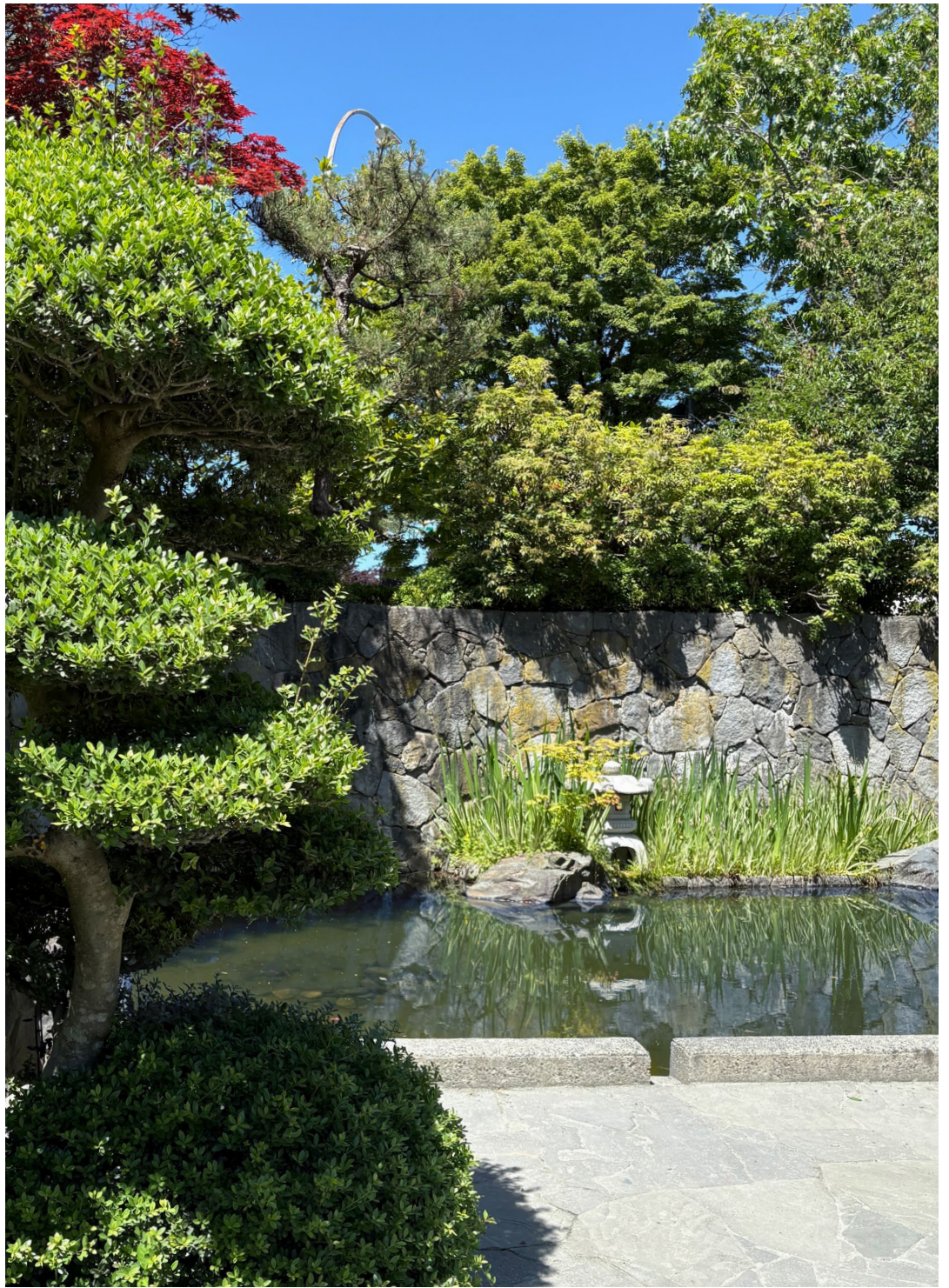
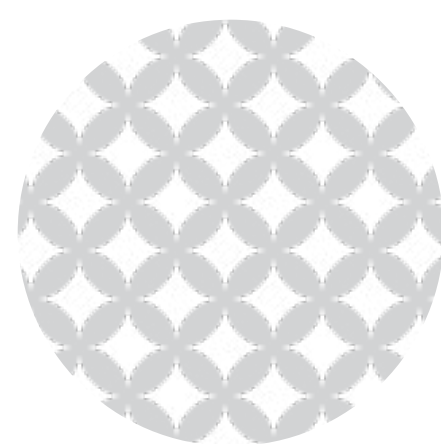
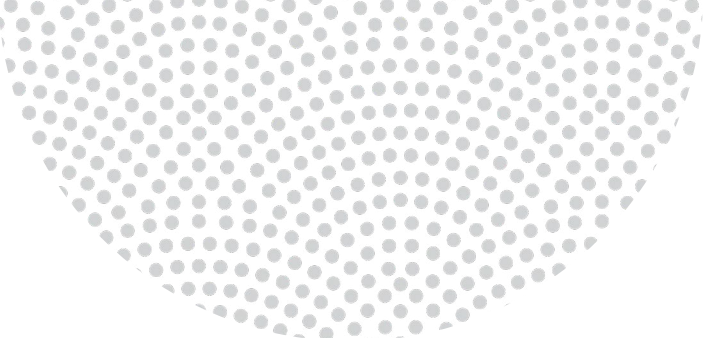




Annual Report 2025-2026

Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre
6688 Southoaks Crescent, Burnaby, BC
604.777.7000

centre.nikkeiplace.org



Mission

To honour, preserve and share the history and heritage of Japanese Canadians and Japanese culture in Canada.

Vision

A nationally recognized museum and gathering place that bridges Japanese and Canadian arts, culture and history, fostering pride in our heritage and a strong multicultural Canada.

Values

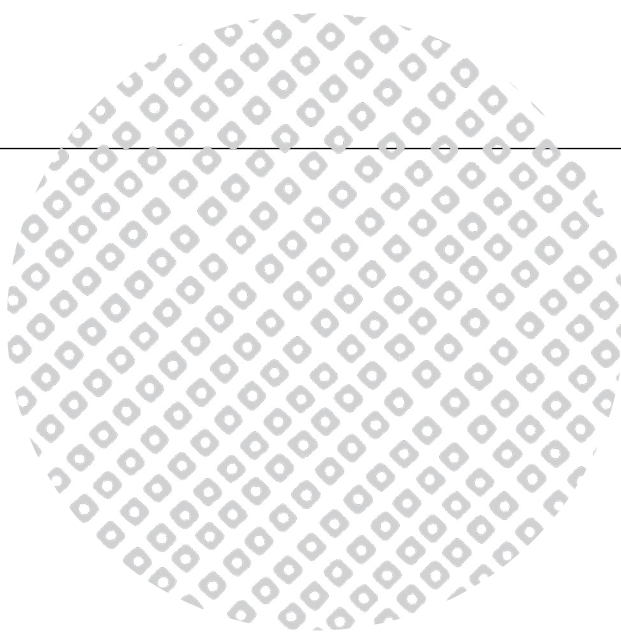
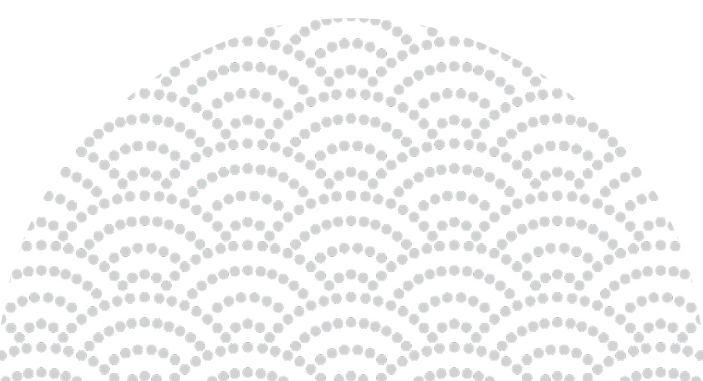
- Respect for heritage
 - Commitment to a diverse community
 - Inclusiveness, compassion and humility
- 
- 

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Message from our President & Executive Director

To our valued members, donors, partners, and supporters, we sincerely thank you for another year of working together to deliver on our mission and elevate our shared impact.

Highlights

We are proud to be part of the cultural fabric of Burnaby. In 2025, the City celebrated 60 years of friendship with its sister city, Kushiro, Japan. On July 13, Nikkei Place was honoured to welcome the visiting delegation alongside members of Burnaby City Council. His Worship Hidenori Tsuruma, Mayor of Kushiro, and His Worship Daniel Tetrault, Acting Mayor of Burnaby, unveiled Kushiro Lane—a beautiful pathway and garden located between the Robert Nimi Nikkei Home and the City's Alan Emmott Centre, aptly described as a “tranquil treasure.” Colourful street banners commemorating this milestone anniversary were erected along Southoaks Crescent, providing a scenic backdrop for the ceremony. Notably, these banners were designed by Danielle Jette, NNMCC's talented Design and Exhibit Coordinator.

Complementing Kushiro Lane, the Sakura-Momiji Project was funded by a generous gift from Ken Shinozaki. His vision was realized with support from Keiko Funahashi (Executive Director, Nikkei Place Foundation), Henry Wakabayashi, Nick Sueyoshi, and the Vancouver Japanese Gardeners Association.

At the invitation of the City of Burnaby, we (Herb and Karah) joined a Burnaby delegation to Kushiro last September. Led by Councillor Pietro Calendino, the visit built meaningful connections between Nikkei Centre and Kushiro institutions, while strengthening our ties with Tourism Burnaby and the Burnaby Board of Trade. Afterward, Karah was joined by Sherri Kajiwaru in Tokyo for the 65th Annual Convention of Nikkei & Japanese Abroad. There, they promoted the NNMCC and our travelling exhibition, *Broken Promises*, which was hosted at JICA's Japanese Overseas Migration Museum in Yokohama from August to December 2025, solidifying our role within the global Nikkei diaspora.

On September 22, 2025, we marked the Centre's 25th anniversary. Reaching this silver milestone is a testament to our generous community, dedicated past and present staff, and enthusiastic volunteers. However, the passage of time has also taken a toll on our infrastructure. Thanks to past fundraising by our late director and secretary, Ian Miki, a legacy gift from Gordon Kadota, and a grant from the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society, we replaced the Centre's roof and HVAC system this past fiscal year. Special thanks go to Henry Wakabayashi, and NNMCC's *ad hoc* Building Committee (Art Kanzaki, Kevin Isomura, and Frank Kamiya) for ensuring this vital project was completed on time and on budget.

This past year, our Heritage Hub Project—funded by the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society's Heritage Pillar—moved from assessment and research into implementation under the leadership of Ryan Yada (Principal Progressor, RYOSHIN Solutions). As we continue improving systems to safeguard and share Japanese Canadian heritage, we look forward to the upcoming final stretch of development and rolling out communications in the next phase.

Message from our President & Executive Director

Acknowledgements and Appreciation

We value our strong relationships with all levels of government, including the local MPs and MLAs who attend our events. Special thanks go to Burnaby Mayor Mike Hurley and City Council members for their frequent visits to Nikkei Centre.

We also gratefully acknowledge the unwavering support of the Consulate General of Japan in Vancouver. A highlight this year for Herb was participating with Consul General Takahashi in the *mikoshi* parade at our Nikkei Matsuri Festival. We bid farewell to former Deputy Consul General Okagaki, who returned to Tokyo as Director of the Domestic Public Relations Office, and warmly welcome her successor, Deputy Consul General Sugio.

Nikkei Centre thrives because of the NNMCC Auxiliary, our 400 volunteers, and our dedicated staff. On behalf of the Board and leadership, thank you for your incredible efforts. We also extend our deep gratitude to our Board and Executive Committee for repeatedly going above and beyond: Carrie Okano (Vice President), Kevin Isomura (Vice President), Ron Kruschen (Treasurer), Craig Natsuhara (Secretary), and Fred Yada (Past-President).

Thank You – And a Request for Your Assistance

Our continued success depends entirely on your support through financial donations and bequests, volunteering your time, and attending our programs, events, and activities with family and friends.

We are now in the second year of our Nikkei Next campaign to fund critical infrastructure upgrades, reimagined spaces, and immersive cultural experiences. Beyond essential roof and HVAC replacements, this campaign will revitalize Hayashi Hall, the Resource Centre Library, and our outdoor gardens to significantly enhance the visitor experience.

Funding is also being sought to transform our Tatami Room into an Immersive Cultural Space featuring a traditional *chashitsu* tearoom. We are pleased to report that work has already begun on bringing this vision to life. Our deepest gratitude goes to local *chanoyu* sensei and practitioners, whose invaluable knowledge of Japanese tea traditions ensures this environment will be both authentically beautiful and educational.

As we look toward a vibrant year ahead, we are honored to welcome you every day to the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre—a place where our shared heritage inspires our tomorrow.

よろしく願いいたします。

Herbert I. Ono, President



Karah Foster, Executive Director



Building Enhancements

Roof Replacement Project

In the fall of 2025, the NNMCC successfully completed the essential roof replacement project initiated the previous year. Supported in part by funding from the Japanese Canadian Legacy Society, numerous donors to the Friends of Nikkei Centre Maintenance Fund, and a legacy gift from Gordon Kadota, this work replaced the Centre's original 25-year-old roofing system with a modern, energy-efficient equivalent. Under the guidance of the NNMCC Building Committee (Henry Wakabayashi, Art Kanzaki, and Frank Kamiya), Marine Roofing removed the aging system and installed a new 9,130 sq. ft. Garland Canada roof system over a six-month period. This upgrade has created a reliable, comfortable, and sustainable environment for our community.



HVAC Replacement Project

Alongside the roof replacement, the NNMCC undertook a major HVAC replacement project beginning in spring 2025. Also Funded by the Japanese Canadian Legacy Society, this initiative focused on replacing the five primary rooftop HVAC units servicing the entire facility. Working with AERCO Industries Ltd., the project involved ordering newer custom-built units, removing the outdated equipment, installing the new systems, and completing full commissioning of the system. The project was successfully concluded in fall 2025 and has resulted in improved comfort for visitors, enhanced climate control for the museum collection, and reduced energy consumption.

Lobby Renewal Project

Funded through the New Horizons for Seniors Program, the NNMCC revitalized the Ellipse lobby. The project transformed the open space into a community hub by introducing comfortable seating, improved layouts, and a warm atmosphere designed to encourage intergenerational engagement. These enhancements now support informal social interaction and dedicated community programming, fostering social inclusion and healthy aging. By prioritizing comfort and accessibility, the renewed lobby has become an active gathering space for seniors and visitors of all ages.

Second Floor Carpet Project

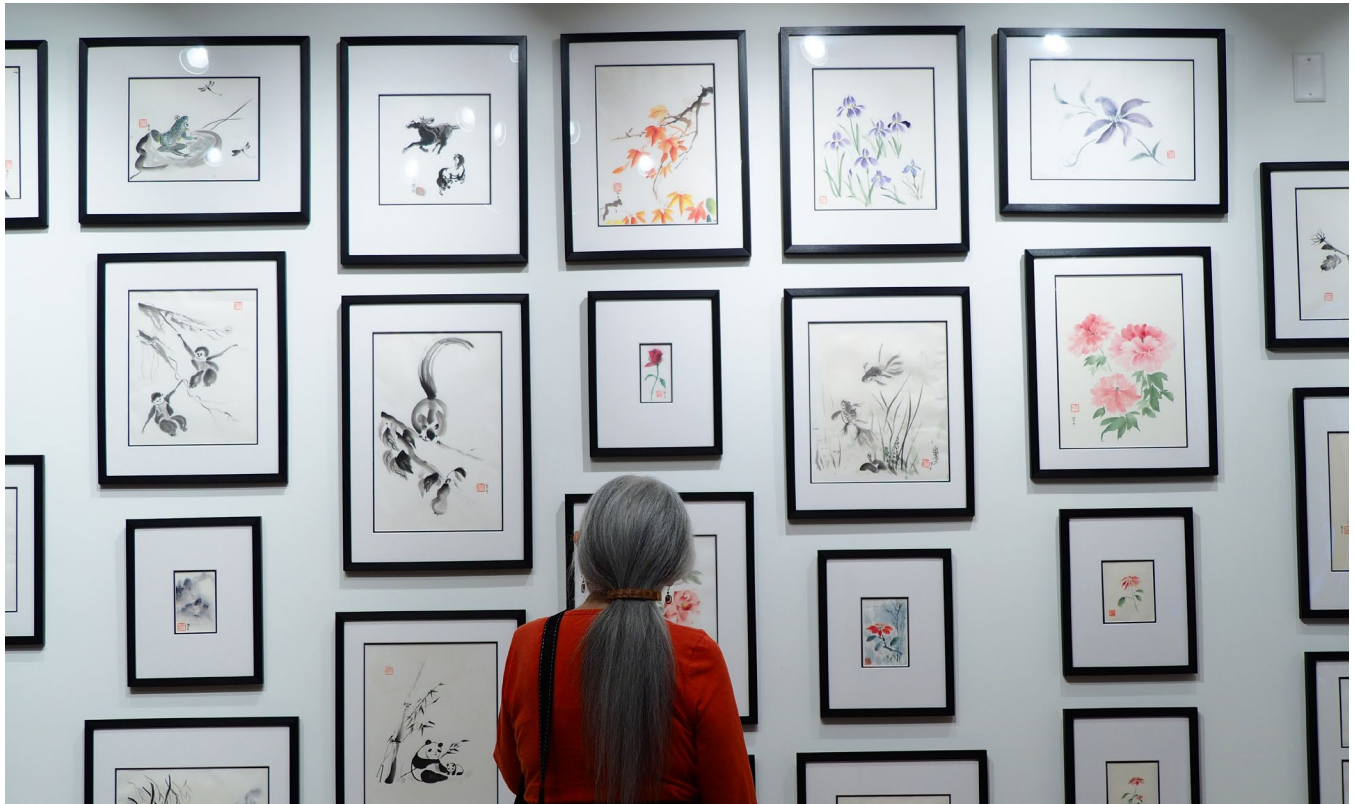
In spring 2026, for the first time NNMCC replaced the original worn and aging carpeting on the second floor of the facility thanks to the legacy of support from Gordon Kadota. The previous carpet had aged well, however after 25 years it became increasingly degraded. Exclusive Flooring Ltd. was contracted and carpeting was replaced throughout the hallways, multipurpose rooms, Gladstone Japanese Language School classrooms and office, and main stairwell. This project has greatly improved the appearance of the second floor while also providing clean, safe and accessible spaces.



Museum

Exhibitions

Karasawa Gallery



Photographer Moay Grace Sakata.

Umami: Savouring Artistic Nikkei Identity (Part 2)

May 27 – September 27, 2025

Artists: Molly JF Caldwell, Yoshiko Hirano, Marlene Howell, Bryan Kobayakawa
and Annie Sumi, Vivien Nishi, Reiko Pleau

As part of our 25th anniversary celebrations, this exhibition highlighted the rich essence of our Japanese Canadian creative community, featuring a range of artistic styles from traditional to contemporary, and including both established and emerging artists.



Photographer Moay Grace Sakata.

Beautifully Broken Kintsugi by Naoko Fukumaru

October 14, 2025 – February 21, 2026

This exhibit showcased the 500-year-old Japanese art of Kintsugi, the practice of repairing ceramics with urushi lacquer and powdered gold. Artist Naoko Fukumaru integrated traditional methods with innovative techniques to explore personal resilience. The exhibition invited viewers to find strength and beauty in the imperfect.



2nd Floor Kadota Landing

TAIKEN: Generations of Resilience

This long-term, trilingual mural exhibit (English, French, and Japanese) presents the enduring history of the Japanese Canadian community. This exhibit is ongoing and free to visit anytime during the centre's opening hours.



Photo by Adam PW Smith



Photo by Adam PW Smith



Photo by Adam PW Smith



25 Together

Launched in July 2025, this ongoing exhibit commemorates 25 years of the NNMCC. Featuring archival documents and the original architectural model, it celebrates the collective spirit of the volunteers, donors, and community members who brought the dream of Nikkei Place to life.

1st Floor

The Vancouver JCCA Nisei Baseball Team, 1951-1960

A new mural, installed in December 2025, celebrating the legacy of Nisei baseball.

Hina Matsuri

From February 11 to March 3, 2026, our lobby featured a traditional Hina Matsuri doll display. This seasonal celebration included a successful sale of donated Japanese dolls.



Travelling Exhibits

Broken Promises

Grounded in research from the Landscapes of Injustice multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional, community engaged project, this exhibit follows the stories of seven narrators to explore the systematic dispossession of Japanese Canadians in the 1940s and their enduring struggle for justice.

Major venues:

- Kelowna Museums, BC (Feb-Jun, 2025)
- Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan (June 2025)
- Japanese Overseas Migration Museum - JICA, Yokohama, Japan (Aug-Dec 2025)
- Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Winnipeg MB (Sep-Nov, 2026)

Small venues:

- Courtney Museum, BC (Feb-Aug 2025)

Japan tour:

- Canada Museum, Mio, Wakayama (Apr-Jun 2024)
- Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, Kyoto (October 2024)
- Doshisha University, Kyoto (December 2024)

The Suitcase Project

This exhibit asks *yonsei* and *gosei* (fourth and fifth generation) Japanese Canadians and Americans what they would pack if uprooted from their homes in a moment's notice.

Major venues:

- Woodstock Museum, ON (Sep 2024-Jun 2025)
- Swift Current Museum, SK (Jul-Sept, 2025)
- Museum of Vancouver, BC (Oct 2025-Nov 2026)



Broken Promises exhibit at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg Manitoba.

Museum Collections & Archives

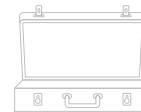


Our museum is honoured to receive a custom, hand-knit Nikkei Place sweater donated from the Granted Sweater Company – thoughtfully designed by owner Brian Hirano with our logo and brand colours in mind. We are grateful to now have this custom sweater as a part of our archives and to continue to share the stories of this longstanding local Japanese Canadian family business. Photo credit: Daigo Naito, NNMCC.

Home to the largest community-driven repository of Japanese Canadian history & heritage, we house and care for nearly 2,000 remarkable collections & fonds that capture and preserve the lived experiences that people of Japanese ancestry have in Canada, sharing their contributions, innovation, creativity and development from the late 1800s to the present day. We safeguard thousands of archival records, rare publications, artwork, and personal belongings donated by individuals, families, businesses, and community organizations.

OVER 90 NEW DONATIONS AND ACCRUALS WERE ACCEPTED:

- **11.2+ cm** of textual records, **1,159** photographs, **1** oral history, **2** audio & video recordings, **63** books, **68** objects and artwork



Online Database - NikkeiMuseum.org

We host the national Japanese Canadian online database hub and this year, we had 9,376 visitors (48,610 visitor hits) explore our 648 collections and 42,136 items.

- Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre
525 collections and 32,481 items
- Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre
63 collections and 8,343 items
- Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre
51 collections and 1,243 items
- Kamloops Japanese Canadian Museum & Archives
9 collections and 62 items

Loans from the Collections & Archives

We loan archival records, objects, and artwork to other museums across Canada. This year, we lent 60 items.

Long-term loans:

- Tashme Museum
- Canadian Museum for Human Rights
- Canadian Museum of History
- Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21
- Museum of Vancouver
- NNMCC Broken Promises travelling exhibition



Tea Set Kintsugi repairs. This tea set is believed to have belonged to a Japanese Canadian family forced from their Marpole home in 1942. The set arrived broken, and no connections could be made to the original owners. Under the skilled hands of Naoko Fukumar, it has been meticulously restored and was on display for the exhibition, Beautifully Broken - Kintsugi by Naoko Fukumar. Photo credit: Naoko Fukumar.

Charles H. Kadota Resource Centre

Staff facilitate access to rare and one of a kind resources in the library, archives, and museum collections. Services include, onsite filming and photography of objects, high resolution digitized reproductions, remote and onsite research & genealogy support, and commercial licensing.

Archives Open House

3 open house events brought in over 100 visitors to conduct research, explore our resources, and learn more about accessing the Collections & Archives. During Nikkei Matsuri 450 festival-goers visited the Resource Centre. We look forward to offering more open houses in the future.



Library professionals attending the annual meetings of the Council of East Asian Studies (CEAL) and Association for Asian Studies (AAS) visited the NNMCC for a tour of the Charles H. Kadota Resource Centre and TAIKEN: Generations of Resilience exhibit, organized together with The Japan Foundation in Toronto. Staff introduced visitors to the NNMCC's specialized library classification system, our archives, and our film preservation process. Photo credit: Chase Nelson, NNMCC.

Research Highlights

We supported:

- 841 research inquiries of which 679 were remote
- 1,580 hours, assisting researchers (700+ hours more than last year)
- 229 in-person visitors (individually or in small research groups)
- 20 tours of the Resource Centre and Archives
- In-kind services and discounts valued at \$4,201, reflect our commitment to support research and community projects
- Almost 100 known Japanese Canadian Legacies Society funded projects supported since 2024

Approximately 77 hours of preparation and handling were spent to provide access to the rich archival collection of poet and calligrapher Kinori Oka. Her personal belongings were central to discussions between Oka's daughter and the donor of the collection, Masako Stillwell, a filmographer, a photographer, and three academics, all supported by the archives team.

Approximately 170 hours were spent on archival support of research and acquiring permissions for use of materials from the community in the expanded online exhibit, *Warrior Spirit*, covering Japanese Canadian veterans of the two World Wars and the Korean War. www.japanesecanadianveterans.ca

Approximately 87 hours spent thus far to support the research, digitization and development of a new interpretive centre at the Vancouver Japanese Language School - Japanese Hall. This project about the school's landmark history is one of many supported by the Japanese Canadian Legacies Fund and is set to open in the fall of 2026.

Approximately 95 hours spent on supporting the Powell Street Festival Society with research, object selection, and digitization of photographs, posters, documents and VHS tapes, for development of both this year's exhibition featured in the Karasawa Gallery and the accompanying book, *Return to Paueru Gai: Fifty Years of Vancouver's Powell Street Festival*.



Collections donor Masako Stillwell visited the NNMCC alongside researchers interested in her mother Kinori Oka's collection of photographs, poetry, and kimono preserved in our archives. Masako posed in front of one of her mother's kimono (2003.1) while holding a studio portrait of 18-year-old Kinori Oka wearing the same kimono and standing with her family in Japan, taken in 1922 (2001.28.2.5.12). Photo credit: Photographed by Ken Villeneuve.

Past Wrongs Future Choices (PWFC)

PWFC is a partnership project based at the University of Victoria focusing on the global history of the mistreatment of Nikkei during the Second World War.

Archives Cluster: Staff continued to support the ongoing research and development of the archival spotlights, and co-led outreach initiatives that brought together over 135 participants from across Canada. In the summer, 2 online sessions were hosted in partnership with the National Association of Japanese Canadians' Family History Program, and featured special guests Louise Noguchi and Marlene Howell. In November, 2 in-person workshops were offered in Ottawa in collaboration with Library and Archives Canada and the Ottawa Japanese Community Association.

Exhibition Cluster: 2025 was a milestone year for PWFC exhibition activity. *Roots of Resilience*, which traces the complex history of the Nikkei community in Brazil, opened in São Paulo in late April with Project Co-Chair Dr. Audrey Kobayashi and Exhibition Cluster Chair Sherri Shinobu Kajiwarra in attendance. *Broken Promises*, examining the mass dispossession of Japanese Canadians in the 1940s and traveling since 2020, opened at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg in October 2025 and will run for a full year. In conjunction with the Winnipeg opening, Drs. Jordan Stanger Ross and Audrey Kobayashi hosted a PWFC museum-cluster symposium that brought project partners together from around the globe. A notable outcome of those discussions is the confirmation of an integrated PWFC exhibition planned for 2028 at the Museu da Imigração do Estado de São Paulo (Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo) in Brazil.



This is one of hundreds of photos of the Uyeda Family now digitized and described on our collections database, nikkeimuseum.org.

Uyeda Family at Christmas; Nakusp, BC; circa 1975. Uyeda Family of Nakusp collection. NNMCC 2025.1.3.11.109.

Tomoni: Living with Ability, Atsu's Story

Following the successful completion of our 2025-2026 digitization project, *Tomoni: Living with Ability, Atsu's Story*, over 900 photographic and textual materials from the Uyeda Family of Nakusp collection (NNMCC 2025.1) are now available for viewing on nikkeimuseum.org. This collection is a treasure in our archives as the materials provide underrepresented perspectives on Japanese Canadian history, depicting the everyday lives of people with disabilities and the family's navigation of medical and social service systems in acquiring care, equipment, and accessibility accommodations.

Saburo Shinobu's Vimy Ridge 1936 Pilgrimage Film

Media Conservation Technician Jeffery Chong digitized and described Saburo Shinobu's 8mm film documenting his pilgrimage to the unveiling of the Canadian National War Memorial at Vimy Ridge in 1936 (NNMCC 2018.12.2.7.1). The film's digitization opens this invaluable resource for research into Japanese Canadian presence and advocacy during and after the First World War. Watch the film on our YouTube Channel @nikkeimuse.

Heritage Hub

This year marked an important step forward for the Heritage Hub project, as the work moved from research and evaluation into active implementation. At its heart, the Heritage Hub is about making Japanese Canadian history easier to find, understand, preserve, and share. For community members, this means a future where it will be easier to explore archival records such as photographs, oral histories, and stories from 1870 to the present that relate to the history and culture of Japanese Canadians.

A central achievement this year was the selection and contracting of a new Collections Management System, the software that will replace the Museum's aging database and become the foundation for future public access to the Museum's Collections and Archives. Following a Request for Proposal issued in July 2025, four shortlisted vendors were evaluated through proposals, demonstrations, reference checks, and long-term cost analysis. Both the Project Advisory Committee and the NNMCC Board endorsed proceeding with Whirl-i-Gig and their CollectiveAccess platform, and implementation formally launched on December 1, 2025.

This new system is more than a technology upgrade. It is a major investment in the future of Japanese Canadian storytelling. Over time, it will allow the Museum to better organize, protect, and share more than 50,000 existing records, while also prioritizing important backlog content not currently available online. It will support a richer public experience, including access to more media formats such as high-resolution photographs, oral histories, audio, video, and other collection materials.

The project also advanced digital preservation, helping protect digital records so they remain accessible in the long-term. NNMCC has teamed up with the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre to support the shared use of Archivematica (via a hosting provider, Permafrost), reducing duplication and costs while strengthening long-term care of Japanese Canadian heritage materials.

Just as importantly, the Heritage Hub has helped build new capacity within the NNMCC team, supporting reference and donation inquiries, condition reporting and conservation, archival processing, audiovisual media preservation, database upgrades, digital preservation planning, outreach, and librarianship. Additional work also began to refresh the overall NNMCC website, creating clearer pathways for Nikkei families, educators, students, researchers, and community members.

Much of the work so far has been behind the scenes, but it is laying the foundation for public-facing improvements that will make Japanese Canadian history easier to explore and more widely accessible for future generations.

Heritage Hub is a signature project led by the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre (NNMCC) under the Heritage Pillar supported by the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society.



Education Programs

This past year, our educational initiatives saw remarkable growth, expanding our impact and deepening connections to Japanese Canadian history both locally and nationally.



Total Reach: Approximately 2,648

Up from 2,153 the previous year

On-Site Learning

Since our doors opened in 2000, NNMCC has welcomed students for immersive historic and cultural experiences. Today, we facilitate vibrant on-site field trips for students across Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, and abroad—including visiting students from Japan.

This year, **1,882** students participated in our signature **Taiken program** and summer camps. We also expanded our offerings with a new, hands-on pickling workshop, which invites students to explore Japanese Canadian history through the unique lens of food heritage.

JOURNEYS Outreach Education Kits

To ensure accessibility for educators outside our walls, we continue to circulate our **JOURNEYS Education Kits** at no cost to teachers. This year, the kits served **667 users**. While heavily utilized across the Lower Mainland (including North Vancouver, Coquitlam, and Burnaby), we saw a surge in demand across broader BC communities like North Cowichan and Squamish, as well as nationally in Ontario cities like Toronto and Windsor.

Tomoshibi 灯 Journey Bus Tour

The **Tomoshibi 灯 Journey** returned for two five-day pilgrimages in July and September 2025. This dedicated bus tour provided **99 participants** with a profound opportunity to learn about the history of Japanese Canadian internment firsthand. Traveling across the bittersweet landscape of British Columbia, the tour traced the history from its painful beginnings at Hastings Park to historic towns and internment sites like Tashme, New Denver, and Lemon Creek. Supported by deep learning and dedicated healing circles, the journey confronted a somber past while celebrating the enduring resilience of today's Japanese Canadian communities.

Special Events

A Blooming Success at Spring Bazaar

On May 3 and 4, NNMCC and the Auxiliary hosted the annual Spring Bazaar to celebrate our 25th anniversary. Visitors explored a vibrant marketplace of Japanese treasures, local crafts, and plants in the Nikkei Garden. Culinary highlights included the Auxiliary's famous manju alongside various street foods. With free workshops in bon-odori and hula, the event successfully combined community fundraising with cultural preservation. Attendance: 3,000

Tanabata Market

On July 6, visitors gathered for the Tanabata Market, which featured a diverse mix of artisans, fresh produce, and Japanese street food—including the Auxiliary's hit new dorayaki ice cream sandwiches. Guests embraced the star festival spirit by wearing yukata and hanging wishes on colourful tanzaku. The atmosphere was further livened by shishimai performances, the Samurai Cinema Club, and a community bon-odori practice in the garden. Attendance: 2,000



Photographer Adam PW Smith

Burnaby-Kushiro Sister City 60th Anniversary

NNMCC was proud to host the 60th anniversary celebration of the Burnaby-Kushiro sister city relationship. To mark the milestone, the Kushiro Lane Garden was officially opened on July 13, 2025. Acting Burnaby Mayor Daniel Tetrault and Kushiro Mayor Hidenori Tsuruma performed the ribbon-cutting ceremony. This new garden located by Nikkei Home is a lasting symbol of six decades of international friendship and cultural exchange between our two cities. Attendance: 200



Photographer Manto Artworks

Zenyasai: Matsuri-Eve Beer Garden

On August 29, we kicked off our landmark 25th anniversary festival weekend with Zenyasai, a lively Matsuri-eve celebration. The Nikkei Garden was transformed into an atmospheric beer and sake garden, featuring a curated soundtrack by top DJs including INFUSE, Rennie Foster, Kevin Shiu, and O-Shun. Guests enjoyed a sunset evening of deep house and EDM while sampling izakaya-style bites and sake flights. Attendance: 500



Photographer Manto Artworks

Nikkei Matsuri 2025

As our largest fundraiser of the year, Nikkei Matsuri 2025 transformed our grounds into a vibrant Japanese festival site on August 30 and 31. This massive undertaking was powered by the tireless dedication of 250 volunteers who filled over 400 shifts. Their efforts began weeks in advance, from the intricate assembly of the iconic yagura tower by Kenyukai members to the hanging of traditional lanterns. The weekend offered a rich tapestry of experiences, featuring 23 performance groups, 23 food vendors, and 12 merchandise vendors, alongside the popular Otakara Market and six sold-out origami workshops. We were especially proud to offer a livestream of the stage performances, ensuring our seniors at Nikkei Home could share in the festivities. From the NNMCC Auxiliary's record-breaking 900 dorayaki ice-cream sandwiches to the yukata-kitsuke station, the festival once again proved to be a vital heartbeat for our community. Attendance: 9,113



Photographer Garth Taylor

Remembrance Day

The November 11 ceremony at Stanley Park saw a significant increase in participation. Marking the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII, the service featured moving tributes from David Iwaasa and David Mitsui. At the Vancouver Rowing Club reception, Linda Kawamoto Reid was surprised with the NAJC Award of Merit for her years of dedicated service in preserving the legacy of Japanese Canadian veterans and her vital work as an archivist. Attendance: 720

TOW: Japan's Ethereal Acoustic Duo

On November 8, NNMCC, in partnership with the Powell Street Festival Society, hosted the Canadian debut of TOW. The Tokyo-based duo mesmerized the audience with a cinematic blend of vocals, accordion, and guitar. The evening opened with the vibrant sounds of the Southern Wave Okinawan Music and Dance Society, creating a unique bridge between Japanese tradition and contemporary artistry. This intimate performance was a highlight of our 25th anniversary cultural programming. Attendance: 150

Craft Fair Celebrates Local Makers

On November 15 and 16, our annual Craft Fair featured 80 talented makers showcasing a diverse array of handcrafted wares. The event continues to be a cornerstone for supporting local artisans, offering a bustling marketplace for unique finds. In addition to shopping, the fair offered door prizes, a kids' corner, and free drop-in cultural programs, fostering a deeper appreciation for handmade culture. Attendance: 1,800

Breakfast with Santa and Holiday Boutique

On December 6, families gathered for a pancake breakfast featuring a new rice flour. This year's event was paired with a Holiday Boutique in the lobby, featuring select Japanese artists and Christmas trees. While children enjoyed crafting activities and visits from Santa, parents explored a fusion of traditional and modern Japanese aesthetics, finding thoughtful gifts. The event offered a wonderful opportunity for the community to celebrate the season together. Attendance: 500

Nikkei Mochitsuki

The year concluded on December 29 with our traditional Nikkei Mochitsuki. The Vancouver Japanese Gardeners Association provided a live mochi-pounding demonstration, accompanied by powerful performances from Chibi Taiko, Satsuki-kai, and Vancouver Okinawa Taiko. The tireless efforts of the NNMCC Auxiliary ensured that crowds enjoyed fresh mochi, continuing a vital cultural practice that rings in the new year. Attendance: 1,800



Photographer Adam PW Smith



Photographer Adam PW Smith

Oshōgatsu New Year Celebrations

On January 3, guests gathered to experience Japan's cherished New Year traditions. Participants practiced *kakizome* (first calligraphy of the year) and enjoyed traditional games like *karuta* and *shogi*. With shishimai lion dances to ward off evil spirits and a menu of warm oden and Okinawan noodles, the event—supported by numerous local partner organizations—successfully fostered a spirit of renewal and cultural exchange. Attendance: 1,800



Photographer Adam PW Smith

Sakura Gala 2026: 25 Years of Community

The 2026 Sakura Gala took place on March 7, bringing together all three Nikkei Place organizations to celebrate NNMCC's 25th anniversary. The evening featured a fine-dining experience by Zen Japanese Restaurant and honoured leaders Gary Kawaguchi and Sam Yamamoto with the Thomas Shoyama Lifetime Achievement Award. The gala was a fitting conclusion to a milestone year, raising essential funds for the continued growth of our community. Attendance: 186

Programs

Cultural Programs

Building on previous momentum, we transitioned to a reliable programming model that doubled our community impact. We delivered **249 programs** (a **64% increase**) and welcomed over **4,400 attendees**, marking a **100% surge** in participation year-over-year.



Photo by Cory Blyth

Strategic Consistency

To foster a loyal participant base, we introduced regular drop-in formats. New recurring offerings include **Pokémon League**, **Karuta meetups**, **Bon Odori practice** (seasonal), and specialized martial arts **Jukendo** and **Tankendo**.

Japanese Language Expansion

To meet rising demand, we expanded to **three levels of Beginner Japanese** and increased sessional classes to **three times per week**. These additions, alongside our conversation class and language exchange, have significantly boosted our instructional volume.

Culinary Arts

Culinary workshops remain a premier attraction. This year, we balanced tradition with innovation by adding **Sake tasting**, **Art Sushi**, and **Gyoza making** to our staple Soba and Miso workshops.

Community & International Collaborations

Our partnerships continue to broaden our reach:

- **Tourism Burnaby:** For the second year, *Bite of Burnaby* sponsored our "Taste of Japan" series with grant and marketing support.
- **Ichigo Ichi-e Series:** We continued our tradition of hosting international talent, featuring **Chef Ryo Imai** and returning kimono upcycle artist **Kiwa Anraku**.

2025–2026 List of Programs

Ichigo Ichi-e Guests from Japan

- Chef Ryo Imai: Fusion Flavors
- Kiwa Anraku: Finger-knitted Kimono scarf workshop

Japanese Language Classes

- Beginner Japanese (Levels 1, 2, and 3)
- Japanese Conversation Class
- Japanese Language Exchange

Culinary Workshops

- **New:** Art Sushi, Gyoza making, Onigiri making, and Sake tasting and pairing.
- **Ongoing:** Chocolate making, Loose leaf Japanese tea lectures and workshops, Miso making, Nerikiri workshops, Soba making, Tea Ceremony demonstration, and Wagashi workshops.

Japanese Culture & Martial Arts

- **New:** Pokémon League, Karuta Meetups, Ninjutsu, Jukendo and Tankendo, Lacquerware, and Kimono Lecture Series.
- **Ongoing:** Shogi Meetups, Kizuna Art Salon, Indigo Dye, Kengido (Sword Fighting), Mizuhiki, Japanese Folk Dance, Kimono/Yukata Dressing, Temari, Kintsugi, Ikebana (Sogetsu & Ohara), Shodo, and Wreath Making.

Literary Arts

- Clara Kumagai Book Talk



Programs by External Organizations

The number of weekly and monthly programs organized by external organizers renting our space who run their own programming in 2025-2026 were 29. (2024-2025: 30 groups)

Budo, Japanese martial arts

- Aikido Vancouver Shomonkai
- Ishikawa Family Judo
- Nikkei Iaido
- Nikkei Karate

Exercise

- Adult Badminton
- Elite Gymnastics
- Jiriki Seitai
- Nikkei Beginner Hula
- Nikkei Line Dance
- Nikkei Pickleball
- Senior Badminton
- Taz Badminton
- Wailele Wai Wai Hula Dance

Japanese culture

- Chibi Taiko
- Nikkei Senior Karaoke
- Nikkei Shohin Bonsai Club
- Samurai Cinema Club
- Satsuki Kai, Japanese dance group
- Shodo Kenkyu Isseikai, calligraphy
- Soroban, abacus
- Southern Wave Okinawan Music & Dance
- Sogetsu Ikebana Class
- Ugatoe Kissa, group singing
- Vancouver Go Association, igo
- Vancouver Youth Go Academy, igo for kids
- Iroha Kids, Art & Craft
- Origami Class

Other

- Rhythm 'N' Rhyme (baby and parents activity in Cantonese)
- Turkish Canadian Society Children Music Group



Museum Shop



25th Anniversary Furoshiki. An original NNMCC creation, this versatile cloth features a custom design that celebrates our cultural elements.



Rentals

Four years after the return to full operations, NNMCC continues to thrive as a vibrant hub for a wide range of activities, from intimate private gatherings to large-scale community celebrations. We have observed a profound trend of groups actively rebuilding their connections, and it is a source of great pride for us to see our spaces serve as the backdrop for these regular reconnections.

Many social and cultural organizations have now made NNMCC their permanent home for annual events. There is no greater joy for our team than welcoming back returning clients and seeing our facility woven into the fabric of their community life.



Creating Traditions

Our reputation continues to grow through word-of-mouth as families establish beautiful traditions within our walls. This past year, we were touched by several full-circle moments:

- A couple who held their wedding at the Centre returned to celebrate their child's first birthday.
- A bride-to-be booked her own wedding after being inspired by her cousin's celebration here.
- Families who celebrated a first child's milestone have returned to do the same for their second.

Our clients frequently speak to NNMCC's beautiful aesthetic and welcoming atmosphere. These testimonials serve as a constant inspiration for the Rentals team, fueling our commitment to providing exceptional service and maintaining a space where everyone feels at home.

Testimonial

Excellent facilities! The school I work at has used the Nikkei for its graduation weekend ceremonies for many years. The hall is lovely and comfortable - the lobby is fabulous for hosting receptions with a large garden area perfect for photos. Momoko, their guest services manager delivers first class support. You won't be disappointed!

- Gaileen Woytko



Volunteers



Photographer Adam PW Smith

The Gift of Time: Our Volunteer Impact

Our 400 dedicated volunteers contributed an impressive **11,000 hours** this year, providing the vital energy that drives our programs. A major highlight was our inaugural participation in the **Tourism Challenge** in April and May. Volunteers at our reception desk engaged visitors with cultural trivia, creating a wonderful learning opportunity for both the public and the volunteers themselves. To honour their service, we awarded Tourism Challenge passports to our top-contributing volunteers from the previous year. In October, we celebrated our community with a spirited **Halloween-themed appreciation party**. With 180 guests in costume, the event was a joyful way for our staff to express their sincere gratitude through games, prizes, and shared laughter. Four days a week, the doors of the **Nikkei Japanese Bookstore** open thanks entirely to our dedicated volunteers. They provide a welcoming space and a vital hub for Japanese readers, while their hard work raises funds that support the NNMCC year-round.

Volunteer Community Committee Chairs

Auxiliary (vacant)
 Japanese Canadian War Memorial.....Mandy Shintani
 Nikkei Matsuri.....Louise Akuzawa



Photographer Adam PW Smith

NNMCC Auxiliary



The NNMCC Auxiliary continues to be a cornerstone of the Centre, bringing tradition and passion to our most anticipated events. Their expertise was once again on full display during our annual **Spring Bazaar, Otakara Market at Nikkei Matsuri, Breakfast with Santa,** and **Mochitsuki**, where their dedication ensures these cultural touchstones remain vibrant.

A particular highlight this year was the debut of the **Dorayaki Ice Cream Sandwich** at Nikkei Matsuri. From the initial concept and production to the final display, the Auxiliary's creativity turned this new treat into an instant sensation. It joined our legendary **Auxiliary Manju** as a must-have signature sweet. The Auxiliary's unwavering commitment and *omotenashi* (hospitality) are essential to the spirit and success of the NNMCC.



Thank you

Funders Apr 2025-Mar 2026

Akiko Gomyo Foundation - Matsuri | Chashitsu Tea Room Project
Canadian Museums Association - Young Canada Works at Building Careers in Heritage
Canadian Museums Association - Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations
City of Burnaby - Festivals Burnaby - Nikkei Matsuri
Deux Mille Foundation - Beautifully Broken, Kintsugi Exhibition, 2025-2026
Displaced, Dispersed, Dispossessed Exhibition 2026-2027
Employment and Social Development Canada - New Horizons for Seniors Program
Japanese Canadian Legacies Society - Community Fund 2 Infrastructure Building Improvements - HVAC
Japanese Canadian Legacies Society - Intergenerational Wellness - NNMCC Tomoshibi 灯Journey
Japanese Canadian Legacies Society - Heritage Site - Japanese Canadian War Memorial
Japanese Canadian Legacies Society - Infrastructure: Building Improvements - Roof
Japanese Canadian Survivors Health & Wellness Fund Society
L.A. Shoji Foundation
Metro Vancouver - Regional Cultural Project Grant
Province of BC- Heritage BC - 150 Time Immemorial Grant Program
Province of BC - BC Arts Council - Operating Assistance
Tourism Burnaby - Bite of Burnaby
University of British Columbia - The British Columbia History Digitization Program
University of Victoria - Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Partnership Development Grants Program
Veterans Affairs Canada - Commemorative Partnership Program

Membership Sponsors

Chado Tea House
Hapa Izakaya
Modo
Pac West Kimono
Suzuya Japanese Market
Tama Organic Life

Thank you

Corporate Sponsors

Amenida Seniors Community
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Dale Matheson Carr-Hilton
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Justin Ault - Remax Real Estate
Kami Insurance Agencies Ltd.
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MeZine Inc.
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Wing International (Trading) Inc.
Yokohama Tire Canada Inc.

In-Kind Sponsors

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What's On Burnaby
SAMURICE
Sapporo Canada
The Bulletin
City of Kushiro

Thank you

Collaborative Partners

Anime Evolution
Consulate General of Japan in Vancouver
Densho
Dōjin Japanese Arts Society
Gladstone Japanese Language School
Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Cultural Association
Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, Toronto
Kamloops Japanese Canadian Association
Kamloops Japanese Canadian Museum & Archives
Kenyu-kai
Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Langara College
Langham Cultural Centre, Kaslo
Library and Archives Canada
Miyazaki House, Lillooet
Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, New Denver
National Association of Japanese Canadians
Nikkei Place Foundation
Nikkei Seniors Health Care & Housing Society
Ottawa Japanese Community Association
Powell Street Festival Society
Simon Fraser University
South Asian Studies Institute
Tashme Museum
Tonari Gumi
University of British Columbia Indigitization Program
University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology
University of Victoria
Vancouver Ikebana Association
Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall
Vancouver Japanese Gardeners Association
Vancouver Okinawa Taiko (Ichari Van Night)
Tourism Burnaby
Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society
Sake Association of British Columbia

Donors



Photo by Adam PW Smith

Michael Abe	The McGill Gang	Carole Griffin
Bryan Adachi Family	Ellis Cheng	Deidre Hamaguchi
Louise Akuzawa & Ron Kruschen	Christine Chiba	Aiko Hamakawa
Anonymous (24)	Chieko Chijiwa	Taeko Hamakawa
Marion Arai & Family	Helen Creak	Tsuyoshi Hamanaka
Janice Arjomandi	Dean & Ayumi Dalke	Khojesta Hamid
Connie Ball	Claire Dewar	Christine Hamrol
Yukiko Basley	Rachel Rizko Enomoto Family	Masami Hanashiro
Charlotte Bergman	Claire Fedoruk	Junichi Hashimoto
Kazuo Bessho	Beverley Foy	Leanne Haya
Michael Black	Tyler Friskie	Katsuji Haya
Yasuyo Bosshardt	Tomoe Fujita	Shigeru & Akemi Hirai
Alexa Bustamante	Masako Fukawa	Brian Hirano
Michael Cameron	Gordon B. Gallagher	Mark Hirowatari
Bob Baker & Beth Carter	Elizabeth Gallant	Elaine Homma
Chado Urasenke Tankokai	Akiko Gomyo	Shinobu Homma
Vancouver Association	Melisa Gorman	Reiko Honkawa
Rigo Chan	Laraine Greaves	Aki & Hamako Horii

Donors

Sumiko Hui	Terumi Kuwada	Dianne Minamimaye
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Ruth Ikoma	Elizabeth Lau	Dennis Morishita
Yasuko Imabeppu	Doreen Lau	Susan Moriyama
Kelvin Inouye	Joana Lee	Wakako Morris
Frances Itani	Norm Lee	Diane Murakami
Janet Izumi	W.B. Lee	Yoko Murakami
Japanese Women's Business Association	Esther Lee	Dan & Rory Nakagawa
Yumi Johnson	Angela Lee	Nakagawa Blackman Family:
Erik Johnson	Frances Lising	Lorne & Judy Blackman
Shinobu Kadome	David Longpre	Kerri Nakahara
Ellen Kadonaga	Garrett Louie	John Nakamoto
Louvaine Kadonaga	Tim Lyon	Neal Nakano
Ken Kajiware	Nishikawa Ryu Natori Dancers	Janet Nasu
Yoshihiro & Chiyeko Jean Kamachi	Kaori Lytton	Roy Natsuhara
Stephen Kamachi	Marion MacQueen	Craig Natsuhara
Stephen Kamachi	Judy Madokoro	Evelyn Negoro
Edward Kaminishi	Wanda Madokoro	Shingo Nichols
Frank & Naomi Kamiya	Esther Matsubuchi	Sunni Nishimura
Denise Kamo	Matsumoto/Tanabe Families	Dan & Colleen Nomura
Kate Kamo McHugh	Chiyomi Matsuno	Michiko Obara
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Art Kanzaki	William McNulty	Tara O'Connor
Iori Kataoka	Les Merson	Maureen Otori
Doris Kimura	Kathy Miki	May Otori
Mas Kitagawa	Noriko Miki	Tracey Otori
Martin Kobayakawa	Nancy Miki & Adam Smith	The Dianne Otori Family
Terry Kondo	Diane Miki	Kiyo Goto & Joyce Oikawa
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Namiko Kunitomo	David & Kiyomi Minamata	Carrie Okano

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Sam Yamamoto

Sueko Yamamoto

Beverley Yamaura

Susan Yatabe

Jack Yeh

David Yoshimoto

Bruce Yu

Estate of Mary Elizabeth Todd

Estate of Nancy Miyuki Oka
Woodward

2025-2026 Board & Staff

Directors 2025-2026

Herbert I. Ono, President

Kevin Isomura, Vice-President

Carrie Okano, Vice-President

Ron Kruschen, Treasurer

Craig Natsuhara, Secretary

Louise Akuzawa

Dean Dalke

Kiyo Godo

Cheryl Honkawa

Ryan Lang

Shawn Lytton

Leigh Ann Shoji-Lee

Fred Yada

Board Committees

Executive: Herb Ono (President), Kevin Isomura (Vice President), Carrie Okano (Vice President), Ron Kruschen (Treasurer), Craig Natsuhara (Secretary), Fred Yada (Past-President)

Finance: Ron Kruschen (Chair), Kiyo Godo, Kevin Isomura, Ryan Lang, Leigh Ann Shoji-Lee

Fundraising - Joint Nikkei Place: Kevin Isomura, Karen Tanaka (Nikkei Place Foundation), Hiroshi Yamamoto (Nikkei Seniors Health Care & Housing)

Governance & Nominations: Leigh Ann Shoji-Lee (Chair), Dean Dalke, Carrie Okano, Herb Ono

Ad Hoc Building: Kevin Isomura (Chair), Art Kanzaki, Frank Kamiya

Building Advisors: George Honkawa, Dan Kunimoto, Henry Wakabayashi, Sam Yamamoto

Staff

Executive Director..... Karah Foster
Controller | Accountant Ella Law

Operations, Rentals, Venue Facility

Operations Manager..... Mike Ogawa
Rental Coordinator..... Momoko Cuesta
Administrative Coordinator..... Shanhong Wan (Leave of absence from June 2025)
Administrative Coordinator..... Katnarine Lie
Operations Coordinator..... Richard Haengphosakul
Facility Coordinator Patrick Fujisawa
Custodian Herozal Evalle | Rainier Dalisay
Facility Team Matthew Armstrong
Travis Armstrong
Naruhito Kruschen
Rachel Lige
Jeffery Wang
Diana Liu
Adrien Kwan
Mackenzie Stewart
Jamie Seo
Rachel Lige
Honoka Kamada (Until May 2025)
Chayton Theys (Until August 2025)
Emiko Wallis (Until September 2025)
Moay Sakata (Until October 2025)

Museum Collections & Archives, Exhibitions, Education

Director | Curator Sherri Kajiwarra
Collections Manager Lisa Uyeda
Research Archivist Daien Ide
Design and Exhibit Coordinator Danielle Jette
Education Coordinator Kimiko Yoshino
Museum Assistant Marika Bise

Project-Based Temporary Positions

Assistant Archivist..... Hikaru Ikeda
Collections Assistant Sakura Taji
Collections Assistant Grace Wang (From March 2026)
Database Archivist..... Reiko Pleau (From January 2025)
Librarian..... Keiko Kaneko
Media Conservation Technician..... Jeffery Chong (From September 2026)
Processing & Outreach Archivist..... Sam Frederick (Leave of absence from March 2026)
Processing & Outreach Archivist..... Chase Nelson (From February 2026)
Youth Program Coordinator..... Pouya Izadpanah (May - August 2025)

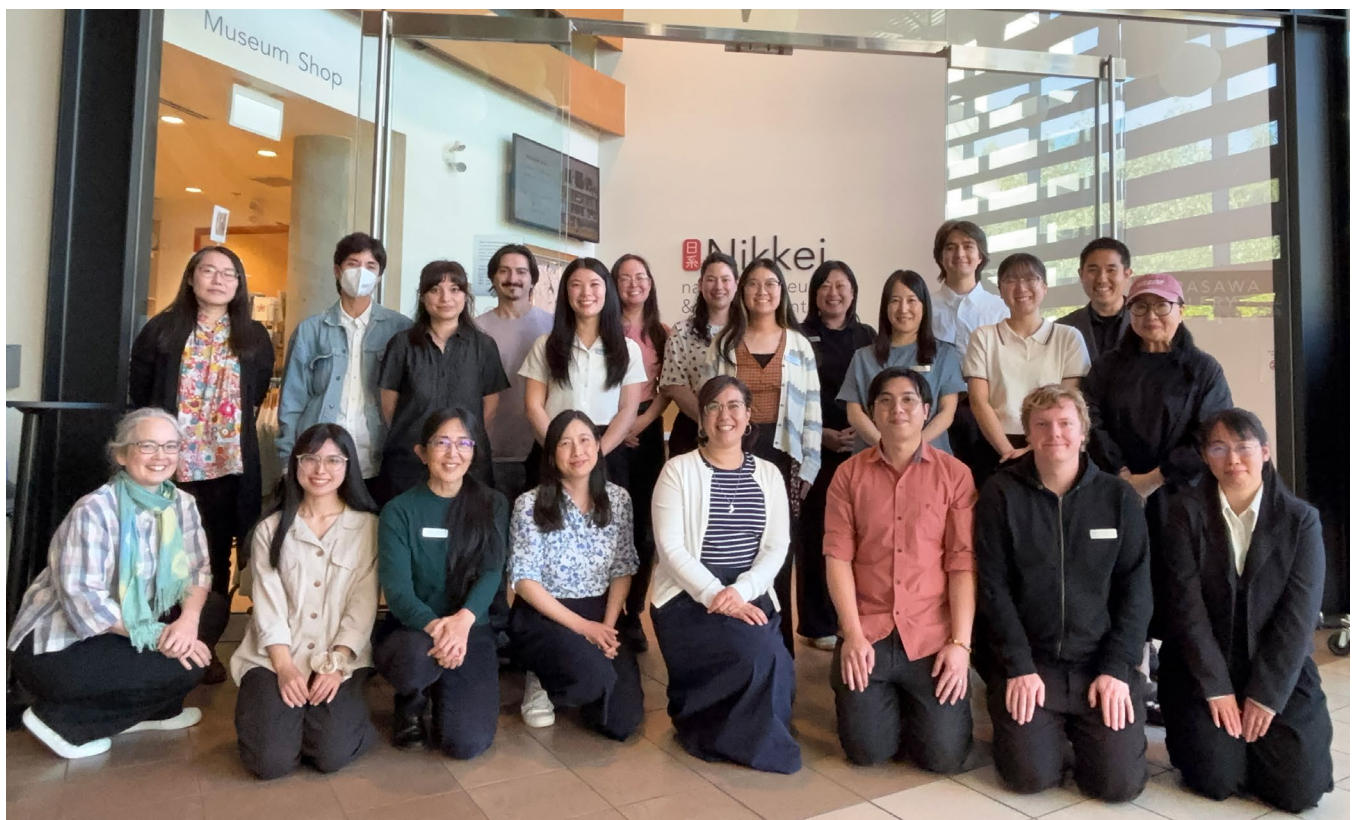
Staff

Programming, Events, Outreach

Communications Coordinator	Nichola Ogiwara
Community Engagement Coordinator	Yukiko Nishikawa
Project Manager	Emily Hirai (From June 2025)
Event Coordinator	Yumi Li
Public Programmer	Kaelan Oxford
Receptionist	Suzuka Natsuhara (Until September 2025)
Guest Service Attendant	Daigo Naito (From November 2025)
Guest Service Attendant	Kiyomi Hoover (From February 2026)
Volunteer Coordinator	Shiho Kawasaki
Event Assistant	Sherise Wong (From May 2024)

Project Managers & Contractors

Heritage Hub	Ryan Yada, Ryoshin Solutions
IT Services	Robin Bains, Bains Digital
Japanese Canadian War Memorial	Michael Yamauchi
Nikkei Next Roof & HVAC	Henry Wakabayashi
Tomoshihi Bus Tour	Michael Abe



The Year at a Glance

Membership



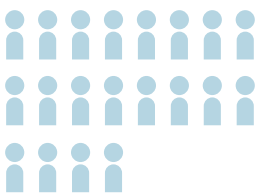
March 2025: 736
March 2026: 781

Education Programs Reach



2024/2025: 2,153 participants
2025/2026: 2,648 participants

Volunteerism



2024/2025: 400 volunteers.
10,000 hours

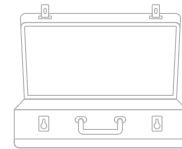
2025/2026: 400 volunteers
11,000 hours

Collection & Archives

The Collections & Archives Team actively preserves:



Film Reels
191



Artworks & Objects
3,400+

Museum Attendees



2024/2025: 6,571
2025/2026: 6,190



Textual Records
71+ meters



Photos & Digital Images
62,750+

Communication



Instagram content interactions

11.9K



Facebook content interactions

5.2K



Youtube subscribers

March 2025: 605
March 2026: 678



E-news subscribers

March 2025: 3,502
March 2026: 3,706



Oral History Records
1,050+



Library Books
2,070+