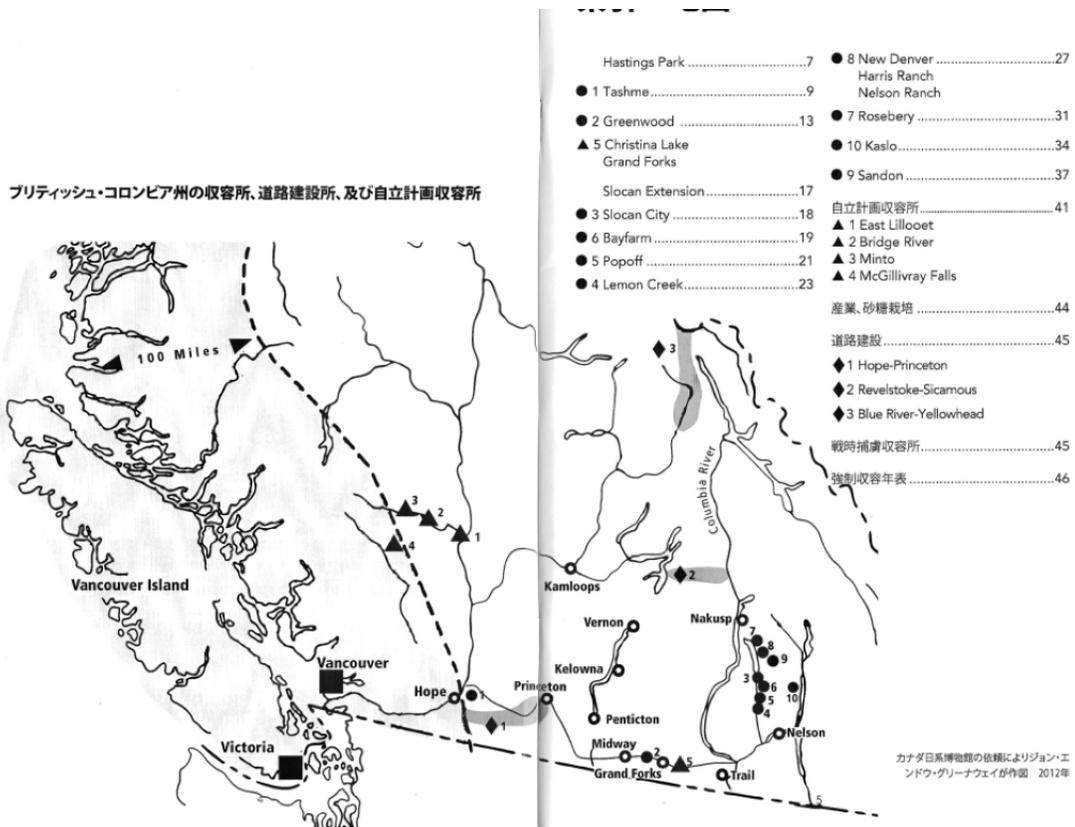


Visits to Japanese Internment Camp Sites in the Interior of British Columbia

By Takashi Ohki

October 1, 2022

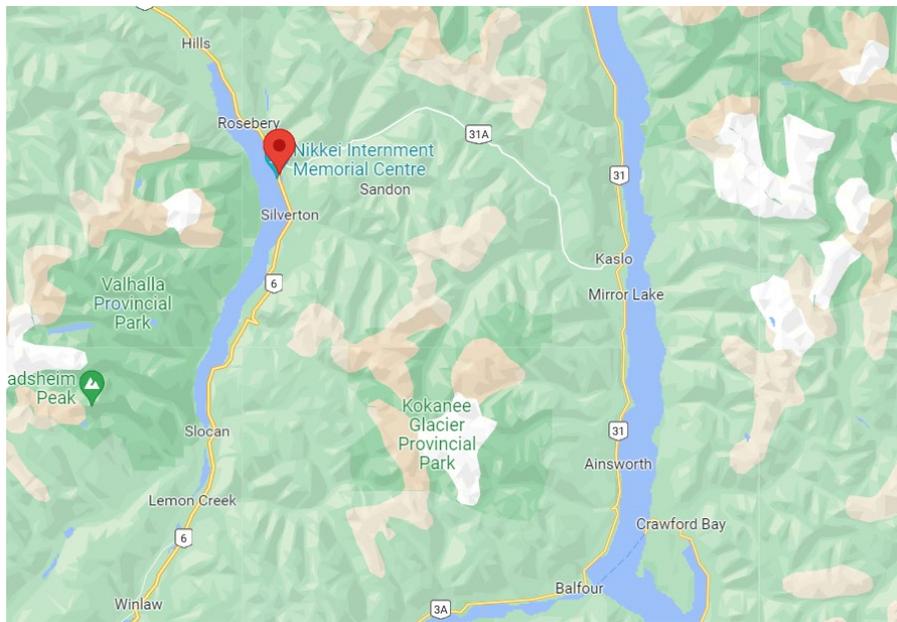
In early September 2022, my wife and I visited Rosebery, New Denver, Slokan, Bay Farm, Popoff, Lemon Creek, Sandon and Kaslo. They are where internment camps for Japanese Canadians were located during the Second World War. For each place, I summarize its history, internment camp and present. I will show you old pictures of these internment camps, which I collected from various sources and compare them with the photos I took during my visits to these places.



Internment camp locations in British Columbia



- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 3 Slocan City | 4 Lemon Creek |
| 5 Popoff | 6 Bay Farm |
| 7 Rosebery | 8 New Denver |
| 9 Sandon | 10 Kaslo |



September 6

We drove from our home in St. Albert (near Edmonton) to Calgary, Banff, Lake Louise and Golden. We stayed in Golden overnight. Golden is located at the junction of Trans-Canada Highway No. 1 and Highway No. 95, which goes south through Kootenay Valley to Radium Hot Springs, Fairmont Hot Springs, Cranbrook and the Canada-US border. Golden is a small town with many hotels, motels, and restaurants. The town has done some beautification to its downtown and appears to be trying to promote tourism as its primary industry.

September 7

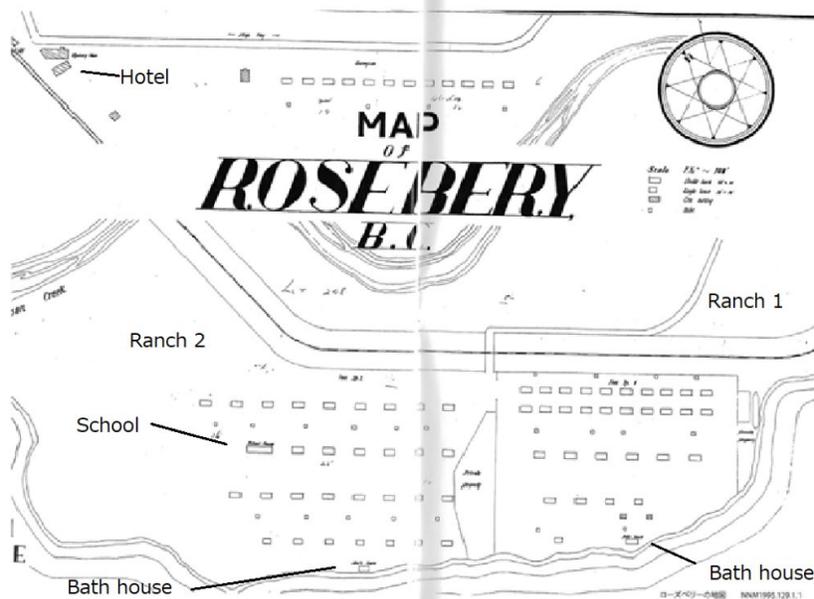
We drove from Golden to Revelstoke, Nakusp, Rosebery and New Denver. We dropped in at Nakusp Hot Springs, located 15 kilometers east of the Town of Nakusp at the end of a narrow valley. The outdoor pool had a warm and hot pool (42 degrees Celsius).



Nakusp Hot Springs

Rosebery Camp

Rosebery Camp was located on the lakeshore 6 kilometers north of New Denver. In the 1890s, it was developed as a steamship and railway terminal. The railway connected Nakusp to Sandon. In 1942, the British Columbia Security Commission (BCSC) leased the land around the terminal and built 60 shacks. In the fall of 1942, a total of 356 Japanese Canadians, most of them holding Japanese citizenship, came to Rosebery. Rosebery was the smallest camp in Slokan Valley, divided into two sections: Ranch 1 and Ranch 2. Ranch 1 had a BCSC office. Ranch 2 had a school. On the north side of a creek was a small local people's hamlet, a hotel, and a grocery store.



1942 map of Rosebery



Current aerial view of Rosebery

In the aerial view, the area circled by a white line is where Rosebery Camp was.



ローズベリー 1943年 NNMイズミ・コレクション

Rosebery in 1943. A train was stationed at the ferry terminal.



A current picture of the train terminal.

We missed the Rosebery Incorporated sign and drove back from New Denver to find it. At present, there was nothing from Rosebery Camp remaining here. Now, the west end of Rosebery Camp is an open space, but the rest is covered with trees. There are several houses in the woods. We drove around but saw no one. There was no historical sign indicating that this was once Rosebery Camp.

Memories of Rosebery by Mary Kitagawa from *Honoring Our People; Breaking the Silence*

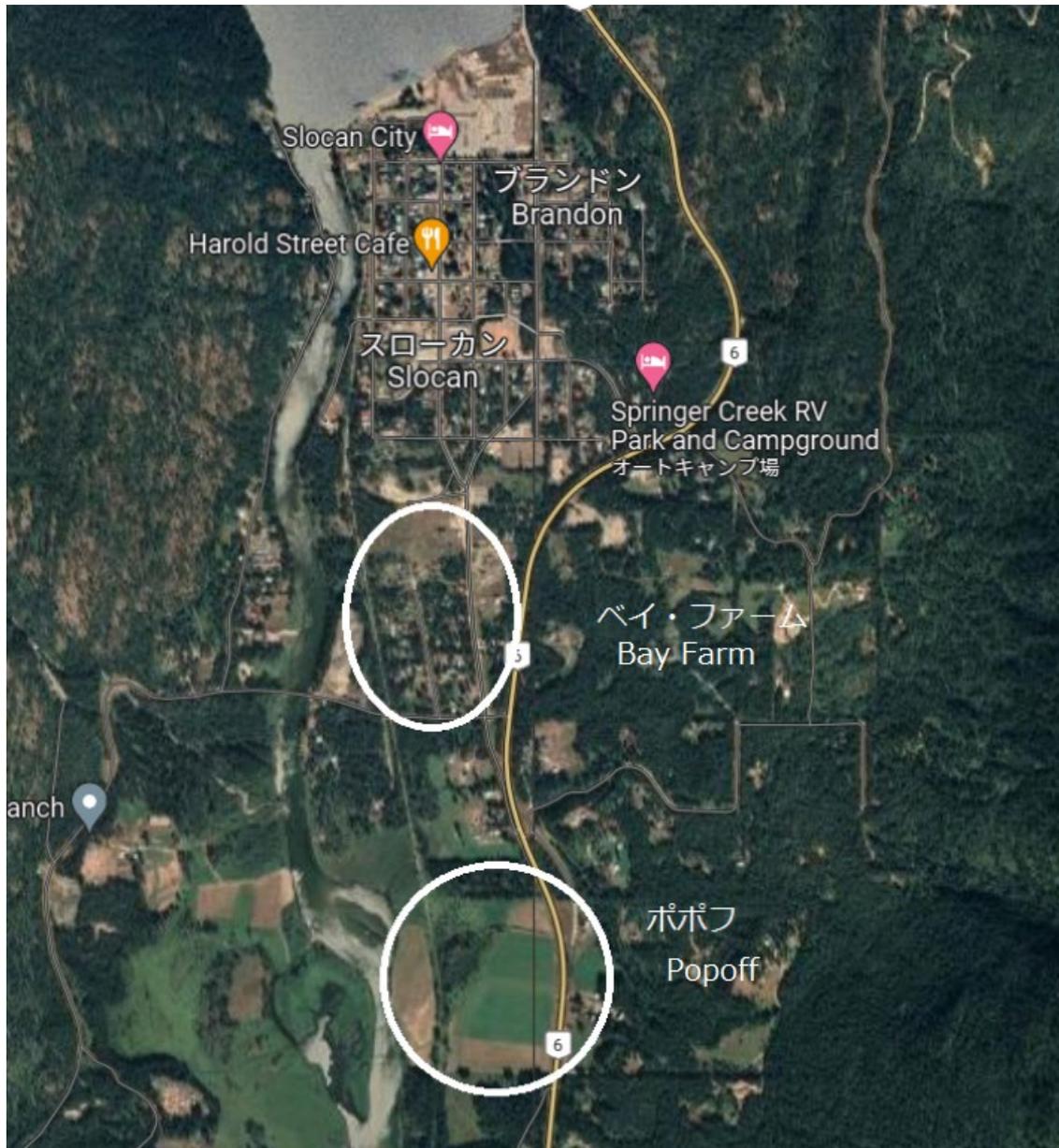
We ended up in Popoff, then Bay Farm and then in Slocan in the dead of winter. I remember the snow coming up high on our tent. We had another family living with us in that small tent. And it was extremely uncomfortable because these were strangers. We had never met them before. We were fed in this so-called mess hall. And we had outhouses.

We stayed there until January first of 1943 when we were told we had to move to Rosebery. When we got there those shacks were not ready for us but we were forced to live in them. All we saw were those rows and rows of these tar paper shacks. It was black because tarpaper was wrapped around the shiplap. The only source of heat was one of these galvanized stoves that were oval shaped, and then a very tiny kitchen stove. This building was only 14x28, divided into three; bedrooms on either side of this very tiny common room where you saw the kitchen stove, the potbelly stove. I am sure we had to eat in shifts because you could not put a table big enough for seven people.

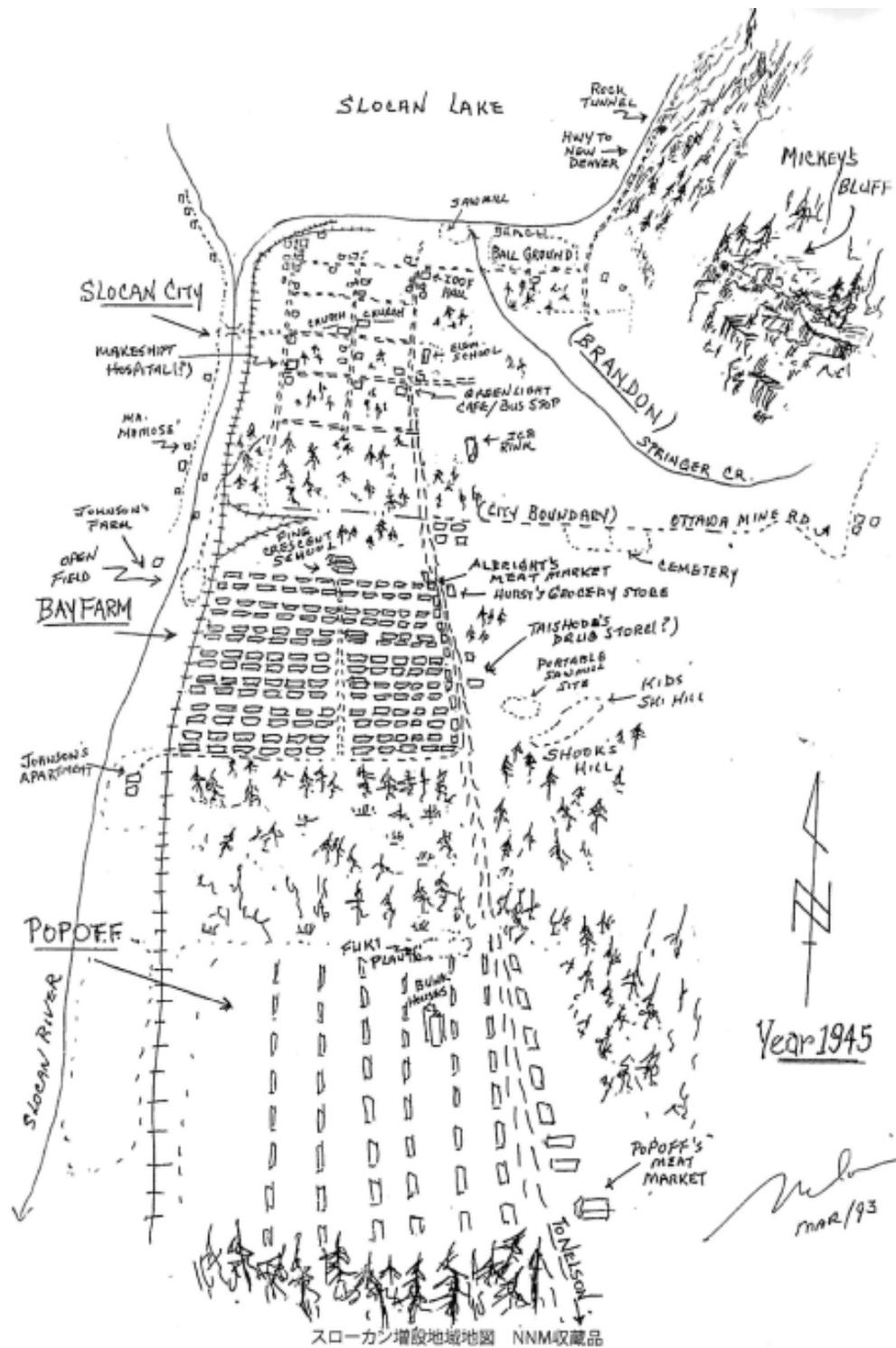
In Rosebery, there was no electricity at that time because they were not ready for us. We had six candles the first winter, it gets dark early in winter, so everybody went to bed early because six candles don't really last too long into the night. When we woke up in the morning, my mum said, "Don't move," because our bedding was frozen onto the sheet of ice on the wall. The wall was just shiplap and 2x4 are visible. We had no ceiling because the roof was there and nothing else. The doors had spaces all the way around. The doors were not doors. They were tow flaps with shiplap just banged together. It was like living in a basket. The wind was just whipping through.

September 8

We visited a series of internment camps in Slocan Valley: Slocan City, Bay Farm, Popoff, Lemon Creek and New Denver.



Current aerial picture of Slocan City, Bay Farm and Popoff



Map of Slokan City, Bay Farm and Popoff in 1942

Slocan City Camp

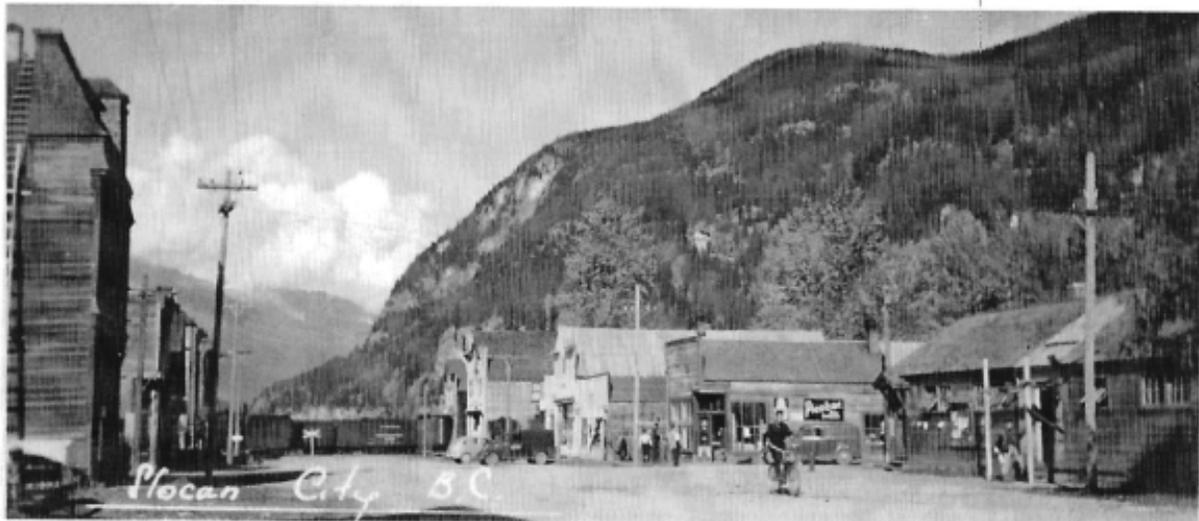
From New Denver, we drove south 32 kilometers and reached the Village of Slocan, located at the mouth of Springer Creek and the foot of Slocan Lake. As soon as we moved into the village, we recognized that this village was planned and not naturally born because the avenues and streets were wide and arranged north-south and east-west. Although the streets were wide, buildings were few.

Slocan City (the old name in the 1940s) was developed as a steamboat landing and ferry terminal in the 1890s when gold, silver, lead, zinc, copper and cadmium ores were found in the mines around Slocan City. A Canadian Pacific Railway branch line came to Slocan City from Castlegar. In 1920, there were 12 hotels in Slocan City. But as the ore was exhausted, Slocan City began to lose business and people. By 1911 the town population had decreased to 177.

BCSC rented empty buildings and houses and made them Slocan Internment Camps for Japanese Canadians. In the summer of 1942, Japanese Canadians came here from Vancouver by a special train. The train ran from Vancouver to Hope, Lytton, Okanagan Valley, Grand Forks, Christina Lake, Lower Arrow Lake, Castlegar and Slocan City. Japanese Canadians got off the train and were moved to other camps in Slocan Valley by truck. In 1946, those Japanese Canadians exiled to Japan got on board a train here.

We drove down Harrod Street toward the lake and found a small sandwich shop. The sandwich was so good that we bought a couple more for supper (because there were very few restaurants in New Denver).

スローカン・シティ BC州 1942年頃 NNM1996.170.16.1.15



Slocan City in 1942, looking down Harold Street toward the lake. At the end of the street, we can see a train. The last building on the right was Oddfellow Hall, one of the few buildings in the 1940s still standing now.



Oddfellow Hall on Harold Street has been renovated and is now Royal Canadian Legion Branch 276.



The head of Harold Street next to the lakeshore in 1897. You can see that the track was being constructed.



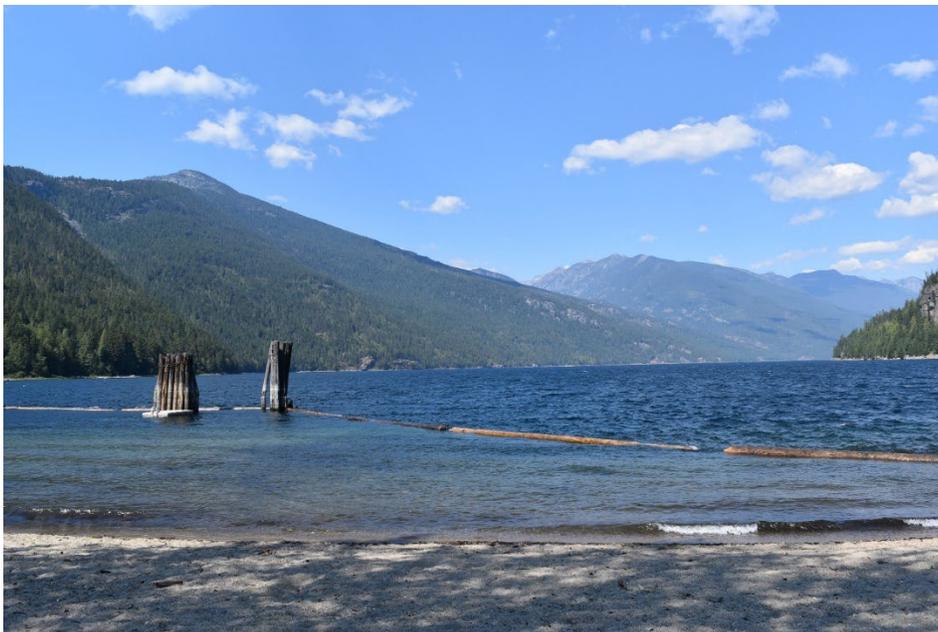
In 1942, Japanese Canadians just arrived at Slokan City Train Station and waiting for trucks to go to the camps in Slokan Valley.



Japanese Canadians to be exiled to Japan got on the train and bid farewell to those who would remain in the camps.



Slocan Train Station was here. Now it is a park.



The rail track was taken away and has become Slocan Valley Trail that stretches 50 kilometers south from Slocan to Nelson.

There is another building from the internment period. Today's Slocan Village Market, formerly Popoff's Market, was operated as Kino's Market by Zenichi Kinoshita. Zenichi's son James Kinoshita designed a modern one-story post and beam structure in 1952. At that time, James Kinoshita was an architecture student in Manitoba. He eventually became a prominent international architect.



Slokan Valley Market (formerly Kino's Market)

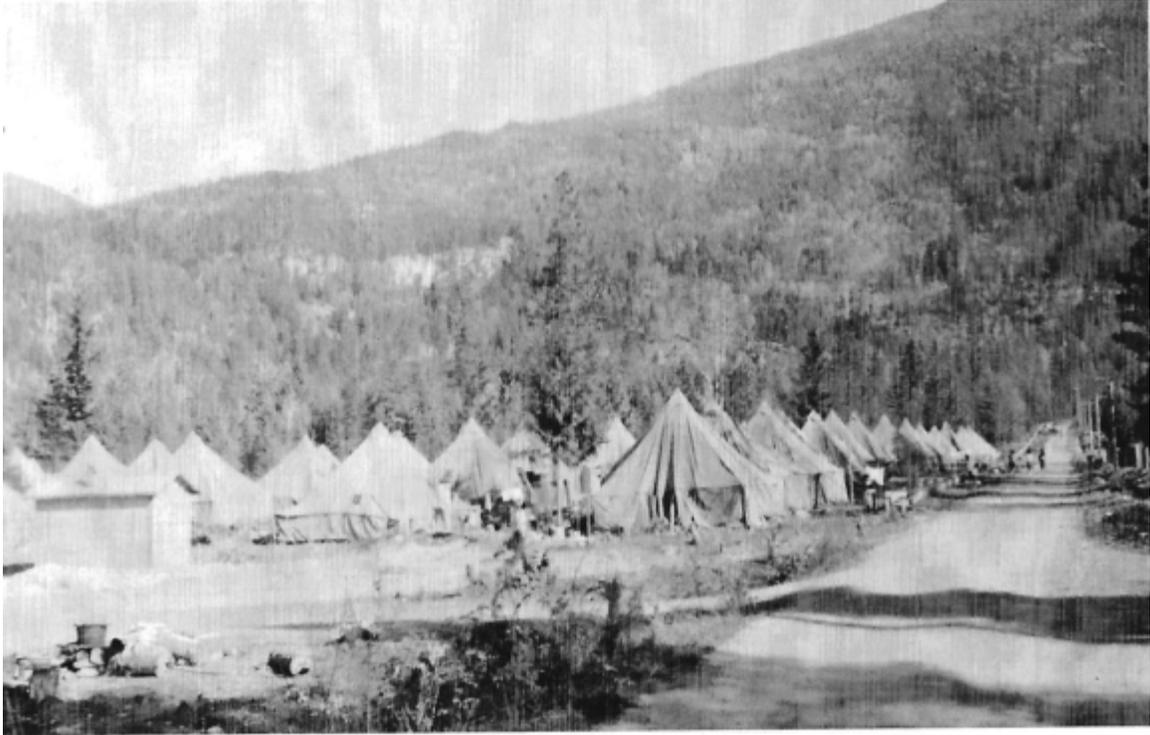
Between the old train station and a park, we found a legacy sign that explained the history of Slokan City and Slokan City Camp.



According to the 2016 Census of Canada, Slokan's population was 289. Slokan has a community library, post office, West Kootenay Office of BC Government, a Royal Canadian Legion Branch, public schools, and a fire hall. It serves West Kootenay as an administrative centre.

Bay Farm Camp

Bay Farm Camp was located on the south side of Slokan City Camp. There was a gravel road connecting those two camps. Today, the northern one-third is an open space, but the rest is a forested residential area. We could not find any legacy signs here.



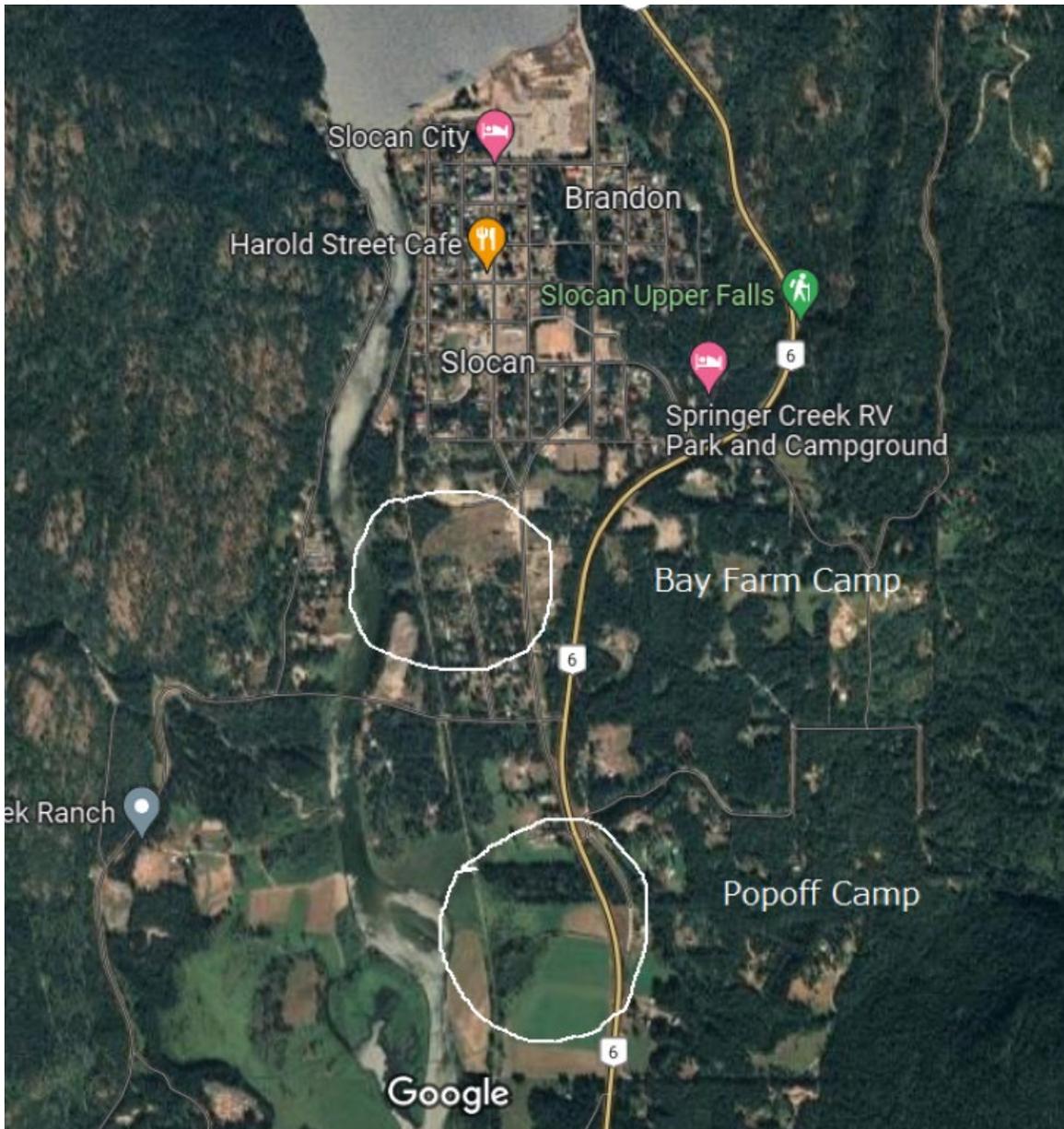
仮設テント ベイ・ファーム 1942年頃 NNM1996.178.1.15

Army tents at Bay Farm Camp in 1942



The Town of Bay Farm; Bay Farm, BC c. 1944. NNM 2012.11.441

Bay Farm Camp in 1944

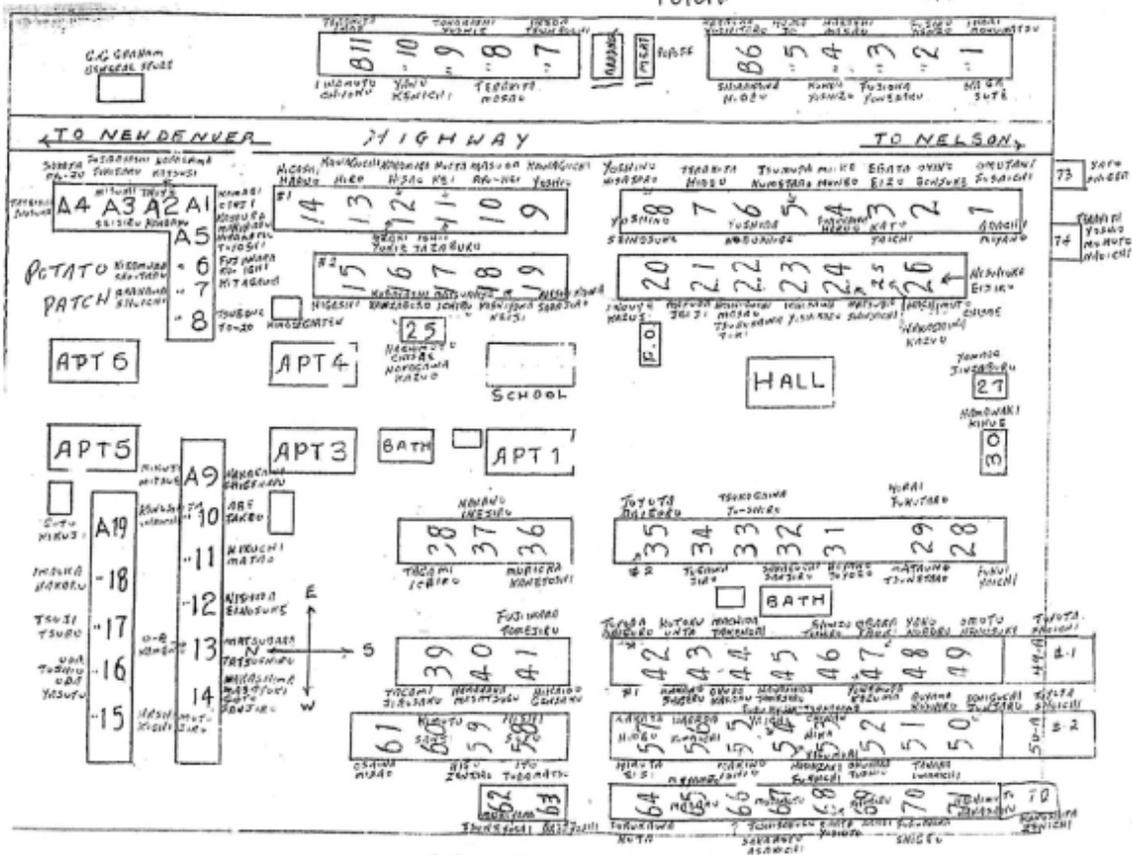


Bay Farm Camp and Popoff Camp

Popoff Camp

BCSC quickly gathered Japanese Canadian labourers from the west coast and brought them to road camps here to build permanent shacks for Japanese Canadians. The Japanese Canadian labourers first made apartments for themselves, then shacks and a school. After the completion of shacks at the camps in Slokan Valley, the apartments were used to accommodate seniors and bachelors. In the summer of 1942, BCSC leased a farm 1.6 kilometers south of Popoff Camp and built many army tents as temporary accommodation shelters for Japanese Canadians forced to move here from the BC coast. By December 1942, a total of 932 Japanese Canadians had moved to Popoff.

Today, the Popoff Camp site is an open field. We could not find any legacy signs here.



ポポフの地図 NNM2011.70.1

A layout map of Popoff Camp



Summer 1942, an apartment at Popoff

I could find very few stories of Popoff Camp. Here are excerpts from a story by George Doi that appeared in the December 2020 issue of "Discover Nikkei." George Doi was 11 years old when he and his family moved from Hastings Park to Popoff Camp.

Memories of Popoff Camp and Bay Farm Camp by George Doi

My memory of the train ride was an absolute blank. I vaguely recall being seated in the train and from the window saw telegraph poles whizzing by and hearing the clickety-clack along the tracks. But if I were awake and enjoying the ride, I would have noticed the high mountains coming together as we approached the town of Hope. Then, following the Canadian Pacific line through the Fraser Canyon into Lytton and heading east, I would have seen the flat open Okanagan Valley, Greenwood, Grand Forks and Christina Lake. Continuing eastward between the narrow mountains, we would come out to Farron and the Lower Arrow Lakes to Castlegar and finally into Slocan Valley.

At Slocan City, after we were checked off by the officials, we loaded our baggage onto a truck and were driven to a place called Popoff, about four kilometers south. Here we were booked into an army type wall tent to accommodate all eight of us. This was to be our temporary residence until our shacks were built.

Fall came early in the interior and within a few weeks everything started to freeze and the snow followed. Icicles were forming inside the tent and the additional clothes we wore to bed that not adequate. Every morning, we got up very early and stood outside around the hot fire that we started in a tin nail keg. Our meals were served inside the hockey rink in Slocan City, a three-kilometer walk.

There were some tents set up inside the rink, probably for the kitchen staff. They sometimes served chocolate pie and egg custard and I always looked forward to these treats.

The Russian Doukhobors from Popoff and Perry Siding used to come on horse drawn wagons and by sleds in the winter to sell fresh vegetables like cabbages, carrots, turnips, etc. and they always

had a gunnysack of raw sunflower seeds. They were a godsend because veggies were not in plentiful supply.

Bay Farm Camp

Mom told me that straws were drawn to decide who got to move into the next available shacks. We were lucky and moved out of the tent in Popoff before the long winter set in. Our house was at the far end of First Avenue, near the railway tracks. The dimension was about 14x24 feet, and divided into three rooms. This being our first experience in interior winter, it was cold, very cold. Even the local old timers mentioned it to be one of the coldest winters they had experienced.

As all the shacks were built with green lumber with roofing paper on the inside (some on the outside), it was like living inside a refrigerator in the winter. When the winds blew we could feel the cold drive through the walls and frost would build up between the boards.

The two end rooms were our bedrooms. I remember a single and a double bed crammed in one room but cannot remember how many beds were in the other room. The beds were made from 2x4 and shiplap, and mattresses were filled with straw or rags.

The eating area was even smaller. Quite frankly, I cannot remember what the table and benches looked like. But you could just imagine what it would be like to have 10 people in a 8x14 foot kitchen crowded with a table, two benches, a kitchen stove, a sink, some wooden boxes for shelves, pots and pans, and couple of water pails.

Of course it would be very crowded so in the morning, when it came time to wash and eat, we all seemed to know what to do without having to be told. Some got up earlier, or if the kitchen was crowded there would be last-minute homework other things to do in the bedroom.

Later, we built an 8x10 foot addition on the back for storage and dug a root cellar under one end of the house. The only source of heat was the kitchen stove in the middle room. Later, we installed a small tin heater and cut a hole in the partition to allow the heat to circulate, at least into one bedroom.

Of course condensation was forever a problem. Ice would form on the windowills and almost every morning we would chip away the ice built up at the bottom of the door before we could open it. Even laying a rag across to stop the draft did not help. By morning the rag was soaked and frozen. With 10 people crammed into a small quarter, I honestly don't know how we ever managed to live through it.

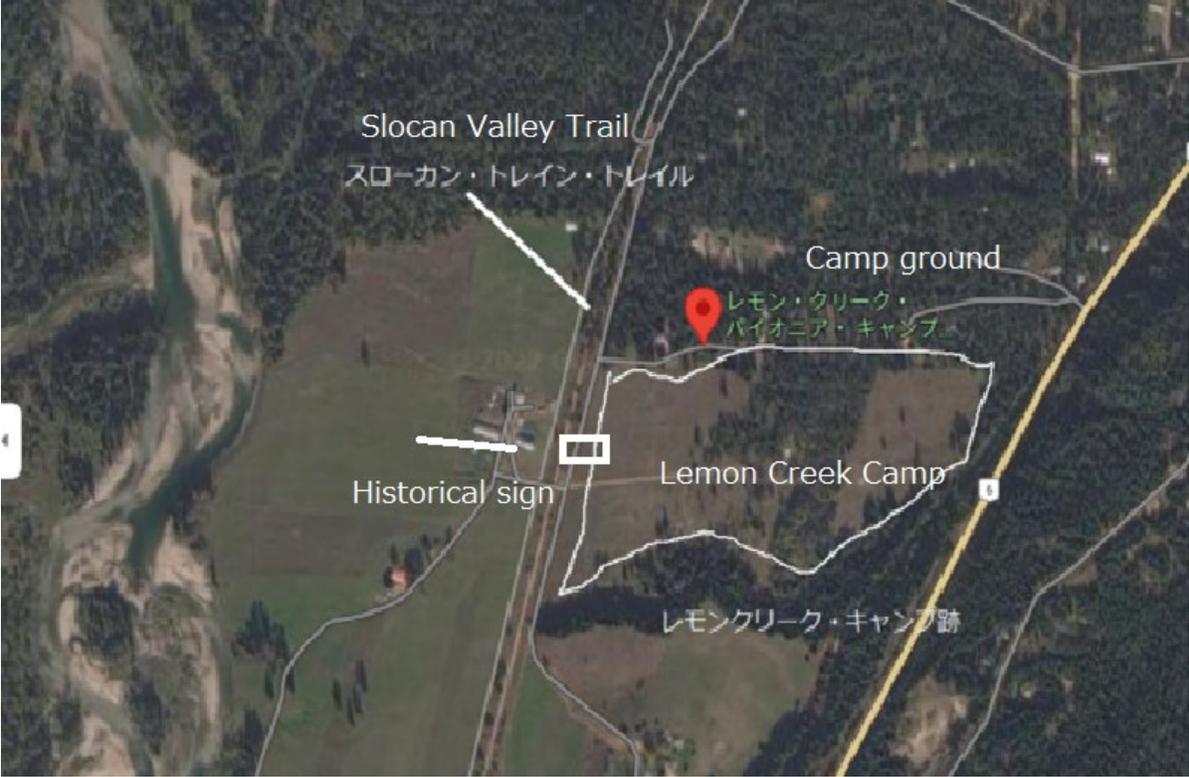
Water was the other commodity that was precious to us in the winter. Outdoor water taps were located every three or four houses apart but most of the time the pipes were frozen and water had to be trucked in. Fortunately we lived close to the river so we packed our water from about 500 feet away.

Lemon Creek Camp

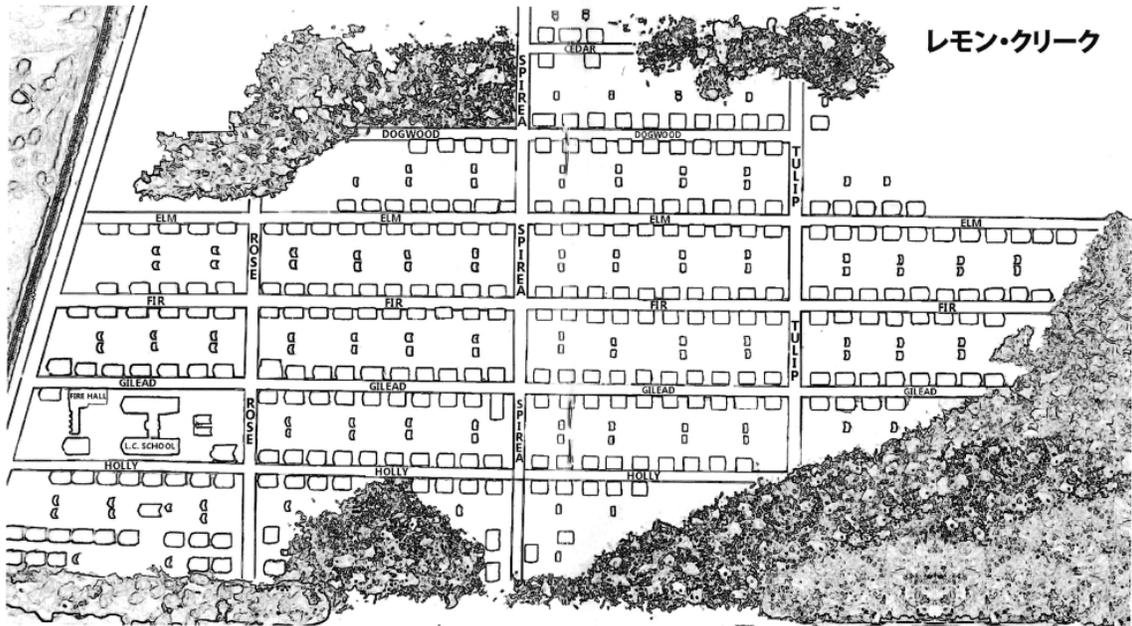
BCSC leased a ranch located 9 kilometers south of Slocan City and built a community composed of shacks, a United Church, a Buddhist Church and three stores. By the end of December 1942, a total of 1,860 Japanese Canadians moved into Lemon Creek Camp. Lemon Creek was the second largest camp in Slocan Valley.

From Slocan, we drove south about 9.7 kilometers and crossed a bridge over Lemon Creek. Then, we turned right into a gravel road. At the end of the gravel road, turn left and found a sign saying

Lemon Creek Pioneer Campground. This was an entrance to an open field where Lemon Creek Camp was. The northern part of the field is now a campground.



An aerial view of the Lemon Creek Camp site



A Lemon Creek Camp map, 1942



Townsite of Lemon Creek Shacks with mountains in background 1943. NNM1994.62.2

Lemon Creek Camp in 1943



The Lemon Creek site in 2022

While we were walking around a campground, a lady approached and asked us if we were interested in Lemon Creek Camp. She bought an old house in the campground with her friends and spent the summer here. She found out that this was a site where Lemon Creek Camp was located and studied the history of Japanese Canadians. She took us around the area and led us to a legacy sign on Slokan Valley Train overlooking the Lemon Creek Camp site.



A historical sign of Lemon Creek Camp

1946 - Lemon Creek Internment Camp is closed and quickly dismantled.
1949 - Four years after WWII ends, Japanese Canadians receive all rights of citizenship and are finally allowed to move back to the West Coast.

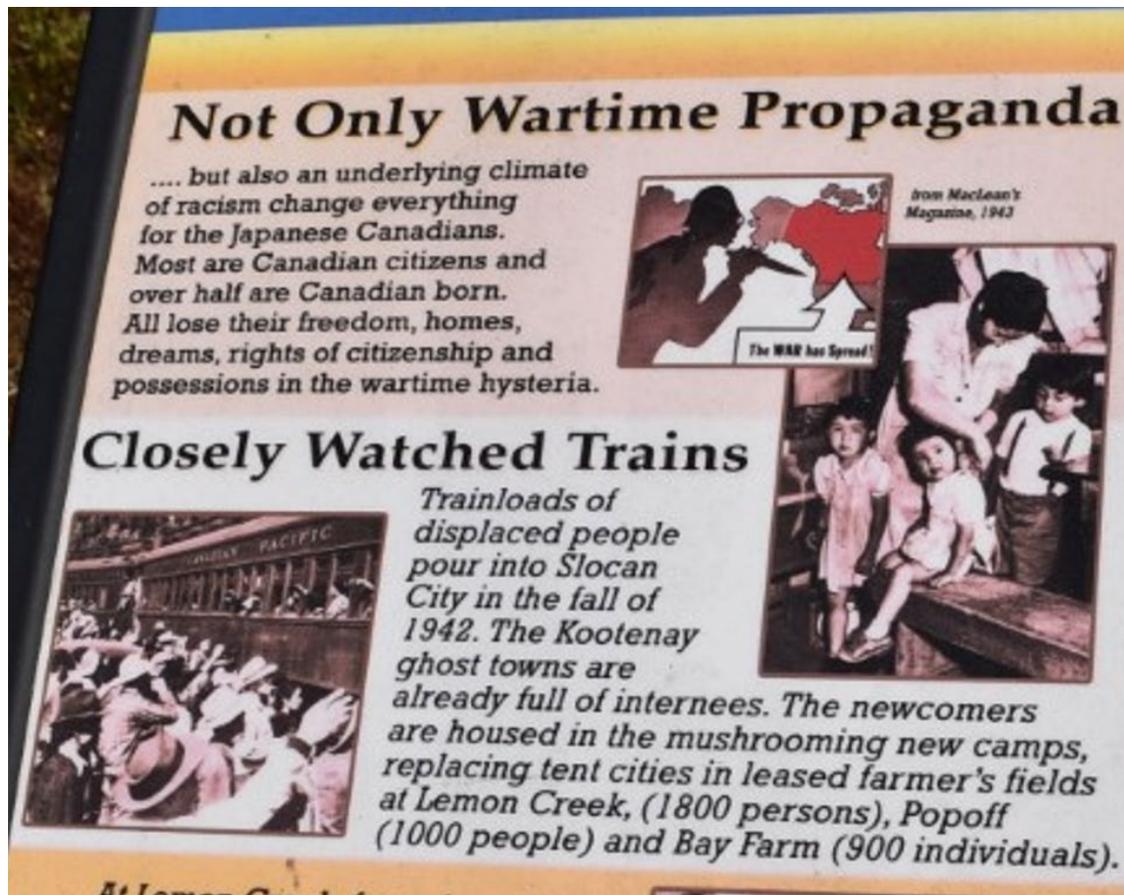
That Town In This Field?



The field in front of you was the site of the largest Kootenay Internment Camp, and the largest settlement in the Slocan Valley since silver rush days. None of the over 1800 Japanese Canadian residents were here by choice. This settlement was built on sorrow, loss, servitude and broken dreams.

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Not Only Wartime Propaganda

... but also, an underlying climate of racism change everything for the Japanese Canadians. Most are Canadian citizens and over half are Canadian born. All lose their freedom, homes, dreams, rights of citizenship and possessions in the wartime hysteria.

Closely Watched Trains

Trainloads of Displaced people pour into Slocan City in the fall of 1942. The Kootenay ghost towns are already full in internees. The newcomers are housed in the mushrooming new camps, replacing tent cities in leased farmer's fields at Lemon Creek, (1800 persons), Popoff (1000 people) and Bay Farm (900 individuals).

...ing from sites in leased farmer's field.
 at Lemon Creek, (1800 persons), Popoff
 (1000 people) and Bay Farm (900 individual

At Lemon Creek, forced-work crews build 268 two-family cabins, most 28 by 14 feet. Two cubicle-sized sleeping rooms with a kitchen between them provide quick, but rudimentary housing for two families or ten persons. Outhouses, washing and bathing facilities are shared.



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secondary and 465 elementary students. Moritsugu and the Ghost Town Teachers Historical Society

Internees At Work And Play

Many Worked in the Bush

They wanted to shut down all our work, but the mill owners wouldn't have that. Tom Tagami Sr.



"There are many to whom the eastward trek is a fearsome journey. Burdened with young children or aging parents it is not easy to leave the camps for a place of doubtful welcome and dubious future."
 Tommy Shoyama in The New Canadian Newspaper

Lemon Creek Scrub

"We thought we could play baseball but these guys just ran circles around us."
 Jim Tinkess from the Langham Tapes



photo and citation from Asahi A Legend in Baseball by Pat Adachi

"Baseball made it possible for the rest of us Nisei to hold our heads higher when BC society kept telling us we were second-rate and not Canadian enough."

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Moving



Memories

“I went up to Lemon Creek with my mom and visited that field. There really is nothing much there, nothing to mark four years of thousands of peoples’ lives”

Leslie Komori

By late 1946 Lemon Creek was closed. Internees were shipped to other camps, to jobs East of the Rockies or to Japan.

“They started selling internment shacks for \$50 to \$75 each, a bargain price for all the locals. The unsold shacks in Lemon Creek, Popoff and Bayfarm were cut into sections, loaded onto flatcars and shipped to the prairies. They would pay you \$10 to cut a house up into sections”

Tom Tagami Sr. as cited in Nikkei Images

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Education: Always A Priority



26 Lemon Creek teachers taught 117 secondary and 465 elementary students.

First Lemon Creek Principal Irene Uchida Remembers

“After constructing housing, the Security Commission work crews spent the rest of that winter (1943) completing our school-to-be. The two large wooden buildings were joined by a roofed corridor. Lemon Creek was the largest camp, but had no electricity. Everything was powered by a diesel generator.”

photo and citation from Teaching in Canadian Exile by Frank Moritsugu and the Ghost Town Teachers Historical Society

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Chop Wood and Carry Water




“Our shack had no electricity and the communal water tap was outside. In the small rooms, beds had to be pushed up against the walls, and on winter mornings the bedding was stuck frozen to the wall.”

Evelyn Murdoch

Chop Wood and Carry Water

“Our shack had no electricity and the communal water tap was outside, In the small rooms, beds had to be pushed up against the walls, and on winter mornings the bedding was stuck frozen to the wall.” *(The name is unreadable)*

New Denver Camp

In the 1980s, New Denver was an early service centre for mines and the nearby towns of Three Forks, Sandon, Cody, Silverton and Slocan. There was a steamship landing, and a coach ran once in two days between New Denver and Nakusp and once in four days between New Denver and Nelson. In 1895, a railway between Nakusp and Sandon was completed, and a railway station was built at New Denver. Mining declined after the First World War. In 1942 when BCSC leased lands for making internment camps in New Denver, the population of New Denver was 350.

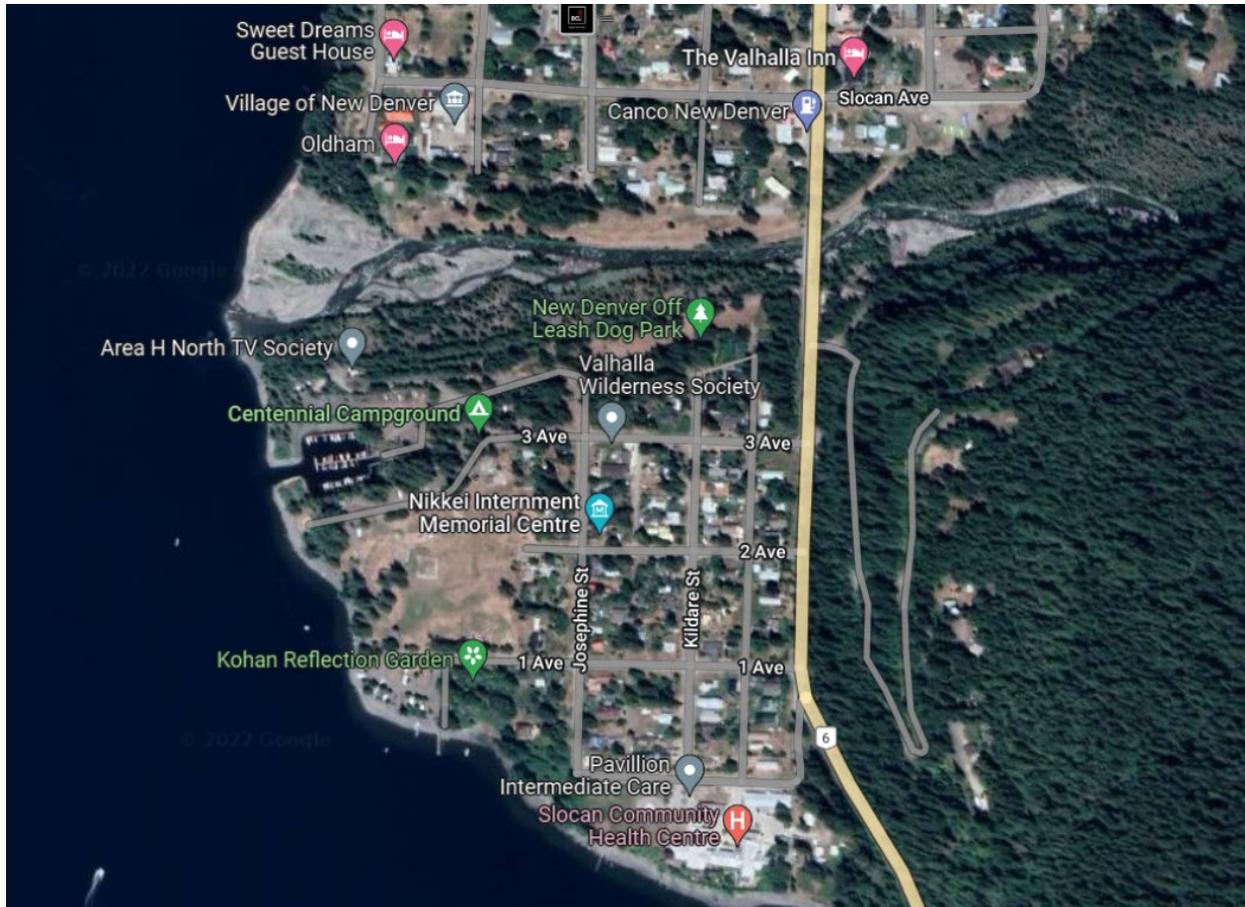


BCSC leased an open space south of the creek that ran east-west in the middle of New Denver. This open space was called the Orchard. BCSC also leased the Nelson Ranch at the northeast corner of New Denver and the Harris Ranch, about 2 kilometers south of New Denver.

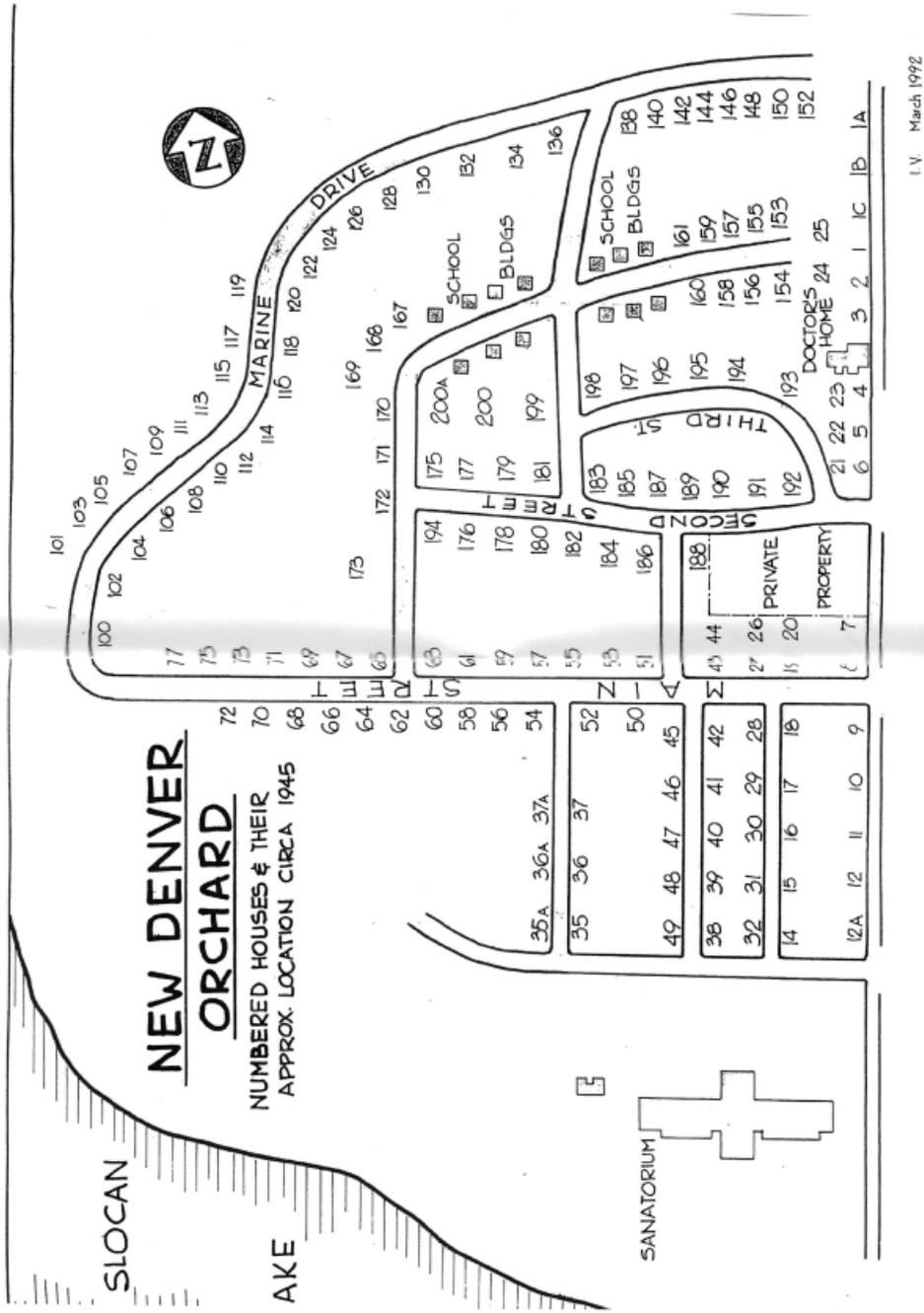
BCSC used Japanese Canadians to build a total of 275 identical shacks in the Orchard area. Local people formerly used this area to grow fruit and vegetables. BCSC built a sanatorium at the south end to accommodate patients from Hastings Parks. The first group of Japanese Canadians arrived on May 21, 1942, and at its peak, the Orchard had about 1,600 people. Japanese Canadians in New Denver mainly were widows with young children and sick who could not work or support themselves and patients' families at the Sanatorium.

In 1946 when the federal government started deporting some Japanese Canadians to Japan, New Denver became a holding area for Japanese Canadian going to Japan in the other camps that had been closed.

Since there were Japanese Canadian patients at the Sanatorium and their families lived in the camp, New Denver was open until 1957. New Denver was finally closed in 1957, and the lots in the Orchard were rearranged into a standard city block. Then, the BC government deeded the shacks and lots to the Japanese Canadian residents who wanted to remain in New Denver.



The present aerial picture of the Orchard at New Denver



I. V. March 1992
 ニューデンバーの発展に番号がふられた住宅の配置、1945年頃、1952年3月前代、NNM所蔵

The Orchard map in 1942

果樹園と療養所 ニュー・デンバー、BC州 1943年頃 NNM 1992.32.19



The south end of Orchard in 1943, you can see the Sanatorium



The Sanatorium today, you can see a part of structure that is the same as that in the above picture.



The beach in front of the Sanatorium



The gate of the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre in New Denver

The Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre

Those Japanese Canadians who remained in New Denver after the internment camps were closed organized New Denver Kyowakai Society and in 1994, opened the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre. However, as the Japanese Canadians in New Denver got old, the administration of the Centre was handed over to the Village of New Denver. A group of non-Japanese Canadian volunteers take care of the Centre. In 2021, a resident Anne Champagne authored a book, *Kyowakai: Memory and Healing in New Denver*. The book can be purchased from the Village of New Denver <https://newdenver.ca/nikkei/>.

Four shacks, one community hall and one outhouse in the Orchard were moved to the Centre. The old community hall is now used as a museum.



The Heiwa Teien Peach Garden and shacks

The garden and buildings are maintained well. However, the buildings are already 80 years old and, although repaired still fragile.

A lady at the Centre told us the story of the internment of Japanese Canadians for 15 minutes. While we were listening to her, a sansei from Salmon Arm came in. He said that his grandfather was a fisherman at Steveston, and his family was moved to Sandon. He visited the Centre several times and once came here with his children. I had read stories about life in the shacks before I went to the Centre. But standing in the shack, I was surprised to find how small the shack was and how simply it was built. In the museum, we found an army tent that Popoff used to accommodate the internees while they were waiting to complete shacks. I cannot imagine how two families could share one tent. When we left the Centre, another group came in.



Shack



The entrance door and a heating stove, you can see a bedroom on the left



Kitchen and a wooden sink



Bedroom



Museum



Display at the museum



Army tent



The residential area around the Centre. You can see a Canadian flag at the entrance of the Center on the left side.

The Orchard is now a residential area and houses were scattered in the woods.



The entrance of Kohan Reflection Garden in the Orchard

The Kohan Reflection Garden is located at the southwest corner of the Orchard. This public garden is continually evolving and maintained by Slokan Lake Garden Society volunteers, the Village of New Denver with assistance from the municipal, provincial, and federal governments and the Columbia Basin Trust (Kohan means by the water). The plaque at the garden says, "The Kohan Reflection Garden was created to honor the Japanese Canadians interned here during the Second World War. Today, a tea house built for ceremonial purposes remains in the heart of the garden along with several huge flowering cherry trees planted by the Fujinkai, a women's organization.



Looking at the lake from the Garden

Harris Ranch

At 60-acre ranch 2 kilometers south of New Denver, BCSC built 23 shacks and leases a big old house. The big house was called the Old Bachelor Home and accommodated about 50 elderly men.



Photo of Harris Ranch NNM 1992-32-20

Harris Ranch in 1942



Harris Ranch Old Man Camp NNM 2012-29-2-2-33

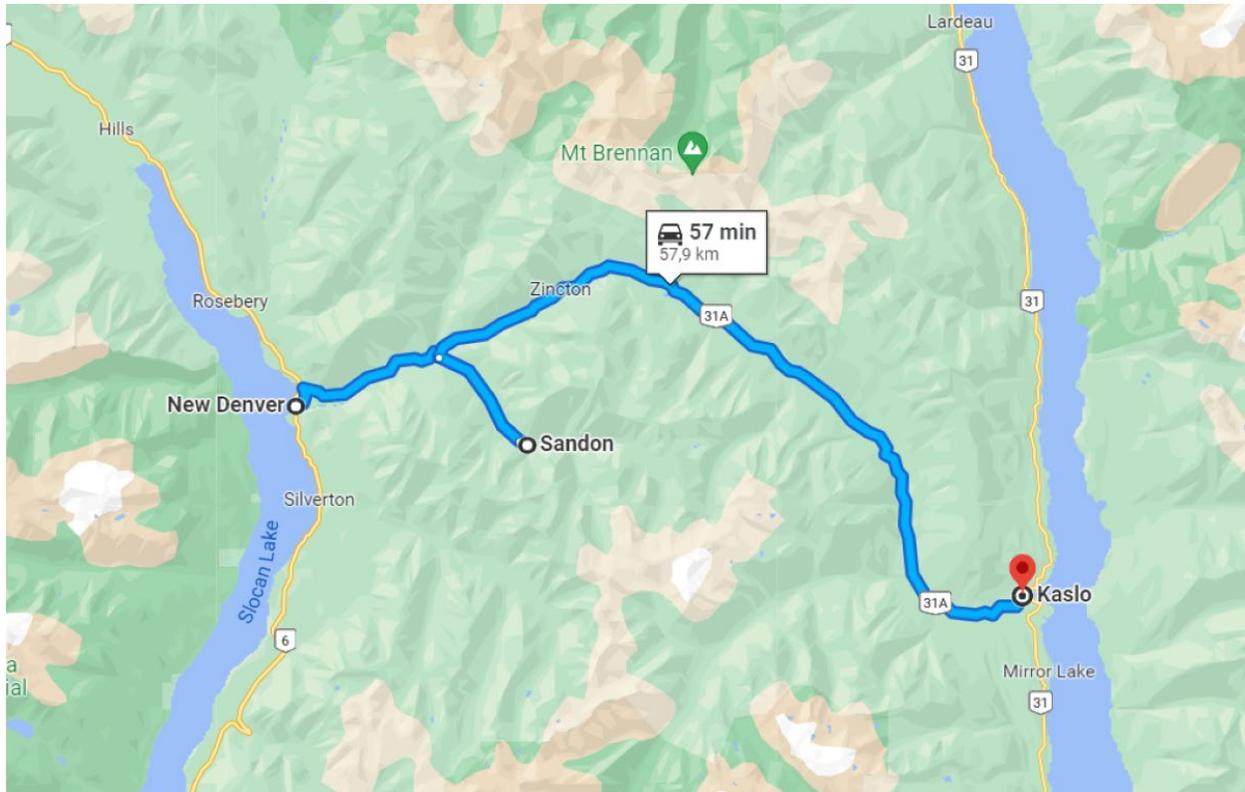
Old Bachelor Home in 1942

Nelson Ranch

BCSC leased a two-acre ranch along the northeast boundary of New Denver. A barn on the ranch was converted to a dormitory for men.

We could not identify the exact locations of the Harris Ranch and Nelson Ranch.

Sandon Camp



From New Denver, we drove to Sandon. We first went east on Highway 31A to Kaslo, then turned south onto a gravel road along a mountain creek. At the end of the creek, we found the site of Sandon Camp.

In 1891, vast amounts of galena ore were found here, and prospectors flocked from around North America. By 1895, Sandon was a thriving town with two railway termini. In 1898, Sandon had more than 5000 residents, 29 hotels, 28 brothels, a hockey arena, and a hydroelectric station. On weekend evenings, more than 10,000 minors from the mining camps around Sandon came to the town. But like the other silver towns of the era, Sandon faded as the silver prices declined in the 1920s. In 1955, a massive flood destroyed most of the remaining buildings.

When BCSC decided to make Sandon an internment camp, the population of Sandon was just 20. BCSC renovated any remaining buildings and built some new buildings. By November 1942, a total of 933 Japanese Canadians had moved into Sandon. Sandon Camp was closed in 1944. It was the



Sandon in the 1890s, the main street was a boardwalk over the creek



Sandon in 1942, the street in the middle was a boardwalk, looking upstream of the creek



The current main street, looking downstream. The building on the right is a city hall built in 1900, used as an apartment in the internment camp



A water hydro-electric power station on the right. The internees used to grow vegetable in the field below the power station



Sandon Museum



Looking downstream from the museum. There was a board walk over the stream

We arrived at Sandon at 10 o'clock when Sandon Museum opened. We parked next to the old City Hall. Then, a non-Japanese Canadian woman talked to us. She explained the history of the Japanese internment camp at Sandon and told us where to see anything remaining from the camp era. I asked her if she was a New Denver volunteer for the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre. She said she owned a small snack next to the old City Hall. Sandon was famous among those who loved to visit ghost towns. During summer, Sandon welcomed many visitors, and she started acting as an unofficial guide. There are only five residents in Sandon: two at the snack, two at the power station and one at Sandon Museum.

We first went to the powerhouse, one of the two buildings still standing from the camp era. The powerhouse is still working, providing electricity to New Denver. At the powerhouse, there was a guide. He took us around the powerhouse and told us that some Japanese Canadians worked at the powerhouse.



Exhibition at Sandon Museum

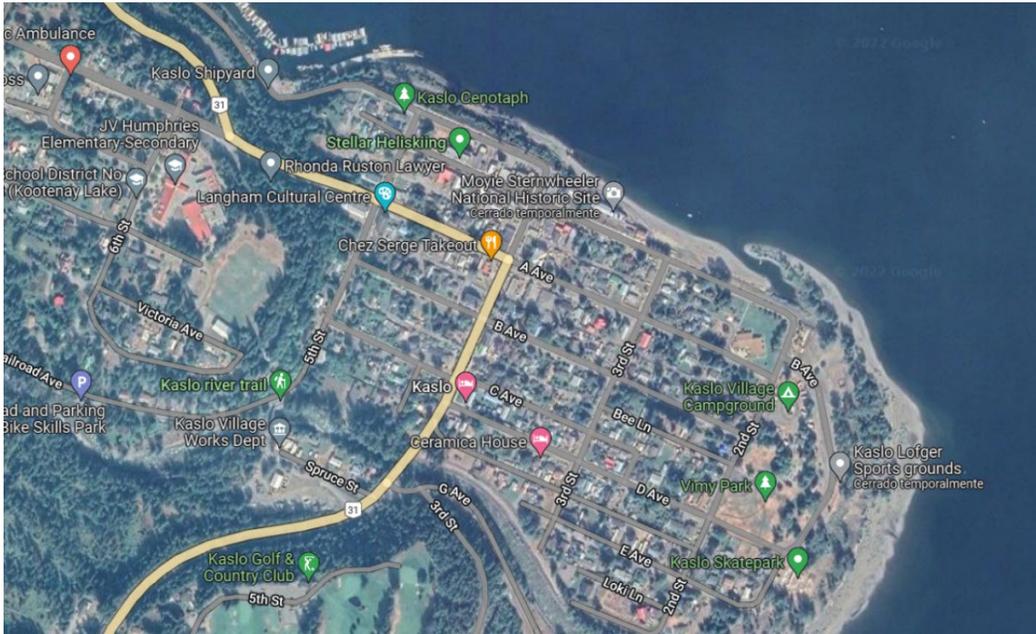
Sandon Museum shows the history of Sandon and has pictures of the Sandon Camp and Japanese Canadian internees.

After the museum, we went to the snack for lunch. The snack owner/cook whom we had talked was now talking to another tourist before making sandwiches for us.

Kaslo Camp

After Sandon, we drove east to Kaslo. In the second half of the 1880s and the first half of the 1890s, Kaslo was an important centre for shipping silver from mines in the area. In 1895, it became the eastern terminus for the Kaslo and Slocan Railway that connected Sandon and Kaslo. It was a

thriving town supporting mining and minors in the area. Kaslo's fortunes faded after the end of the silver rush and then the widespread collapse of mining activity after the First World War. The town switched to fruit farming and logging. By 1942, Kaslo's population was about 500. BCSC leased 52 abandoned buildings and 30 acres for a garden. In May 1942, the first group of Japanese Canadians came to Kaslo. They rode a train from Vancouver to Nelson and then a paddle-wheeler SS Nassokin to Kaslo. In total, about 1,200 Japanese Canadians were interned in Kaslo.



The Current aerial picture of Kaslo





SSナスーキン号からカスロで下船する移送者 1942年5月13日 NNM2011.19.15

May 13, 1942, Japanese Canadians were getting of the SS Nssokin at Kalo.



Overview of Kaslo 1940s - the back of The Langham in right foreground. Kootenay Lake Archives 995.002.0082

Kaslo in 1940

Langham Hotel housed 78 Japanese Canadians. It has been renovated and become the Langham Museum, Theatre and Art Gallery owned by the Langham Cultural Society. A gallery and museum are on the first floor, and the second and third floors are the Japanese Canadian Museum. Some rooms where Japanese Canadians have lived are preserved.



Husso Hasebe playing near the rear of the Langham Hotel.
Kootenay Lake Archives 995.002.0150

Langham Hotel as a part of Kaslo Camp



Langham Hotel in the 1970s



Langham Hotel now (The Langham Museum, Theatre and Art Gallery)

At the Langham Museum, a non-Japanese Canadian woman told us the story of Kaslo Camp. She told us that she and her husband moved to Kaslo from Edmonton ten years ago and now volunteering as a guide at the Museum. She was a member of the Langham Cultural Society.



At the gallery, there was an exhibition of drawings by Tsuneko Kubota, a Japanese Canadian artist in Silverton, a village south of New Denver.



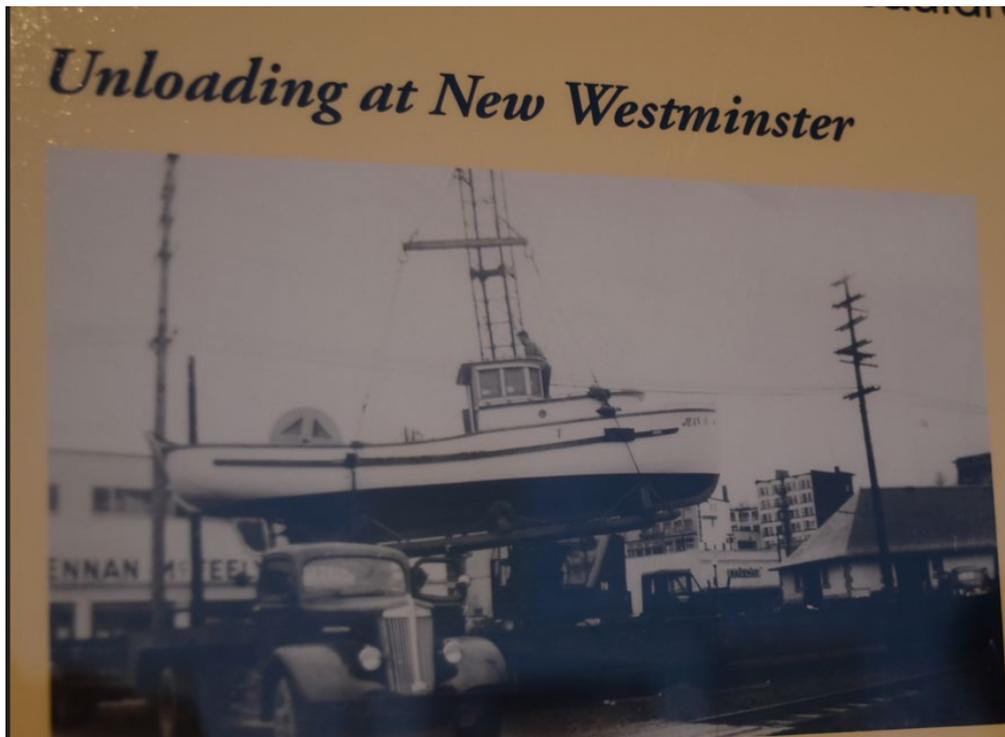
The stairs going up the second floor. Pictures and stories of Japanese Canadians are displayed on the walls.



The second-floor hall with pictures and stories of Japanese Canadians on the walls.



A room in Langham Hotel in 1942 displayed at the museum



Mr. Tomio Baba owned Langham Hotel from about 1950 to the middle of the 1960s and used the first floor to build a fishing boat. He transported the ship by train to Vancouver. The picture above shows a boat being unloaded from a train at New Westminster.

Memories of Kaslo are posted on the walls. I will copy a couple of them below.



Memories of Kaslo by Michiko Konno

In May of 1942, my mother and her seven children (ages 13 years to 8-month-old baby) were loaded onto a train and then the Nasookin to Kaslo. There we were housed at the Langham Hotel in one room with a divider that we had to share with the Tabata's, a family of eight. The room was filled with double beds with only enough room to walk around the beds. After couple months or so, the Tabata's were moved to another building.

Where your front gallery desk is, was where Rev. Shimizu of the Japanese United Church had his office. Behind that was a room that some shingle men shared. Where the Art Gallery is, was a lounge and playroom for the children. Your theatre area is where the kitchen was. Behind the kitchen was the big "Ofuro" (bath house).

My mother tells a story about all the times she would go downstairs to put on a big pot of rice to feed all of us. When she came back down to check on it, someone had pushed her pot off to the site to put their own pot on the hot spot. Needless to say, we ate a lot of "gunji gohan" until the culprit was caught and had her wrist slapped. Everyone was allotted one open shelf to store dishes and supplies in the kitchen.

Eventually another small kitchen was built upstairs and another stove was added to the big kitchen. The wash room (for clothing) was also upstairs. There was a lumber and wood storage shed at the very back of the building.

Memories of Joe Miyazaki

My dad, Shinzo Miyazaki, had a hernia so he didn't have to go to road camps. He was the janitor at the Langham from May 1942 until late 1944 and the rest of my family all lived there. Though I had to stay in a dormitory at the Mayse Hotel on Front Street, I had my meals with the family at the Langham. My dad used to chop the wood and feed the fires. With the ofuro and big cook stove and heating stoves there was always wood to move. The hot water tank was a sawdust burner and it was temperamental. There wasn't enough hot water unless it was constantly tended. Later, there was a

long table and a big stove in the middle of the second floor too. Working as a carpenter's helper I had to build a lot of fences around stoves. Shortly after we got to Kaslo on the first boat, I had to help dig a cess pool behind the Langham. I remember it was about eight feet deep.



SS Moyie, a paddle wheeler that was used until 1957. Currently under repair. The Nasookin that carried Japanese Canadians from Nelson to Kaslo was larger than the SS Moyie.



A park at the lake front

According to the 2016 Census of Canada, Kaslo's population was 968. It is a commercial and administrative centre serving people in the area. The average high temperature in August is 25.4 degrees Celsius and the average low in January is minus 4.0 degrees Celsius. This mild climate attracts people in the prairie provinces to Kaslo as their retirement place.

On September 10, we drove from Balfour to Fernie and on September 11, we went from Fernie, Crow's Nest Pass, Fort McLeod, Calgary and to Edmonton.

During our visits to the Japanese Canadian internment camp sites, we were impressed by the activities of local non-Japanese Canadian volunteers who maintain Japanese legacies at their museums.

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