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# NIKKEI IMAGES



Arai Family at Lion Valet, 155 East 10th Avenue, Vancouver, ca. 1930. NNM 2018-1-1-2-003a.



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**NNMCC**  
6688 Southoaks Crescent  
Burnaby, B.C., V5E 4M7 Canada  
TEL: 604.777.7000 FAX: 604.777.7001  
[www.nikkeiplace.org](http://www.nikkeiplace.org)

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# My Grandfather and the Cariboo Gold Mine

by Teruo Nakanishi

When I was a young boy growing up in Hiroshima, Japan, my mother told me that my grandfather was living in Canada. From then on, I cherished a dream that one day I would go to Canada to meet him. However, in January 1955, when I was 10 years old, my mother received a letter from Vancouver telling her that he had passed away. My dream would not come true.

Fifty years have elapsed since that day. In 2005 I visited Canada for the first time and learned that my grandfather, Kanekichi Nakanishi, left Japan for Canada in one of the first groups of Hiroshima immigrants to work as coal miners in Cumberland on Vancouver Island, but that he left the mine and moved to Vancouver. Ms. Reiko Tagami, a research assistant at the Nikkei National Museum, showed me the book *Hiroshima Immigrants in Canada 1891-1941* by Dr. Michiko Midge Ayukawa in which my grandfather's name was quoted several times. In another book, *Stories of My People*, one description that drew my attention was Roy Ito's reference:

*Tadashi Nagao ... [sold] cigarettes and newspapers in Hotel Vancouver. A Cariboo mine owner staying at the hotel asked Nagao if he could hire Japanese workers for him. Nagao with Kanekichi Nakanishi recruited ten men. Nagao found the work too hard and returned to Vancouver. Nakanishi prospered as the 'boss' of the mine workers.*

About 30 years ago, my cousin told me that he met a Japanese mining engineer who had once worked in Canada. This person told my cousin that he heard about Kanekichi Nakanishi who worked in a Cariboo gold mine and that he was known as *kanayama no oosan*. I thought "king of gold mine" must mean a boss of gold mine workers. I became determined to know more about my grandfather's life in Canada and to find the location of the gold mine where he worked.

I started reading books on the history of Japanese Canadians. In *Kanada doho Hatten taikan* (Encyclopedia of Japanese in Canada by Nakayama Jinshiro, 1921), I found names of some Japanese who



Road sign near Bullion Pit Mine describing John Hobson, who was hired to develop Bullion Pit mining operations, and very likely hired the Japanese workers as low cost labourers.

worked in the Cariboo, but the article simply said: "Mr. Nakanishi worked in the Cariboo mine for three years; Mr. Tagawa worked in the Cariboo with his brother for three years; Mr. Kaminishi worked in the Cariboo mine for three years." Neither the name of the mine nor its location was mentioned. I visited bookstores in Vancouver and bought books on the history of the Cariboo gold mines. Most of the books carried information on Chinese miners, but I could not find any information about Japanese miners. I studied a map and learned that the Cariboo was one-fifth the size of the entire country of Japan, too big to find the location of the mine by chance.

In 2010, on my way to Kamloops to visit my friend Mr. Kaminishi, I stopped at East Lillooet and entered a gift shop where books on Cariboo gold mines were on display. While scanning the pages of one book, I found a picture with the caption: "A Japanese miner at the Horsefly Hydraulic mine." The title of the book was *Gold and Grand Dreams, Cariboo East in the Early Years*, by Marie Elliot.

With that clue, "Horsefly Hydraulic mine," I started searching the sites of gold mines on the Web and found an article titled "Horsefly: Its Early History 1859-1915, Mining in Horsefly 1887-1902." The article stated that "Mr. Hobson took over the Horsefly Hydraulic Mining Co. with 30 whites and 30 Japanese."



Photo of Kanekichi Nakanishi, in centre, surrounded by fellow miners, taken while employed in coal mines in Cumberland, B.C., before he ventured to Bullion Pit Mine near Likely, B.C.

I decided to visit Horsefly, a small mining town in northern British Columbia. The first gold in the Cariboo was discovered in the Horsefly River in 1859. In 2012, I visited the Horsefly Museum. A woman at the museum told me that there were some historic sites where Chinese people used to work, such as the "Chinese oven," a remnant of the living quarters of Chinese miners, but that she had no idea about Japanese miners. She suggested that I visit a museum in Likely, B.C., another of the few remaining Cariboo gold rush settlements, named after John A. Likely of the Bullion Pit Mine.

Just before entering Likely, I found a sign with the words "World famous Bullion Pit Mine" at a lookout overlooking the old mining site, and another sign with

a brief history of the mine. The sign said: "The mine was renamed the Consolidated Cariboo Hydraulic Mining Company" and that "it employed more than 150 men, most of them Japanese." I thought this could be the mine where my grandfather had worked more than 120 years ago.

When I visited the Cedar City Museum in Likely, I found a display on the history of the mine and the town of Quesnel Forks, a ghost town located 13 kilometres northwest of Likely. During the gold rush in the 1860s, the town had a population of 3,000 people. After the gold rush was over, some Chinese people stayed until the 1950s. I looked for any information on Japanese miners, but had no luck.



In 2014 I returned to Likely and visited the ghost town of Quesnel Forks but found no information on Japanese miners who had worked there. I found no trace of my grandfather in Likely, but while there I had a strange feeling that this was where he had lived and worked so long ago.

Back in Japan, once again I researched the Cariboo Hydraulic Mining Company and found the name “Bullion City,” a community where the owner and miners lived. I also continued my research on *Kanada Iminshi Shiryō* and found the following article.

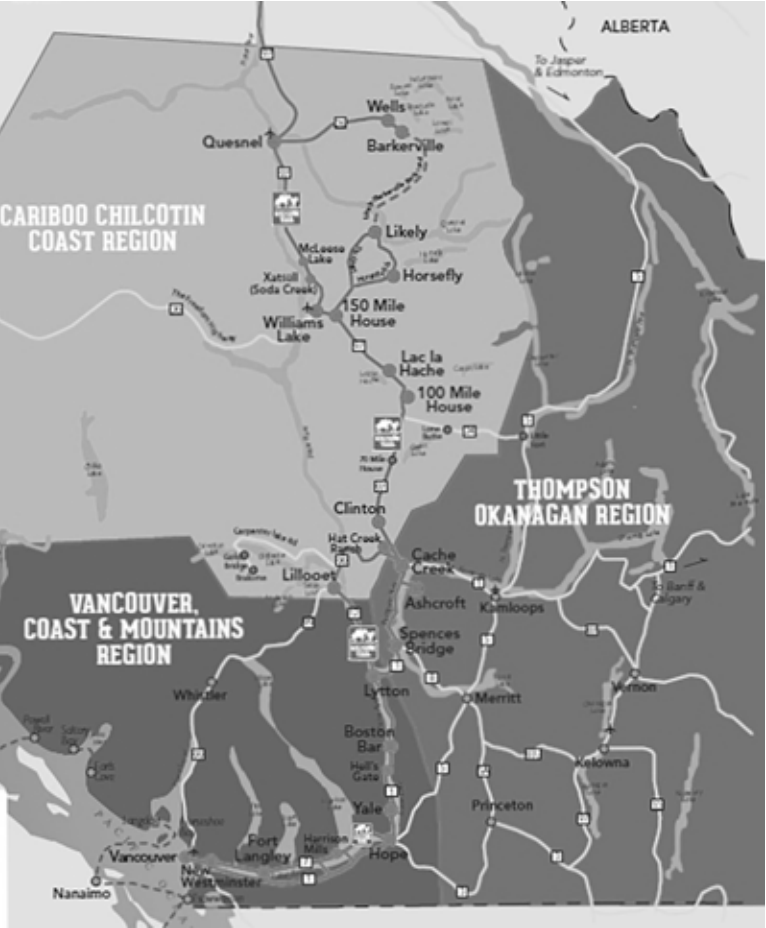
**Tairiku Nippo, October 1940**

**Pioneer of Coal Mines and Gold Mountains**  
Around 1894, he (Nakanishi Kanekichi) was employed by a gold mine in the Cariboo and went there with twenty six Japanese workers. He worked hard and gradually gained the trust of the company. ... about 167 to 200 Japanese workers were engaged in extracting gold ore by dynamiting from May to November of every year. In those days of poor transportation, in order to reach the Cariboo people had to first take a train from Vancouver to Ashcroft and then travel by foot for about 160 miles. Kanekichi Nakanishi worked for the gold mine there for 12 years and became a pioneer among Japanese mining workers.

.....

The distance from Ashcroft to Likely is about 283 kilometres, which meant that the Bullion Pit Mine could be where my grandfather worked. But the article was not sufficiently detailed to indicate that he actually worked there.

Looking for more evidence, I returned to Likely once again in 2015, this time with my wife, Yaeko, and inquired about Bullion City at the museum. The archivist explained that the site was now privately owned and that 15 years ago the owner who bought the site had demolished most of the buildings to build a public campground. After my wife and I returned home to Japan, I received an email from the owner saying that he had found old documents that were kept at the mine office. I asked him if he could search for any documents with names of Japanese miners. He sent me a picture



Map of British Columbia showing Likely, B.C., the nearest town to Bullion Pit Mine, one of the largest placer gold mines, and Bullion City, the community that housed the miners.

of a document that read: “Travelling Expenses Amount expended by K. Nakanishi for expenses Japanese crew from Vanc to mine March 1897.”

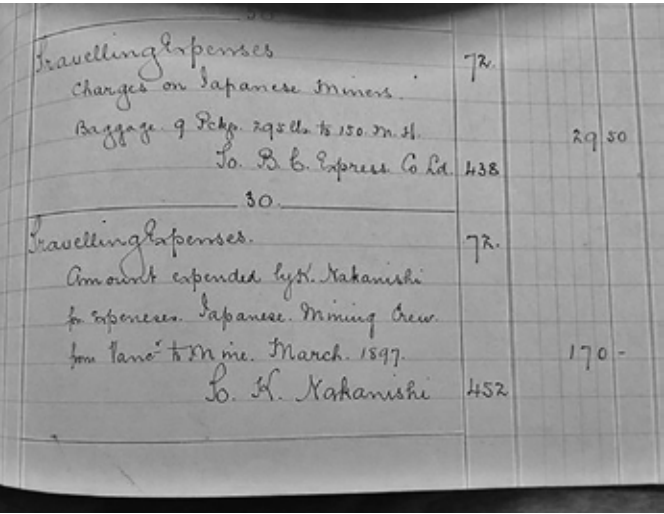
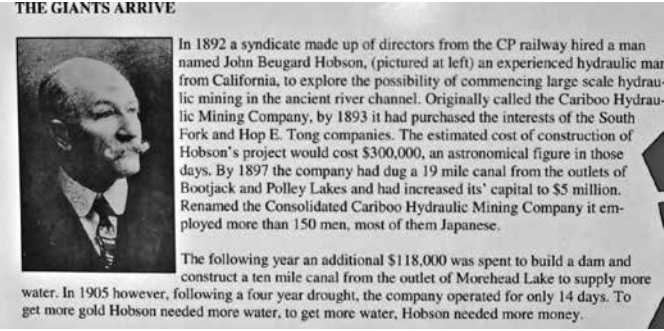
At last I had proof that my grandfather was employed at the Bullion Pit Mine 120 years ago. After 11 years of searching, my mission was finally complete. It is like a miracle that, after so many years, I found at last the gold mine where my grandfather lived and worked. I feel as if I finally met my grandfather in person in Canada.

.....

**A Brief History of the Bullion Pit Mine**

“In the 1870s Chinese miners first began mining gold on a small scale in the area that is now the Bullion Pit. Large scale operations began in 1894, when the China Pit property was purchased by J. B. Hobson, a mining engineer, on behalf of the Cariboo Hydraulic Mining Company. By 1902 the company had built a camp known as Bullion City which consisted of about thirty-five buildings, including bunkhouses for 120 workers, a hospital, store, slaughterhouse, manager’s residence, stables, a blacksmith’s shop, a powder house and other buildings. The simple placer mining method of digging the gold-bearing material with shovels into a sluice box was replaced by hydraulic mining that employed jets of water under high pressure to wash away the overburden. Massive amounts of water were required. The supply of water was provided by damming local lakes and channeling the water through long ditches. An extensive ditching system was built in the 1890s, indicative of an enormous amount of hand labour. By 1899 the company had built thirty-three miles of ditches, all dug by hand. Another labour intensive task was the building of sluice boxes which were seven feet wide and four feet deep. A total of 2,380 feet of sluice boxes were constructed. In the 1899 mining season, the company focused on the site that the original Chinese miners had worked in the 1870s, reworking the original tailings and using hydraulic methods on fresh ground. The Bullion Pit mine operated from 1892 to 1942. Today, the Bullion Pit stands as an astonishing man-made canyon measuring 3 kilometres long by 400 feet (120 m) deep. It displaced 12,000,000 cubic yards of gravel.”

Reference: Water, Gold and Obscurity: British Columbia’s Bullion Pit by Peter R. Mulvihill, William R. Morrison and Sherry MacIntyre, The Northern Review #25/26 (Summer 2005): 197-210.



Accounting entry found in the abandoned former office of the Bullion Pit Mine showing that Kanekichi Nakanishi was employed at the mine.

Images courtesy Teruo Nakanishi



# Japanese Charcoal Pit Kilns in the Gulf Islands: History, Archaeology, Anthropology

by Stephen Nemtin



Tear drop charcoal pit in Japanese garden on Mayne Island

## Introduction

The story of Japanese charcoal pit kilns begins with the story of fire.

One of our most famous human ancestors is the fossil of Lucy, (*Australopithecus*). Lucy was found 3½ million years ago in Ethiopia, in a rift valley where a river flowed below the Ethiopian Highlands out to the Gulf of Aden. It would have been a lush vegetative forest environment to live in with plenty of water. Lucy and her cohorts walked upright (*Homo erectus*). These early hominids definitely would have seen lightning and fire, yet there was no need for a fire since they were living 10 degrees north of the equator.

## Climate Change

Over the next two million years the earth would experience the last great glacial ice epoch. Imagine so much snow and freezing temperatures that all of Canada and most of the northern United States would have been one glacial ice field, three kilometres thick. Across northern Europe, Russia, China, and India there were large glacial fields, and rivers of ice in the mountains of Asia and Africa. Thirty percent of the planet was covered by ice, and permafrost extended another 100 to 200 kilometres from the glacial edge. The continental shore lines would have been 36 metres lower. Animals and birds would have been migrating out of the moun-

tains and forests closer and closer to the equator for warmth. Glaciers drastically changed our planet!

Turkana, the largest desert lake in Kenya, a country contiguous to Ethiopia, is a treasure trove for archaeologists. They discovered varieties of *Homo erectus* dating from 4 million to 1.9 million years ago. As far back as 1.9 million years ago, these hominids shaped flints to make stone tools and build shelters. Turkana Boy (KNM-WT1500), another famous *Homo erectus* fossil, lived 1.5 million years ago. He looked far more human than ape-like, with a larger brain and a skeleton that was 40 percent human (*Homo sapiens*).

## Playing with Fire

These varieties of *Homo erectus* lived in the middle of the last glacial era, which lasted from 1.5 million years ago to the present. *Homo erectus* was attracted to fire for its magic, power, energy, light, and warmth, for cooking food, and as a protection against wild animals. The people would have followed it, watched it, and poked it with sticks like children playing at their first campfire. They also discovered that fire could be transported by carrying charcoal embers from one place to another, and they learned which wood made the hottest and longest-burning charcoal embers for travel and migration.

Inside the Wonderwerk Cave in South Africa, there is clear evidence that people built fires and roasted food a million years ago. It was probably at this time that *Homo erectus* learned how to make fire by using the flint/spark percussion method, with flint and marcasite. It is still unclear when the discovery of the friction method for making fire occurred.

All these discoveries of controlling, transporting, and making fire were momentous for the future of human evolution. These were the first steps toward human culture and the spread of humans across the earth.

## The Hearth (Kitchen)

It is interesting that all the ingredients necessary for an oven or kiln are present in every environment: wood, air, fire, charcoal embers, stone, sand, and clay or mud.

The camp fire, the fire pit or ring, the hearth: all of these are symbols of home. A cave with a fire was the first great structural embodiment of a home. A gathering



Tear drop kiln restored by Steve on Galiano

place providing a safe refuge for cooking, eating, and sleeping, and, during times of leisure, for sharing stories, music, art, and shamanism (religion), would evolve during the next 850,000 years. Varieties of *Homo erectus* would transform into varieties of *Homo sapiens*, with fire as the central ingredient for their survival.

Humanoid migrations were already taking place between 160,000 and 75,000 years ago and were spreading throughout Africa and into the Middle East, Asia, India, Southeast Asia, and China, following the coastlines as the glaciers retreated. Around 60,000 years ago, there was another great warming in the climate, and by 35,000 years ago, *Homo sapiens* was migrating deeper into all parts of Europe, Asia, China, Australia, and Japan. *Homo sapiens*, *Cro-Magnon* and *Neanderthals* roamed around, looking for caves as dwellings. The Bering land bridge opened up around 30,000 years ago, allowing *Homo sapiens* of different ethnic groups to follow a new migratory route across the Americas.

## Pottery/Ceramics Kilns

Another treasure trove of prehistoric artifacts dating back roughly to between 29,000 and 22,000 years ago was found in the Czech Republic. Dolni Vestonice and Pavlov are two sites close together by a stream bed that had a clay base. Dolni Vestonice had six yurt-like structures, each with a small hearth. There was also a large community structure with several small hearths, and in the middle of the settlement was a large central hearth. The entire settlement was surrounded by a fence made of mammoth bones. Archaeologists discovered thousands of pieces of fired clay animals and figurines. There were carvings of bear, wolf, fox,





Morimoto san charcoal kiln factory, Moroto, Kochi ken

reindeer, horse, lion, rabbit, and mammoth, plus human female and male figurines and other sculptures in bone and wood.

An exciting find on the Pavlov site was the remains of the first potter's covered oven kiln for baking clay. It was found inside a lean-to shelter that was dug into the embankment of a nearby stream. Subsequently, at the Dolni Vestonice site, archaeologists found evidence of the first earth dome slope kiln and a potter's hut, dug into the side of a hill with thousands of broken shards lying around.

#### Kilns of Japan

Until about 15,000 years ago, Japan was connected to the Asian continent through several land bridges. This allowed people to migrate to Japan around 35,000 years ago. Japan's first clay-fired pots belonged to the Jamon culture. At the Odai Yamamoto 1 site in Sotogahama, archaeologists discovered earthenware pottery

and other artifacts from 16,500 years ago. During the beginning of the Jamon period in Japan, the open-fire method was used to fire pots. This involved placing the object on an open fire pit of burning charcoal embers, with burning sticks placed around the sides to create a more even bake.

Around 8,000 to 6,000 years ago, different forms and designs of kilns and ovens began to appear. The reason for these new designs was the discovery of how to smelt copper out of rock using high heat.

Charcoal became the prime fuel for the smelting of copper, tin, bronze, gold, silver, and, later, iron at 1,000 B.C.. In Japan and all over the world, charcoal makers were using different types of kilns for the production of charcoal to be used for smelting metals and firing ceramics.



Splitting Ubame oak

The *Sumi Yaki no Kai* is the oldest charcoal-making society in Japan. They produced a pamphlet that has over a hundred different designs of charcoal-making kilns. Charcoal-making in Japan would become a huge industry and an art form.

#### Charcoal Pit Kilns on the Gulf Islands of British Columbia

A few thousand years later, in the 1870s, Japanese people started migrating to the Gulf Islands off the southwest coast of British Columbia, Canada. Many of these immigrants came from Wakayama prefecture, which was noted for its kilns and famous bincho-tan white and regular black charcoal. The Japanese brought their charcoal-making technology to the Gulf Islands.

I know of 13 large charcoal kilns on the Gulf Islands, five on Galiano, four on Mayne, two on Salt Spring, and two on Saturna, and there are unconfirmed rumours of them on Pender and Prevost Islands. All of these char-

coal kilns were dug into a slope and then lined with stones with mud-clay mortar; a dome was made with sticks, sand, or clay before firing.

The B.C. kilns have a similar design and are larger than the one found in the Dolni Vistonice site, of 20,000 years earlier. Eleven of the kilns are what I call the horseshoe or teardrop shape. Each of them is six metres long, four metres wide, and 1.6 metres high with a one-metre-wide entrance. On Salt Spring and Mayne Islands, there are oval-shaped kilns, measuring 6.2 metres wide and three metres long, with a one-metre wide entrance. Evidence from the Salt Spring Island dig of this oval kiln proved that the famous *bincho-tan* method was used to make the charcoal. There is a huge kiln on Mayne Island that is three metres high and four metres wide with a circular shape.





Xylophone made from *bincho tan* charcoal at Charcoal museum, Tanabe, Wakayama ken

Charcoal was used in B.C. mainly for the salmon canning industry as a heat source to solder the tops of cans after boiling. Charcoal was also needed in the explosives, blacksmith, and soap-making industries.

There was a robust Japanese charcoal industry in the Gulf Islands in B.C. at the turn of the 20th century.

I would like to thank Mary Ohara, Rose Murakami, Rumi Kenasaka and the B.C. Wakayama *ken-jin-kai*. Without their perseverance and determination, the history of the charcoal pit kilns of the Gulf Islands would have been buried and lost.

The 1901 Galiano Island census lists the following charcoal makers; this article is in memoriam to them.

H Yashimoto 1896, F Kishino 1898, J Kyaguchi 1900, Ida Kotara 1894, T Gamamoto 1896, G Ohara 1898, T Yamada 1899, Y Miatsumo 1897, J Unenishi 1895.

Images by Steve Nemtin



Salt Spring Island oval-shape kiln historic site



# Lion Valet: A Successful Dry Cleaning and Alteration Business

by Linda Kawamoto Reid and Yosh Arai

Kozo Arai grew up in Akasaka, Tokyo, in a strict family with rigid customs: for example, he had to ride a horse to and from school. After graduating from middle school, in order to get away from the controlled environment he was brought up in, he asked his parents to send him to a California college, presumably Stanford University. They agreed, but with the condition that, on his return, he would follow the family tradition and take up a naval career in Japan. He was then taken by a family friend to California, USA.

After a few semesters, Kozo went on a trip to Seattle on a holiday and liked it very much. On his next trip north, he visited Vancouver and decided to stay in Canada. He never did return to California. Kozo picked up various jobs in the salmon-fishing industry. He worked on a packer boat and in canneries, and he traveled up the coast to River's Inlet, Swanson Bay, Port Edward, and the Nass River area. He also worked in forestry jobs and sawmills, but found the work too dangerous. Between jobs, he worked hard to perfect his English writing and conversational skills. Finally settling in Vancouver, he learned automotive mechanics.

But Kozo still wanted to see more of Canada, so he worked his way as far as Winnipeg to see what opportunities were available to him. On the prairies, Kozo worked on a grain harvesting crew and found it to be the hardest and dirtiest job he had ever had as there were no machines at that time. He also worked in a Lake Louise hotel as a bellhop and as a cook, preparing chickens and turkeys, baking cakes and breads. Lake Louise must have held a place in his heart as he promised his wife later that he would take her there to experience the beauty of the Rocky Mountains, but that never materialized.

After his stint on the prairies, Kozo knew that farming was not in his future. Because of his knowledge of mechanics, he took a job at Granby Consolidated Copper Mine in Anyox, operating a small boat freighting goods



Kozo, Tomeko, Yoshio & Sumiko Arai, Vancouver ca. 1925  
NNM 2018-1-1-6-034-1a

from the deep side of the bay to the shallow mine siding. Anyox was located north of Prince Rupert close to the Alaska border, and the only way to get there at that time was by Union Steamship.

When the mine closed due to low copper prices, Kozo returned to Vancouver, where he opened a garage called Tanacar at the corner of Gore and Keefer Streets with a colleague named Mr. Tanaka. Tanacar sold gas

and performed car and truck repairs. When Kozo left for Japan in 1920, he left the business with Mr. Tanaka in case he did not return.

As with many other bachelors of the time, Kozo's family arranged a marriage for him. On the last of his many trips to Japan, with no intention of settling down, he met and married his wife, Tomeko Yanagisawa, from Minamisaku Gun, Nagano ken. He briefly worked at Mitsubishi Bank but did not like the restrictive ways of Japanese company life, and eventually returned to Vancouver on July 8, 1921. Tomeko arrived on a Princess Line ship five months later, seasick and pregnant with their oldest son, Yoshio, who was born in February 1922 at Vancouver General Hospital.

As a result of Kozo's job at Granby Consolidated Copper Mine he made many friends both occidental and Japanese Canadian, and through his connection with Granby, was able to take Tomeko temporarily to live at the O.B Smith home on Blanca Street and 4th Avenue, about a half block from the present day U.B.C. gates.

Many of the Japanese Canadian friends Kozo made at Granby moved to the Fairview district for work after the mine closed. Many Japanese Canadians already lived in the Fairview area at the time because the men worked at sawmills including Vancouver Lumber, Alberta Lumber, B.C. Fir & Cedar, False Creek Lumber, and Cedar Cove Lumber. The Arai family lived at 10th Avenue and Main Street, in a two-storey building on a 33-foot by 120-foot lot. This location was several blocks from the clusters of *Nikkei* living around the Japanese Language School and United Church at Columbia Street and 6th Avenue and the Buddhist Church at Heather Street and 7th Avenue. Because of Asian exclusionary policies in B.C. before the war, Japanese Canadians had few employment options other than working as labourers or starting their own businesses. Japanese-owned businesses were scattered along Powell Street and Main Street, in Fairview, and in the *Ki-chi-ra-no* clusters of Japanese Canadian neighbourhoods. Many were successful.

At first, Kozo ran a cleaning and pressing shop at 95 Powell Street at Columbia, and then moved to 151 E. 10th Avenue in the current Mount Pleasant neighborhood (known as *Fe-a-byu* to Japanese Canadians). At first the Arais rented the premises, but when the build-



Yoshio Arai behind Lion Valet, Vancouver ca. 1935  
NNM 2018-1-1-3-019-1a

ing next door at 155 E. 10th came up for sale in 1928, they bought the property, and it became both their home and their business, called Lion Valet. Tomeko, the children and some hired help ran the business, and then Kozo opened a second cleaning and pressing shop, called Panama Cleaners, at 866 Howe Street next to the Grosvenor Hotel. He was the first Japanese Canadian to purchase a \$600 steam pressing machine, and his businesses thrived until 1942, when the internment forced them to close down and liquidate Panama Cleaners and lease out Lion Valet.

Yoshio grew up in the *Fe-a-byu* area, attending the United Church kindergarten in 1926 and the Japanese Language school in 1928. The first Fairview *Nihongo Gakko* was a two-room school in a building on 4th Avenue and Yukon Street, which was run by Gordon Na-



kayama and an assistant. The corner of this large building was occupied by the Masuda family; on the Yukon side was a barber shop operated by Mrs. Kitagawa and a fix-it shop where families lived in the back of their shops. The new school at 154 W. 5th Avenue was built by the community in 1929. It had four large classrooms, ample living quarters for the Miyazaki family, and a basement used as a community space. The principal, Koichiro Miyazaki, hired Japanese *Shihan Gakko*-educated teachers, including his wife. Koichiro also wrote stories and other literary publications for the *Tairiku Nippo* newspaper. He attended the Provincial Normal School at 12th Avenue and Cambie Street to enhance his knowledge of Canadian history, customs and everyday living. Eventually the Mikado Club for young people was organized in the basement in 1937, and by 1938 the *judo dojo* was added, making the school a centre for community activities.

The Arai family expanded with Fumiko, born in 1924, Kazuo in 1926, Shizuko in 1928, Misao in 1930, and finally Yukiko in 1934. The kids all attended the United Church kindergarten and church services. Yoshio went to Mt. Pleasant Elementary School and attended Sunday school at Fairview United Church. He also had to help with Lion Valet in his off-school hours along with his sister and mother, who did tailoring, alterations, and repairs. Kozo's businesses did well, and he was able to buy a new car every two years, including a Model A in the late '30s.

Kozo was strict and would not tolerate any talking back; he told Yoshio that, as the oldest brother, he had to look out for his younger siblings and take care of them. And Kozo also advised Yoshio that whatever task he took on, it took the same amount of time to do it well as not, so just do a good job the first time around. Consequently, Yoshio's handwriting and *kanji* were both excellent. Yoshio recalled fondly that every Sunday from Victoria Day to Labour Day, the family went to White Rock. Another fond memory was of when Valley Drive was still a creek and they fished for small fish there.

Tomeko had been a registered nurse and a midwife in Japan. She had also been a tennis champion in Nagano, and looked forward to playing tennis in Canada, but never got a chance to even lift a racket, being so busy with the business and the growing family. She was quite competent in both written and spoken English, had very good business sense, and ran Lion Valet while doing the tailoring, alterations, and sewing.



Lion Valet 155 East 10th Avenue Vancouver ca. 1930  
NNM 2018-1-1-026a

King Edward High School was one of the best schools in Vancouver at the time, and many Japanese Canadian families tried to get their children into the school. Some of the teachers had Master's degrees, and others, who had PhDs, ended up as deans or heads of departments at the University of British Columbia. King Ed offered senior matriculation, the equivalent of first-year university, at a low tuition of \$100 per year. Yoshio benefited from senior matriculation to enter a U.B.C. arts course which cost \$200 per year in 1940. (The average wage in 1935 was 30 cents per hour.) To help pay his tuition, he delivered 150 newspapers per day for *Tairiku Nippo*, earning \$19 per month.

However, Yoshio's future seemed limited. His ambition was to be a pharmacist, but since Japanese Canadians could not vote or get on the voter's list, which was required to get a license, it became difficult for him to be a pharmacist, accountant, or other professional. When Canada declared war on Japan in 1941, and the forced removal was underway, Kozo thought that, since he had been a naturalized Canadian since 1907, he would not have to move out of the coastal area. Yoshio was sent a notice to appear in Hastings Park, get a medical,



Tomeko, Arai children & others in Vancouver ca. 1930 NNM 2018-1-1-001a

and be shipped out to Three Valley Gap for road work. But Kozo did not wish to split up the family, and decided to move to Grand Forks after being refused a permit to go to Vernon on an offer by his friend Denbei Kobayashi. In order to get a permit to go to Grand Forks, like all others who decided to be self-supporting, Kozo, Tomeko, and Yoshio were required to sign a waiver and agree to pay for all transportation costs, medical expenses, and any other expenses for the duration of the internment.

The Arai family lived five miles outside of Grand Forks on a big ranch. Working with Doukhobor families as labourers, they picked fruit, raised cattle, and grew vegetables, earning \$2 for a nine-hour day. Kozo was 55 years of age by this time and it was tough on him. He also had to pay to send the four youngest kids to elementary and high school.

The Arai family had shipped some personal belongings from their home and shops, leaving other possessions with Mr. Reid, who rented the upstairs of their home. Within a year, however, the federal government directed the Custodian of Enemy Property to sell all the property of Japanese Canadians to offset the costs of the internment. Mr. Reid had been sending rent cheques directly to Kozo, but the government intervened and threatened to put him in jail for not obeying the orders of the Custodian of Enemy property, so he stopped sending them. The property at 10th and Main, the two

dry cleaning businesses, and many belongings were sold at auction without the family's consent. After the war, in 1950, the Bird Commission offered \$1,900 for all of it, which Kozo felt was an insult because it was worth a minimum of \$80,000, so he refused the offer.

Yoshio worked on the Grand Forks farm for a year, but didn't know anything about farming, and finally took a job at the Carmi Sawmill for the McLean Lumber Company. He worked there from 1943 to 1946, initially at 50 cents an hour, and supplemented his income by \$15 a month working as a first aid attendant. After he left that job, he returned to Grand Forks to work in the sawmill, doing every job except head sawyer. He also looked after the box cars loaded with lumber, box shooks, and supervised the retail and wholesale building supplies sales.

When the restrictions on Japanese Canadians were lifted in April 1949, Yoshio returned to Vancouver. Because he knew his way around Vancouver and had grown up helping with the dry cleaning business, he opened a dry cleaning shop at 10th Avenue and Alma Street with the help of family friend Mr. John R. Reid, who financed the business. His mother Tomeko also joined the business to run the tailoring, alterations and sewing side. Using the most modern machines of the time, Yoshio introduced the first four-hour cleaning firm and paid off Mr. Reid in three years.





Arai family in Grand Forks ca. 1943 NNM 2017-17-2-1-8-001

One sister, Shizuko, was given a special permit by the R.C.M.P. to get her teaching certificate at the normal school in Victoria and, in 1948, became the first *Nikkei* public school teacher in B.C. while still under War Measures Act. Whether anyone would hire a *Nikkei* was another story. Nursing training was open to women, but, again, whether they could get a job was questionable. Even after acquiring diplomas, Yoshio's sisters Fumiko and Shizuko could not secure full-time jobs as accountants. Fumiko did eventually get a job as an accountant in 1950 after applying to numerous (maybe 50) companies in Vancouver.

At that time, in 1949, not many *Nikkei* had returned to Vancouver yet, and jobs were scarce for Japanese Canadians. In the 1950s B.C. Tel would not hire Japanese Canadians, citing "poor English" as an excuse. Yoshi's future wife, Sumiko Imayoshi, was the first Japanese Canadian to be hired at B.C. Electric (B.C. Hydro). Yoshio met her at a dry cleaner's association meeting in 1952, and they married in 1957. The Imayoshi family had been in Canada since 1912 living and working in the Okanagan area.

After only three years, Yoshio sold the business for a profit and started Wesco Agencies, importing nylon fishing nets from Japan. He supplemented his income by

working as a first aid attendant on the afternoon shift at Westeel Products Ltd. Unfortunately, Kozo passed away in 1957, and had nothing to show for his many years of hard work and success in business. Kozo had never been back to Japan after his marriage, but Tomeko returned several times to visit her elder brother and sisters. Yoshio also went to Japan four times in 30 years on business and to connect with his relatives, and realized that he could never live there, feeling like a foreigner and being treated like a foreigner. He knew that even if a foreigner did get a job, he or she could never rise to be the head of a department in Japan or of the overseas subsidiary companies during the 1950-1960s era.

In 1990, Yoshio, with Tamio Marubayashi, a lifelong friend, organized the National Japanese Senior Golf Tournament, which started in Vancouver in 1991 and later expanded to Toronto and Edmonton. They kept the tournament going for 12 years.

*Yoshio dedicated many years to the Canadian Nikkei community and took part in the redress movement. The Nikkei National Museum thanks him for his recent donation of photos that illuminate life in the Fairview district before the war, in Vancouver before and after the war, and in Grand Forks and the surrounding area during the war.*

## A Man with Two Names

by Judy Teague

My family roots in are the British Isles, but one name in my family tree stands out: Jujiro Takenuchi. My grandma, Elizabeth Taylor – no, not the famous actress – came from a large family in Chobham, Surrey, England. Chobham is a farming community southwest of London. Grandma had many sisters, one of whom was Annie Taylor, born in 1876.

Annie came to Stonewall, Manitoba, in May 1907 with her husband, Walter Morris Oakford, and their three young children. Within three weeks of their arrival, Walter was dead! He had contracted scarlet fever on the boat. Now what was Annie to do? She was six months pregnant with their fourth child and had only one sister, Fannie, and her husband, George Sloan, to help her. The little girl was born in August 1907, and Annie had to work to support her family. She had an agonizing decision to make. How could she work with a newborn baby? A nearby family desperately wanted a child, so Annie allowed them to adopt her baby. Annie found work as a housekeeper with James Tenning, a Japanese farmer who was a widower. Now I have your attention, don't I? You are saying, "That's not a Japanese name." You are right!

So who was James Tenning and what was his story? James was born Jujiro Takenuchi on November 28, 1868, in Kuwana-gun, Mie Ken, Japan, to Heirjiro Takeuchi (Takenouchi) and Seki Kurosa. He was from a *samurai* family. He grew to five feet seven inches, tall for a Japanese. In 1888, after he had lost his father and then his mother, he entered a navy accounting school where he graduated as the top student in 1891. He was given a dirk from the Emperor and worked on battleships for the Japanese Navy for the next few years.

In 1898 Lieutenant Commander Takeuchi was sent to London, England, as an accounting manager for the purchase of three naval warships. In 1902, a terrible discrepancy was discovered. Jujiro and his colleague, Kanzaburo Kagi, a navy commander, had swindled a to-

tal of 330,000 yen of the money intended for building the warships. In today's value that is \$7,540,965 Cdn! Jujiro and Kanzaburo had sent much of the money to Ryoza Nagura, a senior naval colleague in Japan. Ryoza eventually returned part of the money but committed suicide before disclosing his part in the theft. Despite Ryoza's involvement, he was found not guilty by the navy court. Kanzaburo received a much lighter sentence than Jujiro, who was sentenced to 10 years' strict imprisonment *in absentia*.

Jujiro married an English woman named Sarah in England, and on November 25, 1904, he arrived in Halifax on the ship Bavarian as a married farmer going to Winnipeg, Manitoba. Land was cheap then and many people were coming to homestead in the prairies. Jujiro's farm was just outside of Stonewall in an area called Grassmere. Sadly, Sarah died soon after of a burst appendix, and Annie Taylor came into his life as his housekeeper.

On February 26, 1908, James Tenning and Annie Taylor were married in Stonewall, Manitoba. Were they in love or was it a marriage of circumstance? I was told that Annie's family was very upset that their daughter was marrying a Japanese gentleman and refused to speak to her. I'm sure that if Jujiro's parents were still alive they would have thought he was marrying beneath his station.

Now Jujiro had three children from his wife's first marriage: Walter, age six; William ("Hap" for Happy), age four; and Dorothy, age two. In 1909 Annie and James had their first child together, Stanley Juan Tenning. Soon another son, Robert Jusan, was born, and five daughters followed: Amy Rosalie, Elsie, Winnifred Sarah, Margaret Elizabeth, and Evelyn Grace.

My uncle, Dick Hunter, was Elizabeth Taylor's son and Annie's nephew. Two of Annie's daughters visited Dick in the hospital when he had open heart surgery; he had never met any of his aunt's family before and was thrilled



to meet them. Dick said they were gorgeous and very polite. On another occasion, in the 1950s, Dick's wife, Louise, visited Annie and some of her daughters and found Annie to be a very pleasant and a kind host. Over the fireplace were two Japanese swords. The Hunters lived in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Other Taylors lived in New Zealand, England, and Manitoba.

The Tenning farm was on the section of land with the X on it. O marks where the school was located. The black box at the bottom marks the Presbyterian Church. Winnipeg is about 35 kilometres south of Stonewall.

I was told by a relative living in Stonewall that Jujiro was not much of a farmer. In 1917 he lost the farm and went to work in Saskatchewan for other farmers as a labourer. I doubt that Annie knew his story before she married him; in fact, I wonder when he told her the truth. I'm sure he was not proud of his past and didn't want to think or talk about it. He was an exile from his homeland, his family, and his friends. He was not trained to be a farmer and preferred painting and writing poetry and songs, and was, of course, good with mathematics and accounting.

William Taylor of Stonewall remembers his uncle James Tenning visiting his family and that he always had candy in his pocket for William and his sisters. William and one sister still live in Stonewall. He is 105 years old! His father was Harry Taylor, Annie's youngest brother.

Jujiro's son, Robert Tenning, described his mother as a strong person who had a hard life raising her family. Robert said that his father never scolded his children; instead, Annie did that.

He also said that Jujiro was good at *judo* and taught the children how to perform the martial art. As well, Jujiro taught them how to play poker and how to write letters in Japanese using pen and brush. He would build kites in Stonewall and fly them.

At the same time, Robert said, his father rarely showed affection to his children. Robert wrote of his early life: "He never spoke to us about what he did before he came to Canada. Father used to take the buggy out with the two horses and whenever he met a lady on the road he would raise his cap like an English gentleman. I lived a lonely life as a boy. I never had any friends. We

never had much of a family life. I used to go out into the woods and look at the birds. I was alone a lot. From 14 to 15 I started to work. I have no good memories of family life in Vancouver. We seemed to go our separate ways. As you get older you rely more on your family but I didn't have that kind of relationship with my sisters and I think they felt the same way."

In 1928, Tenning went by himself to Vancouver to work at the *Tairiku Nippo* newspaper; according to Robert, Annie did not want to leave Stonewall. The following year Robert and Stanley joined him, and the next year, 1930, Annie and the girls came to Vancouver.

Robert wrote that in Vancouver his father became a different man. He worked hard for the Japanese community but neglected his family and began to drink constantly. Jujiro wanted to return to Japan, to the beautiful cherry blossoms and the small stream he used to fish in as a boy, but he could not and the *sake* helped drown his sorrows.

In Vancouver Jujiro worked first for the Japanese newspaper, then became a translator for the Japanese Fishing Association in Steveston and later a secretary for them. His last years were spent drinking. He was sent to Essondale Hospital, where he spoke only his native tongue. He died there of chronic myocarditis and arteriosclerosis.

On his deathbed, James Tenning made a final request of his son Stanley. He said, "Cast my ashes into the ocean at Steveston and I will finally return to my home in Japan." Part of his ashes were returned to Japan and his grave can be found at Hosei-ji temple in Kayuchi.

I think both Annie and Jujiro went through difficult times. The little girl Alice whom Annie gave up for adoption did not have a good life. She lost her adoptive mother at age 13, married twice, and had one daughter, and yet she attended Annie's funeral, so she must have known her mom in later life. Annie and Jujiro came from different cultures and religions, and I'm sure that affected their relationship. I wonder about Annie's three older children and how they got along with their half-brothers and -sisters. What became of their lives?

When I talked to some of Jujiro's descendants on the phone they were reluctant to talk to me because of the

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When I talked to some of Jujiro's descendants on the phone they were reluctant to talk to me because of the circumstances of Jujiro's exile. I do not judge. Jujiro said that he took the money to help other officers who had got themselves into trouble with gambling, the stock market, and women. One was threatening to kill himself. What would I have done in a similar situation?

circumstances of Jujiro's exile. I do not judge. Jujiro said that he took the money to help other officers who had got themselves into trouble with gambling, the stock market, and women. One was threatening to kill himself. What would I have done in a similar situation?

It is clear that the children suffered and that Jujiro was very homesick. Annie was isolated from her family and bore the brunt of raising the children. In Vancouver her husband distanced himself and drank too much.

Annie and Jujiro were my great-aunt and -uncle on my father's side of the family. There is tragedy in this story but there is happiness in the grandchildren and great-grandchildren. One of Annie and Jujiro's granddaughters received a national teaching award in British Columbia. It is time to move forward. I would like to meet some descendants of their family one day.



Stonewall City Hall. Limestone rock was quarried here and used in the construction of many buildings in the city. William Taylor was the mayor of Stonewall for many years. Photo courtesy Judy Teague



# Yobun Shima Uncovers a Baseball Legacy



First Vancouver Asahi Baseball Club, ca 1915. NNM TD 1113 Ed Kitagawa Collection.

Gaichi Tabata is second to the right in the front row. Suekichi Kodama is second to the left in the second row.

Yobun Shima was born and raised in Kyoto, Japan, and lived in Tokyo for most of his life, working for a shipping company until he retired about a decade ago. That is when he started tracing his family's footsteps.

Yobun's grandfather moved from Japan to Vancouver in 1907. A few years later, his grandfather's family, including a son named Shoichi Shima, joined him. In 1914, Yobun's father, Fred, was born in Vancouver.

Yobun discovered that his uncle Shoichi was one of the earliest members of the legendary Vancouver Asahi baseball team that played from 1914 to 1941. This was

the start of his instrumental work in piecing together little, fragile parts of B.C. history. He would go on to help track down some 30 other families whose connection to the Asahi would have otherwise been lost.

Growing up in Kyoto, Yobun never knew that his uncle had played for the Asahi. The family eventually returned to Japan one by one by the end of the 1930s.

After Shoichi died, the family found in his old files a 1916 Asahi team photo with him in it. That got tucked away until a cousin, Eiyo Shima, visited Vancouver more than 10 years ago and happened to find a book, *Asahi: A*

*Legend in Baseball*, by Pat Adachi. It was a "big surprise" to the family to see Shoichi in the first Asahi team photo ever taken in 1915.

In 2005, the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame inducted the Asahi team, naming 74 former players as medalists for their contributions as athletes. This was a poignant nod to the times in which the Vancouver Asahi played. But then things stalled. There were still 25 unclaimed medals, including the one belonging to Yobun's uncle Shoichi. The list would languish for another decade.

In October 2014, 100 years after his uncle first played for the Asahi, Yobun visited the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre (NNMCC) to attend the Medal Award Ceremony presented by Jason Beck, curator and director of the Hall, joined by Grace Eiko Thomson, historical consultant on the movie *Vancouver Asahi*, and Linda Reid, research archivist of NNMCC. At the ceremony, Yobun was accompanied by his son Yugo and two cousins, Eiyo and Yvonne.

After that, Yobun began to look for families of other former players who had not yet claimed their rightful medals. Emiko Ando, founding member of the New Asahi baseball team that was formed in 2014, offered to assist him in his research.

Yobun eventually got connected to Norio Goto, author of *The Vancouver Asahi Story*, and other Asahi family members, including Satoshi Matsumiya, whose grandfather was president of the Vancouver Asahi team in the early years. They were greatly helpful in tracking down those families in a short time.

In an interview in the Vancouver Sun, Jason Beck said, "Yobun has become the driving force, based in Japan. He's our Japanese division for the search for those players. We have a much fuller picture of who was on these teams."

The list of unclaimed medals is now down to six names.

- K. Endo, possibly from Tottori Prefecture, who played in 1938.
- Tashiro Omoto, from Shiga Prefecture, who played in 1929 and 1932.
- Barry Kiyoshi Kasahara, from Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture, who played from 1919 to 1923.

- Yuji Uchiyama from Niigata Prefecture, who played from 1918 to 1921.
- Yoshio Miyasaki, hometown unknown, who played 1925 to 1926.
- Dr. Henry Masataro Nomura, from Tokyo, who was the president from 1919 to 1921.

In parallel with the search into the unclaimed medalists, Yobun and Satoshi Matsumiya were interested in identifying two of the earliest Asahi players, Tabata and Kodama, whose first names had not been known or registered. Eventually, after exploring old newspaper articles and contacting people in Japan and Canada, they uncovered the players' full names: Gaichi Tabata and Suekichi Kodama. The B.C. Sports Hall of Fame welcomed the findings and immediately included the information on the Asahi roster for induction.

In this connection, induction medals become a point of concern. Jason Beck of the Sports Hall of Fame says that he does not have any records of whether the Hall had already issued medals to the families of Tabata and Kodama.

Yobun and Satoshi Matsumiya have been working to track down and contact the families of Gaichi Tabata and Suekichi Kodama. Suekichi Kodama's daughter has been identified and contacted. Gaichi Tabata's family has been identified, but no contact information is available to reach them. Unfortunately, Gaichi's son Takashi Peter Tabata passed away in 2016. Yobun and Satoshi welcome contact information for Peter's surviving families, namely Enright-Tabata (and husband Robin), Lori Tabata (married name unknown), Shari Tabata (possibly unmarried), plus Courtney and Danielle, daughters of Tomi Tabata (who passed away in 2013 in Burlington).

Yobun and Satoshi welcome any information about the Tabata family. Please contact them at:  
Sevenseas1990@hotmail.co.jp  
03-5984-1755, Tokyo Japan

You may also contact Linda Kawamoto Reid, research archivist at the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre, at lreid@nikkeiplace.org.





## Treasures from the Collection



# Hide Hyodo Shimizu's Legacy

by Michele Hii



NNM 1999.7.

The Japanese Canadian community was lucky to have Hide Hyodo Shimizu as its heroine and inspiration. Hide was born on May 11, 1908, in Vancouver, British Columbia. She was the first Japanese Canadian teacher to be hired in the province.

In May 1936, Hide travelled to Ottawa with Dr. Samuel I. Hayakawa, Dr. Edward Banno, and Minoru Kobayashi to fight for voting rights for Japanese Canadians. She documented her observations in her scrapbook, which had a green cover with a greyscale picture of Ottawa's Parliament Building and "OTTAWA Canada's Capital" typed in bold on top. She glued materials collected on her trip on its brown pages, including newspaper clippings, postcards, Parliament stationary, maps, personal mementos, and diary entries. Even though she and the other three Japanese Canadians failed to convince the government to allow Japanese Canadians to vote, she is still remembered as one of the first women who fought for the equality of all.

During the forced dispersal and dispossession of Japanese Canadians in the Second World War, Hide recruited and trained many *Nikkei* teachers. She formed a strong relationship with all of her students, and they in turn called her their favourite teacher. Trusty Yoshimura, a close friend of hers, said, "I often wondered how she could do so many things and provide so much goodness in one short day."

Hide kept a yearbook from her first school year in 1943. The yearbook was entitled "Summer School Echoes," and it was full of essays and poems written by her students. Hide was known for being very thoughtful and giving, and she carried the black suitcase, now housed at the museum, to distribute Christmas presents to her students. The students and teachers she worked with admired her generosity and commitment to the future of education for Japanese Canadians. She created a legacy of encouragement and activism that all Japanese Canadians can emulate.