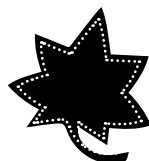


日系 Nikkei **NIKKEI**
national museum
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Japanese Canadian War Memorial, Vancouver BC, 1956. NNM 2016.18.1.4.139.



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Contents



CJA host a luncheon at the Hotel Vancouver, April 9, 1920
Page 4



Matsunoshin Abe,
President of the CJA 1919-1921
Page 6



Who was Jonathan Rogers?
Page 10



A place to remember and heal,
a brief history of the Japanese
Canadian War Memorial
Page 12



The Japanese Canadian War
Memorial 100 Years Later
Page 17



The Search for a Pen Pal
Lost for 80 Years
Page 17

The Kaye Kaminishi Film Collection
Back Cover

Welcome to Nikkei Images



Nikkei Images is a publication of the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre dedicated to the preservation and sharing of Japanese Canadian Stories since 1996. In this issue, we feature the resilience of Japanese Canadians through adversity, whether it be labor unions, fighting for voting rights, or internment and incarceration. We welcome proposals of family and community stories for publication in future issues. Articles should be between 500 – 3,500 words and finished works should be accompanied by relevant high resolution photographs with proper photo credits. Please send a brief description or summary of the theme and topic of your proposed article to Ireid@nikkeiplace.org.

Our publishing agreement can be found online at center.nikkeiplace.org/nikkei-images

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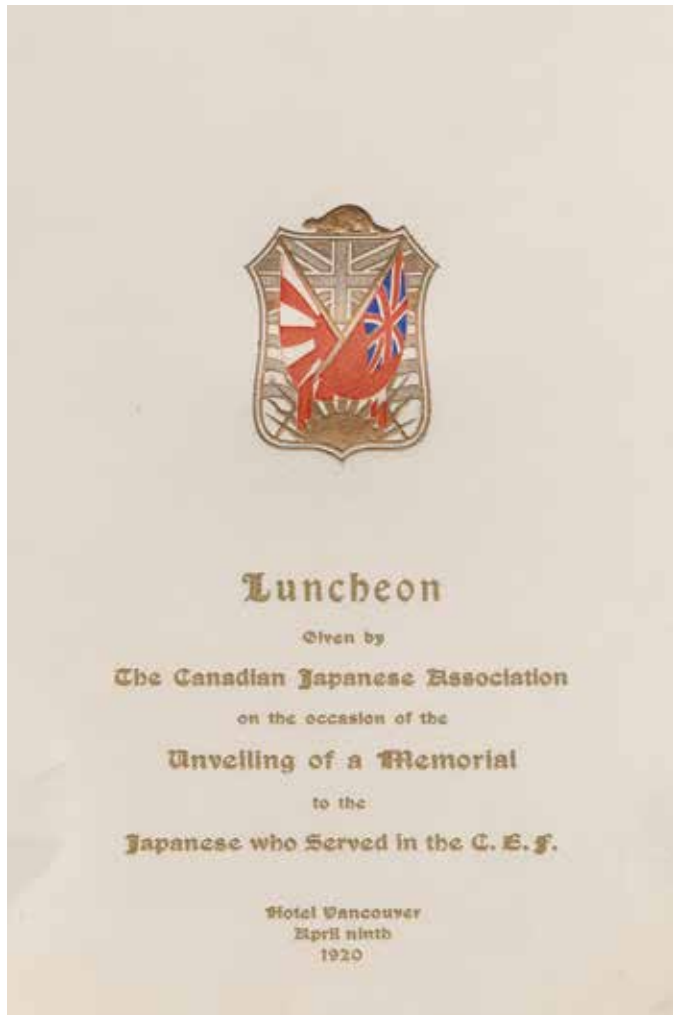
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CJA host a luncheon at the Hotel Vancouver, April 9, 1920

by Linda Kawamoto Reid, Chair JCWMC

A pamphlet of the Luncheon given by the CJA on the occasion of the unveiling of the memorial to the Japanese (Canadians) who served in the CEF reveals the crest of the CJA on its cover. The crest is topped with a symbolic beaver of Canada, and both flags of Japan and Canada are intertwined which represents the relationship between the two countries at the time.



Crest of the CJA on the front cover of the brochure
CVA AM 1519-Pam1920-28



All Japanese Canadian Legion #9 flag origin 1926. NNM 2016-5-1-2-1

Notice the background is the faded out gold design of the British Union Jack.

The pamphlet of the luncheon also reveals the delicious menu at the Hotel Vancouver and gives an insight into the lavishness of the affair. Interestingly, the toasts were very ‘British’ and began with CJA President Matsunoshin Abe giving a toast to the King, who at the time was King George V, Queen Elizabeth’s grandfather, and Queen Victoria’s grandson. This was followed by a silent toast to ‘Those who will not return’, by Captain Robert T. Colquhoun, who had trained the Japanese Canadian contingent in Vancouver from January – May 1916. It was fitting that the Captain give the solemn toast.

Surprisingly, included in the ‘Returned Citizens’ address by government representatives and replies by local dignitaries, a familiar name crops up – Captain Ian McKenzie. At that time, Captain McKenzie was a war hero, lieutenant in the Seaforth Highlanders from 1915-1919. When he returned from the war he became a lawyer and petitioned to form the Canadian

Legion Branches in the British Empire Service League in 1925. So at the time of the unveiling, he was acknowledging his fellow Japanese Canadian veterans at the luncheon and later, he supported the Japanese Canadian Veterans getting the franchise in 1931. But it is interesting that the Japanese Canadians formed their own all-Japanese Canadian Legion Branch #9, and it is the same Ian McKenzie who was very vocal about exclusionary policies in hiring Asians in the 1930s, but in particular Japanese Canadians, who he felt excelled at what they did and took jobs from ordinary Canadians, and should not have voting rights.

Japanese Consul Satotsuga Ukita (1916-1921) was chosen to address ‘Our City’ with the response from Vancouver Mayor’s office. Consul Ukita was in Vancouver for five years, which was on the longer side of a diplomatic posting. And he worked tirelessly with the CJA during a tumultuous period in Japanese-Canadian history against exclusionary policies against Japanese Canadians. He would have also overseen the enlistment of the Japanese Canadian contingent not

in BC but in Alberta in 1916.

The Canadian Ensign was carried into the battle of Vimy in 1917, when proud Canadian soldiers successfully overtook Vimy Ridge and Hill 70 from the Germans, and is believed to be the oldest surviving Canadian Ensign and resides in the British War Museum in London. At the time, there were four provinces in confederation, each represented on the crest on the early Ensign. The Canadian Ensign was not the official flag of Canada, the Union Jack held that honour.

It’s no surprise that James A. Benzie, the architect and builder of the cenotaph, would have something to say about ‘Our Parks’ and that the response was from Jonathan Rogers, who was Parks Board Chair at the time.

The pamphlet of the luncheon gives us a fantastic glimpse of history and the pomp and circumstance of the reception and the speakers at this auspicious occasion a mere 100 years ago!



A group of men holding the Canadian Ensign. A caption included on the photograph reads “After the Great War 1914-1918”. Photographed includes Matsunoshin Abe (far left), Uyeda, Consul Ukita Ryoji, Shuichi Sasaki, Mohei Sato, Saburo Shinobu, Yaju Fukui, and Motoji Yanagisawa. NNM 1994-70-27.

Matsunoshin Abe, President of the CJA 1919-1921

by Linda Kawamoto Reid

Matsunoshin Abe, as president of the Canadian Japanese Association (CJA), was chosen by the Japanese Canadian community to preside over the dedication of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park on April 9, 1920. It was a big deal for the JC community and historically the CJA had much to do with facilitating the initial 1916 training of the soldiers in Vancouver under Colonel Colquhoun, funding their passage to Alberta to enlist, and fundraising for the monument itself.

The cenotaph was dedicated on Vimy Day in Canada. The Battle of Vimy Ridge was a huge victory for the Canadian Army, and as Sergeant Masumi Mitsui, (Military Medal) said “The French army tried but they couldn’t do it, next, the English but they could not get over. Then the Canadians went in. We took Vimy Ridge.” Sergeant Mitsui led a group of fearless Japanese Canadian soldiers in the ‘fighting Tenth Battalion’, one of the many battalions with Japanese Canadians, which contributed to the victory. For these heroic efforts, the CJA decided to honour the ones who returned and the ones who didn’t by building the War Memorial. The names of all the soldiers, including those who perished, are engraved on the cenotaph.

Matsunoshin Abe was the president of the CJA from 1919-1921. He was born in 1872 in Aoba Castle town in Miyagi Prefecture (one of the few hot blooded men who immigrated from Tohoku). Well educated, he acquired a position in the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce in Japan in 1904, became a trade apprentice for Mitsui Bussan, and spent three years researching the production of smoked salmon in Canada. He travelled back and forth from Japan to Canada in first class. Then in 1909, he became the General Agent of Pacific Insurance Company, while managing the King Fish Store at the same time. Later, he became the ticketing agent for Nippon Yusen and Osaka Shosen Company, and due to the respect he garnered, was asked by Arichika Ikeda to manage the Ikeda Mining Company in Vancouver. Mr. Ikeda became a rich man and a bay is named after him in Haida Gwaii.

Matsunoshin also established, became vice president, then president of, the Koseikai (Association of Fairness and Righteousness), an association that discussed politics.

Matsunoshin was described by his colleagues as having a warm personality, natural competency and a sense of justice, a deep thinker who chose his words carefully. He was admired for his decisiveness, unswaying leadership and brilliance while at the same time he communicated with people with a sincere heart. He was described as having a rare talent amongst his countrymen in Canada.

In 1913, he brought over his wife, the daughter of a lieutenant of the Imperial Japanese Navy who was well positioned in Japan society. They lived at 368 East Cordova Street in Vancouver for a few years while he was president of the CJA. Together they both carried on community work, and travelled back and forth to Japan and eventually returned there to live. According to local lore, Matsunoshin Abe continued to hobnob with Baron Shinpei Goto, and other politicians back in his hometown.

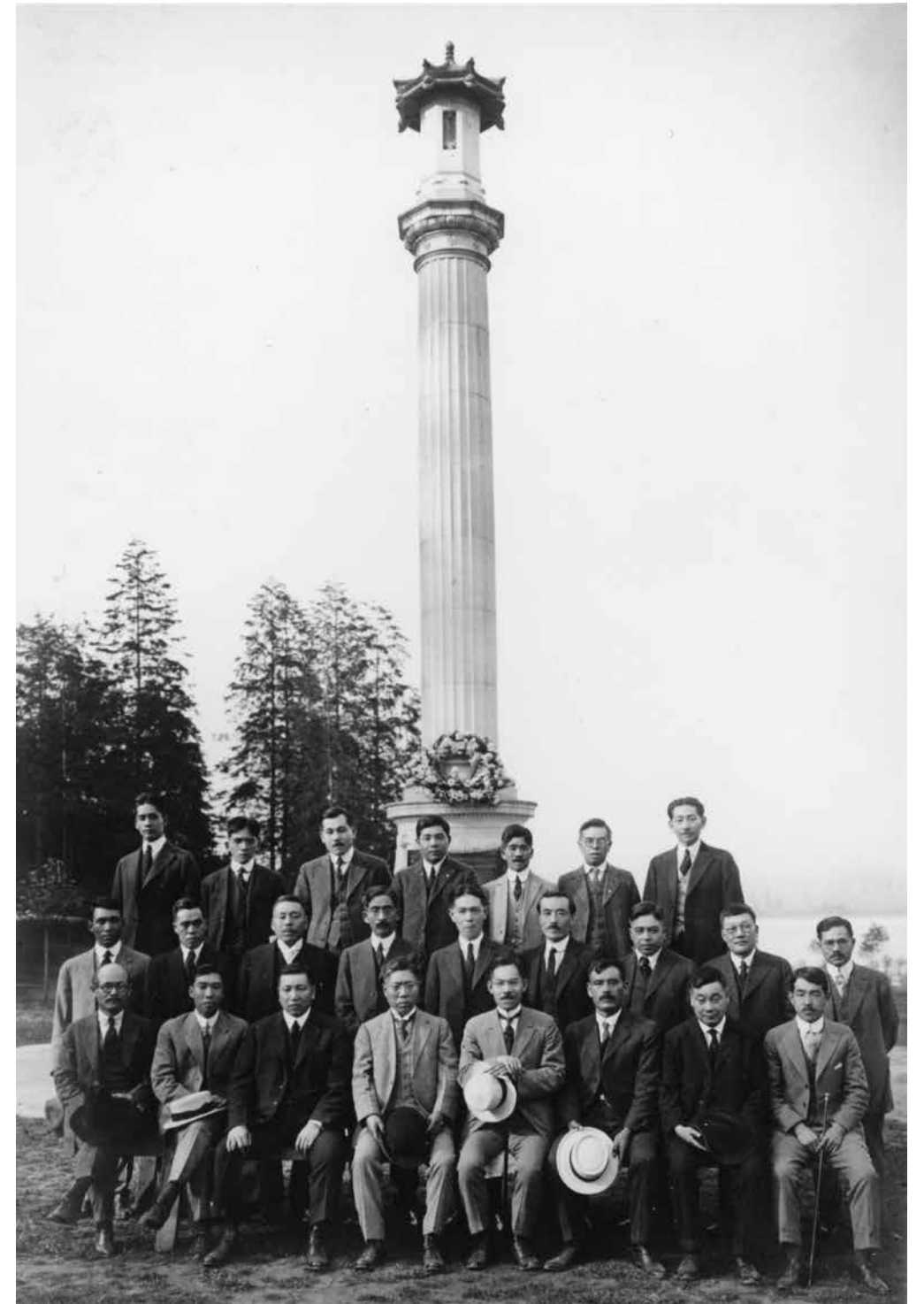
The CJA was established on March 24, 1909 at the office of 329 Gore Street by an early president, Yasushi Yamazaki, who was a great supporter of the enlistment of Japanese Canadians and also founded the popular newspaper Tairiku Nippo. The mandate of the CJA was to maintain good relations between Japan and Canada, especially in commerce, trade, and international relations. It was to also promote the well being of Japanese residing in Canada and under the laws of the country, including the Anglo – Japanese Alliance, educate and guide these citizens to be industrious citizens.

During Matsunoshin Abe’s tenure, just after the First World War, labour problems surfaced in BC, as men returned from the War, needing jobs. The Nikkei Fishing fleet was cut in half when fishing licenses were revoked, and jobs in the lumber industry were reduced. An emergency meeting of the CJA was held March 27,

1920 when all members unanimously passed a resolution to join forces and form the Japanese Forestry Workers Union to confront the Provincial threat to revoke forestry licenses. Initial members included Abe, Japanese Consul Satoji Ukida, Saburo Shinobu (an insurance salesman who was fluent in English), and Sumio Tateishi (secretary). They hired Sir Charles Tupper to represent their interests and challenge provincial attempts to revoke forestry licences of Asians, which would be in contravention to the Anglo-Japan Alliance of 1902 and the Japanese Treaty Act of 1913.

Judge McPhillips, Judge Gulliver and Chief Judge MacDonald were in agreement that the legislating department of the province did not have the authority to override the British North America Act, nor the Treaty with Japan, and that any legislation that restricts the rights and privileges under the treaty, should be revoked. This meant that Japanese Canadians could be employed in public projects on crown land, such as telegraph, bridges, railways, harbours, and forestry areas. However, the BC forestry companies decided to repeal the decision and take it to the Supreme Court of Canada.

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that “BC by using its laws to prohibit the employment of Japanese in government awarded mining or other contracts on crown held or leased forest lands is clearly ‘Ultra Vires’



The founding group of Canadian Japanese Association at the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park BC. Matsunoshin Abe, front row, fourth from the left. NNM 1994.41.14.

and is not only similar to the Homma case, but also treats Japanese as ‘Non favourable citizens’ which contravenes the Anglo Japanese Commerce Treaty in which the treaty was signed with Japan as a most favoured nation”. On Feb 7, 1922 the Supreme Court ruled that the BC Government had no authority to enact such legislation pursuant to the British North America



20th Graduation Class of the Japanese Language School. Back L-R: Mickey Maikawa, Dick Inouye, Tanabe (tailor), Uyeda (taxi), Kannosuke Kaminishi, [unidentified], Shoki-sei Ito, Matsunoshin Abe, Mohei Sato, Kiyoharu Momose, Kaoru Tagana, Saburo Shinobu. NNM 1994-70-2.

Act. However, the BC Government was not satisfied with the ruling and decided to appeal the decision to the Privy council in England.

The CJA sent Sir Charles Tupper to the Privy Council in London and on October 18, 1922 the Privy council upheld the Supreme court decision and invalidated BC's 'Exclusion of Asiatic' Act. Furthermore, in the decision, there were hints that BC Government could alter parts of the Act, but warned that a revised act will fail if the treatment of Japanese is not based on the spirit of the Treaty as citizens of a most favoured nation. The cost of the trials from 1921-1922 was a total of \$24,000 which the CJA coordinated fundraising efforts to pay the expenses. The CJA became a strong organization whose leaders of the Japanese Canadian community advocated and continued to be the strong

voice of justice for Japanese Canadians until 1942.

Matsunoshin Abe was president of the CJA for only two years, yet at a crucial period in Japanese Canadian history. We owe a great amount of gratitude to the past presidents of the CJA who helped to shape the community and navigate the injustices, and racial discrimination in BC. The CJA was disbanded in 1942 with the dispossession of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War. Chattels were found in the Orange Hall at 341 Gore Street, and the last officers to have control of the account were Eikichi Kagetsu who had signing authority, K. Miwa (president), Kanamatsu Nagami (treasurer), and Dr. Masajiro Miyazaki (safety deposit box). Officers of the CJA in 1942 were Toyoshi Kawata (secretary), Jenichi Kinoshita (treasurer), Sakae Arikado, Bunji Hisaoka, and Eikichi Kagetsu (president).

Opposite page: The unveiling of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial on the cover of the Vancouver Sun, published on April 10, 1920. Originally published in The Vancouver Sun, a Division of Postmedia Network Inc. TD 960-001.

The photo caption reads: The picture shows the crowd gathered around the monument to witness the opening ceremonies. In the insert are Ald. J.J. McRae, who unveiled the memorial, and to his right M. Abel (sic), president of the Canadian-Japanese association.



The Vancouver Daily Sun

With which is incorporated The Daily News-Advertiser

01

VANCOUVER, B. C., SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 1920

SIXTEEN PAGES

NADA LEADS TRAINING OF AR VETERANS

AWA, April 9.—In comparison with the United States, Canada continues to be the industrial retraining abled ex-servicemen. According to official figures released at Washington by the board for vocational education, a total of 32,204 men had been approved for training during the period in Canada 13,300 men had been approved for training.

Canada at the same period men had been approved of the vocational training of the department of soldier establishment, and 43,124 actually commenced training. In the United States, 3,904 men commenced training. During the same period in Canada 13,300 men had graduated as soldiers.

1,000 CHEQUES D PAY INTEREST

a Is Preparing Vouch- and Sending Them Out ore May First.

AWA, April 9.—Interest on the 1918 and 1919 Victory Loans is payable on the payment of interest on which are fully registered in the sending out of some 500,000 cheques from the finance department in order that all cheques may be the hands of the bondholders and with a view to relieving the facilities as much as possible the mailing of these cheques will commence almost immediately. The cheques may be received before May 1, the finance department points out, that they are payable until that date and thereafter, as well as the banks, saved trouble if this point is in mind. Interest cheques will be issued by folders giving particulars of a new issue of certificates yield 5 1/2 per cent. interest. The department of finance has received from the Treasury the necessary authority to issue these certificates, which will be in denominations of \$5, \$25, \$50 and \$100.

U.S. WATCHES ROME BURN SAYS HOOVER

This Is Way Former Food Director Terms Attitude of Senate on Treaty.

LEAGUE EMBODIES IDEAL

Declares That Through Negotiation There Is Chance of Preventing Future Wars.

KINGSTON, N. Y., April 9.—Failure of the United States to join a League of Nations that would lessen the danger of future wars is like "silently watching Rome burn," Herbert Hoover declared in an address here tonight at a dinner of the Social Service commission of the New York Methodist Episcopal conference. He said there is an ideal in the League of Nations, "fitting to American character and American civilization." "Not an ideal that we should prevent war by arms," he added, "but an ideal that it could be prevented by negotiation, by arbitration and the ventilation of public opinion of the world. The ideal is not dead in the hearts of the American people."

LIDLAW CHOSEN AS DIRECTOR OF ICE ASS'N AT MEETING

SEATTLE, April 9.—The northwest uses less ice than any other section of the country. Leslie C. Smith, Chicago, secretary of the National Association of Ice Industries, declared today in an address before the Northwestern Association of Ice Industries. The convention will close its sessions tomorrow. J. A. Laidlaw, Vancouver, B. C., was one of the directors elected.

FEWER CASUALTIES. LONDON, April 9.—Official reports received from Jerusalem reduce the casualties in the recent troubles in Jerusalem to two persons killed and 186 wounded, of whom 170 were Jews. The situation is well in hand.

FRESH OUTRAGES BEING REPORTED IN EMERALD ISLE

ee Barracks Outside Limerick Boundary Burned Down, Followed by Arrest of Four Men, Who Are Sent to Cork to Await Their Trial

ee Constables Are Shot; One Dead, Others May Survive

Age Pension Money Is Taken From Stage, Held Up Between Cavan and Arva—Statue Valued at \$5000 Is Destroyed in Cathedral at Rossi Carberry

NDON, April 9.—Further outrages in different parts of Ireland were reported today. A faceted police barracks at Black Boy, outside the Limerick boundary, was burned down. Four men were killed under the Defense of the Realm Act and taken to Cork. At Tipperary, reports say three constables were shot at while bicycles from Rearcross to Newport. It is said that one of the blues was killed, that another was fatally injured and the third wounded. A mail van from Cavan to Arva was held up and more than £100 sterling, representing old age pension money, stolen. The statue of the late Lord Carberry, valued at £1000, was damaged beyond repair.

INTRODUCED OTTAWA AGAINST IN REFERENDUM GRANTING DOMINION

SAYS BRITISH THREATEN NON-PARTICIPATION IN PLANNED PARIS MEETING

UNVEILING JAPANESE WAR MEMORIAL AT STANLEY PARK



HE picture shows the crowd gathered around the monument to witness the opening ceremonies. In the insert are Ald. J. J. McRae, who unveiled the memorial, and to his right M. Abel, president of the Canadian-Japanese association.

Britain Has Not Diminished Faith In Entente or France, Says London

LONDON, April 9.—It is announced in authoritative quarters that Thursday's communication giving the British official view of the French advance into Germany was made chiefly to prevent any possible damage to the Anglo-French alliance. Faith in the Entente and friendship for the French people, it was said, have been in no wise diminished. "Wait and see" is no more in order in 1920 than in 1914. Such an aberration would cause the loss of peace as surely as the prolonged abstention of England in 1914 would have caused the loss of the war.

ADVISED ALLIES. The Temps points out that the government informed the allied and associated governments of its intended action three days before the French troops advanced, and hence can not be accused of 'laing' the allies by surprise by its action. The Temps adds that if, as the British government seems to think, in accord with all the other allies and associated powers of France in disapproving the occupation, France would find herself in isolation, a spectacle which would increase the audacity of the military and in Germany which

Fresh Threat Has Been Made, Declares Editor of French Newspaper.

No Reason Is Given for Postponement of Gathering Now Fixed for Today.

France Is Despatching Note to London Concerning Occupation of Ruhr Area.

London Says Situation Which Has Arisen Is One of Confusion.

PARIS, April 9.—Instructions will be sent the British representative here not to attend the pending conference of ambassadors here if France shows signs of intending to act independently in German affairs. Pertinax, political editor of the Echo de Paris, he says this fresh threat has been formulated "in addition to the conclusions set forth in semi-official statements from the London cabinet."

CONFERENCE SATURDAY LONDON, April 9.—The conference of allied premiers and foreign ministers, which it was expected would convene here today to consider the Franco-German question and other subjects, is now said to have been put off until Saturday noon.

FRANCE SENDING REPLY PARIS, April 9.—Paul Cambon, the French ambassador in London, has been instructed to present to the British government the response to the French government to the note sent to France by Great Britain yesterday with regard to the French invasion of the Ruhr.

BERLIN'S NOTE. PARIS, April 9.—(Havas).—A despatch from the Wolff bureau asserts that the note handed the French government by the German government yesterday maintained that the occupation of Germany was unjustified and not anticipated by the treaty of Versailles and caused numerous incidents, including the killing of Germans and the wounding of others. The German government, the note declares, reserved the right to protest further, but from now on it would hold the French government responsible for all damages caused, or which resulted from recent occurrences.

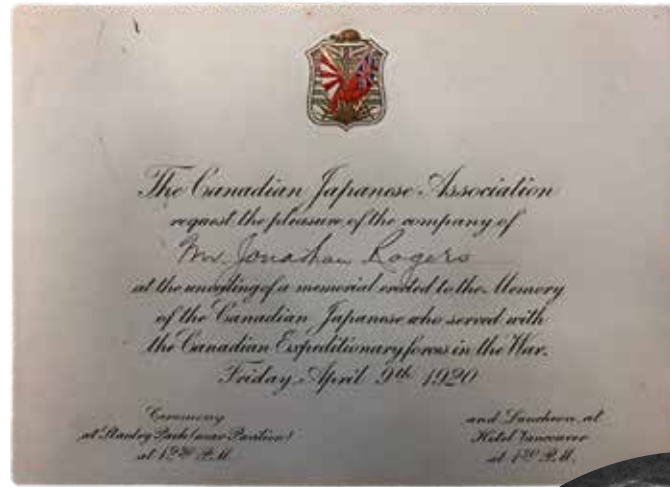
GERMANS BUSY ON AIRPLANES

Work Feverishly and Secretly In Endeavor to Commercialize Air Possibilities.

GENEVA, April 9.—(By Associated Press).—The Germans are working feverishly to construct giant commercial and passenger ships and airplanes, according to a report from Holmsborn. The first trials were successfully held yesterday of two monster machines above Lake Constance.

Who was Jonathan Rogers?

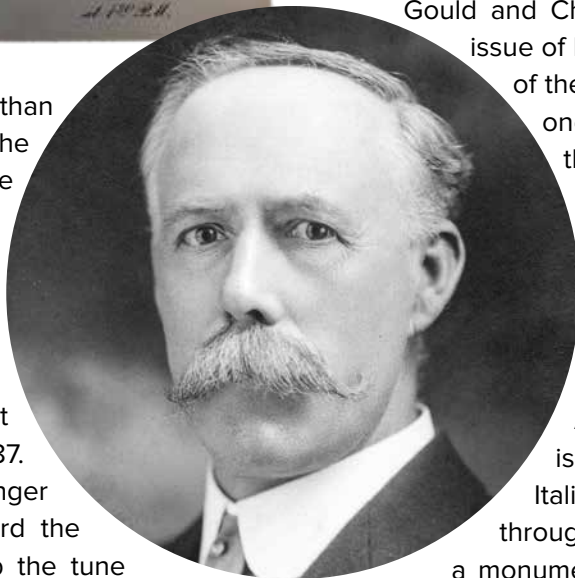
by Linda Kawamoto Reid



This invitation was sent to Jonathan Rogers on the occasion of the dedication of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial on April 9th, 1920, so who was Jonathan Rogers?

Jonathan Rogers arrived in Vancouver aboard the first CPR train to Granville Street from Montreal on May 23, 1887. Rogers was the first passenger to step off the train, and heard the Vancouver City Band strike up the tune 'See the Conquering Hero Comes'. Rogers later confessed, with some embarrassment, that he thought the band was playing it for him, the first person to emerge from the train.

Among Vancouver's earliest pioneers, a youth of 22, and no relation to the Rogers Sugar Baron, Jonathan was born in Plas Onn, Denbighshire, Wales. His life in Vancouver started simply; the city was a simpler place then: Rogers could recall when horse races were run down Granville Street. He was hired to help paint the first Hotel Vancouver, then later became a builder and contractor, eventually contracting and building 300 meters (1,000 feet) of Granville Street footage. The building for which he will be best remembered—and not just because it's named for him—is the Rogers Building.



He liked Vancouver so much he stayed for the rest of his life, nearly 60 years more. Twenty-six of those years were spent on the city's park board, nine of them as chairman. He also served twice as an alderman, and twice as president of the board of trade (1914 and 1915).

The Rogers Building

On the corner of Pender and Granville in Vancouver, cars and streetcars were still on the "wrong" side of the street, when construction of the Rogers building began in 1911 and finally opened in 1912.

This 10-storey beauty was designed by a Seattle firm, Gould and Champney. The October 20, 1911 issue of B.C. Saturday Sunset gave some of the details of "what promises to be one the finest office buildings on the Pacific Coast . . ." The building, said Sunset, "is designed along the lines of the modern French Renaissance (with an) exterior of polished Glasgow granite, in combination with cream-colored terra cotta facing . . . All the interior finish woodwork is to be of hardwood with white Italian marble corridors and stairs throughout The building will be a monument to Alderman Rogers, whose faith in the future of this city is exemplified in the erection of a building which, when completed, will represent an expenditure of nearly \$600,000."

Writing in The Greater Vancouver Book, Sean Rossiter says: "Carl F. Gould was a Seattle architect who had mastered that city's terra cotta material—glazed tiles formed into classical details with weather-resistant qualities appropriate to this climate. When the worldwide collapse of lumber prices in 1910 ended Seattle's boom, Gould and other architects travelled the short distance north to Vancouver where higher prices persisted because of B.C.'s access to British markets. Gould's Rogers Building (1911-12) at 470 Granville is one sumptuous example of what architects from a more sophisticated city could do in booming Vancouver."

The Rogers Building was a hit. His years of study of office buildings were rewarded when, after the building had been operating for a while, builders in other cities began to write and ask for copies of the plans.

End of an ERA

"I feel that I am parting with an old friend," Rogers said in September of 1927 when he sold the building to General F. A. 'One Arm' Sutton. The old friend went for a sum "exceeding \$1 million." It was the largest real estate transaction in the city to that time.

William Mercer remembers the Rogers Building well. He worked in it for 25 years, starting in 1938, first as the building engineer, later as the manager. "Oh, I remember all that white marble," Mercer told us. "It was even down in the basement. They had a huge barbershop down there, it must have been the most ornate in the city; it opened in 1913. Eighteen chairs, plate-glass mirrors on every wall, marble pillars. Do you remember McLeod's Restaurant down there? Fifteen-foot ceilings!"

That barbershop was famous. "For more than half a century," Tony Eberts wrote in 1973 in the *Province*, "it was a meeting place, an exchange for news, gossip and stock market tips, a basement oasis of relaxation and luxury—and a good spot to get a haircut."

One of the patrons of the shop back then was the pioneer lawyer and politician Leon Ladner, who at the time Tony wrote had been getting his hair cut there for more than 50 years. But his longevity was exceeded by one of the barbers, Len Percival, who retired in 1962 after more than 60 years as a barber. More than a hundred of his businessmen customers gathered in the shop to wish Len well.

Elizabeth Rogers

Rogers' wife, Elizabeth, took over the building when her husband died in 1945, aged 80. Elizabeth Rogers was a prominent Vancouverite in her own right. Like her husband, she was long-lived. She died in 1960 at age 83. (The meeting that resulted in the formation of the Vancouver Art Gallery was held in the Rogers' living room.)

By the time the Koerner Foundation bought the Rogers Building in 1955, its price had increased to \$1.25 million. The present owner, Equitable Real Estate Investment Corp., bought the building from the foundation in 1976.

Dunn's Tailors, a firm established in 1936, occupies the ground floor of this handsome old building.

Donald Luxton and Associates

It's probably no mistake that the leading Heritage Consultant and advocate for heritage restoration of buildings in Vancouver are to be found in offices of the old Rogers Building. Donald Luxton was consulted on the restoration of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in 2013, and has produced a Statement of Significance and a Conservation Plan for the maintenance and cleaning of the Memorial, which was done in 2014. The Memorial will be cleaned once again in 2020 for the centenary, following the heritage conservation guidelines, by Shaun Van Den Kerkhoff of Van Den Kerkhoff and sons, Stonemasons.



Rogers Building, ca 1911. City of Vancouver Archive M-11-82

Opposite page, top: The Canadian Japanese Association Luncheon invitation April 9, 1920 Vancouver. City of Vancouver Archives. AM54-S23-1.

Opposite page, centre: Jonathan Rogers, Vancouver Parks Commissioner ca. 1918. City of Vancouver Archives. AM54-S4-: Port P1442.

“We come to mourn the dead. Their souls speak to us, they ask us to look inward, take stock of who we are.”
– Barack Obama, May 27 2016 at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park



Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park, Vancouver BC, 1920. CVA 99-240 Stuart Thomson Fonds.

A Place to Remember: The Japanese Canadian War Memorial

by Mika Ishizaki

While the history of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial is tied to the struggle for the rights of Japanese Canadians, the space has come to symbolize justice, equality, and peace. It is ironic and tragic, as these things often are, that those who fought for our rights and freedoms are the ones who don't get to see or enjoy the fruit of their labour. Such is the fight for future generations, the struggle to be the catalyst for change. Such is the sacrifice to create peace.

Now we get to look back over the 100-year-history of this space and think about what that means for our future. How can we remember those who gave so much? And what does this space, the Japanese Canadian War Memorial, mean for us now? How does the design and the symbolism of a space affect how we perceive it over time? The meaning of a place transforms over time, and when I consider how the identity of being Japanese Canadian has changed over time, and the significance of the community

within Vancouver, I think that the memorial is culturally significant in understanding the lived experience of Japanese Canadians.

The memorial was built and dedicated three years after the Battle of Vimy Ridge, dedicated to the soldiers who lost their lives over the whole of World War I (WWI), and to also celebrate those who were able to come home. This was in 1920, a hundred years ago, but a time that has many similarities to today. It was the decade before the Great Depression, the end of a massive epidemic; sometimes, history has the tendency to repeat itself.

In much the same way that the alt-right sentiment against coloured minorities has seen a surge, the memorial was dedicated at a time when anti-Asian sentiment ran high. Though many Japanese Canadians were citizens, they had few political rights and no right to vote. In large areas of Vancouver, Asians were not allowed to buy land. Any success attained in the community scared Euro-Canadians; only 13 years prior, an anti-Asian riot damaged businesses and attacked individuals in the Chinese and Japanese corridors. These feelings against the community did not abate for many decades after.

Before going much further, I have to write a disclaimer. I am *issei*, a first generation Japanese Canadian. I am also *hafu* – or as I prefer *daburu* – and am very white presenting. My experience of being Japanese Canadian is very different from the *sansei*, *yonsei*, and *gosei* Japanese Canadians whom I've gotten to know through the Nikkei community. It is their story I am trying to tell as it surrounds the memorial. My introductions, through the Kikiai Collaborative, to people who have inherited the traumas of internment through their ancestors and elders have given me some insight to this lived experience, though I will never fully understand it; I will only ever be able to empathize.

My own inherited trauma is that of being both victor and loser in the World Wars; my family from Canada were Norwegian immigrants who logged and farmed in the Kootenays and did not have many sons and fathers that fought in the war. They also lived not far from the internment camps of BC's interior. I imagine that my grandmother and grandfather, who were raised in Creston, heard rumours of the Japanese Canadians who were moved en masse nearby, which influenced their opinions of Asians over their whole lives. My

Two boys in front of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial, Vancouver BC, 1920. NNM 2014.14.2.3.5.





Sergeant Masumi Mitsui at the relighting ceremony of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park, 1985. NNM 1992-23.

family from Japan must have fought and worked in the war and had to rebuild and leave eastern Tokyo when it was destroyed after the war. I imagine – though no one talks about it – that some of my Japanese ancestors died during the war, either fighting to take over the Pacific or in the bombings of the major cities of Japan. I have shame about the way the Japanese military treated prisoners-of-war, that they strove for Asian-Pacific dominance, that my family may have been involved in that somehow.

To come to terms with some of those feelings, in the summer of 2018 I had the chance to walk through the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. For the whole four hours I walked through the park, I cried. I cried for grief, for shame, for the loss that the whole of the world felt through the war. Then and now, I think about how war brings out the worst in humanity. But the space, what it was dedicated to, also reminds me how it can bring out the best in humanity. I walked through the museum and read stories of how people helped strangers as best as they could through the worst possible circumstances imaginable. I walked and wondered how in this day and age we could deal with such tragedy again, and then thought about the places in the world that are still dealing with such horrible circumstances. And then I thought about home, and, despite the juxtaposed halves of my identity, how grateful I am that I live with the privilege that I do in this beautiful place. When I was done in the park, I sat down with the owner of the hostel I stayed at, and she told me her grandparents owned an inn before her, and they took in refugees from the city who escaped the A-Bomb. It was the most open I had ever seen a Japanese person talk about the war.

This is what the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park seems to be; it is a place where people, especially from our community, can go and work through the conflict that I think many of us feel. It gives us a place to appreciate and remember the past, while looking to a future that we dream of and that so many have fought for. The privilege that we have now is thanks to the people before us. These people built, maintained, and continue to bring significance to the memorial. I don't want to give a full breakdown of all the historical context, but it's also a pretty amazing story that spans decades that deserves telling.

The president of the Canadian Japanese Association, Yasushi Yamazaki, organized a battalion of about

200 volunteers and began to train them to fight in WWI. While unsuccessful at first at convincing the federal government to allow them to go and fight, another gentleman, Sainosuke Kubota, discovered that Alberta recruitment teams were having difficulty meeting enlistment targets. Small groups of Japanese-Canadian men traveled across the Rockies to enlist one-by-one through Alberta. Soon, 222 men in over ten battalions were fighting in Europe, and while they were fighting were also temporarily granted the right to vote in the federal election. And when they returned, they used their service as a means to prove their dedication to Canada and therefore as proof that they deserved the right to vote permanently.

In the same year that the memorial was dedicated, the veterans were denied that right however, and only attained it for veterans again in 1936 when a delegation went to lobby. It took them 11 years after the first attempt, as anti-Asian sentiment continued to rise, especially given the beginnings of Japanese militaristic aggression before WWII, such as with the invasion of Manchuria. Of course, all of these rights were reversed during WWII, and conditions for all Japanese Canadians became something out of a nightmare. The internment and impoundment of property which affected the whole Japanese-Canadian community is cruel in a way that I can't even begin to put into words.

There is an accounting of Sergeant Masumi Matsui who threw his medals at the officers who were taking him away, asking "what good" the medals were when confronted by such dishonour. The light in the lantern in the memorial was extinguished at this time, a physical symbol of how Canada turned its backs on this community.

It feels like it took until the relighting of the lantern atop of the memorial in 1985 for this cloud to begin to lift. In the collective memory of Japanese Canadians in Vancouver, the injustices against the community are many, and the timeline of these events seems to surround the memorial.

Despite the injustice of internment, veterans who ended up across Canada, many east of the Rockies, witness Remembrance Day. In Vancouver, the community remembers at the Japanese Canadian War Memorial. It was 1948 before Japanese Canadians secured the full federal franchise, and 1949 before they received the provincial franchise. The Japanese-Canadian fight for the franchise which dates back to

We have to remind ourselves of how far we've come as a community, but how that fight hasn't ended. The peace that we have found for ourselves hasn't extended to others yet, and by remembering the veterans that worked hard for us, we need to pass the torch forward. Or, in the case of the memorial, to light the lantern for others.

1900, set the precedent for all Asian-Canadians. In 1985, at 98-years-old, Mitsui was the honoured guest at the lantern relighting ceremony, one of the few of that generation to bear witness as the community began the process of healing. He died two years later, just a few months shy of his 100th birthday.

The lantern is, in my opinion, the most symbolically significant part of the memorial. It stands atop the column, a form that looks like a Japanese lantern pagoda. Its extinguishing and relighting demonstrably shows how the Japanese-Canadian community is accepted and welcomed in Vancouver. It has remained lit for almost forty years, a true testament of the enduring change we've seen in Vancouver and across Canada. In my mind, the lantern is now a beacon – a symbol of a place that Japanese Canadians can continue to return to.

The rest of the design of the space works symbiotically with the lantern. For instance, the base is an abstracted flower; each of the petals has the names of the battles that the veterans fought in. However, the symbol of the flower is just as potent. While some believe that it is supposed to represent the chrysanthemum of the Japanese imperial crest, others have also seen it as a lotus. In Buddhism, the lotus resembles enlightenment and purity. It rises out of the muddy waters to bloom. In much the same way, the community has come out of the darkness of years of disenfranchisement to find a true place to belong.

What I find the most potent however is the mixing of styles; the memorial combines European and Asian architectural traditions. In art history, they called this chinoiserie, which is a term I've always disliked because it doesn't differentiate between the many Asian races that have distinct architectural styles. This style has also traditionally tried to reinterpret Asian styles through a European lens to make it more "refined" and "architectural." In the case of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial however, the architect James A. Benzie took these distinctive Asian elements and added them to a pretty typical form of European monument design. It provides representation for the duality of



Buck Suzuki & Tony Kato in front of the cenotaph on November 11, 1949.

Japanese-Canadian identity; separate, distinct but complimenting and balancing one another. Neither one nor the other, but a fusion and redefinition of what this memorial should be in the face of the duality of Japanese-Canadian identity. And, most importantly, the significant pieces of the monument are the Asian parts. The European styled column does not overshadow the rest of the space.

The cherry blossom trees at this site, which include a rare *ojochin*, finish the space in the best way possible. The blossoms remind us of the transience of life, that nothing is permanent. We have to remind ourselves of how far we've come as a community, but how that fight hasn't ended. The peace that we have found for ourselves hasn't extended to others yet, and by remembering the veterans that worked hard for us, we need to pass the torch forward. Or, in the case of the memorial, to light the lantern for others.

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The Japanese Canadian War Memorial 100 Years Later

by Lindsey Jacobson

The Japanese Canadian War Memorial, located in Stanley Park in Vancouver British Columbia, is a reminder of the sacrifices of the Japanese-Canadian community during the First and Second World Wars. Since the memorial turns 100 this year, I wanted to connect with dedicated attendees of the annual Remembrance Day ceremony. These individuals

are all Japanese Canadians, and most

have family ties to the ceremony. My

interviewees are Trisha Roberson

(5th generation), Chris Yamauchi

(4th generation), Mike Yamauchi

(4th generation), Donna

Nakamoto (3rd generation),

and Emiko Newman (4th

generation). Each interview

offers a similar perspective,

proving that individuals interact

with the cenotaph in similar ways.

While these interviews reveal what

the cenotaph means to the Japanese-

Canadian community, more in-depth work

needs to be conducted to truly understand how

people currently understand and interact with the

memorial, and how this connection will blossom as

new generations emerge.

One of my first questions for these interviews was "Does the Japanese Canadian War Memorial spark community?". Everyone discussed the positive impact of the tightly-knit community paired with warm welcomes and friendly exchanges during the Remembrance Day Ceremony. The cenotaph has been described in the interviews as not only a space of remembrance, but also as a space for connection between Japanese-Canadian attendees. Chris Yamauchi in particular discussed the importance of community connection at the cenotaph, specifically stating that attending the ceremony is his way of maintaining ties with the Japanese-Canadian community. Donna Nakamoto described the community building that takes place

between organizations, including the Vancouver Japanese Language School and Language Hall, the Japanese Consulate, Nikkei Place, Tonari Gumi, GVJCCA, and staff from *The Bulletin*. This not only encourages important work in a professional context, it ensures that everyone attending the ceremony is welcomed and represented.

Throughout a few of my questions a theme

regarding the importance of physical

space emerged. Specifically

the importance of having a

dedicated memorial where the

community can gather to share

remembrance and stories

annually. Trisha Roberson

discussed the value in having

a space dedicated to Japanese

Canadians, and described it as a

meeting place where everyone can

gather at a predictable annual event.

She emphasized that this type of event

and space encourages people to connect

and reconnect annually, whether that be with friends,

family, or acquaintances. Emiko Newman mentioned

how she feels as though the dedicated organizers

and attendees have witnessed her grow up since she

has been attending consistently since a young age.

Emiko also expressed that this type of event solidifies

these networks of acquaintances and motivates her to

return every year. Trisha also discussed how, since the

forcible uprooting of Japanese Canadians during the

second world war, and the dispersal of the community

throughout Canada, the cenotaph proves to be a

continued space dedicated for Japanese Canadians

in Vancouver. This memorial represents one of the

only spaces in Vancouver completely devoted to the

Japanese-Canadian community on the west coast of

Canada, as well as one of the oldest.

For people new to Japanese-Canadian history, the

cenotaph can also be a valuable space for education.



Photos by John Endo Greenaway



Trisha explained that she attended her first ceremony at the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in 2019 to learn more about her ancestors and community. She stated that she found the event through advertising from the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre. She outlined during her interview that the promise of displays and information at the event solidified her decision to attend. Through stories like this, we hope that other attendees have also gained valuable information of the experience of Japanese Canadians, whether that be through pamphlets, stories passed down from veterans, or conversations between attendees. Mike expressed his hope that the Remembrance Day ceremony can be a place to share stories about the Japanese-Canadian soldiers who risked their lives for all Canadians, and the efforts they endured to be a part of the Canadian Army. From the interviews, I get a sense that the memorial is intended for learning and the sharing of experiences and stories. It is important for Japanese Canadians and non-Japanese Canadians alike to become aware of the injustices faced by the community before World War Two, and the long lasting resilience of the community. Many people discussed how important this space is for Japanese Canadians to learn about the Japanese-Canadian experience. The resources offered by other attendees such as Nikkei Place, the Vancouver Japanese Language School, and veterans are a powerful way to connect to Japanese-Canadian history and culture.

The Japanese Canadian War Memorial and Remembrance Day ceremony continues to be a shared space for memorial and remembrance amongst Japanese Canadians and Canadians alike. Everyone interviewed maintained that this annual event continues to serve the veterans that fought for Canadian rights in World War One. Since the complicated history of Japanese Canadians on the coast, the memorial also serves as a site of remembrance to the injustices faced by this minority during World War Two. Therefore Mike and Chris hope, as time goes on, the site will serve the Canadian public as a reminder to stand up for other minorities that are facing persecution by the government. By remembering the stories of Japanese Canadians we hope to remember their strength and resilience in times of socio-political unrest.

For individuals who have ancestors that fought in the war, the Remembrance Day ceremony is immensely important to them. They often attend with other family members and spend time at the event honouring their ancestors. Through discussions with Donna, Mike, and Chris, it is easy to understand how these individuals have a strong sense of pride for their family and the larger Japanese-Canadian community. Each year, Chris and Mike share the laying of the wreath on the cenotaph, an important and emotional segment of the ceremony. Each interviewee discussed the strength of their grandfathers or fathers and the sadness associated with old age. Donna reflected upon how

the dwindling representation of Japanese Canadian veterans brings more strength to the words “Lest we forget”.

Unfortunately, in most of the interviews, participants expressed that they are concerned about future generations attending the Remembrance Day ceremony. Each person said they felt as though the ceremony was intended for older generations and not many teenagers or children were present at the events. They did state that the few children who did attend were accompanied by family dedicated to the Japanese-Canadian community. Emiko, who has been attending the ceremony since the age of 10, explained that she believes that her strong connection to the ceremony and cenotaph stemmed from the fact that her parents brought her to the event every year. She believes that this dedication demonstrated by her parents made her more committed to the yearly event as an adult. Chris described the importance of bringing his children to the event, to provide them with a background of their Japanese Canadian history. Chris and Mike also expressed that they hoped younger generations would be inspired by the past generations of Japanese Canadians who fought for social justice and their endurance during forcible uprooting and dispossession.

There was also a consensus amongst interviewees describing how they hope this site will become a reminder to attendees of the Remembrance Day

ceremony about what it can mean to stand up for minorities in our communities. Chris hopes that by bringing his children to the ceremony, they will learn to question the intentions of the status quo, and to stand up for the rights of others. Mike linked this statement to indigenous peoples and new migrants to Canada and the United States, who are currently fighting for their own rights.

All of these interviews provide excellent insight into how the Japanese Canadian community interacts with the Japanese Canadian War Memorial. It is exciting to see how dedicated these individuals are to the remembrance of the Japanese Canadian veterans, and how this dedication has lasted a century. Through these interviews, I have learned about the many layers of usage this monument holds. It is a space for education, connection, remembrance, and social justice. Moving forward, I believe this monument will continue to be celebrated for another century as education of the Japanese Canadian experience continues to grow, and new Japanese Canadian generations emerge with new interest and commitment to the history and remembrance of the Japanese Canadian veterans who fought for Canada.

The Search for a Pen Pal Lost for 80 Years

by Susan Yatabe, Richard Nishimura, and Claire Simpson

Introduction

This is a story about a stack of letters written in the 1930s and 1940s, strangers on three continents who were connected by the letters, uprooting and displacement due to war, and an ancestry search that took place 80 years later. The correspondence between two young penpals was initiated by events related to the First and Second World War.

Susan's family

Susan's mother, Kazuko, had a British penpal named Betty Ratcliffe, who lived in Lancashire, England, at the start of the Second World War. Betty was a year older than Kazuko and attended a girls' boarding school. Her family ran an inn which was more than 400 years old. Kazuko's family lived in Vancouver during their correspondence. The girls shared a love of piano, classical music, literature, and history.

Betty wrote about meeting Kazuko's father in Paris in 1936. Susan's grandfather, an *issei* community leader who worked as an insurance agent, went to Europe just once, in 1936, to attend the Vimy Pilgrimage, an honour from the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #9 in Vancouver for his success in obtaining the vote for Japanese Canadian World War One veterans¹.

When the formal Pilgrimage events were over, Susan's grandfather travelled for a couple of weeks in Europe by train. After enduring anti-Asian racism and harassment in British Columbia (BC) for years, he was treated as an

equal on the passenger ship that sailed from Montreal to Belgium, at the unveiling of the Vimy Memorial, during veterans' marches in France in front of cheering crowds, at the garden party at Buckingham Palace where he met the Duke of Gloucester (brother of Edward VIII) and during his two-week solo trip through Europe. It must have been exhilarating to be a tourist in a faraway land in 1936. Despite his previous experiences with racism, he could never have imagined that in six years, life as he knew it would be completely changed. His family members would be forced by their own government into an internment camp and treated like criminals.

When Susan's grandfather met twelve-year-old Betty in Paris, he encouraged her to correspond with his daughter, Kazuko. Susan has found letters from

Betty written to Kazuko from 1939 to 1941. There must have been other letters, but Kazuko didn't keep them (probably because of the disruption caused by the onset of the Second World War and then internment).

Betty's letters to Kazuko describe the escalation of the war in the U.K., rationing, and the enlistment of friends and three cousins in the British army and air force. Betty and her friends at boarding school were knitting socks, hats, and scarves for soldiers. She marked each knitted item with her name and address so that the recipient could contact her. Betty described nightly blackouts that were part of a nationwide defense against German bombers; streetlights were turned off every evening, and windows and doors were covered. Any

escaping light might help to guide enemy aircraft during nighttime bombing raids. Her return to boarding school in September 1939 was postponed by several months as the school did not have an air-raid shelter. In a letter written in February 1940, Betty described the arrival of Canadian and Australian soldiers in England. Betty outlined her plans in one letter to join the Women's Land Army, and her intention in another to become a teacher. Betty was very curious to know whether Canadians were also experiencing blackouts and conscription; she asked Kazuko several times in 1941 how the war was affecting life in Canada. The war was about to cause huge changes in Kazuko's family life.

On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Politicians and the press in BC fanned false suspicions of an impending Japanese invasion. Fishing boats and cars owned by Japanese in BC were seized, and Japanese schools, Buddhist churches and newspapers were forced to shut down.

On February 24, 1942, an order-in-council passed under the Canadian War Measures Act allowed the federal government to intern all "persons of Japanese racial origin". These citizens were forced to leave their homes in the "restricted area" 160 km inland from the west coast of British Columbia. Many would temporarily be housed in livestock barns in Vancouver's Hastings Park before they were shipped to crudely built camps in BC's interior.

The Japanese Canadian internment was the largest mass uprooting to take place in Canada's history. Approximately 22,000 citizens, 14,000 of whom were born in Canada, were interned, based on speculative evidence. Even First World War veterans, who had fought for Canada, were interned. At first, able-bodied males of Japanese origin aged 14 to 45 were separated from their families and taken to road camps in BC. Women and children were transported on trains to camps and ghost towns such as Sandon, Tashme, Slocan, New Denver, and Kaslo. Some were given just 24 hours notice prior to their internment. Baggage was limited to 150 pounds per adult and 75 per child.

In order to stay together, some families agreed to work on sugar beet farms in Alberta and Manitoba where there were labour shortages. Working and living conditions on the farms could be extremely tough. Those who resisted the orders of the Canadian government for the "crime" of wanting to keep their families together were arrested and incarcerated in a POW camp in Angler, Ontario, over 3,000 km from Vancouver. The Canadian government

seized the homes, businesses, vehicles, and belongings of the forcibly displaced, sold their property without their consent, and many needed to use the meager funds from these sales for survival during internment.

In the fall of 1942, Kazuko's family was interned in the remote village of Kaslo, 800 km from Vancouver. The mail of all internees was censored. As the Canadian government had made no provision in their internment plans for educating children, the churches at the internment locations intervened to organize schools. *Nisei* students like Kazuko who had graduated from high school were recruited as teachers for interned students to grade 8. At the age of 18, having completed just a summer course in teaching, Susan's mother found herself a grade 3 teacher in Kaslo, with 32 pupils.

At the end of the war, Japanese Canadians were given two choices: either disperse east of the Rocky Mountains or be "repatriated" to Japan. It was not until January 1949 that former internees were allowed to return to BC. By this time, a great number Japanese Canadians possessed neither the means or inclination to return to the province. Most of those who moved east settled in the city of Toronto, where they still faced racial prejudice and difficulties in finding housing and work. Kazuko's family went to Toronto.

Susan's father's family members had been spared from internment and road camps because their father's former employer arranged for them to move from Vancouver to Ontario in 1942 to work on a farm. Susan's father was a *nisei* who attended the S-20 army language school in Vancouver, then served as a Canadian soldier in East Asia from 1945 to 1947². Susan's parents, who were acquainted from Vancouver days, met again in Ontario and married.

Clearly, the letters from Betty were very special to Kazuko and she held onto them despite the upheaval and multiple moves enforced by the war. During the past few years, when Kazuko's health was declining, Susan would read Betty's letters to her and they would speculate about what happened to Betty and how they could contact her or her descendants.

Susan's friend Richard offered to help search through genealogy databases for Betty or her surviving family members. Susan provided information from the letters (Betty's birthdate, her sister's birthdate, the date her father died and the places that these events took place). Richard constructed a small family tree on the Ancestry.com website and used the Ancestry search capability



Left: Kazuko in Vancouver, aged 14. Shinobu family photo collection. Right: Betty in England, in a photograph Betty sent to Kazuko. Shinobu family photo collection.

to locate information that might pertain to the people in the tree. Ancestry.com very quickly identified Catherine Elizabeth Ratcliffe in a family tree posted by Claire. Catherine Elizabeth lived in the right part of England and her family history closely matched the information from the letters. Richard compared the information in the letters with information from sources such as the England & Wales Civil Registration Birth Index, accessible through Ancestry.com, before concluding that it was highly likely that Catherine Elizabeth was Betty. Still not knowing who Claire was, Richard passed on a message from Susan explaining her desire to return the letters to Betty's family, and Claire responded that her husband was Betty's grandson. Richard and Susan were saddened to learn that Betty died in 1994. Since then, the three of us have exchanged pictures and stories by email.

Richard's family

Richard's maternal grandfather came to Canada from Japan in 1923, settled in southern BC and worked at a sawmill owned by his uncle in the winter. He returned to Japan in 1931 to marry Richard's grandmother, and returned to Canada six months later. Richard's grandmother travelled alone to Canada a year afterwards. In 1942 the Canadian government directed Richard's grandfather to move inland to a sawmill and planned to move the rest of the family to an internment camp. Not wanting the family to be split up, the family obtained government agreement to move to Alberta at their own cost. They were given an extra week to prepare for the move because one of their children had just been born. Their other children were eight, six, four, and two years old. The family arrived in Lethbridge, Alberta, having left most of their belongings behind, staying in a hotel for almost two weeks before a farmer arrived to take them to a sugar beet farm, where they were put to work thinning beets that should have been thinned much earlier. They lived in a two-room uninsulated wood building with a wood stove, one bed, no electricity, and no running water. Because they lived far from school, the children did not attend school the first year, and worked on the farm rather than going to school for a month in early summer to thin beets, and a month in the fall to help harvest them. Richard's grandfather continued to live and work at a sawmill during the winter.

Richard's paternal grandparents, who were already farming sugar beets, grain, and vegetables in the Lethbridge area outside of the "restricted area" in BC when the war broke out, were not displaced by the war.

Claire's family

Betty married a Polish man, Antoni Stalewski, in 1947. Antoni had arrived in Britain during WWII and joined the Royal Airforce in Bomber Command^{3 4}.

Antoni joined the Polish Air Force at age of 16 in 1935, following his dream to become a pilot. After Antoni finished training, Germany invaded Poland, and he immediately found himself involved in the 1939 September uprising (at the age of 20), bombing German units in central Poland.

He then travelled through Europe by way of Zagreb and Modeno to join Allied Forces in Lyon, France. In November 1939, he joined a Polish Air Unit under French command. The Polish squadrons flew 714 sorties in the Battle of France, beginning in May 1940. However, on June 25, 1940, an armistice between Nazi Germany and the French Third Republic took effect. At this point, much of the Polish Air Force contingent was moved to the United Kingdom (UK). Antoni, who spoke no English, began training as a wireless operator and air gunner in the UK at Bramcote. He was posted to the 301 Bomber Squadron "Land of Pomerania", and flew 21 successful missions over Germany.

On October 21, 1941 Antoni was on a bombing mission to Bremen, Germany in a Wellington Bomber Z1217. His plane was shot down over Nienburg, Germany by anti-aircraft fire. He used his parachute to escape from his plane, thereby becoming a member of the exclusive "Caterpillar Club". He and his Polish colleagues were captured and interned during the rest of the war in several German prisoner of war camps.

At the end of the European War, Antoni returned to the UK, where he received honours and medals for his work. However, Allied Forces, that had depended on the Poles during the war, treated the Polish forces badly when it ended. Polish soldiers were not allowed to participate in the Great Victory Parade in London. The US and UK were afraid to offend Stalin, who did not like the Poles. Antoni could not return to Poland because he risked being killed or imprisoned there. He stayed in the UK where he met and married Betty.

Betty and Antoni lived in several locations in Britain based on Antoni's work as an electrical engineer. Betty taught school in those locations. Neither she nor Kazuko ever learned that the other worked as a teacher after their correspondence ended. Betty and Antoni had two sons, and two grandsons. One of the grandsons is Claire's husband, Andrew.



Betty and Antoni on their wedding day in 1947.

Andrew's maternal grandparents were German Jews who fled from Germany to the UK in 1939. The British Government detained thousands of German, Austrian, and Italian people whom they deemed to be enemy aliens living in the UK, even those who had been living there for many years and had not been determined to be a risk. Andrew's grandparents were shipped to Australia for the duration of the war. Andrew's grandfather was sent to Australia aboard the Hired Military Transport (HMT) Dunera, with 2,542 so-called enemy aliens, most of them Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution in Germany and Austria⁵. Britain deported them because it feared the entry of Nazis or fascists, but the majority of those on board were not fascists; two-thirds were Jewish. The deportees were treated so poorly by their guards on board that they were eventually compensated by the British government, and two guards and the officer-in-charge were court martialled.

After arriving in Australia in September 1940, the deportees from the Dunera were interned in camps near Hay and Orange in New South Wales and Tatura in Victoria. By the end of 1941, most of the internees

had been released from the camps. After the war, many returned to Britain, and approximately 700 of the "Dunera Boys" remained in Australia⁶.

Andrew's maternal grandmother and her parents were not interned when they arrived in Australia on the Orient ocean liner SS Orama. They settled in Adelaide and returned to the UK after the war ended.

Conclusion

The war resulted in many upheavals in family lives. Betty's husband Antoni remained in the UK after three harsh years spent in POW camps because he could not return to Poland. Kazuko's family was interned in Kaslo after being uprooted from Vancouver, then ordered to move further east of the Rocky Mountains to Ontario. Richard's mother's family, forced to choose between internment in British Columbia and labour on a sugar beet farm in Alberta, chose the latter. Claire's husband's grandfather was also interned, in Australia. These stories span three continents, four if one includes Asia, the birthplace of Richard's and Susan's *issei* grandparents.

If Claire hadn't posted her family tree on Ancestry.com Richard would not have found her, and we'd never have learned what happened to Betty. This web of stories is tied together by the correspondence between Betty and Kazuko, two teenagers who could not have foreseen the wrenching changes that were about to take place in their respective homelands.

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Treasures from the Collection



The Kaye Kaminishi Film collection

by Jeffery Chong

In the past year, the Nikkei National Museum has conserved and digitized over 26 hours of its moving image collection. In the final batch of digitization, we discovered a 20 second clip of the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park. This was filmed circa 1927, less than a decade after it was built. The discovery of this clip is timely because 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the monument.

This 20 second clip belongs to a collection of 16 mm films donated by Koichi Kaye Kaminishi, who is the last surviving member of the historic Asahi Baseball team. His father, Kannosuke Kaminishi, was a partner in the Royston Lumber Company on Vancouver Island and filmed most of the Kaminishi home movies from the 1920s to 30s in and around Vancouver.

At the time this was filmed, the War Memorial was erected to honour the Japanese Canadians who served during the First World War. In the film, curious passers-by wearing fashionable summer boater and cloche hats walk around the cenotaph to stop and read the structure's main plaque. Though brief, the clip is an invaluable record because it documents the Japanese Canadian presence on the BC coast before their internment. Furthermore, it captures a Vancouver where anti-Asian sentiment was common. Under this social climate, a visibly-racialized person entering a primarily white space to film a home movie shatters stereotypical and historical depictions of Japanese Canadians. When viewing these scenes through the Japanese Canadian lens, we can feel the white European gaze as people look back at the camera with curiosity and suspicion. In a public city park filled with statues and monuments that honour the colonial narrative, the Japanese Canadian War Memorial parallels the filmmaker's presence in this public space. Japanese Canadians were proud of their contributions to Canada, and this memorial reflected their desire to prove and preserve their place in Canadian society.

The Kaye Kaminishi Film collection enhances our understanding of Japanese Canadian history in British Columbia. They document in detail the private and public lives of a Japanese Canadian family, through their own eyes. These films, as a result, represent the community as a whole by showing their everyday lives – their work, leisure, weddings, funerals – lives established along the coast in a discriminatory time before their forced uproot and wrongful incarceration. For this reason, this clip, like many others in our moving image collection, is truly a treasure.

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16mm film strip featuring the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park. Circa 1927.
Kaye Kaminishi collection. NNM 1994.73.8.3.7.

