Tasmania for another regatta and ended up missing the closing ceremonies. The return trip home involved a welcomed, but unscheduled, week-long rest in Hawaii. At the time, the Hungarian Revolution was taking place and Canadian planes were being rerouted to Europe to help evacuate

Hungarian refugees to Canada. Carl and crew had to disembark their plane in Hawaii due to the crisis.

In early December of 1956, the Canadian crews returned home to a hero's welcome. For their achievements, they received medals from the Mayor of Vancouver and each received three UBC Block Letters that represent excellence in university sports.

The 8's may not have won the top award of Olympic gold but being second best in the world was an incredible accomplishment. And I can proudly say that my father is an Olympic Silver Medalist. a

Olympic Dreams by Alan Sakai

Sometimes I still wake up in the night sweating, dreaming about the few years I spent competing at the international level in Judo. I guess the intensity of grappling face to face, toe to toe with another human being leaves deep impressions in the body's memory that never goes away. Only a little encouragement is needed for such memories to come churning to

the surface. The recent excitement of the 2010 Olympic Games bid and subsequent awarding of the Games to Vancouver revived my recollections of competing in the 1972 Olympics in Munich, Germany. With the passing of time and the gaining of some life experiences, I now have come to realize that I was deeply affected both on and off the judo

tatami by participating in Judo and competing in the Olympic Games. Some lessons and memories may be worth sharing.

As with many things, luck and timing, preparation and support played a large part in determining my opportunity to go to the Olympic Games. Judo was a young Olympic

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The 1972 Canadian Olympic Judo Team: Hiroshi Nakamura, Alan Sakai, William McGregor, Phillip Illingworth, Terry Farnsworth and Doug Rogers. (Alan Sakai photo, 1972)

sport that just eight years earlier had been included for the first time in the Tokyo Games, where Doug Rogers won a Silver medal in Judo for Canada. At that time the criteria to go to the Olympics was to be selected by your home country. That probably would not hold sway now. You must rank in the top echelons in the world to be eligible to even participate in the Olympic tournament.

I was seventeen in 1972 and had won the Canadian High School Championships and then placed second in the Senior Championships in May. I was selected to the Olympic Team because of these results. There was some controversy about this decision because of my young age and the fact that I had only placed second at the senior level. I did not know much about the selection process but as I understood it, the decision was contested and though I was selected I was not certain about the final outcome until

the summer.

After being selected to the Olympic team I continued to train. In those days, Judo in British Columbia took a break after the Canadian Championships so I was pretty much left to continue at the local club. Frank Sakai, my uncle and head *sensei* and other Steveston Judo Club members continued to train with me. Arrangements were made for some local fighters to come and practice with me.

I was also selected to a team, which was to train in Germany for four weeks prior to the Olympics. I spent much of July and August traveling and training in Europe. However, the training trip was cut short due to some difficulties with the organizers. I was not to get much international training and competition. In August, I met Leo Haunsberger at Lahr, Germany. He was the Olympic Judo team manager, and he provided me with the Olympic

clothing and training suits he had picked up in Canada. Fortunately, he chose sizes that fit me well. I also met *sensei*, Hiroshi Nakamura, who was to guide the training of the Olympic team for the next two weeks.

I finally arrived at the Olympic Village late in August, a few days before the opening ceremonies and began practicing and watching the other athletes. It was then I realized the magnitude of the competition. Many of the other teams were very professional in their preparations and I could see that my provincial training was not going to take me to that level. With Nakamura *sensei*'s connections in Japan, I was able to practice and do *randori* with members of the Japanese Olympic team, which included several world champions.

A few days later, I remember going to the competition site in awe. The competition was set

and I had drawn a British fighter. The competition area was on a raised platform and there were television cameras, other media and more spectators than I had ever experienced in Canada. I waited anxiously for my match dreaming of upsets and the possibility of medals. I was called to the mat area and faced my opponent. I heard *hajime* and the *shiai* started. I felt that I was not physically out-matched by the British fighter, but I did not have enough technical knowledge to get past his grappling techniques. I was knocked down a couple of times and though the match lasted the full eight minutes I lost in a *hantei* decision made by the judges. My very basic provincial and national experiences were not enough to win at this level. Takao Kawaguchi of Japan eventually won the minus 139 pound category.

I was disappointed with my performance and remember feeling quite despondent. For the next few days I watched the Japanese team do well but the victory I remember most was by a Russian judoka, Schota Chochoshvili, who threw Sasahara of Japan with an *ippon seionage* and eventually won in the light heavyweight category. It was considered by many to be quite an upset. I spent much of my next few days in a fog wondering what to do with myself. I watched some of the other events and wondered where I fit in all of this. I was pretty much left to myself to explore Munich and the Athletes' Village for the rest of the time. I was impressed by the Athlete's Village where I was fed night and day for free and everything an athlete needed was provided for. In the evening there was entertainment and a chance to meet athletes from around the world. This was an athlete's paradise. This

feeling did not last long.

On Sept 5th events took place which changed everything. Eleven Israeli athletes were taken hostage by Palestinian terrorists and were killed during a day-long siege in the village and later at a shootout at the airport which also left five captors and 1 policeman dead. This tragedy changed the course of history and took away any perception there might have been about the innocence of athletic events.

Everyone at the Games was deeply affected by these events. All the athletes were told to stay in the rooms at the Athletes' Village and we were given very little information about what was going on. All I knew was that something different was happening that was not supposed to happen at an athletic event. Armed personnel were all around the village complex. When the details were finally given out I quickly learned that there were issues in this world that were more important than winning and losing a Judo match even if it was in the Olympics.

The decision to continue on with the Games was made amid much controversy, which continues to be debated to this day. Olga Korb won the hearts of fans to gymnastics and Mark Spitz won seven Gold medals in swimming. The Canadian swimming team won several medals led by a young Leslie Cliff's silver medal. The games ended with the usual march into the Olympic Stadium but much of the joy I felt during the opening had faded by then. Somehow I found my way back to Lahr, Germany with the Judo team and on a military flight back to Canada.

I competed in two more Canadian Championships where I placed second and third. I competed in one world championship in

Lausanne, Switzerland and won my first match and lost my second in a decision. Again my loss was close but I needed more technical and physical development. I was not prepared to go elsewhere to train and compete. And, perhaps the joy of winning matches was not enough to offset the pressures of not losing. I started university and the challenge of the academic world caught my interest and I decided to devote my time and efforts to learn about teaching and stopped competing. I threw myself into becoming a teacher and husband and father. Later, I continued my studies in education and became a school administrator.

Long into my 40's now I still have dreams about competition and the Olympics but mostly I think about the things I learned over the years. I learned about the importance of physical development and health, the importance of having the perseverance to complete tasks even the most tedious ones. Judo is fought on an individual basis but one cannot progress without others to practice and compete with and without the *senseis* to teach the skills. In this way learning to respect others is important in Judo. To me sport is only as important as the lessons it teaches and any sport is not an end in itself but a means to promote health and the search for harmony. I wish the terrorists of 1972 had felt the same way.

I am still an instructor at the Steveston Judo Club and believe that Judo is a sport that teaches many important lessons and skills. I wish every young boy and girl could learn Judo. I still watch many of my own *senseis*, now long into retirement years, continue to teach judo. I think they are the real Olympic champions of Judo. a

Toshio Uyede's Reminisces of the Victoria Judo Club

by Yoshio Shimizu

Minoru Akiyama, a graduate of Meiji University, was on his way home after his studies at the University of Toronto when he stopped at the Ozawa Hotel in Victoria. He was offered a job as a Japanese language teacher. Akiyama started a judo class while teaching Japanese. Someone obtained an old gym mat, which we rolled out onto the floor of Ozawa's dining room. Many people sprained their ankles on the lumpy mat. Kunio Uyede canvassed the community to obtain judo mats (*tatami*) from Japan. Akiyama wrote to his mother who ordered the mats for us and supervised the mat making. The mats

finally arrived in Victoria at the "Outer Wharves" where the large boats from the Orient docked, but Customs would not release them. After much negotiation, they insisted that the mats be fumigated. This was done and the new mats were a big change and much enjoyed by all. Akiyama returned to Japan but we carried on.

Kunio Shimizu helped keep the club going until the Ozawa Hotel closed. The mats were moved to the vacant Ishida Hotel and later to the Uyede's at 1003 Caledonia Avenue. The room was not quite large enough so Uyede and Henmi and others obtained donations, which allowed for

the building of a new *dojo* behind 1003 Caledonia Avenue under the able direction of Shiro Koyama. Hideo Takahashi (*Nidan*) arrived in Victoria to take over "My Valet" cleaners from Mitsuo Takahashi. He became our *Sensei* or *Shihan* until the evacuation.

Kunizo Uyede bought a house on 929 Caledonia Avenue where there was a shed in the back. With help from Koyama, a new floor was put in and that became our new *dojo* until the evacuation. The *tatami* were stored and remained there until they were shipped to Tashme, after judo was started at this internment camp. a



Members of the Victoria Judo Club. Front row: Bob Henmi, Shoji Uyede, Mutsumi Uyede, Hidekazu Takahashi. Second row: Hideo Takahashi (*sensei*), Tsutomu Shimizu, Kiyo (Tasaka) Ise, Mamoru Uyede, George Uyede, Terry Uyede, Kunizo Uyede (*sensei*). Third row: Hayashi, Kiyoshi Shimizu, Umekichi Uyede, Yasuke Hasegawa, Sokichi Henmi. Fourth row: Victor Kusumoto, George Hasegawa, Toshio Uyede, unknown, unknown, Bradbury, Katsumi Uyede, Jack Itsuo Henmi. (Yoshio Shimizu photo, 1936)

Remembering the Vancouver Asahi

by Frank Moritsugu

What were the Vancouver Asahi like? I mean the elite pre-World War II Japanese Canadian baseball team—the team that was deservedly inducted into the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame this past June. It's a fair question. After all, although the Asahi team played in Vancouver leagues for nearly 30 years, it was forced to disband more than 60 years ago. That was in 1942, that traumatic year when the mass expulsion from the Pacific Coast destroyed our existing communities and drastically changed our lives.

So it takes an octogenarian like me to recall who some of the star players were and what they accomplished. And what the Asahi, individually and collectively, meant to the rest of us during difficult times of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s in prewar British Columbia. Here are some of the things I'd tell a grandchild when she or he becomes interested enough to listen to another of *Jiichan's* stories. Mind you, I'd condense some of the stories because all that follows is a bit much for any youngster's attention span. And I would wind up

with why the Asahi accomplishments meant so much to us back in those years.

My first memory of the Vancouver Asahi was when I was still wearing short pants—that is, in the 1930s when I was in elementary school. Dad, like most issei fathers, was a keen baseball fan. He followed the Asahi, went to as many of their games as he could, and read about their games regularly in the *TAIRIKU NIPPO*, one of the three Japanese language daily newspapers. Not only that, he took the *DAILY PROVINCE* to keep up with the major-league games during the time when Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig and Jimmy Foxx were doing their things on those diamonds in the eastern U.S.

One day, Dad took me and brother Ken downtown (we lived in Vancouver's Kitsilano district) to Powell Street Grounds to watch the Asahi play. Their usual opponents were all-white teams—in that era there were hardly any black persons living in B.C., and for some reason

Chinese Canadians and East-Indian Canadians weren't baseball-mad like our people were.

So at this first-to-us Asahi game, Ken and I sat with Dad in the bleachers near first base, which was on the Dunlevy Ave. side of the Grounds. And we kids were able to watch from close up the famous Asahi players we'd heard about and read about. During the years following we saw more Asahi games at other parks, too, such as Con Jones Park in east-end Vancouver near Hastings Park where we attended the Exhibition each summer.

There were about 80 issei and nisei who wore the Asahi uniform during the team's life. Personally, I missed most of the original issei players because they were active before my game-watching time. But here are some players from the 1930s and 1940s whom I will never forget, most of them are nisei.

To begin, Roy Yamamura, the greatest Asahi star. His years

Continued on page 12

Facts about the induction of the Vancouver Asahi team in the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame:

Date: Saturday, June 28, 2003.

Place: St. Marys, ON (near London and Stratford).

Other 2003 inductees: Joe Carter, Toronto Blue Jays star and 1993 World Series star; Kirk McCaskill, Kapuskasing, Ontario-born pitcher with second winningest major-league record by a Canadian next to Ferguson Jenkins; Richard Belec, Canadian amateur baseball leader in Quebec & nationally.

Attendance: Estimated 1,000 (of whom about 100 were Nikkei).

Asahi players attending: Ken Kutsukake, Mickey Maikawa, Kaye Kaminishi, Mike Maruno and Kiyoshi Suga.

Presenting the Asahi in the ceremony: Pat Adachi, author of *Asahi: Legend in Baseball*.

Speaking for the players: Kiyoshi Suga and Ken Kutsukake.

The five other Asahi survivors unable to attend: Yuki Uno, Bob Higuchi (Yasui), Ken Shimada, Jim Fukui and George Yoshinaka.

Major highlight of the ceremony: The huge applause that greeted the Asahi whenever they were introduced, and particularly when the Asahi were announced and mounted the stage to receive their handsome Hall of Fame jackets which they donned with the help of baseball great and earlier Canadian Hall of Fame member Fergy Jenkins.



Asahi baseball team in front of the CANADA DAILY NEWS office in Vancouver. (JCNM photo, ca. 1925)

were 1923 until 1941, mainly as a dazzling twinkletoes shortstop and later as manager. He typified the Asahi team style being the best of a bunch of small guys who fielded nimbly and hit singles rather than homers. And ran the bases like they owned them. Let an Asahi get on base with a hit, a walk or allow him to bunt and the other guys were in trouble. Squeeze plays and double steals were a normal part of their game. Although some sluggers did come along in the latter years such as pitcher-outfielder Kaz Suga and catcher Koei Mitsui, the Asahi more frequently beat their physically bigger and stronger opponents by clever strategy and speed—what was called “brain ball” by some. Plus some smart pitching by those such as Naggie Nishihara, Kaz Suga, his older brother Ty Suga, and Mickey Maikawa. The best-known catcher was Reg Yasui who played from 1923-37. His brother Bob Higuchi

(Yasui) was an outfielder from 1928-33. For me and my close friends and fellow baseball addicts, the Yasui brothers and Roy Yamamura as Asahi regulars had special meaning because they were from Kitsilano, our part of Vancouver. And so was Chuck Terada, an Asahi nigon (second-team) player who his friends hopefully thought was on the brink of joining the big team when it had to disband.

Other personal impressions from my Asahi-following years: The quick and reliable second-baseman George Shishido who was a smooth doubleplay partner for shortstop Yamamura. Herbie Tanaka, one of the Tanaka brothers, who covered third base while across the field Joe Fukui handled first base. And in the outfield, leftfielder Frank Shiraishi who ran gracefully and hardly let any ball hit in his area get away. In fact, one story told about Frank Shiraishi’s sleek fielding went like this: (from

Pat Adachi’s history, **Asahi: Legend in Baseball**). The outfield at Powell Grounds had no fencing. Left field was bordered by Jackson Avenue, centre field by Jackson and Cordova Street, and right field by Cordova. And most Asahi games would have spectators standing on the sidewalks of those outfield streets. So when a big fly was hit to left and Shiraishi was chasing after it, the crowd would part to allow him to run and reach the ball. On the other hand, if the Asahi were batting and one of them hit one to the far left, did the spectators move? What do you think? The Cordova Street border of the park also had large trees which meant centrefielders such as Eddie Kitagawa and rightfielders such as Mousie Masuda and Naggie Nishihara (when he wasn’t pitching) had to keep a sharp eye on where they might be heading. Also that part of the Grounds was short so that a ball hit onto Cordova Street or beyond

was an automatic two-base hit. Roy Kurita, who was a youngster when his family lived on Cordova across from the Grounds, said recently that when the Asahi were playing, it was always exciting to see if balls would be hit into their front garden, while hopefully not smashing a window.

Eddie Kitagawa, by the way, played from 1917 to 1931 so I don't recall seeing him on the field. But later, even the young kid I was got to know him and fellow Asahi Frank Nakamura who played second base during 1923-34. That's because the two nisei were both on the staff of the Bank of Montreal branch at Main & Hastings, at the edge of Japantown (*Nihonmachi*) and cater-corner to the Carnegie Library & Museum. Dad had an account there, as many Japanese Canadians did because Eddie and Frank were the first JCs to get such work. It was quite exciting for these eager fans to see these Asahi stars in their smart civilian clothes smiling at you from their teller windows at the bank.

Another Asahi great, who was an incredible marvel, was pitcher George Tanaka. He was an Asahi from 1922-33. The marvel part was that he only had one hand, and yet he not only pitched but also played outfield. Later he became manager and his Asahi won the Terminal League Championship in 1933.

Later as a highschooler and beyond, when following the Asahi became a more religious rite, I followed their games in reports in the English section of the TAIRIKU NIPPO or the newly started English-language weekly, The NEW CANADIAN. So I kept up on the game-by-game exploits of players such as catcher Ken Kutsukake, first baseman Yuki Uno, shortstop Mike Maruno, infielder Kaye Kaminishi, pitcher Tommy Sawayama, as well as Kaz Suga and Naggie Nishihara. Kaz was a southpaw thrower, while

Naggie, one of the few tall Asahi players, threw overhand in a most striking windup style. In playing catch with my brothers or buddies, I often tried to imitate Naggie's style, though I think I failed dismally. As for Tommy Sawayama, he lived on the family farm in Haney, 30 miles from Vancouver. And I am told that after a day's work on the farm he would somehow commute to Vancouver for an Asahi practice or a game. And in those days, 30 miles was far.

I suppose it isn't necessary to remind the reader that Powell Street Grounds was renamed Oppenheimer Park some time ago. But each August it is the site of the Powell Street Festival which commemorates the era when Japantown had that park as one of its landmarks. What's more, baseball is played there still, sometimes by Japanese Canadian teams—which is only as it should be.

* * *

Why did the Asahi and their wonderful diamond accomplishments mean so much to the rest of us? The answer: What they managed to accomplish was at a time in our history when the odds were stacked against us Japanese Canadians and other Asian Canadians in our native and home province. During the 1920s, 1930s and into the war against Japan, these were some of the restrictions in B.C. against people who looked like us. Some movie theatres would only allow you to sit in certain places such as the balcony. (The same kind of segregation was then common against the blacks in the American South.) At Vancouver's Crystal Pool, an indoor swimming place, we were not allowed in. Many jobs for Japanese immigrants and their offsprings paid less for the same work done by other employees. And worst of all, for those of us born in Canada we still weren't allowed to vote when we turned 21. That was also true for

the relatively few immigrants who were allowed to take out citizenship. As it was also true for the World War I veterans who returned in 1918 from dangerous battles in Europe. Those survivors had to fight at home for six years before they (and only they) were reluctantly granted the vote.

And as we were growing up, swirling around us in the local newspapers and on the radio were regular anti-Oriental opinions and attitudes. Not only in letters to the editor but also in the editorials and speeches by elected politicians and other community leaders. And during all this, a team of Japanese Canadians in Vancouver showed the other teams in the baseball leagues they played in that they could be the best. The Asahi took several championships to prove it as the rest of us exulted thankfully. On the level playing field of amateur baseball, our best guys showed them we could be just as good as, no matter what anyone said. And it was no accident that appreciation and applause for their expert and sportsmanlike baseball playing eventually came from sports reporters of the downtown dailies and the white ballpark audiences, too. Then during the wartime incarceration and in the postwar resettlement years, several former Asahi in interior B.C. detention camps helped the rest of us bear our humiliating existences by organizing baseball games. For more details, please watch the superbly made National Film Board documentary, **Sleeping Tigers; the Asahi Baseball Story**, just released this year. This 51-minute film was also instrumental in the Asahi being elected to the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame. As for even more individual details about the players accompanied by remembrances from some fans, look at Pat Adachi's history **Asahi: Legend in Baseball**, published in 1992. Illustrated with

many individual and team photos, it's available in JC community collections, and can also be

purchased at these centres. a
Frank Moritsugu,
journalist and baseball fan,

nominated the Vancouver Asahi to the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame.

Kamloops Nisei Baseball Team by Ken Kochi

The Kamloops Nisei Athletic Club MOHAWKS were a powerhouse Nisei baseball team playing in the BC Interior Baseball League in the mid-1950s. They were little known outside of Kamloops and the BC interior. The MOHAWKS played out of North Kamloops' McDonald Park and were comprised of thirteen Japanese Canadian nisei and two Chinese Canadians. The team was coached by Pat Miyahara and managed by Johnny Shimodaira.

The MOHAWKS were the BC Interior Baseball League champions in 1955. And in 1956, the

powerful Nisei team swept the league with 9 wins, 1 loss season. They were fan favourites wherever they played, and were invited to many baseball tournaments in the interior. They tried to match up with the Vancouver Nisei baseball team, but were never able to find a suitable open date during the summer season. It would have been an interesting match up!

This team was unique for a Nisei baseball team with long-ball hitters and strong pitching. In an especially forceful pitching game,

Ken Kochi shutout the Kamloops JAY-RAYS for 8 innings. The MOHAWKS demolished the JAY-RAYS 17 to 3 (KAMLOOPS SENTINAL, 04-06-1956). Gordie Miyahara, Ken Kochi, Joe Yamake and Tosh Takenaka hit home runs in the last game of the 1956 season against the Rutland ADANACS (Kamloops SENTINEL, ?-?-1956).

If the MOHAWKS were playing out of Toronto or Vancouver, it would have had a lot more recognition as a "powerhouse" Nisei baseball team in the mid-1950s. a



North Kamloops Mohawks, BC Interior League Champions, 1955. Back row: Tom Miyahara, Spud Kato, Sam Motokado, Joe Yamake, Stan Kato, Joe Motokado, Dick Lee, Art Yuen. Front row: Sam Aura, Gordie Miyahara, Tosh Takenaka, Johnny Shimodaira, Pat Miyahara, Sho Yamada, Ken Kochi. (Ken Kochi photo, 1955)

High Boat Trophy by Mitsuo Yesaki and Larry Maekawa

The Japanese Consul, Ko Ishii, visited the Ucluelet Fishermen's Association in the summer of 1936. The great depression of the 1930s was over and the recovering

economy stimulated higher demand and prices for fresh fish. Ucluelet fishermen were making good catches and their Association was finding ready markets in Seattle and

Vancouver for mild-cure salmon. The offshore exploits of the fishermen and the operation and economic viability of the Association duly impressed Consul Ishii. Upon his return to



Jimmy Nitsui with high boat trophy and certificate. (Nitsui Family photo, 1938)

Vancouver, he purchased a trophy, which he donated, to the Ucluelet Fishermen's Association on September 29, 1936 for awarding to the fisherman with the highest catch for the year. The accompanying photograph shows Shigeru Ukichi "Jimmy" Nitsui with the trophy and certificate. A handwritten note on the cardboard frame

states, "*I was high boat for three years, 1936, 1937 and 1938, so Japanese Fishermen's Association presented this trophy to me at end of third year, age 23 years old, James Nitsui.*"

The inscription on the trophy reads, "High Boat Trophy presented to Ucluelet Fishermen's Association by Hon. Ko Ishii Japanese Consul 1936". On the wooden base are six silver shields with the inscription U. Nitsui and year, beginning with 1933 and ending in 1938. Larry Maekawa confirms Nitsui won the high boat designation from the Ucluelet Fishermen's Association in 1939 and 1940. Nitsui was also the high boat in 1941, but the Association did not present this award at the end of the fishing season. Jimmy Nitsui held the high boat award for a remarkable nine years!

Tanezo Nitsui was one of the original Japanese fishermen to relocate their families to Ucluelet in 1922. He and his family moved from Steveston, where he had gillnetted for salmon. He purchased water frontage on "Fraser Bay" from George Fraser and built a home.

Shigeru "Jimmy" Nitsui always showed an interest in fishing. He preferred helping fishermen in rigging and repairing fishing gear than playing with his teenage peers. Jimmy started trolling at age 18 in about 1932, as soon as he became eligible for a commercial fishing license. He purchased a boat and fishing license from Gonnosuke Yamashita, an Issei who returned to Mio, Wakayama during the depression. From the very beginning, he was the consummate fisherman: the earliest out on the grounds in the morning and the last to return in the evening. In 1938, he contracted the Kishi Boat Works in Steveston to build a forty-foot troller, the **SILVER SPRING**. The above photograph was probably taken at Columbia Studios in Vancouver when he took delivery of the boat. a

Ozawa Hotel by Toshio Uyede

I believe that the hotel was built for Mr. Jiro Ozawa at the turn of the century, the late 1800's or the early 1900's on Fisgard St. on the north side between Quadra and Blanshard Streets. He and his wife Sato and relative Tameichi, who was the manager, ran the hotel. The Ozawas were from the village of Mio in Wakayama-ken from where many of the early immigrants came.

All the ships arriving from the Orient docked in Victoria after passing quarantine at William Head. Mr. Bunpei Kuwabara (father of Masao Kuwabara the baseball player) was the interpreter for the Immigration Office at the Outer Wharves. From there, horse-drawn carriages drove them to the Ozawa Hotel where they were provided Japanese meals and accommodations.

The carriage was later replaced by an auto driven by Mr. Iwamatsu Hashimoto. From Victoria, the immigrants boarded the CPR ferries to Vancouver or traveled by train to other places on Vancouver Island.

Mr. Jiro Ozawa would walk to the Fishermen's Wharf to buy fish every day. This of course was before the age of refrigeration. Mrs. Ozawa did the cooking, helped by Jiro. She also made *tofu* once a week, as well as *abura-age*, which my family used to buy.

Besides the newly arrived immigrants, single men lived there and made it their home. Other men made the hotel their home between jobs. In later years, the trans-Pacific ships continued onto Vancouver, reducing the number of immigrant customers at the hotel.



House and hotel owned by the Ozawas in the early 1900s. (Yoshio Shimizu photo, 1986)

The Ozawa Hotel became a sort of community centre where the Japanese community went to socialize. Some went regularly to play cards, *Hana Fuda*, *Go*, and *Shogi*. The dining room was often used for tailoring classes, *shiatsu* sessions, Japanese movies, concerts and judo.

The picture of the hotel was taken in 1986 when I was in Victoria. It had been stuccoed, whereas the original building was brick faced. The house next to the hotel was also owned by the Ozawas and another Japanese family who operated a dry cleaning establishment and lived on the street behind the hotel. a

Tatsumi Dance Group's Trip to Lethbridge

by Dawn Yoneda and Corey Matsuo

On Friday, May 9th 2003, nine members of the Tatsumi Dance Group accompanied by seven of their helpers and supporters embarked on a dancing expedition to Lethbridge, Alberta to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Momiji Kai. It has always been our instructor's, Mrs. Hirano, vision to enrich the experience of her students through out-of-town performances and to lend support to the achievements of affiliated groups in Alberta. This trip was to be the second to Alberta in one year, the first being to Edmonton where we participated as guest performers. For some members, the Calgary to Lethbridge flight was their first time flying in a small, 18-passenger plane. The members traveled in small groups through the night with the last group arriving at about 10:30 p.m. to a brisk Lethbridge evening. Two Momiji Kai representatives warmly greeted the members. From the airport, the group went directly to rejoin the other members already comfortably settled in at the Lethbridge Travelodge Hotel. Conveniently, the Travelodge

also housed the "Largest Convention Center in Southern Alberta" which was to serve as the location for the performance and post-performance dinner the next day.

Much to the group's delight, Saturday brought a warm sunny day, contrary to the snow and cold some members were expecting after the weather of the week before. After a morning of hairdressing and rehearsal with plenty of opportunity to meet and reunite with the members of the Alberta groups, everyone was invited to a brief luncheon of sandwiches and homemade goodies before getting ready for the afternoon's performance.

The recital was entitled "Hana no Stage" honouring the vibrant colours of the stage emblem consisting of a bright sun, streaming cloud and technicoloured maple leaf, the Momiji Kai's logo. Mr. Roland Ikuta, the host for the evening, introduced the president of the Momiji Kai, Mrs. Lil Yamashita, who gave the welcome address. Mr. Hirano followed by congratulating the

Momiji Kai on behalf of the visiting groups. The event seemed destined to be a success from the beginning as roughly 270 faces filled the audience versus the 240 who were expected. The seventeen performances of song and dance appeared to run rather smoothly, offering up a variety of energy and drama interspersed with serene moments of beauty. Enthusiastic applause and cheering followed every number culminating with thunderous acclaim at the finale performed by the entire cast. The three separate groups had performed the last number as a single unit only once before earlier in the day, which was a testament to the harmony of the event and its members. The performance closed with a speech of appreciation by Mrs. Lilly Oishi and floral presentations to instructors Aya Hironaka and Tatsumi Yoshikiyo. The recital was followed by a lovely sit-down dinner in a large room adjacent to the performance area where spectators, friends, family members and performers had an opportunity to mingle, socialize and renew



Members of the Tatsumi Dance, Kaede Kai and Momiji Kai groups on stage of the Convention Centre in Lethbridge. (Mary Hirano photo, 2003)

acquaintances. After a quick clean up, the remainder of the evening was spent resting, relaxing, and just unwinding in good company.

On Sunday, all the participants were invited to a lavish Mother's Day Brunch at Sven

Ericksen's Family Restaurant and the visiting Tatsumi Dancers from Vancouver and Kaede Kai Dancers from Calgary were presented with adorable handcrafted dolls made as thank you gifts by the Momiji group

members. Before heading to the airport, many of the visiting members had an opportunity to explore the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden, see the Nikkei tapestry display at the Sir Alexander Gait Museum, and even slip in a little shopping thanks to the kindness of many Momiji members and their families. Despite a slightly bumpier flight back to Vancouver, the excursion was a tremendous success. Not only was the trip an opportunity for a youthful group from BC to expand their knowledge and experience of Japanese Canadian heritage, but also an occasion to observe and share in the talents, harmony, and dedication of the Momiji group. The Tatsumi Dancers very happy with this year's event and look forward to possibly rejoining many of their Alberta friends again when the Kaede Kai Dancers hold their recital next year in Calgary. a

A Christmas Eve Miracle: Strange but True by Toshio Uyede



Methodist Home for Oriental Women and Children in Victoria. (Toshio Uyede photo, date unknown)

In Victoria, B.C. there was a home for Oriental women and children run by the Methodist Church. Its Superintendent was Miss Anne Martin. Most of the residents were Chinese or Japanese. It was here that my father and mother were married in December 1912. Behind

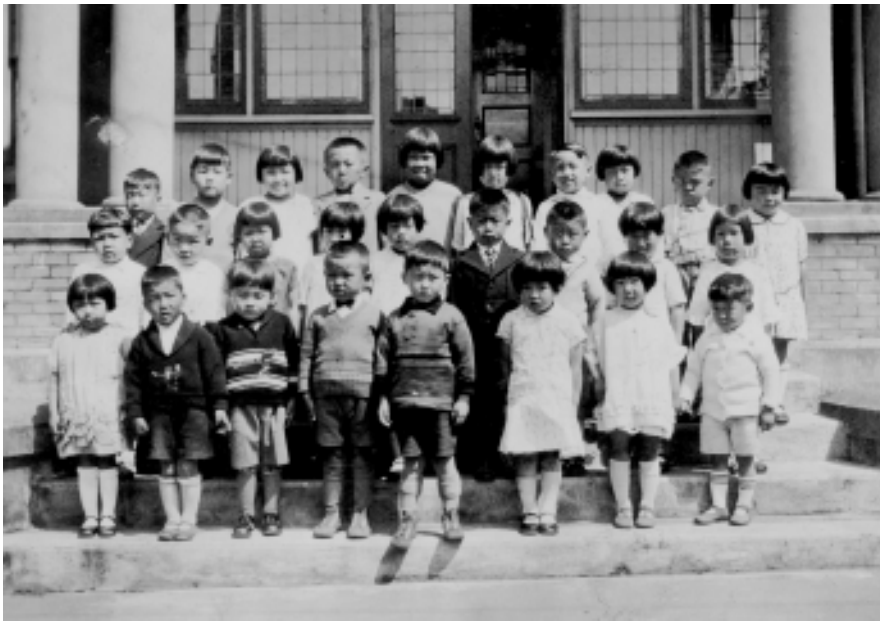
the home, there was a small building where two ladies, Miss Baker and Miss Henderson, ran a kindergarten. We went there to learn English, which was never spoken at home. It enabled us to start public school.

We were forced to leave Victoria, in April of 1942, after war

broke out with Japan in 1941. First we were put into Hastings Park in Vancouver. After a couple of weeks, my brothers and I were put on a train heading to a road camp in Schreiber, Ontario. A few weeks later we volunteered to go to work in the sugar beet fields of southwestern Ontario. We were housed in the fairgrounds building in Glencoe, south of London. At the camp we had a RCMP constable who controlled our movements. In Appin, just north of Glencoe, there was a United Church minister, Rev. Al Stone, a missionary in Japan, who had returned to Canada because of the war. He told us that Miss Martin was in hospital in London. A friend from Victoria and I obtained permission from the constable to go to London to see her. She told us that Miss Henderson was in Hamilton.

After the camp closed at the

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Oriental children under the care of the Methodist Home for Oriental Women and Children. (Toshio Uyede photo, date unknown)

end of the sugar beet harvest, I got a job on a dairy farm just outside of London, at Wilton Grove. Just before Christmas, I found a job in Hamilton as a houseboy, working for an elderly couple, who were looking

after three grandchildren.

On Christmas Eve, I went to a church service at Centenary United. As I was sitting there, a lady came and sat beside me. We started talking and I found out that she was

Miss Henderson; who was married to Mr. Dorsey but was now living with her two daughters since her husband's death. She said that she was a member of Melrose United Church, but had decided to go to Centenary that night. Imagine the odds! Of all the churches in Hamilton and all the pews in Centenary, we happened to meet there.

In the spring, I left my job at MacGregor's and looked for another job. It was not easy. Being classified as "enemy aliens" did not make it any easier. I finally got a job at the C.I.L. fertilizer factory. I also had to find a place to live. That was not easy either. Many places had "ROOMS TO LET" signs in their windows, but as soon as I knocked on their doors and they saw me, the answer was "Sorry, the room is already rented." At last I found an ad in the paper and found a room at 81 Bold St. What do you know? It was next door to Mrs. Dorsey's! a

JCNM at the Powell Street Festival, August 2nd & 3rd, 2003

by Elmer Morishita

The Japanese Canadian National Museum participated in the 2003 Powell Street Festival with an information and display booth in the Vancouver Buddhist Church:

- An exhibit of the history of Japanese Canadians, prepared by John Greenaway.
- An exhibit of Japanese Canadian fishermen prepared by the Nikkei Fishermen's Project Committee.
- A table with books about Japanese Canadians for browsing and for sale.
- A genealogical database to search for information about our parents and grandparents.
- Historical walking tours of Powell Street.

The beautiful weather brought large crowds to the Festival and to the JCNM exhibit. There was

a great deal of interest in our booth. A continuous stream of people looked at the exhibits and books, asking questions and offering information about their experiences. Book sales over the two days grossed about \$1,700. Best sellers were: **Memories of Our Past** (History of Powell Street) and the **Sleeping Tigers** video.

The JC history exhibit provided an overview of our past in a very compact display, with excellent bilingual (English and Japanese) captions for everyone. The sharing of the booth space with the Fishermen was an excellent idea since it provided a more in-depth look at one aspect of JC history. The Fishermen's Committee presented some biographies as well as an overview of the life of fishermen in the pre-war era. They were also able

to update the database of biographies with information provided by some of the visitors to the exhibit. The historical walking tour was very popular with each tour accommodating more people than the maximum of 10. The last tour of the Festival had about 25 to 30 people. Special thanks to the tour guides for leading the larger than normal groups. They created goodwill for the JCNM and made all those who were accommodated happy.

The database was used periodically with several people learning more about their ancestors.

Thanks to all of our volunteers. Our participation in the Festival would not have been possible without you. Finally, congratulations and thanks to the Powell Street Festival. We look forward to next year's Festival. a

Report from the JCNM by Steve Turnbull, Manager Curator

In my last report to you in June, I noted how I intend to strive to fulfil the great expectations the many supporters of the JCNM have for their Museum. I am pleased to report some months later that the Museum is indeed making good progress toward fulfilling those expectations. Here are some of the examples of that progress:

New Staff

Elizabeth Nunoda has been hired as the new Volunteer Coordinator for the National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre. She started work on July 29th. In this position Liz will serve both the Museum and the larger organization of which it is now a part. Liz comes to us with a long history of involvement in the local Japanese Canadian community-including valuable contributions to the JCNM as a volunteer. If you are interested in volunteer opportunities at the NNMHC or you just want to make her feel welcome you may reach Liz at (604) 777-7000, Local 102.

Hannah Lindy is a temporary employee funded under the Federal Summer Career Placement Program and worked at the Museum from June until the end of August. In addition to performing various duties around the Museum, Hannah has been providing valuable research assistance to Grace Eiko Thomson, coordinator of the Japanese Canadian Studio Photographers project, I reported on in the Summer edition of NIKKEI IMAGES.

New Exhibit

The JCNM proudly unveiled its newest exhibit at a community reception held July 28. The exhibit, entitled **“One Hundred Years Of Nikkei Experience; Stories of**

Strength and Pride From the JCNM Collection”, showcases some of the Museum’s recent artifact and archival acquisitions. The six components of the exhibit each tell the distinct story embodied in the artifacts of that component. Among the stories told are:

“**Baseball Heroes**”, a look at the Asahi baseball team; “**Tomekichi Homma**” the story of the Nikkei community’s famous human rights crusader, and “**The Spirit of 1977**” which focuses on the Centennial celebrations that surrounded the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the first Nikkei in Canada. The material on display comprising as it does both the unique and the ordinary represents a fascinating cross-section of Canadian Nikkei life, history and culture.

The spirited crowd in attendance received the exhibit with warmth and enthusiasm and had high praise for the fine job done by Co-Curators Daien Ide and Timothy Savage. Among the speakers at the event were Tenney Homma, granddaughter of Tomekichi, and Jiro Kamiya whose life as a skilled carpenter is one of the stories featured in the exhibit. The reception was planned and hosted by members of the NNMHC Volunteer Auxillary who provided the tasty range of refreshments that topped a perfect evening. Special thanks go to Minnie Hattori and Frank Kamiya for their tremendous work in making the event happen.

New School Programs

Progress continues on the new traveling kit program “**Journeys**” which will be officially launched at a special gathering September 18 during Nikkei week at the NNMHC. Work has also begun on a new program for students

visiting the NNMHC. The Museum’s volunteer Education Coordinator Mas Fukawa, working with a consultative committee of teachers from Coquitlam School District, is developing a program that will feature Japanese Canadian history and culture. It is tailored for the Grade 11 Social Studies curriculum. It will include “survivors talks” by individuals who were interned during WW II. An overview of the new program will be presented at the annual meeting of B.C. Social Studies teachers in October.

New Acquisitions

The Acquisitions Committee of the JCNM gathered in late May for its semi-annual meeting and approved dozens of artifacts plus photos and other archival materials for addition to the Museum’s increasingly significant collection. Offers continue to arrive at the Museum at a steady pace. For more information on the collection and recent additions to it feel free to call the Museum staff at 777-7000.

Powell Street Festival

Once again this year the Museum played a significant role in the Powell Street Festival in Vancouver. The booth in the Vancouver Buddhist Church featured a new display on the history of the Nikkei in Canada, the genealogical database with which visitors could research their family history, and sales of books from the Museum Shop’s impressive stock. The Museum shared its booth with one of its most important partners, the Nikkei Fishermen’s Committee which distributed information on its on-going history project and pending book on Nikkei Fishermen. The all-volunteer effort of staffing and planning the

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booth was very ably organized by NNMHC. Board member Elmer Morishita and his son Kenji both of whom put in countless hours to ensure that the booth was the great success that it was. The Museum also offered Powell Street Walking tours, a long-standing Museum contribution to the Festival, splendidly organized by Museum staffer Daien Ide.

Asahi Exhibit Project

At its July meeting the Board of Directors of the NNMHC approved an organizational framework for the completion of the major new travelling exhibit **“Levelling The Playing Field:**

Legacy of the Asahi Baseball Team 1914-1942”. The new exhibit, now projected to open during Nikkei Week in September 2004 will be developed by a talented and dynamic team, which will include:
 -NNHC Board member and former National Redress Foundation Director Tony Tamayose
 -Celebrated poet and SFU Professor Roy Miki
 -Former JCNM Executive Director Grace Eiko Thomson
 -Toronto-based author and leading authority on the Asahi team Patricia Adachi.

Dr. Miki and Mr. Tamayose will assume the role of Project Co-

Managers. Ms. Thomson and Ms. Adachi will be exhibit Co-Curators. Many other talented and dedicated individuals from within and outside the Japanese Canadian community are also expected to be making their own valuable contributions to the project.

While there is much more to report there is no more space here in which to report it. If you would like to know more please feel free to give me a call at the Museum (604) 777-7000, Local 112 or contact me by e-mail at sturnbull@nikkeiplace.org. I will be delighted to discuss the many exciting things unfolding at your Museum. a

Message from the President, Fred Yada

We look forward to an exciting and challenging first year of the merged National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre. We have good people and excellent programmes and activities for both the museum and the cultural centre.

I would like to introduce our Board of Directors and Executive:

Robert T. Banno (President of Nikkei Place Foundation),

Donald M. Bell, Robert Bessler, Ruth Coles (Vice President), Stan Fukawa (Past President), Roy Hamaguchi, Mitsuo Hayashi (Past President), Gordon R. Kadota, Frank Kamiya (Vice President), Paul Kariya, Albert Kokuryo (Treasurer), David Masuhara, Art Miki, Elmer Morishita, Craig Ngai Natsuhara (Secretary),

Robert Nimi, George Oikawa, Virginia Sato, Dennis Shikaze, Henry Shimizu, Tony Tamayose, Fred Yada (President), Sam Yamamoto.

Thank you, and please join us on September 13 for our annual community celebration dinner as well as the Nikkei activities during the week of September 14 – 20, 2003. a

New and Renewed National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre Members from May 16 - August 13 2003

Ms. Hazel A. Chong
 Alan & Ruriko Davis
 LA Dinsmore
 Mr. & Mrs. Ken Ezaki
 Mr. & Mrs. James Fukui
 Ms. Andrea Geiger-Adams
 Hiro and Kaz Hasebe
 Mr. Yoshiharu Hashimoto
 Mrs. Susan Hidaka
 Gordon & Joan S. Imai
 Mrs. Kimiko Inouye
 Mrs. Masumi Izumi
 Sung Ae Kae
 Ms. Kimiko Kajiwara
 Roger & Joyce Kamikura
 Miss Dottie Karr
 Makoto & Mary Kawamoto
 Matt & Jean Kobayashi

Yuki & Kay Koyanagi
 Ms. Tracy Matsuo
 Mr. & Mrs. Hiroyuki Morimoto
 Les & Phyllis Murata
 Ms. Fumie Nakagawa
 Mrs. Shoko Nakagawa
 Ms. Rei Nakashima
 Ms. Gabrielle Nishiguchi
 Harry & Shoko Nishimura
 Ms. Sakuya Nishimura
 Yoshio & Kazuko Ogura
 Mrs. Mary Ohara
 Ms. Amy Okazaki
 Mrs. Joanne R. Rollins
 Mrs. Michi Saito
 Mr. Terry T. Sakai
 Dr. Henry Shimizu
 Ms. Yuri Shimpō

Miss Miriam Smith
 Steveston Judo Club
 Ms. Masako O. Stillwell
 Mr. Ed Suguro
 Kumi Sutcliffe
 David & Aiko Sutherland
 Mr. Mike Takahashi
 Ms. Harumi Tamoto
 Kinzie & Terry Tanaka
 Ms. Evelyn Terada
 Mark & June Tsuyuki
 Vancouver Shomonkai
 Aikido Association
 Rusty & Ryoko Ward
 Bill & Keiko Yamaura
 Dick & Kumiko Yamazaki
 Ms. Margaret Yoshida