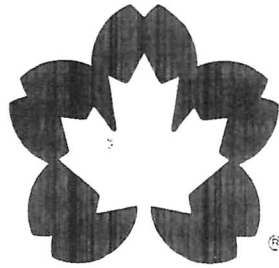


CENTENNIAL YEAR OF OUR JAPANESE CANADIANS



MANZO NAGANO might have ended up in the United States or Britain or almost anywhere. When this bold young adventurer stowed away on a British ship sailing from Yokohama, Japan, in 1877, he had no idea of its destination. But the ship docked at Victoria, B.C. and Nago stepped into history as the first known Japanese to settle in Canada.

In 1977, 100 years after Nagano's arrival, some 40,000 Canadians of Japanese ancestry will proudly celebrate the growth and accomplishments of their community scattered across the country. Though smaller in numbers than most ethno-cultural groups, the Japanese Canadians have a justifiable pride and a sense of achievement in their accomplishments and contributions to this nation's development.

The strength of Canada lies in the multi-national background of its people who are immigrants or descendants of immigrants. The Japanese Canadians are an integral strand in the intricate pattern of the multi-racial fabric which is Canada. In a country enriched by diversity, they believe it is vital to Canada's continued growth and stability that Canadians learn more about each other.

Manzo Nagano symbolizes the first generation of Japanese in this country, the *Issei*, the hardworking immigrant pioneers who met the formidable challenge of a raw frontier, not to mention a strange language and an alien culture. Coming here mainly from 1895 to 1925, they cleared virgin land, cut timber, dug for coal, and helped build the railways that opened up Canada. They played an undeniable and vital role in the development of Western Canada. They brought with them the rich and traditional heritage and philosophy of the Orient, much of which was adapted and became part of the Canadian mosaic.

While they are a forward-looking people, their Centennial also provides an opportunity to pause and look back, to honor the men and women whose courage, sacrifice, perseverance, patience and industry enabled them to overcome great obstacles and establish homes for their families and their descendants.

Their descendants, the *Nisei* (the born-in-Canada or second generation) and the *Sansei* (the grandchildren of the immigrants or third generation) do not forget their Japanese heritage, but they are Canadians, first and foremost.

A black chapter in the story of Canada's Japanese was the forced evacuation of thousands from B.C. coastal regions in the frightening months after Japan entered World War II. The bewildered Japanese, the majority of whom had been born and raised in Canada and most of whom thought of themselves only as Canadians, suffered the loss of their homes and businesses and were removed to inland internment camps.

That the Japanese Canadians survived this traumatic experience is a tribute to their character and to their genuine love for their country. They put bitterness behind them, built new lives after the war and have made a considerable contribution to Canada throughout its length and breadth.

The Japanese Canadians conclude their first century with a quiet sense of pride. They have suffered but they have overcome.

The year 1977 is the Japanese Canadians' moment in history to rejoice and to ask their fellow Canadians to share in this celebration—to learn about the cultural legacy and history of the Japanese Canadians and their considerable role in Canada's development, and to understand their hopes and aspirations.

The Centennial Program

Saturday, May 14 has been designated Centennial Day. In communities across Canada, Japanese Canadians will conduct dedication ceremonies or hold Centennial dinners attended by government and civic authorities.

Centennial Day will also launch a series of events to celebrate the first 100 years of the Japanese Canadians.

The main purpose of the continuing Centennial Program will be to reach beyond communities which happen to have a sizable Japanese Canadian population by planning projects and staging events which will encourage the involvement of the general public.

Thus, 1977 is a special opportunity to arouse the interest of Canadians generally and, hopefully, lead to greater awareness and appreciation of the contribution of Japanese Canadians to Canada.

Many Japanese Canadian communities plan a commemorative gift to their respective towns and cities which will benefit all their citizens. As well, many plan specific events in conjunction with local happenings to highlight the Centennial.

For example, Japanese odori dance groups, located in several Canadian centres, will join in regional festivals, fairs, pageants and other events to present their unique cultural heritage for the enjoyment of the public. There will also be displays and demonstrations of many aspects of Japanese culture, such as martial arts, flower arranging and Japanese landscaping.

A touring photographic exhibit will visit many Canadian centres to "show" vividly and dramatically 100 years of Japanese Canadian history. As well, a pictorial history of the Japanese Canadians will be published.

In addition, the Centennial planners are aiming to create special events and celebrations that reflect the essence of the Japanese Canadians beyond the familiar and the folkloric.

Funding

Obviously, financial backing is essential to the success of the Centennial. The Japanese Canadian Centennial Society hopes to raise much of the money from individuals, organizations and businesses within the Japanese Canadian communities. But because this is a singular, once-only event and because the overall program is national in scope and of interest and benefit to all Canadians, the Society is seeking financial assistance from governments, foundations, corporations and other sources.

The Future

Although relatively few in number, Japanese Canadians have distinguished themselves in the arts, in architecture and in the academic, medical and science-research fields. They hold responsible positions in many other areas, including government, communications, commerce and industry. Unlike their parents who had to prove their Canadian-ness, today's *Sansei* know that they live in an enlightened social climate where they are judged for their talents and abilities alone. Fear of rejection or racial discrimination has all but been erased among them. About 90 per cent of them intermarry.

There has been little emigration from Japan to Canada since the end of World War II. Consequently, the large majority of Japanese Canadians today are Canadian-born or prewar residents of Canada.

On the eve of their Centennial, Japanese Canadians look forward optimistically to their second century, confident that they will continue to play a significant role in fulfilling the promise of Canada's great future. □

ALBERTA'S WILD ROSE



submitted by Jean Leslie

PERREN BAKER, member of the Alberta Legislature for Cypress Hills from 1910 to 1935, was education minister when the wild rose became the province's official floral emblem. At the age of 93 he wrote to his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Bert Baker of Calgary, to tell how the emblem was chosen.

Dear Agnes:

"... it came about through the initiative of the women's organizations—probably the United Farm Women of Alberta or the Women's Institute, and I rather think it was the latter—who pointed out that Alberta had no floral emblem and requested that the deficiency be made good.

Though, like me, not many Albertans even knew that we were so backward, the request was reasonable and more easily complied with than many submitted by earnest reformers, so the women were assured that Alberta would get its emblem.

Alberta was to have its emblem, but what would that emblem be and who was to make the choice? From someone came the happy idea that it should be made by the children of the province. So the Department of

Education polled all the schools, and in the wide vote the little wild rose won out.

For the implementary legislation however, its more precise name was required and this was beyond me. Why I did not get it from a botanist I do not remember, but it was from Dr. Broadus, head of the Department of English at the university that I got the assurance that the botanical name of our wild rose was *Rosa Acicularis*. And it is under this name that it is enshrined in the statutes of Alberta.

Never in any Parliament anywhere can any piece of legislation have had a smoother and more expeditious passage.

No voice was raised in opposition, no delaying amendment moved, first reading, second reading, committee of the whole, third reading, and then the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor and the wild rose became the official floral emblem of Alberta.

I think it was a very good choice. Its shape, though simple and less voluptuous than that of its sophisticated sisters, is pleasing; its delicate color beautiful and when the rose patches are in full bloom the prairie air is flooded with its lovely fragrance.

Moreover, and more significant, it is native. How it came or how long it had flourished on the semi-arid plains of southern Alberta before the settlers arrived I do not know. But there it was.

Neither heat nor cold nor raging winter nor devastating prairie fire or droughts had been able to dislodge it. It had firmly thrust down its roots and when man, the ruthless, came with his plow, the oxen and horses had to strain in their collars to cut through the dense masses of the patches of wild roses.

How fittingly it typified some of the qualities that would be needed if, in due time, men and women were to succeed in putting down their roots and enduring to make homes and civilized communities in that wide, empty and stubborn land.

A modest little flower, but oh! so lovely, and yet so hardy, tough and strong to endure. *Vive Rosa Acicularis*, the wild rose, worthy official emblem of Alberta." □