



# Nikkei Images

National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre Newsletter ISSN#1203-9017 Winter 2006, Vol. 11, No. 4

## Mr. Nishikaze's Rock Garden: An Obsession by Henry Shimizu



*A painting by Henry Shimizu of George Nishikaze in his rock garden.  
(JCNM photo, ca. 2006)*

Mr. Nishikaze (George) was an exceptional cook, today we would say he was a chef. He was born in Gobo, Wakayama ken, Japan. He emigrated like many young Japanese to seek their fortune in North America with dreams of riches and to return to Japan with suits of gold. At age 15, he arrived in Victoria to work as a houseboy, in the exclusive Upland area of that city. As part of his duties he learned to cook western meals.

About 1915, after moving to Prince Rupert he joined my father as the cook for the newly created Dominion Hotel and Restaurant. The restaurant became very popular because of the excellent food. It was

the main dining place for all of the Japanese functions. Its reputation was founded on the quality of George's cooking. Even in the dark days of the 1930s it survived.

In 1936, George was diagnosed with cancer of the stomach. He wanted to return to Japan to die. George was so sick that when he was driven around Prince Rupert for the last time, he could hardly hold up his head. His doctor (Keirgan) was going to England for a visit. He agreed to accompany George to Japan by going west around the world rather than using the eastern route. One month later Mrs Nishikaze received a note that she sign an authorization for a new procedure using radioactive radium treatment. George was treated by passing the radioactive radium by mouth via a tube into the stomach. Six months later, carrying two suitcases he walked down the gangway of the steamship, back to the New Dominion Restaurant and Hotel. He resumed his duties as the cook.

With the beginning of World War II and shipbuilding in Prince Rupert, the restaurant and hotel

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## Announcements

All Events at NNMHC

**SUIAN MARU** Exhibition  
*Sea, Stealth and Suzuko*  
Oct. 13 – Dec. 16, 2006

JCNM Speakers Series  
*The Britannia Beach JC Community:  
Ongoing Research*  
Thursday, Nov. 30, 7:00 pm

Gulf of Georgia Cannery Exhibition  
*Uprooted: A Journey of Japanese  
Canadian Fishing Families*  
Opening in January 2007

*Jan Ken Pon!* Family Games Day  
Feb. 10, 2007

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became a beehive of activity. George was busier than ever. At 5 am he would start breakfast and at 7 am made 50 lunches. The hotel flourished for the next 2 years – then December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941 and the fortunes of all Japanese Canadians were changed forever.

Our family, as well as George's, was sent first to the Hastings Park Exhibition grounds, then to the internment camp in New Denver. Our two families shared one of the larger shiplap houses with bushy area in front. When the sanatorium (TB and chronic care) was built, George began to work there. He would be up at 5:30 am to clean the kitchen and make the bread and by noon he would return home.

### The Beginning of an Obsession

One day George wandered over to the village of New Denver, which lay north of Carpenter Creek. The internment camp spread out on a peninsula of land south of the creek (the Orchard). He noted some gardens, along the creek in the village and began discussions with the villagers about gardens. He had never considered planting a garden. Just about every house in the camp was planting a vegetable garden for food. Since there were no plans to utilize the area in front of our house, George envisioned a rock garden. He was not a gardener, nor was he particularly knowledgeable in this area. He began by collecting rocks of all sizes and shapes. He scoured the shoreline of Slocan Lake and the rocky banks of the creeks. He particularly liked those with odd shapes or colours. He began to pile up a mound of stones in front of our home. People thought he was crazy spending all his time collecting stones when he could be planting a vegetable garden. When he had a large pile of stones, he brought in soil and plants and with help from some of the knowledgeable people

of the village of New Denver, began building a rock garden.

As an untrained gardener, he built the garden without any preconceptions. The garden grew in area spreading out until it reached an old abandoned barn, then he began to build it higher and higher as he added more rocks, plants, and bushes. He could be seen every day scouring the land, the creek banks and the shoreline for rocks, plants and shrubs. Increasingly, the 'rock garden' became an attraction, with people coming from other camps including the *hakujin* from neighbouring villages as far south as Nelson.

In Nelson, one could buy a postcard of the 'famous Japanese Rock Garden'. Why this obsession to build a rock garden, working every day for 5 years? What drove this man - was it the second chance after his miraculous 'cure' - was it his resentment for the treatment as an 'Enemy Alien' - or was he trying to bring something of beauty into an otherwise bleak camp setting? Our home did not have a vegetable garden, but we did receive gifts of vegetables from those who appreciated George's effort so we didn't need to grow them.

In 1947, the Nishikazes were relocated to Montreal. He became a cook for Ritz Carlton and after cooking at another restaurant he retired in the early 1960s. At first after his departure, remaining residents cared for the garden. By the 1950s it had been neglected and was bulldozed down to make way for new developments. Today, there is no remnant of the once spectacular rock garden in the campsite where there are now streets and houses as well as the Nikkei Internment Memorial Museum.

In the mid-1960s, George came to Edmonton to visit and stayed with the Shimizus for a few months, then he returned to Japan as his wife

had died earlier in Montreal. He died in Japan at his ancestral home in about 1969. This painting is the

only memorial of the spectacular rock garden, which once stood in the centre of the Japanese Internment

Camp in New Denver - a tribute to one man's obsession. ☀

## A Legacy of Teaching by Patricia Tanaka



*George Higa, third from left, being inducted into the armed forces during World War II. (E. Miyanaga photo, ca. 1943)*

Family histories hold fascination for many of us. How did we arrive at the places where we are now? What legacies did our forbearers pass onto us and what is our place in history?

Gregory Miyanaga, a Coquitlam teacher can trace his history to both Kagoshima and Okinawa. Like so many others, his ancestors left Japan determined to make a better life in the promising young country of Canada. A legacy of the Miyanaga and Higa clans, with roots in the land, is the importance of education.

### The Higa Family

Greg's maternal grandfather, Shinei Higa emigrated from Okinawa in 1917 to work in the coal mines in Hardieville, Alberta. At that time Hardieville had a sizeable Japanese community, most of who worked in the mine. After two years of difficult labour in the coal mine, Shinei was able to bring over his wife Uta and infant son, Yoshihisa (George).

Shinei and Uta raised 13 children: George, Harry, Jim, Tom, Francis, Sam, Jack, Larry, Carol, Geraldine, Jeffrey, Eileen and Judy. The youngest son Victor died in

infancy.

By 1928, the Higas were farming and in 1936 were able to buy a farm in Broxburn, Alberta. Although Shinei died at age 51 in 1948, Uta continued farming with the help of her children.

Even in those early years Shinei recognized the importance of becoming Canadian citizens to be eligible to vote in federal and provincial elections in Alberta. However, Shinei passed away before Japanese Canadians were enfranchised. In spite of the depression years and World War II, education was also always a priority with Uta so almost all the children completed post-secondary education. While their siblings entered different careers, George, Sam, Geraldine, Eileen and Judy became teachers, although George first served in World War II. He was conscripted for intelligence work by the British Army as a sergeant stationed in India. When he was sent back to the Canadian Army he was demoted to the rank of private.

Brother Harry enlisted with the Canadian Army in 1941. He worked

in radio communications and rose to the level of sergeant. Harry was also instrumental in petitioning for a new elementary school in the Sunnyside area so that the local children did not have to travel too far. Judy attended Sunnyside School in her later elementary school years.

### The Miyanaga Family

Yoshihiko (Joe) Miyanaga was born in 1903 in Kagoshima where his family farmed rice and tobacco. He emigrated in 1921 with a mere \$50 and a blanket to start his life in Canada. For a short time he lived in Victoria and was employed in the forestry industry. He participated on timber cruises to estimate the

*Continued on page 4*



*Joe Miyanaga in cowboy dress while employed in the forestry industry. (Photo from a newspaper article, ca. 1921)*



amount of timber boards in Alert Bay. During one of these trips Joe dressed in cowboy gear to have a photo taken. A few years later he moved to the Whonnock area and worked on strawberry farms and then in a sawmill.

Joe returned to Japan in 1931 to marry Kii Samuraizono, who was also from a farming family. The pair settled in the Mission area where Joe acquired a timber lease at Rolley Lake and hired a crew to do the logging. His logging lease ended when a forest fire destroyed the trees in his Whonnock lease so he returned to work in the sawmill. He logged for the Whonnock sawmill and at one point built a wood road to truck the timber to the mill.

The oldest son Tom (Yoshiharu) was born in the home of a Vancouver midwife in 1936. Brother Bob (Kanji) was born in 1938, followed by John (Junichi) in 1941.

Like other Japanese Canadians evacuated from the British Columbia coast in 1942, the Miyanaga family opted to work in the sugar beet fields of Alberta rather than having the family separated. Rose was born in Alberta in 1944.

Tom attended kindergarten in Whonnock before the family was evacuated to southern Alberta. As itinerants they worked in Barons, Iron Springs, Barnwell, Cranford, and Taber. It was in Taber in 1955 that they were able to buy 100 acres to grow sugar beets, potatoes, and cabbage. The original pink farmhouse remains on the farm that Joe expanded to the current 2000 acres. Bob and John and their families still farm potatoes but in a high-tech operation, which would have been unimaginable in their father's time.

Rather than becoming a farmer, Tom attended the University of Alberta and studied civil engineering. He met and married teacher Eileen

Higa in 1959. They moved to Medicine Hat for five years where Marlene and Greg were born and then moved to Lethbridge. After four years, the consulting firm UMA transferred Tom to Vancouver. The family settled in Coquitlam where Marlene and Greg graduated. Tom and Eileen have lived in Burnaby since 1979. As retirees their time is often spent either with their three grandchildren or curling and fishing.

Joe and Kii Miyanaga's only daughter Rose married Gilbert Oishi who taught in Edmonton. Gilbert is still involved with education at the university level, the JET program and the Japanese Consul. Rose is the recipient of the Alberta Professional Engineers' Award for Excellence in Teaching Science, and recently retired from her teaching career.

### **A Legacy of Teaching**

As is evident, educators abound in the Miyanaga and Higa families, with eight in the teaching profession including Greg.

Greg started university to become an engineer but somewhere

along the way found teaching children a far more rewarding career. In addition to his classroom work, Greg has contributed to resource materials for the BC Ministry of Education in the area of social responsibility. However, like many *sansei* and *yonsei*, he was unaware of the politics of the internment of Japanese Canadians until he became involved in the writing of a new curriculum for BC schools: 'Internment and Redress: The Story of the Japanese Canadians'. He has since taught and presented this resource to Grades 4-6 during workshops in BC.

In March 2005, Greg was awarded the Prime Minister's Certificate of Achievement in Teaching and in October 2005 won a Heritage Canada trip to Ottawa to develop strategies to teach parliamentary procedures. This past August, Greg was again invited to Ottawa to participate in the Teacher Leader for the Library of Parliament Program. On September 28, 2006, Greg received the Governor General's Award for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History. As a



*Governor General Michaëlle Jean and Greg with his G.G.'s Award for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History. (P. Tanaka photo, 2006)*

winner of this prestigious national award Greg and his wife Brenda were flown to Ottawa where Governor General Michaëlle Jean presented Greg and the 5 other recipients with gold medals and cheques for themselves and their schools. The ceremony and reception took place

at the official residence, Rideau Hall. The Governor General also hosted the winners at a private luncheon at the Rideau Club. In the afternoon the teachers attended Parliament where they were recognized and applauded by the Members of Parliament. The day ended with a tour of the

Gatineau Preservation Centre and a Gala Dinner hosted by Library and Archives Canada

It has been an exciting and rewarding two years for Greg, his wife Brenda (also a talented teacher) and their daughter Beth. ❀

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## Greg Miyanaga, a Master Teacher

by Masako Fukawa, Project Leader, Resource Guides on Internment and Redress

Greg was awarded the highest honour in teaching excellence, the 2006 Governor General's Award For Excellence in Teaching Canadian History for his contribution to the resource book *Internment and Redress: the Story of Japanese Canadians*. His belief that young children have the capacity to understand complex abstract concepts when their hearts and minds are actively engaged in learning is behind the lessons Greg Miyanaga has developed and put into practice with his class of 9 and 10 year olds at Pinetree Way Elementary in Coquitlam, BC.

Unaware of the internment - what Pierre Berton calls "the greatest movement in the history of Canada" - when he joined the team of curriculum developers, he quickly grasped its significance and was able to produce a collection of 'hands-on, minds-on, and hearts-on' lessons. Greg's passion for teaching; his belief in the learning capacity of young children; and his innovative teaching ideas have inspired his students to tackle difficult issues.

Greg begins with concepts they already understand such as 'fair and unfair' and helps them connect it to issues such as racism, bullying, human rights, justice, and redress. The students learn about how Canada addressed these issues with the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the formal apology to Japanese Canadians

in 1988. The lessons are designed to develop critical thinking skills. Activities include interactive games, photo-analysis, models of internment quarters, reflective journal entries, and role-playing how to apologize after making a mistake.

In selecting the recipients, Deborah Morrison, CEO of Canada's National History Society, 2006 described them *"as the most extraordinary and skillful individuals that you will ever encounter in a classroom. Their role in promoting and preserving Canadian heritage is exemplary, and the Society is pleased to honour them in a way that is unparalleled in Canada."* Canada's National History Society selects Canada's six best teachers of Canadian History and Social Studies from across Canada. Each is awarded \$2,500, a medal and a trip for two to the award ceremony at Rideau Hall, Ottawa. Each recipient's school receives \$1,000. Greg has donated a large portion of his award to enable the team of developers to reach out to teachers across Canada who want to introduce the topic of the internment and redress of Japanese Canadians in their schools.

Greg and his colleague, Patricia Tanaka, were involved in the development of the resource book at the elementary level. The team of developers at the secondary level included Rick Beardsley, who was one of ten finalists for the prestigious award the year previously when

there was only one recipient. Other team members who contributed to both these resource books consist of practicing teachers: Bruce Kiloh, Susan Nishi, Richard Per, Jane Turner, and Mike Whittingham and community resource people: Stan Fukawa, Mary Kitagawa and Tosh Kitagawa. There is also a website: [www.japanesecanadianhistory.net](http://www.japanesecanadianhistory.net) developed and maintained by Mojo Web Design. The project was funded by the BC Ministry of Education. The resource books are available for sale at the Japanese Canadian National Museum's shop in Burnaby.

Why is the teaching of Japanese Canadian history in our schools important? Because *"our history is made up of people. People who welcomed strangers to their land. People who bravely left their home and families for new opportunities. People who left on these waters to reach the foot of the Rockies -who saw unlimited possibilities in this land. Their actions make our history. Some of it good. Some is not. But it is all important - it is why we are who we are."*

*"And our young people need to know about this. Without understanding where we have been, there is a good chance we will repeat mistakes of the past...learning about our history helps guide us in the future."* Romeo Le Blanc, Governor General of Canada, addressing the Award Ceremony in 1999. ❀

## **Yoshio Johnny Madokoro (Part 3) by Dennis Madokoro**

### **Pearl Harbour**

December 7, 1941 changed all that. Japan attacked Pearl Harbour and all our limitless possibilities crashed in a whirlwind of newsflashes, rumours and innuendos. Our tranquil little world was turned upside down because Japan had declared war on the United States. I firmly believe that we Japanese Canadians were swept up by this struggle between these two nations and we were helpless as the world we knew disappeared forever.

The first news came like a bomb. "Have you heard? Japan is at war with the US." "It can't be true. It is." I don't remember how I felt. I think it was a feeling of disbelief. This was something that in my wildest dreams I couldn't imagine. But it had, and as one of the executives of the Tofino Co-op, I was expected to find out what was happening and to help decide how we should react. The local RCMP Commissioner told us, you guys would be OK because you are all naturalized Canadians. That would be one of the many pieces of misinformation that we would receive over the next few months.

There was a distinct chill between the non-Japanese and the Japanese community. Talk was kept to a minimum. *Hakujin* friends didn't spend as much time with us anymore. We Japanese in Tofino were left to talk amongst ourselves. When you are fearful of the future that talk can turn increasingly anxious. That happened in spades to our community. It was as if our Japanese families were being punished for what Japan had done in Pearl Harbour. Some Japanese were secretly proud of that event; they thought it signified the emergence

of Japan as a major power. Others were obsessed with how they could prove that they were good Canadian citizens. For myself, I thought of how my two boys were going to come though all this.

On December 15, 1941, our boats were ordered to New Westminster. Soldiers were sent to accompany each boat. I suppose it was to ensure that we didn't help the enemy infiltrate the West Coast. If they had done their homework, they would have realized that was not a possibility. Hysteria stirred up by the media and local politicians stirring up the 'yellow peril' image made the decision to single out the Japanese Canadians an easy task. We were not equipped to deal with this violent backlash. We were sitting ducks.

Anyway, the soldier assigned to my boat, the *CROWN*, was a decent enough fellow. He was a prairie boy, born and raised in Melville, Saskatchewan. He had never been at sea and during the voyage to New Westminster, he was dreadfully seasick. I heard similar stories from the other fishermen too. Funny how individual *hakujin* Canadians were so decent, yet from the newspapers and radio, we Japanese Canadians were all traitors.

In 1942, around February or March, a small floatplane circled around Tofino Harbour. One of the other members of the Co-op, a vice-president and I thought that it might be some news about us. We went to meet the plane. There, we heard the orders, you have twelve hours to pack your belongings and be evacuated. We told them no way could we do that. They finally relented and allowed us twenty-four hours. That was all the time we had to gather up our essentials. We thought that we

were coming back. Another lie!

### **Evacuation**

Harold Kimoto and I were the ones who went to Vancouver to negotiate the deal. This allowed us to stay for twenty-four hours. As we were to find out, this was an exception the Tofino gang was able to arrange. As far as I know the other communities and their leaders accepted the original twelve-hour order, without a fight. I suppose in hindsight, if we had organized, we might have been able to protect our rights better. At the time though, we simply accepted what was happening to us as the power of the Canadian Government.

The day of departure came. We were all down at the Government Wharf with our duffle bags to wait for the *MAQUINNA*. It was March of 1942. We would not see the West Coast and Tofino for another ten years. I was feeling like my whole life was being turned upside down. Whatever I had known was now slipping away and I didn't know if we would ever see this life again. I was down as far as I could go but for the sake of my boys, my wife, my mother, and my community, I tried to remain calm and clear. This was not a time to go flying off the handle. Not now!

The *MAQUINNA* took us up the Alberni Inlet to Port Alberni. It was a silent passage and there was much weeping among the women and children as we slipped away from the Government Dock. Goodbye Father. We were off on a journey that would take us to a different world. Our old world was no more.

In Port Alberni, the Provincial Police were waiting for us at the docks. They took us to the local



Police Station. After they checked their lists, something that would become routine to us, we were loaded on the CN train to Nanaimo. We were becoming more known more as anonymous numbers and less as individual members of a community. You know that is what really hurts even to this day: we were stripped of our identities and treated as “undesirables” even though we had not committed any crime. Our crime was being Japanese Canadian! Canada had a funny way of dealing with its own citizens.

At Nanaimo, we boarded the ferry to Vancouver. By then, the shock of being uprooted had given way to anger at the way we were being treated. Those of us who had been educated in the Canadian school system were wondering where in the world the ideals of British “fair play” had vanished. Why was this happening to us? Little did we know all the political behind the scenes moves that were occurring in the legislatures of Victoria and Ottawa. We were literally “pawns” caught up in the hysteria concerning the threat of “the yellow peril”.

From the ferry in Vancouver, we were loaded like cattle into a bus and taken to the infamous Hastings Park. It was a bloody horse stable that they used for the local livestock shows! It reeked of horse manure and horse urine. This was to be our home for the next week. The women started to cry and the children were upset. Is this any way to treat citizens?

Anyway we cleaned out the stinky hay and cleaned up the stables as best we could. It was after all a horse stable and not meant for human habitation. We were starting to find out how much some “fellow” Canadians hated us.

The next day the gang from Cumberland arrived. There was a buzz of conversation as we “one-day veterans” of Hastings Park greeted

them. “What have you heard? Where are the possible destinations? Would we be allowed to stay together with our families?” No one had any answers, we were looking for information from anyone and everyone.

By the end of the week, we had converted the stables into makeshift sleeping quarters. Blankets served as walls to designate one family’s living area from another. We were even allowed to get passes to leave the Park so that we might do some shopping. Imagine that! It was all too



*Ine with Ken in Lemon Creek. (Maddock Family photo, ca. 1943)*

surreal for here we were prisoners of our country and able to go shopping at Woodward’s in downtown Vancouver. The local Chinese wore tags on their clothes that proclaimed them Chinese. I guess they didn’t want to be mistaken as Japanese.

The third day the Victoria gang arrived. The *Nisei* from Victoria were more educated than the rest of us. However, they had no answers. By the end of two days, a list was posted that had one hundred and twenty names, all men, on it. The men named were to be shipped out to Ontario to work on the roads. They would be separated from their families. I had two young kids and my

name as well as all the Tofino gang and all the young men in Hastings Park were on that list. There was an explosion of outrage as we absorbed this latest order. Many of the men were shouting “Damn, I will never go!” We held a secret meeting in the back and posted lookouts. All of us agreed that we would not accept any order that separated us from our families. That is what we said then.

Later, we saw that several men suddenly had their names taken off the list. There were many “arrangements” and one by one, the number of names grew smaller. I thought, this is typical, everyone tries to talk their way out of the list. So much for our solidarity to the order!

One week after we had arrived in Hastings Park, the remaining men on that list were assembled in front of the Park. We were lined up again, and a roll call was made. Once more, we were being reduced to anonymous numbers, rounded up like cattle and shipped out. At the CPR station in Vancouver, the men were in a vile mood. There was much shouting and cursing. “How in the world could Canada treat us Canadians in such a terrible way? Here we were Canadian-born men, being shipped out thousands of miles to a work camp. Our wives, our children, our parents were left on their own. What in the Hell was going on? Who in the world was looking out after our interests?” It was one of the loneliest moments in my life. When the train stopped at a railroad crossing, we looked out the windows and cursed every *hakujin* that we saw. This was not “our” Canada anymore.

## Ontario

At first the Mounties on the train watched us closely. Once we got to Banff, the mood changed. I think they got to know us a little. They were good people, and once



*Yoshio stacking hay in Glencoe, Ontario. (Madokoro Family photo, 1942)*

away from the coast, they treated us ok. In hindsight, I think people on the West Coast were hysterical about a possible invasion. We were the potential “enemy” there. In Calgary, for example, they even let us leave the train and go for a beer. Everyone came back. No one ran away.

When we got to Schreiber, Ontario, it turned out to be a settlement of mostly Italian people. Schreiber was a roundhouse station for the CPR, a place the railway used to swing their locomotives around in the opposite direction. The local people were just like your next-door neighbors. They treated us well. Perhaps not all Canadians hated us. Perhaps the West Coast had its own peculiar culture of hysteria. Perhaps Canada after all had a conscience and a basic decency. What did we know; we were being flung around like so much unwanted baggage? It was reassuring that the people in Schreiber related to us as one human being to another.

The road camp was located just outside Schreiber. In town, there was a drugstore owner who let us Japanese boys stay in the

store overnight. He just went home and shut off the lights downstairs in the store. Upstairs, we Tofino boys would gamble all night. Nothing was ever missing in the drugstore. He trusted us and we did not betray that trust.

Sometimes we went bowling in the evening. There weren’t a whole lot of things to do in this little town of Schreiber. The Victoria boys were pretty good bowlers and we fishing guys from Tofino tried our hand at it. We were at the road camp for one month when a representative from the Commission in charge of us Japanese came looking for volunteers. “What kind of volunteers” we asked? They needed guys to harvest sugar beets. “Where are these sugar beets,” we asked? The farms were in Southern Ontario near London. Right away, I put up my hand as a volunteer. The whole Tofino gang and Victoria gang volunteered, we were so anxious to get away from this little town in the middle of Northern Ontario.

We were shipped to Toronto enroute to the sugar beet farms. There we went looking for a restaurant for some breakfast. No one said anything to us. In fact, one of the security guards came up to us and said, “Where did you guys come from, Mexico?” We just smiled at him and said nothing. The difference between that attitude and the hostility we faced on the West Coast was amusing. We walked up Yonge Street but there were not too many spots open. Finally we found one that was open and had ourselves some breakfast.

The train took us to Glencoe, Ontario, near Chatham. There, in a kind of surreal moment, the Ladies Auxillary held a tea for us. One of the ladies stood up and welcomed us and thanked us for helping out with the sugar beet farming. They were farmers and we were fishermen. There was work to be done and they

were appreciative of our helping hands. They were not concerned that we were Japanese. We felt this sense of common decency and were touched by her comments. So, they were looking for someone from our group to say something in response. I think it was Roger Obata who stood up and gave a very nice reply.

Well, this good feeling lasted until we saw a guard at the gate to the compound where we were billeted. “Nice, we come to help you farm and you put a guard on us,” we said. There was more grumbling of that nature. The next morning we looked out, No guard! Hello Glencoe, nice to be here.

As I mentioned, the boys from Victoria were all high school students. They were able to express themselves in English. Fellows like Jack Hemmy, Shimizu and Uyede were good talkers and debaters. Pretty soon, through their efforts in the sugar beet fields, the town was wide open to us. The townspeople treated the Japanese boys well and we sure did a lot of work for them. The going pay was twenty-five cents an hour, about two dollars for our eight-hour day.



*Mary with Bud and Ken standing behind. (Madokoro Family photo, ca. 1943)*





*Mary on family car. (Madokoro Family photo, ca. 1945)*

Pretty soon a few of the fellows got permission from the head of the Japanese Commission to go back to BC and join their families. I chose not to because I knew there would be no work for me. I figured the chance to work was out here, not in hostile BC. Thomas and I spoke to the Commission about Kapuskasing. They needed me to cut pulpwood. I mentioned that I was a good mechanic and was there a chance to get to Toronto. I had Mr. Yanai, a relative of my wife there.

About a week before the work was finished at Glencoe, I got permission to go to Toronto. Mr. Yanai was not enthusiastic about my chances in Toronto. He said there was no work and conditions were bad. I guess in hindsight, conditions were as you made them. He was older and perhaps more anxious about his prospects. I was still young and full of confidence about what I could do.

My first job was welding transformers, you know those great big ones? I got the job through sheer "chutzpah". They asked me, "Did I

have any experience?" I said, "Sure, lots." In the meantime, I was taking welding lessons at a school on Church Street. Well, I guess I talked my way into that job, and I did OK. The pay was thirty-five cents an hour. I worked at night, took school at day, and I shared a flat with my brother Michi.

The flat was one room and a kitchen. We shared a bathroom with the other tenants. It was OK, and pretty soon I had enough money to put down five hundred dollars down payment for a house on Phoebe Street. Mr. Makioka made the arrangements. It is still standing. Man, that was a big thing! We stayed there almost ten years.

So, my wife Mary and I were separated for about a year and a half. I had left BC in the fall of 1941. The only contact I had with her was through letters. Mary stayed with my sister Kuni in the ghost town of Slocan. My sister Kuni had married Joe Nakagawa in 1941. They were engaged just before all this nonsense started. I am not too sure who their *byshaku-nin* was.

That house on Phoebe Street was a new start for us. We had to have boarders to meet expenses. I think we had two or three men at any one time. That house became

sort of an unofficial meeting place for single Nikkei young men. It was hot as hell during the sweltering summer nights. We had to sleep on the roof to try to keep cool, but it was our home and as I said, a new start for our family.

One of my best friends was a Ukrainian fellow named Tony Thomas. He had changed his name to blend in with Toronto society. We did everything together; drinking, fishing, etc. Man, those were good times! He got me into the Ukrainian Fishing Club. We would get together for a weekend of fishing out in the backwoods of Ontario. We would rent a cottage. You didn't have to go too far in those days to get to some good spots.

In Toronto, in 1945, our third son, Dennis, was born. He was a good baby, slept a lot and was no problem for my wife Mary. My mother Ine was of course staying with us. So there was our family of six, and three boarders. It was cozy in that Phoebe Street house. The boys went to Ogden Street Public School. It is still standing, I think. The kids used to play hockey on the school grounds as they put up an outdoor rink in the winter. My wife Mary turned into a real fanatic for

*Continued on page 10*



*Front row, third from left; Ine with Ken and Mary with Bud and tenants in front of Phoebe Street house. (Madokoro Family photo, ca. 1945)*



Grace Omori with Ken and Bud by the Phoebe Street house. (Madokoro Family photo, ca. 1945)

the Toronto Maple Leafs. She would go to one or two games a year, in the grey seats of course. She could heard hollering for her favourites, like “Teeder” Kennedy. Mary really loved her Maple Leafs. Even when we moved out to BC, our dinner hour was in front of the TV on Saturday nights. Boy, she loved those Leafs. Me, I used to get everyone in the house upset by rooting for whomever they were playing. That always got everyone going because Mary had all our sons rooting for the Leafs.

I went through different jobs in Toronto. I left the welding job at Westinghouse for a mechanic’s job because the pay was better. Around 1950, BC Packers came back east looking for fishermen. I think they contacted Tommy Kimoto who went out west to scout out the situation. He soon sent word that BC Packers really wanted more experienced fishermen and would we be interested? The deal was that we would have to fish for the company for five years. After that, we could form our own association.

I said, “So Mary, what shall we do? I could sell the Phoebe Street house for a good price and buy another house for you and the

boys on the outskirts of Toronto, like Downsview.” Mary said, “No thank you very much, I don’t want to look after three rascal boys by myself all summer.” Mary didn’t want that life. Remember we had been separated for almost two years at the start of the war. So I said, “Let’s go”. We sold the Phoebe Street house and away we went. There were ten of us who thought that their prospects would be better out fishing than staying at our jobs in Toronto. Tommy Kimoto, of course, Harold Kimoto, my brother Thomas, Noel and Harold Morishita, Takashi Nasu, Toki Kondo, Shigeharu Nagakawa and Susumu Terashita.

### Back to British Columbia

I made arrangements to have the **CHALLENGER II** built. It cost \$11,000 for the boat and engine only and BC Packers helped us with the financing. All the boys going back had boats built. Harold Kimoto had **SHARJOAN** built and named after his two daughters, Sharon and Joanne. Tommy Kimoto had the **LA PEROUSE** named after a favourite fishing bank. My brother had the **HYSON**. Noel Morishita had the **BLUE DANUBE** which he

kept spotless all the time. Harold Morishita had the **STAR RUBY** named after his daughter Joan who was born in July, the precious stone of which is a ruby. Toki Kondo had the **BEVERLY K** and Joe Nakagawa the **SUMA N** built.

So we made our decision to sell the Phoebe Street house and move back to BC. With the proceeds from the Phoebe Street house we would buy a new house in BC and put the down payment on the **CHALLENGER II**. Goodbye Toronto! Hello BC again! It had been ten long years with a World War and evacuation in between. What a lot of events that in my wildest dreams (or nightmare) could I ever have imagined.

In 1951, we packed up everything and took the CN train across Canada. My two oldest sons Ken and Bud acted up all the way from Toronto to Vancouver. The conductor kept reminding Mary that her boys were acting up, again! During the three-day train ride I had the opportunity to reflect on our return to BC.

*Haiseiki*, or discrimination, had forced us out. Now, salmon fishing was bringing us back. Some of the Japanese Canadians had the attitude that it couldn’t be helped, *shikataganai*. For me, the hurt went deep. For many, many years I could not even talk about what happened to us from 1941 to 1951. A funny thing though, through the Redress Movement which successfully got an apology and a token compensation in 1988, some of that hurt was relieved. Imagine that, the Government of Canada apologized to us for taking away our property and our rights.

In Port Alberni, we stayed with Mary’s oldest brother and family on Seventh Avenue. I remember their house was right beside the community park, Recreation Park. Harold had two sons, Raymond and Gene. He also had two daughters,



Joanne and Sharon after whom his boat was named. Sharon was even the May Queen for Port Alberni. She was the first Japanese Canadian girl selected in the Alberni Valley. There were still some people who didn't like us, but it seems there were quite a few who did. So, we did OK in that community. My sons and my daughter Marlene all graduated from high school. That was something for us Nisei, because most of us had our education stopped at grade eight. For me, the reason was that I had to support my family. For others, it was the same or the War came along and there was never an opportunity. But our kids were doing OK and getting an education. Canada was OK after the War.

The first time I took the **CHALLENGER II** through Duffin's Passage and around Grice Point, I felt many different emotions. I had been away in central Canada for ten long years, and now I was returning to my home. Except that it no longer was my home. Our family house was still standing but I could not look at it without feeling angry. The



*Granddaughter Tove and grandsons Clayton and Tim with Yoshio besides the CHALLENGER II. (Madokoro Family photo, 1990)*

village of Tofino looked the same but no longer were Japanese families living there. I heard that they had passed a bylaw in January 1947 prohibiting Orientals from owning property in Tofino. This bylaw was finally removed from the books in November of 1997 after a Mr. Sada Sato complained.

I had mixed emotions tying

up the **CHALLENGER II** to the government wharf that first time. A long time had passed and many things had happened. Funny how it goes, I began this story fishing for *shaina-pochie* with my father, Kamezo. Now, I was back in Tofino where he and I had fished. The *shaina-pochie* was still here too. ❀

## **Ian Alistair Mackenzie by Mary Taylor**

In 1942, Ian Mackenzie, then the Liberal member for Vancouver Centre and Minister of Pensions and National Health, played a major role in persuading the federal government to expel all the Japanese Canadians from the coastal area of British Columbia. He was not, of course, the only one in B.C. who wished to do this. Local politicians, both Liberal and Conservative, as well as many organizations and individuals were urging that such action be taken, corresponding to what would also be done in the United States. But Ian Mackenzie had considerable influence on the Liberal Prime Minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King, both as his main lieutenant in B C and as a personal friend. Throughout the

course of his political life, first as a provincial MP from 1920 to 1930, and then as a member of the federal parliament from 1930, Mackenzie had always been suspicious and critical of the Japanese Canadians. Not surprisingly the attack on Pearl Harbour and the events which followed only served to intensify this animosity.

Ian Alistair Mackenzie - a typical Scottish name - was born in Assynt, a remote rural area in the far north of Scotland. The family must have moved, however, for Mackenzie went to school in Kingussie, a small town forty miles south of Inverness. Its high school had an excellent reputation, to which Mackenzie contributed when he graduated from Edinburgh University in 1911, with

Honours in Classics and three gold medals. He also won a scholarship for research in Celtic languages and literature, which enabled him to spend a year in Dublin transcribing old Irish manuscripts. In 1912, he studied law and graduated as the best student in his year in 1914. With this outstanding academic record, combined with the fact that he had also been president of the students' council, one might expect he would have had no difficulty finding a good job, which makes his decision to emigrate to Canada in July 1914 somewhat surprising. Whatever the reason he arrived just before the onset of the First World War and in 1915 he joined the 72<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders, with

whom he fought in France at Ypres and the Somme and was mentioned in dispatches. Unlike so many – 60,000 were killed or wounded on the first day of the Somme – he survived these terrible battles and later became a captain on the Staff. In 1919, he returned to Vancouver, where he was called to the Bar and a year later was elected to the provincial parliament. In 1930 he was elected to the federal parliament where he served as Minister of National Defense from 1935 to 1939.

The Scots who served abroad, whether in the British colonies, or elsewhere, had the reputation of being less arrogant and racist than the English, no doubt because they themselves were often treated as a lesser breed. This was particularly true of the Highlanders, so it remains a mystery why Ian Mackenzie, a highly intelligent man and a brave one, a great orator whose speeches were full of literary quotations, would be as virulently racist in his attitude towards the Japanese Canadians as he proved to be. Was it a question of political opportunism, since sad to say his prejudices were shared by many of his constituents, or had some particular experience left him permanently embittered? That is a question to which we will probably never know the answer.

Early in 1942 Ian Mackenzie, along with other MPs from British Columbia, argued that the Japanese Canadians living on the west coast represented a threat to national security. This view was not shared by either the military or the RCMP, both of whom believed that the actions already taken - the seizure of the fishing boats, the arrest of forty supposed hardliners and the closing of the three Japanese language newspapers – were a sufficient safeguard against any possible acts of sabotage. But it was Mackenzie

and his supporters who won out, no doubt helped by the former's friendship with the Prime Minister. And so on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February the government announced that all those of Japanese origin, whether citizens or aliens, must leave the 100-mile coastal strip of British Columbia.

The task of removing 22,000 people was carried out by an organization, known as the British Columbia Security Commission, under the leadership of a Vancouver industrialist, Austin Taylor. It was responsible for the internment centre at Hastings Park, and for



*Ian Alistair Mackenzie. (Photo from 'Who's Who in Canada', date unknown)*

the administration of the so-called 'interior housing projects', the ghost towns. Mackenzie was not a member of this Commission, although he had been instrumental in ensuring that many of its 21 members were Liberals who shared his racist views, but he nonetheless continued to exert considerable influence over what happened to the Japanese Canadians.

The homes, farms and possessions, which the Japanese Canadians had been forced to leave behind, often in great haste, had been placed in the hands of the

Custodian of Enemy Property. The latter was ill equipped to deal with the amount of property this involved and wished therefore to get rid of it. So in January 1943, the Cabinet Committee on Japanese Questions, which Mackenzie chaired, decided that all the property that was in the Custodian's so called "Protective Custody" could be sold without the owners' consent. Mackenzie foresaw gaining political capital by later giving the confiscated farms to returning veterans, though not to those of Japanese origin. In a couple of instances, at the end of the war, when it was proposed to give the farms to returning Japanese Canadian soldiers, Mackenzie, by then Minister of Veterans' Affairs, opposed this vigorously. If he had had his way there would have been no such veterans. When early in 1945 it was finally agreed that a limited number of Nisei would be allowed to enlist, something previously denied them, Mackenzie accepted this decision most unwillingly. It was to placate him that no publicity was given to the fact that Japanese Canadians were now serving their country abroad.

In 1944 a bill to amend the Elections Act was introduced which would deprive all Japanese Canadians, wherever they lived in Canada, of the right to vote. Those in British Columbia had long since been deprived of the franchise but this was not true of other parts of the country. One exception had been made in BC in 1931 when the vote had been extended to Japanese Canadian veterans, and Mackenzie had actually supported this move in deference to the wishes Vancouver Veterans' Association, of which he was president. The new Bill aroused considerable protest, particularly in the Senate. Many pointed out the irony that legislation largely concerned with the voting rights



of soldiers serving abroad should appear to betray the ideals for which these soldiers were fighting. But Mackenzie and his friends argued that of the 7,000 Japanese Canadians now outside BC the 4,000 eligible to vote -many were too young- were grouped together in certain areas and could therefore affect results in several constituencies. Despite all protests the Bill was passed.

From 1942 on, Mackenzie and his supporters had argued that once the war was over all of those of Japanese origin should be forced to leave BC. "*Not a Jap from the Rockies to the Sea*", was his campaign slogan in 1945 and he frequently proclaimed that the Japanese were not "an assimilable race". He was satisfied, therefore, early in 1945 when the Japanese Canadians were faced with the choice of moving east almost immediately or agreeing to go to Japan when the war came to an end. Fearful of yet another move many opted for Japan; the end of the war seemed far off and they believed they could later change their minds. But much sooner than expected the war ended leaving Japan in ruins. Not surprisingly many now wished to reverse their decision and to stay in Canada, something the government

was not prepared to allow. 'The Deportation Crisis', as it was known, gave rise to widespread protest all across the country. In 1942, in an age when people tended to believe what they were told, many had accepted the government's argument that the Japanese Canadians should be moved from the coast. But seizing the property of innocent citizens, denying them the vote, and now threatening to deport them was quite another matter. All across the country organizations banded together to accuse the government of acting like the Nazis. Among the most prominent was the Jewish community, which normally tended to support the Liberals. Mackenzie King was too wily a politician to maintain a policy, which was clearly likely to lose his party votes, and so the attempt to force people to leave was gradually dropped. Many still decided to go, often taking with them young dependants who would have preferred to stay and would later return.

But Ian Mackenzie was not one to be swayed by a change in public opinion or by King's statement in 1944 that there was not a single recorded act of disloyalty on the part of a Japanese Canadian. As late as

November 1946, he suggested that the Japanese Canadians might well have engaged in sabotage and he seemed to take pride in espousing such extreme views when he proclaimed, a few months later that, "the world would be poorer when Scotsmen hesitate to express their views freely and forcefully". He never failed to emphasize his heritage, wearing the kilt on grand occasions and quoting Burns in the brogue, which he had not lost. By then, however, he had fallen out with Mackenzie King and had begun to drink, so in January 1948 he was appointed to the Senate, always a useful way of disposing of unwanted politicians. In 1945 he had married Helen Mary McRae of Winnipeg, but neither the marriage nor his membership in the Senate were to last long for in 1949 he died. Shortly afterwards his young widow bequeathed 100 boxes of his papers to the National Archives, thereby leaving a permanent record of just how racist he really was. It was his close friend, John Diefenbaker, who was to say of him that on this subject he was somewhat unbalanced. All that can be said in his defense was that unfortunately in that age he was not alone. ❀

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## Book Review of '*A Black Mark*' by Margaret (Inouye) Lyons

More than sixty years after the eviction of all Japanese Canadians from coastal B.C., Mary Taylor revisited this sorry story of ethnic cleansing in Canada. She called it '*A Black Mark*' quoting Lester Pearson when he opened the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in Toronto in 1964.

Mary Taylor was a career diplomat in the British foreign service before she met and married a Canadian diplomat who became Ambassador to Japan. This time in Japan gave her a special insight into Japanese attitudes which she used to understand how the Issei managed in

their first years in Canada and how they endured during the trying years of forced transport and work in the gulags of interior B.C., prairies and northern Ontario.

Her work is well worthwhile because she brings a fresh perspective and has managed to simplify and condense this long and complex saga into a vivid and easy to follow two hundred pages.

She has revisited the personal stories of survivors, and has had the advantage of recent access to archives of the political accounts of the period. These give the colour and suspense to the complex story of how

the few influential racist politicians from B.C. managed to discount the findings of federal investigations into the potential threats to the security of B.C. by the Japanese military and fair minded supporters of the Japanese Canadians and overcame the reluctance of federal ministers. They persuaded the Prime Minister himself of the political advantage to be gained by enacting federal measures to carry out their aim to get rid of Japanese Canadians from B.C.

She was particularly fascinated by the incomprehensible racist motivation of the leader of this

campaign against the Japanese Canadians, like herself a Scottish immigrant, Ian Mackenzie.

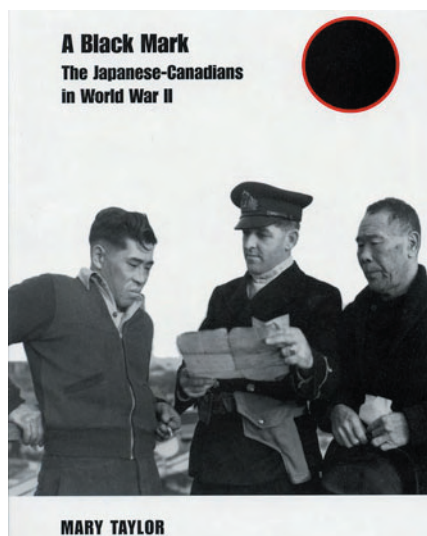
For political junkies, these passages read like current Ottawa political reports of behind-the-scenes negotiations between tough provincial politicians and their reluctant federal ministers, but all taking place under the pressure the unknown threats in the first days and months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

For those of us who lived through those days, it is useful to be reminded of the brutal experience of those suddenly made beggars in their own communities, of families being broken up, of women and children being herded into Hastings Park to be forced to wait for exile to some unknown fate without their homes, cars, ships, cameras and pets. Their men folk were away in some distant work camps, not able to communicate easily without censors while they tried to decide the next moves living in a swirl of one vivid rumour after another. A proud people suddenly unemployed and unemployable made to live on government handouts.

She observes that the immigrants, who had managed to carve a comfortable life in Canada, suddenly became poor immigrants

in another, sometimes hostile part of their own country: refugees looking for welcome doors somewhere.

For their successful descendants, sixty years later, the story she tells of their community in two hundred pages, should be required reading. It is an easy read and touches on all the important points in this success story including



Cover of 'A Black Mark'. (JCNM photo, 2006)

a detailed account of the work of the redress committee who set a precedent for the recent efforts of the Chinese community to right the wrongs done to them.

Mary Taylor's account is balanced between the self serving politicians and their bigoted

supporters and the many kind acts of good friends and supporters, including many churches which risked offending some of their members by reaching out to these new immigrants. These are remembered with gratitude by the successful survivors.

She concludes with an almost triumphal account of the reward of their efforts, by the disproportionate number of highly successful men and women in the arts, the professions and range of occupations, winning their share of honours in Canada and recognition abroad. And how the community has more than trebled in population, spread across the country, no longer bullied.

Through their personal stories and interviews, she describes their tenacious clinging to what they see as their rights as citizens and rebuilding communities wherever they settled to educate and bring up their children.

It is a story told by a sympathetic outside observer, reminding us of how far we have come. ❁

*Margaret Lyons (nee Inouye) graduated from McMasters University in 1949. She worked for the BBC and CBC from 1972 to 1991. From 1982 she was the first female vice-president of CBC's English radio network.*

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## Seattle's Nihonmachi Past Found at the Panama Hotel

by Carl Yokota

In May 2005, I ventured down to Seattle for a reunion of former Japan tour members held in the heart of its historic *Nihonmachi* neighborhood. Held on a Friday evening, only sixteen of us were able to meet for dinner at the 100-year old Maneki Japanese restaurant. After a scrumptious Japanese-style dinner, the group moved on around the corner to the Sixth and Main Street location of the refurbished Panama Hotel and its adjoining Tea & Coffee

House and Home Video Theatre.

The Panama Hotel building was designed and built in 1910 by Seattle's first Japanese architect, Saburo Ozasa. In its heyday, the hotel was home to many Japanese immigrant families, fishermen and loggers. In 1985, Jan Johnson, the current owner bought the hotel from its second owner, Takashi Hori who had operated it since the 1930s, and has over the years transformed the hotel to what can safely be seen as

the 'jewel of the neighborhood'.

The Panama Hotel is located at 605 ½ Main Street and can be readily spotted by its red brick exterior, and bright blue and white neon sign. The hotel has 100 European-style rooms on three upper floors accessed up a long, steep flight of stairs leading to the front reception area.

There is a small, enclosed formal sitting room where guests can quietly enjoy a good book or enjoy some conversation with fellow



guests. An overnight stay can cost as little as US\$65 in clean, private rooms. During our visit Jan Johnson was gracious enough to show a few of our group some of the rooms she had renovated and surprisingly the rooms were decorated very much the way they were back in the early 1900s. Quite frankly, it felt as if we had stepped back in time. To think that those rooms at one time housed early Japanese immigrant families as they gained a foothold in establishing their new lives in America was indeed an eye-opener.

The ground floor of the building houses the Panama Hotel Tea & Coffee House at 607 Main Street and the Home Video Theatre at 603 Main Street. The Tea & Coffee House is a popular neighborhood gathering spot with its big bright room, high ceilings and of course the unique selection of teas and coffees to enjoy. As visitors enter the establishment, the first thing that most people notice is the huge

floor-to-ceiling brick wall with its neat rows of framed black and white photos of Seattle's pre-World War II *Nihonmachi* community. Closely examining the photographs the sense of a once vibrant and close-knit Japanese community is readily apparent. In an adjoining room, there is a quiet sitting area and more framed photos and exhibits of old *Nihonmachi* on display. In the hotel storefront reception hall next door, Jan Johnson has set up a 'Home Video Theatre' where there are periodic showings of Japanese

videos, and a place where an impromptu and loosely formed group who call themselves the 'Friends of *Nihonmachi*' get together for casual evenings of fun and companionship. As of this summer 2006, a total of approximate 120 individuals had signed on as 'Friends of *Nihonmachi*'. It is evident there are still people in the greater Seattle who want to keep the spirit of their *Nihonmachi* alive and well. It is unfortunate that here in Vancouver, its old *Nihonmachi* area along Powell Street has all but surrendered to what can basically be described as a crime-ridden area, not suitable for even a leisurely weekend stroll. The one exception is during

signing of Executive Order 9066 by then U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt in April 1942, all Japanese citizens were forced to evacuate from the West Coast of the United States. This was especially catastrophic for the thousands of individuals who lived and worked in Seattle's *Nihonmachi* district. Compelled to hastily gather up whatever personal belongings they could carry with them, the *Nihonmachi* residents were sent away to Japanese American internment camps such as Tule Lake in Arizona or Idaho's Minidoka. What valued possessions the people could not take, were either sold, given away or placed in storage

with the assistance of sympathetic caretakers such as Mr. Takashi Hori. Mr. Hori helped store their packed trunks, suitcases and other belongings in the hopes that it wouldn't be too long before they returned to retrieve their goods. Unfortunately, many of those sent away to the 'concentration camps' never

returned to *Nihonmachi* and were not able to retrieve their personal belongings stored in the basement of the Panama Hotel. When Jan Johnson was in the process of purchasing the hotel from Mr. Hori, he took Jan downstairs where upon seeing all the dusty artifacts Jan felt she had stumbled across a treasure trove of Seattle's once infamous but significant link to its Japanese community's past. Fast forward a number of years, and Jan Johnson's glass floor installation allowing guests of the Tea & Coffee House to



Front entrance to the Panama Hotel & Coffee House with its bright blue neon sign on the right. (C. Yokota photo, 2005)

the annual Powell Street Festival, which still attracts large crowds to the summertime celebration.

Returning back to the Tea & Coffee House, there is a curious fixture that can be found at the rear right hand corner of the room. It is a clear piece of plexi-glass secured to the wood floor, exposing the wood timbers and the basement below. Peering through the glass, one notices an old dusty hotel sign and a suitcase with clothing contents exposed. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the subsequent

graphically see with their own eyes how war-time hysteria affected those previous inhabitants of Seattle's *Nihonmachi*.

Another special treasure of the Panama Hotel is the existence of an old Japanese bathhouse or *sento* in the basement. With its separate entrance, the *Hashidate-Yu* was a unique community-gathering place and is considered to be one of the very last of its kind still found in the U.S. Although in non-working condition due to years of non-use and neglect, the Japanese baths are a reminder of a more peaceful time for the early residents of Seattle's *Nihonmachi* area. We did not have an opportunity to tour the baths, but Jan Johnson offers pre-arranged tours for school groups and interested visitors.

In the spring of 2006, the



Visitors viewing Jan Johnson's collection of historic Seattle's *Nihonmachi* photographs. (C. Yokota Photo, 2005)

Panama Hotel was designated as a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. National Park Service. It is a fitting accolade for this 'grande dame' of buildings still remaining in Seattle's *Nihonmachi* area. So next

time when visiting Seattle, take time to explore its old *Nihonmachi* district and visit the Panama Hotel and Tea and Coffee House and be pleasantly surprised. ❀

## Fraser River Shad by Terry Slack and Mitsuo Yesaki



View of Celtic Slough from the shipyard dock to the Straits of Georgia. (T. Slack photo, 1960)

American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) was found in large numbers from Labrador to Northern Florida. The fish was first introduced into the Sacramento River on the West Coast of North America in

1870. Shad quickly spread north and south, and is now found spawning in many Pacific Ocean rivers from Baja California to the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia. Today the Columbia River and its tributaries

has the greatest spawning shad population in the world, with an estimated seasonal return each year of between three and five million fish.<sup>1</sup>

In many ways, American shad act much like West Coast salmon, moving in schools from birth to adult and like steelhead return to spawn more than once. They also spawn in rivers and migrate out to sea when young, and return to their river of birth. Their energy reserves, built up in the ocean, will take them only so far up river so that any delays will mean a new location for spawning. Shad spawn from May to July, preferably in relatively clear river systems, with a gradual saltwater wedge.<sup>2</sup>

In West Coast rivers, such as the Columbia, most shad spawn and go back to the ocean and return in later years to spawn again.<sup>3</sup> In East Coast rivers, shad eggs and larvae were once a major food source for resident sturgeon. If in the future, shad returned to the Lower Fraser River in run sizes like the Columbia





*'Big Foot' looking for handouts of scrap fish. (T. Slack photo, 1960)*

River, it is not certain what their effect would be on wild salmon.

In the late 1950s and 1960s on the North Arm, my Dad and I were fishing for salmon on the small gillnetters **IMPERIAL #18** and **PUFF I**, between North Sturgeon Bank and Point Grey. During the late summer sockeye season and the fall pink and chum fisheries, we came home to Celtic Slough, like other boats, with many species we called 'scrap fish', such as hake, anchovies and a strange fish we knew as shad.

Most of the Celtic gillnetters were fed up and tired fishing all night catching scrap fish, so on the morning set of the net, they left these nuisance fish either wrapped in the nylon net or kicked out of the way under the net drum. At the Celtic Cannery dock, tired fishermen, some with their running lights and mast fishing lights still on, began the job of boat cleanup and deck wash down. The shad and other scrap fish were either tossed into

the slough or fed to the local Great Blue Heron, nicknamed 'Big Foot'. This character bird jumped up and down along the dock grabbing each offering. My friend on the gillnetter **SEA BUBBLE** was always guessing about how much shad pieces this bird could gulp down.

The BC Packers salmon collector **LILAC** would come along side the gillnetters **SILVER FOAM** (owner Dave Endo), **SILVER PRINCESS** (Miki Minoru) and **PELICAN** (Y. Minamimaye) to find the fishermen very busy in the stern cockpit gutting shad to take home. Harry Tait, skipper of the **LILAC**, always agreed to save the shad he found in the rest of the gillnetters for his Japanese friends. It was rumoured that Harry received recipes for 'how to cook shad' for the extra scrap fish he passed onto the Japanese fishermen. How the Japanese fishermen filleted and cooked shad was a well-kept secret for many years. By the 1980s, these bony fish had virtually disappeared,

at least from the North Arm of the Fraser River and Sturgeon Bank.

Shad is a tasty species, but because of its many bones is generally not appreciated as a food fish in British Columbia. However, the Japanese overlook the bones and appreciate shad for its flavour. Japanese have several ways of preparing shad. They gut and split the fish along its backbone and bake it in the oven either lightly seasoned with salt or smothered in a *miso*/sugar paste. Also, they make shad into *sashimi*, though the pieces have to be cut thin because of the many bones. \*

<sup>1</sup> The Shad Foundation. [www.cps.washington.edu-hinrich/shad/basin/Columbia/Columbia.html/](http://www.cps.washington.edu-hinrich/shad/basin/Columbia/Columbia.html/)

<sup>2</sup> McPhee, John. *The Founding Fish*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York. 2002

<sup>3</sup> Columbia River Basin Information. [www.cps.washington.edu-hinrich/shad/basin/Columbia/Columbia.html/](http://www.cps.washington.edu-hinrich/shad/basin/Columbia/Columbia.html/)



*Alfie Slack beside his gillnetter IMPERIAL #18. (T. Slack photo, ca. 1965)*

*The NNMHC does not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed by the authors of the articles included in this issue : nor does it accept responsibility for errors or omissions.*

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## My History of *Ochazuke* by Shane Foster

(former Archivist of the Japanese Canadian National Museum)

When I think about who I am today, a 38-year old male of mixed European-Japanese heritage and priorities in life, character traits and sense of belonging in the community, there are a number of factors that have helped to define myself. One of the most poignant of these experiences was my involvement in the Japanese Canadian community for 10 years.

Growing up with my *hakujin*<sup>1</sup> mother in a euro-centric world, my main contact with the Japanese Canadian community was going to visit my father and relatives during summer vacations and holidays. Being Japanese Canadian to me was the wonderful experiences of my aunts and grandmother making *ochazuke*<sup>2</sup> with baked salted salmon and home made *tsukemono*<sup>3</sup> on the side.

In addition, I also fondly remember family gatherings where everyone would get together and perform *karaoke* on my aunt's extremely high-tech looking *karaoke* machine. There were many hand-written labels on its face; indicating which switches to turn on and off in order for it to work. After some adjustments being made, at the press of a button, the living room would seemingly be transformed into a stage with blossoming cherry trees as props. Highly orchestrated tunes with heavy base tones would emanate from over-sized speakers, prompting my relatives to re-enact performances sung by famous *enka*<sup>4</sup>, torch singers popular in their day. Woeful songs (which for the most part sounded the same to me) of lost love and betrayal were performed, accompanied by praise from the audience upon their completion. Often after someone had finished singing, the microphone would jokingly be handed to me. Everyone

would giggle as I squirmed away, although in reality, I always wished I had the ability to participate.

These infrequent visits gave me a wonderful sense of belonging. The warmth and adoration bestowed upon me by such loving and caring people made me feel very special.

I carried close to me this idealized view of what I thought it meant to be Japanese Canadian for a very long time. For I knew that at the end of my visit to Greenwood or Vancouver, I would go home — always a little sad, feeling like I was leaving part of my identity behind. Kelowna was a very dissimilar world to me. As much as my mother tried to impress upon me the value of my Japanese heritage, she certainly had no idea how to make *ochazuke* and her singing voice was less than pleasing!

In 1990 I moved to Vancouver and lived with my father in order to attend Simon Fraser University, majoring in history. Like almost every 20 year old, I was full of idealistic visions of how the world should be, and how I could somehow invent my identity by finding some purpose in life. At the time this involved joining various clubs on campus, which soon disinterested me; trying to become more literate by reading Russian Classics, which soon bored me; painting, which became frustrating upon realizing I wasn't Rembrandt; and so on and so on. I was desperate!

One day my father's niece visited us. Knowing I was looking for a summer job, she pulled out the *JCCA Bulletin*, which I had never known to that point. She directed me to an advertisement for a job posting for a summer student offered by the *Japanese Canadian History Preservation Committee Aural*

*History Project*. The first thing that occurred to me was what a great opportunity to have a job related to my field of study. The next thing I did was to look in my dictionary to find out what the word *aural* meant.

Upon attending the JCCA office on Powell Street for my job interview, I was warmly greeted by two friendly women named Kirsten McCallister and Mari-Jane Medenweldt. After getting over the initial nervousness of applying for a job with very little related experience, I became struck with the realization that I had never had the opportunity to speak with other bi-racial people before. I began to feel very bonded to them — meeting other people with *exotic looks*. These were words people often used to describe me that I had come to dislike. At times, the way they were expressed by someone made me feel as though I was some sort of rare Amazonian bird and did not *fit in*.

Almost ritualistically, as often happens when Japanese Canadians meet, I let Kirsten and Mari-Jane know my Japanese surname, where my family was interned and we began to determine whether our respective families knew one another and if we were distantly related. Because my father's sister Tam Haraga (nee Oye) was quite heavily involved as a volunteer for the JCCA and the Redress Movement, I was acknowledged as being a member of the Japanese Canadian community. I immediately felt as though I *belonged* in spite of being told that I did not get the job! Spending a week feeling dejected, I eventually received a telephone call asking if I would like to join the History Preservation Committee on a volunteer basis. I jumped at the offer!



In the weeks to come I attended many meetings, most of which focused on the methodologies and practices involved in conducting oral interviews primarily of the *Issei and Nisei* generations. After participating in a number of interviews and meeting people with varied backgrounds and life stories, I started to realize that my idealized view of who Japanese Canadians were was quite disjointed. Aside from kind smiles, and comforting words that lacked complaint, I came to understand that much of the community also suffered a great deal of pain and anger that had never been publicly expressed to me before. My eyes opened to my own family's plight during the Internment Era. For while I had always known that my family did not move to Greenwood by their own volition and that they lost a great deal upon leaving Vancouver, naively, I did not comprehend the emotional costs that experience provided. Upon reflection, this was probably because I spent years denying to myself that my own loving family could be subjected to such hatred.

One evening upon attending a history preservation committee meeting, the Chairman Frank Kamiya, characteristically with a great deal of enthusiasm and charm, approached a fellow volunteer, Betty Tasaka and myself, with a unique offer. Upon handing us an imposing looking 6-inch binder named *A Manual for Small Archives*<sup>5</sup>, Frank suggested that we become involved as the coordinators of a project to create a formal archives of the Community's history. The Project's aim was to successfully preserve and maintain a quickly growing collection in the back of the JCCA office of important items such as: documents, small artifacts, photographs and many boxes of recently acquired aural histories. At

the time, like most community-based archives, the majority of donated items were given by individuals from the Community wanting to leave future generations a legacy to remember them by.

I fondly recollect Betty and I looking at each other, and after suffering from pangs of anxiety and nervous laughter, we reluctantly agreed to become involved in something which we knew was probably *over our heads*.

After taking the manual home and skimming through its many pages, making as much sense to me as if it was written as hieroglyphics, I started to realize what the Project's ultimate challenge was. Our greatest responsibility wasn't to create a space to preserve and store old photographs, but rather we were entrusted by our elder community members to honour their most cherished possessions, their memories — my family's memories! In spite of being intimidated, with her wonderful sense of ambition and positive attitude, Betty started to get us motivated to create a plan of action as we knew we had a very long road ahead of us.

I would like to thank Betty for helping to start what would become my career for the next several years. If it wasn't for her I certainly would have fled from that initial meeting and never returned!

Over the next several years *The Manual for Small Archives* became my Bible as I studied its dog-eared pages from cover to cover, over and over again. In addition to the manual and to obtain a much greater understanding of archival practices and procedures, I began to take various courses related to archival studies at Simon Fraser University. I also started participating in courses sponsored by the Archives Association of British Columbia (AABC). At these courses, the

professional Archivists and Conservators not only provided a wealth of information, but were also beneficial because they allowed me to meet many other individuals who were also trying to create archives for their respective community-based organizations. The AABC programs became a wonderful way to seek professional advice, a forum to meet others with similar concerns and a venue in which to promote our own small Archives.

Although making headway into the Project, the main challenges facing our growing Archives quickly became apparent. These problems included a lack funding, manpower, and space.

The first issue was temporarily resolved by obtaining grant monies from a variety of sources including the Japanese Canadian Redress Foundation and the Community Archives Assistance Program (CAAP). The grant(s) were of great benefit, allowing me to initially become employed as the *Archives Program Coordinator* and then subsequently the *Archivist* for our organization. In addition, funding allowed the Committee to purchase database software to catalogue and describe the collections and, most importantly, acid-free materials to properly preserve the many deteriorating artifacts.

To overcome the issue of manpower, a hard-working group of committee members and general volunteers assisted in doing much of the indelicately phrased *grunt* labour that was needed. Many hours of hard work were volunteered in sifting through boxes of files and dusty photographs as well as working on the many administrative jobs that needed to be accomplished for the Archives. Unfortunately, I am truly sad to say that I do not have the space to name all of the wonderful volunteers I worked with;

many of whom became friends and like family to me. One person who I will recognize though, having had the honour to work with her on an almost daily basis, was the Committee's wonderful resource known as Minnie Hattori.

Although, with a great deal of modesty, Minnie is probably shuddering at the thought of her name being published in this light, I could not possibly write this article without taking the opportunity to mention her. For not only did Minnie provide tremendous assistance with the many jobs that needed to be done for the Committee and Archives, but most memorably, she boosted everyone's morale and provided friendship, laughter and a great deal of patience. Minnie is someone I will always cherish and look upon with great fondness.

In 1993, the *Japanese Canadian History Preservation Committee* changed its name and thus largely its identity to the *Japanese Canadian Archives*. The name change gave the Committee greater respect in the Community and by other archival organizations. In addition, shortly afterwards, by moving to its former Broadway Street location, and having the new name published in the phone book, a greater number of researchers began to use the Archives for their research. Greater public awareness and respect was finally given to the Organization as a professional institution.

The growing public awareness of the Archives meant a great deal to me. It gave me the opportunity to say to myself that at a young age, through hard work and determination, I was able to assist in the creation of something of great and lasting importance. In addition, I think that the Archives' successes were poignant because they partly

represented the pride I had in my family; a sentiment I have never had the courage to share with them in person. For by working to preserve the history of my family's community, I felt that I was preserving the *Oye* name as well.

Approximately in 1995, with the collaboration of the *Japanese Canadian Archives* and the *National Nikkei Heritage Centre Society*, the role of the Archives began to evolve. The dream of the Committee to one day have a dedicated space in order to maintain its archives became coupled with the goal of having an area in which to exhibit the many historical artifacts in the community. By partnering with the NNHCS, a dedicated museum and archives could finally become a reality, thus the *Japanese Canadian National Museum and Archives Society* was born.

Many changes started to occur in the small office space. The then Executive Director Dr. Michael Wilson was hired, as well as Susan Sirovyak and Naomi Sawada; two Japanese Canadian women having curatorial experience from working in gallery and museum related environments. As I was not familiar with the methodology of how museums functioned, I initially felt quite intimidated by their presence. Over a brief period of time though, with the highest level of professionalism of my new co-workers, I began to understand how a museum and archives could function as a unit. Additionally, it also became evident that aside from being a place to practice their professions, like myself, Susan and Naomi had a stronger desire to preserve their community's history. My new co-workers provided me friendship and listening ears that could relate to problems that would

often arise in our shared work place. I miss them!

Although a cliché, all good things do come to an end. With funding being a constant issue at the time, it became clear that the Society could no longer afford to employ me on a full time basis. The relative idleness that allowed me to do large amounts of volunteer work as a university student, gave way to the pressures of having to pay bills as a mature man in his thirties. As a result, I found another job and ceased working for the Museum and Archives.

Upon leaving, I was surprisingly not sad. I felt that ten years was a very good length of time to be dedicated to a career, and I had other goals in my life that I wanted to accomplish. I told myself that I would maintain the relationships that I had nurtured over the years, and would one day return to my Community. I now realize that I took a great deal for granted. Sadly, I have not returned; now hearing through third and fourth parties how people I once spoke to on a regular basis are doing; some passing away, others having moved on with their own lives.

In writing this article, I now understand what its ultimate purpose has become. I have been given an opportunity to express to people how grateful I am for their guidance over the years in helping to define who I am today; an opportunity to thank them for the wonderful memories that they have provided me; and a forum to say I miss you, and hope to see you again, soon!

<sup>1</sup> Caucasian

<sup>2</sup> A Japanese rice and tea dish

<sup>3</sup> Japanese homemade pickles

<sup>4</sup> A traditional style of Japanese singing popular during and after World War II.

<sup>5</sup> Archives Association of British Columbia; 1988



## 35-Year History of the Gladstone *Nippongo Gakuen* and Japanese Language Education in BC by Yoko Murakami

2006 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> year since Japanese language education became accessible to the people of British Columbia. Gladstone *Nippongo Gakuen* has existed for only one third the time Japanese language has been taught in British Columbia, but I would like to share my 35 years of Japanese education as well as its history.

Before opening my school, I taught at the Vancouver Japanese School. In 1971, I decided to open a private school in my home. I named the school, Gladstone *Nippongo Gakuen*, after the street where I lived.

The 1970s was an era when the Canadian dollar equaled 300 Japanese yen. People in Canada were not yet interested in Japan. However, Japanese parents hoped their children would preserve their native language.

The main purpose of Japanese language education was to maintain communication among family members. Gladstone School was open to meet their demands and to promote an understanding between Japan and Canada, similar to Dr. Inazo Nitobe's desire to be a "bridge over the Pacific".

My first challenge was to motivate children. I wanted the school to be as happy a place as possible. To peak their interest in Japanese culture, many events such as the "Story-Telling Party at Christmas time", the "School Talent Show (*Gakugeikai*)", and "Sports Day"

have been organized throughout the school year. Traditional Japanese events such as *mochitsuki* and *hinamatsuri* have been held to give children the opportunity to cook and eat traditional foods. Through these events and class presentations, children develop self-confidence, positive attitude for success, and enthusiasm to learn Japanese. For parents, it has been an opportunity to see the development of their child's interest in the culture and language as well as progress.

In the 1970s, the B.C. Japanese

economy grew exponentially. Interest in Japan and the necessity to learn Japanese as well as the business culture grew. As a news article declared, "Now, the Japanese language is no longer only for Japanese". The Japanese language education became a boom worldwide. In Greater Vancouver, Japanese language courses were opened at public schools. As a result of the JET Program, many university graduates went to Japan to teach English. As well, The Japanese Speech Contest was created for all levels.

At Gladstone School, the number of students also increased at this time. Students published a school newsletter; thus the new *Hikari Shinbun* replaced the original newsletter and word processors were used instead of typewriters.

To celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school in



First students of the Gladstone *Nippongo Gakuen* in 1971. (Gladstone *Nippongo Gakuen* photo, 1971)

Language Teachers Association was established to promote the education of Japanese and Japanese teachers. The association held many activities such as School Talent Show (*Gakugeikai*) among the member schools to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Japanese Immigration and Speech Contest (*ansho-kai*). Participation of these activities stimulated students and energized their desire to learn more. British Columbia's research shows that these events provide positive influence, especially in conversation abilities.

During the 1980s, Japan's

1985, a trip to Japan was organized. Students had the opportunity to meet with the Honourable Crown Prince Hirohito and Princess Michiko. Twenty students visited the Hiroshima Memorial Park and presented a *senbazuru* (1000 cranes) they made to make a tribute to peace. They also went to Tsukuba Expo. The following year, students from the school's calligraphy club demonstrated their work at the Japan Pavilion at Vancouver Expo. These were the years of spreading cultural diversity and globalization.

Because of the growing interest

in Japan, parents developed the desire for their children to be bilingual in English and Japanese, with a good understanding in Japanese history and culture. In the 1990s, Gladstone School started to answer to these strong wishes. During this era, the Japanese Proficiency Test was started in British Columbia. Since then, many Gladstone students challenge this highly recognized Japanese exam with 90 percent of middle school students passing level 2, and 90 percent of high school students passing level 1. Students who pass level 1 have the ability to read Japanese newsletters efficiently.

In addition to the Japanese Proficiency Test by The Japan Foundation, the Japanese Ministry of Education in British Columbia has initiated the *Kanji Kentei* Exam. Students of

all levels were invited to take these exams. Gladstone School is the only location in British Columbia where the *Kanji Kentei* Exam has been recognized by the Japanese Ministry.

The continuity of the Gladstone School has not always been easy. Until Nikkei Place opened in 2000, Gladstone School relocated 7 times from local community centres,

to churches, to public schools. However, the school always had the support of cooperative parents and enthusiastic teachers. Without this support of parents, community and children, the school would not have continued as long as it has.

Over the years, the school has expanded, adding new classes as the needs of the students have changed. Basic classes for English-speaking students and three-year old Japanese have been added and we are now

history lectures, *koto* and *shamisen* performances, *wara-zori* (sandal-making) as well as a variety of other activities. Through the involvement of the community, children can learn practical, everyday language and culture.

Last summer, a group of students visited our sister school in Shizuoka and learned about Japanese school life. Climbing Mt. Fuji was the climax of that visit to Japan.

After 35 years, we have more than 1000 graduates. Many of them now live and work in Japan. Others live in Holland, Australia, Toronto and many other places, spreading the Japanese culture. Their Japanese education has provided them with many exciting opportunities worldwide. Many graduates have also married interracially, with their children attending

the school. Through this, I hope that graduates and their children will continue to preserve the Japanese language and culture.

Ultimately, I hope that my students' experiences at Gladstone have provided them with the foundation to becoming global persons as our world is increasingly becoming interconnected. ❀



*Gladstone Nippongo Gakuen students meeting the Honorable Crown Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko in Tokyo. (Gladstone Nippongo Gakuen photo, 1985)*

offering continuous Japanese education from pre-school to high school.

Moving to Nikkei Place provided us with an excellent opportunity to be involved in the local Japanese community. Students visit the Nikkei Centre and make presentations to seniors. Also, visitors provide us with special cultural presentations. We have had

## Remembering Oikawa Jima and Sato Jima, B.C.

by Stan Fukawa

A new historical marker recalls what existed on two small islands in the Fraser River from about 1900, when some Japanese first settled there, to 1942, when everyone of Japanese descent was removed from

the Pacific coast. Don Island and Lion island are now uninhabited. The Japanese in the area referred to them as Oikawa Jima and Sato Jima, after the two leaders of the colony. They lie just downriver from Annacis

Island.

On October 13, 2006, the City of Richmond's historical plaque, which was erected on the Lulu Island dike opposite the islands, was unveiled in a ceremony which was part of the





*Oikawa rice mill and salt salmon factory on Don Island near New Westminster, B.C. (T. Minemoto photo, ca. 1910)*

Suian Maru Centennial Celebration. This celebration, undertaken by a committee of the National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre, marked the centennial of the voyage of the **SUIAN MARU**, a three-masted schooner which sailed from Japan, taking 50 days to venture to Canada.

The ceremony took place on a perfect day – sunny skies, warm temperature, no winds. About 250 people were in attendance, many of them elderly.

There was a party of a hundred from Japan. Many of them were descendents of the Suian Maru voyagers who fled the famine in Northern Japan caused by successive years of cold weather and poor crops. Many of the first generation of immigrants returned to Japan, while their Canadian-born children stayed behind. Reiko Imakita, great granddaughter of Jinzaburo Oikawa, the leader of the settlers and the man who chartered the Suian Maru, said that her own grandmother, Shima, (daughter to Jinzaburo) had returned with her parents to Japan in 1917 but had longed to come back to the Fraser River home where she was born. Reiko had been brought up on stories of her grandmother's

wonderful life in Canada and she wept upon at last seeing the place that she had heard so much about.

Others who spoke were Fred Yada, President of the National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre; Rob Howard, Acting Mayor, Richmond City; Nobu Ellis, great niece of Soemon Sato who led the Japanese pioneer group on Lion Island; and Takahisa Fuse, Mayor of Tome City.

Among the crowd was Kim Kobrle (nee Oikawa) a cousin of Reiko's, now living in Port Coquitlam. The

largest number of descendents traced their lineage to Bunji Goto, the man who kept the log of the fifty-day voyage. Some 70 people, including spouses, made it to the Goto clan reunion that evening – organized by Kiyoo Goto, semi-retired fisherman and volunteer *karaoke* deejay at the Nikkei Centre.

After a brief ceremony including speeches by representatives of the Oikawa and Sato families, the City of Richmond and of Tome City (home

*Continued on page 24*



*Oikawa household including employees. Jinzaburo Oikawa on extreme right. (T. Minemoto photo, 1903)*

of Oikawa), there was the unveiling of the plaque by the Kikegawa family and the ceremonial cherry tree planting by two groups. The Japan Tree was planted by Reiko Imakita, representing the Oikawa family, Takahisa Fuse, mayor of Tome City, site of Oikawa's home, and Kanichi Onodera, organizer of the Japanese group. The Canada tree was planted by Tab Goto, representing the descendents of the voyagers, Councillor Bill McNulty, representing Richmond City, and Sadako Oikawa for the Miyagi *Tomo no Kai*.

A bit of excitement was caused when Acting Mayor Rob Howard mentioned the possibility of the islands officially being renamed Oikawa and Sato Islands. Emcee Stan Fukawa explained that this was almost impossible to accomplish as the government forbids the changing of place names that occur in navigable waters. Confusion of names is hazardous to navigation. Richmond Councillor Harold Steves (whose efforts resulted in the erection of the plaque) is, however, pursuing the idea of attaching the names of Oikawa and Sato to the parkland, which the islands now constitute.

The Plaque Unveiling was part of a successful, many-faceted

celebration. On the previous evening, a panel discussed the history and archaeology of the settlement and featured panellists UBC Prof. Henry Yu, David Sulz translator of the novel about the *SUIAN MARU*, Doug Ross archaeologist, under moderator Dr. Midge Ayukawa. After the unveiling, a boat trip from the New Westminster Quay travelled to and around the islands. Later, on the same day, the Japanese Canadian National Museum opened a new

exhibit, 'Sea, Stealth and *Suzuko*' which features the Oikawa Family Collection. This had been presented to the Museum by Reiko Imakita and her sister Yuko Ouchi, in the names of their grandmother, Shima, and mother, Yoko, who had faithfully preserved the family heirlooms from its Canadian past. The exhibit will be there until December. Next day, was the *SUIAN MARU* dinner, which hosted almost 400 guests. ❀



Pictured above are Mrs. Miyoko Kikegawa and her two children Kazuko (Katsi) Abe and Eich. Mrs. Kikegawa was born on Annacis Island and her children were born on Don Island (in the background) – from which they were interned to a camp in the interior of B.C. They were the last Nikkei on the islands. (Stan Fukawa photo, 2006).

## Japanese Canadian National Museum - Fall/Summer 2006

### Highlights by Tim Savage

#### Exhibitions:

*Leveling the Playing Field: Legacy of Vancouver's Asahi Baseball Team* closed in September at the JCNM Gallery and will be on display in January and February 2007 in the Gendai Gallery at the Toronto JCCC.

*Shashin: Japanese Canadian Studio Photography to 1942* at the North Vancouver Museum and Archives in September-November, Cumberland Museum in December-January, and Museum at Campbell

River in February-April 2007.

*Sea, Stealth and Suzuko* a new exhibition opened October 13 at the JCNM Gallery to mark the centennial of the 1906 *SUIAN MARU* voyage by Jinzaburo Oikawa and Fraser River settlers, on display until mid-December.

*Uprooted: A Journey of Japanese Canadian Fishing Families*, coming in January to JCNM is an exhibition from the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site in Steveston.

**Public Programs:** National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre second annual fundraising dinner, June 10. *Sea, Stealth and Suzuko* exhibition reception opening, October 13.

**Education Programs:** A range of student, tour and seniors groups visited the JCNM and Centre over the summer and fall, from the B.C. lower mainland, around Canada, Japan, Seattle and elsewhere in USA.

**Speaker Series:** Book launch of *History of Haney Nokai* translated



to English by Bill Hashizume, June 27. *Katsubenshi*, two silent films narrated by Koyata Aso, July 15. Panel discussion on the history and archaeology of the Don and Lion Islands Nikkei settlements with Midge Ayukawa, Doug Ross, David Sulz and Henry Yu, October 12. Soba workshops by Chef Yasumasa Ouchi and family, November 3.

**Research Centre:** Researchers assisted the Simon Fraser University Nikkei history course and the Vancouver Japanese Language School centennial exhibition.

**Outreach:** Vancouver Museum opening reception for new history galleries, with photos and artifacts contributed by JCNM, June 8. Annual NNMHC Open House with JCNM gallery tours and museum information table, June 24. JCNM display including Japanese heritage toys at Burnaby Village Museum on Multicultural Day, July

29. JCNM display, historical walking tours, information and merchandise booth at 30<sup>th</sup> annual Powell Street Festival, August 5 and 6. First annual Powell Grounds Ball Game, co-presented by the Asahi Committee and Carnegie Community Centre Association, August 7. Nikkei history display during the BC Land Conservancy event at the Kogawa house, September 17.

Thank you to our 2006 summer student staff: Krysta Mukai, Iain O'Shea and Kristie Taylor, and thank you to all of the many volunteers who contributed to museum activities in 2006, your hard work and generous support keeps our museum and heritage centre flourishing. *Arigato* and see you in 2007!

For more information on JCNM programs please telephone 604 777 7000, or visit [www.icnm.ca](http://www.icnm.ca) or [www.nikkeiplace.org](http://www.nikkeiplace.org)

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## Mrs. Takenaka and The Writings of Mikio Higashi

by Sakuya Nishimura

A year ago, Mrs. Takenaka, who lives in New Denver, donated some of her late husband's documents, including his daily logs and household account books from before and during World War II to the Japanese Canadian National Museum. Before the war, Mr. Takenaka had worked in the pulp mill at Woodfibre, B.C.

Before World War II, time clocks were not pervasive and the workers had to report their own work hours. According to his daily log, Mr. Takenaka often worked seven days a week. At that time, Japanese labourers worked so hard that most of them took days off only at Christmas and New Year's. They scrimped and saved and sent money to their families in Japan. Mrs. Takenaka's kind donations are very valuable in recording such aspects of our history. When I phoned her, I was impressed with her clear responses about those times although she was over ninety years of age.

I subscribe to a Japanese magazine, in which I love to read articles by Mikio Higashi. Several months ago, I was surprised to find Mrs. Takenaka's name in one of his articles. Mikio Higashi is the second son of the late Peter Shinobu Higashi who was the first editor of the NEW CANADIAN newspaper in 1938. The NEW CANADIAN was published in both Japanese and English languages and was the only Japanese newspaper allowed to publish during World War II. Peter Shinobu served for a brief period and was replaced as editor by Thomas Kunito Shoyama.

Peter Shinobu was the son of Rev. Zengo Higashi who was an Anglican priest assigned to minister to the Japanese in Prince Rupert and Vancouver in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and he served in B.C. with his family.

Mikio, Peter's son and Zengo's grandson, is a talented man. He is a guitarist, music critic and travel writer. He traveled all over the U.S. and Canada in search of the places, which influenced contemporary musicians. His final destination was in B.C. where he hoped to trace his family's roots.

First, he visited the places where Japanese Canadians were interned during World War II. He went to New Denver and met Mrs. Takenaka there. He introduced himself as the son of Peter Shinobu Higashi. Mrs. Takenaka told him that she had met his father in Woodfibre in the 1920s. She told him, "Your father was in his early teens at that time and played the drum when his father preached on the road." Mikio was surprised to hear this because he never knew his father played any musical instruments.

Mikio wrote in his article that he was disappointed in finding nothing in Woodfibre where the pulp mill had once existed. In Prince Rupert, he learned that a big fire had burned most of the town and so he found nothing at the City Hall, the Library or the Museum. However, he did find something in the Anglican Church Archives in the town. It was an old picture in which Zengo, his wife Shige and their children were standing in front of a sign, which read "Japanese Mission, Prince Rupert *Seikokuwai*." This picture was taken in 1923 to celebrate the opening of the new building. The Anglican Church in Prince Rupert also had some hand-written notes on the "Japanese Mission in the Skeena." It said that Z. Higashi arrived in Skeena in 1918 with his family at Port Essington, a salmon cannery town at the mouth of that river. Zengo's missionary work had been successful and two years later, there were 68 Anglican faithful, with 34

of them baptized.

Mikio wanted to go to Port Essington, but the town was destroyed by fires in 1961 and 1965

so that nothing remained. He would have had to charter a seaplane if he wanted to go there. He found it difficult to admit defeat but had to

console himself on the banks of the Skeena by looking longingly toward the site of his grandfather's old parish. ❀

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## **“Many Thanks to Suian Maru Supporters, Donors”**

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The committees for the Suian Maru Centennial Celebration wish to thank everyone who helped to make it an unprecedented success. All the events were well attended and exceeded expectations by a wide margin. The panel discussion on Thursday drew 150 people, the plaque unveiling on Friday drew 250 people to the dike opposite Don and Lion Islands, both boat trips with a capacity of 100 passengers each were sold out. The museum exhibit opening was attended by 60 people and the dinner had 389 guests. Guests gave us rave reviews, some calling it the best ever event at the NNM&HC.

The Suian Maru 100 Committee of the NNM&HC, consisting of Stan Fukawa, Masako Fukawa, Kiyoo Goto, Mitsuo Hayashi, Frank Kanno, Anshin Sugawara, Mitsuo Sugawara, AND the Dinner Committee, consisting of Masako Fukawa, Joyce Oikawa, Michiko Sugawara, Keiko Suzuki and Kaori Yano wish to thank the following...

Panelists – Dr. M. Ayukawa, Doug Ross, David Sulz, Dr. Henry Yu.

Singer on Boat Tours – Masao Onishi

Exhibition Opening Volunteers – Kazuyo Hirai, Shari Ikoma, May Ishikawa, Yumi Matsuda, Krysta Mukai, Roberta Nasu, Sanae Nunotani, Kaori Yano,

Dinner Volunteers – Kaori Yano (coordinator), Kay Akada, Fumi & Yosh Aura, Jane Ayukawa, Karol & John Dubitz, Kiyoko Hamada, Minnie Hattori, Kazuyo Hirai, Fumi Horii, May Ishikawa, Naomi & Frank Kamiya, Kay Koyanagi, Kaz & Terry Koyanagi, Reiko Kurushima, Keiko Mayede, Roberta Nasu, Mitch Obara, Joyce Oikawa, Ruby Okano, Susie Oyama, Jane & Howard Shimokura, Mike Sokugawa, Avalon & Tom Tagami, Rosemarie Takeuchi, Bob Yamaoka, Bev & David Yamaura, Mas Yano,

Cake Decorator – Masa Hirano;

Program cover – Miyoko Kikegawa, Ken Kikegawa.

Audio & Video technicians – Kiyoo Goto, Naoto Horita

Driver volunteers – Jun Shindo, Jason Suzuki, Tom Suzuki, Sam Yamamoto, Masamichi Yamazaki.

Izumi-ya catered a fine o-bento dinner.

The staff of the Centre and the Japanese Canadian National Museum performed beyond the call of duty. It was a pleasure to be working with them.

Donors – Reiko Imakita & Yuko Ouchi in the name of Shima Oikawa and Yoko Oikawa, Mr. & Mrs. RK Abe, Thos & Betty Arai, Teisuke Asano, Asako Chang, Catherine Chiba, C.M. Chiba, Junichi Chiba, Mr. & Mrs. K. Chiba, Chibi Taiko, Audrey Clark, Shirley Clark, Kiyoshi Denbo, Mr. & Mrs. K. Ellis, Elaine Eoff, Fraser Port Authority, Stan & Mas Fukawa, Art Goto, Chiyo Goto, Ed Goto, Kiyoo Goto, Mr. & Mrs. K. Goto, Norio & Kyoko Goto, Shizuka Goto, Mrs. T. Goto, Tab Goto, Tamotsu (Tom) Goto, Teruji Goto, Toshimi Goto, Yoneko Goto, Mits & Emmie Hayashi, Kachiko Higashitani, Shirley Hutchison, Katsuko Iida, Hideki Dick Ito, Tak Ito, Japan Air Lines, Shigeaki Kamachi, Frank Kanno, Miyoko Kidegawa, Yaeko Kikuchi, Shigeo Kimura, Mrs. A. Kobayakawa, Kim Kobrle, Suemori Koga, Lillian Lee, Jessyca Maltman, Jerry & Sally Manuel, Teruko Minemoto, Miyagi Tomono Kai, Miyeko Nakagawa, Yaeki Nakamura, National Assn. of Japanese Canadians, Robert & Jane Nimi, Sakae Ogaki, A. Geo. Oikawa, C. Geo. Oikawa, Hy Oikawa, Joyce Oikawa, Link Oikawa, Mitsuo Oikawa, Nobuko Oikawa, Toshiko Oikawa, Toyoko Oikawa, Takeo Onodera, Harry Otsuki, Safeway at Seafair, Akira Jack Saito, Isami Saito, Toshimi Saito, Atsushi Sakakibara, Kingo Sakamoto, Susumu Sakurai, Kichiro Sato, Sussy H. Seki, Akio Shudo, Anshin Sugawara, Mits Sugawara, Natalie Suzuki, Rocky & Keiko Suzuki, Shig Tabata, Ruth Usami, Sandy Usami, Andrea Wilson, Kuniko Yamauchi, Tomoko Yoshida.

Kanichi Onodera, a long-time Jinzaburo Oikawa fan, organized the 100 visitors from Japan, many of whom explored their Canadian roots by visiting the graves of deceased kinsmen. They know well why the early immigrants risked their lives to travel here and why they worked so hard and sent money home to their starving families at the time of the famine.

The City of Richmond deserves special thanks for commemorating the centennial of the Suian Maru voyage with a plaque on the East Richmond dike opposite Don and Lion Islands.

The organizers appreciate the support and encouragement from so many people who were a great incentive to us to do our best.



## カンバーランド 西村 咲弥

ナナイモの北西100キロのところにある小さな町、カンバーランドを初めて訪れたのはJCCAの恒例お盆ツアーの第1回の時だったが、昔そこに炭鉱があった事も知らなかったから、炭鉱事故で亡くなられた日本人鉱夫たちの墓石が、見るも無残に折り重なっているのを見た時は、息をのむ思いだった。

ツアーの主催者たちの話によれば、第2次大戦のとき、心無い人々によって日本人の墓が荒らされた事、このままにしておけないという有志の人々が募金をしているので、近いうちに整備される予定であるという事であった。

カンバーランドが炭鉱町として生まれたのは1880年代で、そのころは白人の地に中国人が働いていたが、日本人がここで働きだしたのは1890年代で、先輩の中国人と同じように、仕事をする炭坑の傍に住んだ。中国人と違って日本人は家族持ちが多かったので、教育施設やサービス業、例えば風呂屋、床屋などを必要としていた。そして日本人はこの国の風習に慣れようと努力した。1881年に350～400人の鉱夫が新たに雇われ、このころ学校、新聞社、宿屋ができ、数年後には人が3000人になって、町と名乗るようになったが、これは当事北米で一番小さい町だった。

年代	白人	日本人	中国人
1888年	240人	—	150人
1892年	520人	70人	200人
1896年	798人	132人	283人
1906年	1114人	85人	504人
1914年	1047人	126人	363人
1925年	713人	62人	259人
1934年	534人	49人	49人
1940年	893人	24人	25人

カンバーランドには、No.1～8までの炭坑があった。No.1はユニオン町とコモックス湖の間にあった。No.2はチャイナ・タウンのすぐ後ろのコール・クリークの堤に、No.3はユニオン町とコール・クリークの間にある露天鉱で、以上の3坑は比較的小規模のものであった。No.4は約50年の間に650万トンの石炭を産出した大炭坑であった。No.5はカンバーランドの町の北西数マイルのところにあり、1895年に開坑した。また、No.6は市役所のすぐ後ろにあり、1898年生産を始めた。後に、この2つの炭坑はつながって一つになった。No.7の炭坑はコモックス湖から流れるパントレージ川に近く、1902年から生産を始めたが、カンバーランドから離れていたため鉄道がNo.7とNo.8の炭坑を行き来して坑夫たちの通勤を助けた。No.8は1912年に生産を始め、14年後に封鎖されたが、36年の10月に再開され52年2月に永久封鎖された。

カンバーランドでは落石で命を失う人が多かったが、事故の最大原因はガス爆発だった。昔の木が石炭になるまでには数百年の年月を必要とするが、その間に数種類のガスが発生する。これらのガスは、石炭を掘っている時に空気中の酸素と出会って爆発し、またそれにより有毒ガスが発生する。

1901年の2月15日、No.5とNo.6の炭坑が共有していた通風用のカーテンに火がつき、濃い煙が坑道を満たし、64名が窒息死した。このうち35人が中国人、日本人が9人、カナダ人が20人だった。この2つの炭坑には一度にそれぞれ19人以上の坑夫が入る事を禁止されていたのに、それが守られていなかったため、このような大事故になった。

1903年7月15日、No.6炭坑でガスに火がつき中国人坑夫16名が死亡した。原因は16人中の誰か一人がマッチをすったのだろうと言う事だった。1917年6月3日にはNo.6坑内で4人の白人の坑夫ふぁー酸化炭素中毒で死亡した為、12日後にこの炭坑は閉鎖された。

1922年8月30日午後、No.2炭坑が爆発、白人3人、日本人6人、中国人9人の18名が死亡。16人が怪我をした。翌年2月8日、同じくNo.2炭坑が爆発、33名が死亡。このときは日本人はおらず白人14名、中国人19名で、他に6人が怪我をした。死者のうち10人はひどい火傷をしていた。この時25人の子供が父親を亡くした、という事はこの親達は生きていれば、まだ10年以上も子供達のために働く事の出来た年齢だったのだ。当事の市長は事故で父親を亡くした子供達の為にビクトリアに無料の住宅を用意した。ここでは4人以上の事故だけを挙げたが、少人数の事故を含めると、1874～1954年の80年間に305名が犠牲になった事になる。

カンバーランドでは最盛期には400人の坑夫が1日1200トンの石炭を掘り出したが、坑夫たちの労働条件はひどかった。No.4の炭坑で働いていた男の話によると、作業は胸まで水につかって行ったという。一方では火事が起こり、一方では水害にあっていた。そんなわけで、1912年～14年ごろ、よくストライキが起きた。1912年9月には一日ストライキをしたが、会社側は前と同じ労働条件で2年の契約にサインするように迫り、1週間後には警察が介入した。中国人はこの契約にサインをしないと中国へ戻すと脅かされた。イタリア人はこの条件をのまずに全員が町から引き上げた。警察はストライキをしている従業員を社宅から追い出した。当事白人の日給が3.3～5ドル、日本人と中国人は1.4～1.65ドルだった。

カンバーランドには日本語学校があつて、日曜以外は毎日、公立学校の授業が終わってから、日本語で読み書き、公民、文法、日本史、図画、音楽、地理、話し方などを習った。8月は夏休みだった。親達はいつか日本に帰えるのだから子供たちに日本の教育を受けさせねばと考える者もいた。また日本に戻る気はないが、日本語が家庭内のコミュニケーションに必要だと考えて、日本語学校に通わせた親たちもいた。日本語学校が出来たのは1918年だったが、東京の師範学校を出たMr.青木と女子専門学校を出たMrs.青木が、文部省から3年間の期限で派遣された。二人は期限後も残り、1934年まで16年間、Mrs.青木が初級、Mr.青木が中級と中学校を教えた。1940年にBC州にある外国語学校の規制が厳しくなり、41年には特別の許可が必要となって、第2次大戦開戦後、州政府は日本語学校の閉鎖を命じた。1942年の日系人強制移動ではカンバーランドとその周辺の多くの家族が驚き、悲しんだ。

カンバーランドにハイスクールが出来たのは1903年。この時日本人の学生はT.田中だけだった。1916年には夜7時から9時まで勉強する夜間学校が開校し、ESLの月謝は当事6ヶ月で4.5ドルだった。

日本人はスポーツやコミュニティー活動をよくし、特に野球が盛んだった。ロイストン・チームは日本人だけの野球チームで、1932年ごろは最強だった。カンバーランドの歴史を書いた本（注1）の中に、このチームの写真が載っていて選手名も記されている。モトミチ、須山、清野、ハタ、西、梶山、前田、田中、宮原、佐藤で、他に8人の日本人の名が挙げられている。カンバーランドで学校の先生をしていたMr. Appsはいろいろな面で日系人社会を助けてくれ、第2次大戦後も、日本人の友人と連絡を取り続け、戦後彼を訪れた日本人との再会を喜んだ。

日本語の新聞はなかったが、時には日本人関係のニュースがのった。1914年No.5炭坑の日本人が野球場を作った。1915年林写真館が出来た。1916年No.1炭坑の日本人町で火事があり、Mr. 蜂須賀の家が全焼した。等など。また広告ではビクトリアから来た歯医者数日ここに滞在するから治療を受けたい者は申し出るようにというのもあった。

カンバーランド博物館は1981年10月に出来た。85年にはBCヘリテージ基金を得て、カンバーランドの初期の中国人、日本人、黒人の人口を調べた。また同館管理者のD.リープス氏は、日本人写真家の林専造氏と二人の見習いが1913年～30年までに写した沢山の日本人家族写真のガラスのネガ786枚を注意深く撮影して永久保存できるようにした。そのうちの30枚は大きく引き伸ばされて館内に飾ってある。

私の2回目のカンバーランド訪問は、日本の新聞記者から、この博物館を見たいから案内して欲しいと頼まれ、今から10年ほど前に実現した。居合わせた女性の館員は、「カンバーランドに住んでいた人々とその家族のリユニオンを計画しているので、誰かそういう人を知っていたら教えて下さい。」と語り、既に認知できた人々のリストや、林コレクションの写真を見せて下さった。写真は希望すればコピーを購入することが出来るというので、私はこの地で生まれた斉田愛子のポートレートと、当地を訪れた日本のお相撲さんの写真を買った。

昼少し前に館を辞去しようとする、この女性は午後1時過ぎに暇になるから、車で町の中を案内して、E&Nの駅まで送る、と申し出てくれたので、一端、辞去して近くのレストランで昼食を取った。驚いた事に、このレストランは日本人の学生で一杯。聞いてみると、ここで3ヶ月英語を勉強するために日本から来たとの事。こんな辺鄙なところで、喫茶店も映画館もなく、よく勉強できるでしょう、というのを笑っていた。1時過ぎ博物館に戻ると、さっきの女性が玄関に車をつけて待っていて、我々をのせ、旧日本人町やチャイナタウンのあとを案内してくれて、クーテニー発ナイモ行きのE&Nの午後の列車の待つ駅まで送ってくれた。✿

注1) D.E. Isenor, E.G. Stephens, D.E. Watson 共著 “One Hundred Spirited Years: A History of Cumberland 1888-1988”, Ptarmigan Press 1988年発行、P.154  
尚、本文中史実に関しては上記の本を部分抄訳したのもです。

### The list of new and renewing members of National Nikkei Museum & Heritage Centre from August 1 to October 31, 2006

C & M A'Hearn	Joanne Kuroyama	Terry & Marge Sakai
Kay Akada	Ernest & Delphine Lowe	Frank & Margaret Seko
Mieko Mamano	Gwen Macdonald	Dennis & Marion Shikaze
Calgary Kotobuki Society	Bud & Judy Madokoro	Henry & Joan Shimizu
Ms. Hazel Chong	Lillian Nakamura Maguire	Kiyoshi Shimizu
Alan & Ruriko Davis	David Martin & Mizue Mori	Brenda Smith
Kyosuke Domai	Bill & Pat McEwan	B. Masako Stillwell
Michael & Margaret Ebbesen	Ken Minato	Kumi Sutcliffe
Kenneth & Nobu Ellis	Ms. Florence Mitani	Aiko Sutherland
Harold Ezaki	Les & Phyllis Murata	Ann-Lee Switzer
James & Molly Fukui	Kaz & Mary Nakamoto	Henry & Patricia Tanaka
Yoshiko Godo & Terry Lighthead	Rei Nakashima	Joe & Jean Tatebe
Roy Hamaguchi	Henry Grant Naruse	Evelyn Terada
Tae Helgeth	Craig & Sharon Natsuhara	Thomas Teranishi
Shirley Inouye	Robert & Jane Nimi	Edzard Teubert
Tokuko Inouye	Hideo Nishi	Mark & June Tsuyuki
Koichi Kaminishi	Ron Nishi	Vancouver Shomonkai Aikido Association
Alfie & Rosie Kamitakahara	Jim & June Nishihara	Peter Wakayama
Norifumi Kawahara	Toshi Oikawa	Rusty & Ryoko Ward
Makoto & Mary Kawamoto	Amy Okazaki	Michael Wilson & Ineke Dijks
Tad & Michi Kitagawa	Shinichi & Shirley Omatsu	Cheng Ming Wu
Bill & Addie Kobayashi	Yoshie Omura	Sueko Yamamoto
Ken & Michi Kochi	Robert & Audrey Ostrom	Joji & Sachi Yamanaka
Jim & Michiko Kojima	Joanne Rollins	Bill & Keiko Yamaura
Joe & Elsie Komori	Fumiko Ruth Saito	