PRIV 40 Gwen Suttie-Smith with the Nisei in New Denver 1972

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WITH THE NISEI IN NEW DENVER

by Gwen Suttie, edited by Dorothy Blakey Smith. - O.C. Archives -

Introduction

The winter 1970-71 issue of BC Studies carried a thought-provoking article entitled "Some Aspects of the Education of Minorities: the Japanese in B.C., Lost Opportunity?" by Jorgen Dahlie. Mr Dahlie's statement (p.13) that in the relocation centres of the 1940's "high school education was by correspondence or made possible by the assistance of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and United Churches" reminded me that my old friend Miss Gwen Suttie, B.A. (Brit.Col.) B.Paed.(Tor.), now retired in Vancouver after forty years in Japan, had worked for the United Church Women's Missionary Society in New Denver from 1942 to 1947; that she had organized a high school that flourished for three years; and that it was she also who had actually established the kindergarten which Mr Dahlie implies (p.13, n.48) had been set up by the B.C. Security Commission. It seemed to me that Miss Suttie's recollections of her five years in New Denver might have some historical value in themselves; and I thought too that they might provide an authentic, if small, weight on the credit side of the balance, worth the consideration of some future historian who might undertake a comprehensive and unbiased account of an episode in Canadian history that most British Columbians at any rate would prefer to forget.

Miss Suttie was at first reluctant to revive her memories of New Denver, thinking that surely she could have nothing new or valuable to add to accounts already given. However, I pointed out to her the statement of F.E. LaViolette (in his The Canadian Japanese and World War II: A Sociological and Psychological Account, Toronto, 1948, p.113, n.22) that "it has not been possible to gather sufficient information to relate or appraise the role of the churches in the educational work", and she then agreed to put on tape what she remembered. I checked and amplified this tape against the various reports of the B.C. Security Commission published in Ottawa by the Department of Labour, and also against a file of the Nakusp Arrow Lakes News, a weekly which carried a column of notes headed "New Denver". In addition, the Archivist of Union College, Vancouver, kindly made available to Miss Suttie the annual reports of the WMS from 1942 to 1948, which contained the field reports of Miss Suttie and her fellow-workers.

When the material had been gathered Miss Suttie was still reluctant to write an article (saying that her Japanese and English vocabularies were now interfering with one another in a most frustrating way), and so I finally agreed to organize the material and write the article, but from Miss Suttie's personal point of view - the only possible way, I felt, in which the material could be vividly and adequately presented. But my text was thoroughly discussed and emended where necessary; and this final version has Miss Suttie's full approval.

The article is, admittedly, narrow in scope: it deals with only two of the relocation centres, and it presents the point of view of one person who worked for the most part with Japanese Christians. Nevertheless, it is factual; it is documented; and it is, as far as possible, in the circumstances, objective. It may serve therefore as a supplementary footnote to Mr Dahlie's article, and it should also make good in a small degree the lack of information noted by La Violette concerning the role played by the churches in the relocation crisis. It would appear that this was a role of which the United Church of Canada, for one, need not be ashamed.

Dorothy Blakey Smith

Gwen Suttie - Nisei in New Denver

1972

When World War II broke out I was in Canada on furlough after over ten years as a high school teacher in Japan under the Women's Missionary Society of the United Church of Canada. The Axis Pact of 1940 made it clearly unwise for any Canadian missionary to return to Japan, and so I was sent to work in Vancouver, at the Powell Street Japanese United Church, a large, well-organized, and self-supporting institution which celebrated its 45th anniversary in November 1941. Here I supervised the kindergarten and worked with various groups of children and adolescents. I found the young people, all of whom had been born and educated in this country and who had never thought of themselves as anything but completely Canadian, in a state of unhappy bewilderment and often quite at a loss to understand the personal bitterness with which some other Canadians now regarded them. If it had not been for the thoughtful sermons and the wise counselling of the Rev. Kosaburo Shimizu they would, I think, have been even more bewildered and more than a little resentful.

In March 1941 all the Japanese in British Columbia were required to register with the RCMP, and so when in December 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbour they were easily and immediately classified as "Aliens". As soon as Canada declared war on Japan some were interned, though none of our Powell Street congregation were thus affected; others were sent to road camps; all were required to surrender their fishing vessels, cars, cameras, and weapons. At the Rev. Mr Shimizu's request I took over his car (for the consideration, I remember, of seventy-five cents) and it was then my job to make the circle tour collecting the children for the kindergarten and to do any other driving that the church needed.

Under strong and almost hysterical pressure from British Columbia the Federal Government finally agreed to evacuate all the Japanese living in the coastal area, for it was felt that there was not time to sort out the loyal from the disloyal, and so the innocent suffered. On 4 March 1942 Ottawa set up the British Columbia Security Commission to carry out the evacuation scheme. Some 23,000 people had now to be relocated either east of the Rockies or in various "ghost towns" in the interior of British Columbia. When a clearing station was organized in the Exhibition Buildings at Hastings Park in Vancouver I was given a pass to visit the women and children there. As far as possible I carried on the group work among the girls and small children, and I was also able to do some personal shopping for the women of our former congregation, now bravely making the best of their horse-stall accommodation. I felt that I must do anything in my power to assuage in even some small degree the loneliness, the frustration, and the bewilderment that were afterwards to be so poignantly expressed in Dorothy Livesay's Call my people home and in Takashima's sensitive and delicate evocation of her own past in A Child in prison camp.

All summer the work of relocation went on, and the Hastings Park centre was closed on 30 September 1942. A month before that, however, the WMS had provided me with a car and sent me to work among the Japanese evacuees in New Denver and Rosebery, two of the once flourishing mining towns in the mountains between the Kootenay and Slocan Lakes. These settlements were four miles apart on the eastern shore of Slocan Lake, with a magnificent view of mountain and glacier to the west. New Denver, considerably the larger of the two, had had about 300 inhabitants, mostly miners and farmers, before the influx of over 1,500 Japanese in 1942.[1] The BCSC leased the 60-acre Harris

1. See the B.C. directories for the period, and the Report of B.C. Security Commission March 4, 1942 to October 31, 1942, p.22

Ranch half a mile south of the town, and in an old orchard erected 275 houses for the immigrants, the Commission supplying the lumber and the Japanese the labour. The houses were small, most of them only 14 x 25. Some were allotted to one large family; others accommodated two families, who had one room each for sleeping and shared a central room as living quarters. Built of rough lumber and tar paper, the shacks were far from weatherproof. On an early morning visit to a family I had known well in Vancouver, I found the lady of the house sweeping up some greyish-looking stuff from the floor and putting it into a bucket. When I asked what it was she replied: "Oh this is the frost we have to scrape off the walls every morning. We usually get about two buckets of it". Yet the health of the people in the orchard that winter was very good: no use was made of the small house next to the New Denver hospital, which the Commission had reserved as an isolation unit for the Japanese. At first the shacks were lighted only by lamps and candles, but in the spring of 1943 electric power was made available to the orchard settlement.

When I arrived in New Denver on 5 September 1942 the town was naturally in a state of considerable confusion, many of the original inhabitants indeed being almost as bewildered as the Japanese. One man and his wife refused an introduction to me when they heard I had come to work among the Japanese, and it was said that this gentleman was even circulating a petition asking the government to supply New Denver with an arsenal for the protection of the citizens against the invaders. On the other hand, the New Denver branch of the Canadian Legion accepted the situation, declaring the influx of Japanese a necessary war measure[2], and the Board of the Turner Memorial United Church offered me the use of their building at any time when services were not being held. In the middle of September I was able to open a Sunday School and to organize the usual church groups for young people. By the end of May 1943 there were 125 children on the Sunday School roll in New Denver, and 30 in Rosebery.[3] Junior Explorers and CGIT were also meeting in both settlements.

On the secular side, the B.C. Government had consistently refused to accept any responsibility whatsoever for the education of the 5,500 Japanese children so ruthlessly and so irrevocably plucked from the coastal schools in which they had heretofore been peacefully integrated. It therefore became necessary for the Federal Government, through the BCSC, to set up an elementary school system in the housing centres, headed by two qualified Japanese-Canadian young women and staffed by teachers chosen from the best-educated young Japanese-Canadians in the settlements, who were given crash courses by Normal School staff and others. In New Denver the Commission built a school in the orchard and provided teachers, and thus the Japanese elementary school children were taken care of.

The next most pressing need, it seemed to me, was for a kindergarten, and this I was able to open on the 1st of November 1942 with 71 children[4]. Since there was no suitable space in the United Church, the Presbyterian Church gave me the use of their basement, and the BCSC Supervisor for New Denver, Mr H.P. Lougheed, had three windows put in, of course with the consent of the congregation. Miss Terry Hidako, one of the two organizers of the elementary school system, undertook to teach in the kindergarten,

2. Nakusp Arrow Lakes News 8 October 1942.
3. Ibid., 27 May 1943.
4. WMS Annual Report 1942-43, p.118

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since she had previously coped with small children in Sunday School. With her help, I pasted building paper on the basement walls to make the room warmer and to give it a little more light. The crooked lines testified to the amateurish efforts of a missionary not trained in that particular trade.

In January 1943 Mrs Margaret McDuffee James, with whom I had already worked in the Powell Street Church, came from Vancouver to help me. She took over the supervision of the New Denver kindergarten and also assisted in the group work. As soon as I could I organized another, though smaller, kindergarten in Rosebery, renting the old schoolhouse from the local school board for ten dollars a month. In March the Sunday School clubs combined with the Women's Association of the Japanese United Church in putting on a bazaar which was patronized beyond our wildest dreams, in view of the popularity of the bingo games and raffles by which other organizations in New Denver were accustomed to raise money. There was barely standing room in the Veterans Hall from one o'clock in the afternoon to ten o'clock at night, and I was really afraid the old building would collapse altogether, or at least that somebody or something would go through the floor. We sold various articles that the women had made, and hamburgers, and soft drinks; we served some 700 meals; and in the evening 150 children played games in the hall. The net proceeds of $160 went partly to the Japanese Church and partly to the children's clubs[5], some of the money being given to the students to buy baseball equipment. Incidentally, they later won the baseball championship of New Denver. When the BCSC Supervisor for the whole province inspected New Denver shortly after our bazaar, he had high praise for the activities offered by the United Church to the Japanese people in a place where entertainment and recreational facilities were so conspicuously lacking.

During that first winter in New Denver, Mrs James and I organized a study group for Japanese ex-university students and graduates. They met in my tiny apartment once a week, sometimes for a play reading, but more often for a discussion of the difference between Japanese and Canadian ways of thinking, or of the effect which the evacuation had had on the Japanese. The talk was calm and well informed: indeed, the open-minded facing of facts, without bitterness or sentimentality, would probably have surprised anyone not so well acquainted as we were with Japanese-Canadian youth. They tried hard to keep their mental and emotional balance, for they truly believed that a new era was coming. And for them it was. When the right time came for each individual, all of them went east: one boy to the atomic plant at Chalk River, where he is still working; others to various universities and eventual degrees; all of them to a much freer choice of professions than if they had remained in coastal British Columbia.

In June 1943 Mrs James left to join her husband, who had been posted to Halifax. Her place was taken by Miss Ella Lediard of Toronto, a returned missionary from Japan. She took over the supervision of the kindergarten and some of the work with the groups, and she also visited the women in the orchard, thus leaving me better able to concentrate on my next problem: the provision of education for the Japanese teenagers, who were simply roaming the streets, causing no particular disturbance, but still doing no good to themselves or to anybody else.

5. WMS Annual Report 1943-44, p.159.

At a Board meeting on 18 March 1942 the WMS had advised missionaries among the Japanese at the coast that they would stand behind any action taken in the field for the welfare of the Japanese in Canada[6]. I now put this resolution to the test: I wired the WMS in Toronto for money to open a high school in New Denver. The response, both then and later, was as generous as other commitments could allow. For the calendar year 1943 the total WMS grant for all the work of the United Church in New Denver-Rosebery, including the high school and the two kindergartens, was $4680.72; for 1944, $6353.54; for 1945, $7558.54; and for 1946, the year in which the high school was closed, $4663.19[7]. In September 1943 the WMS officially recognized the establishment of high schools at Lemon Creek, Tashme, and New Denver-Rosebery.

I spent the summer of 1943 organizing the New Denver-Rosebery project. An interview in Victoria with Dr S.J. Willis, the Superintendent of Education in British Columbia, resulted in his promise of three conscientious objectors for the United Church proposed schools, the only stipulation by the Provincial Government being that we should not pay them more than $25 a month beyond their board and room. Naturally I had first choice among the three, and I picked Mr John Rowe, the son of an Alberta clergyman and a graduate of the University of Alberta, who had expected to be at Harvard instead of in a forestry camp on Vancouver Island. He took the mathematics and science in the New Denver-Rosebery school and also taught maths every Friday evening and Saturday morning at Lemon Creek. The course in social studies was taken by Mrs Mildred Osterhout Fahrni, whose husband Walter was then at the Lucky Jim mine in nearby Zincton. Well known in university and political circles for her interest in the welfare of the underprivileged, Mrs Fahrni was a qualified high school teacher with experience, and also with a willingness to work for "what the budget will bear". Miss A. Helen Lawson, a teacher from Hamilton, was anxious to do something for Japanese students in British Columbia because of her contact with the Japanese who had been evacuated to Ontario. Well trained in music, she did Sunday School and club work as well as her high school teaching of English, and she trained a girls' choir and a boys' tonette band. Holding a B.C. academic certificate dated 1922 I myself served as principal and also taught Latin and French, managing to keep barely ahead of the students in vocabulary and idiom after twenty years of forgetting. We planned to give a complete high school course in Grades IX-XII. While in Victoria I also saw Dr Edith E. Lucas, who was in charge of the correspondence courses given by the Provincial Department of Education, and I obtained from her a copy of every lesson in every subject we were offering, not for the use of the students but for the teachers. Using these lessons as outlines for our own teaching we could feel satisfied that our Japanese students were at least getting the same material as other high school students in British Columbia.

The problem of finding accommodation proved even more difficult than finding teachers. I had thought that possibly the Japanese and the Occidental students might be integrated in the New Denver high school, as

6. This information was kindly supplied by Mrs Philip Harrison, Archivist of Union College, Vancouver, from notes taken by her from the Minutes of the Dominion Board of the WMS in the Archives of the United Church in Victoria University, Toronto.

7. See the WMS Annual Report 1943-44, p.369; 1944-45, p.380; 1945-46, p.379; 1946-47, p.361

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had been done in some of the other centres[8], and that our four teachers might be combined with the New Denver staff of one. But the local school authorities thought it better to keep the two racial groups separate. The Roman Catholics had begun mission work among the Japanese some two weeks after my own arrival in New Denver, and were planning to open a high school at the same time as ours. Again I had thought it possible that staff and accommodation might be combined, but these were the days before the ecumenical movement, and the Sisters could only reply pleasantly but firmly: "We cannot co-operate".

So after a vain search up and down every street in New Denver for a vacant building of any sort I had to accept with grateful thanks the offer of the United Church of their fairly large one-room building. The BCSC Supervisor, again with the consent of the congregation, put in two more windows. We had a cupboard built, and tables made which could be placed in the pews for study periods. Our equipment was a box of chalk and a rolled blackboard. Since the budget barely covered running expenses the initial outlay was taken care of by contributions from friends of the staff. On Friday evenings the church had to be swept and dusted and all the school equipment hidden behind a green curtain; on Monday mornings we took it all out again and began school for the week.

Each of the four teachers was allotted one corner of the room, and all the students, even the big gawky boys, sat on kindergarten chairs. If occasionally there was some doubt as to whose class a particular student was really in, I'd just ask him: "Is it my class today or Mr Rowe's?" and if he replied, "It's yours", I would just say, "All right; come over a little closer and we'll get on with it". Inevitably mathematical formulas sometimes got mixed with French irregular verbs, and the reading of poetry had for background the "stinks" of the science class opposite. But there was a fine spirit of friendship among school, church and Commission. When wood for heating, which was supplied by the Commission, was delivered in 8-foot lengths, students and teachers dealt with it in a Saturday morning session with borrowed axes and cross-cut saws. When the church was needed for a funeral, the science teacher took his students on a long-planned nature ramble[9].

The school opened on the 1st of September 1943 with 45 students[10]. When 25 more pupils came into Grade IX from the elementary school they could not possibly be accommodated in the church, and so the BCSC Supervisor gave us the use of the Recreation Hall during school hours, the ping pong tables making excellent desks. The hall was two blocks from the church and the necessary running back and forth certainly provided exercise for both students and teachers. We called our school "Lakeview Collegiate", and with our eyes on the shining mountains across the lake we chose as our motto: "Per ardua ad magna".

The Japanese United Church in New Denver was solidly behind our efforts. The Roman Catholic high school had much better equipment than we

8. Report of the Dept. of Labour on the administration of Japanese affairs in Canada. 1942-1944. p.16.
9. Mrs Walter Fahrni, "Lakeview Collegiate", Nakusp Arrow Lakes News, 21 October 1943.
10. WMS Annual Report 1943-44, p.160

had, and a larger staff, but many of the Japanese congregation were reluctant to send their children to a Roman Catholic school, and even those who had no children of high school age themselves did all in their power to further the development of a Protestant school. One mother sold her sewing machine rather than ask for assistance to buy books for her children. Some Japanese offered help in renovating and decorating the church, while others tried, though without success, to arrange regular transportation for the students who lived in Rosebery.

Indeed, the transportation for the 20 Rosebery students posed a real problem. From September to December Mr Rowe and I took turns driving them to New Denver every morning in time for their classes, and they made their own way home, either walking the four miles with their books on their backs or hitching rides when they could. One morning they were not at the accustomed rendezvous; we learned later that a meeting with a black bear had been responsible. In January the weather grew colder and walking more unpleasant. We then decided that it would be better to conduct two schools, the staff alternating between New Denver and Rosebery, where we arranged to conduct classes in the old schoolhouse after the morning kindergarten was over. Of course this arrangement involved more work and more inconvenience for the teachers, but they were glad to do it for the sake of the children who were without educational facilities through no wish nor fault of their own.

In the school session of 1944-45 things had settled down and there were fewer problems in administration, though I did find myself taking on the additional load of commercial subjects. These were naturally attractive to our stndents, and so when they came to me and said, "The Catholics are going to have business subjects on their curriculum. Are we?" I simply knew I could not allow our students to feel cheated and immediately answered, "Oh yes, of course - bookkeeping, typing and shorthand". Actually it was the first time the idea had entered my head, and I quite realized that I should have to be responsible for all these subjects myself. In the summer of 1944 I took Dr Lucas's correspondence course in bookkeeping; I had instruction books in typing and shorthand - and I managed. The students did their typing practice according to a definite schedule, using my own personal typewriter in my living room. Some years later I met again one of the boys in my bookkeeping class who had become the head of a large Toronto office and who was showing me the sights in his own car. When he told me that he had had no business training beyond what he had received in New Denver I felt well recompensed for all the midnight oil I had burned trying to keep ahead of my commercial classes.

One reason for the undoubted success of our school was, I think, the almost complete lack of disciplinary problems. Education had top priority for the Japanese parents, and the children themselves really wanted to come to school. The only punishment I ever meted out, and that only once, was to forbid a student entry into a class. Even though some of the older people in the relocation centres found voluntary co-operation at times rather difficult, the students in Lakeview Collegiate came to understand more and more that the educational service the WMS offered them was truly disinterested and the teachers had no governmental or religious axe to grind in the classroom.

Of course out of school the teachers did involve themselves in

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religious work with the various youth groups in the church and taught Sunday School and Bible class. Also, every other Sunday one of the four high school teachers would take the church service, for New Denver had no resident United Church minister and was served by the minister from Nakusp, who came over every other week, weather permitting. The women teachers joined the Women's Institute and the Women's Association of the Turner Memorial United Church and on occcsion held office in these Occidental societies.

In June 1944 Mrs Fahrni, to our regret, felt that she must take up some social work broader in scope than New Denver permitted. Her place was taken by Miss Margery Rempel, a university graduate from New Mexico who was a physical education specialist and who also was fired by the necessary desire to work hard for a small salary. In June 1945 the students of Lakeview Collegiate took the regular departmental examinations in all the subjects we were teaching, and 95% of our candidates passed[11]. The kindergartens in New Denver and Rosebery also continued to operate successfully, and by now they had been opened to the local Canadian community as well as to the Japanese, so that there were half-a-dozen fair heads among the black-haired Japanese tots.[12]

Before the end of this school term the war in Europe was over, but it was not until August 1945 that Japan surrendered. Then began the long and complicated process of disestablishing the relocation centres in the interior towns of British Columbia, and of sending the people, according to their own choice, either back to Japan or to other settlements in Canada. New Denver became the centre for all those Japanese who wished to remain in this country; the other camps became repatriation centres. There was thus a considerable shifting of the Japanese population in New Denver and Rosebery, as those who wanted to be repatriated departed and their place was taken by an equal number of Canada-minded Japanese. During this period Lakeview Collegiate carried on with the same staff, the same lack of space, the same minimal equipment. There were now 70 students, equally divided into boys and girls, and now that most of the adherents of the Buddhist faith had left to be repatriated, the school was 85% Christian, mostly United Church and Anglican.[13] My own time was now spent almost entirely in the high school, but I continued to go to Rosebery on Sunday mornings, for there were still some 15 children there. Since the people now in NEW Denver had all decided to stay in Canada I also started a beginners' class in English for the women. The 20 members met for an hour twice a week, and while they made many humorous mistakes they did learn the fundamentals of the language and became less shy about using it.[14]

In June 1946 the provincial supervisor of the B.C. Security Commission came to New Denver and asked me to close our school. When I asked what was wrong with it he replied, "Nothing. That's just the trouble. The government wants the Japanese to move east of the Rockies, and because the children are established here in a satisfactory school the parents are reluctant to go to another area where there might not be such good educational opportunities. Will you co-operate with the government by closing your school here?" Since I also was of the opinion that it would be far better for the Japanese

11. WMS Annual Report 1945-46, p.160
12. WMS Annual Report 1944-45, p.154
13. WMS Annual Report 1945-46, p.160
14. Ibid.

to go east and to be assimilated into the life there, I could do no other but agree to close down Lakeview Collegiate at once. During its three years of operation, out of a total registration of 122 students 14 had now graduated from high school and at the end of its final year 97% of our candidates passed the Department of Education examinations.[15]

But I determined to come back to New Denver after the summer holidays in 1946, to see what had happened to the Japanese high school students who for one reason or another had still not left for the east. Now that the war was over the Provincial Government was forced to re-assume its educational responsibilities, and the local school board could not legally deny admission to the Japanese students who remained. They had to be accommodated in the existing New Denver high school. The enrolment was thereby increased from 20 to 55, and a second teacher had to be found. The Board appointed a male principal and asked me to join the staff. For the sake of my Japanese students I could hardly refuse, for teachers were scarcer even than fuel in those days in British Columbia. I agreed to stay only until another teacher could be found, but of course it turned out to be for the whole school year. The day school opened the principal came to my room and said, "I wouldn't have come to New Denver if I'd known that the students would be mostly Japanese". There was no answer to that remark. In less than three weeks he appeared again to say, "I've never had better students anywhere". My own fears for my Japanese students were allayed as soon as I discovered that they and the Occidental students were borrowing each other's homework. I had no further cause for worry. When the school inspector came in the spring of 1947 he said to me: "What can I offer you to stay on for another year?" I could only reply "Nothing. I work for the church". And I think he understood. But I admit to a feeling of, I hope, justified pride when a Japanese student from the New Denver high school came second for the Kootenay district in the junior matriculation exams in 1947 and won a scholarship, with an average of 91.9%.[16]

When Lakeview Collegiate was so abruptly closed in June 1946 the other three members of the staff of course left New Denver, and since ill-health prevented Miss Lediard from resuming her missionary duties in September I was alone for the next year. I carried on as much of the church work as my teaching load in the high school would permit, continuing the Sunday School and the Mission Circle as long as enough members remained, and giving Bible lessons once a week to a group of young women patients in the sanatorium which had been opened in New Denver in April 1943 to accommodate all the Japanese in British Columbia who were suffering from tuberculosis. With the help of some of the local congregation I also kept up the services in the church when the minister from Nakusp was not able to cross the mountains.

In June 1947 the WMS decided that the situation in New Denver did not warrant a special worker for the Japanese, and after almost five years I left New Denver for good. The hope of the United Church was that the Japanese who remained there would become part of the local community, and so indeed it proved. The children had now been integrated into the local

15. WMS Annual Report 1946-47, p.143
16. Nakusp Arrow Lakes News, 24 July 1947

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schools. The adults had already shown their acceptance of the Japanese; a number of families in the orchard purchased property from the local residents without opposition, and in June 1946 the Rev. T. Komiyama was appointed minister of the New Denver United Church, taking the responsibility for both English and Japanese services every Sunday. At the ceremony of welcome it was made clear that

> this occasion was one of real importance to Canadians, for while the appointment of a Nisei to a position of responsibility in an Occidental community should be nothing out of the ordinary, it is still unfortunately rare enough to be noteworthy, as an example of common and natural fraternity.[17]

It is true that in November 1946, when the number of Japanese had dwindled to fewer than 700 and it was felt that he could be more useful elsewhere, Mr Komiyama was transferred from New Denver,[18] but the point had been made. Other professional men of Japanese racial origin had also been accepted into the community. In August 1946 the Nakusp Board of Trade had requested Ottawa to allow Dr Paul S. Kumagai, the dentist in New Denver, to remain in the district, and the Deputy Minister of Labour had replied that Dr Kumagai was quite at liberty to remain on a self-supporting basis if he wished to do so.[19] He did so wish; and on 19 June 1947 the Nakusp Arrow Lake News reported on its front page that Dr Kumagai, playing with two men bearing obviously Occidental names, had "sunk his tee shot on the 9th hole." The headline read simply: "New Denver man makes golfers' hall of fame."

When Lakeview Collegiate had been in operation for a year I asked in my annual report to the WMS,[20]

> Does the education of forty-five children justify the effort and expense involved? On the basis of citizenship, on the basis of democracy, and on the basis of Christianity which succours those in need, we believe that it does. How long such school will be needed we cannot tell, but the Church will not lose in prestige or in power through filling a need, which was in part caused but not cured by the government.

The next year I expressed my opinion

> that the WMS is doing a very great work, perhaps greater than any of us realizes, in giving Japanese young people an opportunity for a Christian Protestant Canadian education with no strings attached.[21]

In the years that have passed since 1945 I have seen no reason to change this opinion. When some years after the closing of Lakeview Collegiate I made a check of our former students then in Toronto and of others whom they knew of, I was well satisfied. One of the boys was working for his Ph.D.; he obtained the degree and has for some years now been an advisor to the Federal Government in oriental matters. Two of the girls

17. Nakusp Arrow Lakes News, 13 June 1946
18. WMS Annual Report 1946-47, p.143
19. Arrow Lakes News, 15 August 1946
20. WMS Annual Report 1943-44, p.161
21. WMS Annual Report 1944-45, p.154

had gone into pharmacy: one was then working in the Food and Drug administration in Ottawa; the other was in the dispensary of the Women's College Hospital in Toronto, an institution with a very fine reputation indeed. Many of the other students had done equally well. For staff and students alike those years in New Denver had not been easy, and perhaps I am prejudiced. But I still think we made no mistake when we chose as our school motto: "Per ardua ad magna".

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This letter, referred to in the Minutes (p.4) has been sent to the people responsible, endorsing the stand taken by the Sierra Club regarding Phase 3 Pacific Rim National Park:

"..... The Council of the British Columbia Historical Association has endorsed the stand of the Sierra Club of British Columbia regarding the inadequacies which exist in Phase Three - West Coast Trail - of the recently formed Pacific Rim National Park, and are in accord with the reasons given for the proposed changes.

The Council respectfully wishes to draw your attention to the Sierra Club's proposal that a strip 1½ miles wide be preserved to allow proper protection for the trail strip, instead of the existing strip of ½ mile, and we would ask your further consideration that the Nitinat Lake area be included in the boundaries of this same Phase Three.

The Sierra Club has proposed that we save the most precious region of the Nitinat - the lake drainage basin to the west of Nitinat Lake - the valley of Tsusiat, Hobiton and Squalicum Lakes, comprising approximately 13,800 acres of land.

The Council was also in agreement that, until final disposition and decisions have been made by the parties entrusted with this great responsibility on behalf of all Canadians, any logging or other commercial development should not be allowed in this water-shed. We have no desire that any logging company shall be allowed to attempt to predetermine the future destiny of this area. Yrs."

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List of Societies affiliated with the B.C. Historical Association

Alberni & District: Mrs E. Adams, 845 River Rd., Port Alberni,B.C.
Burnaby: Mrs F. Street, 6176 Walker Ave., Burnaby, B.C.
Creston & Dist.: Mrs Clarice Y. Abbott, Wynndel, B.C.
Golden: Mrs Jean L. Dakin, Box 992, Golden, B.C.
Gulf Islands: Mrs Clare McAllister, R.R.1, Galiano Island, B.C.
East Kootenay: Mr D. Kay, 921 S. 4th ASt., Cranbrook, B.C.
West Kootenay: Miss Jane Tyson, 39 Hazlewood Dr., Trail, B.C.
Nanaimo: Miss E. Norcross, 710 Hamilton Ave., Nanaimo, B.C.
Vancouver; Mrs K. Winterborrom, 3828 West 14th Ave., Vancouver 8, B.C.
Victoria; Miss M.C. Holmes, 863 Somenos St., Victoria, B.C.