

# Landscapes of Injustice



## Research News and Project Updates

Winter Spring 2019

### Message from Project Director

Dr. Jordan Stanger-Ross



It was my great pleasure this month to submit to McGill University Press a weighty book manuscript: the summative research findings to date of *Landscapes of Injustice*. It contains contributions from 11 different authors, ranging from two people who were undergraduate students when they wrote their first drafts to distinguished scholars and the one-and-only Art Miki. Further, it represents the contributions of dozens of people who contributed to our discussions over the past years. I'm very proud of the book. The Epilogue gave me the opportunity to reflect a little on our collective accomplishment. I reproduce it in part here (notes eliminated):

*During the years when Landscapes of Injustice was conceived and written, the questions at the heart of this history seemed to grow more urgent. With tens of millions of people displaced and the politics of security, migration, and race perpetually entwined, members of our research collective connected the work we were doing to the challenges of the present. How will states and citizens protect human and civil rights at times of national insecurity? What response will democratic institutions make to tribalism? Who is harmed by a politics of fear, and who benefits?*

*Such questions seem likely to bedevil the coming century, just as they did the past. History will not save us, but it is, perhaps, a tool, among many, in answering some of our most pressing questions. We should value our contested, critical histories, in which hard questions are asked and past injustices interrogated. The alternatives are not good.*

*The great feminist historian Gerda Lerner, jailed in 1938 for her resistance to the Nazi take-over of Austria before escaping from Europe, later reflected: To those in power, history has always mattered. In fact, recorded history began as a means of celebrating the accomplishments of military chieftains, usurpers, and kings . . . Similarly, usurper regimes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century used history for their own purposes . . . German National Socialism created an elaborate official history extolling the mostly mythical deeds of Teutonic ancestors and rewriting more recent history to fit their version of "Aryan" racial superiority . . . The United States, in its rise as world power . . . used the doctrines of American exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny . . . as a legitimizing explanatory system.*

*Absent critical histories, power too easily coopts the past, in Canada as elsewhere. Japanese Canadians of the 1940s, Lerner's contemporaries and, like her, victims of a politics of race, knew better than most the impacts of being pushed outside the story of a nation.*

*They said so at the time. In 1948, Thomas Shoyama, then President of the National Japanese Canadian Citizen's Association, attempted to convey the dispossession of Japanese Canadians within the lives that they lived. "When, early in 1942 and under the grim compulsion of global war, the federal government finally decreed the complete removal of the Japanese Canadian minority from the British Columbia coast," he wrote:*

*it brought to a drastic and disruptive end a half-century's advance towards economic security and success. The story of the struggle of that half century, beginning with the early arrival of eager, though*

*bewildered young men, is an intensely human one, beneath all its political, social and economic ramifications . . . a story of extravagant hopes and prospects quickly deflated by the press of unexpected reality; a gradual acceptance of and adjustment to actual conditions; a transformation from hopes of easy and quick success into the determination to build for the future . . . it is against a background such as this that . . . [internment] may be properly assessed.*

*This book has attempted to follow Shoyama's lead, and that of many Japanese Canadian storytellers since, in conveying the "intensely human" story of their confrontation with "unexpected reality."*

*At the same time, we have worked to investigate the processes of injustice. We have sought to understand who was responsible, why they did what they did, and how so many were complicit. We have examined the possibility of alternatives; of paths not taken and voices of the unheard. Hannah Arendt, reflecting on the mid-twentieth century, suggested that "under conditions of terror most people will comply but some people will not." "No more," she proposed, "is required, and no more can be reasonably asked, for this planet to remain a place fit for human habitation." Our project has sought to understand the undertaking of political violence, the compliant majority, and those who thought and acted otherwise.*

*We have done this work in partnership. A large grant from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada enabled, and required, that we work in connection with one another. Some 70 people, from 17 varied institutions, met regularly to discuss, debate, and struggle over this history. We benefited from two advisory committees, one comprised of senior scholars and the other made-up of leaders within the Japanese-Canadian community. Our collective is diverse: ranging from people who lived through the dispossession to those who came to it for the first time in answer to an advertisement for a summer job. We have benefited also from the presence, at all of our meetings, of varied*

*academic perspectives as well as the contributions of museum curators, in-service teachers, and archivists already working to translate this history for new audiences and to ensure its long-term preservation. Many who are not represented as authors in this volume nonetheless made essential contributions to its creation; this is truly the result of a research collective.*

*Connecting across differences of experience, discipline, and perspective, we developed an approach to historical analysis that was for me, at least, novel, challenging, and exciting. I came to imagine our collective as a wheel: our work meets at a hub in the centre, in discussion of the dispossession of Japanese Canadians, but each of our contributions—life histories, analyses of land titles and law, the lessons necessary to teach fifth graders to think in new ways about fairness and loss—radiate out from that core in their own direction, each with its own theories, methods, and objectives. Student researchers on our project have carried this history into projects of their own, reshaping the topic to fit their urgent questions and pressing concerns. The work of partnership is to hold these varied initiatives together in the same room, to work together but not in unison, to integrate without flattening.*

*Years ago, when *Landscapes of Injustice* remained in its infancy, I was walking with my wife toward the central square of an ancient city when people, mostly young men, began to stream toward us. They had on black armbands and combat boots. They saluted passing traffic, drivers serenading them with honks. My wife Ilana, who is from Brooklyn, favoured confronting them, asking what they wanted, what they believed. I, having always lived in small Jewish minorities, urged instead that we divert to another street. Afterward I struggled with what we had seen and how we had each responded. I had a feeling of helplessness, but also reassurance that at least I, and many others, were working hard to understand the histories from which such present hatreds emerge. Our history may not save us, but working hard to draw it to light, together and across difference, is an essential task of our times.*



## **Landscapes of Injustice Public Day Presentations Saturday, April 27, 2019**

Jordan Stanger-Ross, Project Director, and the Research Collective invite you to an afternoon of presentations related to the Landscapes of Injustice research project.

**1:00 pm**      **Introductory talk and welcome**

**1:30 - 3:30 pm** **Landscapes of Injustice panel presentation on forthcoming book on the project's research including Q&A.**

**3:30-4:00 pm** **Break and poster session. Light refreshments will be served.**

**4:00-5:30 pm** **Presentations by Phase 2 clusters - Teacher Resources, Museum Exhibit, Digital Archive and Narrative Website and Q&A.**

**FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

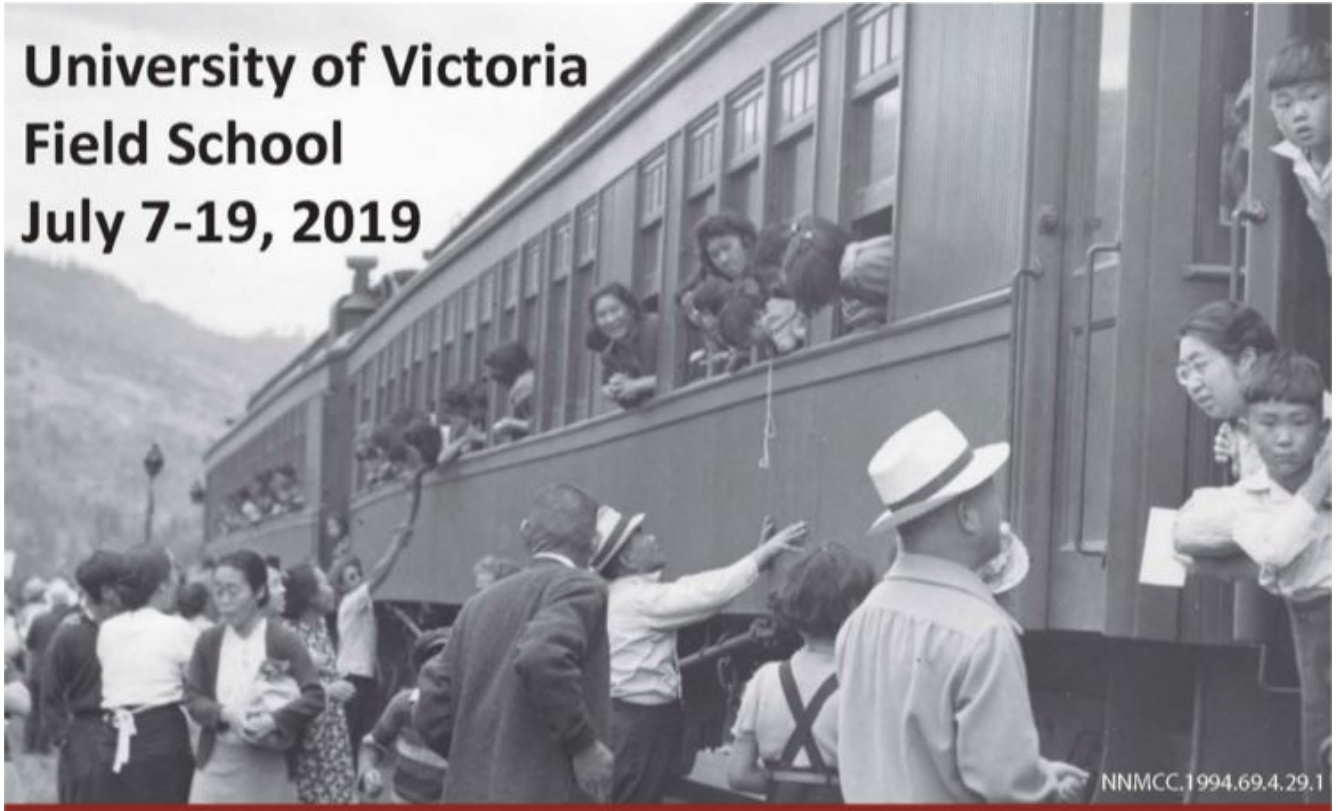
Bob Wright Centre  
Room A104  
University of Victoria

For more information:  
[www. landscapesofinjustice.com](http://www.landscapesofinjustice.com)  
[info@landscapesofinjustice.com](mailto:info@landscapesofinjustice.com)

# **Landscapes of Injustice**



# University of Victoria Field School July 7-19, 2019



## Learn Canada's Internment History in the Places Where It Happened Victoria-Vancouver-Hope-Greenwood-Kaslo-New Denver-Slocan Valley July 7– 19, 2019

Join Nikkei National Museum bus tour  
Teaching resources from experienced educators,  
Greg Miyanaga and Mike Perry-Whittingham  
Graduate credit (1.5 units) and non-credit options available

Position available for teacher with links to the Japanese-Canadian community  
One week bus tour of sites of internment led by Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre  
One week in-class led by Dr. Jordan Stanger-Ross at the University of Victoria  
Costs for travel, accommodation, and fees for participation are covered, up to \$3,000  
Contribute to how this history will be taught in primary and secondary school classrooms

Applications accepted until May 22, 2019.

Enquire: Michael Abe [mkabe@uvic.ca](mailto:mkabe@uvic.ca)  
[www.landscapesofinjustice.com](http://www.landscapesofinjustice.com)



# Canada's Internment Era – A Field School

*An opportunity for in-service teachers*

*Learn the history of the internment in the places where it happened*

*Receive resources made by teachers for teachers*

*A fully funded learning opportunity*

The National Association of Japanese Canadians and Landscapes of Injustice are pleased to offer a new funding opportunity for an in-service teacher to attend UVIC's July 2019 course, **Canada's Internment Era- A Field School**. We are seeking a candidate with links to the Japanese-Canadian community and its history. All costs of participation including flights, accommodation, and course registration will be covered by this funding (to a maximum of \$3,000).

The successful applicant will join a team of teachers from across Canada for two weeks this summer, July 7-19, for a new course offered in collaboration with the Nikkei National Museum. Designed to educate and provide teaching resources to in-service teachers, this exciting course includes a 1-week tour of internment sites in British Columbia and 1 week of intensive learning in Victoria.

Open to educators at both elementary and secondary school levels. Educators can get undergraduate or graduate credit, if they wish.

Applications (including: cover letter, resume, dissemination plan [indicating plans to distribute resources within your home district—see below], and letter of support from home district) accepted until May 22, 2019. Please explain in your cover letter your connection with the Japanese-Canadian community and its history.

For enquiries and to apply, contact information is contained below.

Michael Abe, Project Manager, Landscapes of Injustice

e-mail: [mkabe@uvic.ca](mailto:mkabe@uvic.ca) website: [www.landscapesofinjustice.com](http://www.landscapesofinjustice.com)



# Ideafest 2019

## Righting an Historical Wrong: Complicity and Reparation in the Case of the Esquimalt Japanese Tea Garden

Dr. Yasmin Railton

On Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Landscapes of Injustice presented new research as part of University of Victoria's Ideafest, a weeklong festival of research, art and innovation. Channeling the innovative spirit of Ideafest, we presented community-engaged research, and constructed a pop-up installation on a local case study: the former Japanese Tea House and Gardens in the Esquimalt Gorge Park. Once a beloved Victorian landmark, Canada's first Japanese garden and teahouse were looted and destroyed when owners Hayato and Kensuke Takata were sent to internment camps in 1942—along with thousands of other forcibly displaced Japanese Canadians during the Second World War.



Photo credit: John Lutz



Photo credit: Jonathan Woods

Bridging historical and community engaged research, LOI researchers shared the Ideafest stage with a local community group, the Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society (VNCS). Jordan Stanger-Ross and Kaitlin Findlay presented on the extent to which the Japanese Tea House and Gardens were looted and vandalized, and challenged the audience to consider the complicity of everyday Victorians in the unlawful dispossession of Japanese Canadians in the 1940s. VNCS president, Tsugio Kurushima, spoke about the present-day proposal by the VNCS to create a commemorative Tea House at the site with funds from the McLoughlin Amenity Funds for capital projects in Waterfront Park Improvements. Yasmin Railton then presented a public history pop-up installation constructed by the LOI project team. This interactive display included historic images of the property, and offered an opportunity to handle reproductions of historic menus, postcards, and archival files that document the teahouse's destruction. Yasmin also made a short video on the subject, which was shortlisted for the University of Victoria's Research Reels feature film award. <https://bit.ly/2Df0tJ6>

Research Assistants Jonathan Ballin, Camille Haisell, and Nathaniel Hayes gave teaser lectures on their research, and presented an academic poster session. Camille Haisell presented a poster on her original research on the Mental Health Impacts of Internment on Japanese Canadians. She presented a new perspective by placing mental health at the forefront of an historical discussion on systemic racism. Nathaniel Hayes and Lindsey Jacobson presented a new poster explaining the construction of an online database where Landscapes of Injustice documents will be available for further research. Jonathan Ballin presented a poster related to elementary school curricula. Gord Lyall, Jennifer Landry, and Josh van Es were on hand to speak to academic and community audiences about LOI.

In the reception that followed, visitors enjoyed tea and menu items from the historic teahouse, as they engaged with the pop-up exhibition. The VNCS had a stand with further information on the Japanese Tea House campaign, and the Urasenke Tankokai Association displayed traditional ways of Tea. The success of this event would not have been possible without the enthusiasm of the Landscapes Team, in particular the incredible efforts of Kaitlin Findlay, Mike Abe, Josh van Es, Camille Haisell, Jordan Stanger-Ross, and the generous assistance of Mike Haisell, Crawford Railton, Natsuki Abe, Keith Chiu and the Esquimalt Archive.



L-R Camille H., Nathaniel H., Yasmin R., Kaitlin F., Gord L., Josh vE., Jordan S-R., Lindsey J., Jonathan B., Jennifer L.  
Photo credit: Yasmin Railton

# Salt Spring Island

Kaitlin Findlay

On Tuesday, March 12, I boarded the small ferry to Salt Spring Island with Drs. Yasmin Railton and Jordan Stanger-Ross. Fresh off the Ideafest event, we were to convey project activity and new research findings to interested visitors at the Salt Spring Island Public Library. We were met by an engaged crowd of about twenty people. Jordan and I presented newly completed research that will appear in the forthcoming Landscapes of Injustice book and Yasmin presented the recent work of the museum exhibit cluster. Mary Kitagawa (néé Murakami) wrapped up our presentations by speaking on behalf of our Community Council and from her own perspective on the meaning on the new research produced from the Landscapes of Injustice collective. Following the formal Q&A period, we continued to chat over cookies and coffee. Thank you to everyone who helped organize and execute the event!

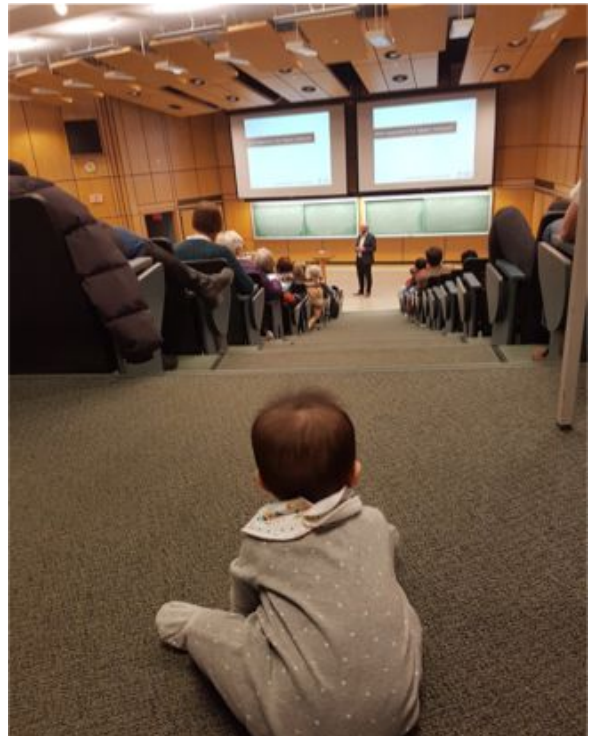




# The Takatas

We were lucky to be joined by Dillon, Lisa, and baby Naya at our 2019 Ideafest event. Dillon's father, David Takata, was the son of George Takata, son of Kensuke Takata, one of the brothers who ran the Takata Japanese Tea Garden until 1942. Naya-chan and her parents are pictured here in front of the stylized replica tea house run by her great-great-grandfather.

Photos courtesy of Lisa and Dillon Takata.



Jordan's biggest and littlest fan. Future historian.



# Digital Archives Cluster

It was a busy first year for the Digital Archives Cluster. Research assistants Gord Lyall, Kara Isozaki (recipient of the 2018 NAJC/ LOI Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Research Scholarship), Lindsey Jacobson, Nathaniel Hayes, and Jennifer Landrey (recipient of the Frank Hori Research Fellowship) started processing the vast amount of materials acquired during the initial research phase of the project under the guidance of cluster co-chairs Stewart Arneil and Lisa Uyeda.

Research assistants process government records such as the Bird Commission files, land titles, Custodian of Enemy Property case files, RCMP reports, inter and intra-governmental communications; and community records such as newspapers, Japanese and English directories of the Powell Street area and other major sites of interest, photographs, oral histories, letters of protest, and historical Geographic Information System (GIS) maps. They are learning XML (eXtensible Markup Language) so that they can encode materials for the database. This includes supplying the necessary metadata in accordance with the Canadian archival standard Rules of Archival Description (RAD). Ultimately, the team will build an XML database, flexible in design giving various options for output such as an AtoM (Access to Memory) instance, or a HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) website.



Case File Source: Custodian of Enemy Property, Case File 705: Oda Kiyozo, 03 April 1942. *Custodian of Enemy Property: Case Files*, LAC RG117 C-3, C-9310. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Now in the second year of the knowledge mobilization phase of the project, this year's Digital Archives Cluster RA's are excited to continue this important work to preserve these records for the Japanese Canadian community and share these materials with the world.



Photos Provided by the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre: **Fishing Village; West Vancouver, BC.** Circa 1935. Family Photographs, Morishita Family Collection NNMCC.2011.79.4.1.1.77; **Mr. Kimoto and Four Children Posing on a Car; Vancouver, BC.** Circa 1935. Family Photographs, Morishita Family Collection. NNMCC.2011.79.4.1.1.78

# The Lost Fleet Exhibit Launch Report: A Case Study

Mike Abe

It was an honour to speak at the event launch of the Lost Fleet Exhibit at the Maritime Museum of British Columbia in January. The exhibit was on loan from the Vancouver Maritime Museum from Jan.-Mar., 2019.



Photo credits: James Hollko

At the launch, I spoke about Susan Fukuyama and her family. She is, like myself, a sansei, third generation Japanese Canadian who lives here in Victoria. Susan has a deep family history tied to the fishing boat industry and especially relating to this exhibit. She has done some incredible research on her family. Her story along with photos and artifacts were displayed in the exhibit.

Susan's grandfather, Senkichi Fukuyama, was born in 1889 in Fukaura, Japan. A carpenter by trade, he left home for Canada at the age of 16, arriving in Vancouver near the end of 1906. He travelled back to Japan to marry Yaye Okazoe on February 12th, 1919, later returning to Vancouver. Yaye, or Yayeko as we later found in her Canadian records arrived in Canada in May 1920. They settled at the Crescent Rooms at 259 Powell Street, paying rent of \$15 per month. Senkichi received his certification of naturalization on February 1, 1921 and he and Yaye would have six children. By 1922, Senkichi and Iwakichi Sugiyama had created the Howe Sound Fisheries Ltd. located at 203 Powell Street. They were wholesale fish dealers and fishing contractors exporting and importing product. Five years later in 1927 they expanded the business to include the Burrard Fishing Company and a third company, the Canadian Saltery, was added in 1936. By 1941 the Howe Sound Fisheries owned a fleet of 5 boats: *Howe Sound*, *Howe Sound II*, *Howe Sound III*, *Howe Sound IV*, and *Menzies Bay*. Senkichi also ran a boat, the *Orca G* with the Howe Sound fleet.



Photos courtesy of Susan Fukuyama

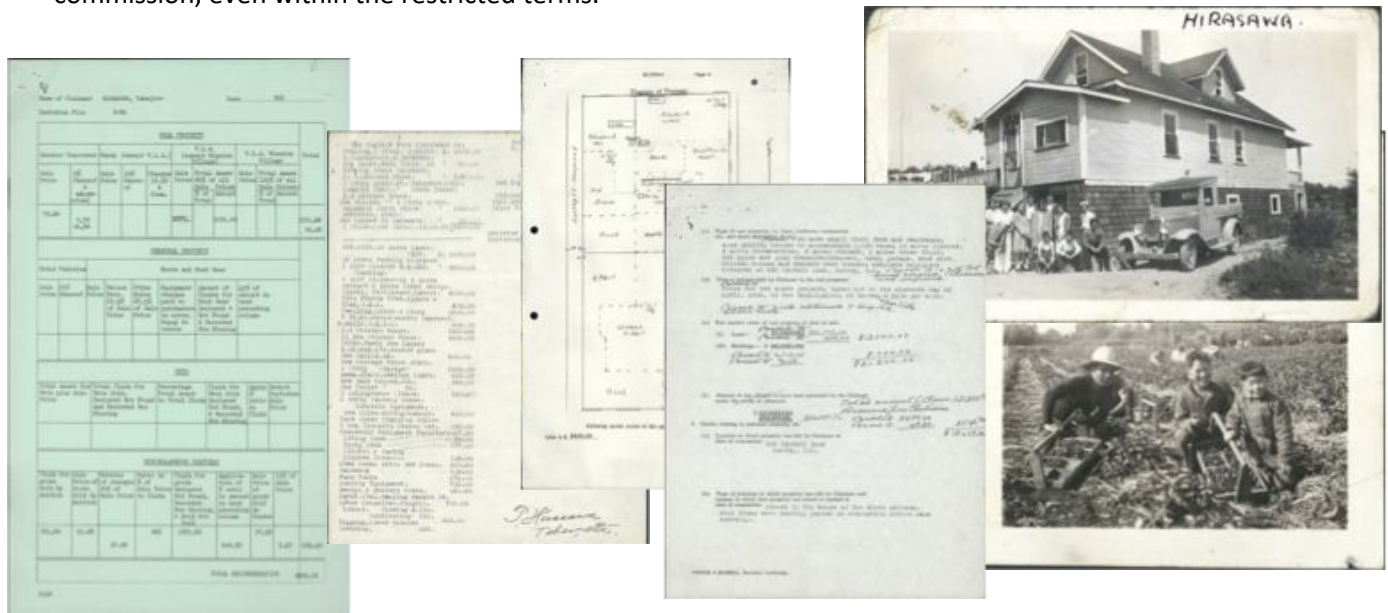
After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, all the boats were confiscated and the companies and boats were forcibly sold. In May 1942 the family was forced to move outside the designated "protected area" and their properties (2503 Triumph Street and two lots) were sold. They first settled in Revelstoke before moving onto Vernon. While in Vernon they were involved in fruit growing, eventually moving back to Vancouver by 1958. Once back in Vancouver the two men – Senkichi and Iwakichi – entered into the fishing business again.

Fukuyama Ltd. and Sugiyama Ltd. were created as a joint venture. The companies were eventually run by their respective sons until they retired. Senkichi passed away in Vancouver on June 12, 1984, at the age of 95.

Susan contacted our project to learn more about her family history. We were able to quickly locate the records of her fishing boats through the ledger created for a website for our book, *Witness to Loss*. By clicking on the boat name, or searching through owners' names, we could find the sales documents, including one for the *Howe Sound II*, built in 1918, valued at \$6,000, sold for \$5,430.

Next we looked at our collection of files in the Bird Commission. For those not familiar with the Bird Commission, The Royal Commission on Japanese Claims, known as the Bird Commission for Justice Henry Bird, ran between 1947 and 1950 as support for Japanese Canadians to investigate the forced sale of their property grew. For Cabinet, it served as a way to demonstrate the government's accountability. But the Terms of Reference for which a person could contest the sale of their property if they thought that they were sold for less than fair market value were very narrow and restrictive and prevented many people who had lost property from submitting claims. Thus, there are only about 1,400 Bird Commission files.

The records are useful and interesting and provide a glimpse into the arrangements the claimants made for their property, a perspective of what they claimed in 1947, including evidence like maps, lists, correspondence, and photographs, and evidence of how they argued their case for compensation to the commission, even within the restricted terms.

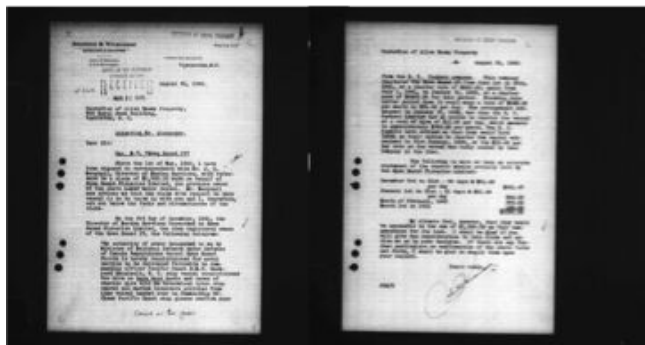


Takejiro Hirasawa Bird Commission File LAC RG33-69 Vol. 24 File 505 From Hamilton Ontario presentation

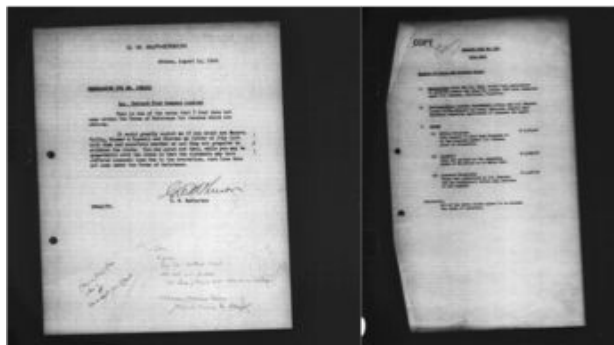
We located a small file for Senkichi Fukuyama and Iwakichi and Chiyo Sugiyama. In the case of Senkichi, for the \$350 and \$375 he received for each of his lots, and the \$3,400 for his house at 2503 Triumph Street the Bird Commission recommended that he receive an additional 5% and \$12.50 for each transaction for a total of \$243.75. This is compared to the value of \$5,200 for the house and lots that he submitted in his claim. After subtracting the \$4,050 that he received from the sale, the final line indicates the difference that he thought he should be entitled to, \$1,150, not the \$243.75 calculated based on the blanket formula used by the Commission.

Our partnership with Library and Archives Canada has provided us with the digitized images for the 15,000 case files of Japanese Canadians uprooted during the 1940s. Although not in an easily accessible form yet, our work study students, Natsuki Abe and Sydney Fuhrman were able to retrieve and adjust the readability of the case files for Susan's grandparents and father, Senkichi's partner, Iwakichi Sugiyama and his wife, Chiyo and the three companies. These case files provided an additional 918 pages of reading material.

As we reviewed the documents, there were many interesting and surprising items. We see in the file of the Howe Sound Fishery case file of August 20, 1942, a claim by Senkichi's lawyer to Mr. Alexander indicating that his boat, *Howe Sound IV* was requisitioned for naval services on December 3rd, 1941 before Canada had even entered the war. He complied and delivered his boat on December 16, but received a telegram the next day saying the requisition was cancelled. The vessel was not returned until March 11, 1942 after which Howe Sound sold it to Charles Wilson for \$18,500. Senkichi was writing to the government for a claim of \$1,500 in loss of earnings while the government used it for 3 months. His calculations show he actually stood to lose \$1,833.30 in charter money during that time. Later we see a letter on November 30, 1943 that states that he settled for \$25 per day for 11 days, a mere \$275 dollars.



Howe Sound Fishery LAC RG117 C-3, C-9210

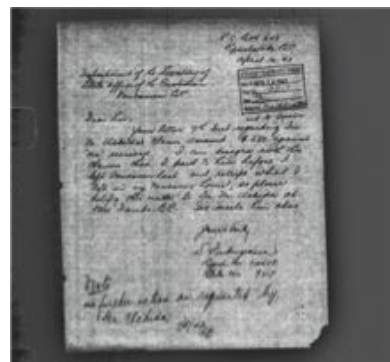


Burrard Fish Co. LAC RG117 C-3, C-9211

In the Burrard Fish Company case file, we found a letter as Glenn McPherson urges Frank Shears to advise Senkichi's attorney to withdraw his Bird Commission claim as they both believe that the claim is outside the terms of reference. A later letter shows the withdrawal of the \$10,276.85 claim for this company and a note that concludes that the claims were outside the terms of reference.

What struck me while talking to Susan were the smaller things that stood out to her. She has found the house on Triumph Street in Vancouver on the BC Assessment website so she knows that it is still standing today - although worth quite a bit more. She was delighted to see a photo of the house from 1943 and was appreciative of having a record of how it looked when her grandparents lived there.

We also saw the Bill of Lading for the possessions that her family shipped to Revelstoke as they had the means to be self-supporting. Looking at the list of contents she noticed there was a Japanese instrument listed. "I still have it, she said, it's a biwa". We also came across a hand written letter with her grandfather's signature and she was amazed at how similar it was to her own father's signature.



It was encouraging to see these files help Susan bring her family history to life, providing a glimpse into her past as they coped with trying circumstances. This is one of the most rewarding and exciting output of the project for our Japanese-Canadian community, providing access to these records so that family members can learn more about their history.