

REMEMBRANCE DAY

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2023, 10:40 AM SHARP
JAPANESE CANADIAN WAR MEMORIAL IN STANLEY PARK



70 years since the end of the Korean War on July 27, 1953.

PROGRAM (10:40 AM)

Moderator.....David Iwaasa
Taiko Opening.....Shinobu Homma
O Canada.....Kevin Takahide Lee
Introduction of the Representatives.....David Iwaasa
Reflections.....Alecia Greenfield, Vancouver Holy Cross Church
Last Post.....Bugler Bombardier Couturier

The Silence

Lament.....Piper Edward McIlwaine
Reveille.....Bugler Bombardier Couturier
In Flanders Fields.....Eileen Kitamura
Act of Remembrance.....Dave Mitsui
Address from Coal Harbour MLA.....Spencer Chandra Herbert

Placing of the Wreaths

God Save the King.....Kevin Takahide Lee
Lapel Poppy Wreath.....Cathy Yamamoto

Please join us for a light reception at the Vancouver Rowing Club in Stanley Park immediately following the ceremony.

Sponsored by the Japanese Canadian War Memorial Committee and the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre

Chair: Linda Kawamoto Reid
Moderator: David Iwaasa
Committee Members: David Mitsui
Justin Ault
Mike Yamauchi
Tak Irizawa (Korean War Veteran)



Veterans Affairs
Canada

Anciens Combattants
Canada

WREATH LAYING

BESL Legion #9.....Dave Mitsui, grandson of Sgt Mitsui MM
S-20 & Nisei Veterans Association.....Mike Yamauchi
Veterans Affairs Canada, Vancouver Office.....Matt Rands
RCMP.....TBA
Consul General of Japan.....Consul General Kohei Maruyama
MLA West End Coal Harbour.....Spencer Chandra Herbert
NAJC.....Past President Lorene Oikawa
Nikkei Place (NNMCC, NPF, NSHCHS).....NNMCC Board President Herb Ono
Japanese Canadian Legacies Society.....Susanne Tabata
St. John Ambulance BC & Yukon.....Richard N. Liu
Jodo Shinshu Temples of BC.....Ted Akune
City of Vancouver.....Councillor Christine Boyle
VPD & Mounted Squad.....Inspector Marco Veronesi
Vancouver Parks Board.....Commissioner Tom Digby
GVJCCA.....President Cary Sakiyama
Tonari Gumi.....Executive Director Masako Arima
VJLS & Hall.....Director Mike Ueno
Vancouver Konko Faith.....TBA
Vancouver Japanese Christians.....Alecia Greenfield
Ofukai.....President Katsumi Kubo
Poppy Wreath.....Cathy Yamamoto

SERGEANT FRANK MORITSUGU, A NATIONAL TREASURE!



Frank Moritsugu in Canadian Army uniform, ca. 1945 courtesy of Frank Moritsugu

Frank had just graduated from Kitsilano High School when he was forced to go to Yard Creek Road Camp near Revelstoke for 18 months. But his skills were needed at the only newspaper allowed to print during the internment - The New Canadian - located in Kaslo. When forced to leave BC, he rejoined his forcibly relocated family in Premier Hepburn's farm near St. Thomas Ontario as labourers. When he enlisted from there, his parents were opposed to the idea, not only did they feel mistreated by Canada, but the idea of Frank fighting against the country of their origin may have made them sick at heart. Frank enlisted into the South East Asian Command as a translator, interpreter and language instructor due to his proficiency in both languages, and was promoted to sergeant for his diligence and hard work.



Nisei Soldiers (18), members of the second group sent overseas attached to the British forces in 1945. India JCCC 2005.01.01.09



Yard Creek Road Camp's "All-Star" Softball Team. They played teams from other camps in the Revelstoke-Sicamous area. Back row on right, Frank Moritsugu, Yard Creek ca. 1942 JCCC 2001.9.78.5

Japanese Canadian men were the first to be removed from the coastal areas of BC, separated from their families and put in Road building camps. Frank writes: *"Brushing aside swarms of mosquitoes which are of a very bloodthirsty variety, this correspondent will try to give you belated news of what's happening at the #2 Camp at Yard Creek or Cambie Siding. Our work, like the other camps in the Revelstoke – Sicamous area, consists of widening the narrow at present two-car highway. In achieving this, the young and old workers are engaged in clearing brush and burning it and felling the bigger trees which are sawed into firewood. On Sundays, we have the one thing that keeps us going – that is the weekly baseball game with Solsqua. With ex-Asahi players on the veteran's team and aces from the Island, Woodfibre and Britannia on the younger team, it should be an interesting tilt."*

Frank got his start in journalism in 1946 with Saturday Night magazine, writing about why Japanese Canadians in B.C., under pressure from the government to either move east or go back to war-ravaged Japan, weren't moving. Then at the University of Toronto — studying economics and political science, he was elected editor-in-chief of The Varsity before winning the best editorial award in the annual Canadian University Press competition. His illustrious journalism career included Maclean's, the Toronto Star and the Montreal Star, work on TV and radio, the communications director for various government ministries and as a journalism teacher at Centennial College. He wrote "Teaching in Canadian Exile", about the high school students who taught the kids in the internment camps, and he is a regular columnist for Nikkei Voice called "Frankly speaking"!

Frank - Happy 101st birthday on December 4, 2023! Thank you for so many years of words of wisdom, humor and leadership, and we are proud of your selfless service for Canada against all odds!



Tak Irizawa at the Peace Memorial dome in Hiroshima, Japan ca. 1953 NNMCC 2019.32.1.2.73

SERGEANT TAK IRIZAWA

Tak graduated from Kelowna High School in 1947 but found it difficult to find a white collared job due to ill feelings from the Second World War – Tak heard – “we would like to hire you but people will complain”. All that was available to him was farming, fishing, logging and mining. When the Korean War broke out in June 1950, Tak chose to join the administrative section of the Canadian Army. His tour took him to Camp Borden, Vancouver, Ottawa, Japan, and Korea & Toronto.

He served in Japan and Korea with the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade, part of the British Commonwealth Forces. In November 1952, together with 600 Canadian reinforcements, Tak boarded a troop ship in Seattle

and set sail for Yokohama and Pusan, Korea. Camp Hiro near Hiroshima City was home during the 1953 Japanese New Year’s celebration, and he was able to go to Yamanouchi near Hiroshima City to visit his maternal grandmother and her entire family for an emotional New Year’s osechi. Thanks to the Canadian Army, Tak was able to see his grandmother as sadly his grandmother passed away 8 months later.



Tak Irizawa’s medals NNMCC 2019.32.1-1.3b

The occupation by US Forces in Japan ended in April 1952 and all rationing of food stuff, except rice had ceased. In January of 1953, Tak was airlifted to Seoul, Korea and was jeep transported to HQ 25 Canadian Infantry Brigade near Kaesong for 6 months. He assisted the Paymaster in paying about 5,000 troops including the Armoured, Service Corps, Engineers, Signals, Artillery, Provost, Postal, Dental, Medical and the Ministry.

Armed with a Browning 9 mm pistol and a 9 mm Sten gun which was very unreliable, every evening, Tak would hear an artillery barrage (Long Toms) by the Americans to let the North Korean and Chinese military know that they were there. By 1952, the "war" de-escalated as peace talks were taking place but there were still skirmishes at night to probe their defenses. The war ended on July 27, 1953. Tak was then posted back to Japan to the 25th Canadian Reinforcement Group located at Camp Hiro where he attained the rank of Sgt and stayed until July 1954 when he was posted back to Vancouver.

Tak retired from the military in 1956 at the age of 27, after 6 years of service, and using his Veteran's War Credits, enrolled in a 5 year accounting course (CPA/CA) at Queens University and University of Toronto. He had a successful career as a Chartered Accountant until he retired in 2005, and volunteered his skills at the Toronto Japanese Language School, Korea Veterans Association of Canada, the ALS society of Ontario, Nipponia Home, and is our sole and treasured veteran on the Japanese Canadian War Memorial Committee.



Tak Irizawa's armband for the Royal Canadian Army Pay corps
NNMCC 2019.32.1.3.1



Troops listening to the radio in Korea. Tak Irizawa collection NNMCC 2019.32.1.2.60

Frank and Tak may be the last surviving JC veterans of the Second World War and the Korean War. We honour and acknowledge your contributions in the JC community and for Canada!



Sergeants Frank Moritsugu & Tak Irizawa at Remembrance Day ceremonies in Toronto November, 2020. Photo courtesy of Kelly Fleck at Nikkei Voice.



Please consider donating to the JCWMC's ongoing efforts to commemorate our veterans and host the Remembrance Day ceremonies each year.

Thanks from the JCWMC!