

LESSON 1 SOURCE 1.15 THE MAIKAWA FAMILY

Family Name: Maikawa

Family Members: Sannosuke, Eiko, and Tajiro Ogino

Street Address: 314 Powell Street Vancouver, B.C.

Occupation: Restaurant owner/operator – Fuji Chop Suey

Location: Vancouver, British Columbia



Vancouver sits on the coast of British Columbia's mainland, on the shore of the Pacific and near the mouth of the Fraser River. New arrivals to the region recognized the geographic advantage of a settlement in this place. The land on which it stands has long been home to people of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh nations (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh-ulh Temíxw (Squamish) and səliwətaʔtəməxʷ (Tsleil-Waututh) territory).

In 1939, Vancouver is the economic engine of the province. The Canadian Pacific railway carries timber, coal, and canned fish across Canada. The port delivers the same resources across the world. It is a time of optimism: this year has shown the first signs of economic prosperity since the Great Depression. Newcomers pour into the city hoping to take advantage of the province's natural wealth.

Powell Street is the heart of Japanese Canadian life in Vancouver. It is lined with Japanese Canadian-owned shops, businesses, restaurants, boarding houses, and food merchants catering to Japanese Canadians in and beyond Vancouver. Powell Street begins in the business centre of Vancouver and runs east toward the city's working-class districts. Shipyards and lumber mills lie north of Powell Street. Residential neighborhoods, with family homes, expand southwards. The streets bustle with millworkers, entrepreneurs, established families, and new immigrants.

Not all Japanese Canadians live in the Powell Street neighborhood. Some families have moved to different parts of the city. Successful entrepreneurs live in wealthier neighborhoods like Kerrisdale. Even as the community grows, however, Powell Street remains a vital centre to Japanese Canadian life. Only there can you find the home-turf of the beloved Asahi baseball team, uniquely Japanese cuisine, and the headquarters of community newspapers.

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ABOUT THE MAIKAWA FAMILY

Fuji Chop Suey is the most popular restaurant on Powell Street. It has a dining room upstairs and a banquet hall on the ground floor. The restaurant serves Japanese-style Chinese cuisine and is a fashionable venue for wedding receptions, organization anniversaries, and graduation celebrations.

Fuji Chop Suey is one of the few restaurants where Japanese Canadian women and children can go. Most Japanese Canadian

restaurants in the area cater to men. Restaurants in other parts of Vancouver often refuse Japanese Canadian customers.

Sannosuke Maikawa purchased the restaurant in 1938. The Maikawa family is well-established in the neighbourhood. They own several businesses on Powell Street, including a fish market, a mechanic garage, and a department store. Sannosuke's daughter, Eiko, and son-in-law, Tajiro Ogino, manage the restaurant. Eiko and Tajiro live with their young son (age 2) in a house on Alexander Street.



Left: A meeting of the Fukui Kenjinkai in the Fuji Chop Suey banquet hall. They gathered to welcome a diplomat from Japan. This event was held July 4, 1930. Photograph by Seo Shinshinkan, Nikkei National Museum 2012.10.15.6



Centre: A view of the Fuji Chop Suey restaurant from the street. Photograph by Stuart Thomson, City of Vancouver Archives 99-3873



Right: Eiko Maikawa in 1925. She later married Tajiro Ogino. After her father purchased the restaurant in 1938, Eiko and Tajiro managed Fuji Chop Suey. Nikkei National Museum 2011.45.8