

Edmonton

JAPANESE COMMUNITY CLUB

Editorial Address:

9104 71 St.
Edmonton, Alberta
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MOSHI MOSHI

1982

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 5

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1982

OBASAN by Joy Kogawa

Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys,
1981, 256 pp. (hard cover) \$13.95

Joy Kogawa, born in Vancouver, now lives in Toronto. She has written three volumes of poetry, worked as a schoolmarm, a writer for the Canadian Prime Minister's office, and been Writer-in-Residence at the University of Ottawa. She is the recipient of several Canada Council grants.

OBASAN, her first novel, recovers the truth about what happened to her, her family, and her people in Canada during the Second World War. Naomi Nakane, a sheltered and beloved child, is only five years old in 1941 when her mother leaves to visit relatives in Japan. Then comes Pearl Harbor - and without warning her gentle world is thrown into unimaginable turmoil.

Separated from her mother, Naomi watches bewildered as she and her family become "enemy aliens", persecuted and despised in their own land. Like other Canadian citizens of Japanese origin, they are stripped of their rights and possessions, the men press-ganged, the women and children herded into concentration camps and dispersed across the country. Naomi lives in a world of fragile enchantment - protected by the resolute endurance of her aunt, Obasan, and the silence of those around her. Only after Naomi grows up does she return to question that haunting silence. Out of this profound psychic need, Joy has fashioned a redemptive novel of great gentleness and unmistakable power.

Those familiar with Southern Alberta will recognize much of the familiar setting of this novel. MOSHI MOSHI is attempting to get a special discount for membership purchase of this book, but so far we have not heard.

GRANT SHIKAZE, C.A.

Adding to his Bachelor of Commerce Grant Shikaze was awarded a degree in Chartered Accountancy in January (on his birthday!). He will continue to work at the place where he had articulated here in Edmonton.

Father Ben and mother Flo must be extremely proud to have a second son follow in his Dad's footsteps. Howie received his degree two years ago in Calgary.

Now if only we could earn enough to have one of the Shikaze's find tax loopholes for us, because there they are, ready and able.

-Lucy Takahashi

NEW FEATURES FOR MOSHI MOSHI

We are adding some new touches to MOSHI MOSHI in the coming issues. Elsewhere in this issue is a story called The Toro by Sally Ito, high school daughter of the John Ito's. Attached to her submission was this note: "I believe it is my responsibility as a young Yonsei to contribute what I can to the continuance and flourishing of our heritage. I chose the literary pathway. . . ."

The editors of MOSHI MOSHI plan to publish creative, artistic submissions that are short and appropriate for our kind of publication. We therefore encourage from readers of all ages contributions of art, poems, short stories, whatever.



ANNIVERSARY

A Happy Birthday to Mrs. IMA KONDO whose otanjobi is this month (we hope we are not too late), and to Mrs. C. NISHIMOTO, who celebrates her big day in March.

ENGAGED

In military circles engagement means hostile encounter, but not to Tats & Nicki YAMADA and Ben & Florence SHIKAZE, who are very happy to announce the engagement of their children, BRENDA and GRANT. The wedding is set for August 7th, 1982.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Great Grandparents, Grandparents, Parents, Children, Relatives, Friends, even In-Laws . . . Please phone us for announcements of births, engagements, weddings, obituaries or any happenings to Lucy (469-3260) or Flo (466-1059).
Our next copy deadline: March 26.

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT

We have just received some copies of Ann Gomer Sunahara, THE POLITICS OF RACISM, from the publishers. The books are available for \$12.95, but EJCC members will be eligible for a membership discount price of \$10.50 (soft cover). Contact Flo (466-1059) for your copy; mailing will cost extra, whatever the new rates require. (A review of this book will be published in MOSHI MOSHI; it missed this month's deadline - see Review on another page (4) next issue - ... Edmonton Journ: Nov. 28, 1981.)

see you at

EJCC
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Saturday, March 6
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TO THE HOCKEY PARENT

The traveling minister had finished his sermon in a prairie town and asked:

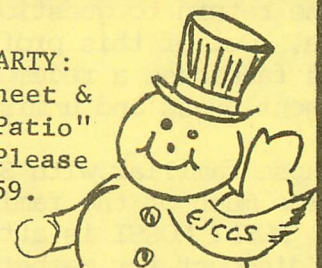
"Now, how many of you would like to go to heaven?"

Everyone raised his hand except for a small boy sitting in the front row.

"Don't you want to go to heaven?" the minister asked, looking at the lad.

"I'd like to," came the reply, "but I got hockey practice at 2."

LEFT AT THE XMAS PARTY:
A 10 x 15 cookie sheet &
a dinner plate... "Patio"
by Johnson Bros. Please
call Flo at 466-1059.



CANON NAKAYAMA'S PROJECT;
A BOOK ON PIONEER ISSEI

REDRESS FOR
JAPANESE CANADIANS

Joy Kogawa, author of OBASAN, sends us this opportunity:

"I'm writing to ask if you could insert something in your MOSHI MOSHI asking Nisei if they would write something for my father's project. He's been given money from Secretary of State for a book about stories from the lives of Japanese Canadian pioneers and it seems to me this is an opportunity for Nisei (and Sansei) to remember and honour their folks by sharing any anecdote - long or short - some incident, event - some interesting or illuminating detail of what they did, their basic philosophy, how they coped - something funny or tragic or noble or whatever - some meat to put on the skeleton of our history. I'll help him edit, collect, write out the English prose, if people could send the stuff on to me."

And as she adds: "Thus do we weave our tapestry." We heartily endorse this project and ^{urge} that we grasp this unique opportunity to honor our elders by sending materials for Canon Gordon Nakayama's book on Canadian pioneers to:

Joy Kogawa
447 Montrose Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M6G 3H2



I WENT TO AN
ETHNIC PARTY

It was Robbie Burns Night, January 23, and I was the only black-haired Scotsman in attendance; I had to honor the heritage of my first name, Gordon.

We began the evening with a Burns poem, in Celtic, and then came the ceremony of the haggis (which is a sausage of sheep's stomach filled with "stuff not sold to the English and which the birds wouldn't eat"), skirlie (various odds and ends not used elsewhere and fried in a lot of fat), neeps (rutabagas this time) and the rest was familiar - tatties (as you might guess, potatoes), prime rib, scones, highland pie (like a walnut pie except with prunes, dates, nuts). We started with Scotch broth. The haggis and skirlie are tongue-in-cheek descriptions by the lively speaker, who also described the Scots as European migrants who were pushed where nobody else would go

An information pamphlet, prepared by Japanese Canadian Centennial Project: Redress Committee (this group produced A Dream of Riches, the 100 yr. photographic history during the Centennial), is now available. It aims to serve as foundation for study of the redress issue and its implications.

"Our group believes that the uprooting and forced removal of the Japanese Canadian community from the West Coast in 1942 was a grave injustice and that all individual Japanese Canadians affected by that injustice should receive financial compensation for what they suffered."

The questions and answers presented in the pamphlet reflect what is regarded to be the most important aspects of redress. They are organized under the following questions:

1. What is redress?
2. What form should redress take?
3. Why redress now?
4. Why bring up what is past?
5. How should the injuries and losses of war years be measured?
6. Who should receive compensation?
7. Why should Japanese Canadians be compensated if the uprooting of our community was, as some believe, a "blessing in disguise" which caused us to prosper?
8. What can we do to promote redress?

"Please tell us what you think about these questions ((and answers--in the 4-pager there are responses and discussion aids following each question)) - what you agree with, disagree with, what aspects of redress you think we've missed, etc. Future publications of the Redress Committee will report on the comments we receive."

For copies of the pamphlet, and information about starting a study group, write to:
Japanese Canadian Centennial Project
Redress Committee
525 - 890 West Pender Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 1J9

and who have not had the wisdom to move to New Zealand, Australia or Canada. Robbie Burns, like Mozart, died in his thirties. By today's definition, he would be an alcoholic; fortunately, nobody tried to cure him and rob society of one of history's great poets. I thought these things were for us recent minorities only, but the Scots are just as ethnic.

THE POLITICS OF RACISM by Ann Gomer
Sunahara, Toronto: James Lorimer &
Co., 1981, 222 pp. \$12.95

This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. See item under THIS AND THAT column regarding special membership purchase price.

Author Sunahara has an MA (History) from U. of Calgary and currently is 2nd year Law student at U. of Alberta. She is married to Dr. David Sunahara, Research Officer at Alberta Solicitor General's Office and member of the EJCC Board of Directors.

As a Sansei the book can be viewed from at least two perspectives; 1st, as a Canadian, and 2nd, as a person of Japanese ancestry. This well-researched and documented book reveals the racist motives which caused many politicians and citizens to support, indeed at times, applaud the "necessary" policies instituted by Mackenzie King's government.

It was the Canadian in me which read the account with disbelief, dismay and shame. In a generation in which Watergate and similar politically-inspired events have become too-commonplace, it was still shocking to read the political motives behind the wartime treatment of Canadians of Japanese ancestry. For example, it was considered politically astute to deprive Japanese Canadians of their property in the Fraser Valley and to reserve the farms for returning Veterans. The moneys derived from the sale were used to repay the uprooted inmates for relief benefits for camp necessities -- the victims were paying for their own incarceration! But what a vote-getter for those Liberals running for election in British Columbia.

The "other" in me read the book with some pride - the ability of my ancestors to rise above all and demonstrate their strength and resilience. Is it genetic or is it due to the lessons learned on my parent's lap... *shimbo shité*. Some may feel disdain at a perceived weakness - that is, the Japanese Canadians tolerated instead of fighting the system with more vim and vigor. To

feel such may be to misunderstand the culture and the circumstances.

Many questions were answered for the "other" in me. Why did my parents and their families leave their homes and friends in B.C. for Ontario? Why was Dad such an adamant supporter of Andrew Brewin and the CCF? What happened to Dad's house in Steveston? Why were so many persons of Japanese ancestry so anxious to rid themselves of anything and everything that could identify them as Japanese in origin? Even with better times and human rights have we really emancipated ourselves of that hang-up? How unpleasant were the internment camps physically? And psychologically?

Whether one is Issei, Nisei or Sansei - or for that matter, some other Canadian - The Politics of Racism is an important book to read. It tells the story many of our relatives are unwilling, sometimes still unable, to tell. The awareness is raised. There is nothing to prevent this from happening again - *except the awareness gained in concert with the citizen vigilance not to let it happen again, to anybody, ever.*

-TCN



random OBSERVATIONS

- Countries as homogeneous as present-day Norway and Japan are exceptions rather than the rule. Plural societies are more numerous. The idea of plural societies grew out of observations of the complex, multiethnic colonies of Southeast Asia. From this it may be anticipated that immigrants from S.E. Asia can more readily adapt to multicultural and multiethnic Canada than from Japan and Norway, at least from those two aspects.

- In 1964, a *tanka* written by Takeo Nakano (author of Within the barbed wire fence U. of Toronto Press, 1980) was chosen as one of twelve from 46,886 entries in the annual Imperial Poetry Contest, Tokyo.

The English translation:

*As final resting place,
Canada is chosen.
On citizenship paper,
Signing
Hand trembles.*

Mr. Goto tended his garden with fervor. He wanted it to be as authentic and as original as possible. It had taken him almost all of his retirement years to perfect it. He took immense joy in his masterful work of herbery for he had never had his own garden in the old country.

The dark green pine trees that he had so carefully transplanted years before his retirement, were now tall and eloquently graceful. Mr. Goto watered and pruned them like a loving father. The flowers were a beautiful array of colors. Each morning, dew glistened upon each leaf, radiating spectrums of sunshine, displaying nature's unaltered splendor. Mr. Goto seeded the flowers each year so that the flowers would grow continuously throughout the summer.

Mr. Goto took pride in his garden, although he used to chide himself on his inadequacy to capture the true magnificence of nature. He would often look at his garden and sigh, "Nature is so peaceful in itself yet if one wishes to capture her peace, she must be tamed and treated like a child."

Nothing could be more true. The garden had to be watered constantly; the flowers seeded and reseeded. The white stones had to be raked into even furrows and washed daily to keep their color.

The toro, the little rock lantern, however, never needed tending. It sat constantly in the midst of a cluster of white stones, its grey speckled granite a beautiful contrast to the greenery growing about it. Firm and steady, it became the soul and heart of the entire garden. Mr. Goto had specially ordered it from Japan. He was very fond of the lantern and every night, he ceremoniously lit a candle inside of it.

It was early evening--Mr. Goto was strolling in his garden when his son came to call. He had come to discuss business with his father.

"Father, we have a few applications for that opening at the store and I wanted to check them out with you." The son said, slowly and articulately.

Mr. Goto nodded his head.

"There are two forms from Japanese boys. The first application is from Masayuki Shimizu. His father owns the laundry across the street."

"I'm aware of that." Mr. Goto said, impatiently, "I have not been away that long."

"Well, there is also one from a Nobu Aotani. He's worked in a store before. And, well...um... there's...."

"What is it Son?"

"Well..." The son's voice stiffened, "This crazy hakujin, white man, came in today and said he needed a job badly. He said he had a family to support. But he was wearing the dirtiest clothes and he smelled terrible, Father."

"Ah, so? That is quite odd." Mr. Goto pondered the thought. A white man applying was indeed a rarity.

"Hmm, the man must be rather desperate. You shall give the hakujin the job."

The son's eyebrows flickered but he said nothing. He rose from his seat and bowed. "Thank you Father, for your help. I shall do as you say."

Mr. Goto was glad to see the boy off. The sun began to set. It was time to light the candle.

The summer passed on bringing with it a silent but growing fear of war. The news in the papers had been disturbing lately. There were stories of the Japanese invading China and Manchuria. But Mr. Goto never bothered to read the headlines. What Japan did was no longer of his concern. For him the chaos was over.

Mr. Goto remembered the early years when he had just come from the old country, young and ambitious. Being Japanese had been such a hindrance then--the clash of cultures, the language, the people. It all lead up to that unforgettable riot on

Powell Street. He remembered how all the windows in his store had been smashed. He hadn't been making too much money then. How his wife and he had skimped and saved to pay for the new windows! But it was all over now. Those first few years were the hardest but he had survived.

As the years progressed, Mr. Goto's store flourished. He retired in reasonable comfort. His son had taken over the business quite adequately. Mr. Goto liked to drop in occasionally. Just last week, he had dropped in to see how the new employee was getting along. The hakujin was doing just fine. He was well groomed and had a nice voice. He had just immigrated from Europe. The new environment here, seemed a healthy change for the hakujin. Mr. Goto promptly gave him a raise, much to the dismay of his son. His son hated immigrants.

With the coming of winter at hand, Mr. Goto busied himself with all the necessary preparations for the garden. He carefully raked up all the dead leaves and branches. He blanketed the trees most susceptible to frost. Then he levelled the rocks and pulled out a few protruding weeds. He rested often for it was strenuous work for an old man. Every time he would stop to catch his breath, he would look at the toro. It looked bleak and naked, sitting in the brown deadness of autumn.

It was a cold December morning when Mr. Goto had his first heart attack. Someone had vandalized the garden and had smashed the toro.

"Look at that crazy old man." A Japanese housewife said to her husband, pointing at an elderly man nearby. The couple was standing on the dusty porch of their makeshift shack.

Mr. Goto's shack was right next door. It was the same rusty brown color that seemed to characterize all the shanties around the area. They seemed a dirty smudge to the magnificent mountain scenery in which they were set.

"He does the same stupid thing every night." The woman quacked.

Mr. Goto was outside. By the door of his shack was a large chunk of grey rock. Mr. Goto carefully picked it up and nestled it in his arm. Then slowly, for he could not move too quickly, he pulled out a large white candle from his pocket. He hobbled out into the pine forest and placed the rock upon a pile of dead leaves. Then he took the candle and gently placed it upon the rock. He carefully lit it. He looked at it for a moment and then walked away.

The candle flickered brightly in the dark blue of the night. It was small and insignificant, swallowed up by the majesty of the towering pine trees. A sharp biting wind blew through the forest. It swished the leaves, fluttering a whisper amongst them. Then it wafted by the candle and suddenly blew out the flame.

-Sally Ito



JAPAN FOUNDATION GIFT TO U of ALBERTA

The Year of the Dog has begun auspiciously for the Dept. of East Asian Lang. and Literatures. On 29 Jan., the Japan Foundation bestowed one hundred volumes of classical Japanese literature plus a number of linguistics, reference, and language dictionary texts on the Department.

The literary works span the years 700 AD to 1868 and were prepared by scholars of the highest order. The books were presented to President Myer Horowitz by Mr. T. Sada, Japanese Consul-General.

ON VISITING JAPAN: 2

with kim shimizu and henry

On our third day we flew to Takamatsu (Shikoku). Soon we were settled in the Kawaruku Inn; its rear entrance opens into a large covered mall of shops, restaurants, and entertainment. A couple, relatives of Edmonton potter Noboru Kubo, contacted us and whisked us about Takamatsu in the rain, to sobayas, museums, the Ritsurin Garden and finally climaxed by a visit to Yashima Plateau, a Temple and viewpoint.

One of the pleasures of the Japanese Inn is the large ofuro, located centrally in the hotel. The granite hot tub was at least 30 x 15 ft. with a high central tower from which cascaded hot spring water; Peter and I enjoyed celestial relaxation as water overflowed. Our delicious varied meals were served in our rooms by a smiling, kindly obasan, who just could not believe Kim's blonde appearance.

The next morning, via Hover-craft, we sped across the Inland Sea and then by train to Kurashiki, the folk arts center of Japan. We stayed at 250 year old Kurashiki Ryokan, in the heart of the old city. A delightful dark-beamed, low building of traditional architecture, this Inn faced an ancient canal. The surrounding shops were filled with antiques and traditional handicraft.

The large toy shop next door housed a toy museum of ancient kites, toys and dolls, along with traditional handicraft toys for sale. As with other places, the cobbled-stone streets were filled with hundreds of high school students on tour. Nearby are two great museums: the internationally famous Ohara Gallery and the Folk Craft Museum. (The Ohara has a large collection of Impressionist paintings as well as many modern Japanese painters.) Late that afternoon we enjoyed Kohi-kan, next door to our Inn, for some of the best coffee we had ever tasted. While we sipped our brew, we watched a beautiful, fascinating lady, working unceasingly grinding and sorting coffee beans in a giant motorized grinder.

Our next stop was Osaka, where we stayed with a Japanese family. Our itinerary included temples, Osaka Castle, and an all-girl show in the suburbs of Takarazuka. That evening we were treated to lobster sashimi, so fresh that it was alive. The following two nights, it was Nara, the cradle of Japanese culture, a must for all visitors of Japan re temples, shrines, pagodas and gardens.

-tsuzuku- -7-

two for one

January 23, 1982

AMY KIKUCHI

BOB TAJIRI

Amy Kikuchi (of Bill and Setsu) of this city, was married to Bob Tajiri (of Horsey and June), who resides in Vauxhall, on January 23 at the Edmonton Unitarian Church. Rev. S. Ikuta, a long time friend of both families, performed the ceremony.



Attending the bride were Nancy Cross, Jayne (Takahashi) Yamauchi, Lorraine Spot, and Bob's sister, Darlene Tajiri. Attending the groom were Bob's cousins: Brian Tajiri, Larry Maruno, Gary Tajiri and Amy's brother Dennis. Ushering the guests were Jim Kikuchi and Stan Kanegawa.

Amy was very elegant in her flowing white georgette gown featuring a portrait neckline of lace and seed pearls, spanish sleeves ending in lace lily point sleeves. She wore a derby style hat with a white flower pinning the side brim, from which fell a three-quarter length veil. The bride carried a white lace fan with a cluster of pastel flowers.

A very enjoyable reception and dance were held at the Westin Hotel; another reception is to take place at the Lethbridge Lodge Hotel the following week. The newlyweds are making their home in Vauxhall after a honeymoon skiing in Lake Tahoe and California. Mrs. Bob Tajiri was a very active member in our Community. She was with the Sakura Odori Group; a Board Member of the EJCCS and during the Centennial Year, was quite involved with the Youth Group. Both are U of A graduates, Amy with a degree in Education and Bob in Commerce.

The EJCCS wishes Bob and Amy many years of Health and Happiness. We'll miss you Amy, please come back to visit us....with Bob ...SPRING SOCIAL is on March 6th, PICNIC probably on June 27th, CHRISTMAS PARTY probably on December 5th okay?

-Flo Shikaze

Jack Iwabuchi

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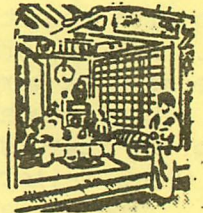
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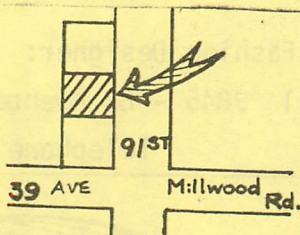
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チケットは次の方々から 2月23日 までにお求め
ください。 橋本 484-4633 大石 435-7167
西村 456-4149

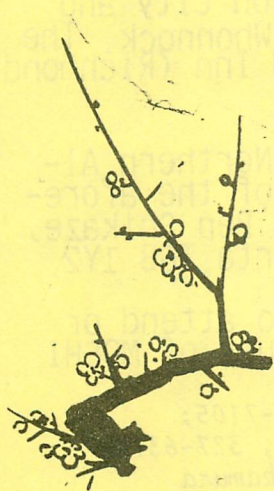


お年寄り訪問プログラム

エドモントン日系人クラブではお年寄りを、又お年寄り同志がお互いに訪問しあえるようにその機会を提供すべく交通の便をはかりたいと考えております。クラブ会員以外の方でもこのプログラムに参加可能のお年寄りの方、又お年寄りを御存知の方、会長西村ノリ(四五六四一四九)又は係り中村ジョージ(四三四一〇一〇)まで御連絡ください。

もしもし原稿募集

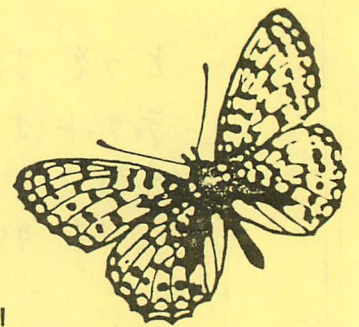
次号への原稿締め切りは三月才四週です。もしもしお寄せください。
(平塚西丸八〇九)



MOSHI MOSHI

9104 - 71 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6B 1Y2

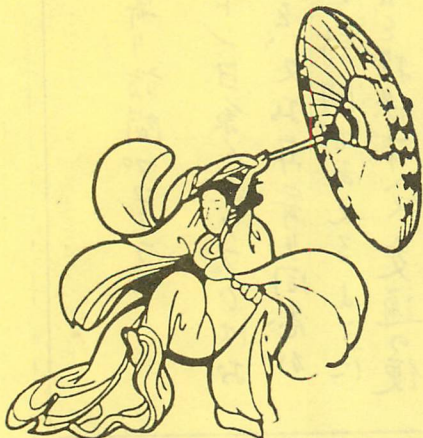
Contributors, PLEASE NOTE. Our next copy
deadline is March 26. Send your materials to;
(Engl) 9104 - 71 Street, Edm. T6B 1Y2;
(Jpnz) 45 Bellevue Cres., St. Albert T8N 0A5



SAY - YOU OUT THERE!! EX-MISSION CITY PEOPLE, ATTENTION!!

THERE'S GOING TO BE A REUNION! THERE'S GOING TO BE A REUNION!

Plans are underway for a big reunion of people from Mission City and District, including Abbotsford, Clayburn, Dewdeny, Ruskin and Whonnock. The big dates are Saturday, August 21, 1982 -- Banquet at Richmond Inn (Richmond, B.C.), and Sunday, August 22, 1982, Bus Tour to Mission.



All persons in the Edmonton and Northern Alberta region who were residents of the aforementioned places, please contact Ben Shikaze, 9104 - 71 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6B 1Y2 or phone (403)466-1059, regardless of whether you plan to attend or not. More details in future issues of MOSHI MOSHI.

In Calgary, contact Yo Yamauchi, 243-7105;
In Lethbridge, contact Tom Mitsunaga, 327-6318
or Toyosaburo Nakamura

