NIKKEI IMAGES

Bill Waterman and Hideo Onotera sitting on top of a gillnetter in Sunbury BC, 1935. Delta Archives, 2008-023-167. Courtesy of Delta Heritage Society.

Nikkei
national museum
& cultural centre

A publication of the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre
2026 Volume 31, No. 1

Contents

Nikkei Images is published by the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre

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We welcome *nikkei* family and community story proposals for possible publication. Articles should range from 500 to 3,500 words and include high-resolution digital photographs with photo credits.
If you have stories related to Japanese Canadian history, culture, and arts that you would like to preserve and share, we invite you to contribute. We are dedicated to capturing and documenting these narratives for future generations. Let's work together to ensure these significant stories are preserved and celebrated.

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When the Blossoms Fade: A Filmmaker's Journey

By Tamiko Potts

In memory of Carole Haruno Sone-Potts

When I began working in documentary television over two decades ago, I never imagined that my first film would be a documentary that featured me — or that it would become the key to understanding my mother. As a child, I tried to make myself as small as possible, avoiding attention in the classroom. The thought of being on camera would have been my worst nightmare. Although I grew into a confident leader and television producer during my university years and early career, there was still one part of myself tethered firmly to childhood: my relationship with my mother.

Haruno Sone — or Carole, as I had known her my whole life — is *nikkei* and a Japanese Canadian internment survivor. Growing up, I didn't know what either of those descriptions meant. My high school history classes conveniently omitted the Japanese Canadian internment and Indigenous residential schools, and my mother rarely spoke about her childhood. By the time I was a teenager, our relationship had turned cold. Her unpredictable behaviour had me tiptoeing around her, afraid of upsetting her. Because my mother had me later in life, at age 45, I attributed our lack of closeness to the age gap. By 19, I was living on my own while my parents were retired and travelling the world. We lived separate lives, and at the time, that distance felt normal.

After university, I interned at a television documentary production company, where I was introduced to the power of documentary storytelling. I was hooked. Over the next decade, I worked my way up to Associate Producer while also creating short films independently. When the factual television industry slowed in 2014, I found myself unemployed for the first time. Almost by chance, I applied for a job in children's animation and spent the next ten years producing acclaimed preschool series. My career flourished, and I saw my parents only intermittently when they were home from their travels.

PHOTO

Top: My mother and I during my teenage years, 1993. Photo courtesy Donald Potts.

Bottom: My mom and dad travelling across Switzerland, 2016.

In 2016, after my parents returned from a road trip across Canada, my father casually mentioned that they had visited “the camps where your mother grew up.” It was the first time I had heard that my mother had grown up in an internment camp. I knew vaguely about the Japanese Canadian internment — whispers absorbed over the years — but it had never occurred to me that my own family had been directly affected. My mother had also lied about her age for much of my life, which further obscured the timeline.

When I finally asked my mother about her time in the camps, I expected her to deflect. Instead, she spoke as if it were unremarkable, saying that no one cared about the past and that “you never asked.” At the time, the full gravity of what she had endured had yet to settle in.

The following year, during a break between contracts, I decided to apply for funding to make a short film about my mother’s internment experience. I booked a camera operator and a sound recordist and filmed her walking through High Park during cherry blossom season. She recounted how she and her family — along with 22,000 other Japanese Canadians — were interned after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Her parents and four children were sent to Bay Farm in Slocan City, about 26 kilometres south of New Denver in British Columbia’s West Kootenays. My mother was seven-years-old at the time. She remembered sleeping in a tent as an adventure, unaware of the fear and injustice surrounding them. Only later did I learn that her family, along with 1,500 others, had been forced to live in tents because the shacks were still being built.

PHOTO

Top: My mother (right) with her siblings at Bay Farm internment camp, 1945.

Bottom: My mother (2nd from the left) with her siblings at Bay Farm internment camp, 1944.

She told her story plainly, without visible emotion, yet beneath her words I sensed the bitterness I had felt my whole life. What surprised me most was her account of her relationship with her own mother. After the war, the family was forcibly relocated to Farnham, Québec. They went from owning a comfortable two-storey home in Vancouver to sharing a self-built house with another family, with one wooden outhouse between them. By then, the Sone family had grown to nine children. My mother was a teenager, and this was when her relationship with her mother deteriorated. She described emotional and physical abuse from her mother, who didn't understand the rebellious nature of a teenager. Years later, as I researched intergenerational trauma, I realized that our relationship mirrored the one she had had with her own mother. I remembered being slapped across the face for talking back or "being sassy"— identical words she used to describe tensions with her own mother.

I didn't receive funding for the film, and soon after, an all-consuming contract took over my life. The footage from High Park sat untouched — a record of the longest and most honest conversation I had ever had with my mother. I would later be grateful that I had documented her story. At the end of 2017, she was diagnosed with dementia.

As her memory declined, the pandemic years were especially difficult. I had gained new understanding and promised myself I would spend more time with her, only to have distance imposed again. In 2020, amid a broader racial reckoning following the murder of George Floyd, my understanding of identity shifted. Growing up in multicultural Toronto,

PHOTO

Top: My mother (bottom centre) with her mother and siblings; Vancouver, BC, 1937.

Bottom: My mother (far right) holding her newborn sister, with her siblings; Farnham, Québec, 1948.

I had considered myself colourblind — even toward my own heritage. I had always identified simply as Canadian, but that label no longer felt sufficient. I mourned the traditions lost to internment and displacement. On the eve of my 40th birthday, I made a quiet but profound decision: I stopped using my legal first name and began going by my Japanese middle name, Tamiko — "child of many beauties." A name I had once felt ashamed of, without knowing why, became an act of reclamation.

My growing awareness of systemic racism also reshaped how I viewed the entertainment industry. In 2023, I left animation and founded Unicorn Power Media, a production company committed to supporting authentic and underrepresented voices. I knew the first story I needed to tell was my own, so I returned to the documentary proposal from 2017 and the footage of my mother from High Park. The story had evolved. It was no longer only about my mother's internment, but about how that trauma shaped our relationship — and my identity.

On April 6, 2024, I learned that I had received a Community Arts Grant from the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society. I could finally make my first film, *When the Blossoms Fade*. The original vision included travelling with my mother to New Denver, but her dementia had progressed too far. Instead, I would make the journey alone. While that opportunity was lost, another emerged: 2024 marked the 30th anniversary of the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, reshaping the film entirely.

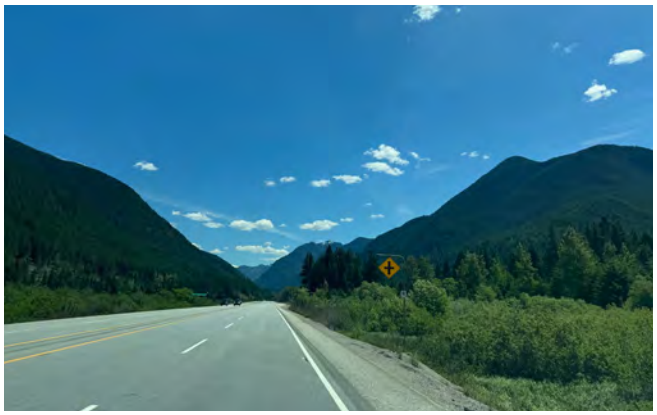
My journey began on June 20, 2024, when I boarded an early morning flight to Vancouver with my partner and my director of photography. With an ambitious schedule and a tight budget, we hit the ground running. Our first stop was Hastings Park, where thousands of Japanese Canadians were detained before being sent to internment camps and work sites. My grandfather, Miyoji Sone (b. 1902), was taken there first, followed by my grandmother, Katsu Sone (b. 1910), my mother, and her three siblings, who were forced to sleep in the livestock building among animal stalls and waste troughs. As I climbed the stairs to the building, I imagined how frightening it must have been for my grandmother to care for four young children after being separated from her husband. The locked doors, filthy windows, and peeling paint felt eerie. As crows cawed overhead, I searched around the steps and found the small plaque commemorating the 3000 Japanese Canadian women and children who were "unjustly detained…under traumatic and deplorable conditions between March 1942 to March 1943" (Vancouver Heritage Foundation).

PHOTO

Filming on the steps of the livestock building in Hastings Park, 2024. Photographed by Michael Guglietti.

Later that day, we filmed with trauma therapist, Natascha Lawrence. The Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre kindly allowed me to film her interview in one of their tatami rooms, a calm setting for an otherwise intense conversation. In the quiet of a tatami room, I read aloud from my teenage diaries. Trauma has no sense of time, and reading my words transported me back to those painful years. I cried openly, forgetting the camera. The interview with Natascha was incredibly insightful. My mother's abusive relationship with her mother had left her with unresolved traumas and reliving those teenage years with me had been one trigger after another. The forced displacement left her feeling continually unsafe and insecure about food and shelter, even though we were an average middle class family and did not have to worry about going without. She had no understanding of what was happening to her and I had no way of comprehending her behaviour towards me.

The next day we began our 13-hour road trip to New Denver, and thankfully the weather was in our favour and we were treated to a spectacular drive through the mountains. As the strawberry moon greeted us upon arrival, I felt ready for whatever change lay ahead.



PHOTO

Top: Interviewing Natascha Lawrence at the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, 2024. Photographed by Michael Guglietti

Bottom: Road tripping from Vancouver to New Denver, 2024. Photographed by Tamiko Potts.

The following morning was the 30th anniversary celebration at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, a National Historic Site dedicated to preserving the stories of the internment. The celebrations opened with speeches from descendants of internment survivors and I had been invited to take part. I volunteered to do a spoken word poem aptly titled "When the Blossoms Fade". I like to think that I inherited my love of poetry from my mother, who loved poetry, yet it was another part of her that she never shared with me.

Despite my discomfort with public speaking, I felt grounded and sharing the poem and speaking with others afterward was unexpectedly healing. This was the largest Japanese Canadian event I had ever attended, and for the first time, I felt a sense of belonging I hadn't known I was missing.

Balancing the roles of director, producer, and on-camera subject at a live event was challenging. I felt torn between staying on schedule, capturing what we needed, and remaining present. Between interviews, learning taiko drumming, and painting sumi-e, the day passed quickly.

PHOTO

Above: Interviewing Uzumi Taiko at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, 2024. Photographed by Michael Guglietti.

Bottom Right: Discussing a shot with Sahand Minaei at the 30th anniversary celebrations at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, 2024. Photographed by Michael Guglietti.

Bottom Left: The WBTF film crew (L-R: Sahand Minaei, Acacia Nikiel, Michael Guglietti, Tamiko Potts) at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, 2024.

On our final shoot day, we returned to the memorial centre for a private tour with guide Neil Dunnigan. Inside the museum, one of the most chilling artifacts was an original army bell tent — like the one my mother would have slept in. Standing inside the small tent, I heard her voice describing roasting hot dogs over a campfire, the only warmth against the cold.

Walking into one of the original shacks from 1942-1943 felt like stepping back in time. The space was filled with donated artifacts representing how two families once lived there. When Neil explained that one family would have shared the tiny bedroom, I was stunned. I imagined arriving after a harrowing journey to find only a straw mattress, a blanket, a duffel bag, and a wooden bucket. During the internment years, two more siblings were born, bringing the family to seven, all crammed into this single room. The shared kitchen was scarcely larger, and pumping water by hand only added to the hardship. Sitting quietly in the bedroom, I was struck by the contrast to my own childhood. My mother had worked tirelessly to give me stability, and only now did I fully understand how different her own beginnings had been.

PHOTO

Top: Standing in the bedroom of the 1942-1943 shack at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, 2024. Photographed by Tamiko Potts.

Bottom: The army bell tent that my mother would have slept in; the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, 2024. Photographed by Tamiko Potts.

As we strolled through the beautiful Heiwa Teien Peace Garden, the care taken to transform such a painful site into a place of reflection and healing moved me deeply. History and renewal coexisted in quiet balance.

On the journey back, while waiting for the ferry at Galena Bay, I wandered down to the water's edge. I was wearing my bathing suit underneath my clothes, as I had hoped to film some swimming shots in Slocan Lake but we had run out of time. I stared out at the bay, dipping my toes into the freezing cold water. Even though my mother had been unable to accompany me on this journey, I felt that I had gained a better understanding of her. Filming this deeply personal story had required vulnerability I had long avoided. The camera witnessed not only inherited trauma, but also something else: resilience. As I dove into the frigid water, I thought about how in choosing to tell this story, I was beginning to reclaim what had been fractured — my history, my voice, and my place within the Japanese Canadian community.

PHOTO

Top: Stepping out of the 1942-1943 shack at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, 2024. Photographed by Michael Guglietti

Bottom: Tamiko Potts on the Galena Bay ferry, 2024. Photographed by Tamiko Potts.

Hideo Onotera:
Fisherman, Innovator, and Activist

By Hikaru Ikeda in collaboration with family members Shirley M Clark (née Onotera) and Elaine K Eoff (née Onotera), with support from Reiko Pleau.

Hideo Onotera was a *nisei* (second-generation Japanese Canadian) [1] community activist, fisherman, and inventor born in 1914. He was the son of Tsuruyo (née Suto) and Tamotsu Onotera and had a brother named Tatsuo ("Gramps"). Hideo left school in the eighth grade to help his father fish after Tamotsu's leg was amputated – possibly due to tuberculosis in the bone [2]. His father owned property on River Road in Sunbury, New Westminster, British Columbia – now part of Delta, BC – which he transferred into Hideo's ownership. Here, the family raised chickens and grew berries along the South bank of the Fraser River. A fisherman proficient in gillnetting, Hideo fished salmon on the Fraser River and fished salmon and halibut as far north as Prince Rupert for many years [3] [4] [5]. He was married to Masa – also known as Masako or Mas – Onotera (née Onodera – no relation). Born in Japan, Mas worked as a teacher at the Sunbury Japanese language school and mending fishing nets [4]. Together, they had three children.

PHOTO

Portrait of Hideo Onotera in 1985. Courtesy of Elaine K Eoff (née Onotera). Edited by Hikaru Ikeda.

PHOTO

Bill Waterman and Hideo Onotera sitting on top of a gillnetter in Sunbury BC, 1935. Delta Archives, 2008-023-167. Courtesy of Delta Heritage Society.

The Onotera family was forcibly uprooted and interned during the Second World War. Hideo and his brother Tatsuo remained in Canada, while the rest of the family went to Japan prior to the forced removal of Japanese Canadians [5]. Between 1942 and 1949, Hideo was interned in Kaslo, Greenwood, and Salmon Arm. In Salmon Arm, he worked building the Kettle Valley Railroad and as an accountant for a lumber company [5 6 7 8]. Hideo wrote to the Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property protesting the forced sale of his property, which included the family's seven-acre farm [9] and a gillnetter boat called the Go-Getter[10].

With the lifting of wartime restrictions in 1949, Hideo was able to return to the West Coast of BC. He went back to his hometown of Sunbury [1 3 8 9 10] and purchased a Sunbury wharf which included a warehouse used for Steamboats pre-war. Here, he built his gillnetter ShirLaine and helped his friends build their fishing boats when they also returned to the area [4 5]. By 1978, he and his brother were well-known for having invented a mechanized gillnet drum – used to haul long fishing nets onto boats – which they created using an old Ford engine [9]. Other Nikkei fishermen soon commissioned the Onotera brothers to build them their own gillnet drums [9]. Hideo carried forth his expertise in the industry, working as a salesperson for E.A. Townes – a fishing supplier in Steveston – from the 1960s until he passed in 1985 [8].

Activism and Community Organizing

Hideo Onotera firmly believed that attaining franchise and its associated rights was the only way that people of Japanese origin would succeed in Canada [8] and attain legal and economic equality. An activist and community organizer, he was a founding member of the Japanese Canadian Citizens' League in 1935 and served as president of its Delta, Richmond, and Surrey chapter until 1940[4]. Prior to the Second World War, he also served as the president of the Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association in Vancouver [8 9]. Alongside Seiji Homma and T. Kobayashi, Hideo was one of three delegates who travelled from BC to Toronto to co-found the National Association of Japanese Canadian Citizens (NJCCA) in 1947 [11]. The NJCCA was renamed to the National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC) in 1980 [11].

Working alongside Tatsuro "Buck" Suzuki, Hideo Onotera was a leader in the local labour movement and was instrumental in integrating Japanese Canadian fishermen into the hitherto hostile fishing industry. Before and after the Second World War, he worked to build some basis of unity with white union fishermen [4] and advocated for Nikkei fishers to sign up as members of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU) [2]. By 1956, he was serving his second term as the president of the Sunbury Local of the UFAWU and as a member of the general executive board, where he used his bilingualism to interpret between union delegates from Japan's fishing industry and local union members [12 13]. By 1978, he was serving as Director of the British Columbia Fishermen's Union [3].

Hideo Onotera also contributed to the Upper Fraser River Fishermen's Association, Sunbury Hall Society, and regularly served as a master of ceremonies for community gatherings and events [3 4 6].

PHOTO

In Commemoration of the Year 1940 – Delta, East-Richmond, Surrey chapter of the JCCL. Hideo Onotera is front and centre. Toyoko Oikawa Collection, NNMCC 2019.18.3.1.3.

Alternative names

Hideo was also widely known as Hides and Hydes [1] [3] [4] [14]. When Hideo's father immigrated to Canada from Japan, the family's last name was changed from Onodera to Onotera. It is likely that the immigration officer misread the kanji or misheard the pronunciation [6]. Family members in Japan use the Onodera family name while the Canadian branch of the family uses Onotera [6]. Historical records use a combination of these first and family names to refer to Hideo Onotera.

HIKARU IKEDA (they/them) is the Assistant Archivist at Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre. They joined the team in January 2025. Hikaru provides reference services and helps preserve and make the NNMCC's archival materials accessible. They have a Master of Library and Information Studies from the University of British Columbia.

Endnotes

[1] Nitta Jiro and David Sulz, 2009, *Phantom Immigrants: Oikawa Jinsaburo, the Suian Maru, and the Miyagi-ken Japanese-Canadians of Lion Island and Don Island* 密航船水案丸 *(Mikkousen Suian Maru)*, Nikkei National Museum Library Collection, Burnaby, BC, Canada https://nikkeimuseum.org/www/item_detail.php?art_id=A21928

[2] S. M. Clark (descendant), in discussion with the author, May 24 2025

[3] Nikkei Fishermen's Project Committee, 2004, *Data and Biographies on Nikkei Fishermen* (2010.11.1), Nikkei Fishermen's Project Committee fonds, Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, Burnaby, BC, Canada https://nikkeimuseum.org/www/series.php?series_id=S1779

[4] Murakami, N., "Nancy Murakami's Life Story (Part 1)", Nikkei Images 24(2), September 30 2001 https://centre.nikkeiplace.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/NI2019_Summer_Digital.pdf

[5] S. M. Clark (descendant), in discussion with the author, May 27 2025

[6] S. M. Clark (descendant), in discussion with the author, April 14 2025

[7] E. K. Eoff (descendant), in discussion with the author, April 4 2025

[8] Canada. Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property, 1942-1950, 1654: *Hideo Onotera* (Reel C-9322, 1547-1629), Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property fonds, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, ON, Canada, retrieved from https://loi.uvic.ca/archive/C-9322_1654.html

[9] E. K. Eoff (descendant), in discussion with the author, December 11 2025

[10] Japanese Fishing Boat Disposition Committee, 1942, Fishing Boat Ledger – *Official Number NW 2807* (2010.4.4.1.185). Kishizo Kimura fonds, Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, Burnaby, BC, Canada https://nikkeimuseum.org/www/item_detail.php?art_id=A26326

[11] National Association of Japanese Canadians Greater Toronto Chapter, "*75 Years Ago on Labour Day Weekend*", National Association of Japanese Canadians Greater Toronto Chapter, 2022 https://torontonajc.ca/75-years-ago-on-labour-day-weekend/

[12] Fisherman Publishing Society. "*Sunbury Local Elects "Hides*"". The Fisherman, June 19, 1956, Simon Fraser University Library, Burnaby, BC, Canada https://newspapers.lib.sfu.ca/fishermannewspaper-14726/fisherman-june-19-1956-page-7)

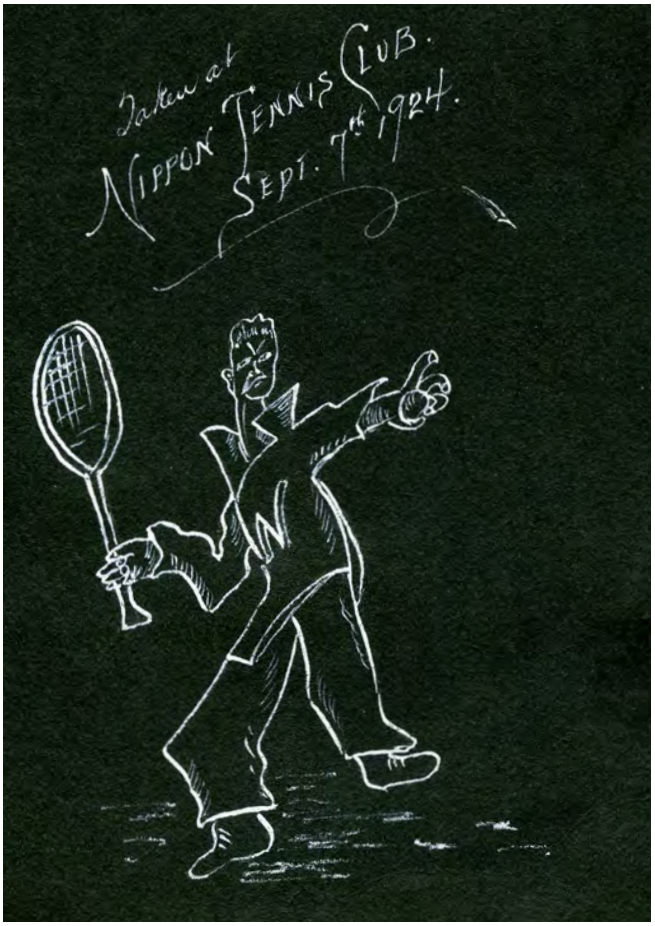
[13] Fisherman Publishing Society. "Meet 1957 UFAWU executive board". The Fisherman, April 16, 1957, Simon Fraser University Library, Burnaby, BC, Canada https://digital.lib.sfu.ca/fisherman-publishing-society-newspaper-tuesday-april-16-1957-page-1

[14] Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, ca. 2003, *Island Inhabitants 1949-2003* (2019.33.1.1.20), Suian Maru Collection, Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, Burnaby, BC, Canada https://nikkeimuseum.org/www/item_detail.php?art_id=A46631

Kishizo Kimura and the Nippon Tennis Club

By Neil Kishi

Kishizo Kimura was an important and controversial figure in Japanese Canadian history, but more importantly to me, my grandfather. He was the lone Japanese Canadian member of the Fishing Boat Dispersal Committee and Property Disposal Committee that organized the dispossession of property of Japanese Canadians during The Second World War. Before this though, he was a tennis player, businessman, and family man with a wife and five children. I mostly remember him in his later years as a shuffling, chain-smoking, frail elderly man with Alzheimer's disease. When he was living with my family in the mid 1970s, he would attend my siblings' and my school events, causing me great embarrassment, often falling asleep in his chair with his mouth open and a Tic Tac stuck to his tongue. I also remember him spending hours and hours meticulously writing in his journals in perfect Japanese script though at the end, it became shaky and crooked. I had no idea about what he was writing but it turned out to be his memoir. This was foundational to the Landscapes of Injustice Project and the book *Witness to Loss* edited by Jordan Stanger-Ross and Pamela Sugiman.



PHOTO

Above: White pen line drawing by Ed Kitagawa, circa 1930. Ed and Muriel Kitagawa Collection. NNMCC 2010.30.1.1.85

Right: Steveston Tennis Club; Steveston, BC, circa 1922. Nishihata Family Collection. NNMCC 2010.80.2.10.

As I was reading the interesting article by Mark Forsythe in the Summer 2022 issue of BC History Magazine[1], I noticed that my grandfather, Kishizo Kimura was the person on the top left in the photo of the Steveston Tennis Club as shown above. I found that peculiar because my grandfather lived in the Powell Street area and I didn't think he would play for a club in Steveston. This led me down an investigative rabbit hole and motivated me to begin a research project.

After some investigation, I found that the photo was actually the Nippon Tennis Club on Albert Street (later renamed Franklin Street). I cross-referenced this photo with others and found the same house in the background of other photos depicting the Nippon Tennis Club. As well, some of the same people are in many of the photos. I mainly drew upon some writing[2] from my mother Florence Kishi, the Nikkei National Museum Collection, and numerous newspaper articles.

I remember the club championship trophy shown in one of the photos and some other trophies that my grandfather had won sitting in the basement of his home at 30th Avenue and Collingwood Street in Vancouver. When he passed away in 1976, the trophies were put in a cardboard box and I believe Auntie Beatrice Tanaka took four tennis trophies according to a list[3] that showed belongings distributed after his death. After speaking with her, she said that the wooden bases were removed but the tarnished silver cups were stored in a box in her house. I received two of the trophies from her recently though one was broken by the shipping company.

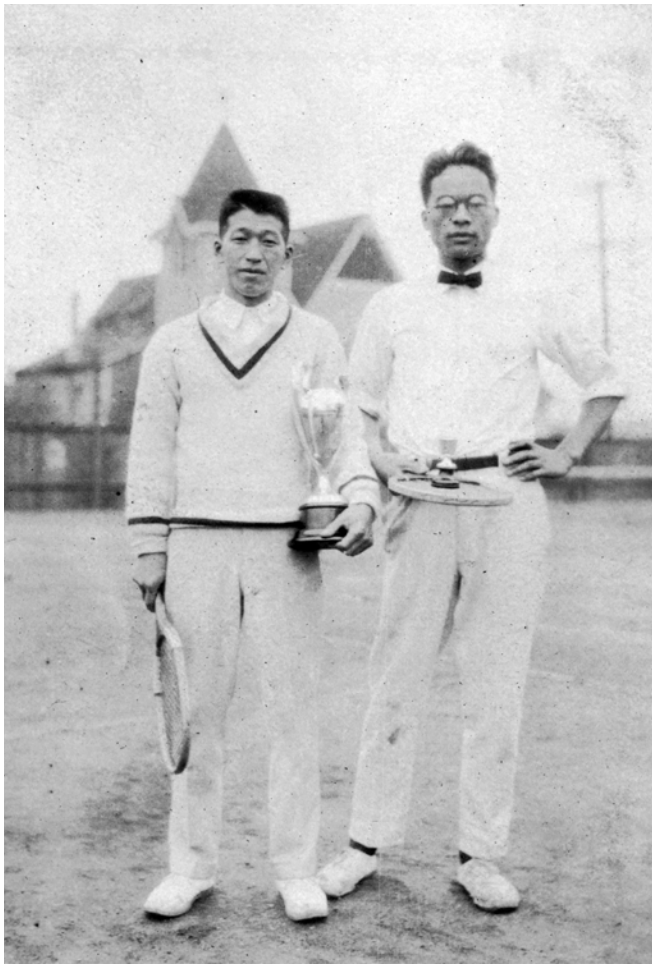


PHOTO
Portrait of Kishizo Kimura and a man on a tennis court, circa 1926. Kishizo Kimura Fonds. NNMCC 2010.4.7.1.79.

My mom had one of my grandfather's tennis racquets. I used it for a short time in the late 1970s when I first started playing with my sister at Christina Lake. New tennis courts had just been built across the street from where my grandfather and his family lived from 1946-1961. The old wooden racquet was not easy to use and we soon bought new racquets with larger heads. The old strings also were rotten and a few broke and we never bothered to get the racquet restrung. The racquet sat in our Christina Lake house basement until my mom sold it in 2005 at a garage sale shortly before moving to the coast.

Nippon Tennis Club

Kishizo Kimura was passionate about tennis. From the late 1910s to the 1930s, he could be found maintaining the grounds, socializing, and playing tennis at his home court on Powell Street and then later on Franklin Street or travelling and playing at various tennis courts in Vancouver or even further afield in Victoria or Seattle. He was with the Nippon Tennis Club (NTC).

> Often on a Sunday morning, while we were leaving for church, mom would be trying to wake him up, but he said he was too tired. When we came home, Dad would be gone, to play tennis, and sure enough he would come jauntily home later in the afternoon with his racquets.[4]

Unlike baseball, pre-war tennis seems to be a little-studied topic in the Japanese Canadian community. There were a core number of young *issei* men who first participated at the Nippon Tennis Club. They competed not only with other Japanese Canadians but with other clubs in Vancouver and further afield. Over the years, their membership expanded to include *nisei*, women, and junior players.

> Baseball and tennis are the two chief sports… Vancouver Japanese have a ball team which they loyally support and which is called the Asahis, and which also had a good record in 1918.[5]

Nippon Tennis Club members Kishizo Kimura, Jenichi Kinoshita, and Ed Kitagawa also played for the famous Asahi baseball club where Kitagawa was a longtime star player. K. Ito was president of both the Asahi Baseball Club and the Nippon Tennis Club in 1919[6].

What was the purpose of starting a Japanese Canadian tennis club? In the 1910s, tennis became an increasingly popular recreational sport, especially for the wealthy and powerful. It allowed for physical fitness, competition, social interaction, and was popular for both men and women[7]. With an eye on social-climbing and competitive fun, a small group of enthusiastic men built tennis courts and founded the Nippon Tennis Club in 1916[8]. It was a club of Japanese Canadian tennis players whose best players competed in the Vancouver and District Tennis League and Mainland League against other local tennis clubs. As well as tennis, the club organized and sponsored socials, dances, and banquets at local halls and restaurants for their members in their later years[9].

The NTC was established in 1916 with two courts on the 500 block Powell Street[10]. It was located near the Japanese Methodist Mission Church which became the Japanese United Church in 1925. Currently, the Vancouver Buddhist Temple stands at this location.

PHOTO

Above: Asahi Baseball Team, July 3, 1917. Ed and Muriel Kitagawa Collection. NNMCC 2010.30.1.5.69a-b.
Ed Kitagawa front row left, Jenichi Kinoshita second row left, Kishizo Kimura second row second from left.

Below: Nippon Tennis Club, June 15, 1924. Ed and Muriel Kitagawa Collection. NNMCC 2010.30.1.1.89a-b.
Ed Kitagawa sitting bottom left, Kishizo Kimura sitting bottom middle, Jenichi Kinoshita standing fourth from left.

The club expanded and built clay courts and a clubhouse in 1921[11]. They became an incorporated limited company in September of 1921 as a $10,000 athletic association[12]. Their new location was on the 2400 block of Albert Street in Vancouver on the southeast block near the intersection of Nanaimo and Franklin Streets[13]. Albert Street was renamed Franklin Street in 1929 "to avoid the confusion with Alberta Street[14]." After comparing some of the tennis photos taken in the 1920s with current Google Maps Street View (2009), it was determined that the Nippon Tennis Club was situated on five lots on the south side of the street currently located at 2436, 2448, 2468, 2482, and 2488 Franklin Street. Many of the houses in the background of the 1920s photos still exist today. The Saint David of Wales Parish Anglican Church is especially prominent in many of the photos.

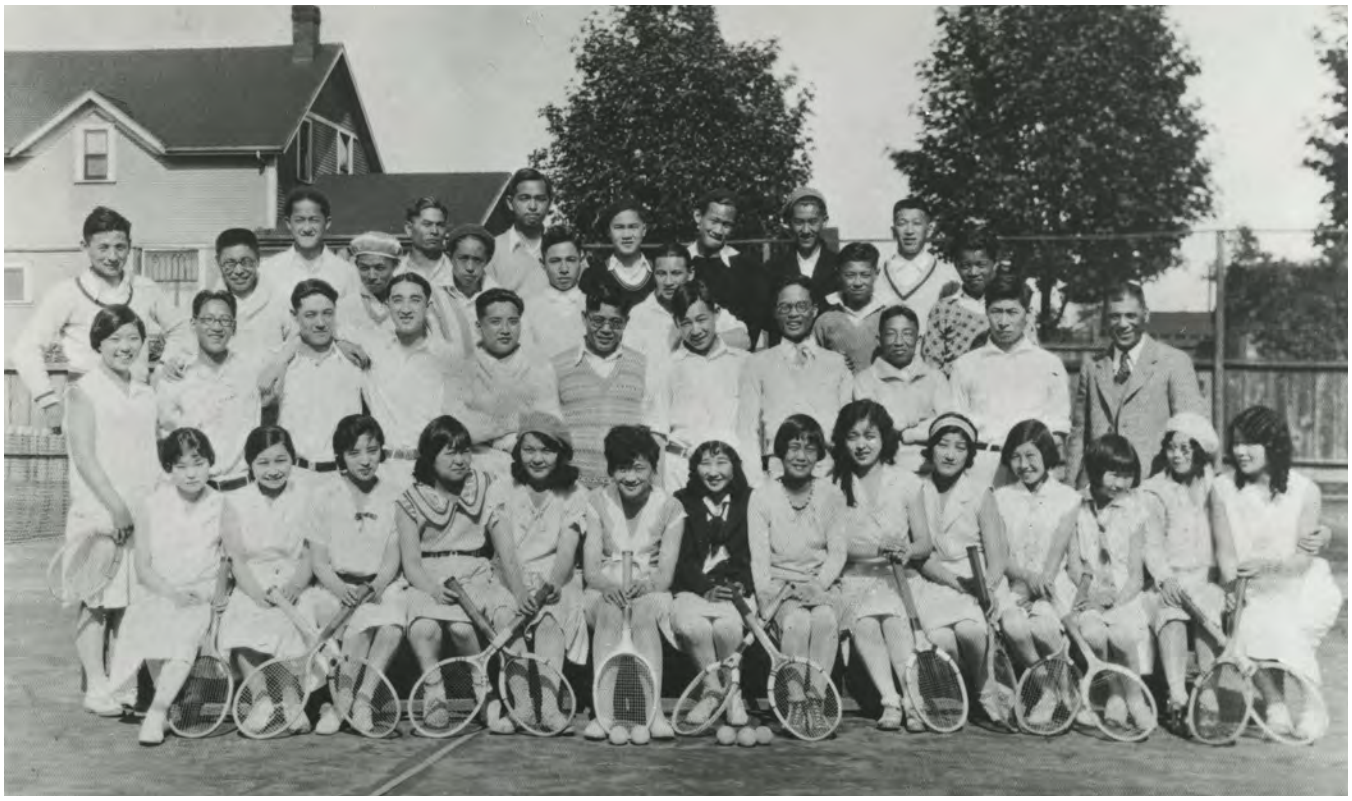
The NTC's heyday was in the mid 1920s when they competed in the "A" Division of the Vancouver and District Tennis League against the top clubs in the Lower Mainland as well as the Mainland League[15]. They were a fixture on the Vancouver tennis scene through the 1920s and 1930s. Some of their longtime and star players at the time were Kishizo Kimura, Jenichi Kinoshita, Yoriki Iwasaki, Kanichi Matsubayashi, and George Yoshy, the junior provincial champion from 1929 to 1931[16].

From 1919 to 1927, the NTC played in the Second Division of the Vancouver and District league. Other teams in this division included Point Grey, Jericho, North Vancouver, and Fairmont in 1919[17]. In 1921, the other teams were the Canadian Bank of Commerce, Comets, Point Grey, and Rotary[18]. In 1924, the other teams were the Comets, Denman Teachers, Marpole, New Westminster, and North Vancouver[19]. In 1926, BC Electric, Jericho, Laurel, Marpole, New Westminster, North Vancouver, and Vancouver Lawn Tennis were also in the Second Division[20].

In 1924, the club had at least 20 members of which four or more were women as evidenced in a group photo from the Ed Kitagawa Collection.

PHOTO

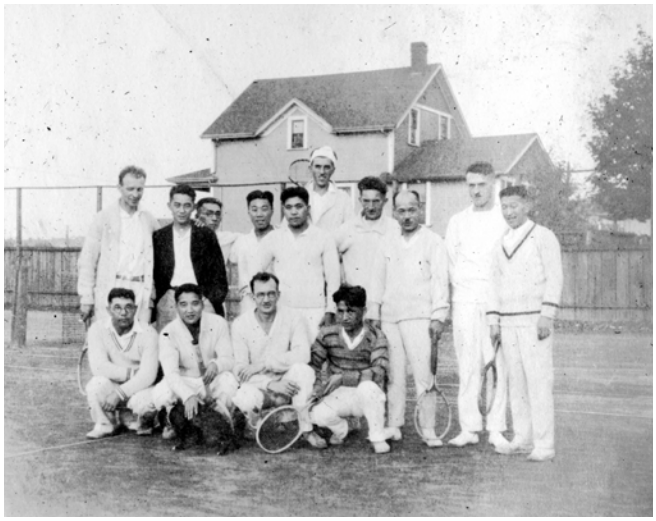
Nippon Tennis Club, Sept. 7, 1924. Ed and Muriel Kitagawa Collection. NNMCC 2010.30.1.1.84a.



PHOTO

Above: Unidentified Tennis Club Group. University of British Columbia Library, Rare Books and Special Collections, Japanese Canadian Research Collection. JCPC-46-001. Beatrice Oikawa sixth from left in the front row.

Below: With Kitslano (sic) Players, Sept. 25, 1927. Kishizo Kimura Fonds. NNMCC 2010.4.7.1.101. Kishizo Kimura standing on right.



By 1927 or so, the club had grown to at least 40 players with almost half being young women. This is proven by a group photo from Beatrice Oikawa.

The Nippon Tennis Club was also active in promoting and sponsoring international players to come to Vancouver for various events. They supported the application by the Vancouver Lawn Tennis Club for the Davis Cup match between Canada and Japan in 1923[21]. The NTC also applied to bring high-ranking Japanese players to compete in the Canadian Lawn Tennis Championships at the Vancouver Lawn Tennis Club in 1931[22]. Again, in 1936, the NTC approached the Vancouver Lawn Tennis Club to invite Japanese Davis Cup players and British star, Fred Perry, to play in the Dominion Tournament in which the NTC would pay part of the expenses[23].

The NTC hosted the famous Japanese tennis players, Tsumio Tawara and Takeichi Harada in 1926. They represented Japan in the 1926 International Lawn Tennis Challenge that took place in Philadelphia. It was the 21st edition of what is now known as the Davis Cup[24]. Harada was an amateur tennis player from Japan who competed in the 1920s and 1930s, including the 1924 Summer Olympics where he placed in the top eight. He was ranked third in the U.S. and seventh in the world in 1926[25]. Harada had a record of 27 wins and 12 losses in his Davis Cup matches over five years[26]. Tawara played both singles and doubles. He had an 8 win, 3 loss record in his Davis Cup matches[27]. Together, Tawara and Harada were the Japanese doubles champions in 1923. They were most famous for winning the US Zone of the Davis Cup, beating Mexico, the Philippines, and Cuba in the summer of 1926. In the hard-fought finals, they finally ended up losing to René LaCoste, Henri Cochet, Jacques Brugnon, and Jean Borotra of France, known at the time as the "Four Musketeers"[28]. After their successful Davis Cup run, the Japanese duo visited Vancouver in October to play an exhibition match at the NTC on their way back to Japan.

According to Beatrice Tanaka neé Kimura[29], her father Kishizo Kimura also played an exhibition match against Bill Tilden, the star American player who was the number one ranked tennis player in the world from 1920 to 1926. He was also ranked in the world's top ten from 1919 to 1930[30]. Tilden's name is engraved on one of Kimura's trophies.

In 1928, the NTC were promoted to Division 1 in the Vancouver and District League[31]. By 1929, they also had a team in the Mainland League. The NTC remained in the top division of the V & D League until 1938. Some teams in Division 1 of the V & D League included Vancouver Lawn Tennis Club, Jericho, New Westminster, Canadian National, Point Grey, Denman Teachers, North Vancouver, and BC. Electric.

PHOTO

Group Photo with Famous Japanese Tennis Players, Tsumio Tawara and Takeichi Harada at Nippon Tennis Club, October 1926. Kishizo Kimura Fonds. NNMCC 2010.4.7.1.78. Tawara; second adult from left, Harada; third adult from left, Kishizo Kimura; third from right.

In 1940, the NTC was going strong. Close to 50 players competed in their annual BC Japanese Open Labor Day Tournament[32] and less than a year later, their Red and White Club Tournament attracted over 50 entrants[33].

In the club's final season of 1941, rain played havoc with their year-end two day Labour Day tournament and the mens' doubles and ladies' singles were not completed until the following weekend. Unfortunately, it seems the mixed doubles championships and consolation finals were never completed due to poor weather.

The NTC season ended on Saturday, September 20, 1941 with their year-end banquet and social at Fuji Chop Suey. There they ate, presented trophies and prizes to the various champions, drew raffle ticket winners, and danced the night away[34].

Some of the players then moved on to the winter sports of badminton, table tennis, basketball, and soccer[35]. Little did they know that less than two months later, the bombing of Pearl Harbour on December 7 would change their lives forever, culminating with the expulsion of all Japanese Canadians from the Lower Mainland. This would be the last tennis they would play for many years, or for some, ever.

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Silent Reflection on 80 Years: Concert of Healing

The following two speeches by Roy Akune and Sachi Rummel were originally delivered at the Silent Reflection on 80 Years: Concert of Healing held on August 15, 2025, at Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver. The event was organized by the Japanese Dementia Support Association and Fraser Monthly. Both speakers live in BC, Canada.

Nanakorobi Yaoki: Fall Seven Times, Standup Eight

By Roy Akune

PHOTO

Roy Akune in Vancouver, BC, on August 15, 2025. Photo by Koichi Saito.

August 15, 1945 signified a new beginning for the Canadians of Japanese heritage.

It was on this date that Japan had surrendered in The Second World War. And, it is well documented in the historical annals of Canada that on February 24, 1942, the Canadian Government issued an Order in Council that the Canadians of Japanese heritage be removed from the West Coast of Canada. In the following week, there was a forced exodus 160 kilometres in land from the Coast.

I was born in Steveston on March 20, 1936, to Yuichi and Shizuka Akune and despite my young age, I do recall some of the events our family experienced due to the Government edict.

How did these events affect me personally? Although I was not fully aware of all of the circumstances of this sudden move, I could sense uncertainty and unrest with my parents. Dad wrapped black cloth around the ceiling lights and boarded up the windows with black tar paper of the single family house on Trites Road in Steveston. These measures, which I understood later, were taken to prevent the Government Security Commission from viewing any activities of the family which may be perceived as alien to national security and, most importantly, to prevent air-sightings by the Japanese military. There may have been the perception that Dad was carefully watched by the Government Security Commission because of his role as the head

instructor of the Steveston Kendo Club wherein he may have been training the youth for the Japanese military. It was indeed a scary experience with the house virtually blacked out.

Personally, my immediate concern was attending my kindergarten class at the corner of Chatham Street and No. 1 Road, a 15 minute walk from our home. It was here, I attended classes on a daily basis in the mornings. Suddenly, myself and others of Japanese descent could not join our favourite class.

With so much uncertainty about what we could take with us and being restricted to a few suitcases and boxes, Mom and Dad were concerned about the treasured items they had to leave behind. I can recall that Dad and Mom had carefully wrapped them in wooden boxes and hid them in the attic. What occurred to these items remains a mystery as we did not return to the same house.

It was in early spring 1942, shortly after my birthday, that we were told to relocate. Dad had some thoughts of returning to Kagoshima, Japan, his birthplace. However, on the strong encouragement of my maternal grandparents, we joined them and the rest of the extended family in Mission, where my grandparents, the Hisaoka's, had homesteaded and established a berry farm. Together we boarded the Canadian Pacific Railway in Mission, BC enroute to Picture Butte, Alberta in Southern Alberta. We were on a ride to an unknown location. Despite my inadequate Japanese, I can recall asking Obachan, "*doko ni ikuno*?" (where are we going?). Her reply was, "*doko ka shiranai*" (I don't know where). There was grave concern as we trained for 20 hours through interior BC and the Rocky Mountains to our eventual destination. As we disembarked, the Security Commission spokesperson announced the names of the families and asked them to meet the hosts who were designated to provide housing and employment. Our family name Akune was called. With our scant belongings, we met Mr. Herford, our host. He counted the number of heads and determined that there was one too many and asked that someone had to go elsewhere. I was told to leave. Fortunately, my anxiety was greatly lessened by moving in with my grandparents and the uncles and aunts. As I departed, I wondered when I would see my two sisters and brother again. My siblings, Sachiyo, Satoru, and Misaye and parents were interned in Diamond City and Ojichan and Obachan were interned ten miles away in Turin, a small village north of Lethbridge.

I was told that Dad, days later, had borrowed a bicycle and began his search to locate my whereabouts. With knowledge of the general location, he had apparently biked to the homes of the Japanese families in the neighbourhood and asked for the whereabouts of the Hisaoka's.

How long was I away from the family? It was only for three weeks but it seemed like three months. Their home was unknown to me. I was told by my parents that they lived in a one room chicken coop in which in the dark of night one could see the brightly lit moon through the gaps in the roof and they could feel the breeze through the cracks in the wall. There were no toilet facilities and water was by buckets from a well.

In my situation living with my grandparents did not seem as harsh. There was, however, an incident that I recall very vividly, perhaps because of the fear instilled in me through the horrific experiences of the forced relocation. One day when the grandparents and uncle and aunts were working the farm, there was a knock on the kitchen door. Fearful that the "white people were out to catch and jail us", my aunt Michie and I ran into one of the bedrooms of this large wooden farmhouse. We lay breathlessly under the bed waiting for them to leave. Sensing no one was at the door, quietly my aunt and I returned to the kitchen. "Thank goodness we're safe", we said to each other.

Desperately in need of better housing, Mom and Dad negotiated with the Security Commission and were able to move to more spacious quarters in Carl Alexander's farm in Iron Springs. Our stay there was very short-lived, as my father, who was well known as a skilled kendo instructor, was invited to move to Raymond, Alberta to organize the Buddhist Temple Kendo Club. This situation became a very successful and positive experience for Dad and the family. A new kindred spirit developed between the family and the *Sangha* (Buddhist community) in which the entire family became immersed in the temple life. The family became involved in attending Sunday services and becoming active in religious, recreational, and social activities. However, there was one experience that my father had encountered as the head instructor of the Kendo Club. Here again unknown to him, he was quietly monitored by the Government Security Commission suspected of training the youth for the Japanese military. This was indeed unfortunate.

It was also in Raymond, after two more moves from 1944 to 1948, that Dad had decided that being a farmhand was insufficient and leasing a farm was where the future lay. He leased a ninety acre farm, three miles east of the sugar beet factory of Raymond and began a new venture. With the lease arrangement of this large acreage, Dad purchased a Massey Harris tractor and the necessary equipment, including a dark green two ton truck. This was indeed quite an undertaking for a family having now reached eight (Tetsuro was born in Lethbridge and Sanae, the youngest, in Raymond) with the eldest being myself at 12 years old. There was space for a large vegetable garden, a chicken coop for 100 chickens and a small pig pen. The wooden farmhouse had two bedrooms, a kitchen with a coal stove and space for dinner table but no refrigerator. The toilet was a separate outdoor facility. There was no central heating and water was from a well. And, Dad built an *ofuro* for hot baths. This was spartan living - barely adequate for the family. Going to school was also an experience, taking a yellow school bus some three miles from school while picking up others enroute on an icy and snow laden road.

There were many hardships for the family, particularly for Dad in managing the farm. Preparing the soil was in late April, seeding in May, thinning in June, weeding in July, fertilizing in August, irrigating in September and harvesting in late October - pulling each sugar beet, removing the stems and leaves and laying them in rows. Eventually, Dad would load the beets by shovel from the ground into the truck for hauling to the factory. The harvesting would normally conclude in late October. However, the Fall of 1950 and 1951 was exceptional with an early snowfall that made harvesting very difficult. We were pulling beets in ankle deep snow in November. What else struck me was seeing my siblings, Sachiyo and Satoru, aged ten and eleven, weeding in the 30 degree sun in July and Misaye babysitting Tetsuro and Sanae at the end of the field making sand castles.

As one could imagine there was much work to be done on the farm. In 1948, beginning as a 12 year old farmhand, I missed up to 20 - 30 days of school. I was unaware of the number of days absent until the summer of 1980 when I was invited to Raymond's 100th anniversary celebration. On this occasion, the event was a homecoming for the 1954 graduating class of which I would have graduated had I remained in Raymond. As part of the school memorabilia, class registers including my Grade seven class were posted. On reviewing the register, my son pointed to my name and asked, "What do the numbers mean?" In the Days Absent column, was the number 30 beside my name.

It was in April 1,1949 that the Japanese were restored with their rights as Canadian citizens. Herein, I recall this conversation with my mother.

Mom said, “with the restoration of our rights as Canadian citizens, we must exercise it responsibly - *majime de gambari nasai*” (be earnest and do your best).. These words stuck to me like glue. In 1950, in another situation, when I was hoeing the beets, Dad got off the tractor and approached me. He asked me, “Do you like farming?” My reply was a straight forward, "No”. Following that conversation, I had not given much thought to it and had forgotten about it.

The hardships faced in farming ninety acres for the family were very severe. To continue there was the need to hire farmhands and with the eldest not interested in farming, Mom and Dad decided to return to Steveston and the move was made in April 1952. By this time a number of the Japanese had already returned to the West Coast of BC to resume their pre-war livelihood they had left.

We lived in a rented Cannery house on Fourth Avenue and Dad leased a gillnet boat from Canadian Fishing Co. That summer, my siblings registered in Lord Byng Elementary School and I registered in Grade eleven at Richmond High School.

It was in Grade eleven, that I asked Dad, “Why is it that we returned to Steveston in 1952, much later than others? His reply was,” If you recall I asked you whether you liked farming? And, your reply was "No.” That along with mixed feelings about the livelihood, education of the children, and the harsh winters were the determining factors. Apparently Mom and Dad had visions of mixed farming of 640 acres in Foremost, Alberta. Their rationale was that successful farming required at least two farmhands. With the eldest son not interested, the return to Steveston became imminent.

I entered UBC in 1954 and graduated in 1958 with a degree in Chemistry. On graduation, I was employed as a Quality Control and Research Chemist at Reichhold Chemicals in Port Moody. Because of the closer distance, I moved to a similar job with a leading Food Processing Company in Vancouver. In due course, there was an opening for a Supervisory position. Thereupon, I inquired about the position but I was told they would not accept my application because I was not white. Forthwith, I submitted my resignation in the summer of 1961.

After giving serious thought to pursuing a career as a lawyer to bring about a change in the mindset of people, I decided that the best would be to influence the mindset of the young. Hence, I enrolled in the Education programme at UBC. In 1962, my career began as a Science teacher at Eric Hamber Secondary School in Vancouver. As much as I enjoyed the teaching, there was one situation which I do not wish to recall. In the school men’s staff room in front of several colleagues, these words and fingers were directed at me by an English teacher, “You’re a Jap aren't you?” I interpreted this behaviour in a derogatory sense. It affected me deeply but I remained silent.

Following that, after two years an influential colleague advised me to seek an administrative career in a smaller district wherein my aptitude would be better felt. Subsequently, I was given a position as a Chemistry teacher at Richmond High School. As the years progressed I became a High School Principal and eventually was accepted into the Superintendency. Along the way, I was appointed an Adjunct Professor at Simon Fraser University. Presently, I am an Assistant Minister with the Steveston Buddhist Temple.

Remembering the words of my mother, “become a responsible citizen of Canada” and those sobering moments of racism of not being white and being called “Jap” had a profound effect on me. Unequivocally, those experiences did indeed spur me on: *Nanakorobi, Yaoki - Fall seven times, Standup eight*. Hands Together in Oneness for Peace and Harmony.

A Hiroshima Survivor's Journey from Silence to Hope

By Sachi Rummel

PHOTO

Sachi Rummel in Vancouver, BC, on August 15, 2025. Photo by Koichi Saito.

I am 88 years old and a survivor of the Hiroshima atomic bomb. This year (2025) is the 80th anniversary of the first atomic bombs ever dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

At 8:15 am on August 6, 1945, I was playing in the schoolyard of a local national elementary school. The school was 3.5 km from ground zero. Suddenly, there was a flash of light, and a cloud of dust rose up in an instant. We couldn't see anything around us, then there was a huge explosion.

It was a hot day without a cloud in the sky, and we were playing games under the shade of a large tree. The children screamed and got down on the ground. Someone said, "Let's go to the classroom," and we all ran to the classroom. The teacher divided the students into groups and told us to walk home through the mountain path.

Black rain began to fall on the way, and the white blouse I had on was stained in black as being exposed to radiation and debris. No matter how many times I washed it, the black stains did not come out. They remained as radioactive poison, just like wounds on the human body. However, we arrived home safely without any burns or wounds. This was because we were under that large tree.

My father was working at a company close to ground zero. He was trapped by debris and the flames were closing in when he regained consciousness after suddenly fainting. He struggled desperately and managed to escape.

The city of Hiroshima was destroyed beyond recognition, and wounded people were walking about, looking for water. My father was whipping himself to keep from collapsing, as he walked along a pathless road littered with corpses to get home. "Am I dreaming? No, I'm not. This is a reality, happening right now in this world. It is hell on earth!", he was thinking.

The war ended on August 15th. My father was really happy, saying, "There will be peace from now on." Unfortunately, he passed away the next day, August 16th.

Although the fear of enemy bombings was gone after the war ended, daily life was very hard all the same. However, only three days later, streetcars were back in operation in Hiroshima. It was said at the time that no trees or grass would grow for 70 years, but oleander flowers bloomed and phoenix trees sprouted in the following year. Although the citizens were poor, they began to move towards rehabilitation with hope.

Thanks to this effort, the Atomic Bomb Memorial Monument and the magnificent Peace Memorial Museum were built. Now, the atomic bomb documents are open to the public, attracting many visitors from all over the world. If you have a chance, please do visit Hiroshima.

Many atomic bomb survivors avoid talking about their experiences. Their experiences were so harsh and it takes courage for them to think back upon their experiences. They do not want to be looked at in a special way as a survivor. I was one of them for a long time.

However, on March 11, 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, and it led to a tsunami resulting in the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Many residents were forced to move in with relatives and acquaintances, as their homes, fields, and land were damaged by the poisonous radiation emitted by the nuclear reactors.

This was the third nuclear tragedy. At the time, I felt that I could not remain silent anymore, so I began telling my story as a survivor of the atomic bomb. First, I asked the Fraser Monthly to publish articles on my experience and their compilation as a book called Hiroshima - Memories of a Survivor. Since then, with the help of my husband, I have used this as a base to talk about my experience of the atomic bomb at schools, communities, churches, and other places, and have spoken to many people about the abolition of nuclear weapons and peace.

My story is like a type of seed. A seed is small, but it can eventually blossom into a big flower. I hope that one day, many people will sprout the "seedling" of their desire for a peaceful society, which will then become the "stem" that takes action toward that goal, and the flower of a peaceful society will eventually bloom. As a "sower of peace," I would like to continue sharing stories with my husband for as long as I live.

The 21st century is the age of IT and AI. A lot of information is flying around from all over the world. I have a dream that the young people who will play important roles in the future will be able to cultivate the wisdom to use information and technology effectively, and strive to achieve world peace by abolishing nuclear weapons and creating a world without war. I hope that we can pass the baton of sowing the seeds of peace to them, thinking about what we should start with to achieve global peace.

I am very pleased that last year, a group of atomic bomb survivors called the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. Setsuko Thurlow, who lives in Toronto, attended the award ceremony in Oslo on their behalf. The award of the Nobel Prize for Peace has led to a renewed international focus on the abolition of nuclear weapons, and a ray of hope for peace has begun to appear for the future. I pray that the world will come together in love, and work to build peace.

Creative Research: Translating *haiku* into English with Context and Emotion

By Carolyn Nakagawa and Yoriko Gillard

Carolyn Nakagawa, a fourth-generation Japanese Canadian poet, playwright, and researcher, and Yoriko Gillard, a Japanese-born poet, artist, researcher, and educator, have spent the past year working together to develop a *haiku* translation practice based on poetry written by *issei* (first generation) in internment camps. They explain their process and methodology throughout the research to date.

Carolyn: My grandparents were young adults when they, their parents, family members, and their entire community were forcibly uprooted from the west coast of British Columbia. I did not understand this history well enough to discuss it with them when they were still alive. I've long been curious about the collections of Japanese-language poetry written by survivors of internment during their time in the camps. Although I am a rarity in my generation for having had the opportunity and privilege to study the Japanese language, I haven't felt confident reading poetry in Japanese. I want to break this barrier between myself and these poems. Who is better suited to appreciate *haiku* written in internment camps than me, a poet who has studied both Japanese Canadian history and Japanese language?

Yoriko: Every time I learn about the history of Japanese Canadian people during 1942-1949, my heart aches and often my emotions take over with tears. Through this project, I resonate with Japanese Canadians' past and their ways of living resiliently through hardships with *haiku*. As a writer and poet, *haiku* and any Japanese poetry practices are the reflection of my soul.

Carolyn: Our practice resonates with Audrey Kobayashi's observation that "As social tradition, poetry is time-and-place-specific". She explains that poetry is written to be shared, and thus "is not a closing in, but an opening out upon the world as it is commonly understood and communicated" (243). Kobayashi, herself the descendant of a celebrated *issei haiku* poet, provided some vital insights into the importance of *haiku* for the *issei* which guided my process. She explains how the modern practice of *haiku* took shape in Meiji-era Japan, at the same time that *issei* were migrating to Canada; that the widespread adoption of Japanese cultural practices contributed to the construction of a nationalist identity that "define[s] the present by redefining the past" in an era of radical Westernization; and that a similar process happened to *issei* who were defining their Japaneseness after leaving Japan (246).

Carolyn: When we begin, I bring my craft as a writer and reader of English poetry and my knowledge of the context of Japanese Canadian internment. Yoriko brings her interdisciplinary artistic eye, her empathy, and her deep knowledge of the Japanese culture she grew up with. We look together at the two collections published by the Tashme *haiku* club. Hundreds of *haiku* are published in dense single-line script. I have no idea where to start. I ask Yoriko to choose some *haiku* that are meaningful to her for us to start working with. She chooses these three, written by Koson (弧村), pen name of Torao Takeda:

春晝の光が満てり手術室
春書のベッド上なる花一輪
春書の薬品の香が廊下まで

We analyze the content of the poems. I am able to understand the meanings of the words, filling in gaps with the help of a dictionary, and write out several possible ways to translate each one, rearranging words and phrases to search for the right effect. But I have to ask Yoriko what she finds interesting about them.

Yoriko: I was not sure where to start with this project but was motivated by a sense of responsibility towards the *haiku* that were written by Japanese Canadians in the past. As soon as I read these three linked *haiku* (also known as *renga*), my artist's heart found resonance in the poetry. Koson's vivid descriptions of the hardships that Japanese Canadians were forced to live through felt sincere and haunting to me.

Carolyn: The first poem describes light coming into the operation room. I hadn't noticed the title that links the poems together: "Three poems on a visit to Tashme hospital". Yoriko asks what operation might have occurred in a room in the Tashme hospital, and what was the result? How did the writer feel about it? Why did they use the seasonal word "春晝", spring afternoon, and how is it different from another way to tell us it is spring? I tell her what I know about the hospital at Tashme—just a few bits and pieces—and I imagine with her.

Yoriko: As neither Carolyn nor I knew how exactly we wanted to go about translating these *haiku*, I started by asking her many questions. I was curious how Carolyn felt and extracted meanings behind each word, beyond what might be described in the dictionary. I was not interested in judging her answers but learning her perspectives. Because I already knew of and respect her historical knowledge about Japanese Canadians, my questions often included "what do you know…" to honour her knowledge that I do not have.

Carolyn: After I hear Yoriko's many questions about each poem, what I want to do more than ponder the most preferable arrangements of words and phrases is to ask more questions. I set out to write a poem that repeats some of Yoriko's questions and adds some of my own, inspired in part by my long-ago reading of Pablo Neruda's *The Book of Questions*. I think about the emotions of the writer, as well as the context I know of living in Tashme and the hospital. If there's some aspect of the poems I don't understand, I ask about that too. I am trying to listen and understand.

How long is a spring afternoon?
When does day emerge from morning, become evening?
What did you feel when the snow finally melted, that coldest winter of 1942?
Do you miss the rain?
Could this possibly be your favourite sunlight,
its brilliance nothing like a prison?
What happened in the operating room?
Did the doctor's hands, skills prevail?
Who left, and where did they go?

What drew you into the room?
Who left a single flower on the bed?
Will you touch the soft petals, remember its name?

What is the fragrance of medicine?
From where did the doctor procure it?
What ailments can it heal?
Does medicine smell better in springtime?
Where does the hallway lead you?
Who else perceives this smell?
Are you able to leave? Are you healed?

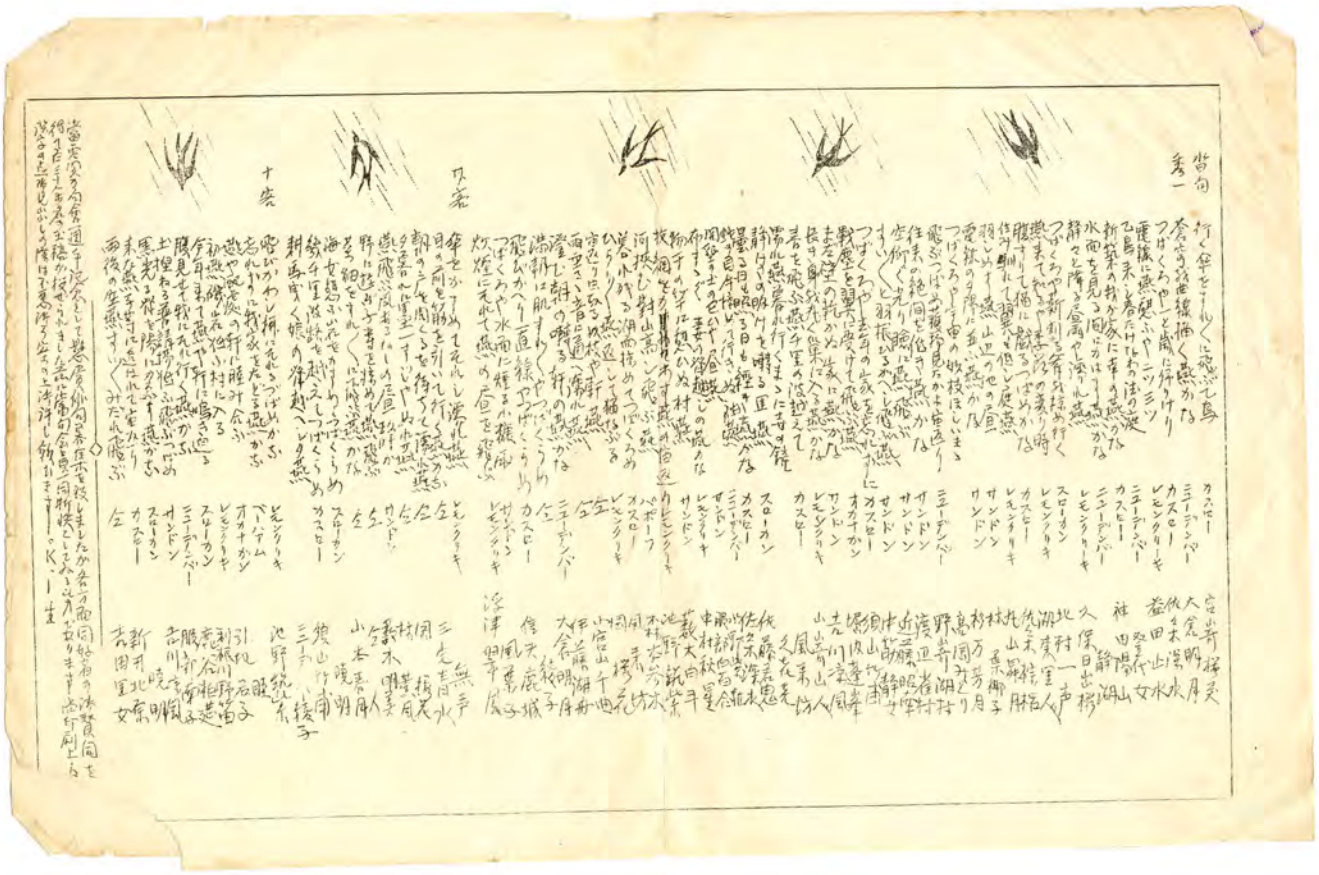
Yoriko: Carolyn's attempt to write this poem truly inspired me and helped me to think about what my contribution could be. First I tried to write three responding *haiku* to Koson's *renga*. However, I felt something was not right about this approach when I attempted it. One day at work, I was looking outside my window with a paper and pencil and suddenly three *tanka* (short poems) came to me. Through this experience, I realized that I cannot translate someone else's *haiku* into another *haiku*, whether in English or Japanese. It would be like I was painting someone else's painting in different colours. Instead, I choose to respond to the art with my own interpretation. To me, this is a truer way to share the experience I have of reading *haiku* than it would be to write something in a form that superficially resembles the structure of Japanese *haiku*.

Carolyn: We visit the Nikkei National Museum archives to see what other poetry collections are available from the internment era. I am most interested in the ones that list the author's location as well as their name; this allows me to answer Yoriko's questions about context more easily. Some collections are from writers all living in one location, such as the two Tashme collections; I'm curious about reading work from writers in multiple locations, to see if they can offer a broader range of contexts.

Yoriko: When looking at potential materials for this project, I was careful not to limit myself to my personal preferences. Rather, I was searching for something meaningful that could unfold from the past to the future. In addition, as a Japanese language and cultural educator, I was aware of the potential benefit to Carolyn, as a descendant, to deeply connect with the materials, especially with *haiku* and its form, theme, and meaning.

Carolyn: Yoriko is drawn to one text in particular that fits my criteria: a broadsheet of poems published in honour of the anniversary of the Lemon Creek *Haiku* Club. We found a copy in the Kinori Oka collection, among several other publications which Oka contributed to. It contains over seventy *haiku* written by authors in various locations throughout British Columbia, including several internment camps in the Slocan Valley, and some poems from the Okanagan. They all incorporate the prompt of "*tsubame*", or "swallow", which Yoriko says is a seasonal word that indicates spring. It appears in various forms throughout the poems: つばめ、燕、つばくろ、つばくらめ、鳥.

Carolyn: I translate each of the poems in the *Tsubame* text, as I come to think of it, one by one. First I make notes, and discuss with Yoriko to confirm I understand the literal meaning correctly. Then we discuss what the poem makes her feel, and she asks how I connect with it, until the poem means something emotionally to me. I write my own version in English, using the same method that I used with Koson's hospital *haiku*.



PHOTO

Tsubame, Lemon Creek Haiku Society, April 4, 1944. Kinori Oka Collection. NNMCC 2001.28.

Excerpts from Carolyn and Yoriko's translation notes

1月14日10時
戦塵を翼に受けて飛ぶ燕
オカナガン　堀内蓬峯

Dust of war; 戦塵をのがれる
Doing construction? In Okanagan, picking in fruit orchards
Interior probably just generally dustier than coast
Swallow's wings collect dust by flying through the *senjin*? Did the swallow create dust by flying up from the ground?
JCs rushed away from the coast;
senjin = feeling of chaos
Tsubame isn't like an eagle; has to get covered in the dust

1月16日午前9時
What colours are the swallow's wings under the dust of war?

黒光る背を陽にかえすつばめかな
スローカン　暁明

3/20 9pm
黒実る？を陽にかる？すつばめかな
Black fruit (ripening?)
Lightly sunshine ?
Swallow

4/1 [discussion with Yoriko]
黒光り: something very shiny, glossy; maybe swallow is a bit wet. Usually used to describe crow
Wet part reflects the sun; 光る
かえす: turning over/flipping; reflection/mirroring back the sunlight
Sunlight as violence? Political meaning
背を陽に feels like a protest of some kind
かえすつばめかな feels weaker;
could fit in more meaning

Apr 5 9:30am
What does the swallow return to the sun in the light that shines off its back?
What makes its feathers dark?
What do you miss from this small shade?

4/8 [discussion with Yoriko]
黒光る = くろびかる. Shininess of a crow; not matte black (not a novel concept for Japanese)
陽 = ひ
Japanese *tsubame* is black; Canadian swallows are blue/green/brown
Might be a memory from Japan, because swallow is black - Japanese variety; reflecting on childhood, life in Japan? Can't go back to that time, but be resilient
Bird is shiny from being wet; important so they don't overheat
背を陽: visual image かえす bouncing back relationship/interchange between bird and sun

5/2
What colour is your swallow?
Does the black feather of your former home shine brighter in your memory? Does the water that dries from her small brown back return prisms to the same burning sun?

Carolyn: I ask the writer questions about the experiences that led them to write; questions I'll never be able to ask my grandparents or great-grandparents. I repeat English versions of words and images appearing in the original, imagining it like a telephone conversation—someone reading the English might be able to infer contextually what the Japanese says. I think of "translation" in the sense of a mathematical operation—shifting an object from one space to another—as opposed to reflection or rotation. My writing feels like reflection rather than translation: a looking back at the original.

河挟む對山高し飛ぶ燕
パポーフ　森本参木

How close does the river hold you,
surrounded by tall mountains?
How high does the swallow fly,
clearing their peaks?

暮れ残る湖面掠めてつばくろめ
カスロー　風耒村

Why did you see the swallow
glancing off the surface of the lake?
Was the lingering dusk-tinged light
enough in that reflection?

Yoriko: Throughout this process, I guide Carolyn to think critically about her ways of understanding *haiku* through her own feelings as well as historical knowledge. However, I have no intention to correct her understanding of the language. My focus is to immerse myself in her way of seeing the *haiku*. At the same time, I share my vision with her without forcing her to think of my view as the correct one. The exception to this is when I explain the implicit meanings that some words have in Japanese culture, that are used to cue things like seasons, time of day, or other conditions. Through this mutually respectful dialogue, we both come to resonate more closely with the past through the work of Japanese Canadian *haiku* artists.

Carolyn: After going through the full collection and "reflecting" each one, I looked them over and realized that I had a lot of poems asking about birds and swallows; and also that this was not why these poems mattered to me. I wanted to write poems about what connected me to these works. So I went through the entire collection again, and wrote a single long poem using the same method, but with one important difference: I did not mention swallows or birds.

This feels like the most honest way for me to "translate", or "reflect" these poems: it expresses how I feel about them after talking them over with Yoriko; it expresses what I do not know, but would like to, as a descendant of this history that the poets experienced and were living through as they were writing. But as a representation of the original poems, it is lacking; there is so much in there of my feelings and my perspective, perhaps more than there is of what was originally written.

PEN America asserts in their Translation Manifesto that translators are "literary artists in their own right, in addition to their role as curators and creators of new work". I chose internment-era poetry as my text to translate, because I feel it is a Japanese-language text that I have some level of claim to, and because I want to know more about these poems and the people who wrote them, peers of my ancestors. But beyond that, I have largely left the process of selection and curation, which is part of translation, to Yoriko. I have not had confidence in my own literary taste when it comes to *haiku*.

But after spending weeks and months reading every single poem in the Tsubame collection, I do have some favourites. Yoriko and I both select a handful of our favourites to share with each other; there is no overlap. Yoriko's choices are intuitive, she explained: she used her senses purely as a Japanese writer and artist who knows what she is drawn to and tried to not think about our previous conversations. She did this in a similar way to how she would choose her favourite artwork while visiting an art gallery. Mine are more heavily informed by our conversations: I choose poems with images that lingered in my mind after we discussed them, including poems that I most strongly feel that I have not done justice to in my earlier reflective writing. Poems that I want to explain to my non-Japanese-speaking peers.

Yoriko: Among Carolyn's and my mutual Japanese Canadian friends, I know that most of them are intimidated to learn Japanese language or to try to look at archival materials written in Japanese. I wish to encourage their curiosity and pride for their family members and the *issei* as a whole. I made sure to share this hope with Carolyn throughout the project, knowing that our trusting relationships with each other and with our community is essential to making it come true. I consider this part of my practice of *kizuna* 絆, or mutually respectful, reciprocal relationships, which I have written about elsewhere and continue to practice and develop in many ways as an artist, researcher, teacher, and community member.

Carolyn: Coming back to my favourite Tsubame *haiku*, I use a modification of the glosa form to expand upon some relatively literal English translations. I open up the world I see the authors in in my mind, based on my knowledge of the locations where they lived and that I have visited, such as Kaslo and New Denver.

Yoriko has facilitated two main things throughout this process: my understanding of the Japanese poetic diction and grammatical constructions, and my emotional connection to the poems. She shares what the poems make her see that is not written down, including associations embedded in Japanese culture and literary conventions. She has also persistently brought us back to the historical context of internment, encouraging me to bring all the contextual knowledge I can offer to each poem.

Yoriko: I felt Carolyn's trust in my abilities and understanding of *haiku*. Her respectful manners supported me to be free in sharing my thoughts. We maintained a truly reciprocal effort throughout the entire process.

Carolyn: Yoriko has also done some of her own writing: originally, I asked her to write her own "questions poem", but we soon realized that I was including her questions in my own writing, and that this was part of my voice and practice, not hers. Although Yoriko writes poetry in both English and Japanese, in this case she has felt that she needs to write in Japanese, and particularly the *tanka* form. When she shares her *tanka*, I realize that they are translations from the *haiku* form into the *tanka* form, even though both are in Japanese. Her *tanka* make absolutely no attempt to repeat words or images, as I did in my reflective writing; instead, she describes emotions, what she feels when she reads a *haiku*; the reason, in her view, that it exists as a poem. When she reads them to me, I feel like the flat surface of the *haiku* has been lifted, and I've been submerged in the depth of feelings beneath the original words.

Yoriko: Just like the word *tanka* literally means "short poem" in Japanese, but is used in both Japanese and English to refer to a specific traditional

poetic form, the English-language "*haiku*" form is not the only way, and maybe not always a sufficient way, to express the meanings and significance that *haiku* embodies in the Japanese tradition. This is a complex topic which needs further discussion with our fellow artists working across cultures, particularly when considering how to share the work of Japanese-language writers with readers who do not understand the language. Carolyn and I would like to continue to explore these questions, particularly with Japanese people living in or outside of Japan.

Carolyn: It is agonizing to attempt to render a poem from one language into another: to go through many possibilities for each word, the order and construction, and try to choose only one "best" version each time and in combination. I think in order to truly share what is in a poem, you need to show it in multiple different ways, not distill it down to a single approximation.

The long poem I wrote expressed my experience of reading the *haiku* in the Tsubame collection, but it does not feel like a method I could recommend others to adopt, nor is it a faithful encounter with the original texts; it is too personal. I want to point more closely to the choices that the original writers made, not just how they make me feel.

So here is my proposed method for translating *haiku* into English. The *haiku* that I work with were written by people imprisoned in internment camps, and my translations are attentive to that context; but this method could be applied to other poems with attention to those contexts. The intention is to convey not just the denotative meaning of the original poem, but its layers of significance as they are perceived by a well-informed reader; its power as a work of art.

First is an English poem that embeds the original poem into it, using lines from a simple, more or less literal translation alongside the original text. This could be a modified glosa, but could take some other form that embeds lines from the original within a longer poem. It builds and expands upon the world suggested by the original poem, considering the context that may have inspired it, and sharing that imagined context with the reader of the translation.

Next are annotations on the original Japanese poem that convey to a reader who doesn't understand the original language what the translator understands from and responds to in the original poem, on an immediate level. These are notes—fragments, full of associations that may be culturally understood or may be highly personal. They include some sample translations, full or partial renderings, but not a single definitive translation.

Finally, there is an English-language short poem, written in the spirit of a *tanka* that conveys the emotional content of the *haiku*, as the translator understands it. This might not have any objective relation to the words in the original poem, but it expresses the beating heart of the artistic work that the translator recognizes and wants to bring forth to English-language readers.

Yoriko: When Carolyn first invited me to work with her on this project, my first reaction was skepticism. I asked her, why do you want to translate *haiku*? While we both respect those who have been translating Japanese *haiku* to English, I personally cannot translate a Japanese *haiku* written by someone else into an English *haiku* of mine because I would lose so much unwritten context from the original *haiku* such as its background, history, and social constructions. Carolyn responded that she has similar feelings on this matter, and this is what she wants to explore in our collaboration. Therefore, we did not restrict ourselves to analyzing meanings of words and grammar, but instead focused on exploring our emotional connections to the writing

of the Japanese Canadian poets and the historical contexts they were living through. As I reflected and understood possible hidden meanings in the *haiku*, I often found myself overcome with emotion, which I would share with Carolyn. *Haiku* often gave me visual impressions before any other form of understanding, which I later created in visual materials such as drawings, paintings, and films in my mind.

My collaboration with Carolyn is not about direct translation, but about the process of understanding through mutual trust that we can share with readers. We wish that our soulful interpretation of those courageous Japanese Canadian survivors' art will guide people who feel distant from their ancestors to connect with their great gifts.

Carolyn: Most of the poems we worked with from the Lemon Creek *haiku* club collection are signed with the poet's surname, pen name, and location. We are planning to publish further translations in the future, and would like to keep family members informed about this process. If you see a name and location in the list on the next page which you think matches a relative of yours, or if you would simply like to be notified when further work from our project is published, please contact me at **cynaka15@gmail.com**.

PHOTO

Yoriko Gillard (2025), Kizuna in Process, Chigiri-e artwork

Read further translations from this project in other publications:

The Capilano Review: Spring 2026 issue

ARC Poetry Magazine: Summer 2026 issue

We gratefully acknowledge support from the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society (JCLS) Community Fund "Arts" Stream for this project.

“Tsubame” *haiku* author surnames (pen names removed) - listed by location

Kaslo
Arai
Kanda
Miyazaki
Sasaki
Suyama
Yoshida

New Denver
Hattori
Mizuno
Ogura
Uchibori
Yamazaki

Lemon Creek
Hayashi
Ikeno
Ito
Kohigashi
Komiyama
Kubo
Maruyama
Masuda
Mio
Nakamura
Oka
Tonegawa
Ukizawa
Yamazaki

Slocan
Kitamura
Sato
Shikatani

Sandon
Hattori
Hayashi
Hayashiba
Kondo
Mio
Nakasuji
Sugiman
Watanabe
Yabuki
Yamamoto
Yoshikawa

Okanagan
Hikichi
Horiuchi
Sakae

Popoff
Morimoto

Location not listed
Midori Takaoka
Sasanami Seseki

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“The 2023 Manifesto on Literary Translation.” PEN America, 10 Apr. 2023, pen.org/report/translation-manifesto/.

My Tomoshibi Bus Tour Journal

By Laura Hashiguchi Sutton

Growing up in Thunder Bay, Ontario, I learned very little about the impact of the Japanese Internment on my family. This trip was an opportunity not only to learn about my family's history but to gain knowledge so that I can teach others. I am a teacher, member of the Lakehead Japanese Cultural Association and passionate advocate for sharing important stories of our past. This is my journal from the University of Victoria Field School.

When I began this journey of searching to find answers, there were many options. One that popped up was the Tomoshibi bus tour. As I explored this further, I felt that this was the path for me! To be honest, I really didn't know what to expect. I tend to hear a good idea and jump in. I am good at trusting my feelings and knowing that it's okay to follow my gut...doesn't always work out, but I learn from it either way.

This tour signifies a beginning for me. A journey of discovery and understanding. As I get ready to get on the bus and travel with a bunch of people whom I don't know, I am strangely excited to build my knowledge and understanding. I am also nervous about what I might learn or not learn. I don't want to miss any more opportunities to learn. Since my father and grandparents have all passed on, with their stories tucked away with them, everything I will learn will be new!

Day One: Monday July 14, 2025:

We began our day at Hastings Park. This is where the tour began - a beautiful tranquil pond decorated by Japanese Maple trees (pictured left). I felt surrounded by calm. It was a peaceful place that was a good reminder of the lovely lives that the Japanese Canadians had before going to what lies just a few meters away.

I had to take this picture (above). It was of the wall in the museum in Tashme. The walls of the building that was once the butcher shop reminded me instantly of the walls in my grandparents' basement. When they settled in Thunder Bay and purchased a home, my grandfather had fixed up the basement walls just like this. He used wood and nails and paint exactly like this!

Day Two: Tuesday July 15, 2025

As we sat for a break in Boundary, Carmen (a wellness professional assigned to the tour) put out some rocks and paints. I took a look at the pile and as I reached for one rock, this one grabbed my attention (pictured right). At first I noticed the line on the left and when I went to show it to Mike (our tour manager), because I thought it was a fossil, he immediately noticed what looked like *Kanji*. He looked up what it could be and found a similar symbol that means “encouragement”. I felt that even before this journey I was called, or encouraged by something to take this trip. It’s a special message that lets me know I am on the right path.

What a lovely way to close off the last two days. This dip in Christina Lake was just what I needed. It cleansed my mind and body, it refreshed me for what was to come tomorrow. In the distance Jordan (leader of the University of Victoria field school on the tour) pointed out the peninsula and mentioned that there was an Internment Camp there before. Looking at it from this distance, in this setting, just hours after hearing about the kindness in Greenwood, reminds me that sometimes there is beauty even in the darkness.

Day Three: Wednesday July 16, 2025

This is the site of the Popoff Internment Camp (pictured below). This field is now owned by a person across the road. They allowed us the opportunity to view this site. The field is cleared, there are no houses, no sign that this was ever an Internment Camp. Is this good? Or not? My dad and grandparents lived here… I took a moment to just look at the view and tried to connect with what they must have seen many years ago. My eyes saw what they saw, but decades apart and I am free, they were not.

At the exit of the New Denver Internment Museum, I walked past a mirror (pictured right). I caught a reflection of all the displays behind me. I wondered what the “Reflection” was… was it for me to think? Was it for me to look at myself? I didn’t know. I took two pictures - one with me and one without.

New Denver is where my father was born. During Internment. I have no words for this, I reflect on it, and it is sad that he was born into this place. The joy a new baby brings would be tainted by fear of the unknowing of what would come next. I can’t even imagine…

Day Four: Thursday July 17, 2025

This staircase in the Langdon Museum (pictured left), in Kaslo was new. JCLS helped them to restore part of the building. It was well done, safe, and new, but also a barrier to some who cannot go up and down this steepness or number of stairs. It made me think of the barriers that we still have today for people to learn about Internment. Barriers like lack of knowledge, confidence in sharing the stories and who the audience could and should be.

Awakening Light by Toru Fujibayashi,
acrylic on canvas

I found this painting in the Langdon museum art installation. I was drawn to it because of the colours and the shape. I love staring at art and just imagining what the artist was thinking while creating the art. I love looking at the brush strokes and thinking about the process. It helped me step out of the heaviness of the rest of this museum, but yet knowing that this artist lived the truth that I needed a short break from.

Day Five: Friday July 18, 2025

The walk to freedom (pictured below). What a concept. I took this photo because of one of the videos we watched where the narrator talked about how "just crossing this bridge would get you to freedom." We just easily walked across it today, but the significance in the past was big. It is scary what we take for granted. This is just one of the things we can do easily that many years ago our families could not and were not allowed to do.

This river (pictured right) got bigger and bigger, wider and wider, faster and faster as we drove the long stretch that travelled with us. It was like our story. I compare it to the 'small' story that the Japanese Canadians thought they were living... I call it small because they lived in small spaces and small towns. As it picks up interest from newer generations, the stories are exposed for what they really are. The stories are getting bigger, with more information, filling a wider space and the power behind the stories and people are more and more powerful like the fast moving water.

I'm glad I took the invitation to write myself a note at the beginning of the tour. I wrote about my dad and grandparents and how I remembered them. They had good lives, friends and family that loved them and found prosperity with families, jobs, homes, and communities. This trip was a total rollercoaster ride - the scary climb, the exhilarating rush of emotions and the sadness that it is over when it was done but knowing you have the memories to visit every once and awhile. These pictures capture just a small snapshot of all that I saw, felt and, learned along the way. An important part of the trip that is not in the photos was my sister, who travelled with me. We laughed together, learned together, and cried together. What I bring back from this trip is a new me. Someone who has a better understanding of the hardship, resilience and power of spirit.

Domo Arigato!

Treasures from the Collection: Granted Sweater Company's Nikkei Place Sweater

By Sam Frederick, edited by Lisa Uyeda, reviewed by Keiko Funahashi and Brian Hirano

This recent addition to our archives brings with it stories of a family-owned business that operated for decades in Vancouver, BC. Founded in 1978 by Toyojiro and Noriko Hirano, the Granted Sweater Company produced locally-made hand-knit woollen sweaters and accessories. Their high-quality, crafted garments featured beautiful, whimsical, nature-inspired patterns, cherished by loyal customers in Vancouver and around the world.

PHOTO

Granted Sweater Company Nikkei Place Sweater; 2025. Photographed by Brian Hirano. NNMCC 2026.1.

Toyojiro and his wife, Noriko, immigrated from Japan to Canada in the 1970s for work opportunities. The Sekine bicycle factory, where Toyojiro worked in Japan, was establishing a factory in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Toyojiro was selected to oversee production. As the plant was closing down, the couple, along with their first child, chose to remain in Canada and moved to Vancouver in 1977, where Toyojiro became a tour guide. It was here that Toyojiro was inspired to open his own sweater company after seeing how popular hand-knit sweaters were with tourists. Alongside Noriko, who brought her expertise as a former kimono designer in Tokyo, they launched their company and found success in bringing their Canadian Heritage sweaters to locals and tourists alike. The Hiranos had two more children in Vancouver and as the little ones grew up, they became immersed in all aspects of the business, from design and inventory to quality control and accounting.

In 2007, Brian and his sister Ai took over operations from their parents and launched a new era for the company. They brought modern graphics to their well-loved sweaters, and led collaborations with dozens of organizations including Ghibli Studios, CBC, NASA, Burton Snowboards, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, and the David Suzuki Foundation. With the latter two, the proceeds from sales of their sweaters were donated to the Canadian Wildlife Federation and David Suzuki Foundation respectively, supporting the conservation of endangered Canadian animals, and sustainability and environmentalism efforts.

All of the Granted Sweater Company's patterns were designed in-house at their studio and they made use of a community of local knitters to produce each sweater, with all wool, trim, and tags sourced from within Canada. With this focus on local production, a guiding principle and value for the company, each sweater could take up to 20 to 25 hours of knitting.

In 2016, Ai left the company to pursue other endeavours at which point Brian took over as sole Owner and Creative Director of the Granted Sweater Company, continuing to shepherd the company and expand on the devoted customer base. After 47 years in business, Brian made the difficult decision to cease operations in January 2025. But before they closed, Brian custom-designed one last signature garment, the Nikkei Place sweater. Brian's creative and thoughtful design features the red and ivory colours of Nikkei Place complemented by blue and grey hues, a red and gold origami crane on the back, and is fastened with the Granted Sweater Company's signature maple wood zipper pull. Brian's design is intended as a symbol of peace that represents both Canadian and Japanese heritage in much the same way that Nikkei Place does.

With a limited production of only two Nikkei Place sweaters, we are grateful to preserve this one as a part of our archival collection and we are honoured to continue to share the stories of this longstanding local family business. As best said by the Granted Sweater Company, this sweater honourably represents "Our story told in stitches."

To learn more about the Granted Sweater Company, visit their website grantedclothing.com. Through Brian's continued generosity, the second sweater was gifted to Nikkei Place Foundation to support its fundraising efforts across Nikkei Place to strengthen community, culture, and senior care.

Explore more items from the archives at: nikkeimuseum.org

To set up a research appointment at the Charles H. Kadota Resource Centre, contact the Collections & Archives Team at: archives@nikkeiplace.org

PHOTO

Toyojiro and Noriko Hirano wedding photo. Courtesy Brian Hirano.

SAM FREDERICK is the Processing & Outreach Archivist at Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre. She previously worked as a Collections Assistant on the Tegami: Reaching Out Across Distance project, digitizing materials from the Eiji Yatabe and Shinobu Family collections. She has a Master of Information from the University of Toronto and originally hails from Winnipeg, Manitoba.

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