



Nikkei Images

National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre Newsletter ISSN#1203-9017 Winter 2004, Vol. 9, No. 4

Archaeology of Nikkei Logging Camps in North Vancouver

by Bob Muckle

It is no secret that in the early 20th century Nikkei were involved in the Canadian west coast forest industry, both as businessmen and labourers; cutting the trees in the forest, turning the trees into lumber in mills, and shipping to a variety of destinations, including Japan. Due primarily to continued development of the forests and mills for housing and industry, the forces of nature burning or burying the evidence, and the collection of artifacts by hobbyists, however, much of the physical evidence of these forestry activities has disappeared.

Professional archaeologists, as well as others working or hiking in British Columbia forests, have occasionally commented on the occurrence of Japanese dishes and bottles in forests dating to the early

20th century but until recently, there has been no systematic archaeological study of Nikkei in Canadian west coast logging camps. This began to change in 2000 with the first field season of the Seymour Valley Archaeology

Project, which includes an annual archaeology field school operated by Capilano College and which focuses on early 20th century logging activities in North Vancouver's Seymour River Valley. Two camps with clear evidence of a Nikkei presence have been investigated. Both camps evidently burned in a mid-1920s forest fire that swept through the valley, and the remains have been largely hidden by several decades of forest re-growth. Now, through the methods of archaeology, glimpses into the lives of those working in the logging camps are emerging.

The Suicide Creek camp, so-named by archaeologists because of its location near a creek of the same name, was initially examined over the course of a few days in 2000. During this time a few dishes of Japanese origin were noted among the scattered trash, which also included horseshoes, broken bottles, portions of a cookstove, sawblades, and tin cans. Subsequent excavations at the camp during the summers of 2001, 2002, and 2003 have revealed



Remnants of ofuro. A fire was built within the stone hearth and the tub was placed on top. (Bob Muckle photo, 2004)

hundreds of artifacts, many of which are clearly Japanese in origin, including dishes, beer and sake bottles. Excavations have also led to the identification of a central kitchen and eating area, the main trash dump, a blacksmith shop, a bunkhouse, and no fewer than three wooden roads leading to and around the camp. The roads were built so that horses could

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One of several Japanese bottles (Motomura Sho-kai) recovered from the camps.

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Announcements

Mochitsuki

Wednesday, December 29, 2004
12:00-15:00 hours
NNMHC

Shashin: JC Studio Photography Exhibition

January - March, 2004
Royal BC Museum, Victoria, BC

COPANI XIII

PanAmerican Nikkei Assoc. Convention
July 7,8 and 9, 2005
Vancouver, BC

JCNM Lecture Series

January 27, 2004, 19:00 hours
Bob Muckle
"Archaeology of Nikkei Logging Camps"
NNMHC

March, 2004
Alan Sakai, Ken Kuramoto
"Steveston Judo Club Video"
NNMHC

Nikkei Images is published by
the National Nikkei Museum
and Heritage Centre Society

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Subscription to **Nikkei Images**
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Senior Couple \$20
Non-profit Association \$50
Corporate \$100
\$1 per copy for non-members

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haul sections of the trees on sleds out of the forest. Based primarily on the evidence of the mid-1920s forest fire, the dates assigned to the artifacts, and the age of trees that have grown over the camp, it is likely that the Suicide Creek camp was last occupied sometime between 1921 and 1924.

A few years ago, and a few kilometres away from the Suicide Creek camp, a new trail was being constructed through the Seymour Valley to accommodate the thousands of people who walk or bicycle through the area each year. When building the trail in the area of McKenzie Creek, those in charge noticed that unless the course was changed, the trail would destroy a large portion of a previously unknown camp. Consequently, the course was altered slightly to avoid destroying the remnants of the camp. Knowing that a trail close to an old camp could provide an excellent potential for public education, and also knowing that the close proximity of the trail could result in looters taking bottles, dishes, and other items of perceived value, the Seymour Valley Archaeology Project shifted its attention for the 2004 field season from the Suicide Creek camp to the newly-discovered McKenzie Creek

camp. Like at the Suicide Creek camp, it was fairly easy to identify wooden roads leading into and around the McKenzie camp. Beyond that, however, there was no initial indication of any similarities between the two camps.

The dozens of items scattered on the ground surface or only partly buried at the McKenzie camp included a variety of nails, tin cans, portions of a cookstove, and broken bottles, but nothing of Japanese origin or style. There was no clear evidence of a main trash dump, central cooking and eating area, blacksmith shop, or bunkhouse. Instead several discrete clusters of trash were identified, mostly including broken bottles and tin cans. Also visible on the surface were widely scattered instances of window glass, nails, and items of a personal nature, such as the inner workings of a small clock. Once excavations began, the Nikkei presence at the McKenzie Creek camp became evident. From beneath the surface, many dishes have been recovered, including fragments of small Japanese bowls, cups, and a teapot. Dozens of bottles have also been recovered, including Japanese beer, sake, and medicine bottles. The most significant discovery of all has



Archaeologist excavating a wooden road running through the McKenzie Creek camp. (Bob Muckle photo, 2004)



Japanese dishes. Some dishes with the same designs were found at both camps. (Bob Muckle photo, 2004)

been that of an *ofuro* (Japanese bathhouse). Like the tip of an iceberg, only the very top of a stone structure was initially visible. The structure contained the fire used to heat the bathwater and support the tub. Excavation revealed portions of the metal base of the tub nailed into small fragments of cedar from the original tub walls, a pipe that was probably used to either fill or drain the tub, and part of the chimney used to carry the smoke from the fire. Approximately 1,000 nails found in the soils nearby are the remnants of the building surrounding the tub. It is likely that this is the first *ofuro* excavated in North America.

The several discrete clusters of trash at the McKenzie Creek site pose the possibility that rather than living in a communal bunkhouse, the loggers resided in their own cabins, which they probably shared with their wives and perhaps children as well.

Recovered artifacts suggest that the McKenzie Creek camp was occupied a bit earlier than the Suicide Creek camp, probably around 1920 or 1921. This is based partly on the presence of some dishes with Japanese writing on the base, and others with 'Made in Japan' written in English, a practice which became common around this time. Dates assigned to other artifacts also correspond to this time period.

The relationship between these two camps is uncertain. Many of the artifacts from both camps, including Japanese dishes, beer and sake bottles, are identical, suggesting a strong link between the two camps. On the other hand, the overall layout of the camps is significantly different. It appears that the McKenzie Creek camp was entirely, or at least primarily, occupied by Nikkei. The situation at Suicide Creek is unclear. It may be that the same company or

at least the same people who worked at the McKenzie camp simply built and moved to the Suicide Creek camp when the supply of standing trees made the move economical. If this was the case, however, the move likely represented a significant difference in lifestyle, including a central kitchen and eating area and a communal bunkhouse. Another possibility is that the Nikkei represented only a fraction of the workforce at the Suicide Creek camp, which is structured as one would expect a typical Pacific Northwest camp of the period.

One intriguing possibility is that one or both camps was operated by Eikichi Kagetsu, who was prominent in the forest industry of southern British Columbia in the early 20th century, and probably most well-known for his Deep Bay Logging operations on Vancouver Island, which he began in the mid 1920s. According to Eikichi Kagetsu's son Tadashi (Jack), his father had logging operations in North Vancouver's Seymour Valley in the early 1920s, and at least one of the areas he is reported to have logged is close to the camps.

So far, only small portions of the two camps have been excavated. It is anticipated that further excavations planned for the summers of 2005 and 2006 will provide more insight into the lives of those Nikkei working in the logging camps of the Canadian west coast in the early 20th century. ❁

Bob Muckle teaches archaeology at Capilano College and is the director of the Seymour Valley Archaeology Project.

Richmond's Strawberry King by Carl Yokota

As a young journeyman linesman with the Winnipeg Electric Company, Jim Tonoski didn't particularly enjoy working on those extremely cold, windy Manitoba winter days. So in 1946 in search of

warmer and more hospitable work conditions, Jim made the move out to B.C. He found similar work with the B.C. Electric Company and in time invested in an eleven-acre property on Steveston Highway in

Richmond and started growing strawberries part-time. He conscientiously worked his strawberry fields in the evenings after getting home from work and on weekends. In 1962, Jim decided to

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Jim Tonoski with wide-brim, straw fedora hat. (Carl Yokota photo, 2004)

go full-time into strawberry farming, eventually operating seven properties under the Berry Lu Farms Ltd. name until his retirement in 1983.

In May of 2004, I visited Jim Tonoski at his Richmond home where we reminisced about old times. Like many Steveston Japanese Canadian teenagers in the 1960's, I earned my summer spending money picking strawberries for Jim Tonoski. Jim would be dressed in his khaki-colored field clothes and a wide-brimmed, straw fedora hat, picking up his workers at pre-determined locations around the Steveston and Richmond area in his covered pickup truck or old highway passenger bus. When I asked about that old bus, Jim indicated he had purchased it from an auto wrecker, fixed it up and with its use he was able to more efficiently transport and recruit his much needed berry pickers. On days when Jim drove his pickup truck, my friends and I would hop into the back of the open, canopied truck and sit ourselves down on benches placed lengthwise. With strawberry picking season normally starting around mid-June and lasting only a few weeks, the need to find good, fast pickers was very important. Jim recalled he usually had about 250 strawberry

pickers working his fields on any given day but his record-high was 325 pickers, harvesting a total of 15 tons of fruit for the day. Jim said, "Those Steveston Japanese kids were very good workers, I never had any problems with them!"

Our days would start out about 7:00 to 7:30 a.m. when Jim Tonoski would come by in his pickup truck or bus. On the strawberry fields by 8:00 a.m. we would pick all day until around 4:00 to 4:30 p.m. The delicious lunches my mother packed for me were painstakingly prepared. I can remember having rice covered with shaved bonita (*katsuo*) and seaweed (*ajitsuke nori*), maybe a sour plum (*umeboshi*) embedded in the center, sautéed sweet peas, egg omelet (*tamago makiyaki*), boiled and sliced wieners (not your typical Japanese *bento* fare but one I looked forward to), some fruit like orange slices or an apple, and two cans of partially frozen soda pop. The pop was purposely partially frozen because as the day warmed up, it would be thawed out by the time we took our lunch and the mid-afternoon breaks. Friends would huddle together in groups, trying to find shade whenever possible to have their meals and breaks. After a long, hot day's work, I would come home tired, with hands and fingernails stained red from the strawberries, and jean pants soiled with dirt and dust. I don't recall eating many berries in the field since I was out there like many of my friends to make as much money as possible. It was usually a competition as to who could pick the most and the fastest in their assigned strawberry rows. As you brought in your baskets or flats filled with strawberries either in "jam" or "stem" fashion (Jim or his field hands would specify how they would like their strawberries picked at the start of the day or as the day progressed), a notch would be punched on a card

indicating how much was picked. These cards would be turned in later on for cash payment. I don't recall if we were paid weekly but it was always nice to receive the little payment pouch with the hard-earned cash in it.

Apart from the daily camaraderie and competition, there was some fun and mischief out in the fields. When the field hands weren't looking, some of the boys would take part in starting strawberry-throwing fights, being careful not to be caught or else risk getting a good scolding. On one occasion, I can still recall after all these years when a certain group of Japanese boys, who shall remain nameless, pulled a prank on one of their comrades. When one unsuspecting fellow went to use a field outhouse, a few of the others snuck up to the outhouse and knocked it over with the poor occupant still inside.

The Tonoski's had a lot of competition in the Richmond area. There were other strawberry farmers such as the Bissetts, the Featherstones, the Gilmores, the McKims (Berry Dale Farms), the Mays, and the Zylmans (W & A Farms). All the farms were constantly looking for good berry pickers and Jim considered the Japanese kids were by far his best. Offering them competitive wages and free transport to and from the strawberry fields, Jim Tonoski first employed the Japanese pickers around 1950. Some farmers tried to entice pickers away from him, but many loyally returned, year after year. It was not unusual to find several members of a family picking berries for the same farmer. All three of my sisters also picked strawberries for Jim Tonoski during their teen years.

In managing his strawberry fields, Jim Tonoski was a very innovative and progressive farmer.



Tonoski strawberry field along Steveston Highway. (Jim Tonoski photo, ca. 1960)

He was the first local strawberry farmer to use a forklift attachment on his farm tractor to load his pallets of berries onto the delivery trucks, eliminating the backbreaking and time-consuming job of manually hoisting the heavy strawberry flats onto the trucks. Jim was also the first to use a specially designed two-man strawberry planting tractor

attachment. This greatly reduced the need for a large number of labourers required to manually plant strawberry plants and lessen the planting time required during the early spring. In 1956 Jim recalled there was a very bad freeze, which meant there were no strawberry plants available for planting. So, Jim Tonoski had plants flown in by air from Holland. He was

even sought out by, and contracted with his fellow strawberry farmers to get their fields ready for the season. Jim insisted the key to his farming success fell mainly to the generous assistance and sharing of farming techniques by large strawberry farmers, he befriended south of the border, in established agricultural communities like Lynden, Washington.

At the age of eighty-seven, Jim Tonoski is still well known in the strawberry farming business and to individuals like myself. I picked berries for him almost thirty-five years ago as it was the normal and anticipated thing to do during our teen summers. As my visit to Jim Tonoski's home this past spring came to its conclusion, Jim went into an adjoining room and returned donning a wide-brimmed, straw fedora hat just like the one he used to wear in the strawberry fields years ago. I was also pleasantly surprised to learn that for all his work and contributions, Jim's fellow farmers came to refer to him as the "Strawberry King". ❁

Berry Picking in Mount Lehman by Chuck Tasaka



Chuck Tasaka at 14 years of age. (Chuck Tasaka photo, 1960)

Good evening, I was asked by Stan to speak on behalf of the berry pickers. However, I had to think it over for awhile because I felt that I

would not be able to give a broad cross-section of the berry pickers' experiences. You see, I was a late comer by berry pickers' standards. Most of my sisters, brother and their friends preceded me, and they left Greenwood at age 10 and 11 to earn money for their families. They went to Magna Bay, Cawston, and Mt. Lehman. As you can see, our parents did not abide by the Child's Labour Code! Greenwood was unique in that most families had 10-12 children. So, the labour pool was abundant. Thus, Greenwood became a haven for recruiting migrant workers!

When I was still a young, impressionable child, I would hear stories about their berry picking days. They came home so tanned that some of them were almost

unrecognizable! I overheard them say that some girls would hang tea bags on a clothesline so that they would be used again the next day. They must have been very frugal with their food budget! Socially, they would talk about the boys they met at Mt. Lehman. I can still remember overhearing tidbits about this owner's son who was so bright and that he had these kissable lips! Oh, did I forget to mention that these girls worked at Fukawa's.

Now at 13 (year 1959), it was my turn to go. My sister was already in Mt. Lehman with her friends. However, I wanted to play baseball against Trail, B.C. so badly that I prolonged my journey to Mt. Lehman. Nevertheless, I get a call that I HAD to be there, just a day

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before the game! I was so despondent. To make the story short, our team lost 5-3, and the player from Christina Lake who replaced me made two errors. Little did I know that it would be my last time to enjoy my summer vacation!

I journeyed alone in an old, diesel Greyhound bus. I got off in Aldergrove, and Mr. Ishikawa and my sister were there to pick me up. Once there, it was a good thing that our older sisters were there to handle all the finances and cooking. Suzanne Shinde with Seishi, Judy Nitsui with Kenny, Lucy and I, but Shuji Hayashi was the only one without an older sister. Mr. and Mrs. Ishikawa provided rice and *shoyu*. To make maximum profit, the girls had to follow strict, fiscal restraints. You knew what that meant! Memories of drying tea bags became more vivid. Our lunch consisted of two cans of soup diluted with water and spiced up with salt and pepper over rice! That fed all 7 of us! For dinner, we upgraded it to wieners and baloney. Many times, we relied on home care packages to satisfy our voracious appetites.

Our hang-out was the Honkawa's Cafe. This is where we bought more canned soup, but at least, we could splurge occasionally and have hamburger sandwich and/or fries to supplement our hunger. The Co-op was another place where we met people from Mt. Lehman, namely the Shikaze boys, Tak Nikaido, and Eugene Miyoshi.

Even though we worked 8 hours a day, we enjoyed our 'Camp Ishikawa' for 6 weeks. Our food bill came out to a grand total of \$8.00 per person! Wow! We cleared over \$100. We could now buy school supplies, clothes, and still have enough

money left to visit Vancouver and the P.N.E.

The following year (1960), only the boys went to Mt. Lehman. Tony Imai, Vincent Yoshida, Peter Tanaka, Dennis Hamaguchi, Seishi, Shuji and I. Tony became our leader, financial advisor, and designated driver even though he only had a learner's licence. The things I remember are the guitar playing by Peter and listening to all the top 40 hits of the day. You know, Frankie Avalon, Annette, Bobby Rydell, etc.

Most of us worked hard all day, but you knew who didn't...because he had the cleanest, white straw hat! He was the one throwing over-ripened strawberries at others! We also knew the competitive pickers. They would pick anything...green ones, little bits of dirt, and leaves so that it would weigh more. You see, we were paid by the pound. It was 4½ cents. There were three of us who were slow pickers, but careful. Mrs. Ishikawa would designate us to pick the choicest raspberries to be sold in stores. The fast pickers had to pick JAM BERRIES! Whenever there was a down time in picking, the Ishikawas would send us to Ichikawas to pick bulbs for a day or two, or we had to do some weeding.

After a long day of work, we welcomed the hot, Japanese bath. Once we were cleaned up, Mr. Ishikawa would allow us to drive the tractor around the field. Well, one evening we drove the tractor into the ditch! It was a miracle that no one was hurt. I guess we were all nimble and agile back in those days. Mr. Ishikawa was so patient with us! On top of that, he allowed Tony to drive the pick-up truck to Honkawa's Cafe. Again, that was our hang-out. That freedom also gave the boys the

opportunity to visit the neighbouring farms at Katsumoto or Okabe. This is where the Midway girls stayed! Well, you know the rest. Tony met his future wife, June Yamazaki, and they are still married to this day!

In closing, the berry picking days brought us many fond memories, but more importantly, we learned to work hard, be responsible, to get along with others, and to bring in money for our families. However, the lasting impression, I and most of us will agree, is how wonderful the farm families were to us. Especially for our group, Mr. and Mrs. Ishikawa were unbelievably patient and hospitable. They would provide us with anything we required, and they would never get mad at us, but in a subtle way we knew when they were not pleased with our results.

Many years later, during my university days, I had a teaching practicum in Langley. I asked the Ishikawas if they would let me stay at their place for two weeks. Every day for those two weeks, Mr. Ishikawa would drive me to school, pick me up at lunch, drive me back, and then pick me up again after school! Mrs. Ishikawa would have delicious breakfast, lunch and dinner prepared for me every day! They never asked me to do chores, and I am sure that they were very busy. Therefore, I am ever so grateful to them for whatever success I had. You know, I may not be here to make this speech if it were not for Mr. and Mrs. Ishikawa. I owe my teaching career to them, and I suppose that is why I am here tonight speaking in front of you. Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of the berry pickers of days gone by. ❀

Chuck Tasaka presented this talk at the Nikkei Week Dinner.

The Times They Are A' Changin' by Theodore T. Hirota

During the Bronze Age, tin was mined on the Cornwall coast of Britain and shipped to the

Mediterranean to be combined with copper to produce bronze, a hard metal that could be turned into

weapons and other useful tools. When iron eventually replaced bronze, the tin miners became

obsolete. Every age has a period of rapid transition based on new technology. In retrospect, I believe that I lived through such a transition during the early 1950s.

My brother and I along with my maternal grandparents left Chapleau, Ontario by train at the end of the school year in the spring of 1952. My memory of our departure is forever locked in an incongruous perception. Grandpa was incapacitated with rheumatoid arthritis and was brought to the train station by stretcher. However, the stretcher could not be turned from the stairwell of the passenger car into the aisle to his seat, so that he was unceremoniously inserted through a side window with everyone on the platform watching!

Dad, Mom, and my preschool-age sister had gone ahead of us by train to Steveston, B.C. Dad purchased a salmon gillnet boat named **RUTH IRENE** from a fisherman who worked for the Canadian Fishing Company at the Gulf of Georgia cannery in Steveston for about \$6000, a large sum in those days. The **RUTH IRENE** was a 36' by 8' cedar planked fishing boat drawing about 4' of water. With a 110 hp GMC 6 cylinder marine conversion gasoline engine, the large boat was underpowered. With less disposable capital, my uncle Roy purchased a prewar 30 footer with a 15 hp one-cylinder Easthope engine.

We were not among the first to return to the B.C. fishing industry after the 1942 evacuation of Japanese Canadians from the west coast. Following the legislated franchising (i.e. the right to vote) of Japanese Canadians in 1948 and the lifting of restrictions under the War Measures Act in 1949, B.C. fishing companies began to encourage the return of former fishermen to their previous occupation. Some of the earliest returnees were instructed by company officials to reside in

Vancouver and not Steveston, work on their nets in Terra Nova, a then isolated corner of Lulu Island, and to fish only at night. These strategies were designed to avoid any confrontation with non-Japanese Canadian fishermen. By the time our family arrived in 1952, we experienced little or no prejudice.

Fishing for the Gulf of Georgia provided our family with a 'cannery house' located at the corner of Chatham St. and 4th Ave. The south side of Chatham St. down to the river from 4th Ave to 5th Ave contained about 20 such houses that were rented to employees of the Gulf for about \$20 per month. Our house, unlike most of the other houses, shared a flush toilet outhouse with the neighbor next door. Mom strenuously objected to this arrangement, so that it was not long before Dad started moving interior walls and partitioning off a bathroom area to install a toilet and bathtub. I recall going to the Steveston Hotel that summer to take baths at \$0.25 a dunk.

In the early 1950s salmon gillnets were still made from linen fibers and hung on cotton three-ply twisted rope lines. Gillnets were designed with large open meshes so that the salmon would be caught by their gills as they tried to pass through the net. Linen gillnets were made from loosely twisted fibers the color of sunflower seeds. They absorbed the river silt quickly and became very heavy when wet. In addition, fish slime was difficult to remove. The fibers did not stretch and weakened quickly if the nets were not placed in a tank of 'blue stone' (copper sulfate) for a few hours to cut the slime, and then washed thoroughly before being racked to dry. Linen nets were used on the Fraser River from before the turn of the century. Gillnets were manufactured by Dominion Textiles in Drummondville, Quebec. The round cedar tanks about 5' in

diameter and about 4' high were made in the form of a straight-sided barrel with three steel hoops that held the vertical staves together. The bottom of the barrel was also made of strips of cedar with a tapered edge that fitted into a groove at the bottom of the vertical staves. When the tank was filled with water, the swelling wood tightened and became leak-proof. The tanks looked very much like present day outdoor, wooden, whirlpool tubs. The 'blue stone' was shipped to the cannery in paper bags with crossbones and a skull stamped on the bag to indicate its lethality. When a bag was dumped into a cedar tank the water turned a beautifully blue-turquoise like the Aegean Sea. When the gillnet boats came in on Friday after five days and nights of fishing the nets needed to be treated, washed, and dried to minimize deterioration. Repairs were carried out on the weekend and the net was reloaded by a power-operated drum onto the stern of the boat and readied for the Monday morning opening.

While some net racks were located on floating docks that made it easier to unload and load nets from the gillnet boat, most net racks were located on fixed docks mounted on pilings up to 20' above the low water mark. Thus if the tide was out, hauling a wet and heavy net into a blue stone tank located on the edge of the dock was back-breaking work. Most fishermen would wait until the tide came in, except when time was of the essence, then the fishermen could be heard loading nets well into the night under lamp light, irrespective of tidal conditions. Gillnets were limited to 200 fathoms (1200') in length in the inland waterways and 300 fathoms (1800') in the high seas. Similarly, the depths of the nets were 60 meshes and 90 meshes, respectively. Thus a 6" mesh net was 30' deep for inland waters.

Fishermen working for each
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cannery had the use of net racks, net lofts, docking privileges, a boat hoist for hull repairs, and a store for fishing-related supplies. In exchange, fishermen were expected to turn in their catch to company collector boats that plied the fishing grounds and not to 'cash' collectors who paid several cents more per pound for their salmon. In fact many fishermen used the cash collectors as a ready form of quick cash for purchasing fuel and other supplies while turning in the majority of their catch to the company.

Beginning in about 1953, nylon gillnets manufactured in Japan began to make inroads on Canadian linen net sales. The new nets were pure white, much lighter, and much stronger than the linen nets. Unlike linen nets, nylon nets could be dyed the color of the water in which they were used, green for the river and blue for the ocean. In the early years, some thought the stark white was too visible to the salmon and nets were dyed pink! In addition to stretching before breaking, nylon three-ply twine had a tighter twist than linen twine and remained cleaner. While more expensive than linen nets, nylon nets outlasted linen nets by many seasons. Canadian companies were slow off the mark in nylon net production and took many years to recover from the rapid change.

The cork and lead lines that hold the net in the water like a giant curtain also underwent a similar shift. The prewar cork line was made of cotton, three-ply, twisted, and ½" in diameter. When new, these lines had to be stretched before being threaded with tarred cedar floats otherwise the lines had a tendency to twist and kink. I recall one time when Dad decided to stretch a new cork line using the *RUTH IRENE* to pull the line across water. I wrapped one end of the line several times around a piling on the dock and held the end in a gloved

hand. Dad took the other end and tied it to his boat, and moved the boat away from the dock under power. With the line stretched several hundred yards out it was difficult to communicate the need for Dad to stop at some point. When the tension became too great the rope slipped out of my hand, and the end whipped around the piling several times and shot into the water, but not before giving me a good smack across my legs. Fortunately, my rubber boots limited the damage to severe bruising and did not draw blood. Needless to say, we never did that again. When preparing cork lines sold by the company, Clarke forklift towmotors were used to stretch the lines safely on dry pavement.

The lead line had the same problem of twisting but with an additional problem. The ¼" diameter cotton lead line was created by running the line through moulds which would form slender, oval-shaped, lead weights about every 8" along the line. However, since the line had a three-ply twist some of the molten lead would escape out from the ends and form little knobs during the manufacturing process. Knobs would then catch on the netting and play havoc with racking or setting the net and had to be manually cut away, a task that was very time consuming.

The new cork lines were made of braided nylon. Molded foam plastic floats in gold, white, or cream replaced the traditional tarred, cedar floats. Floatation was increased and the weight was decreased, both by several factors. Stretching new lines and retarring old corks became unnecessary. The early nylon lead lines were found to be too strong when snagged on rocks or sunken tree trunks and were soon replaced by braided sisal or hemp lines that would break when snagged and thus limit damage to a small area of the net. The natural fibers were braided

around a circular lead rod that was crimped to break every ½" and thus produced a flexible and smooth snake-like lead line that eliminated many of the problems associated with the old line.

The new nets not only reduced the labour of handling and maintenance but also proved to be very efficient at catching salmon because the net was less detectable in the water. The transition from linen to nylon nets occurred almost within a season. Once nylon nets became available, fishermen would not buy linen nets. The old stock of new linen nets at the Gulf of Georgia remained in the back storage building until years later when a marketing idea emerged from the head office. My family was one of a number of families employed to turn 6' strips of linen netting into small, bow-tie shaped bundles held together with a ¼ lb canned salmon label. These bundles could be used in the garden as a trellis for flowers or vegetables, and were offered as an incentive to purchase Gold Seal canned salmon in the grocery store. Several winters were spent cutting, looping, and labelling fishnets before the linen stockpile ran out.

Catches with the new nets increased at such a rate that the fisheries reduced the days open for fishing from 5 days a week, 24 hours a day, to fewer and fewer days per week so that over the course of several decades the time was reduced to as low as 12 hrs for one day only on the Fraser River. An attempt to introduce clear monofilament nylon nets was quickly terminated by the Department of Fisheries because they were virtually invisible in the water and would increase catches even more than the regular nylon nets.

The effect of reducing the amount of time available for fishing had a stress-inducing side effect. Previously, when equipment

breakdowns occurred during the 5 days of fishing, repairs could be undertaken and the fisherman could return to fishing with only a day or two lost. With only one day or even worse, a 12 hours opening in a week, equipment failure meant the whole week was lost. When fishing was restricted to one day in a week, large numbers of salmon would congregate in the mouth of the Fraser River and large catches were possible if one was in the right place at the right time. Traditional skills associated with fishing experience became less important than high-tech gear in good condition in combination with pure luck.

When Dad returned to fishing in 1952, he had to reestablish his fishing and navigational skills after a hiatus of ten years. I recall several times when Dad would set his net in such a way that the end of the net would drift past a channel marker buoy without getting caught. The drift would begin some distance upriver from the channel marker. Thus timing and an eye for the direction of wind as well as intimate knowledge about tidal and river currents played a role in ensuring that the net would come close to but not get caught by the buoy. This was no easy task since the end of the net could be a distance of 1200' from the boat. Most fishermen stayed well clear of buoys and thus schools of salmon could be found near a buoy. If the drift was slow enough or if only a small portion of the net was out then errors of judgement could be corrected by towing the net away from the buoy under power. On one particular occasion, the tide started to ebb and combined with the river current to produce a fast flow. Dad's luck ran out and the end of the net was caught by the buoy, which rapidly swung the net in an arc until it was in a straight taut line parallel to the flow of water. I have no memory of the traumatic

event and how Dad extricated himself from the situation. Instead, my vivid heart-stopping recollection is one of water boiling up behind the huge red buoy and the flagpole at the end of the net disappearing beneath the fast-moving current. In fishing we were not infrequently faced with the power and destruction of natural forces.

Dad kept records of past season catches and would use such information four years later to identify the time and the location to maximize his catch for that season's run of salmon. The different species of salmon - spring, sockeye, coho, chums, and pinks began their migration upriver at different times in the season and each year different runs would appear. So the task of "maximizing a catch" season after season was not an easy one but one that Dad always looked forward to each spring. Dad frequently talked about the Adam's River run since it was the largest in the Fraser River system.

I myself began commercial salmon fishing in the summers between attending high school. My first foray was inauspicious. Harold Steves Sr. a local farmer provided a 14' clinker-built dory with a stationary Briggs & Stratton 1.5 hp

engine. The boat held about 150' of a hand-me-down nylon net, a cotton cork line and square plastic floats. Without a roller in the back, the net had to be manually released and retrieved over the stern. With the tide running out and the river in full force the dory could barely hold her own going upriver. However, as a summer past time Huckleberry Finn could not have enjoyed it more. Eventually, the head gasket on the engine started to leak and curtailed my activities for the season. Despite the short season that year, I was hooked!

With Dad's help I designed and built a 15' x5' plywood skiff in the garage and with a 10 hp Johnson outboard motor began the next season in earnest. The stern of the skiff was extended by 2' in the next season, a low cabin added up front, and the engine was replaced by a 35 hp Johnson outboard motor. After several seasons, I gave up fishing in the summer to work for wages in our cannery's gillnet loft. I recall being in conflict soon after I began work in the cannery. My parents admonished me to work hard and not disgrace the family name by any slothfulness. At work, the union representative soon took me aside and told me to slow down or I would make the other

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Ted Hirota with his new mosquito boat. (Ted Hirota photo, ca. 1957)

workers look bad. I survived and learned among other things, how to create a coil of 3-ply cork line by simultaneously drawing up the line from behind me with my hand and twisting the line with my fingers as I formed each loop. This procedure ensures that the line can be pulled off the coil without producing any kinks. I do this to this day with the outdoor electrical cord.

By the end of 1980 when Dad retired from fishing at age 70 he had replaced his 6-cylinder gas engine with a powerful diesel engine and added both a rotating radar antenna and a small plywood dingy for safety on the cabin. Of course, inside the cabin, a radio-telephone, two depth-finders, an automatic pilot as well as a direction finder were also in place. So that while he held to the importance of using his skill and knowledge in fishing, he readily embraced the advancing technology in the industry.

An administrative factor placing pressure on the salmon population was the government's refusal to limit the number of commercial fishing licences. Commercial fishing was available to anyone who was prepared to pay a nominal fee for a licence. News of people catching a year's wages in one week attracted many to the industry on a part-time basis and swelled the numbers catching the limited salmon run available each year. Commercial fishermen whose only employment

was fishing and who were good at what they did could have survived, even without unemployment insurance, if the number of licences had been restricted. However, with unemployment insurance available to supplement a part-time fisherman's income and ensure survival to the next season, the numbers continued to increase.

The government's response to the pressure was to limiting fishing time in any one area (e.g. Fraser River) and open up other areas (e.g. west coast of Vancouver Island) to limit the catch and allow enough fish to escape upriver to spawn and replenish itself in a 4 year cycle. By the 1960s and 1970s however, successful commercial fishermen had replaced their small gillnet boats with larger, faster boats. In my uncle's case, a state-of-the-art 40' V-hulled fiberglass behemoth with diesel power was purchased for a sum of \$40,000. Such gillnet boats could now travel from one area to another to match openings and closings or to travel from a low-yield area to a high yield area within the limited opening times each week. The application of high-tech advances in the industry confounded much of the attempt by the government to reduce the catch. Eventually, the government began to restrict fishing licences to specific areas, and to limit how many licences a fisherman could hold. Finally, in the 1980s the government began not only to restrict

fishing licences but also to buy back licences as well as gillnet boats to reduce the numbers. Skyrocketing cost have probably done as much or more to discourage new fishermen than any government efforts.

I have been away from the fishing industry for decades now but on my return visits to Steveston I have observed the shift in emphasis from processed canned salmon to a huge variety of fresh caught seafood, for the general public as well as the restaurant trade. The move to aluminum boats from fiberglass and wood boats has altered the shipbuilding landscape. The bow pickup rather than the stern pickup of nets to avoid the net tangling in the propeller reflects the continuing improvements within the fishing industry. Demographically, the shift from Japanese Canadian fishermen to other Asian Canadian fishermen may have much to do with changing immigration patterns as with the shift of Sansei and Yonsei offspring to more professional occupations.

Following decades of over-fishing and mismanagement, gillnet fishing of salmon in Pacific waters will probably go the way of east coast cod fishing and be replaced by extensive large-scale salmon farm fishing. Given my particular background, I am not proud to say so but I now eat Atlantic farmed salmon, and enjoy it as much as the west coast variety. For me, my wild salmon days are over. ❀

Family History Series No. 2

Masao and Fumie Hayashi (Part 1) by Patsy Kikumi Kikegawa

Masao Hayashi

Hirokichi Hayashi, Masao's father was born April 14, 1866 in Mio-Mura, Hidaka-gun, Wakayama-ken, Japan. His siblings included Cho-Notsuke, Fukusaburo and Kaya. Hirokichi was the youngest. He came to Canada sometime in 1887 as a young man. He worked as a

fisherman and saw the opportunities and prosperity associated with the fisheries and sent word back to Wakayama. When the fishing was good, they returned to their villages for the winter.

Around the year 1900, on one of his return trips to Japan, he married Yasu Hanazawa. No one

knows the names of Yasu's parents, but we have a picture of her father, and a separate picture of her mother. Yasu was the oldest. She had four siblings: Takezo, Gin, Yoshie and Genzo.

Hirokichi and Yasu had five children. The oldest, Rintaro was born October 25, 1901. In 1904 - 1905,



Hirokichi and Yasu Hayashi. (Hayashi Family photo, ca. 1949)

when Japan went to war with Russia, Hirokichi joined the army and was sent to the *Hohei*, the artillery. On September 13, 1906, the second child, Setsue was born. Hirokichi immigrated to Canada earlier to prepare for the family. On April 8, 1913, Yasu and Rintaro immigrated to Canada aboard the *S.S. SADO MARU*. Setsue was left under the care of her grandmother, Hanazawa *Oba-san* until she was 16 or 17 when she immigrated to Canada. Hirokichi and Yasu lived in a cannery house owned by the Gulf of Georgia. Masao, the third child, was born February 25, 1914 in Steveston, B.C. Yasu worked in the cannery even when he was still a baby. She would wrap him up and strap him to her back and this way would be able to work and look after him. The fourth child, Saburo was born March 21, 1918, and youngest, Sueko was born June 25, 1920.

Most of the Japanese children attended the new Japanese Language School on No.1 Road from 1909 to 1923. Japanese students were integrated into the Lord Byng Elementary School in 1923. This school was too small to accommodate all the students, so overflow classes were held in the Japanese Language School for a few years. One of the amusing stories told about Masao, was that he was a very naughty boy, always fooling around and seemingly not paying any attention to his schoolwork, but when the teacher would spring a question on him, he

always had the answers, so she could not reprimand him. When he was around 10 or 11 years old, the teacher, Miss Esperen (Mrs. Hunter), told the class to dismiss in the proper manner in which they were taught. Masao climbed out through an open window. His best friend was Kazuo Tanaka and they remained best of friends all their lives. After graduating from Lord Byng Elementary School, he went by streetcar to Cambie High School. He quit at grade 11 because he didn't like it and wasn't learning anything worthwhile. Besides, he could be fishing and making money.

Dad's first fishing trip was with his older brother in 1927. Rintaro inherited his father's boat and license at the age of 26, when his father retired at the age of 60. Dad was just 13 years old.

Masao said that his first fishing experience on his own was on a boat with sails, and everything was done by hand. The nets were made of heavy linen and the corks were made of wood. It was a very backbreaking job, setting the nets and bringing them in. The cannery tugs would tow all the sail gillnetters to the fishing grounds on the Skeena River. At the age of 15, he became Inosuke Ueyama's partner and would go every summer up to the Skeena. A lot of the fishermen could not afford to buy their own boats at that time, so they worked on the cannery

boats. Eventually they would be able to purchase their own boats. Masao bought his first boat when he was around the age of 21, which was built by the Nakade Boat Works. He sold the boat a few years later, and bought a bigger boat, which was made by the cannery. He would leave Steveston near the end of March, head up to Skeena and fish in that area until the end of August. Then he would return to Steveston and from September until the end of November, sometimes into December, he would fish locally for chum salmon.

Uncle Rintaro said that during the First World War, there was no movement to chase the Japanese out of fishing, but after 1919, the government decided not to allow the number of Japanese fishermen to increase. In 1922-23 they began to cut down the number of Japanese licenses. The Japanese decided they had to do something about this and protested to the government with no results. In 1926, a committee decided to get rid of all the Japanese fishermen by 1937. At that time, in Steveston alone, there were more than five hundred fishermen. A lot of Japanese decided that the only thing to do was to file a case in court so they went to the Japanese Consul, who said that the Japanese fishermen were responsible for the problem

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Lord Byng School class. Masao Hayashi seated, sixth from left. (Hayashi Family photo, ca. 1925)



Rintaro and Masao Hayashi. Masao with championship cup. (Hayashi Family photo, 1939)

because they didn't cooperate with white fishermen. Then a new Consul was appointed in 1927 and the Japanese fishermen filed a suit in the Supreme Court. One clause of the Fisheries Act said that the minister may revoke a license and our lawyer took this "may" to mean that this limited the Minister's decision-making power, and it was against the Canadian constitution to take away the licenses of Japanese Canadians (naturalized). That decision in favour of the Japanese fishermen came in 1928, but Parliament appealed the case to the Privy Council in London. The case was tried in England in 1929. The Japanese fishermen were able to hire a Mr. John Simon, one of the best lawyers in London at the time, because of the help from the Japanese Embassy in London. Mr. Simon said that it was against international mutual agreement and also against the Anglo-Japanese accord to discriminate between people of one country who were supposed to be British subjects. So the Japanese fishermen won the case. But in British Columbia, only half of the Japanese fishermen remained.

Masao was also very interested in the martial arts. His first interest was Jujitsu, but he soon lost interest and quit. When he was 17 years old, he became interested in Kendo. He also joined a Sumo wrestling club when he was 18, but he lost interest and did not continue. So he went back to Kendo, which was being taught by his older brother Rintaro and a family friend, Mr. Akune. They started the Kendo school in Steveston and invited a 10th Dan instructor, Mr. Takano from Japan to speak at the school. Dad concentrated on Kendo and won his first "cup" at the age of 19. He also won a championship in 1939 and was awarded a silver cup, which the family still has.

Dad had learnt only the basics at the Steveston Japanese Language School. He self-studied and learnt to read and write the more complex Chinese characters and became very knowledgeable in the Japanese language. He joined the *Seinenkai*, a young people's association and he studied every minute he could, especially after he became president of the club.

Sometime around 1933, the

Hayashi family moved into a big new house on No. 9 Road, between No. One Road and Railway. No. 9 Road is now called Steveston Highway. Dad's uncle, Mr. Sakiyama, who was a carpenter, built the house with the help of Uncle Rintaro, Dad, Uncle Saburo and Grandpa. Dad was 18 or 19 years old at the time. Mr. Sakiyama was Dad's mother's brother, who was adopted by the Sakiyama family to carry on the family name. This was quite a common practice with the Japanese. Uncle Saburo, at age 18, contacted TB and was hospitalized in the sanitarium in Vancouver.

Fumie Yodogawa

Fumie's father, Kichitaro Yodogawa was born April 12, 1877 in Fukuoka-ken, Japan. His father's name was Norisuke and his mother's name was Nobu (Otabe). Kichitaro didn't say too much about his parents so Mom doesn't know too much about them. Kichitaro was the oldest and he had two sisters and two brothers: Yasu, Taki, Moichiro and Sahachiro. Kichitaro came to Canada when approximately 30 years old. Although he was the eldest son, and responsible for looking after the family house, he decided to go to Canada where opportunities were greater. He told Moichiro, his younger brother that he was now the owner of the house as he would be going to Canada and did not expect to return. When he arrived in Canada, he stayed with Tomekichi Homma's family working at the lumberyard. A



Hayashi family house on Steveston Highway. (Hayashi Family photo, ca. 1933)

lot of the young men when arriving in Canada would be helped out by Mr. Homma. Later on he would go fishing in Rivers Inlet, and the rest of the time he worked on the railway near Alberta. Fumie said that he was a good father.

Grandmother Ichino's father, Uтаро Murakami was born in 1863 and died in 1918. Uтаро's first journey was to Hawaii, where he worked for a couple of years. He then came to Canada to work, first in carpentry, and then exporting salted fish to Japan. He made a few trips back to Japan before he married Tsune. She was a beautiful kind person. Their first child, Ichino, was born April 1, 1894, in Innoshima Mitsuki-gun, Hiroshima-ken, Japan. Uтаро, Tsune and Ichino then came to Canada around 1899. Tsune was one of the first six women to come to Canada. Ichino was the oldest of 7 children. Yonetaro, Masao, Hana, Minoru, Michiko and Baby were all born in Steveston. Uтаро passed away before Fumie was born so she doesn't know much about him. Michiko (Konno) told me that when her father died, she was 13 years old. Her mother Tsune had to find work to look after her children. She took in odd jobs and also worked in a cannery. They moved to New Westminster and later moved back to Steveston.

After doing a bit of research, I found out that the Murakami's were called pirates. This was because the Murakami's were shipbuilders and controlled the inland sea and charged tariffs to other ships. Apparently there is a museum in Innoshima, Japan, which tells this story.

When Kichitarо met Ichino, she was only 17 years old, but he liked her and she liked him so they got married sometime in 1913, and had 7 children. Fumie said that her mother had all her children at home and that her father delivered them all. They lived in a cannery house owned by



*Kichitarо and Ichino Yodogawa.
(Hayashi Family photo, 1913)*

the Imperial Cannery. The house was like a boathouse. It had 3 bedrooms, a parlor and a kitchen. Mitsuru was born November 11, 1914, and Fumie was born on April 8, 1919. The rest of the children included Sumiko, Katsuko, Teruko, Setsuko and Tomie.

Fumie also went to Lord Byng Elementary School. When the youngest child, Tomie was born, Ichino became quite ill and so the responsibility of looking after the new baby fell on Fumie's shoulders. She was only 11 years old. In the old days, as Fumie would say, when there was a problem with unknown illnesses, the

doctors would tell the patients' family that the patient must be kept at home. Aunt Michiko helped out a lot in caring for the family. When Fumie was 13, she worked in the cannery during the summer months. Times were tough for Mom, going to school and having to look after the family, so at the age of 15 she quit school. Her mother's illness lasted for 5 years. Fumie recollects how arduous a task it was when she had to do the laundry, especially the sheets. There were six beds and all the sheets had to be washed by hand. Laundry water was taken from the *furo*, a wooden square tub with an iron plate bottom, which was heated by making a fire under it. The *furo* was housed in the *furo-ba*, a Japanese style bathhouse, which was built separately from the houses. She said you had to scrub them on a washboard, rinse them, wring them out and rinse them again. The sheets were then hung out to dry. Fumie said she hated washing the sheets the most. She always reminds us of how

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Yodogawa family. Front row, from left: Teruko, Kichitarо, Tomie, Ichino, Setsuko. Back row: Sumiko, Mitsuru, Fumie, Katsuko. (Hayashi Family photo, 1939)

lucky we are that all we do is put the clothes into the washer, add soap and push a button. I must say I'm certainly glad I wasn't born then.

At the age of 16, Fumie got a job with a Japanese family named Watanabe, who owned the Busy Bee Grocery Store in Vancouver and needed a housekeeper and babysitter for their 4 children. Aiko was 5, Sumiko 4, and the twins, Keiko and Fumiko who were 6 months old. Tadao Yoshida, who worked at the Busy Bee Grocery Store, showed Fumie how to get to the house. They went by streetcar into Vancouver and then transferred to a bus. The grocery store was somewhere on Robson Street and the family lived near Stanley Park. Every Sunday, she would take the children to play in the park. Fumie lived with the Watanabes for one year.

Masao and Fumie

Pre-war Years

When Masao was 22 or 23, he met Fumie who was 18, and began courting her. Courting was when a group of guys would buy noodles, or something to eat, and go over to the girl's house to visit. One group of men that came over with Masao included Takeuchi, Hori, Mizuyabu and Sakata. Another group included Hama, Shiho, Nishimura and Doi. Fumie was working at the cannery and also attended a sewing school. She said that Masao was a prankster, always trying to scare her. He would hide in the net loft and drop things from above as she was walking past. Another time, Fumie remembers how thoughtful Masao was. When her sisters were all down with a cold, Masao would drop in to see them and bring each of them a candy to brighten up their spirits.

When Masao decided he wanted to marry Fumie, his mother would not approve of the marriage and refused to give her consent. He told his

mother that if she didn't consent to his marrying Fumie, he would jump the next boat to Japan and join the Japanese army and go fight in Mongolia and probably be killed in action.

Masao's best friend, Kazuo Tanaka married Sawako Okada, on January 9, 1938. Masao's older brother, Rintaro suggested to Masao that he should get married too. So on January 19, 1938, Masao and Fumie were married at the Steveston Japanese United Church. Reverend K. Nomoto officiated and the reception followed at the church. The Best Man was Kazuo Tanaka and the Maid of Honour was Fumio Hamagami. The Usher was Noboru Konishi and the Bridesmaid was Fumie's sister, Sumiko Yodogawa.

Masao and Fumie lived in a cannery house in Steveston, and on May 30, 1939, their first child, Saeko (Shirley) was born. Fumie said that when she learnt how to make pancakes, and Masao really liked them, she made pancakes for him every morning until he got fed up with it.

In early July 1940, Masao ended up with blood poisoning in both hands.



Masao and Fumie Hayashi. (Hayashi Family photo, 1938)

He was hospitalized for a month in Skeena and returned home July 31, 1940, and the next day, Hiromi (Judy) was born. He went back into the hospital and was lucky enough to have a doctor who treated him with this new drug. In all it took 2 months for the treatment to work. He was lucky not to have lost his fingers let alone his life, but it left his index finger on his left hand slightly bent. He could not work for the rest of that year, so things were tough for the family. Masao talked about how he tried to feed himself with his feet, using his toes as his fingers. It seemed to intrigue him, what if he didn't have any hands, how would he be able to survive. He even practiced counting coins with his toes, and putting the coins into a purse. Because Fumie worked at the cannery, there was food on the table.

Fumie also remembers the time when they got into a fight. Masao was late one night so she locked him out. When he got home, and she wouldn't let him in, he threatened to break the door down with an axe. Fumie got scared so she let him in, but ran out and hid in one of the outdoor toilets. She was there for over an hour and Masao came searching for her. He looked everywhere, and finally when he found her said, "What a stupid thing to do, hiding in here, get up and come home".

Masao went back to fishing the next spring, and times were starting to look promising for his family and he was able to purchase his second boat, which he bought from a Mr. Koshihara (he was retiring and wanted to sell his boat to Masao). But shortly after he bought the boat, Japan attacked Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941, and things started to turn bad. All the Japanese were not allowed to go out after dark and they had to put blankets over their windows. Then they were told that they would have to move into the

interior, at least 100 miles away from the coast. The fishermen were told to sell their boats, but most of the Japanese fishermen didn't believe this. Masao probably wouldn't have sold his boats either, but one of the natives up in Skeena offered to buy his boats. The first boat sold for \$500 and the second boat sold for \$700. He put this money into the bank, but when he wanted to draw out the money, he was told that all assets were frozen and would be held until after the war.

Internment Years

When it came time for the families to be relocated, they were told to only take what was necessary for a few months or so, and leave the rest of their personal property in the houses, and when they returned after the war, they could reclaim these items. For some reason Fumie doesn't even know why, but she took the family photo's with them. So Fumie and Masao packed up all their personal belongings, all the new dishes and blankets, bedroom furniture, etc., and left it in Hayashi's house, along with the rest of the families belongings, in the care of Mr. Urhquart, who was a friend and neighbor of Uncle Rintaro's. However, a year after the internment, all the belongings and the house were confiscated by the government Custodian of Enemy Property and sold for a fraction of their value. I believe the amount that Fumie and Masao got for their belongings was about \$300. I don't know what Uncle Rintaro got for his property and house. Fumie said that when she heard that her new bedroom suite had been sold without them even being consulted, she was very hurt and it made her very angry.

The Japanese families were instructed to show up at Hastings Park where they would be told where they would be relocated. The men



Hayashi family in Sandon. Clockwise from top left: Mom, Saburo, Dad, Shirley and Judy. (Hayashi Family photo, 1942)

were separated from their wives and children. If you had already made plans to move into the interior you were allowed to make your way on your own, as long as you moved 100 miles away from the coast. Rintaro Hayashi's family had made plans for all the family members to go to Alberta, but these plans were thwarted because there weren't enough adults of working age. There had to be 4 adults to work in the fields. Rintaro Hayashi and his family, along with Grandpa and Grandma Hayashi finally decided to go to Kaslo. Masao and Fumie were also denied so they lived in an apartment above a grocery store on Powell Street in Vancouver for a couple of months. Mom said that while they were in Vancouver, they used to take *nigiri* and other food items to Sumiko, Grandpa and

Grandma Yodogawa, Terry, Sets and Tomi. I asked why they were allowed to stay in an apartment outside while all the others had to stay at Hastings Park but she didn't know why. Grandpa and Grandma Yodogawa, Terry, Sets and Tomi relocated to Kaslo. Sumiko and Masao Hiraoka and his parents relocated to Winnipeg. Dad and Mom were one of the last families to leave Vancouver. This was around June or July of 1942 when Dad was asked if he would go to Sandon, BC.

Then Masao was approached and asked if he would go to Sandon, BC, as they needed a Kendo instructor. So Masao, Fumie, Saeko and Hiromi, along with Dad's younger brother, Saburo, went to Sandon, which was a ghost town until

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Girls kendo class in Kaslo, BC. Masao in centre of middle row. (Hayashi Family photo, ca. 1945)

the Japanese were relocated there. When they arrived, all that was available was an old dilapidated shed that looked and smelt like a chicken coop. It had 2 rooms, a kitchen and a bedroom. They lived in these cramped conditions for two years. Reiichi (Rey) was born in Sandon on August 29, 1943. He was premature and weighed only four pounds. He was named after a man named Kanehara Reiichi. Masao taught Kendo and worked in the silver mines. He also taught himself to play the mandolin, *samisen* and even tried his hand at playing the violin. He loved music and sang all the time. Mom said that when they left Vancouver, one of the most important things she took with her was her sewing machine and three, 100-pound bags of rice and four *taru* (bamboo barrels) of soya sauce. It was in Sandon, that Masao became interested in *haiku* and later became a *sensei* to a group of avid *haiku* enthusiasts in Richmond. The most memorable *haiku* poem he wrote, that our family will always cherish, is the one he wrote a few months before he passed away.

Then the government told the

families that they had to leave Sandon. As the rest of the Hayashi family was in Kaslo and because they needed another Kendo instructor, Masao packed his family and moved to Kaslo, where Kikumi (Patsy) was born on December 16, 1944. Fumie said that she barely made it to the hospital. She said I literally dropped out of her on the stairs inside the hospital. I weighed in at almost six pounds, the heaviest of the kids. Fumie said that Masao was writing *haiku* at the time I was born and that was where I got my name. It was in Kaslo that Rey was given a stuffed gray elephant from a Mr. Fujimura. He called it "Bimbo". Fumie doesn't know where he got the name, but that's what it was called. On Rey's fiftieth birthday, I made him a copy of his "Bimbo", or something similar to it as a joke. When we took a trip to Kaslo, BC in 1997, we couldn't find the original hospital, but when we inquired with the staff at the new hospital, they told us where the original hospital was. Fumie couldn't remember where we lived. Only that it was over a drug store.

Once again, the family was told to move on, and in 1945, we moved

to Slocan, BC (actually, Popoff which was a community just outside of Slocan). There were other communities as well (Lemon Creek, Bay Farm). When we arrived, there was no housing available for a family, so we lived in a bunkhouse for two months with Mr. Tanaka, Mr. Miura and Mr. and Mrs. Yamada. Then we moved into a bigger house and lived there until the spring of 1946. Fumie remembers the time when Masao wanted to go to Lemon Creek to see Mrs. Hibi, but rather than taking the train, he said to her that it was only a couple of miles and would be a nice outing. So Rey and I rode in the buggy, and poor Shirley and Judy had to walk. Instead of just a couple of miles, it turned out almost 4 miles through the mountains and dark forest. Fumie was certain we would be attacked and killed by wild animals. We stayed the night at Mrs. Hibi's and the next day, Fumie and us kids went back to Popoff by train and Masao walked the rest of the way back home with the buggy.

At this time, the war had ended and the Japanese had a choice of either going back to Japan or going further east. Dad decided to go to Alberta rather than going to Japan. He figured we stood a better chance in Canada than in Japan and he heard that there was a food shortage there. His best friend, Kazuo Tanaka and his family decided to go to Japan. Dad tried to persuade him not to go but Kazuo's mother and father wanted to go back. It was a mistake they regret even today. Mrs. Tanaka said she would never go back to Japan.

The government said that there were sugar beet farms in Alberta that needed workers. So in May of 1946, we boarded a train and off we went to Diamond City, Alberta. We were hired on at the Burbank Farm. The Burbanks, Bill and June, had three children, all boys, Leroy, Jared and Max. We lived in the Burbank's old



Hayashi family on way to Alberta by train. (Hayashi Family photo, 1946)

house. Fumie and Masao worked hard at thinning, weeding, hoeing and harvesting the sugar beets. I never thought much about how difficult life was. The memories that I have of Alberta was a time of adventure and fun with animals and being on a farm. Fumie however painted a much different story.

In the winter months, January to March, Masao would go by horseback to work in a logging camp somewhere in the mountains. Then he would help with the planting, thinning, hoeing of the sugar beets and in the summer, he would go to Taber, Alberta to work in the factory, leaving Fumie to do all the hoeing herself. Fumie said that the kids would help hoe and pull weeds. There was a quarter section of land on the Burbank farm, and because Fumie and Masao were so efficient at thinning and hoeing, they went to other farms and worked as well. On some nights when the moon was out, Fumie and Masao would go out into the fields and hoe the sugar beets so that in the morning when the kids helped out, it would be easier for us to pull the sugar beets out.

Shirley and Judy were able to go to school because Mrs. Burbank was the school bus driver. I'm sure Shirley and Judy can tell some interesting stories about their lives in Alberta and their treatment at school during that time. I vaguely remember

something about Dad throwing Shirley's report card out into the snow because he wasn't satisfied with her marks. Shirley with tears running down her face would go out into the snow to retrieve her report card and begged Dad to sign it. Also, I remember the time that Judy and Shirley were so bad and difficult to deal with that Mom tied them up, back to back. When Rey and I came into the room, they bribed us into untying them. I think Judy got the brunt of the punishments because she was so stubborn. She wouldn't say, "I'm sorry". I think she spent a lot of her time either in the cellar or tied up.

The Burbank's farm was an irrigation farm and there was a small reservoir that was used as a swimming hole. Shirley had heard a story about a person drowning and was told that when a person falls into deep water and can't swim, they usually come up for air three times before they drown. Someone (no one will admit to it) decided to test this theory and pushed me in. I came up for air three times and didn't come up the fourth, whereupon Shirley decided to pull me out. Another remembrance of the ol' swimming hole, was when Dad returned from one of his trips. It was a very hot day, and he had just walked for miles when he saw us at the swimming hole. He came running down the road as he tore off his shirt, socks and

shoes yelling, "Last one in is a nigger baby" (not acceptable saying now), then plunged into the pond.

There were so many stories about life on the Burbank farm, and some of the stories are remembered from a child's memory so may be slightly exaggerated. Leroy Burbank died in 1960. I was told that Mr. and Mrs. Burbank divorced. Jared is living in Tacoma, Washington, and Max is living in Maple Ridge. Mom and Dad went to Max's wedding.

When I spoke with Max, we planned a get-together with his mom, his children and my family on August 28, 1999. Ironically it would be 50 years since we left Alberta. Max, said he remembered the time when my mother spanked him. When I asked Mom about this, she laughed and said, "He was such a *domonari* (brat), but she couldn't remember why she spanked him. One of the other memories that Max recalls which stuck in his mind, was when we arrived, we only spoke Japanese. After being with the Burbanks, we soon learned to speak English. I

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Hayashi family in Alberta. Clockwise from top: Fumie, Shirley, Patsy, Rey, Judy. (Hayashi Family photo, 1947)

guess that's why all my memories are in English.

In 1949, Mr. Matsuo came to Alberta to tell us that the government was allowing us to go back to Steveston, which made Fumie and Masao very happy. On March 7, 1949, the BC legislature gave the Japanese the right to vote. Seiji Homma, one of Tomikichi's sons was instrumental in getting the right to vote for the Japanese.

We left Alberta, November of 1949 and went to Greenwood where Fumie's parents and sisters were living. Only the men returned to Steveston because of the difficulty

in obtaining accommodations. We stayed at Grandpa and Grandma Yodogawa's for 4 months, and then we moved into a 4-room apartment beside Auntie Terry and Uncle Keay. The apartment was located over the O'Brian's Red and White Green Grocery store. They had a son named Jimmy O'Brian, who was retarded. Jimmy was only supposed to live until he reached puberty, but he lived to be around 22 or 23. We were terrible and always teased him, and he would chase after us. Rey and I were such *domonari's* (as Mom would say), because we always used to tease poor Grandpa Yodogawa. We would

try to snatch his cane from him, and he would swing it at us. One day he connected and hit Rey in the mouth. The only English words he knew were "Goddam you!" One of the forms of punishment that Mom always threatened us with was, *yaito*. Grandma Yodogawa used this *yaito* to relieve her *katakori* (tightened muscles). *Yaito* is when you burn the flesh in small spots with some kind of incense. This practice was stopped after it was brought to the attention of the doctors. ❀

(To be continued in the Spring 2005 issue of NIKKEI IMAGES)

Artist/Craftsman Series No. 4

Sharon Minemoto Leads Vancouver Jazz Quintet

By Stan Fukawa



Sharon Minemoto at the keyboard.
(Stacie Bracken-Horrocks photo, 2004)

I was intrigued by Sharon Minemoto's name popping up in previous Vancouver Jazz Festivals and in jazz columns. When I discovered she was helping her father at his bonsai booth at the Nikkei Centre one day, I took the opportunity to make contact and to begin gathering the information for this

article.

Since then, I have heard her on the CBC being interviewed for North By Northwest, and went to hear her at the Vancouver Jazz Festival, playing with her quintet at the Roundhouse Community Centre.

She is barely in her thirties and went to high school in Richmond where her father was in landscape gardening. She has a Bachelor's degree in Jazz Performance from Capilano College and her main work is in teaching Jazz Performance at Vancouver Community College during the academic year from September to April. She also plays professionally one or two nights a week during that time. During the summer months, her balance of teaching and playing is reversed and she gets some time off for practicing and composing.

She chose her musical career while still in high school where she played in a jazz quartet. Bernie Arai was a member of that group and he is currently one of the most sought-after drummers in Vancouver. He also plays in her quintet. It took a lot

of work and required hours of practice and rehearsals but she found it more fun than anything she did in school. The ensemble work was what she most enjoyed - not the working in isolation she associates with traditional piano lessons but the enthusiastic interplay with others similarly having fun and encouraging each other.

Her parents do not have a musical background but knew that she was doing well because of the awards and scholarships she won at music festivals. They also knew how committed she was because she went regularly to jazz choir rehearsals at 7:30 in the morning and practiced nightly until 11 or 12. She says that while they probably wish that the professional musician's income was more consistent, they seem to be comfortable with her ability to manage her own life and to be happy.

Music is a big source of fun and satisfaction for Sharon. She loves the interaction between musicians who trust in each others' skill and musical sensibilities and know each



Members of the Sharon Minemoto Quintet including from left: Sharon (piano), Brad Turner (trumpet), Darren Radtke (bass), Bernie Arai (drums) and Ross Taggart (saxophone). (Stacie Bracken-Horrocks photo, 2004)

others' styles so well that they can tell where each other will go with specific numbers. She also enjoys having her compositions played by a group, for a fuller texture, than when she plays them on her own as a solo piece. Jazz to her is a group happening.

Her personal career ambitions are to find more time for composing, to take her quintet on a tour and to study with some of the great jazz pianists in New York.

As for her family life, she is married to one of the top saxophonists in Vancouver, Ross Taggart, who is also part of her quintet. He also leads his own Ross Taggart Quartet. (Jazz musicians seem to play in a lot of different ensembles with many other musicians. The only permanent members of a lot of these groups seem to be the leaders.) She loves being able to run new songs past another professional musician at a moment's notice and having someone who understands the joys and tribulations of the work situation.

Sharon's Quintet, which has been playing together for six years, has issued a debut CD entitled "Side A." It was recorded live at the Cellar, one of Vancouver's premiere jazz venues, over two nights. Cory Weeds, who manages the Cellar, wanted the live recording for the Cellar series and Brad Turner, who plays trumpet in the Quintet also served as sound engineer for the recording sessions. The other musicians were husband Ross Taggart, Bernie Arai and Darren Radtke on bass. All the tunes are Sharon's compositions.

The CD, says the long-time music columnist for the VANCOUVER COURIER, Chris Wong, "conveys the group's strong rapport and mutual passion for playing dynamic jazz." He says that "The Cookie Monster," the first piece on the disk, "evokes Art Blakey's rhythmic vigour and "Anonymous" brings Wayne Shorter's harmonic creativity to mind, but overall the songs show Minemoto has gone a long way toward developing her own

compositional voice." About the title tune, *Side A*, he says that she "displays an increasingly singular piano style" that is "appealingly well-grounded and thoughtful."

Other critics have said about some pieces in "Side A", that "Anonymous...shows several of her sides: the lyrical soloist, the tasteful accompanist, the generous bandleader." (Marke Andrews in the VANCOUVER SUN) and "her piano solos are elegant, well shaped beauties." (Joseph Blake in the VICTORIA TIMES-COLONIST).

On listening to her CD, one can understand why she chose *Side A* as the title song. I found it to be the most pleasing number among the eight-song collection although repeated listenings can sometimes make you appreciate aspects of songs that you missed on earlier playings. Turn up the volume and try to catch some of the electricity that can only be gained by being at a live performance. There was certainly an excitement at the concert in the Roundhouse during the Vancouver Jazz Festival that is hard to recreate in a recording. The horns were particularly great that day with Brad Turner and Ross Taggart front and centre and Sharon being lyrical and thoughtful.

The Sharon Minemoto Quintet has played out-of-town jazz festivals in Kelowna and in Whitehorse. Described as one of the "tightest and most exciting live jazz groups on the scene" it is clear that its leader has an even brighter future ahead of her. At the beginning of November, she is scheduled to play at the Cellar as part of the Weeds/Minemoto Quartet, a session which will be recorded for a possible upcoming CD. ❁

Shashin: Japanese Canadian Studio Photography Exhibition

January - March, 2005

Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, BC

Katari Taiko Turns 25! by Reiko Tagami



Katari Taiko and guests perform classic piece 'Matsuri'. (Alex Kozma photo, 2004)

Soredewa minasan. Hajimemashou-ka? Hajimemashou!

“Hey everyone – shall we begin? Let’s go!” So began Katari Taiko’s 25th Anniversary Concerts – one in September at the National Nikkei Heritage Centre in Burnaby, and one in October at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre – with the vocal introduction to the song *Ja Sawago*, written by former group member Eileen Kage. The title of the song translates as “Let’s raise a commotion”, or “Let’s raise hell”, which is what Katari Taiko has been doing in Vancouver for the past twenty-five years.

In the summer of 1979, the San Jose Taiko Group performed at the Powell Street Festival in Vancouver’s Oppenheimer Park. Inspired by the performers’ energy, power, and enthusiasm, a group of Asian Canadians decided to start a *taiko* (Japanese drum) group in Vancouver. With a borrowed *taiko* and lots of old tires, they practiced first at the Steveston Buddhist Church, then at the Strathcona Community Centre in Chinatown.

That winter, Katari Taiko invited Seiichi Tanaka of the San Francisco Taiko Dojo to give a week-long workshop, teaching the basic technical skills as well as some of the history and philosophy of *taiko*. From

then on, the group worked to develop their skills and technique, and establish their own style. The name Katari Taiko means “talking drums”, and was chosen in part because the group operates as a collective. All matters are discussed by the group as a whole before a decision is made. Leadership rotates between members on a monthly basis, and all members take responsibility for organizing practices, performances, drum maintenance, meetings, public speaking, and any other necessary work. With no single leader or teacher, group members work with each other to learn, improve and move forward.

Docchi-mo, kocchi-mo, ittari-kitari, are kore kiite-mo do-don ko don!

The line above, also from the song *Ja Sawago*, roughly translates as “Here, there, and everywhere, you hear do-don ko don” – the sound of the *taiko*. Katari Taiko’s goal is to develop a form of Asian Canadian culture that incorporates discipline, physical strength and grace, non-sexism, and musical creativity. While rooted in the historical tradition of *taiko* as a part of everyday life in Japan, and specifically in festival drumming and post-war *kumi-daiko* (ensemble performance), the members of Katari Taiko bring other

influences with them to the art form, incorporating elements such as spoken word, vocals, non-traditional instruments (e.g., electric guitar, saxophone, and kazoo), and other musical styles (e.g., rock, rap, folk, jazz, and the blues).

As the first *taiko* group to form in Canada, Katari Taiko works to inspire other Asian Canadians to explore their community and culture. In keeping with this desire, the group has given workshops to groups in Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, Seattle, Victoria, and Kamloops. The group also holds regular open workshops in Vancouver to enable the general public to get a feeling for *taiko* and to serve as cultural exchange between Canadians of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Katari Taiko is but one of the elements in the revival and evolution of Japanese Canadian community and culture. Members of Katari Taiko sit on the boards of various community associations, were active in the redress movement, and work or volunteer at the Powell Street Festival, Tonari Gumi, National Nikkei Heritage Centre, and the Japanese Canadian National Museum. Other members have been involved in historical and cultural publications as writers, editors, and

researchers. As well, the group feels a commitment to the broader community and has given their support as performers to women's groups, the peace movement, environmental groups, and other local issues, such as native land claims.

Furusato – Homecoming

The 25th Anniversary Concerts were a homecoming of sorts for Katari Taiko. The September concert, at the National Nikkei Heritage Centre, is part of a recent tradition started by Katari Taiko, who have performed annually as part of the Centre's Nikkei Week since the events series began three years ago. As part of this tradition, Katari Taiko has brought friends with them to the Centre – local *taiko* groups such as Sawagi Taiko, Chibi Taiko, and Okinawa Yuaikai Ryukyu Taiko; performers from other communities, such as musical groups Vishwa and Tzo'kam; and solo artists Albert St. Albert (percussion) and Tomoyoshi Ukida (shamisen).

The October concert, at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, represented a return to old and familiar haunts. Katari Taiko has presented several successful concerts at the Cultch during the group's 25-year history – in fact, the Katari Taiko 10th Anniversary poster is on permanent display in the venue's green room – and has occupied practice space in East Vancouver for



Katari Taiko and guests Ponkotsu, Tomoyoshi Ukida and Mario di Fine. (Alex Kozma photo, 2004)

almost as long as anyone can remember. For the concert, Katari Taiko alumni came together to form the group Ponkotsu (roughly translated as old, worn-out, or beat-up), performing some old favourites as well as composing a new piece for the occasion. At last count, there have been 65 different members of Katari Taiko over the years, and it was moving to realize that many were in attendance at the concert, if not performing with Ponkotsu.

Since the group's formation, Katari Taiko has performed every summer at the Powell Street Festival. More recently, group members have begun to perform at the annual Mochitsuki event at the National Nikkei Heritage Centre each

December, drumming to announce that the *mochigome* is coming out of the *seiro* and is ready to be pounded into the traditional New Year's rice cakes. For twenty-five years, Katari Taiko has provided a heartbeat to accompany the celebrations, political movements, and cultural evolution of the Japanese Canadian community here in Vancouver. Here's to another twenty-five years of summer festivals, winter traditions, and everything in between. *Hajimemashou – ja, sawago!* ❀

Reiko Tagami is a performing member of Katari Taiko and works as Assistant Archivist at the Japanese Canadian National Museum.

Nikkei Week Salutes Unique Century of Nikkei Farms

by Stan Fukawa

The 2004 Nikkei Week Dinner took place on Sept. 18 at the National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre. Over 200 guests filled the hall and celebrated the history of Nikkei agriculture in Canada from the beginning of the 20th century to the present day. The special guests included the MP (Peter Julian) and MLA (Patty Sahota) representing the ridings in which the Centre is

situated, and the Consul-General of Japan (Toshiyuki Taga). The *makunouchi bento* dinner was outstanding and the entertainers (The Okinawa Yuaikai Dancers and Roger Kamikura as Elvis) were excellent. The photo exhibit in the lobby was presented on stage and the story told as a Powerpoint presentation (collection and selection of photos by Masako Fukawa, Powerpoint

technical work by Tosh Kitagawa, narration by Stan Fukawa). Chuck Tasaka and Don Iwanaka gave very humorous and at times touching personal reminiscences of their experiences as berry pickers.

The story of Nikkei agriculture was a century in the making, beginning with the entry of Japanese immigrants into strawberry growing

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just after the turn of the 20th century. Strawberries were a money-maker and at their peak of popularity, rose steadily from five cents a pound in 1915 to an astonishing 22 cents a pound in 1921. These prices attracted many Nikkei into farming in the Fraser Valley. Japanese were good at growing berries and by 1941 grew over 80% of the strawberries and over half the raspberries. There was agitation to prevent Japanese from buying land but this did not succeed in B.C. as it did in California which passed an Alien Land Law.

Japanese farm leaders were quite progressive, forming Nikkei agricultural cooperatives (*Nogyo kumiai* or *nokai*) and later urging their members to join with their white neighbours in coops to develop overseas markets and maintain good prices.

The Second World War drove the Japanese off the coast, mostly into agricultural work as labourers on sugar beet and potato farms in the prairies and in the orchards and vegetable farms of the B.C. Interior and Southern Ontario.

When the war ended, some of the farmers from the pre-war Fraser Valley returned to the coast to grow berries again. There were also Nikkei berry farms in pockets in the Interior like Magna Bay on Shuswap Lake where families had found shelter in the internment years.



Mr. and Mrs. Jushiro Ishikawa and guests on a walk through their berry farm. (Kaori Yano photo, ca. 1930)

Nikkei youth from the city and from the countryside often spent summers in their early teens picking berries on these farms. These experiences were memorable for the young people who were often away from home for the first time and working at their first jobs with new friends.

The photos in the exhibit and Powerpoint presentation were sent in by the pickers and the farm families for whom they worked. These were young workers who went on to more lucrative union wage jobs in the canneries when they turned 16. As the black and white photos are replaced by colour photos, showing the passage of time from the 1960s to the 1980s, the youthful Nikkei pickers in the photos are replaced by older South Asian pickers.

Several things seem to have happened. First, the Nikkei farmers were not replaced by their children. Most of the children moved to the

cities and were followed by their parents when they retired. The Nikkei who remain in agriculture have either become “hobby farmers” or had to expand beyond the “mom-and-pop” family farms of their parents’ generation. The latter have gone into large-scale agri-businesses and nursery operations—following the option to “get big or get out.” Secondly, young Nikkei are no longer going to work in the berry patches in the summer. This may be a sweeping generational change in which young people are discouraged from seasonal farm-work by “child-labour” regulations and a societal disdain for manual labour.

It may no longer be “cool” to work long hours in the hot sun for modest sums of money.

Those “good old days” of early teen-age berry pickers working on family farms have gone forever. ❀

Japan Trip - Player’s Observations by Liam Nediger

My name is Liam Nediger and I am a grade 12 student at Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School in London, Ontario. I was fortunate to play goal with Nikkei Team 2004 in Japan this past summer.

My Japanese heritage comes from my mother’s side of the family. Her parents are Nisei; they were born on Vancouver Island but came to Ontario after the war. I had no prior experience with Japan. My

grandmother visited Japan when I was very young so I don’t remember her talking about her trip. She did talk more about it when we talked about my trip and she saw the pictures. I think my trip brought back memories for her. She was happy to receive some good green tea from Japan: something she gets only when her cousin in Japan sends her some.

I really did not know what to expect of Japan but there were lots

of amazing things. I loved the ramen; it was not too expensive and was available everywhere. I also enjoyed being able to buy hot and tasty fast food any time at the 7 Eleven. The Japanese seemed to love ceremony. The speeches at formal events were taken very seriously. The opening ceremonies at the last game were so long it almost destroyed my concentration. The two most amazing aspects of the Japanese

people were their politeness and their ingenuity.

Even though we were not successful on the ice, I really enjoyed the hockey. Previously, I played competitive hockey for our local organization and for my high school. I never played against a team with such uniform speed and dedication.

The biggest difference in the style of play was the amount of interference and the setting of picks. That type of play would have resulted in lots of penalties back home. In contrast, some of the rough play that was expected in Canada, resulted in penalties in Japan.

The trip was the experience of

a lifetime. I met some great guys from across the country, some Japanese hockey players, and had many incredible experiences. If there are any Japanese-Canadian hockey players reading this and contemplating the 2006 trip – go for it. Get yourself in shape, refine your skills and learn some Japanese. ❁

Japan Trip - Parent's Observations by Bill Nediger

My name is Bill Nediger and I was fortunate enough to accompany my son, Liam, and Nikkei Team 2004 to Japan this past summer. My family has lived in the southwestern Ontario area for many generations. I met Dale Yoshida, my wife and Liam's mother, while attending the secondary school Liam now attends.

Dale's mother, Katy Yoshida, first brought the program to our attention when she showed us an article by Paul Kariya in the NIKKEI VOICE. She connected us with Ian Burgess who is married to her niece, Debbie Toyota, and whose son, Thomas, played on both the 2000 and 2002 teams. He raved about the experience. Dale and I were attracted by both the hockey and the cultural experience. As a young player I had the opportunity to play in a couple of international tournaments and those memories have lasted a lifetime. I was thrilled that Liam might get the opportunity to have similar lifelong memories.

Like Liam, I did not know quite what to expect of Japan. I had some partially-formed pictures in my mind based on some reading about Japanese Buddhism I had done in university, along with some bits of information in tourist guidebooks and snapshots provided by others who had visited.

What I found was a land of contrasts. It was a land where what appears to be a sleepy, drab little city is transformed into a place of colour and vibrant energy at festival time

where the air is filled with the smells of food and the cries of the vendors welcoming all and inviting you to taste their wares. At the festival a young woman dressed in her colourful summer *yukata* and carefully made up might be accompanied by some friends similarly attired, but she might just as easily be accompanied by a male friend wearing ratty jeans and a t-shirt emblazoned with a slogan in English. (Slogans we saw included rude comments about Mickey Mouse and odd versions of North American sayings or clichés that had been translated from English to Japanese and back again. The original sense seldom survived this process.)

It was a land where people tended to dress more conservatively (except in the Shibuya district of Tokyo) and definitely more modestly but practiced communal bathing where they were completely comfortable with nudity in ways that I seldom experience in the dressing room of the local health club.

It was a land of slender people who seemed healthy and fit. Walking and cycling were common modes of transportation but smoking was just as common and completely acceptable.

It was a land free of litter and yet it was next to impossible to find a garbage can.

It was a land where commerce and religion existed side by side. I was struck by the sight of a woman quietly praying in front of a small statue just off to the side of the busy commercial

district that led to the temple grounds. She was completely absorbed in her prayer, oblivious to the noisy swarms of people not more than 10 metres away.

It was a land of strict rules, codes and modes of behaviour that seemed to govern everything from simple exchanges on the street to moving huge groups of people easily on the train system but was still very relaxed when it came to things like the consumption of alcohol by minors or the sale of fireworks.

As I look back on the trip, however, it is the people, their honesty, hospitality and spirit that I remember most. A particularly striking aspect of the Japanese culture was the commitment everyone I encountered seemed to have to whatever they did. Everyone, from what we might consider the lowliest professions on up, performed their tasks with care, energy, seriousness and precision. This commitment to task was particularly evident in the service industry. I knew we were in a different culture when, after our first meal in a restaurant after a long day of travel when our group must have been, at the very least, a small disruption, a waitress, at least in her 50's, ran a good city block to return a hotel key that had been left behind by one of our players. I was struck also by the care and attention to detail that was exhibited by our host in Tomakamai and how it is not possible to sit at a table with Japanese people and have

an empty glass or plate in front of you.

The most memorable image from the trip, however, came from the festival parade. A *taiko* group stopped in front of some people who were (very) happily drinking and eating. These people gladly shared beer and *sake* with the drummers and exhorted them to perform. And

perform they did. After his drink, the fellow I assume was the lead drummer, put on a show like I have never seen. He seemed completely lost in the rhythm while at the same time funneling the energy from all those around him. When he was finished, a younger man took over. While the first drummer stood high on a truck and played a huge drum

mounted on the truck-bed, the second stood on the road with a smaller drum strapped to his shoulders and gave an equally stunning performance with muscles rippling as the blur of sticks beat out an incredibly complex rhythm. The absolute mastery of their instruments, and the spirit with which they performed will be with me always. ❀

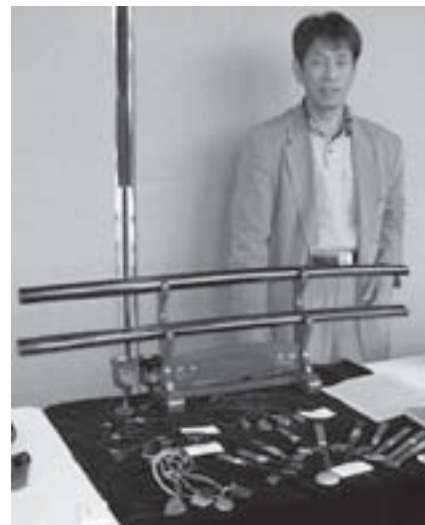
Yamanaka Lacquer Ware Artisans Visit Nikkei Place by Carl Yokota

On Sunday, September 12, 2004, twenty Yamanaka lacquer ware artisans from Ishikawa-ken, Japan visited Nikkei Place. Led by Mr. Masanori Kamiguchi, Chairman of the Yamanaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry and with cooperation by the Japanese Ministry of Economic Trade and Industry/ Small and Medium Enterprise Agency, the artisans, most quite young, exhibited their beautiful and delicate creations and demonstrated their skilful techniques. The displays were held in the Ellipse Lobby of Nikkei Place where visitors were able to get a close up view of the

items, meet the artisans, and even purchase a special gift.

The town of Yamanaka is located deep in the mountains by the Daishoji River and is one of the largest lacquer ware centers in Japan. The town is also famous for its therapeutic hot springs (*onsen*), Kutani porcelain, and even a shrine worshipping the famous Japanese *haiku* poet, Matsuo Basho.

Prior to visiting Nikkei Place, the Yamanaka artisans had a showing on Salt Spring Island on September 8 and 9 where they met with local island crafts people. ❀



Masami Youemi with samples of his handicrafts. (Carl Yokota photo, 2004)

The list of new and renewing members of the National Nikkei Museum & Heritage Centre from July 28, 2004 to October 30, 2004

Mrs. Kay Akada
Ms. Jennie Akune
Ms. Mieko Amano
Mr. & Mrs. Tsuguo & Grace Arai
Mr. & Mrs. Edward & Dorothy Arnet
Mr. Guy Champoux & Ms. Reiko Okubo
Ms. Bok Rye Cheong
Ms. Hazel A. Chong
Mr. & Mrs. Alan & Ruriko Davis
Mr. Kyosuke Domai
Mr. & Mrs. Mike & Margaret Ebbesen
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth & Nobu Ellis
Mr. & Mrs. Steve & Ellen Enomoto
Ms. Yoshiko Godo & Terry Lighthart
Ms. Akiko Gomyo
Mr. & Mrs. Bill & Celine Hamade
Mr. & Mrs. Hiro and Kaz Hasebe
Mr. Jay Hirabayashi
Prof Masako Iino
Ms. Judy Inouye
Mrs. Kimiko Inouye
Ms. Shirley Inouye
Mrs. Tokuko Inouye
Ms. Kimiko Kajiwara
Mr. & Mrs. Koichi Kaminishi
Miss Dottie Karr
Mr. & Mrs. Kenji & Kikumi Kikegawa
Mr. & Mrs. Bill & Addie Kobayashi

Mr. & Mrs. Matt & Jean Kobayashi
Mr. & Mrs. Ken & Mich Kochi
Mr. & Mrs. Joe & Elsie Komori
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest & Delphine Lowe
Mrs. Gwen E. Macdonald
Mr. Shizuo Matsuba
Mrs. Dorothy Y. Matsune
Mr. & Mrs. Seishi & Kisako Matsuno
Miss Judy Maxwell
Mr. & Mrs. Bill & Pat McEwan
Mr. & Mrs. Ken and Marianne Minato
Ms. Florence Mitani
Mr. & Mrs. Michael & Aiko Murakami
Ms. Mary Nago
Ms. Rei Nakashima
Mr. Henry Grant Naruse
Mr. & Mrs. Takashi & Keiko Negoro
Mr. & Mrs. Robert & Jane Nimi
Mr. & Mrs. Shoji & Eve Nishihata
Mr. & Mrs. Harry & Shoko Nishimura
Ms. Toshi Oikawa
Ms. Amy Okazaki
Mrs. Jean Okazaki
Mr. & Mrs. Shinichi & Shirley Omatsu
Mr. & Mrs. Robert & Audrey Ostrom
Ms. Christina Reid
Joanne R. Rollins
Mrs. Michi Saito

Mr. & Mrs. Terry & Marge Sakai
Mr. Ken Sakamoto
Mr. Roy Sakata
Mr. & Mrs. Tats & Kim Sakauye
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis & Marion Shikaze
Dr. Henry Shimizu
Mr. Kiyoshi Shimizu
Miss Miriam Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Harold & Kathy Steves
Steveston Judo Club
Mrs. Kumi Sutcliffe
Mr. & Mrs. David & Aiko Sutherland
Ms. Hitomi Suzuta
Ms. Ginny Tahara
Mr. Mike Takahashi
Mrs. Etsuko Takata
Mr. & Mrs. Henry & Patricia Tanaka
Mr. & Mrs. Joe & Jean Tatebe
Ms. Evelyn Terada
Ms. Ikuye Uchida
Mr. & Mrs. Shigeru & Midori Wakabayashi
Mr. Peter Wakayama
Mr. & Mrs. Rusty & Ryoko Ward
Dr. & Mrs. Joji & Sachi Yamanaka
Dr. K. Stanley Yamashita
Mr. & Mrs. Fukashi & Chiyo Yasui
Ms. Margaret Yoshida