

JAPANTOWN

MULTICULTURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD CELEBRATION



SATURDAY MARCH 28.09

10AM to 9PM **VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN THE
JAPANTOWN & POWELL STREET
NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Produced by the Powell Street Festival Society • Tonari Gumi
Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall
and Vancouver Moving Theatre
For information: 604-628-5672 or www.vjls-jh.com

Greetings



On behalf of the citizens of Vancouver and my colleagues on Vancouver City Council I am delighted to welcome everyone to the first Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration – an event that celebrates the history, diversity and enduring promise of Vancouver's Japantown/Powell Street area.

Neighbourhoods are a foundation of our City. The Japantown neighbourhood has vital historic and cultural significance to Vancouver, and I am very pleased to see the local community coming together to contribute to its future.

Congratulations to the many people and organizations that have helped to realize this event. Your efforts to contribute to your community are greatly appreciated and valued. The City of Vancouver is proud to support this Celebration.

Enjoy the history walks, displays, performances, ceremony and gala everyone!

Yours truly,
Gregor Robertson, Mayor



It is my pleasure to congratulate the organizers on the opening of the Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration in recognition of the 80th anniversary of Japan-Canada diplomatic relations. Such a community-based cultural promotional event is commendable because of its contribution to the deepening of mutual understanding among the different cultural and ethnic communities' people in Canada. Best wishes for a very successful celebration.

Seiichi Otsuka
Consul General of Japan in Vancouver

We are delighted to welcome everyone to the Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration! Today's celebration arose from the vision to create a collaborative, community-based event that explores the multicultural past and present of Japantown - and contributes to its future.

The Japantown area is one of Vancouver's most interesting communities: rich in history, culture, stories and home to people who deeply care for their neighbourhood. By showcasing the artists, art forms, organizations and cultures of Japantown we work to strengthen the relationships between neighbourhood residents and organizations, educate the general public about the neighbourhood, and foster community led renewal through arts, culture and heritage.

Thanks to all the celebration artists, historians, presenters, community partners, volunteers and staff who have contributed to today's celebration. A special thanks to Celebration Coordinator Teresa Vandertuin who has worked with such dedication to produce this event.

We trust that you will be inspired by today's sharing of the history, culture and people of Japantown. Enjoy the celebration everyone!

Kristen Lambertson
Powell Street Festival Society

Joji Kumagai
Tonari Gumi

Rika Uto
Vancouver Japanese Language School and Japanese Hall

Terry Hunter
Vancouver Moving Theatre

Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration Saturday March 28, 2009 10am to 9pm

Various locations in the Japantown and Powell Street neighbourhood

Produced by Powell Street Festival Society, Tonari Gumi, Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall and Vancouver Moving Theatre, in association with a host of community partners

www.vjls-jh.com or call 604-628-5672

All events are free admission.

The Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration acknowledges and honours that our neighbourhood lies within the Traditional Territory of the Coast Salish people.



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Front cover

Photos David Cooper, Terry Hunter, Michelle Richard, creative commons

Design Big Wave Design

Appearing in the photo Oppenheimer Totem Pole, Vancouver Japanese Language School (archive), DTES Samba Band, Morimoto doorway design (archive), Stephen Lytton

Photo: Michelle Richard

Producing Partners

In 1977, the Japanese Canadian centennial year, the first Powell Street Festival was initiated in an effort to celebrate Japantown and produce an event similar to the summer festivals in Japan. Today, the mission of the **Powell Street Festival Society** is to celebrate the arts and culture of Japanese Canadians and Asian Canadians, to encourage Asian Canadians to take a leadership role in the development of the arts in Canada, and to foster community development through cultural events, including the annual Powell Street Festival in August every year.

Tonari Gumi (Japanese Community Volunteers Association) was established in the DTES in 1973 to help Issei (first generation) Japanese Canadian seniors who suffered from cultural and economic alienation in the Japantown area. Today, it provides social services and a variety of cultural, recreational and seniors-based programs from its East Broadway location.

Credits & Thanks

Staff

Producing Committee Terry Hunter, Joji Kumagai, Kristen Lambertson, Rika Uto
Celebration Coordinator Teresa Vandertuin
Procession Coordinator Michelle Richard
Procession Banners Diane Wood
Graphic Designer John Endo Greenaway
Publicist Sabrina Furminger
Production Manager Simon Garber
Production Assistants William Butler, Ruthie Sumiko Tabata, Doug Vernon, Elwin Xie
On-site Photographer Ken Tabata

Community Partners

The Bulletin, Carnegie Community Action Project, Chapel Arts, DTES Neighbourhood House, Firehall Arts Centre, Kalayaan Centre, Japantown Live/Work Studios, Japanese Canadian Citizens'

Established in 1906, the **Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall (VJLS-JH)** is a community centre dedicated to promoting Japanese language and culture, Japanese Canadian heritage and cross-cultural understanding. It offers classes to all age groups, organizes cultural events, and provides a gathering place for local community groups.

Vancouver Moving Theatre (VMT) is an award winning Downtown Eastside based professional theatre company founded in 1983 by residents Terry Hunter and Savannah Walling. Recognized nationally for its innovative arts based community development projects tailored with and for its home community, VMT's activities include original theatre productions, community festivals and cultural services.

Association, The Living Room, National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre, Oppenheimer Park, Vancouver Heritage Foundation

Special Thanks

Rick Archambault, Tomi Asakawa, Ayex Bathan, Leo Cooper, Leah Diana, Kira Gerwing, Leith Harris, Barb Hinton, Miko Hoffman, Mari Honma, Jennifer Johnstone, Vicki Joss, Sharon Kravitz, Cathy Kwan, Jim Leyden, Helen Liang, Ali Lohan, Sandy MacKeigan, Chisaki Muraki-Valdovinos, Nichola Ogiwara, William Oksanen, Holly Page, Laura Saimoto, Sister Elizabeth, Sister Margaret, Paul Taylor, Erika Thomas, Mike Uyeno, Kathy Walker, Savannah Walling, Nathan Wiens, Ryoko Wilkings, Deanna Wing, Y. Richard Yagi, Elana Zysblat and thanks to those wonderful people who will step in to help after the program guide has gone to print.

Powell Street (Japantown) Historical and Cultural Review

By Savannah Walling

The Report

The Powell Street (Japantown) Historical and Cultural Review was prepared for the City of Vancouver by a team led by Strathcona resident James Burton. This involved a community consultation process to review the historical and cultural heritage of the Powell Street area commonly known as Japantown. I was one of the co-writers.

The team was guided by the wisdom of an Advisory Group: individuals with a deep understanding of the physical place and its cultural history. Many community members generously shared through their writing, interviews and conversations. They told us about the area's history, identified some of its critically important stories and the spaces and buildings needed to tell them, and shared ways to do the telling.

We built on the research of other important projects such as the City of Vancouver DTES Public Realm Plan and the Strathcona Business Improvement Association's Open Windows streetscape improvements project.

The Review surveys the area's history; its historical themes; places of heritage value; cultural activities that celebrate heritage; management tools for historic and cultural management; and ideas for future planning. It concludes with lots of community suggestions on "next steps."

We hope this report will assist the community to argue on behalf of its own rights and goals.

Historical themes

The report describes ten powerful themes experienced in one form or another over the years by the neighbourhood's residents:

- First Nations presence;
- Heart of the City;
- Hastings Mill and Waterfront Industry;

- Welcoming Community;
- Powell Street Cycles of Prosperity and Loss;
- Exclusion, Perseverance and Resistance;
- Church and Cultural Precincts;
- Housing and Home;
- Japanese Canadian Settlement; and
- Gathering at Powell Street Grounds.

Historical context

The Powell Street (Japantown) area is the place from which Vancouver began and grew. Some stories about Vancouver's early development are to be found only in its streets and buildings—and in the memories of its residents. Powell Street (Japantown)'s history is part of the founding story of this city and therefore the common heritage of all who live in Vancouver—the site of many historic events, waterfront industries and cultural institutions key to the city's development. It's also the story of a particular place and of the people who have lived here and do so now.

Powell Street/Japantown lies on land within the unceded territories of the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. One of the earliest European settlements - Hastings Mill—was erected on an ancient Coast Salish site. This area was a hub of major trade routes between inland Coast Salish and interior groups: it was a "place to meet other people who gathered and hunted with us." There has always been a strong First Nations presence here and there still is today.

Within 30 short years of settlement, native power over this area had collapsed; Japanese immigrants began to replace Aboriginal workers and take residence; thousands of immigrants arrived by train and ship. Victoria capitalists Dr. Israel Powell (Superintendent of Indian Affairs) and David Oppenheimer (Vancouver's first mayor) bought up most of the land east of Carrall St. to Clark. Here, Vancouver's first cultural institu-

tions and churches were established and the area's cycles of fabulous boom times and ongoing decline set in motion. As wealthier residents left in the 1890s for the West End, mixed use buildings became the norm—with small family businesses on street level and rooming or boarding houses above.

The area was famous, during the 1920s - 1930s, for its exciting, bustling, economically vibrant centre of the Japanese Canadian community—still influencing life here more than 60 years after its social destruction. (In 1942 - despite no evidence of disloyalty on the part of anyone of Japanese ancestry in the province - the federal government yielded to demands from panicky white British Columbians and forcibly removed Japanese Canadians.) Not until the 1950s were laws that were discriminating against Asian immigrants and Aboriginal citizens repealed. A few young Japanese Canadians and seniors returned to settle in the area; some stores and restaurants reopened. The Japanese Language School and Japanese Hall reopened, drawing Japanese Canadians from across the lower mainland. They continue to visit the area for cultural programs and seasonal festivals. Today the area is "natsukashii" (a place of lots of memories) and a mini-pilgrimage site.

The area was never ethnically homogenous however. First Nations always maintained a working and seasonal residential presence in the area's waterfront industries. Yugoslavs have resided on Cordova Street, and Scandinavians, Chinese, Latinos and Afro-Canadians have also lived here.

The heart of the community is Oppenheimer Park (once known as the Powell Street Grounds)—the block bounded by Cordova, Powell, Dunlevy

and Jackson Streets. First Nations who felt unwelcome in Stanley Park made it their home. Nearby ethnic communities used it as their outdoor space. It's been home to the award-winning Asahi baseball team, the DTES Slo-Pitch League, the Vancouver Dream Catchers Homeless Soccer Team and martial arts exhibitions. It's been an historical staging ground for protests and rallies by the marginalized and unemployed. It's been home to festivals, feasts and ceremonies. Today, it's still the community's "living room."

By 1949, although the loss of Japanese Canadians offered new opportunities for other ethnicities, Powell St. seemed almost deserted. Declared an industrial zone by the city, loans for mortgages and home improvements were stopped; infrastructure was neglected. As a result, the neighbourhood deteriorated physically. Rezoning attempted to do away with an area historically used to entertain the city's citizens and visiting resource workers with services ranging from restaurants and night clubs to gambling houses and brothels. Rezoning undercut a well-functioning working class community that provided its residents with a variety of goods and services. Traditional sources for jobs were in retreat: a decline in fishing stock plus technological changes in the forestry, railroad and shipping industries meant fewer jobs. Warehouses moved to the suburbs. Unemployment rose locally. Streetcars disappeared, reducing the flow of customers.

Inline with trends from the mid-1950s to the 1970s that wiped out culturally lively communities across North America, the city was interested in urban redevelopment with plans for high-rise towers; a super-highway to speed traffic

from New Westminster to Vancouver; a third-crossing over Burrard Inlet—plans that would have wiped out big chunks of today's Downtown Eastside.

However the community refused to die. In the mid-1970s, a grassroots protest movement forced government policy to change. Freeway and high-rise tower plans were abandoned. A government funded neighbourhood improvement program assisted a cultural renaissance, improving facilities at the Japanese Language School and Buddhist Temple; and planting *sakura* cherry trees in Oppenheimer Park. During the 1970s, Powell Street (Japantown) was enjoying a renaissance: Tonari Gumi (Japanese Canadian Volunteers Association) drew in descendents of immigrants who began recovering their community's history and culture. New social housing was built. The high-water mark was the creation of the annual Powell Street Festival.

This cultural Renaissance could not stem descending physical and social changes straining the Powell St. (Japantown) social fabric. Newly organized one-way streets made Japantown a "drive-through community." The redevelopment of Gastown pushed low-income residents east. Downsizing of the mental hospitals led to an influx of unsupported mentally ill people. Zoning changes reduced ground-level retail opportunities. Welfare reduction policies and social housing cut-backs left little spare money for discretionary funding. Homelessness in the area, and the city as a whole, doubled. Self-medicating drug use increased and so did the black-market in prescription drugs. Policing actions of the 1970s and 1980s, that moved prostitutes from the nightclubs and hotels to the streets, coincided with the beginning of a series of murders and disappearances of prostitutes, most who had worked in the DTES including the Powell Street area.

Once again, collective actions to overcome adversity are arising to work for more social and affordable housing, improved welfare rates, zoning changes

to restore retail and treatment centres. Residents are initiating grassroots self-help projects such as the Kalayaan (Freedom) Centre for Filipino Canadians and the intentional cooperative community formed at Jackson and Cordova. Over and over again, community involvement has improved the neighbourhood as residents, with some government assistance, have shown how people can help themselves and each other. From the Kalayaan Centre to the Firehall Arts Centre, from the DTES Heart of the City Festival to the Oppenheimer Park programs and Powell Street Festival, artists, cultural groups and residents are producing art and giving voice to the community. Community ceremonies honour the departed.

Powell St. (Japantown) is a vibrant community with a lively cultural life, retired seniors, people on disability, hard working residents, family homes and over 150 children. Powell St. (Japantown)'s long-term residents and artists like to live, work and study in the area for its history; its ethnic and economic diversity; its live-and-let-live spirit and human scale; its quality of life, its cultural wealth and its potential.

Consistent with its history, Powell Street (Japantown) is still an amalgamation of communities sharing several city blocks that feature the oldest buildings in the city – including some of its nicest Victorian houses, last of their kind. Here are some of Vancouver's most storied public spaces and important centres for the Japanese, Chinese, Aboriginal and other communities. Despite the low incomes of the majority of its residents, it's a functioning and stable neighbourhood. Year after year, it continues to survive and renew itself.

The current debate around the area's future is but a continuation of the story of the place: how does the community share the place and accommodate long-term residents and others who also have a stake in it?

The Japanese Community and the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement

by Sister Elizabeth Kelliher, S.A.

On October 26, 1926 four Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement arrived in Vancouver. They came to carry on the works of Katie O'Melia San who had worked in the Japan town area for many years.

Their initial work consisted of providing classes in English as a second language, operating a day care program, kindergarten, first and second grade, providing religious education and visiting the sick.

In 1942, some of the Sisters accompanied the Japanese who were being interned in the town of Greenwood BC. The Sisters accompanied the families to assist in these difficult and painful transitions. To ease the pain of loss for the families, the Sisters provided storage for some of their furniture and other belongings.

When the Sisters realized that 700 Japanese children would not be accepted in the local Greenwood schools, the Sisters provided Elementary and High School classes, evening business courses and piano lessons. The Sisters also



opened a kindergarten.

Sports and dramatic performances, putting on festivals and promoting gardening were activities the Sisters used to keep many occupied or entertained in that very bleak environment.

At the end of the war a few families remained in Greenwood. Most left for eastern Canada, the West Coast or Japan.

The Sisters are very happy that we remain well connected to the Japanese community and we continue to be an active resource for the entire community of the Downtown Eastside and Japantown.

My life in the Downtown Eastside

by Kathy Walker

Each Sunday for the past 14 years I make my way from Jackson down Cordova to St. James church followed by a small crowd of happy kids who are perfectly at home in this place, oblivious to the dire commentaries of life 'down here'. What 'down here' means to us, is what is becoming rare elsewhere; a neighbourhood that people actually live in. This is a community of tremendous vitality. It has something to do with the depth of relationships between people who engage with one another so often, people who continue to gather and occupy public spaces to socialize. I see my neighbours all the time because they

warm the same benches week after week, sell their wares on the same corner (no matter how many times the cops move them along), gather around the same picnic tables with the same friends year after year. When I stop by Oppenheimer for a chat there is warmth and a welcome that is not easily conveyed to people who are accustomed to seeing this area through the sensational lens of the media. On a stroll to Sunrise Market I am met by a half-dozen acquaintances and friends who want to know how I am, how the kids are doing, what the latest news on so and so is, or to tell me a little of the hardship that they have

A Field of Dreams

by John Endo Greenaway

Although we all have pivotal moments in our lives—events that change, for better or for worse, our circumstances—there are sometimes decisions we make that are so far-reaching in their implications that they inexorably alter the course of our trajectory. Mine happened when I was 19 years old and living with my parents in a housing co-op on Union Street. Takeo Yamashiro, a *shakuhachi* master and community activist, invited me to perform the songs I had written at a coffeehouse that Tonari Gumi was running out of the DERA (Downtown Eastside Residents Association) building on Cordova Street. At the urging of my parents, I somewhat reluctantly agreed. After all, I didn't know what Tonari Gumi was. Or DERA. In fact, I barely knew Takeo. Following my performance, I was approached by a group of folks who invited me to join their band, Kokuho Rose, an Asian Canadian folk band. And just like that, I was part of a community. It is a community that has shaped me and nurtured me, both literally and figuratively, for the past

thirty years.

On February 12 of this year, I watched as one of the legacy *sakura* trees was uprooted and moved to another part of Oppenheimer Park. Around me, watching this mammoth undertaking, were many members of the community that has been such an integral part of my life. Although it was cold, the sun was shining brilliantly, and it struck me at that moment that it all began for me, those many years ago, just a few blocks from where I was standing. On Powell Street. The home of the Asahi baseball team and the Powell Street Festival. On our own field of dreams.

John Endo Greenaway has been the editor of The Bulletin, a journal of Japanese Canadian community, history and culture, for the past 15 years. He was a founding member of Katari Taiko, Canada's first taiko group, and Uzume Taiko, Canada's first professional taiko group. He is currently assistant instructor with Chibi Taiko. Yes, Canada's first youth taiko group. In his spare time he is a graphic designer. He designed this program guide.

endured over the past short while. I usually come home with some local news about an event, an exhibit, a protest, a trouble maker in the park or too often the sad news of the untimely death of a neighbour.

On the corner of Jackson and Cordova in the big green house my family and friends have for the past 12 years, five days a week, invited our neighbours for a community meal where we gather around the table to build and strengthen the ties that make life more liveable. This is what I like to call 'crime prevention'!

It is not that I am naive about the real issues down here, or that I romanticize

the neighbourhood, it is simply that in the midst of the suffering, the abuse and the crime are the constant gestures of hope, struggle, kindness and the resiliency of people who just won't give in or give up or shut up. People who I would expect to be callous, bitter and violent from years of sustained abuse have on many occasions surprised me with such tenderness and goodwill that I cannot submit to despair. Just when you think you've had enough, someone throws a party or a festival or they march down the streets, fully alive, making noise, beating drums, remembering... and I know I am at home in a place that I love.

History Walking Tours

Meet at Chapel Arts, 304 Dunlevy

10am

Reminders of the Labour Movement

Geoff Meggs, Lorene Oikawa

Although the Downtown Eastside and Hastings Street near Victory Square are well-known for their heritage and labour history, the Powell Street district around Oppenheimer Park is even more drenched in the history of the labour movement and the Japanese Canadian community. Geoff Meggs, Vancouver City Councillor, brings a journalist's view and curiosity to the walk and Lorene Oikawa, Vice President BCGEU, shares her enthusiasm for the stories of the labour movement. This short walk will explore the dwindling number of reminders of this very historic district and the communities that brought it to life.

11:30am

Powell Street Walking Tour - Judy Inouye

On the historical tour of Powell Street, Judy Inouye will take you back in time to the vibrant pre-war community of Japanese Canadians and Japanese immigrants who lived and worked in the area. The area grew and thrived over a fifty year period from the 1890s to its abrupt end in 1942. The tour will focus on the 300 and 400 blocks of Powell Street, the commercial heart of the community. Judy's grandparents moved to Powell Street in 1908, her parents followed in 1923 and 1937 and her family lived here until the dispersement. She has been giving tours for over 10 years.

Photo: Jason Vanderhill



Photo: Ken Tabata

1pm

The Rolling History of Japantown - John Atkin

The area of Japantown has a many-layered history and there are simple historical and contemporary reasons for the way that the community has developed. Join civic historian John Atkin on a living history walking tour and learn how geography, industry, politics, policies and economic factors impact the ways that the neighbourhood has changed over the years. And continues to change – walk through the streets of Japantown and see the years roll by.



Displays

11am to 2pm

Historical & Cultural Displays

Chapel Arts, 304 Dunlevy

- City of Vancouver Historical & Cultural Review, Powell Street (Japantown)
- Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall
- Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement
- Central City Foundation
- Nikkei Place, Asahi Baseball Team
- Vanishing Baseball Diamond, DTES Women's Writing Group
- Philippine Women Centre
- Open Windows, Strathcona Business Improvement Association
- St. James' Anglican Church



11am to 1pm

Planning & Design

Oppenheimer Park Field House

400 block Powell

- Vision Mapping Workshop
- Carnegie Community Action Project

3pm to 9pm

Historical Display & Future Plans

Vancouver Japanese Language School

& Japanese Hall, 487 Alexander

- History, Renovation drawings
- Vancouver Buddhist Church

Story Sharing

11am – 2pm

Chapel Arts, 304 Dunlevy

This is an opportunity to listen to stories of people's personal experiences. Take a seat for an informal and intimate gathering of story sharing. We hope to learn from the depths of experience from our invited guests and that you may be inspired to share a story of your own. Each hour will focus on a different theme and will change moderators.

11am

Growing Up in the Neighbourhood

– Personal Experience

- Kathy Walker (moderator) & daughters
- Mary Kawamoto
- Ritsu & Cy Saimoto
- Judy Hanazawa

12pm

Working In the Neighbourhood

– Labour and the Working Class

- Joyce Rock (moderator)
- Takeo Yamashiro
- Bill Saunders
- Toby Barazzuol

1pm

Activism and Community Building

– Personal Experience

- Kat Norris (moderator)
- Jean Swanson
- Harry Aoki
- Grace Eiko Thomson
- Ayex Bathan

Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration - Saturday March 28, 2009

Chapel Arts 304 Dunlevy

11am - 2pm
Historical & Cultural Displays
Poets Corner

11am Music Kozue Matsumoto - koto

12pm Short Documentary Film
Sakura Sakura - Linda Ohama

12:30pm Workshop
 How to Use *Sensu* (folding fans)

1:30pm Voice and Drum
 Dalannah Gail Bowen

WALKING TOURS (MEET AT CHAPEL ARTS)

10am Reminders of the Labour Movement
 Geoff Meggs, Lorene Okinawa

11:30am Powell Street Walking Tour
 Judy Inouye

1pm The Rolling History of Japantown
 John Atkin

STORYSHARING

11am - 12pm
Growing Up in the Neighbourhood
Personal Experience
 Kathy Walker & daughters
 Mary Kawamoto • Ritsu & Cy Saimoto
 Judy Hanazawa

12pm - 1pm
Working in the Neighbourhood
Labour and the Working Class
 Joyce Rock • Takeo Yamashiro
 Bill Saunders • Toby Barazzuol

1pm - 2pm
Activism & Community Building
Personal Experience
 Kat Norris • Jean Swanson
 Harry Aoki • Grace Eiko Thomson • Ayex Bathan

Oppenheimer Park

400 Block Powell

11am - 1pm Planning & Design
 Vision Mapping Workshop
 - Carnegie Community Action Project

11am - 2pm Activities
 Children's Art Workshop



Breadline Gallery 386 Powell

ALL DAY WINDOW INSTALLATION
 Sean Arden - *Bridging the Gap*
 Quin Martins - Lifeskills Film/Video Group
 Danny Kostyshin - ceramics

Living Room 528 Powell

11am - 12pm Crafts Workshop Sue Blue
12pm - 12:30pm Poetry Stephen Lytton
12:30pm - 1pm Song Isabel Ramirez



Japanese Hall 487 Alexander

3pm - 9pm Historical Display & Future Plans

2pm Procession leaves from Japanese Hall, returns to Japanese Hall

3pm Ceremony and performances

MCs: Grace Eiko Thomson & Hannah Walker
 Sekyu Siyam - Chief Ian Campbell • Okinawa Chorus • Okinawa Dance
 Oppenheimer Drum Group • Wushu Institute
 Buddhist Church Choir • Steveston Tera Taiko
 Saint James Music Academy

5pm - 6pm Food Sales

6pm - 7:30pm Gala Performances

MCs: Margaret Gallagher & Stephen Lytton
 M'Girl • Kathara Dance • Moraima • Sawagi Taiko

8pm - 9pm Performance

Bando-ryu Dance Group



Okinawa Chorus
 VJLS & JH
 DTES Samba Band
 Ladies in White
 Seniors from Tonari Gumi
 Philippine Women Centre
 Saint James Music Academy



Daytime Activities

11am - 11:30am

Music – Kozue Matsumoto

Chapel Arts, 304 Dunlevy



Born and raised in Japan, Kozue now lives in Vancouver. She has played *koto* since she was 3 years old and since *koto* has always been around her, Kozue says "koto is in a way a part of my body" and one of her dreams is to "connect people through my music." An MA student at UBC, Kozue has performed both in Japan and Canada, including the Powell Street Festival, the Fearless Festival and other Japanese community events.

11am - 12pm

Crafts Workshop – Sue Blue

The Living Room, 528 Powell

Break the Cycle Now! a workshop with handi-woman Sue Blue, the Queen of Cordova. Share thoughts and questions while beading and other handicrafts.

11am - 1pm

Vision Mapping Workshop

– Carnegie Community Action Project

Oppenheimer Park Field House

400 block Powell

Wendy Pedersen of the Carnegie Community Action Project will lead a workshop to narrow down what is important to residents and friends of Japantown. By asking everyone: draw the most

meaningful places; what is the best housing model; and what are the best food/stores, we can have a way to prioritize the answers. As the long-term vision of the Downtown Eastside is developing, the purpose of this workshop is to discover the neighbourhood's priorities. The work in the mapping sessions will build upon the first phase of visioning that CCAP prepared with 1,000 low income residents. To see the results in the report *Nothing About Us Without Us*, visit www.ccapvancouver.wordpress.com.

11am - 2pm

Poets Corner – Delayne Azrael

Chapel Arts Courtyard

corner of Dunlevy and Cordova

Drop by to share, write and read poetry with Delayne Azrael, poet and artist.

11am - 2pm

Workshop – Children's Art

Oppenheimer Park Field House

400 block Powell

Children are invited to create masks, streamers and other fanfare in preparation for the 2pm Procession. Workshop led by Oppenheimer Park program staff.

12pm – 12:30pm

Short Documentary Film – *Sakura Sakura*

Chapel Arts, 304 Dunlevy

Directed by Linda Ohama, *Sakura Sakura* (2008, 6") was created to raise awareness of the cultural significance of the Legacy Sakura (cherry blossom trees) in Oppenheimer Park. The park is being re-developed and it's important that the historical, spiritual and cultural value of the trees be taken into consideration. Since the early 1970s, Linda has worked as an exhibiting visual artist, educator and independent filmmaker. She helped to initiate substantial funds in support of the national campaign for the Redress Movement for Japanese Canadians with her artwork, *Watari Dori* (*A Bird of Pas-*



Photo: John Endo Greenaway

sage). For many Canadians, this limited edition became a symbol of the historic Redress campaign, which eventually led to redress and a formal Government of Canada apology in 1988. Today's viewing is followed by a Q & A.

The short video can also be viewed online at www.lindaohama.com.

12pm – 12:30pm

Poetry – Stephen Lytton

The Living Room, 528 Powell

The aspirations of poet and community activist Stephen Lytton are captured in this quote: "I feel that every disabled person, Aboriginal or other, must be involved in the community. This involvement not only benefits the individual, but also strengthens and promotes the health of each community. Involvement in government policies and decisions that affect our communities and that of the country in general will, I know, make way for a much more productive and hopeful future for all Aboriginal people, and perhaps all people."

12:30pm – 1pm

Song – Isabel Ramirez

The Living Room, 528 Powell

Longtime neighbourhood favourite, folklorista Isabel Ramirez is in fine voice these days and loves nothing better than sharing her songs.

12:30pm – 1pm

Workshop – How to use Sensu (folding fans)

Chapel Arts, 304 Dunlevy

A rare opportunity to learn how to use a *sensu* (folding fan) in the style of classical Japanese dance. With visiting Nihon Buyo artists Yukimitsu Bando and Yukio-mi Bando. Children and adults welcome.



Photo: Ken Tabata

1:30pm – 2pm

Voice & Drum – Dalannah Gail Bowen

Chapel Arts, 304 Dunlevy

A musical activist, Dalannah is a versatile high-energy singer, songwriter, actor, playwright and poet. She has been a vocalist for 40 years and has experienced many highlights in her musical career and many challenges in her personal journey. Dalannah continues to write songs and two of her songs are finalists in international songwriting competitions. Currently, she is leading an initiative to create a Downtown Eastside Centre for the Arts. For more information visit www.decentreforthearts.com.

Procession

2pm – leaves Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall, 487 Alexander
Processes around Oppenheimer Park, with stops along the way
Returns to the VJLS & JH by 3pm

Participants

- Downtown Eastside Samba Band
- Members of the Oppenheimer Music Program
- Okinawa Girls Chorus
- Vancouver Japanese Language School
 - ~ Students
 - ~ Board of Directors
 - ~ Moms & kids of Sun Run Training Group
 - ~ Members of the Aikido Club and Kyudo Club
- The Ladies in White
- Seniors from Tonari Gumi
- Philippine Women Centre
- Students of Saint James Music Academy
- AND YOU!!

Procession banners created by DTES artist, poet and community activist Diane Wood.

Downtown Eastside Samba Band

Last fall, in the month leading up to the 2008 DTES Heart of the City Festival, master percussion teacher Joseph 'Pepe' Danza taught a large group of DTES involved residents to play samba. This spirit-lifting get-your-body-shakin' popular music of Brazil is springing up all over the world. These workshops were followed by very successful performances at the 2008 Festival. Now the beat goes on and the band is very pleased to again present its infectious uplifting music in the streets, and for the residents and friends of our 'hood. Today's procession is led by Terry Hunter, the Band Co-ordinator, and Artistic Producer of the DTES Heart of the City Festival.



Oppenheimer Music Program

With support from a Neighbourhood Small Grant to purchase musical instruments, the program began as the Homeless Band. After leading a procession to Gallery Gachet and a performance at the 2008 DTES Heart of the City Festival, the band has developed into the Oppenheimer Music Program. Led by Rudolf Penner, the weekly program takes neighbourhood musicians on a musical journey from rock, to country, to rap. Members of the program join in with the DTES Samba Band for today's procession.

Okinawa Girls Chorus

Visiting from Okinawa Prefecture, the Girls Chorus joins the procession. Along with the Okinawa Dancers, we are pleased to have the guests perform for us during the 3pm Ceremony at the Japanese Hall.



The Ladies in White

The Ladies in White are an offshoot of a larger theatre collective - The Dusty Flowerpot Cabaret - a group known in Vancouver for their multidisciplinary theatrical events (puppetry, mime, clown, original composition, choreography, art installation). Drawing from such influences as traditional mime, contemporary and Balinese dance, and clowning principles, the Ladies in White move slowly throughout the crowds, leaving an entranced audience in their wake. *This appearance by Ladies in White is sponsored by the Japantown Live/Work Studios.*

Philippine Women Centre

The Kalayaan Centre is a Filipino community centre run through the commitment of volunteers. These volunteers recognize the Centre's work as borne out of the hard struggle of the Filipino community in Canada for survival, dignity and freedom. Since 1996, the groups in the Kalayaan Centre have operated to serve the needs of the growing but marginalized Filipino migrant and im-

migrant community in Vancouver. The Filipino word *Kalayaan* means "Freedom," and was chosen as a demonstration of the deep aspirations for genuine freedom that Filipinos hold wherever they may be. Organizations such as the Philippine Women Centre of BC, SIKLAB (the migrants organization), Ugnayan (Filipino-Canadian Youth Alliance), BC Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, Filipino Nurses Support Group and Sinag Bayan (the cultural group), work through educating, organizing and mobilizing, to empower the community to fully participate in Canadian society. Visit www.kalayaancentre.net or call 604-215-1103 for more information.

Saint James Music Academy

The Saint James Music Academy students are escorted to the Academy at Saint James Anglican Church by volunteers – our "walking school bus" – and are picked up by caregivers after lessons. To see the students travelling in the neighbourhood, some arm in arm, others carrying musical instrument cases, it's a procession in itself. Visit www.sjma.ca for more information.



Photo: John Endo Greenaway



Oppenheimer Drum Group

Led by Patrick Smith and sponsored by the Aboriginal Wellness Centre, the Oppenheimer Drum Group meets Thursdays at the Oppenheimer Field House. We are pleased to welcome them to the Japanese Hall.

Steveston Tera Taiko



Steveston Tera Taiko is the first organized taiko group in Richmond and only the 2nd youth taiko group in the Lower Mainland. They were formed in December of 2000 at the Steveston Buddhist Temple. Their instructors were Mr. Shinobu Homma and Ms. Naomi Shikaze for the first two and a half years. Steveston Tera Taiko has been performing for the last four years. Highlights include: Kamloops Canada Day Festival, Western Washington University Culture Shock, CTV News In Your Neighbourhood, Richmond Olympic Oval Opening Celebrations, and collaborations with The Chen Ling Academy of Dance, Chibi Taiko, Uzume Taiko and Le Patin Libre.

Saint James Music Academy

The Saint James Music Academy gives young people the opportunity to explore their creative potential, gain self-confidence, get an academic head start, and develop good relationships, all of which will add to their success in life. At a time when Vancouver's Downtown Eastside is rapidly changing, we have established a music education program, which will remain accessible to children from low-income families. Saint James



Music Academy is located at St. James' Anglican Church. In providing this space, the church continues its 125-year tradition of excellence in music and commitment to its neighbourhood. Visit www.sjma.ca for more information.

Wushu Taiji Qigong Institute, Grandmaster Shou-Yu Liang

Wushu (Kung Fu) is the proper term for all the martial arts styles in China. It has been practiced in China for thousands of years. Wushu consists of thousands of different external and internal styles including bare hands and weapons. Aside from a means of self-defense, Wushu has also been developed into a sport. Wushu improves participants' health and fitness, as well as reaction time, agility, jumping ability, balance, flexibility, coordination, power and speed. Today, Wushu is also a presentation art. The Wushu Institute has been in the neighbourhood since 1987 and their main training hall is at 220 Jackson. www.shouyuliang.com.

Food



5pm - 6pm Savoury Japanese Food Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall

Minimal cost. Prepared by volunteer team of VJLS & JH. Proceeds to the School and the Celebration.

Ceremony & Performances 3pm – Japanese Hall, 487 Alexander

MCs: Grace Eiko Thomson, Hannah Walker

Welcome

- Sekyu Siyam - Chief Ian Campbell, Squamish Nation
- Mayor's Office, City of Vancouver

Guest Speakers

- Seiichi Otsuka, Consul General of Japan in Vancouver
- Libby Davies, MP for Vancouver East
- Harry Bloy, MLA Burquitlam
- Jessica Chen, City of Vancouver Planning Department

Performers

- Okinawa Girls Chorus
- Okinawa Traditional Dance Group
- Oppenheimer Drum Group
- Vancouver Buddhist Church Choir
- Steveston Tera Taiko
- Saint James Music Academy
- Wushu Taiji Qigong Institute

Past-president of the National Association of Japanese Canadians, **Grace Eiko Thomson** previously taught Canadian and Asian art histories at University of Manitoba and University of Saskatchewan, worked as a curator of contemporary art, and was the Executive Director

of Japanese Canadian National Museum from 1999 to 2002.

Seventeen-year-old **Hannah Walker** has lived across from Oppenheimer Park since she was two years old and a couple years ago she received 1st place in the Pivot photography contest. Hannah is also interested in singing, music and social justice.

Okinawa Girls Chorus & Traditional Dance Group



Visiting from Okinawa Prefecture in Japan, the Okinawa Girls Chorus gives us a taste of their choral talents. Also visiting from across the Pacific Ocean is the Okinawa Traditional Dance Group. The Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall will present a full program of performance on Sunday March 29 at 1:30pm.

Gala Evening 6pm – Japanese Hall, 487 Alexander

MCs: Margaret Gallagher & Stephen Lytton

Performers

M'Girl • Kathara Dance
Moraima • Sawagi Taiko

Margaret Gallagher is an arts reporter and a contributor to CBC Radio One. **Stephen Lytton** is a DTES poet and community activist.

M'Girl

M'Girl [pronounced ma-girl] is a fast-rising award-winning Aboriginal women's vocal ensemble. With an inspired fusion of harmonies, they incorporate the sounds of R&B, blues, folk/roots, house and world beat with traditional Aboriginal melodic phrasing, songforms and rhythms. The message in the music is an emergence of cultural ideals and worldviews from the perspectives of their Metis/Cree (Nêhiyawin), Ojibway and Mohawk backgrounds. For this evening's performance M'Girl is Renae Morriseau, Tiare LaPorte and Jenifer Brousseau.

Kathara Dance

Since 2002, Kathara Dance has been involved in an artistic and cultural exchange with the 21 year old Kathara Dance Theatre Collective of the Southern Philippines. Kathara Canada continues to foster awareness of Philippine indigenous identity through theatre, traditional and contemporary music, dance and martial art. Artistic Director and performance artist Babette Santos has returned from the Philippines in an arts exchange with Ambala Aeta tribe in Bataan. In the spirit of multiculturalism, Kathara invites guest artists to explore the Philippines and its historical links to India, China, Islam, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Tonight's performers are Michael Louw (percussion), Babette Santos (percussion, dance), Oneal Mendoza

(Filipino martial artist) and guest Alvin Ramos (*shakuhachi*).

Moraima



Moraima brings together Vancouver guitarist Peter Mole, Spanish-born singer Jose Lara, and Al Mozaico Flamenco Dance Theatre soloist Michelle Harding. Their high-energy flamenco performances have been thrilling Vancouver audiences for many years. Catch them live at the Kino Cafe on Cambie Street and experience an evening of inspired flamenco. The evening's program will include Fandangos de Huelva; Rumbas; and Alegrias.

Sawagi Taiko

Formed in 1990, Sawagi Taiko is Canada's first and foremost all-women's taiko group. The members of Sawagi Taiko explore their different ancestral legacies in the art form of taiko and the pieces reflect their diverse experiences as East Asian Canadian women. As a performing group, they create an environment where all members can initiate and explore their artistic visions. Sawagi Taiko continues the historical and cultural connections amongst different Asian cultures - the instrument originated in China; the artistic form originated in the rural communities of Japan. The members of the group are Mariko Heidelk, Rika Moorhouse, Jeanie Ow, Sachiko Yamaguchi and Linda Uyehara Hoffman.

Special Guests

8pm – Japanese Hall, 487 Alexander
Bando-ryu School of Dance

Special dance performance with Yukimitsu Bando and her son Yukiomi Bando of the Bando-ryu School of Nihon Buyo Foundation from Tokyo. "The classical dance form of "nihon buyo" is performed in kabuki theatre and by geisha. It focuses on elegance, precision and nuance, and is rich with complexity." Craig Takeuchi, *Georgia Straight*



Japantown Live/Work Studios 386 Powell Street

Japantown Studios, as it is commonly known, was incorporated in 2005 by a group of business people committed to sustaining the building and artistic community in the area. The building at 386 Powell is over a hundred years old and is zoned for artist live/work studios since it underwent extensive renovation in the mid-90s. A historical timeline is posted in the front window and lists the previous occupants and uses.

Famed Japanese Canadian artist, poet and university instructor Roy Kiyooka had studios on the upper floors in the 1980s and 90s. Though there have been artists living and working in the building since the early 1900s, Kiyooka's presence is generally acknowledged as the reason for the artistic zoning today. Since 2005 Japantown Studios has housed a variety of working artists including: award winning Katherine Souci, who produces her own line of clothing using specialized processes; Randi Obenauer, who creates handbags and other goods from recycled leather; and longtime local ceramic artist Danny Kostyshin. Painters Eli Bornowsky, Mat Bushel, and Colin Johansen currently occupy the space once used by the world famous Canadian Attila Lukacs and Royal

Bank Prize winner Etienne Zack.

Japantown Studios Ltd. is happy to participate in the Japantown Celebration and help this area grow. Japantown Studios is a for-profit business and does not rely on subsidies from any level of government. They have recently launched the Breadline Gallery which has two main components, regular window displays and a developing online gallery to display and to market local art, artistic productions and handicrafts.

For further information on artists, please go to: cooperleo@telus.net japantownstudios.ca, sansoucie.ca, oraearth.com, breadlinegallery.com, atomised.ca, bcpotters.com/members/danny_kostyshin millenniumplateproject.wetpaint.com

Breadline Gallery

Window Installations on Sat March 28

- Ceramics - Danny Kostyshin
- Looping video installation *Bridging the Gap* - Sean Arden
- short videos Lifeskills Film & Video Group - Quin Martins



Other Events

Japan Fair at "Under the Cherry Tree"
Sat March 28 & Sun March 29

10am - 5pm
VanDusen Botanical Garden, 5251 Oak St. (37th & Oak)

Bring on the blossoms at "Under the Cherry Tree" and enjoy the Japan Fair with Japanese cultural arts, products and demonstrations in addition to the best of BC's fine crafts. Come experience the food, performances and hands on demonstrations of a family friendly sakura matsuri (cherry blossom festival.) Free admission to "Under the Cherry Tree."

Celebrate spring inside the garden at "Sakura Days" with a tea ceremony, sake tasting, garden tour, Bing Thom Ar-

chitects' Haiku Cherry Tree Installations and more. Garden entrance fee applies to "Sakura Days."

For more information:
vancouverjfg@gmail.com, www.vcbf.ca

Presented by the Japan Fair Organizing Committee: Japanese Business Association of Vancouver (Konwakai); Vancouver Mokuyokai Society; Japanese Women's Business Association (JWBA); Vancouver Japanese Business Association (Kiyukai); Japan-Canada Chamber of Commerce and The Canada-Japan Society; Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society; and Crackerjack; in conjunction with the Consulate General of Japan in Vancouver to celebrate the 80th Anniversary of Japan-Canada Relations.

Other event announcements

- **Sunday March 29, 12pm to 3pm**
Vancouver Buddhist Temple Spring Food Bazaar, 220 Jackson
- **Sunday March 29, 1:30pm**
Okinawa Traditional Song and Dance
Vancouver Japanese Language School & Japanese Hall, 487 Alexander
- **April 14 to April 18**
Cherry Blossom Festival, Oppenheimer Park



**National
Association
of Japanese
Canadians**

Congratulations and best wishes on this special occasion of the Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration!

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
JAPANESE CANADIANS
EXECUTIVE BOARD
AND THE
NAJC ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

www.najc.ca national@najc.ca



Congratulations Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration!



For more information call 1-800-667-1103



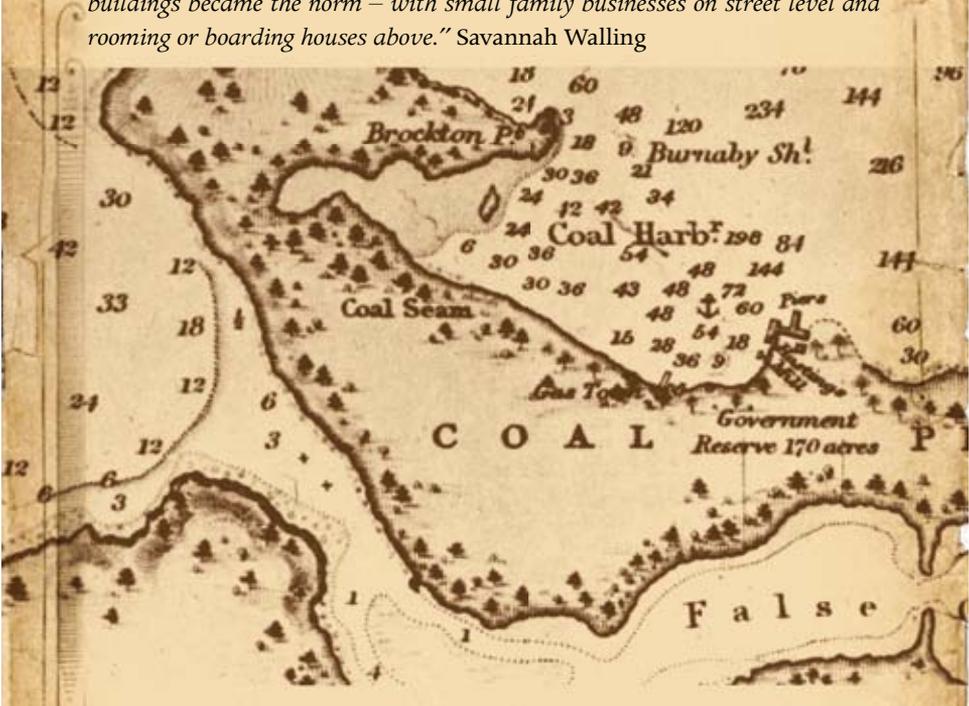
The Strathcona Business Improvement Association is pleased to support the Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration in the heart of our community



Congratulations

to the Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration. Best wishes from Central City Foundation.

“Within 30 short years of settlement, native power over this area had collapsed; Japanese immigrants began to replace Aboriginal workers and take residence; thousands of immigrants arrived by train and ship. Victoria capitalists Dr. Israel Powell (Superintendent of Indian Affairs) and David Oppenheimer (Vancouver’s first mayor) bought up most of the land east of Carrall St. to Clark. Here, Vancouver’s first cultural institutions and churches were established and the area’s cycles of fabulous boom times and ongoing decline set in motion. As wealthier residents left in the 1890s for the West End, mixed use buildings became the norm – with small family businesses on street level and rooming or boarding houses above.” Savannah Walling



powell street festival society



Tonari Gumi
DROP IN CENTRE



1906
JAPANESE HALL
VANCOUVER JAPANESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL
AND JAPANESE HALL



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of Japanese
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