

Moshi Moshi

Edmonton Japanese Community Association

Vol. 15, No. 4, January-February 1991

The EJCA Cultural Centre Project

Sally Ito

Definitely worthwhile" -- "A wonderful idea" -- "The JC population in Edmonton isn't big enough" -- "A centre without programs will fail" --- These are some of the comments we have received from our surveys about a proposed Japanese Canadian cultural centre in Edmonton. For the past couple of months WHB Consulting has been working on a feasibility study for a Japanese Canadian cultural centre in Edmonton.

The idea of establishing a cultural community centre in Edmonton has not been new. In fact, the idea of a cultural drop in centre for the community has been around for many years. The start up of the Metro Edmonton Japanese Community School and the Japanese Canadian Centennial in the late seventies helped further that interest. There was a perception that something was needed to house and facilitate the Japanese culture and language. A cultural centre would be just that appropriate something. But could the community afford, much less support a centre? Some fund raising began, but in the minds of many, the idea of cultural centre was more a

dream than an actual possibility.

Then in September 1988, the Redress settlement was announced by the federal government. Along with individual compensation came group compensation in the form of a foundation whose mandate it was to restore that which was lost to the JC community during the wartime years. The 8 million dollar foundation would assist JC communities across Canada by providing funds for both capital and non-capital projects. Here now was a potential source of funds for a community centre. Members of the JC community here in Edmonton acted quickly at the opportunity. The EJCA Board set up a Community Centre Steering Committee to look into the possibility of applying for the Foundation funds. They applied to the city of Edmonton Community/Recreation and Culture department for a grant to launch a feasibility study. On Sept. 1, 1990, after the grant was approved, the grant monies were sent to the EJCA and the feasibility study was begun.

On Nov. 20, 1990 a community forum about the centre was held. Various group leaders from the

community were in attendance. Former EJCA president and current chairman of the Community Centre Steering Committee, George Tsuruda gave a report on the history of the community centre project. Dr. Henry Shimizu, board member of the Redress Foundation, spoke about the foundation and how grants were disbursed. Junichi Hashimoto, architect and consultant with WHB Consulting, explained how the feasibility study would be conducted. Group survey and individual survey forms were handed out at the meeting, and group leaders marked on a large map of Edmonton, the current meeting location of their groups. Later, the same survey form appeared in the last issue of *The Moshi Moshi*.

According to Audrey Kobayashi's demographic profile of Japanese Canadians, there are about 1900 JC's in the Edmonton area. About 75% of these JC's were born in Canada, with about 25% being post war immigrants of Japan. Interestingly enough, a considerable 64% of the JC population in Edmonton is under the age of 37. Although 1900 may not appear to be a very large population for a

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President's Comments

Gil Oishi

What's in store for the '90's? Futuristically thinking, your E.J.C.A. board of directors have embarked upon a number of initiatives both short and long term. Below, I would like to focus on two of these initiatives.

To enhance our memoirs regarding past E.J.C.A. activities, we wish to begin a compilation of memorabilia such as donated works of art, names of past executives, histori-

cal events and various other documents and pictures. Recognizing that a historical collection will require considerable time and assistance it is our wish to begin now with the hope that we will begin receiving artifacts as well as volunteers to bring this project to fruition. Our initial thrust will be one of planning and organization.

E.J.C.A. is presently renting a facility at 8760-50 Ave. For many years we have discussed the possibility of having a Drop-In Center owned and operated by the E.J.C.A. At present, we have gleaned considerable information from our experiences in renting the present E.J.C.A. facility. The time has come to research the

topic thoroughly and provide subsequent direction in the near future. Towards this end, we encourage all interested community members to provide input which will help us plan our future endeavors. In terms of activities at the center, the major users of the facility include the Kitano Taiko, Bonsai Club, Crafts Group, Karaoke Singers, Senior Citizens Group, Board of Directors and various ad hoc committees. We're very happy to have all of these groups using the facility for the purpose of promoting our Japanese Heritage.

In closing, and on behalf of the E.J.C.A. directors, I would like to wish all Moshi Moshi readers a Happy and Healthy New Year.

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"Moshi Moshi" is a publication of the Edmonton Japanese Community Association. Its objective is to disseminate information of interest to the Japanese community, including announcements of upcoming events.

We are grateful to the businesses who have placed advertisements which help to defray the cost of publishing.

NAJC on Human Rights

Gordon Hirabayashi

The National Association of Japanese Canadians have been active this past summer with the Aboriginal Canadians in expressing our support for justice and fair play.

More recently, the Arab Canadian Federation has been in consultation with Art Miki, NAJC president, in appreciation of our support. Last weekend Art Miki arranged for Japanese Canadian presence at a quickly called press conference by the Arab Federation, during which the ACF expressed encourage-

ment for all Arab Canadians to cooperate with Canadian officials as good Canadians. However, they also called for fair play on the part of Canadian officials and the public. There has been increasing harassment with mounting war hysteria, and some interrogations of Arab Canadians have run into six hours or more without specific accusations. Japanese Canadians experienced similar confrontations during WW11, objected to them then, and object to such treatment to any other Canadian now.



Welcome to Edmonton Consul-General Toshikazu Kato



Consul-General Kato

Consul-General Kato was born in the Chiba Prefecture of Japan on May 15, 1931. After high school he attended Chuo University in the faculty of law.

After joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1954 Consul-General Kato has held many positions, some of which are:

Japanese Embassy in Iran
Japanese Embassy in Afghanistan
Consul-General of Japan in Los Angeles, U.S.A.

Consul-General of Japan in Perth, Australia
Senior Assistant for Cultural Cooperation in the Cultural Affairs Division
Consul-General of Japan in Calcutta, India.

On December 7, 1990 Consul-General Kato arrived in our snowy but friendly city. We would like to warmly welcome the Consul-General to Edmonton and we hope he enjoys his stay with us.



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Christmas Party 1990

Sayuri Matsuba

Happy New Year to you all! I cannot believe that another year has passed by. I still have a vivid memory of last November when I was extremely busy organizing the Christmas party and also, at the same time helping out with the Christmas Bazaar. I was very happy that the bazaar was a great success despite the cold spell and Grey Cup game.

As for this years Christmas party, I was a little bit nervous at the beginning because of the shortage of volunteers, however, many people offered their help at the last minute which I appreciated very much.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people who helped to make the party a success. Firstly, I would like to express my great appreciation to Mr. Ohki for being an excellent M.C. and also for giving me alot of good advice on program planning. Mrs. Ohki made delicious mochi again this year. This must be her tenth year or more in a row. Thanks to Lucy Takahashi, Ruby Tsuruda, Mrs. Nakano, Mrs. Sasano, Mrs. Kuriki and all the other ladies from the Japanese Language School (Mrs. Yokoyama,

Mrs Noborio, Mrs.Nagase) who helped in the kitchen. I know that it is not an easy job standing many hours preparing food for everyone.

Did anyone notice that the children were very quiet and busy at the Christmas Party? Kyoko Waida, Yuko Tainaka, Yoshiko Dutton, Mrs. Yahiro and Rose Oishi did a wonderful job with the children. They looked after them with an excellent craft program and videos. Some craft materials were made by wives and husbands of the Moshi Moshi group. What great team work!

Mike Murakami did a wonderful job too. He was jolly old Santa Claus who treated all the children and the Seniors very nicely this year. Thanks go out to Mrs. Waida who prepared the Christmas gifts for the Seniors. The ladies from the craft group were very kind to pack the children's gifts.

Many thanks also go out to the performers. Maureen Miyagishima played beautiful Koto music. The Taiko goup had a new routine this year. The Soran Bushi folk dance was added to their original Taiko drumming.

"Kobutori Jiisan" was a very interesting skit. It was presented by the Japanese Language School

parent's group. Thanks to Mrs. Nakano who organized this group and also to all the staff who came out to perform.

Mr. Bob Motokado lent us his own T.V. and video sets to use for the children's programs. He is always helping out with all kinds of delivery and maintenance work for us. We really appreciate all your efforts Bob.

There were so many other people who helped me organize the Christmas party. Mr. Sugawara looked after the P.A. system. Ken Ohashi and Gil Oishi again set up the tables in the hall early in the morning. Gary Yamada looked after ticket sales and also purchased soft drinks and Japanese oranges for us. Dr. Sawada printed 100 Christmas programs. Mrs. Nakano, Mrs. Ohashi, and Mrs. Moriyama cooked turkey and stuffing. Maya Nishiwaki played the piano when we sang Christmas Carols. Derral Moriyama looked after the door prizes.

Last but not least thanks to all who brought delicious food and supported our E.J.C.A. I hope the New Year will bring each of you happiness and prosperity.



EJCA Christmas Party



Continued from Page 1

centre to be feasible, Winnipeg with a JC population of about 1500 was able to buy, renovate and operate its own centre before the Redress settlement. Edmonton with about a similar size population could be capable of the same. Edmonton also has many potential user groups from taiko to bonsai, Japanese language school to the Japanese Christian Church. There is quite a variety and number of potential groups that could use a centre. Many of these groups are already using the existing centre on a regular basis. In addition to these user groups are other possibilities for a centre -- a homestay coordinator office, a seniors counsellor and coordinator, language classes for business people, a restaurant, etc. One of the unique things that was discovered during the course of the study so far was what other multicultural groups were doing with their centres. The Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre, for example, holds Sunday brunches open to the public which are extremely popular with the community and helps keep the centre operating.

What are the options available for

a centre and could the community afford it? These are some of the questions the study will aim to find out in the months ahead. One likely possibility that has been suggested is to lease out or buy an old school. A school has all the facilities needed for a centre. In addition to this, is the fact that school property situated on park land is property tax free. Property tax has been a problem for some of the multicultural centres in this city.

Funding is another area that the study is currently reviewing. The major sources of funding for a capital projects such as a centre come mostly from government. The JC community has, in addition, the Redress Foundation to look to. Fundraising is another source which helps in not only raising money, but contributes to community awareness and camaraderie. Past fundraising efforts such as casinos, Heritage Day Festival sales, and bazaars by the EJCA have raised considerable sums of money and helped raise a sense of community spirit.

Does all of this activity herald the real possibility of a cultural centre in Edmonton, or is this still a pie-

in-the-sky venture? The purpose of the feasibility study is obvious -- it will determine whether a community cultural centre is feasible or not. But the greater thrust of this study is in what it will show us about our community -- its possibilities, its capabilities, its credibility. Each member of the community as an individual should take this opportunity to think about themselves and their role in the community. How important is the Japanese culture and language to you? Do you or your children want to study Japanese? Do you socialize with other JC's? Do you worship or meditate with other Japanese? Do you participate in traditional Japanese sports or crafts? Do you have contact with Japanese people through business or cultural activities? Asking yourself these questions will begin to give you an idea about yourself, the role you play in the JC community, and what potential a community centre may have in this city. The feasibility study is not complete without your input and we encourage you to submit your ideas and opinions through the survey that we have run again in this issue of the Moshi Moshi.

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Homecoming '92

Gordon Hirabayashi

It will be "Homecoming '92... After 50 Years". It will be a time for a new beginning; it will be bridging to the future. This event of the decade will be the National Japanese Canadian Conference at Vancouver Hotel, October 9, 10 and 11, 1992 (Thanksgiving weekend). Mark the dates in your special notebook.

Ninety percent of the Japanese Canadians were located in the Vancouver Island and the Vancouver and Lower Mainland areas before World War 11 and the mass uprooting. Thus, one of the inevitable foci at the conference will be a 50th reunion. In addition to the historical highlights of the early settlement experiences and the Japanese communities that emerged, attention will focus on the future of the Japanese seniors.

But just as important, what is happening to the new young adults, the Sansei and to some extent, the Yonsei? These latter two groups are joined by the "post-war Nisei", the children of the Shin Ijusha (post -war immigrants). Consequently, a most important concern of the conference will be intergenerational.

The Homecoming '92 planning committee will have nearly two years to implement the most meaningful event of the decade. In this endeavor, the planning committee will have the experience of the Calgary conference of 1989 along with the insights from the Leadership, Youth and Education conferences of the past two years as springboards. Look for regular reports of plans in the coming issues of Moshi Moshi.

Heading the planning as chair of

the Conference Steering Committee is Dr. Jackie Hayami-Stevens (Montreal). Working closely with Jackie will be Dr. Victor Ujimoto (Guelph) as chair of the Program Committee; Lucy Yamashita (Winnipeg) as chair of the Finance Committee; Tatsuo Kage as chair of the Publicity Committee; and the National Headquarters with Caroline Yamashita, Office Administrator, making sure of good networking. Two important arms working out of the Steering Committee are Tony Tamayose (Vancouver) as Coordinator, and the Host City Committee headed by Randy Enomoto. Each of the above committees will have active and functional members. Dr. Yumiko Hoyano, Edmonton's delegate to the National Seniors Committee, will be part of the Program Committee.

**Deadline for submitting articles for the next
Moshi Moshi is February 28, 1991**

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Announcements

Century Old Timer's Club Edmonton

We wish to extend an invitation to all Seniors to a Senior's social at the Shogun Restaurant on Friday, February 15, 1991 at 5:00 . All who wish to attend please contact Mrs. Shimizu at 488-1482 or Mrs. Tsujikawa at 466-1545.

We would like to acknowledge with appreciation the generous donation from Mrs. C. Nishimoto , Mrs. K. Yamauchi and a generous cheque from the Edmonton Japanese Women's Club.

Mrs. Tsujikawa

Birth Announcements

Tyson Cole Denhamer was born on January 10, 1991. Proud parents and grandparents are Janet and Peter Denhamer and Albert and Kay Shimbashi, all of Calgary. Tyson weighed in at 7lbs. and 3 ozs.

Donations

We acknowledge with thanks a generous donation to the Moshi Moshi from Dr. and Mrs. Henry Shimbashi of Edmonton, from Mrs. Kimiko Shimizu, also of Edmonton, from Mr. R. H. Masuda of Sherwood Park, from Bill, Marie and Kim King of Nanaimo, B.C. and from Jennifer Hashimoto of Toronto, Ontario.

Curling Update

The 26th annual mixed E.J.C.A. Bonspiel is scheduled for March 22, 23, 24th at the Thistle Curling Club. For an entry form and more information contact Gary Yamada at 438-8020.

Ski Trip

All those interested in a Ski Trip on February 16 and 17 contact Gary Yamada at 438-8020.

Letter of Thanks

Dear EJCA Members,

Greetings from Vancouver! This is a belated letter of thanks to the EJCA for the scholarship I received this fall. Unfortunately, I was unable to be in Edmonton at the time it was presented, but my mother accepted it on my behalf.

At present, I am enrolled in full-time graduate studies at Capilano College in Vancouver. I'm enrolled in the Asia-Pacific Management Cooperative Program, in which we study International Business & Trade, Finance, Asian Culture & History, Asian languages and Economics.

The Asia-Pacific Management program consists of a year of study and a year's work experience in Asia-Pacific. So, if all goes according to plan, I'm hoping to be somewhere in Asia by this time next year.

Anyway, now that I'm a student again, the scholar-

ship will definitely come in handy. Actually, I'm currently living with 220 Japanese students at a residential college - the Canadian International College - for Japanese students studying English here in Vancouver. Five other Canadians and I are part of the first year of an "experiment" to have native English speakers living with the Japanese students. So CIC is like a little piece of Japan plunked down in North Vancouver (They even serve "natto" for breakfast!) So, having just returned to Canada from two years in Japan on the JET (Japan Exchange & Teaching) program, I find I am still a "gaijin!"

At any rate, living with 220 Japanese (most of whom are between the ages of 18 and 22) is, as I'm sure you can imagine, a rather unique experience. I have a 22 year old roommate from Kanagawa-ken so I can keep up my Japanese and I get to eat a lot of curry rice and miso soup.

Once again, thank you very much for the scholarship and my best wishes to the EJCA in 1991.

Lynn Nawata

The Kurimoto Japanese Garden

The Kurimoto Japanese Garden at the Devonian Botanic Garden was designed by the late Dr. Tadashi Kubo along traditional lines. Dr. Kubo was a Christian and humanitarian. He included many of the traditional elements that have evolved in Japanese gardens, including Buddhism (evident in the pagoda) and Shintoism (evident in the importance of rock placement). The construction of the Garden was undertaken by Dr. Kubo's representative, Mr. Kozo Mitani.

The smooth pale-yellow wood used for the Entrance Gate and other structures is from a tree known variously as Alaska cedar or Nootka cypress. Most of the structures are held together with joints and pegs, without the use of nails or screws.

The large bronze "friendship bell" was donated by Shizu Kurimoto in the memory of her late husband. It is inscribed with a message of friendship between the University of Alberta, and Nagoya Shoka Daigaku, a private university founded by Yuichi Kurimoto.

The topography of the garden depicts a "mountain" at the waterfall, sloping southeast through a "valley" to the "hill" with the Bell Tower. The "river" flows on through a reflecting pond to the "ocean" to the southwest, ending in an ariso (beach of smooth rocks). A Misaki lantern serves as a "lighthouse" at the end of the "peninsula" near the large azumaya (shelter) used for viewing the scenery.

Each of the stone lantern designs has won a place in Japanese tradi-

tion, and named for places or people first associated with them. The tallest structure is the 13 tier stone pagoda of Buddhist design, the 13 steps of this Taho toh representing the 13 steps to enlightenment.

The water cascades from its mountain source over rocks that took an entire season to place to the satisfaction of the architect. The stream starts its journey with a rush of 800 gallons per minute.

The stream divides into two channels. The eastern stream flows gently over horizontal rocks, while erect rocks of the western arm produce a strong and vibrant stream. Rushing water at the weir echos off the bridge to provide the sound so familiar to all who have ever paused by a mountain stream.

The selection of plants appropriate to a Japanese garden, yet also suited to the Alberta climate, posed a certain challenge. Kozo Mitani's solution was to introduce a large number of larch similar to the wild tamarack seen growing at the Rocky Mountain rock source. Some mature native birch trees growing in the central area had to be removed, as the white trunks would create a distraction in an intentionally mellow green landscape. On the other hand, a number of mature native trees were retained near the perimeter.

Grass is a key element in the design, and the plan is to mow at three different length, depending upon location. The tsukiyamas and other inner parts of the garden will be kept short at about 2cm: the banks of lawn near the perimeter will be at a more standard 4cm length, and the outer

transition zone just inside the fence will be maintained at perhaps 8cm.

A final touch, and one that was required in order to compensate for a structural problem, was the detail in a bowl depression southwest of the Entrance Gate. This "flower arrangement in rock" was created by Kozo Mitani alone, using the principles of an Ikebana school of flower arranging. This small element within the garden has been interpreted as the "signature" of the master gardener.

The overall garden design is related to one in Kyoto, based on a period in Japanese history known as Murin-an. Rather than being intended for passive contemplation from one vantage point, it is designed for walking. In keeping with this garden style, the plants are not identified by labels.

(Editor's Note: I hope this short critique of the Kurimoto Japanese Garden will help in the appreciation of the Garden).

