



Nikkei Images

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The Call of the Amazon by Anne McVety (Uchida)

To the adventurous, the vast Amazon¹ region with its thick jungles and rainforests of towering trees and abundant wildlife is as compelling as the sea to a sailor.

The Amazon River, the greatest in the world, is a system of rivers with more than a thousand tributaries that are like the veins on a leaf. Pulsing, roiling and eddying, it spills 6 million cubic feet of water every second into the Atlantic Ocean, enough to colour the sea a turbid brown more than 100 kilometers from the coast. It is a paradise for botanists and entomologists. Of an estimated 5 million to 10 million plant, insect and animal species in the world, 1 million are located in the Amazon Basin. The river contains more than 2,500 species of fish, the largest of which is the pirarucu, 4 meters in length and weighing 200 kilograms.

The Amazon is home also to the piranha, one of the world's most terrifying fish. Up to 60 centimeters long, piranhas hunt in packs among the shoals and can attack even a much larger animal and strip the flesh.

There is no place on earth like the Amazon! Superlatives abound, but my pen must take another channel in order to tell my story.

To this vastness, Japanese immigrants were absorbed, coming from half a world away to a hostile and unknown region. The first trickle of emigration to the Amazon Region of Brazil began in 1929 when 43



Anne, missionary to her kinsmen in the Amazon. (Anne McVety photo, ca. 1979)

families with a total of 189 persons came to Tome Acu. Satoshi Sawada, who was 11 years old when he arrived, said that initially the Japanese tried their hand at planting rice and cocoa beans. Conditions were adverse. Many died, victims of tropical diseases endemic in the region, like malaria.

Between the years 1935 to 1942

some 276 families abandoned the colony. Only the persistent or those who were unable to move stayed on. They were isolated. A trip by boat to the capital city of Belem took 20 hours.

The situation of the colony improved dramatically after World War II with the arrival of black pepper plants from Singapore. In 1933 a Mr. Usui, who was responsible for taking a group of immigrants to the Amazon, had an unexpected stop in Singapore due to a sickness on board. Usui took advantage of this stop and picked 20 slips of black pepper. Of the 20 slips only 2 took, but through these 2 slips the fate of the Japanese immigrants changed. The first "boom" of black pepper occurred in the years 1935 to 1955, in the Acara Valley of which Tome Acu was the principal town and became the largest exporter of black pepper in the world.

An era of prosperity called the "epoch of the black diamond" was celebrated. The colonizers utilizing new methods became almost exclusively occupied with the planting

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Announcements

JCNM Lecture Series, NNMHC

Friday June 10, 2005, 7:00 PM

Ted Cox

The Toledo Incidence of 1925: Three Days that Made History in Toledo, Oregon

Saturday June 11, 2005, 2:00-4:00 PM

Ted Ohashi, Yvonne Wakabayashi

Introduction to the Tasaka Family History

Things Japanese Sale

June 4, 2005, 10:30 AM-2:30 PM

NNMHC

COPANI XIII

PanAmerican Nikkei Assoc. Convention

July 7, 8 and 9, 2005

Vancouver, BC

<http://najc.ca>, <http://www.pana.ca>

COPANI XIII Internment Tour

July 11-14, 2005

For information call:

Mamoru Yanagishita@Jalpak:604-689-1213

http://www.jalpak.com/e/tours/jp_special_pkg2005copani.htm

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Mr. and Mrs. Ishii picking black pepper. (Anne McVety photo, ca. 1965)

of black pepper, with great success. Huge new homes were built, each complete with an electric generator, truck and tractor. Brazilians that moved into the area provided the farm labour.

But, the colonizers paid a heavy price for mono-cultivation. In the 1960s there appeared signs of disease in the black pepper plants, which in time decimated plants extensively in plantation after plantation. Coupled with this outbreak was the instability of black pepper prices on the world market. The Japanese were forced into diversification, producing cocoa beans, guarana², passion fruit and other regional fruits. Recently, while in Tokyo, I was amazed to receive from a Brazilian-Nikkei working in Japan the meat of cupuwacu³ fruit, frozen in neat packages from Tome Acu! Jam was readily made for my enjoyment in Canada.

Pages can be filled telling stories of the deprivations, cultural shocks, reversals in fortune, loneliness, disease, and back-breaking labour under the tropical heat and humidity

of the Amazon. But the colonizers persevered, in fact, there was no other recourse open to them. Their resilience is noteworthy. Soya sauce and *miso*, the main stay of Japanese cuisine, were home-made so that even today the Tome Acu *miso* is reputed to be better than what is imported from Japan. In primitive conditions and with few amenities, they worked from sunrise to past sundown, 365 days of the year with little semblance of any respite, not even on New Year's Day.

In the spring of 1964 after having completed 4 years at the Prairie Bible College and two years of intensive language studies in Tokyo, I made my way to Belem, Brazil, a city located at the mouth of the Amazon River. It is known as the gateway to the Amazon. Belem is the jumping off place to the vast Amazon Basin.

What took me to the Amazon of all places? Was it the call to adventure that compelled me? To answer this question I will have to return to the relocation center of New Denver, B.C. There at the age of 15 I sensed an inward struggle for assurance of my destiny. Having been exposed since a child to the Bible, I knew wherein the answer lay, not in religion or philosophy but in the Person of Jesus Christ who said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me". What succinct, unequivocal, authoritative words these were!

The invitation of the Lord Jesus Christ was compelling and personal - to invite Him into my life. I remember so clearly. It was a clear, sunny June morning just before the school bell was to ring at the Lucerne Junior Senior High School that I said "Yes" to the person of Jesus Christ. The peace, assurance and joy that filled my being were unmistakable ... and they remain to this day.



Taking the children home on our Rural Willys. (Anne McVety photo, ca. 1971)

Later came the realization that God has a foreordained plan for my life and it was up to me to line up with it. It meant the foregoing of my own plans and accepting unconditionally His blueprint for my life. In doing so there was a sense of well-being, anticipation and assurance.

Translated into a phrase, it was the CALL OF GOD that took me to the Amazon. This was coupled with a love for the struggling immigrants and their children and a strong conviction of the reality and power of the message of Jesus Christ.

My first assignment upon arrival was immersion into the study of Portuguese, plus acculturation. What a contrast from closed Japan where the bud of a flower is considered beautiful. Here was a culture, a wide open rose in its interpersonal relationships, happy, friendly and tolerant. The Japanese immigrants had a culture of their own, coming from various prefectures of Japan, many of whom were repatriates from mainly Manchuria and Korea. In time there evolved a beautiful mixture of the two cultures, Brazilian and Japanese, influencing greatly every aspect of their lives, even to their cuisine. Totally saturating myself into this unique society, my identity has become very Brazilian-Nikkei.

Upon completion of my formal study time of Portuguese, my mission, CrossWorld, assigned me to live in the Japanese colony of Coqueiro, 30 minutes from Belem. There I began my missionary work.

Coqueiro had suffered a severe

reversal of fortune. Expecting a bumper crop of black pepper, the whole colony was excited with the prospects of filling their pockets and returning to Japan. Then came the rainy season, from January to the end of June. It rained in torrents for months, and the roots of the pepper plants rotted. When harvest time came, the vines had wilted along with their dreams and hopes. All that was left was discouragement and despair. Into this situation came the missionary from Canada.

Finding living quarters where there were no apartments for rent and every home filled to capacity seemed out of the question. But God wonderfully opened the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ishii who lent me a room in the corner of their home and a shared kitchen. Moving from the bustling city of Belem and from the happy extended family of our language school home, at nightfall, I found myself alone in the silence of my room with the flicker of a lamp casting shadows that only deepened my solitude.

Then all of a sudden there arose a crescendo of sound, a chorus in unison calling out, “koi, koi” that continued into the night. “*Koi*” in Japanese means “come.” To the comforting words of welcome, “koi, koi”, I fell into deep slumber to find the following morning that the nocturnal chorus belonged to frogs!

The “boot camp” training of the early relocation days in Rosebery, B.C. prepared me well for most situations. But not for the art of pulling water out of a well, or going through deep mud holes full of fire ants on my bicycle. Or cooking on a primitive mud packed charcoal stove. Or 6 months of rain that saturated everything, and the oppressive heat and humidity that left one limp. Siestas, how welcome they were! This was to become home for the next 27 years.

The Ishiis consented to a weekly Bible study. So every Tuesday the three of us gathered around a crude table to

see what the book of John in the New Testament had to say to us. Unknown to me, the soil of their hearts was well fallowed to receive the seed of God’s Word and they responded wholeheartedly to the claims of Jesus Christ upon their lives.

However, Mr. Ishii was a chain smoker of 40 years. The insistent begging of his wife to quit met with rebuff. He said later that when times were hard he would go to the farm hand’s shed, collect the cigarette butts and re-roll them. God was to instantaneously set him free before our eyes, as he yielded to Jesus Christ.

This dear couple went on to abandon their farms to become missionaries of this Gospel message that transformed their lives. They saw churches planted in four different colonies.

With the acquisition of a vehicle, our work expanded to other colonies within a radius of an hour. So in time we were having house meetings in five places. Once a month, taking the long boat ride of 20 hours to Tome Acu we visited the small group of Christians there.

After three years, we held our first baptismal service by a clear stream surrounded by tall towering trees. All nature joined with us as eight baptismal candidates, including two couples, sang from a full heart, “wonderful change in my life has been wrought since Jesus came into my heart...”

They were to form the nucleus of the Amazon Evangelical Christ Church, the largest Nikkei church in the Amazon region. That church continues to this day. They are seeking to reach out to the Japanese communities through varied activities and sports in their huge gymnasium and also through dormitories for the student population from the interior. Pastor Josue Hisamitsu, a Brazilian-Nikkei and his wife Susanna, are at the helm of this ministry.

It has been my joy and privilege

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Our first baptismal service. (Anne McVety photo, ca. 1967)

to visit most of the colonies scattered over the vast Amazon Basin by bicycle, jeep, canoe, boat and plane, going up and down the mighty Amazon River five times. The 1,450 kilometer trip upriver to Manaus usually takes five days by boat. In January 1976, burdened for the colonizers in and around Manaus, I spent a year visiting the humble farm homes and teaching the Christians.

On one of these trips, we were received warmly by a Japanese family in Santarem, which is located on the Amazon River half way between Belem and Manaus. We were an unlikely team of three, Mr. Essashika, having lived for years in the upper reaches of the Amazon was very knowledgeable of the “mysteries” of the Amazon and my co-worker, Irene Weber (Bakker), a Canadian of German descent whom the Japanese called my “bodyguard”. She was a formidable presence. After a full day of travel by boat, we were happy for the “comfort” of the bed, which turned out to be a narrow bed of boards with no semblance of a mattress. With no mosquito netting, we were attacked all night by the buzzing mosquitoes. When Irene moved, I had to move in concert with her. Finally out of sheer exhaustion we fell asleep only to have Mr. Essashika yell, “Sensei, sensei, can you hear the howler monkeys?” From the

nearby jungle the grotesque, guttural roar of the howler monkeys reverberated through the air, a sound that would make your hair stand on end! These trips took us to isolated colonies listening to the stories of the people’s sufferings and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As was to be expected, there was eventually a move from the interior colonies to the city of Belem. Always eager for their children’s education, the Japanese made sacrifices to place them in the best of schools to ensure a successful passage to university. To respond to this need, from 1981- 1991, I relocated to the city of Belem to reach out to the scattered Japanese population in the city. God brought together a team

of co-workers and two Japanese families that formed the nucleus of our pioneer efforts. The work grew rapidly and in time it was decided that we merge with the church in Coqueiro.

In 1991 after 27 years in the Amazon, God directed my path to Japan to accompany the thousands of Brazilian-Nikkei who were making their way to Japan to work in the factories as blue-collar workers. There are 280,000 Brazilian-Nikkei in Japan, the largest concentrations of which are found in Shizuoka, Aichi and Kanagawa prefectures. The work in the factories is arduous and long. The open, free Latin culture clashes with the Japanese culture, and the inability to communicate in Japanese becomes poignant.

In their distress and need, many seek out the missionary. I found myself serving as interpreter for a Brazilian incarcerated for rape, accompanying others to hospitals, the motor vehicle center, visa center, etc. I ended up serving as liaison between the Japanese companies and the Brazilians who were looking for employment.

Nilza suddenly lost her husband who was hit by a car as he attempted to cross a busy street. Her boss contacted me and I rushed to the



Brazilian-Nikkei in my home in Toyobashi, Japan. (Anne McVety photo, ca. 1991)

emergency ward. But Nilza's husband was already dead. She asked if she could stay with me that night. Understanding her difficulty of returning to an empty apartment, I consented, though I had not met her before. She ended up staying with me seven months. Today she is remarried to a fine Christian man.

Existential needs had to be met and many were the opportunities to give comfort and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The "Vida Nova Church," the work I was involved in, continues stronger than ever under the leadership of Elisa Kiyan, a dedicated Brazilian-Nikkei. Outgrowing their facilities, a new church is being constructed at present.

Unknown to me, God had a surprise awaiting me, something fabricated in heaven as it was only as I looked back did I realize the detailed intricacies that brought Ken McVety, the founder and long time CEO of the Word of Life Press Ministries in Japan, into my life. We were married on March 23, 1996. Marriage to Ken expanded my horizons to include India, Nepal, Mongolia and China where we have a ministry of Bible seminars.

The sunset is visibly before us but we look up with a sense of joy and gratitude to our God who CALLED us. ❀

¹The Amazon Basin - the Amazon is one of the world's great rainforests. The vast Amazon basin covers more than



Marriage to Ken McVety. (Anne McVety photo, 1996)

two and a half million square miles, more than any other rainforest. It spreads across much of South America. Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil and Venezuela all have Amazonian regions. Nearly 40 percent is in the Brazilian Amazon.

²Guarana - is a berry. The taste of guarana is distinctive and unique, and the main reason for its success in Brazil

is as a soft drink. The main ingredient is guaranine, which is chemically identical to caffeine.

³Cupuwacu - the cultivated trees of the cupuwacu are 6 to 10 meters tall and its fruit weighs from 1 to 1.5 kilos. The meat is light yellow with a sour taste and a peculiar aroma. It is delicious made into a jam, juice and ice cream.

Artist/Craftsman Series No. 6

The Koyama Home and Four Lanterns by Nan Capogna

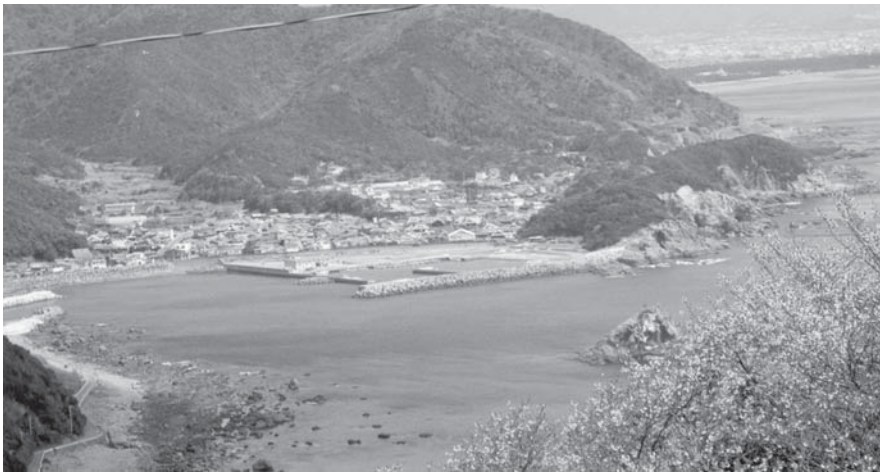
Changes/New Beginnings took root when Shirley Inouye visited her parents' birthplace, Mio village, Wakayama-ken, Japan, sister city of Richmond in 1996. She had taken the trip with her mother and sister and has since been carrying the seed of that experience with her, waiting for

its germination.

To hear Inouye talk about her visit to Mio, one gets the impression she has just returned; it is that fresh in her mind and in the enthusiasm in her telling of it. The Mio she experienced has changed very little since the late 1800s; the

passageways are still narrow between the clay-roofed homes, the properties are attended to even though they may be without residents, there is support and care shown amongst neighbours. During her visit, Inouye stayed in the home in which

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View of Mio-mura taken from Hinomisaki. (Shirley Inouye photo, 1996)



Toshie (left) and Chieko (mother) Koyama with family paper lantern. (Shirley Inouye photo, 1996)

her father was born. The Koyama (Inouye's maiden name) home appears as it was; cared for by her aunt with a garden that is thoughtfully trimmed, it is typical of the homes in Mio. Inouye walked over the floors her father had walked on and looked out from the window at the view her father had grown up with. The magnitude of this experience for her was profound and moving.

It was in her father's home Inouye discovered the four wooden boxes that housed the paper lanterns once used to light the way before electricity came to the village. Opening the boxes and mindful that the collapsed lanterns might

disintegrate in her hands, she was enchanted with her find. The paper lanterns offered her the form and metaphor for *Changes/New Beginnings*.

Migration, exile, internment

Though Inouye was born in Canada, visiting her ancestral homeland was, in a sense, a return to home. It had the resonance of a place one was a part of and attached to. For the Koyama family and other Japanese Canadians, the meaning of *home* evolved within the context of migration, exile and internment. 'Home' was re-located.

In the early 1900s one third of

the residents of Mio village emigrated to Steveston, B.C. to become fishermen. The first immigrant from Mio was Gihei Kuno in 1887. Fishing flourished and he encouraged others from his village to follow him. At the age of twelve, Inouye's father, Fukujiro Koyama, left Mio for Steveston, B.C. Fourteen years later Fukujiro married Chieko Hamade, also from Mio village. Inouye notes the similarities and special relationship between the fishing villages of Mio and Steveston, where her parents and family later moved to after their internment during WWII.

Shirley Inouye (Takako Koyama) was born in Port Alberni and lived in the fishing village of Ucluelet until 1942 when her father's fishing boat was confiscated and the family relocated to an internment camp in East Lillooet. Landing in the middle of sage brush country, they lived in tents until their small two room house was built. Other internees followed and a small self-sustaining village developed; with the assistance of an engineer in the group they developed an irrigation system from the river to grow vegetables. The industrious new community grew tomatoes and started a co-operative that supplied a local cannery.



Akari #2 - lantern handmade by wirecutting a mould of paper clay. (Nan Capogna photo, 2003)

Looking back on her childhood, Inouye remembers with fondness the novelty of her father at home and not at sea. Now as an adult she is deeply aware of how difficult it must have been for her parents and other Japanese Canadians during this dark period.

Influences

Changes/New Beginnings is a new body of work for Inouye. A potter for twenty-five years, her clay work continues to evolve but its aesthetic remains firmly grounded in her Japanese ancestry. She is primarily a functional potter, very much influenced by the Art of *Kenzan* of the 17th century and *Mingei* (folk) potters of Japan. *Mingei*, the Japanese word for ‘folk art’ was a response to the industrialisation in Japan in the 1920s. Followers of *Mingei* sought a return to and recognition of the beauty found in traditional Japanese craftsmanship. Also an influencing force in Inouye’s work is the reduced sculptural forms of modernist, Isamu Noguchi.

Akari

Clay work is physically demanding. This is part of its allure, and for Inouye, this is certainly true. She has heard the statement: “In Japan you learn with your body, not your head”. After years of pushing around what now must be tonnes of clay, she realizes that it “involves the soul”- a complete and continual absorption. Her devotion to tradition and craftsmanship underlay her persistent exploration of forms and new meaning within her work

For the *Akari* works, Inouye used ‘paper clay’¹, exploring various manifestations of the lantern form. The surface of these works ripples and retracts; striations in the clay fluctuate in intensity and small holes and slits puncture the surface allowing light to pass through. Small,



Shirley Inouye with “Akari I to VI” at the “Changes/New Beginnings” Exhibition at the Richmond Art Gallery. (Nan Capogna photo, 2003)

sea animal forms stud the surface and we are reminded that Inouye is a fisherman’s daughter. She has described herself as a ‘child of the Fraser’, so much of the river has overflowed into her life. In *Akari*, the Japanese word for light, the relationship between Inouye and her ancestors is illuminated. Though light may be fleeting, Inouye’s connection with her ancestral homeland is firmly tethered.



Sea basket - wheel-thrown with hand pulled handle. Multi-fired stoneware clay. (Ken Nagai photo, undated)

Biography

Richmond resident, Shirley Inouye has worked in clay for twenty-five years. She is a long time member of the Richmond Potters’ Club and the Potters Guild of B.C. She was an instructor to children and adults from 1982 - 1993 at the Richmond Arts Centre and the Potters’ Club, respectively. She has recently retired from the City of Richmond and can now, with the gift of time, devote her full attention to her work. ❁

¹ Finely ground paper fibre is added to clay giving it different properties than pure clay

Nan Capogna is the Cultural Programmer of the Richmond Art Gallery.

Statement

I am a Richmond resident who was born in Port Alberni, B.C. After discovering clay works in 1979 and taking private throwing lessons with Barbara Baanders, I completed my ceramics program at Douglas/Kwantlen College. On graduating from this program, I enjoyed being

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an instructor of children clay classes at the Richmond Arts Centre and adult classes for the Richmond Potters' Club from 1982 to 1993. While teaching these classes, I took advanced fine arts programs at Emily Carr College of Art and Design during the summer months. As of April 2003, I retired from my employment with the City of Richmond and now have the gift of time to enjoy the freedom of playing with clay.

Basically I am a functional potter who enjoys making one of a kind pieces. Often my forms are thrown and altered, wire cut, carved or chattered to give variations of texture and colour in stoneware clay and fired to cone 8 or 9 in my 8 cubic oxidation kiln. I have always felt the need to challenge myself and push clay to its limit. I have discovered the flexibility of working with magical paper clay. My need to explore has been met most recently with the

opportunity to fire in a 60 cubic wood and soda kiln, which I find most challenging. Often in forming, glazing or in the firings, my experimentation leads to disappointment. However, when an experiment works, I am gratified in expanding the knowledge of my craft.

Living my entire life by the

water's edge and with my tiny sunroom studio overlooking the garden, my clay work takes an organic direction. The meditative nature of working with clay has been my way of life. It has given me so much joy, I am blessed!

Shirley Inouye



"Sea Escape" an exhibition of Shirley Inouye's pottery at the Gallery of BC Ceramics on Granville Island (Graphic design by Todd Inouye). (Bryan Melvin photo, 2004)

Shirley Takako Inouye - Ocean Inspired Artist by Tamaka Fisher



Shirley with granddaughter in her studio. (Laurie Inouye photo, 2004)

I first met Shirley Inouye in June 2004 when I was looking for local clay artists to show in the Steveston Village Gallery. I was struck by how joyful and natural her pottery is. Her

pieces have a calming effect on me. From the undulating waves of sand on the side of a wood fired vase to the seashells and starfish on the surfaces of her large clay lanterns –

the pieces are graceful and strong in their silent beauty.

Shirley was born Takako Koyama in Port Alberni, B.C. and spent her childhood in Ucluelet and later in an internment village in East Lillooet. Her father, Fukujiro Koyama, a fisherman, and her mother Chieko Hamade were both originally from Mio Village in Wakayama-ken.

As a child, Shirley spent whole days down at the river in Lillooet with friends and she still remembers the shapes of leaves, plants and the sparkle of the water where she passed the time swimming. Even as a child she was sensitive to the miracle of nature and it is a recurring theme in her work.

Shirley originally got into pottery by accident in 1978. She, her sister, and a girlfriend were walking along Moncton Street in Steveston and looked in a window, saw a pottery

studio and signed up for a class. She still remembers the place was so cold, the clay was frozen, although she didn't know enough about pottery at the time to know that was why the clay was so difficult to work with! Shirley's sister and friend stopped pottery shortly after that class but Shirley kept going. She kept going through marriage and 3 children as well, continuing to learn and then later teach others.

When her daughter was young Shirley took her figure skating at Minoru skating rink in Richmond. Shirley would use that time to hang out at the potters studio at the Richmond Arts Center. One day the children's pottery instructor was unable to teach and Shirley was asked to step in. She continued to teach there for the next 10 years!

Shirley is striving for perfection. She enjoys the challenge of creating unique forms and the soothing, meditative act of creating with clay. She says clay has seen her through difficult times and she feels committed to the process. Her children are grown now and Shirley goes to the gym to keep up her strength so she can continue working with clay into her later years.

Shirley has exhibited at the Gallery of B.C. Ceramics and Crafterhouse on Granville Island, and the Richmond Art Gallery in Richmond as well as being a regular



Steveston Village Gallery on Bayview Street. (Tamaka Fisher photo, 2005)

exhibitor at the Steveston Village Gallery. She has also studied at La Meridiana Ceramics in Italy, Instituto Allende at the University of Guanajuato in Mexico, Metchosen International Summer School of Arts at Pearson College, Emily Carr College of Art and Design and Kwantlen College, in the Vancouver Lower Mainland.

Shirley's work is a perfect fit for the Steveston Village Gallery which is located in a new development on the Fraser River waterfront. I opened the gallery with the dream of raising the profile of local artists, here at home and abroad while also promoting peace. Shirley is now one

of 90 such artists including myself, whose beautiful work graces the tables and walls of the gallery. Every month we have new shows of paintings and every week we receive new pieces of local pottery including Shirley's. The combination of selection, convenience, and excellent customer service have kept people coming back and has drawn new people to our door.

I invite you to come to our gallery to see Shirley Inouye's amazing pottery and sculptural pieces influenced by nature and her heritage.

The Steveston Village Gallery is at #125-3900 Bayview St., Richmond, B.C., V7E 4R7 ✽

Dr. John Stanley (Stan) Rowe (1918-2004) by Wakako Ishikawa

John Stanley Rowe was born in Hardisty, a small town southeast of Edmonton, on June 11, 1918, the second child of Rev. Arthur Herbert Rowe, a Methodist missionary and his wife, Nora.

As a result of Rev. Rowe's calling, the family lived in many small towns in the grassland region of southern Alberta, explaining Stan's lifelong interest in grassland ecology.¹ One of Stan's memories about his childhood was of shooting and killing

an innocent rabbit. He never touched a gun again.

Stan attended high school in Granum and High River, and went on to the University of Alberta in Edmonton. He graduated with a B.Sc. in 1941 in botany and ecology.

In the spring of 1941, Stan refused military service because of the influence of his passionately anti-war parents. He was not initially accepted as a true conscientious objector but was treated as a draft-

dodger. Imprisoned in Fort Saskatchewan for three months, appeals from J.S. Woodsworth and other churchmen resulted in his receiving CO status. He was sent to work in forestry camps in B.C. for two years.²

On September 5, 1942 Gwen Suttie, a United Church missionary, arrived at New Denver, where some Japanese Canadian detainees had started to arrive on May 21, 1942.³

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By November, 1,500 evacuees had moved into New Denver. In the summer of 1943, Suttie went to Victoria to meet Dr. S.J. Willis, the British Columbia Superintendent of Education, in order to organize a kindergarten in New Denver and nearby Rosebery and a high school in New Denver, because the government provided the Japanese children only with elementary schooling. Willis promised three conscientious objectors as teachers for the United Church high schools in New Denver, Lemon Creek and Tashme. Suttie's first choice was Stan, because of his degree from the University of Alberta. Willis asked that the Church not pay the COs more than \$25 a month in addition to room and board.³

During the war, New Denver had three main religious groups: Roman Catholic, Protestant and Buddhist. Only the Catholics and Protestants had the resources to set up schools, though Stan recalled the Buddhists probably had a school as well. Separation along religious lines seemed so ridiculous as the goal of everyone was education. Gwen Suttie thought it possible that staff and accommodation might be combined, but these were the days before the ecumenical movement. The Roman Catholic Sisters replied pleasantly, but firmly that they could not co-operate. The local school authorities thought it better to keep the Caucasian and Japanese races separate.³

During this period, Stan lived in New Denver. He co-op housed with two United Church missionaries, Ella Lediard and later Margery Rempel, and a teacher, Mildred Fahmi. They shared a big house a couple of blocks from Lakeview Collegiate School in the Turner United Church. Stan's upstairs room was "heated" through the winter by a hole cut in the ceiling of the kitchen, above the cooking stove. It was not warm enough and

for the first and last time in his life, he suffered from finger and toe chilblains.

Stan taught mathematics and sciences at Lakeview Collegiate School. He also taught music, and not just singing! He and Helen Lawson, a missionary, wanted to teach music, especially to boys, who are notoriously hard to interest in melodic themes. They scraped up the money for a couple of dozen tonettes, cheap little black plastic flutes, with a musical range of a couple of octaves at most. Stan and Helen wrote out the harmonies in two or three parts for common songs, such as Red River Valley, and even a few hymns because these had the harmonies already worked out. With a bit of music reading instruction, they soon organized a tonette band. All went well for a while but one day, all the boys in the band politely refused to play. Stan never found out why, but suspected that maybe their non-musical peers made fun of them playing toy flutes. The girls continued on with the band and choir for a year or more.

As a teacher at Lakeview Collegiate School, he wrote an article entitled "Peace on earth, Goodwill toward all men" in the 1944 Christmas issue of *The New Canadian*. "... *we persist in believing that human problems can be settled on a non-human level, namely on the level of technology. Someday, much as a scientist in his laboratory discovers a new element by fortunate experimentation, some men will discover and present to a delighted world the Key to Peace – a simple formula, use as directed, guaranteed not to disturb the most delicate constitution. Probably a post-war plan, requiring only the setting up of a Nations' Assembly and an executive Council, of course backed with sufficient force – or*

by all means with teeth. All men want peace, but few desire the things that make for peace. Then ring out sweet bells and carols and greetings of Christmas, and remind us of those things which make for peace".

Afterwards, he remembered that the *nisei* had been great, "They were so glad to have a school that there were few discipline problems if any (none came to my attention). They were bright, cooperative, good students. We had lots of fun in classes and out. The supervisor of the detention camp school system, Hide Hyodo, used to visit New Denver frequently with her friend, Terry Hidaka". Stan kept a few photographs of them picnicking on the beach of Slocan Lake, just 100 metres from where he last lived. Rev. Kosaburo Shimizu found that Stan was without good books, so he gave Stan half a dozen from his library. Stan kept the signed books until his death.

Though he lived and taught in New Denver, Stan also taught mathematics for Japanese students at Lemon Creek High School on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings from late 1943. He remembered giving a talk to the high school students at Lemon Creek on the history of jazz, illustrated with several 78-r.p.m. records. In those days, all the young people listened weekly to the radio's Hit Parade of the top ten jazz tunes. He was asked two years later to write something for the 1946 *El Cee Hi* school annual. He wrote, "... We look before and after, and sigh for what is not meanwhile missing the pleasure around us, failing to appreciate what we will sigh for several years hence. ...Some day (believe me) you will be saying, "Ah, the good old school days – how I'd love to be back. ..." That day will come, and sooner than you think".

When the war ended, all the teachers felt a great sense of relief that it was over at last. They had a farewell party. According to THE NEW CANADIAN⁴, the *nisei* families hosted an evening of social fellowship at the Bosun Hall in New Denver on November 15, 1945. They decorated the Hall with chrysanthemums and invited 25 Canadian guests. Stan led the singing, K. Nakanishi and I. Kakuno performed a *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute) duet and Kakuno gave an accordion solo. Margery Rempel, a missionary, sang three Japanese songs and Ken Soga played a trumpet solo. Stan played clarinet alongside Ken Soga's trumpet and Lakeview students, Art Okumura and his younger brother Tats joined them. In their picture, taken by Dr. Henry Naruse, the quartet looked like professional musicians and someone asked Stan years later if they had made any recordings.

The significant dates in Stan's life tell the story of a life of commitment ...

1946 – hired by B.C. Forest Service as a Forest Ranger on Arrow Lakes.

1948 – M.Sc. in Botany at the University of Nebraska. Thesis on prairie vegetation.

1948 – Canadian Forestry Service ecologist in Winnipeg.

1952 - Stan met Julia Mary McQuoid. Stan and Julia were married in 1953. Their son John was born in 1954 and daughter Andrea in 1956.

1956 – Ph.D. in Botany from the University of Manitoba on The Vegetation of the Boreal Forest in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

1957 - Forestry Service posted him to Ottawa from 1957 to 1967.

1967 - Secretary of the Ecology Section of the Canadian Botanical Association in 1967-68 and elected as Chair of the Association the

following year.

1967 – 1985 Professor of Plant Ecology and Crop Science at the University of Saskatchewan when he retired as a professor emeritus.

1990 - Stan moved back to New Denver in November and divorced Julia.

1991 - he met Katherine Chomiak, who became his companion until his death.

1991 - Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario.

1994 - won the prestigious J.B. Harkin Conservation Award for his significant contribution to protecting Canada's parks and wilderness areas.

1995 - one of the four founding members of the Slovan Writers Guild, who meet monthly. The Club members read their own works and also old Japanese *haiku*, including Buson, Kijo Murakami and Basho.

1996 - the Canadian Botanical Association (Ecology Section) established the J.S. Rowe Ecology Award for the best student paper on plant ecology for the year.

1997 - Stan and five others stood in front of a bulldozer and were arrested for trying to preserve the quality of the water by preventing a logging road from being built.

He continued to write, and published a number of articles and a book from New Denver. In *Home Place: Essays on Ecology* published in 1990, he says, "*If the species Homo sapiens is to survive, then human ecology should also mean the working out of right relationships between people and the land*".

Stan's view of the unity of the earth's ecosystem was rooted in his knowledge of prehistory as well as ecology. He once said, "*the closest relatives of Japanese trees are in eastern North America and many of the trees of southern Ontario*

have their nearest relatives in Japan. Their common ancestry goes back millions of years, when all the continents of Earth formed one super-continent".

Surrounded by nature in New Denver, he was happy with little things such as bicycling, walking in the woods and swimming in the lake. A Lemon Creek camp reunion was held in Toronto on June 7, 2003. Stan regretted he could not go, but hoped that Tad Oyagi would say hello to any Lemon Creek students who might have remembered him.

He wrote then, "*Old age doesn't bother me, not yet. As you get older you get slower, but as long as food tastes fine and sleep comes easily, it's a good life. Probably everyone welcomes death when all the simple joys of the senses go dull, and that's not yet*".

In July 2003, "*.... I bicycled to the [New Denver] Nikkei Centre looking for Nobby but he was away in Nelson. So I gave the attendant a copy of the story about the Asahi baseball club for him. I had heard that Nobby played semi-pro baseball but didn't know he'd been [a] bat boy for the club. ... over in the Orchard I tried to find Pauli Inose but she wasn't home*".

Stan and most of his friends had given up on the "Christmas" myths and preferred to go back to the winter solstice celebrations that had preceded them, celebrating the year's shortest day and the middle of winter. He said, "*You might say we're trying to be Earth-aware pagans, ... on the 21st of December, we go down to the lakeshore and burn candles to welcome the return of the sun, which seems most appropriate for us Earthlings. I shouldn't be surprised if we aren't closer to some of the old Japanese customs than to those of Jerusalem?*"

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Stan liked the Shinto idea that the gods were in our midst—the caves, streams, rocks, trees, etc. are here on Earth as guardian spirits and not in some transcendent unearthly place. He found *haiku* poems by people like Basho to be more religious than the Bible.

When he had a stroke on March 13, 2004, Stan was rushed to the hospital in Nakusp and then to Vernon. When it became apparent that his chances for recovering a life of any quality were nil, he asked that no further measures be taken to prolong his life. He was moved to the Pavilion in New Denver, which had been originally built as a sanatorium

for Japanese Canadian tuberculosis patients in 1942, where his partner, Katherine, and daughter, Andrea, stayed with him. He requested no visitors and eventually asked to be taken off IV life support. After a few days, he passed away on April 6, 2004. He was the last surviving teacher from Lakeview Collegiate School in New Denver.

Stan is survived also by a son in North Carolina, a daughter in Quebec and three grandchildren.

The memorials for Stan after his death reflected the “nesting boxes” of his life. The Slovan Writers Guild renamed its annual creative writing award, the Stan Rowe Literacy

Award, to be presented to a senior student at Lucerne Elementary-Secondary School in New Denver and the University of Saskatchewan flew its flag at half-mast for a week.

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References

¹ John Stanley Rowe. *Home Place: Essays on Ecology*. Edmonton. NeWest Publishers. 1990.

² Nancy Knickerbocker. *No Plaster Saint*. Vancouver. Talon Books. 2001

³ Gwen Suttie, ed. Dorothy Blakey Smith. *With the Nisei in New Denver*. N.d.

⁴ THE NEW CANADIAN December 23, 1944.

The Thomas K. Shoyama Papers at Library and Archives Canada

by Yuri Shimo

News of note for students of Japanese Canadian history: Thomas Kunito Shoyama has donated his personal papers to Library and Archives Canada (formerly the National Library of Canada and the National Archives of Canada). Mr. Shoyama and his partner, Hazel Morris, officially made the donation in 2003 after being approached by archivist Gabrielle Nishiguchi. It has taken some time for these materials to be processed, however, they should be ready for public access in a few months.

Mr. Shoyama has been a leader and distinguished member of the Japanese Canadian community since the Second World War, when he was editor of THE NEW CANADIAN and an eloquent spokesman against injustice. He served from 1945 to 1946 in the Intelligence Corps of the Canadian Army. Following his discharge, Mr. Shoyama became an economic advisor to the Saskatchewan government before joining the federal civil service in 1964. He is perhaps best known to those outside the Japanese Canadian community for his term as Deputy

Minister of Finance: a position he held between 1975 and 1979. After leaving the civil service, he shared his knowledge with the younger generation as a Professor of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. He retired from teaching in 1992. Mr. Shoyama has received numerous honours including the Order of Canada, the Order of the Sacred Treasure (Japan), and multiple honorary doctorates.

The Shoyama fonds (archival collection) contains approximately 2.7 linear metres of textual records and circa 2,000 photographs. One of the highlights of this fonds is a substantial amount of correspondence from Japanese Canadians and others during and after the Second World War. As an editor, Mr. Shoyama often received letters from members of the community who wrote candidly about their situations as well as their thoughts and feelings on the internment. Many of the letters are a moving testimony to the struggles faced by Japanese Canadians at the time. Similar correspondence from after the war sheds light on the dispersal of the population and the

activities of Japanese Canadians in eastern cities such as Toronto and Montreal. Letters from well-known figures such as Roy Ito, Muriel Kitagawa, George Tanaka, and Irene Uchida are included. This early material is complemented by numerous photographs – mostly black and white snapshots of both identified and unidentified subjects.

Later materials include business correspondence and subject files from Mr. Shoyama’s years in Saskatchewan, Ottawa, and Victoria, as well as personal correspondence with friends, relatives, and acquaintances. There are also some files relating to the Japanese Canadian Citizens’ Association and the redress movement. Some files contain sensitive information and have been restricted or closed for designated periods of time.

The website of Library and Archives Canada can be found at www.collectionscanada.ca. To check for availability, search the Archivianet database on the website using the keyword “Shoyama” in the title field.

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The Little Town That Did: The People of Chemainus and the Japanese

The small town of Chemainus is located on the southeast coast of Vancouver Island, 80 km. north of Victoria. The west side of the town abuts a mountain covered with evergreen trees such as cedar and firs. The east side of the town faces the beautiful Georgia Strait, where the sea is always calm and there are many fish. So, many people come to see the whales here in spring.

Caucasian people appeared initially on Vancouver Island about 200 years ago. After the National Boundary Agreement was signed in 1846, British Columbia and especially Vancouver Island developed quickly. There were three main industries on Vancouver Island including mining, forestry and fishing. The Hudson Bay Company, given a monopoly by Queen Mary for trade and development, established the fur trade with the First Nations on Vancouver Island. An Indian showed the presence of coal to Hudson Bay Company personnel, which eventually led to the development of the coal mining industry on Vancouver Island. Copper deposits were also discovered and mines were opened. Gold was also discovered in the middle of the 19th century on the mainland. Many miners came to British Columbia from Europe, the United States and later from China and Japan.

Mines are closed once the mineral deposits are exhausted. On the other hand, the forest industry is always renewed because cut trees can be replaced by planting young trees. There are many trees more than a thousand years old on Vancouver Island. The tallest tree near Chemainus was more than 300 ft. high and 45 ft. in circumference. Unfortunately, a gust of wind fell this tree in 1913. The road was closed for three days while the tree was removed.

According to the local Indians, the area around Chemainus was called, "Cowichan", which means the warm place. They are members of the Coast Salish tribe, a very gentle people because of the abundance of food such as wild animals, fish and edible berries.

There were 30,000 First Nations people and 1,000 Caucasians in southern Vancouver Island in the middle of the 19th century. Caucasians started the forest industry on Vancouver Island in 1858. The first sawmill powered by a water mill was opened in Chemainus in 1862.

The forest company in Chemainus prospered because of the good harbour for exporting lumber. The town was also connected to an island railway and highway. However, the company suffered when the export market for lumber and chips collapsed and it announced the closing of the sawmill two years later. The people who lived in Chemainus got a serious shock when they heard about the closing of the 120-year old sawmill. They had to attract another industry, otherwise they would have to abandon and leave their lovely hometown.

At that time, a 21-year old immigrant, Carl Schulz, from Heidelberg, Germany arrived in Chemainus. He worked as a mechanic, carpenter and sometimes as a businessman. He had a long-term plan, which he presented to the Chamber of Commerce of Chemainus in 1971. He suggested that the walls of the buildings in the town be decorated with large paintings that recounted the history of the town, from the First Nations peoples to scenes of the forest industry. He maintained that paintings would attract tourists to the town. He got this idea from frescos painted on walls of a monastery in Moldavia (Romania) that he once visited.

For 10 years, Schulz patiently promoted his plan to the people of the town. Finally, the Mayor of Chemainus agreed to his proposal in 1980. A Chemainus Town Development Committee was formed, under Schulz's leadership, to coordinate the project theme of bridging the pioneer era with the present period.

Five murals were painted in the first year, depicting scenes of the forest industry. The first mural was of the "Steam Donkey", which was invented in 1882. This machine was used to pull large trees and remove large obstructions. Manpower or horsepower did the heavy work before this machine was invented.

Seven murals were added the following year with several additions in each of the ensuing years. These included the following, "The daughter of the Native Chief watching the arrival of English sailing boats", "One Sunday in the logging camp", "The warship which came to investigate a murder case, year of 1863", "Julia, the first Caucasian baby here in 1871", and "American millionaires Rockefeller and Carnegie who visited Chemainus in 1900 and the hotel in which they stayed".

Initially, the painters of the murals were BC artists, but later painters were invited from all over the world, including USA, Europe, South Africa and China. One invitee was a Japanese American.

Ten years later, there are now 38 murals. Among them are pictures explaining the history of the First Nations and the Japanese people who worked in the forest industry. In 1996, the mural "The Chinese boy's memories" was added to commemorate the Chinese people who contributed to the town's development. 400,000 tourists now visit Chemainus every year. There is

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no charge to visit the largest open-air gallery.

There is a connection between the Japanese and Chemainus. Japanese have lived on Vancouver Island and in the western part of BC since the early 20th century and in the 1930s there were about 300 Japanese in the Chemainus area. They worked hard, were well behaved and more or less stuck to themselves. However, anti-Japanese sentiments existed and resulted in racial discrimination.

Japanese Canadians were discriminated against for a long time, but were finally accepted into the Canadian community. The service of Japanese volunteer soldiers who bravely fought in Europe in WWI (1914-1918) contributed to the acceptance of the Japanese. Two hundred Japanese Canadian soldiers fought in Europe, 54 of whom were killed in action and 97 were injured. The number of casualties was abnormally high. A stone monument stands in Stanley Park, a famous park in Vancouver. The status of Japanese Canadians was elevated by their soldiers' blood.

However, after England and France declared war against Germany in 1939, the Allied countries began applying increasing restrictions on Japan, an ally of Germany. The unexpected Japanese military attack on Pearl Harbour was the death knell of the Japanese Canadian community. All of the 300 Japanese Canadians who lived in Chemainus were sent to the interior of BC. During the war, the Japanese cemetery in Chemainus was bulldozed and the gravestones used for fences around houses in town.

After the war, the redress movement by Japanese Canadians resulted in the Government of Canada issuing a formal apology in 1988. The pastor of the Chemainus Anglican Church found 5 Japanese Canadian gravestones and rebuilt the Japanese cemetery in 1988. On a summer day in 1991, many former Japanese Canadian residents from all over Canada returned for a reunion. Ever since on *Obon* day in August, a remembrance ceremony is commemorated.

A book, "*O-bon in Chimunesu*", was written by Catherine Lang. The book tells the stories of 10 Japanese families that lived in Chemainus. Two murals portraying the Japanese community in Chemainus have been painted. The "Winning Float" painted in 1991 refers to the 50th anniversary of the forest company, when the Japanese entered a beautiful float decorated with flowers, lanterns and several girls wearing pretty kimonos. This float won a prize accounting for the title of the mural.

The other mural, "The Lone Scout", is a portrait of Shige Yoshida wearing a Boy Scout uniform. Shige was interested in the Boy Scout movement and asked to join the local troop, but was refused for no known reason. Consequently, Shige applied to a correspondence course in the U.S. and studied to be a scout. After 5 years, he qualified and worked hard to organize a scout troop of six Japanese Canadian boys in 1930. This was the first Japanese scout troop in Canada.

Shige was evacuated to Tashme Camp in the BC interior when WWII began. There, he organized a Boy Scout troop for Japanese Canadian

boys. This movement bolstered the morale of the boys who lost hope in the camp. The troop had 110 members in 1944 and in the following year, 200 members paraded holding Union Jack flags. It was the largest Boy Scout troop in the British Commonwealth at that time. The two murals dealing with Japanese themes were painted by Japanese Canadian artists and were commissioned because of "the plentiful and valuable contributions of the Japanese Canadians to the local community".

There is another connection with Japan and Chemainus in addition to the fact that many Japanese Canadians lived here. In June of 1942, the Japanese Army occupied Attu and Kiska Islands in the Aleutian Islands, USA. The U.S. Army landed in Attu Island in May 1943, and there was a violent fight so that all of Yamazaki's soldiers and officers were killed. The First Torpedo Boat Group miraculously evacuated the remaining 5,200 Japanese soldiers from Kiska Island under heavy fog on July 29th, 1943. The Allied Forces of USA and Canada gathered secretly in Chemainus in early July 1943 to mount an attack of Kiska Island. On August 13th, the Allied Forces began an attack of Kiska Island, but found it deserted. In the book written by Olsen, there is a picture of soldiers boarding a ship on the lumber company wharf in Chemainus.

The town of Chemainus has revived and has many links with Japan since the war. ❀

Kay Minami's essay appeared in the Japanese magazine "Kouzan (Mining)", April 1998 and was translated by Sakuya Nishimura.

Glencoe Sugar Beet Camp, May 29th - November 12th, 1942

by Yon Shimizu

Those of us from Camp Black, who volunteered to work in the sugar beet fields of southwestern Ontario,

were trucked to the train station in Schreiber where we joined up with a group of men from the Schreiber

Camp. I was surprised to read from the archival documents that we boarded the train at 3:30 am on the



Crystal Palace, the exhibition building for the Glencoe Fair. (Yon Shimizu photo, 1942)

29th of May! We must have had to get up really early because we were six miles back in the bush from Schreiber and there really wasn't much of a road yet. On our way to the sugar beet camp in southwestern Ontario, the train made a stop at the Jackfish Road Camp, which was approximately 20 miles southeast of Schreiber and was the eastern terminus of the unfinished, future Trans-Canada Highway. There, we were joined by some Jackfish Camp men who had also volunteered to work in the sugar beet fields. There were now 135 men on the train who were headed for a new adventure on the sugar beet farms of southwestern Ontario. I think that most of us who volunteered were looking forward to seeing another part of this new and hitherto unknown province of Ontario. None of us knew what our ultimate destination was to be, except that it was in a part of the province where farming was the mainstay of the economy and we were asked to help the farm economy in whatever way we could.

As we traveled from northwestern Ontario, we could see the scenery change from the rocky, stunted growth, which is characteristic of the north shore of Lake Superior, to a more pleasant,

grassy, hilly terrain. Past London, the land flattened out considerably, with lush looking green fields on both sides of the train. I can recall being overjoyed by the sight, because the green fields at this time of the year reminded me of the home I had left behind in April. We must have stopped in Toronto on our way, but I can't remember. I don't remember that I got off the train for any reason. We may have been given sandwiches to eat on the train, but except for my memories of the changing countryside, my memories of that trip are very vague.

The train finally stopped at the Glencoe station, which is about half an hour from London. The Mountie who was accompanying us, told our half of the coach to get off here as this was the end of the line for us. According to the archival records, there were 58 of us who were in this camp as of June 25th, 1942 and 55 at the Dresden Camp, which does not add up to the 155 that another record shows left the road camps in the first group. There must have been some transfers out of the Dresden Camp. When I began my archival research, I learned that the other Japanese men on the train went on to Thamesville, another small town about half an hour from Glencoe. From there they were

trucked about 15 miles northwest to a camp at Dresden, which is only about 12 miles from Wallaceburg.

We were met at the station by a couple of trucks and a delegation of people including ministers of some of the churches in town. The trucks took us to our new home, the Crystal Palace, which was the exhibition building for the Glencoe Fair. The churches welcomed us with a meal prepared by the ladies of the churches and we really appreciated the home-cooked food they served us, after the road camp fare we had been eating since we first arrived in Ontario. We soon found out that the Japanese man, who was our cook for the camp, had been the cook for the Hotel Georgia in Vancouver, and his brand of fare was much more refined than the meals served to us at Camp Black. I recall that I really enjoyed his meals, although one of our Victoria fellows told me that he didn't like the fancy hotel type of sandwiches he gave us for lunch. On Sunday mornings after we had settled in for a few weeks, he served us a gruel like rice dish which was called *chagai*, which we ate with fish. This was a real treat for the fishermen in the camp who were ecstatic the first time we had it and they really looked forward to Sunday breakfast. I had never had this before, but I like rice, even to this day.

Our facilities consisted of the main building, which had been converted by the Ontario Farm Service Force into a kitchen and mess hall downstairs and dormitory-type accommodations upstairs with double-decked bunk beds and room to spare for a few tables. One of the tables became a permanent poker table from the first night we were there, and I believe there were some men playing poker every night. We had with us a group of fishermen from Tofino and Ucluelet on the West

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Coast of Vancouver Island. They appeared to have considerable money in their money belts and they were very much into poker playing. They played serious poker, there was always lots of folding stuff in the pot, and I remember once when one of the men showed me how someone in the camp had marked the deck to get that extra advantage. I don't believe they ever identified the culprit and there never was a fight over a card game. I didn't know there was such a thing as a money belt for safekeeping of valuables because of my youth and only \$24 in my pocket.

Just behind the main building was a wash/shower-room with lavatory basins and showers with hot water. How we loved this, because at Camp Black there were no lavatory basins or showers! Out back, beyond the wash/shower-room was the outhouse, a six-holer as I recall. When I first examined the outhouse, I noticed that it had a concrete holding basin. There was no way for anything to escape from the basin. The first problem we had with the outhouse was an infestation of some kind of creepy, crawly, small, caterpillar-like creature with a tail. It was a terribly disconcerting, uncomfortable situation knowing that there were these critters crawling around below your bottom while you were answering the call of nature. We got rid of them completely with the use of lime, thank goodness! I had never seen anything like them before or since. Later in the summer, the outhouse had to be cleaned out. I wasn't aware that this was to be done, but one day when we were returning to the camp on the open truck, which was used to take us to the different farms, we were met at the far end of the town by a most malodorous scent. As we progressed through the town the scent became worse, until when we arrived at the camp it was obvious that we had

arrived very near to the source of the odour. We were told that two men had taken on the job of cleaning out the outhouse and had spread the contents on the farmland immediately behind the campgrounds. In order to do the job, we were told that the men downed a 26er of liquor and were pretty drunk by the time they finished. It was horrible as I remember, and we tried closing the windows to try to lessen the stink while we had our dinner, but it didn't help at all. We eventually had to open the windows and doors, because in this part of Ontario, it was hot, hot, in the summer time. And if it was humid, there was no way one can exist without air circulation, and in those days there was no air-conditioning. Being a city bred boy, I had never been subject to anything like this, but living here in Wallaceburg, we are subject to the stink from farms. Whenever the scent of pig manure is wafting through the air around here, which doesn't happen often, thank goodness, my mind shifts back in time to that day in Glencoe and the "honey-dippers".

The camp had a wire fence around it, about 3 ft. in height and there was a guardhouse at the entrance. There was a RCMP constable stationed there for a few weeks together with a couple of WW II veterans for around the clock

surveillance. We were told that only three of us could leave the camp in the evening after work and that we had to sign out and check in with the guard on return. We had not expected this, it was our understanding that we would be much freer away from the road camp and this caused some grumbling at the start, but we were told that the numbers could be increased as the towns-people became familiar with us. It did not take long for that to happen, the people had no idea what we were like, and were very surprised that we spoke English.

On Saturday, May 30th, 1942 the LONDON FREE PRESS printed a short article on our arrival. The reporter described our arrival in Glencoe and how we were pleased with the reception we received from the people who were waiting at the station for us. He also mentioned that 50 men had arrived at the Dresden camp. As the story says, that night we had a really big, bang, dilly of a summer lightning, thunder and rain storm, the likes of which most of us had never seen before. We all stood at the windows of the upstairs sleeping quarters just amazed at the pyrotechnics of a summer storm in this part of Ontario. I remember, as a youth in Victoria, standing in Beacon Hill Park, along the waterfront in the summer months,



Thinning. From left; S. Miyashita, Y. Madokoro, S. Kawahara and J. Hemmy. (Yon Shimizu photo, 1942)

looking to the east and seeing the lightning flash over the mainland, never hearing the thunder, but being fascinated by the light show so far off! The torrent of rain, which fell wasn't good for the beet farmers. Apparently, they had quite a bit of rain already, and the ground was getting packed and the clay soil in the area wasn't going to make the "thinning" or "blocking" easy when it dried out enough for us to start working. Here, I should explain for the benefit of those not familiar with the cultivation of sugar beets that there are three basic operations, which had to be done after the seeds sprouted.

1. "Thinning" or "blocking" was performed with a short handled hoe about 18 to 20 inches long. The seedlings had to be thinned out so there was only one seedling per foot. The short handle of course required one to bend over to "thin" with one hand and separate the leaves of the seedlings with the other. Was this ever hard on the back! If you were good at "thinning", you stayed in this bent position until you got to the end of the row. The thing I hated most, was when I couldn't see the end of the row when I started. It turned out that ground conditions that spring were one of the worst they had for "thinning" because of the rain and clay soil. This was our baptism to one of the harder farm jobs in this part of Ontario. We were supposed to be able to make up to \$5 per day, working the fields on contract. As it was, because of the adverse



Second hoeing. T. Hoita. (Yon Shimizu photo, 1942)



Second hoeing. Front, from left; J. Hemmy, H. Omori, G. Uyede and Y. Madokoro. Rear; Y. Shimizu, J. Szuz, R. Hoita and M. Baba. (Yon Shimizu photo, 1942)

conditions and our inexperience, we all ended up working for 25¢ an hour, which was guaranteed by the government for all three operations.

2. "Second hoeing" was done about a month or so after "thinning", to get rid of the weeds growing between the plants. This was not bad as we used regular long-handled hoes, which did not require bending over. I remember once a lightning bolt flashed down and hit the wire fence around the field where we were working. I felt the hoe jump and a sort of tingling in my hands. There were some cows in the next field and nothing happened to them, so we were not afraid. Today, I would head for the nearest ditch!

3. The last operation was called "topping", when the leaves and a thin slice of the top of the sugar beet were cut off. First, the farmer with his tractor and an implement loosened the beets from the ground. We picked the beets from off the ground with a machete-like knife, fitted at the end with a curved hook. After "topping", the beets were thrown into piles on the ground and manually loaded onto a wagon, then transported by truck or rail to the sugar beet refinery in either Chatham or Wallaceburg. A good friend from university days was working in the Wallaceburg refinery

in June 1948 and was instrumental in my coming to Wallaceburg to work after graduation. I was having trouble finding a job, because Japanese graduates were not readily accepted soon after the war.

On Monday June 1st, 1942 the LONDON FREE PRESS ran a longer story on us. James E. Bowes, the staff reporter, described in general our backgrounds, our educational levels and that we spoke mostly English. He also described our dining, sleeping and bathing facilities and how our general welfare was being looked after. The reporter wrote about the cook, George, who was the only fat man in camp. There weren't too many fat Japanese in those days, although there was a fellow who was a little on the pudgy side. The reporter's reference to exercising may be due to a high bar that someone had installed between the back of the main building and the shower room. There was one man in camp who could really perform on the bar. I don't know where he learned his routine, but I always watched him because he was really good at it.

On Monday morning, a farmer was looking for men to help him plant tomatoes. I believe his name was

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Sunday treat by the bath house. From left; T. Madokoro, A. Hama, N. Morishita, M. Sakauye, T. Tosa and K. Morishita. (Yon Shimizu photo, 1942)

MacLaren. Families of Scottish descent populated the town of Glencoe and the surrounding area. Our paperboy, who delivered the LONDON FREE PRESS and the TORONTO DAILY STAR, was named Alex MacFarlane. I got his name and wrote to him from Kapuskasing after I left Glencoe in November. He sent me three pictures of himself which I still have in my album. Anyway, I quickly volunteered to go and so did my brother Stum, and a couple of other fellows from Victoria.

Tomato planting was easy work. Two of us had to sit close to the ground on each side of the planting rig. This rig punched evenly spaced holes in the ground and squirted water in the holes. We placed tomato plants into alternating holes and the rig then drew dirt back around the plant. A tractor pulled the rig up and down the field. The other two fellows worked on another rig for planting. This was my first ever farm job, and I felt good about it. We were paid 25¢ an hour, and I believe we worked most of the day and completed the planting because we did not go back. I did not go back to pick the ripe tomatoes and can't remember if anyone else in the camp did either.

By Tuesday morning the ground was dry enough to go out into the fields, and we worked until all the sugar beets had been "thinned." We

went out in groups of five to ten to a farm, depending on the size of the field and the demand for our labour. I have no idea how much acreage was on an individual farm, but most fields seemed to be huge, and never ending. This was most discouraging to most of us. Many of the men wrote back to their friends and told them not to volunteer for work on the sugar beet farms because of the backbreaking work and the poor wages. The Ontario Farm Service Force and the Canada and Dominion Sugar Company had wanted 500 men in the summer of 1942. Our unfavourable work experience, scuttled any chance for this quota to be met. A. Maclaren, the Director of the OFSF, reported in a letter on December 1st, 1942 to A. MacNamara, Dominion Deputy Minister of Labour, "372 men were recruited for the season, of whom about 25 were sent back to Schreiber as unfit or unwilling to do the work. However, the balance who did work, were, I should say, about 85 percent satisfactory. Many of the farmers were perfectly satisfied with the work these men had done."

It was just not possible for men experienced in fishing, logging, lumber and paper mill work, where they had made fairly good wages, to accept low paying farming work. As a recent high school graduate unfamiliar with any real kind of work,

I found the beet work hard. But everything else we worked at wasn't bad, except for preparing corn for ensilage. In this process, corn stalks are cut, tied together in sheaves, taken by wagon to a shredding machine and the shredded material carried on a conveyor into a silo. The sheaves were heavy because they were green and tossing them with a pitchfork onto a wagon was a heavy job for me.

A week later on June 6th, 1942 another short article appeared in the LONDON FREE PRESS. The reporter described how well we were adapting to the work required of us. On Monday, June the 8th, another story was printed in the same paper. In this article, the reporter wrote of wanting, "to set at rest the rumours of incipient race riots and possible troubles" and described us as, "orderly, well-spoken and nicely mannered". He went on to write of a farmer's appraisal of our work, our wages and the restrictions imposed on us. He dealt into a misunderstanding about our access to the local theatre, which the theatre manager quickly resolved. He ended his story by stating that in the course of one week the Japanese Canadians had earned the admiration and sympathy of the whole community.

I think that it was sometime in October that the Fox theatre showed "Holiday Inn", in which Bing Crosby introduced the song "White Christmas". Most of us went to see it once, but one of the fellows from Victoria went to see it every night that week. He sang it in the bunkhouse all the time, trying to imitate Bing!

We were lucky to have been assigned to Glencoe, because once the townspeople got to know us, we were accepted. Other camps in Chatham and Essex had real problems, especially in Chatham. The camp in Chatham had to be moved from within the city limits at the sugar

factory to a farm a few miles from the city. The people did not want the men in town at all, although the farmers were desperate for help. This was resolved when the men insisted that they would not stay and work where they were not welcome. The OFSF was not supposed to locate farm workers in an area where the people were antagonistic towards Japanese Canadians.

After the “thinning” was finished, we worked at picking cucumbers for the Lealand Pickle Company in West Lorne which was 20 to 25 miles southwest from Glencoe. We picked small gherkins initially and later the larger cucumbers. We would periodically stop to rest and if it was near lunchtime, the talk would inevitably get around to the good old chop suey houses in Victoria or wherever we came from. There we were in a field of cucumbers, some of us chewing on one we had just picked and peeled with a knife. One day, another fellow from Victoria and I climbed up to the hayloft in the barn for a snooze after lunch. No one bothered to call us down when they returned to resume working in the field. The “straw-boss” missed us 15 - 30 minutes later, came to the barn, banged on the walls and shouted to wake us. I was in a deep, sound sleep, but duty called and we walked sheepishly out to the jeers of our fellow workers. Our camp had a Japanese head foreman who assigned the workers to the farmers and a “straw-boss” to oversee each farm gang. This boss had three sons in camp and was the largest family group in the camp. The youngest was 17 years old. He didn’t have to be in camp, but came along so the family males could stay together.

In late July we had to help with the wheat harvest. This was a job which all of us enjoyed, for at least three reasons. It was not the

backbreaking toil of “thinning” and we were paid 35¢ an hour. Furthermore, we didn’t have to pack a sandwich lunch because the farmers welcomed us to eat with them and the other labourers. I was quite overwhelmed by the welcoming attitude of the men, as well as the women who came to help prepare the tremendous meals served to all of us. The meals were either roast beef or pork with mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetables, and always pie for dessert. Of course there was tea and coffee as well. We had been driven by racial prejudice from British Columbia, where we were reviled and despised by the bulk of the population. On the other hand, in the farmlands of southwestern Ontario, we were welcomed as equals and saviours by the farming population. Later, we helped harvest the ripened oats and barley. Between “second hoeing”, harvesting of grains, suckering, harvesting tobacco and other odd tasks, we had enough to keep us working through the summer months.

I remember an incident during the lunch hour at a wheat harvest, which is always remembered with a shudder. This farmer killed a pig or two, and we watched. He killed the pig by slitting its throat, and then

letting it run around the barnyard, until it dropped and died from loss of blood. The pig’s laboured breathing through its flapping slit throat was the most disturbing for me.

One of the other farm jobs we did was hoeing weeds in cornfields. One hot, muggy day in late August, we were working in a field where the corn was taller than I was. I was in a row working by myself and bent over to clear some weeds right next to the corn stalk. I had just grabbed the weeds when this snake rose up out of the weeds, hissing and flaring out its hood at me. I screamed, dropped my hoe and headed for the hills, thinking it was a cobra! The other fellows came running to me, as did the farmer, who was watching under a shade tree. I told everyone that this snake that looked like a cobra hissed at me when I went to get some weeds. The farmer laughed and said that I must have seen a puff adder. I have never liked snakes and this one had scared the hell out of me! I haven’t seen another since.

During a holiday, probably Labour Day, the Ridgetown All Stars asked us to play a softball game with them. They must have read about us; that we liked to play and were pretty good. We had a pretty good pitcher,

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Picking tobacco. From left; E. Ono, T. Kuwabara, unknown and T. Shimizu. (Yon Shimizu photo, 1942)

but he wasn't up to his usual game. His arm failed him and we got the pants beaten off us. It got so bad that even yours truly was asked to pitch, and I don't pretend to be a good pitcher! I can't remember the score; it must have been so horrible that I've blocked it out of my memory completely.

On October 6th, we had a little flare-up in the camp. I had completely forgotten about the incident, but read about it in the archives. Twenty men refused to go to work. Their complaint was "if they were not permitted to return to their families after the sugar beet season, they would not continue to work." Pipher came to the camp, threatened the men with detention and promised them no black listing if they would return to work. There were six Victoria men involved in this incident; one of them was Jack Henmi from the Class of '42. At the 50-year reunion we had in Victoria in 1992, I asked one of the men mentioned as being one of the dissenters about the strike. He could not remember the incident. In 1994, I met Jack Hemmy (that's how he spells his name now) in Toronto and he could not remember anything about it either! It was not that big a deal.

On October 14th, a Mr. Macfie of Appin wrote to Mr. Reek, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Agriculture that, "complaints were going abroad because of waste and

extravagance in the Glencoe Jap. Camp. ... the man who gathers the garbage has stated different times that partly used portions of food are being thrown into the can - partial roasts of meat, rolls of bologna etc. These may be exaggerated but I think this reported waste and the conditions should be investigated. ... if these rumours are baseless they should be contradicted" Reek sent this information on to Garner, the Agricultural Representative responsible for some of these camps. His reply was that he had eaten at the camp twice, and that the meals were good but not extravagant and he had seen no "wasteful practices." Another supervisor McPherson, "has been there on several occasions during meal time and at other times unannounced and he has seen no indications of wasting of food." He commented, "on a recent meat account that they purchased turkey at 38 cents a pound and there may have been some comment regarding this purchase. However, if we compare this with the retail price of any reasonably good cut of beef, it can hardly be termed undue extravagance." He closed with, "If the party or parties who have registered this complaint will supply specific information it would facilitate matters here a great deal." I never heard a thing about this complaint, so I guess the issue died a natural death.

By sometime in October, the

only crops left to harvest were the corn and sugar beets. I did take part in harvesting corn for ensilage, but not too often, thank goodness, as it was a hard job for me. By late October, the weather had turned, and we were working in quite cold temperatures, with the odd snow flurries. Harvesting the beets was not as backbreaking as "thinning." But some of the beets were so huge they had to be "topped" by resting them on one's raised leg, holding them steady with one hand while chopping them with the beet knife. I was always extremely careful, because as you can guess, I wasn't about to poke the pick in my leg, or to slice it! On one of the fields we were harvesting, the train tracks were very close but raised up so the other side couldn't be seen. I was curious to see what was on the other side, so I climbed up the embankment and saw a field of popping corn. The corn was ripe for picking, so some of us went into the field and picked some ears. We popped the corn on New Year's Day when we were in the bush camp. The corn popped quite well and tasted good; because it was the first time any of us had ever picked corn and popped it. Ours was the last of the sugar beet camps to close. The beet harvest was completed in the Glencoe area on November 11th, and a group of us left for Kapuskasing on the 12th. There were snow-flurries the day we left. ❁

The *SUIAN MARU* Centennial Celebration by Stan Fukawa

The *SUIAN MARU* Centennial Celebration Committee invites all interested persons to join in recognizing the contributions made by Jinsaburo Oikawa and his fellow immigrants from Miyagi, Japan to the history of British Columbia. The Celebration Dinner is tentatively set for Sept. 16, 2006.

The Japanese Canadian National Museum is understandably very eager to add to its collection of documents and photographs and would like to obtain additional information on the Don and Lion Island communities, their subsequent dispersal to the surrounding districts of Delta, Richmond and New Westminster, and later, further afield due to the internment. Committee member Kiyoo Goto, whose grandfather was on the *SUIAN MARU* has been collecting and making maps and lists of the two islands and their inhabitants. Those with information are asked to contact Kiyoo at 604-528-9717.

The committee encourages local historians and others interested in the research on the history of the Miyagi immigrants to become involved in the research of the voyagers and the colony. Contact have been made with some

of the known descendents of those who were on the voyage and who lived in the colony and these will be expanded. Support has been expressed by local leaders and these should increase as we approach the date of the celebrations.

Passenger List, *SUIAN MARU*, Voyage of 1906

Source: Kiyoki Shudo, Canada Mikko Monogatari – reprinted in Roy Ito, Stories of My People

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Iwate Prefecture:</i> | Hatakeyama, Sosuke (42) | Oikawa, Yoshizo (29) |
| Chiba, Masa (43) | Horiuchi, Heizo (33) | Onodera, Gizo (27) |
| Sugawara, Unkichi (27) | Igarashi, Takeru (24) | Sasaki, Sakae (19) |
| | Inage, Shinshiro (35) | Sato, Juzaburo (26) |
| <i>Kanagawa Prefecture:</i> | Ito, Harusaburo (40) | Sato, Kibinosuke (48) |
| Inouye, Hisao (32) | Iwabuchi, Chosaburo (32) | Sato, Kichiemon (24) |
| Komazawa, Hirokichi (40) | Iwabuchi, Shitagoro (22) | Sato, Kikuji (21) |
| Ono, Kobe (45) | Kumagai, Chusasuke (29) | Sato, Kuraji (21) |
| Shibuya, Saijiro (33) | Kumagai, Ichisaburo (22) | Sato, Kuroji (31) |
| Tsuyuki, Jizaburo (41) | Kumagai, Kunibei (41) | Sato, Seiichiro (29) |
| | Kumagai, Taiji (24) | Sato, Shigejiro (33) |
| <i>Miyagi Prefecture:</i> | Kumagai, Toyomatsu (46) | Sato, Shinkichi (21) |
| Abe, Sanji (22) | Kumagai, Yojuro (43) | Sato, Sozasaburo (36) |
| Abe, Suekichi (26) | Miura, Dainosuke (23) | Sato, Tatsusaburo (26) |
| Asano, Yoemon (29) | Numakura, Magobe (36) | Sato, Tokujuro (36) |
| Chiba, Eikichi (26) | Oikawa, Chiyomi (22) | Sato, Yaezo (39) |
| Chiba, Gensaki (48) | Oikawa, Goroji (33) | Sato, Zensuke (25) |
| Chiba, Matsutarō (32) | Oikawa, Harujiro (27) | Shima, Kenzo (48) |
| Chiba, Torakichi (41) | Oikawa, Ichiji (29) | Sudo, Eiji (36) |
| Endo, Iwao (37) | Oikawa, Jinsaburo (53) | Sugahara, Jinzaburo (22) |
| Fujiwara, Tarobe (21) | Oikawa, Oon (16) | Sugahara, Takeyoshi (19) |
| Fujiwara, Yoshiharu (30) | Oikawa, Ryoji (30) | Sugawara, Kumakichi (24) |
| Fujiwara, Yuhei (38) | Oikawa, Seiichiro (22) | Suzuki, Gennosuke (28) |
| Goto, Bunji (24) | Oikawa, Seitaro (38) | Suzuki, Hisayo (22) |
| Goto, Chuzo (26) | Oikawa, Terajiro (29) | Suzuki, Jogo (25) |
| Goto, Kimpei (18) | Oikawa, Toyo (25) | Suzuki, Seinosuke (29) |
| Goto, Kosaburo (43) | Oikawa, Usaburo (28) | Tadano, Tatsusaburo (31) |
| Hatakeyama, Takanori (21) | Oikawa, Yojiro (42) | Taira, Ichinojo (41) |
| Hatakeyama, Riemon (28) | Oikawa, Yonishin (25) | Takizawa, Yoshio (18) |

Kushiro Sister City Delegation to Burnaby by Stan Fukawa

In celebration of their 20 year-old sister city relationship, a large delegation from the Hokkaido city of Kushiro is visiting Burnaby at the end of June, 2005. The delegation will be visiting the National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre during their stay and members of the NNMHC and local Nikkei community will be actively involved in welcoming the representatives of the northern Japanese city. Translators can help immensely in international exchanges.

Kushiro is a city of 200,000, slightly larger than Burnaby, situated on the east coast of Hokkaido. It is similar to many B.C. cities in that the major industries include fisheries, paper mills and mining. It is also famous for the conservation work that has brought back the red-crowned crane that was at the edge of extinction.

Visitors to Burnaby Mountain Park cannot miss the totem pole-like sculptures which were a gift to Burnaby from their sister-city in

Japan. They were done by sculptors Noburi and Shusei Toko, a father-son team and represent many creatures, both mythical and real, frolicking in the Playground of the Gods.

Burnaby has been spearheading an “eco-sculpturing” style of landscape decorating and has hosted a Kushiro Parks Representative to a three-day workshop in preparation for the gifting of a special eco-sculptured crane to Kushiro to celebrate the twenty-year relationship. ❀

Worth A Thousand Words by Reiko Tagami

This month, I present to you a beautiful image from the Japanese Canadian National Museum Photographic Collection. An

inscription on the back of the photograph indicates that the photo was taken on January 18, 1910 to celebrate the birth of Sumiko Inata,

born 28 days earlier. Sumiko is the baby in the centre of the photograph, in the arms of her proud father, Eiju

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Inata. One of the men seated to the left is Dr. Tokutaro Kinoshita, and one of the men seated on the right is store-owner Washiji Oya. The other men in the photograph are sawmill workers, who likely would have been employed at the nearby Hastings Sawmill. A separate inscription states that this particular copy of the photograph was presented to a Mr. Fukuda.

Fading into an aged sepia tone, the photograph is riddled with spots that could be water damage or the traces of other spills. It is adhered directly to a cardboard “frame” which provides physical support to the photograph and has helped to keep the photograph intact through its almost 100 years of existence. The acidity of the cardboard, however, has probably accelerated the yellowing and fading of the image. Our records show that the photograph was found in a building at 657 Powell Street in December 1988. The photograph was given to Mr. Tsuneharu Gonnami, who was then the Japanese Librarian at the University of British Columbia. Mr. Gonnami sent the photograph to the Japanese Canadian History Preservation Committee, now the Japanese Canadian National Museum.

At the time the photograph was re-discovered, Sumiko Inata, if she were still alive, would have been almost 80 years old. We do not know the history of the Inata family, if any family members are still living, or if they even live in Canada. But this lack of knowledge does nothing to detract from the many stories waiting to be told in the faces and demeanours of the men, woman, and children facing the camera.

Above the door of the building, for instance, is a small sign that reads “E. Inata, Japanese Goods”. We know that Washiji Oya, also in the photograph, owned one of the



Celebration of daughter's birth, Vancouver, B.C., January 18, 1910. Arikado Studio. (JCNM collection)

buildings on the north side of Powell Street in the middle of the 400 block. The building in the photograph is very similar to Oya's building, which is still standing. This similarity leads us to believe that the photograph was taken in front of Oya's building, with the ground-floor rented to Mr. Inata for his “Japanese Goods”. If this is the case, how was the business relationship established between Mr. Inata and Mr. Oya, and what were the “Japanese Goods” marketed by Mr. Inata?

Hanging from the sign is a lantern, on which is printed both the Japanese *Hinomaru* and the British Union Jack. This is a symbol of the friendly relations between Japan and Britain at the time, but also shows the efforts of the Japanese Canadian community to bridge the gap between the two cultures.

The photograph is dominated by men, and includes only one woman and two children. The woman, standing behind and to the left of Mr. Inata, is unidentified, as is the child standing at the bottom right of the picture. Is the woman Yo Oya, the first known Japanese Canadian woman immigrant and the wife of Washiji Oya, or is she perhaps

Sumiko Inata's mother? If she is not Sumiko's mother, then where is the mother of the baby, and why is she absent from the photograph? The mother's absence may speak to the length of recovery from labour and childbirth at that time. Overall, the absence of women and children serves as a reminder of the nature of Japanese immigration to Canada in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Immigrants were mostly single men, and families were a rarity in both the rough-and-tumble world of working-class Vancouver, and industrial and heavy-labour jobs such as railway work, fishing, logging, and mining that employed so many *dekasegi* labourers.

Looking at this photograph, I am certain of three things. First, there must have been similar photographs taken in Japanese Canadian communities all over B.C., with growing frequency as once-transient labourers married and put down roots in the province. I can only imagine the pride and relief felt by communities as they celebrated women and their children surviving childbirth. Second, someone reading this will have a better knowledge of the facts or the stark reality of

everyday life in a Japanese Canadian community in 1910. If so, please tell me – this is how staff and the wider community expand our knowledge of Japanese Canadian history and experience. Third, this photograph raises more questions than it provides

answers. Who are all of the other men, the woman, and the toddler; what are their stories; and what happened to them? Such is the beauty and ever-present conundrum of working with the rich, varied and

growing artifact and archival collections at the Japanese Canadian National Museum. The more you see, and the more questions you answer, the more you realize is still to be discovered. ❀

Japanese Canadian National Museum Report by Tim Savage

Coming very soon to the JCNM gallery is the much anticipated exhibition “Leveling the Playing Field: The Vancouver Asahi Baseball Team,” curated by Grace Eiko Thomson. The museum gratefully acknowledges the many supporters who have generously donated material and funds to help realize this project. Members of the community who attended the April 9 Asahi exhibition meeting or the April 28 banquet and April 29 celebration honouring the Asahi induction in the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame will have seen the impressive exhibition model that has been on display. The outpouring of support and pride for the Asahi team members at these events was very moving, and their legacy will be made known through this major touring exhibition that will travel across Canada.

In the museum gallery, the exhibition “Reshaping Memory, Owning History: Through the Lens of Japanese Canadian Redress” is continuing to draw strong audience interest. The exhibition is featured in the popular “Taiken” school visits

program that has seen a large number of groups this past spring. After gaining a high profile with thousands of visitors at the Royal B.C. Museum in Victoria, the exhibition “Shashin: Japanese Canadian Studio Photography to 1942” moved to the University of Victoria Maltwood Art Gallery, which will host a reception, symposium and guided tour by the show’s curator, Grace Eiko Thomson, on the afternoon of May 18. “Shashin” will tour to six venues in B.C. in the coming years, next at the Langley Centennial Museum June 30 to September 25.

Donations to the archives and artifact collection continue to stream in, with much new material related especially to the Asahi baseball team and other sport history. Reiko Tagami, our archivist, has undertaken a successful conservation pilot project with a large panorama photograph print that will be the model for conserving further panoramas in the collection. An archival arrangement and description project was undertaken by Randy Preston,

working with the photographs of Marie Katsuno and Masanobu Kawahira. Another UBC graduate student in archival studies is preparing a facility analysis looking at storage, lighting and other needs as part of our collaborative research centre professional experience program.

This spring a number of public programs were hosted at the National Nikkei Heritage Centre by the Museum, including the first *Jan Ken Pon* Japanese Heritage Games and Toys Day on March 19, the monthly Museum Lecture Series events, and “The Gull: the Steveston Noh Theatre Project” on May 7 after its two week workshop at the Centre. The Museum and Centre are preparing to receive international delegates on July 8 for the COPANI XIII conference hosted this year in Vancouver. For more conference information visit the National Association of Japanese Canadians website www.najc.ca.

Look for the new, updated version of the Museum website soon to launch at www.jcnm.ca.

Request for Information

I am currently doing some research on Japanese workers and their families that resided at Britannia Beach and Britannia Mines from the early 1900’s to the early 1940’s. Very little has been documented about their lives and work during this period and none has been from their perspective. Many have passed away and much of this important and rich history has been lost.

In the hope that parents and grandparents shared their stories with their children and grandchildren, I would be very grateful if they could contact me. It is my intention to document the important history of the Japanese community in Britannia Beach for future generations, by including their names and historical information in a memorial register at the BC Museum of Mining and National Historic Site at Britannia Beach. Family names include: Asano, Kakutani, Shinohara, Takahashi and Utsunomiya.

Marilyn Robb, E-mail: copper47top@yahoo.ca, Phone: 604-939-8076, Mail: #205-515 Foster Avenue, Coquitlam, BC, V3J 2L5

The list of new and renewing members of the National Nikkei Museum & Heritage Centre from February 1, 2005 to April 30, 2005.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Mr. & Mrs. Robert & Kazue K. Abe | Mrs. Sumiko Kamachi | Mrs. Toshiko Quan |
| Mr. & Mrs. Yoshimaru & Yoshi Abe | Mr. & Mrs. Shizuo & Kimie Kamezawa | Mrs. Aileen Randall |
| Mrs. Shizuka Akune | Mr. A. J. Kapusta | Mr. & Mrs. Yoshiyuki & Masako Sakaue |
| Mr. & Mrs. Tats Aoki | Ms. Tomoko Kato | Mrs. Akemi Sakiyama |
| Mr. & Mrs. Tsuguo & Grace Arai | Mr. & Mrs. George & June Kawaguchi | Miss Joyce Sakon |
| Mr. & Mrs. Mitsuyoshi & Keiko Araki | Mr. Masanobu Kawahira | Mr. & Mrs. Arnold & Satomi Saper |
| Mr. & Mrs. Yoshiharu & Fumiko Aura | Miss Amy E. Kawamoto | Mr. Fred Sasaki |
| Mr. Frank A. Baba | Dr. Tsuyoshi Kawasaki & Ms. Marja Kates | Mrs. Virginia Sato |
| Mr. Robert Banno & Ms. Cathy Makihara | Mr. & Mrs. Kazuo & Mitsuko Kawashima | Ms. Yuko Shibata |
| Mary Burke & Rod Hayward | Ms. Suzue Kimoto | Mrs. Eva T. Shiho |
| Mr. & Mrs. Katsuji & Kuniko Chiba | Mr. & Mrs. John & Jean Kitagawa | Mrs. Michiyo Shimamichi |
| Mrs. Sumika Child | Mr. Gordon Kobayashi | Mrs. Utaye Shimasaki |
| Mr. & Mrs. Michael & Ruth Coles | Mr. & Mrs. Kunihiko Araki & Ms. Hatsue Kobuke | Mr. & Mrs. George & Emiko Shimizu |
| Mr. Christian Cowley & Elaine Yamamoto | Mr. & Mrs. Masaoki & Reiko Kodama | Mr. & Mrs. Ralph & Chiyomi Shimizu |
| Mr. & Mrs. Shoichi & Ayako Deguchi | Dr. May Komiyama | Mr. & Mrs. Ted & Shiz Shimizu |
| Ms. Anne Dore | Mrs. Kay Komori | Mr. & Mrs. Yoshio & Norma Shimizu |
| Mr. Shigeyoshi Ebata | Ms. Amy Emiko Koyanagi | Mr. & Mrs. Wataru & Barbara Shishido |
| Mr. Randy Enomoto & Ms. Lynn Westwood | Mr. & Mrs. Min & Midori Koyanagi | Mr. & Mrs. Darin & Susan M. Sirovyak |
| Mr. Dennis Y. Enomoto | Mr. & Mrs. Teruo & Kazuko Koyanagi | Mr. Mike Sokugawa & Ms. Fumi Horii |
| Dr. & Mrs. Bruce & Vivian Ettinger | Mrs. Yoshiko Koyanagi | Mr. & Mrs. Roy Sokugawa |
| Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm & Keiko Fitz-Earle | Mrs. Kazue Kozaka | Mr. & Mrs. Kanji & Yuriko K. Suga |
| Mrs. Esther S. Freeman | Mr. & Mrs. Seiya & Moko Kuwabara | Dr. & Mrs. George & Kuni Sugiyama |
| Mr. & Mrs. Robert & Doreen Friesen | Mr. & Mrs. Bernie & Ruby Lofstrand | Mr. & Mrs. James & Mary Sugiyama |
| Mrs. Kyomi Fujisawa | Kazuko Kameda Madar | Suki's Beauty Bazaar Ltd. |
| Mrs. Fumiko Fujiwara | Mr. & Mrs. Mamoru & Peggy Madokoro | Mr. & Mrs. David & Kei Takahashi |
| Mr. & Mrs. Stanley & Masako Fukawa | Ms. Sharon Masui & Mr. Gwilym Smith | Mr. & Mrs. Ken & Peggy Takahashi |
| Mr. & Mrs. Frank & Vickie Fukui | Ms. Josie Matsuba | Mr. Koji Takahashi |
| Mr. Makoto Fukui | Mr. & Mrs. Yoshiaki & Miyoko Matsumoto | Mrs. Atsuko Takashima |
| Ms. Tomoko Goto | Ms. Janice Matsumura | Mrs. Aiko Takeda |
| Ms. Kiyoko Hamada | Mrs. Shizuko Matsumura | Mr. Tatsuya Takeda |
| Mr. & Mrs. Roy & Kikuyo Hamade | Mr. & Mrs. Hisao & Mariko Matsuoka | Mr. & Mrs. Akira & Isabel Tanaka |
| Mr. & Mrs. Arthur S. Hara, O.C. | Mr. & Mrs. Mitsuyoshi & Lily Matsushita | Mr. Kazuo B. Tanaka |
| Mr. Thomas H. Hara | Mrs. Kay McBride | Mr. & Mrs. Masaru & Etsuko Tanaka |
| Mr. & Mrs. Kazuji & Chieko Haraguchi | Mr. & Mrs. Arthur & Keiko Miki | Mr. & Mrs. Minoru & Miyoshi Tanaka |
| Mrs. M. Grace Harling | Mr. & Mrs. David & Kiyomi Minamata | Mr. & Mrs. Mitsuru & Yuki Tanaka |
| Dr. & Mrs. James & Helen Hasegawa | Mr. & Mrs. Kaoru & Aki Minato | Mr. & Mrs. Ryoji & Fusako Tanizawa |
| Mr. & Mrs. William T. Hashizume | Mrs. Frances Miyoko Miyashita | Mr. Chuck H. Tasaka |
| Mr. & Mrs. Masao & Nobue Hatanaka | Mr. & Mrs. Tak & Shizuko Miyazaki | Mr. & Mrs. Shigeharu & Florence Teranishi |
| Mr. Rodney Y. Hatanaka | Mr. & Mrs. Don & Rose Mohoruk | Mr. & Mrs. Willy & Evelyn Tobler |
| Mr. & Mrs. Mickey & Betty Hayashi | Mr. & Mrs. Kazuhiko & Toshiko Mori | Mr. & Mrs. George & Hiroko Tsuchiya |
| Mr. & Mrs. Mitsuo & Emmie Hayashi | Mr. & Mrs. Elmer & Sofia Morishita | Mr. & Mrs. Tomoaki & Yoshiko Tsuchiya |
| Mrs. Amy Hayashida | Mr. & Mrs. Steve & Shirley Morishita | Mr. & Mrs. Takuo & Motoko Uegaki |
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| Mrs. Fukiko Hinatsu | Mr. & Mrs. Toshio & Kazuko Nagumo | Mr. & Mrs. Mutsumi & Michiyo Uyede |
| Mr. & Mrs. Miki & Miyako Hirai | NAJC Kamloops Chapter | Ms. Kuniko Uyeno |
| Mr. & Mrs. Shigeru & Akemi Hirai | Mrs. Frances K. Nakagawa | Vancouver Japanese Gardeners Association |
| Mr. & Mrs. Isamu & Masako Hori | Mrs. Shoko Nakagawa | Mrs. Akiko Wakabayashi |
| Mr. & Mrs. Mikio & Midori Hori | Mr. Edward Nakamura | Mr. & Mrs. Henry & Yvonne Wakabayashi |
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| Ms. Sanaye Ikari | Ms. Seiko Nakazawa | Miss Sheena Wilson |
| Mr. & Mrs. Gordon & Joan S. Imai | Mr. & Mrs. Peter & Aster Nimi | Mr. & Mrs. Richard & Fumiko Woloshyn |
| Reverend Katsumi Imayoshi | Mrs. Shigeko Nishimura | Mr. & Mrs. Fred & Linda Yada |
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