

カナダ日系のコミュニティー・歴史・文化の月刊誌

the Bulletin

a journal of Japanese Canadian community, history + culture

けっほ
October.2020

RANDALL OKITA'S THE BOOK OF DISTANCE

virtual reality experience meets the world



An Issei's Memoir from an Earlier Pandemic
Downtown Eastside Heart of the City Festival

Eastsideから見える日本と世界 日本の「ブラジルタウン」の経緯と現在

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Bulletin Editor John Endo Greenaway experiencing Randall Okita's *The Book of Distance*.
Photo by Katja De Bock.

NOTE REGARDING THE SAFETY OF THIS PUBLICATION

This publication was produced with care regarding transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

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Web Express is also committed to providing safety for employees, publishers and their readers to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We have undertaken numerous disinfecting measures like crew separation and equipment wipe down. We have also limited entry from delivery people and customers to increase social distance. Currently we understand the virus is NOT easily passed on paper (according to the World Health Organization spokesperson on CNBC they have not issued a warning regarding the passing of the virus on paper). BUT to reassure readers, the manufacturing process requires VERY LITTLE TOUCH from our staff.

– Web Express Printing & Mailing

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Cover Story



Randall Okita. Photo montage by John Endo Greenaway.

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GVJCCA



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JAPANESE CANADIAN WORKING GROUP

▪ REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN NAKAYAMA SURVIVOR STORIES ▪



We recognize how difficult it may be for survivors to come forward and tell their stories and we will continue to fight on their behalf. But we also realize that personal accounts and testimonies lend a powerful voice. The more the community and public become aware of the abuse experienced by survivors, the more we can make abuse a matter not of shame, but of seeking justice and accountability.

Surviving clergy sexual abuse is not only a matter of justice but also one of personal well-being. Some survivors have expressed their relief upon sharing their stories because they were able to unload unwarranted feelings of shame or self-blame and gain strength from knowing they are not alone.

The JCWG is asking survivors of Nakayama's abuse, and/or their family members to write and submit their accounts of his abuse. They will, of course, remain anonymous, should the writer wish. The accounts may be general or detailed and show how the abuse has affected one's life. Family members or friends could help by recording or writing the account for the survivor or they can submit their own story about their experience being the family of a survivor.

Accounts will respectfully be given the promise of anonymity. Both written or recorded accounts (which the Committee could transcribe) will be received in greatest confidence. We will notify the writers if and how these accounts might be published or shared – possibly in a JCCA *Bulletin* article. Please forward your story to the JCWG, c/o jcworkinggroup@gmail.com. Upon the request of survivors or supporters, counselling support will be provided free of charge and without disclosing any victim's identity to the Church.

The Japanese Canadian Working Group

Judy Hanazawa, Connie Kadota, Emiko Lashin, Wendy Matsubuchi-Bremner, Liz Nunoda, Larry Okada, Naomi Shikaze, Lily Shinde, Peter Wallace.

UPDATE

Since 2014 the Japanese Canadian Working Group (JCWG) has been working to seek justice for the many survivors of abuse by Gordon Goichi Nakayama. While the Anglican Church gave an official apology in 2015 and his abuse became more widely known, the JCWG has recently joined with the NAJC to seek restitution for Nakayama's clergy sexual abuse and the decades-long hiding of that abuse.

In a workshop held by the JCWG in 2017, Dr. Satsuki Ina reported on a case of widespread abuse by a minister in San Francisco's Chinatown. When some survivors' written accounts of their abuse were made public, many more survivors came forward with their stories. And in the recent Me Too movement, the stories of survivors of abuse by those in power have resulted in many abusers being made accountable for their actions. They have been a powerful voice for many to demand justice for what has long been hidden or denied.

COUNSELLING HELP IS ALREADY AVAILABLE!

Are you a survivor, or has Mr. Nakayama's clergy sexual abuse affected you because you knew one of his victims, possibly as a family member or friend? The JCWG is ready to support you. We welcome you to share your story with us. If you are ok with sharing your story publicly, it may support others to do the same.

We also reach out to anyone who wants to talk with a counsellor. The Diocese of Calgary guarantees free counselling for those who have been harmed by Mr. Nakayama. Although your name will not be shared with the Diocese, we will need your name, the name of your chosen counsellor and their contact info. For more information please contact us at jcworkinggroup@gmail.com.

NOTE: The following submissions contains descriptions of sexual abuse that some readers may find disturbing. Discretion is advised.

RESPONSES

We have already received several testimonies in response to September's *Bulletin* article. We deeply appreciate these stories and thank community members for their submissions. We stand with you.

TESTIMONY 2

Anonymized. 1946. Boys disclose their abuse experience to each other.

Just forgive me for taking time on this because it has been many years since this story took place. It is by recall. That year was one of the most difficult years that Southern Alberta experienced in terms of weather. 1946. It was June and I was walking back from school and I was still a quarter mile from home when the neighbour's neighbour came running down from his home and said, "Hey sonny, get going because that is coming." He says pointing at [an oncoming storm], "You have to get home before that hits us. Start running!" And so I did. I made it back just in time. My mom, sister and I covered ourselves in blankets on the floor. They were screaming. We were in a shack under the trees and there was banging from all around. Here I am thinking, "What has gone wrong with our lives... everything was taken [during internment] and now mom and sister are crying on the floor in a shack in Alberta. I got to do something about this." It rained for three days and flooded many farms. That winter it froze and it froze ponds. It was on a neighbour's farm that one of the boys lived. And on the [redacted] farm was where (A) and his family lived. We had a skating party and at the skating party we built a fire and we were talking and I said, "Hey, you guys are from Christian families. Who is God?" and (B) was the eldest of the boys and he says, "God almighty! You've been talking to Nakayama." I said Nakayama visited us. That's when he (B) told me, told us, about being molested by Nakayama. And then (A) said "Oh no...(B) he did that to you too?" Then (C), a friend who was with us, went on and said "Ohhh..." and I knew he was molested too. And this all came about by my asking "Who's God?" and all three of them were molested and didn't know. Then both (B) and (A) said, "Look. No matter what, don't let that man come close to you. And don't tell anybody ever about what we had said today." And I have never done that until the (JCWG) started this process with the Anglicans.

In 2010 my friend (D), who also knew (A), came to [Canada] to visit (A) and then went back. From there on I phoned (D) a number of times wanting to find out from (D) about Nakayama. By that time (2010)

Nakayama had died, (B) had died and (A) had disappeared. Well, in my phone call with (D) he said, "It's such a difficult story to talk about... there are so many evil things that have happened...and I am sworn to keep quiet about it. So I'm sorry, but I cannot tell you. I have been disturbed by this."

(D) was a member of the clergy and he never came back to Canada again. And guess what? He died last summer. His...his daughter looked after him and he died at the age of [85+]. One thing he did say to me was "[narrator], I do believe that Nakayama went to Peru...there's Japanese in Peru and he also went to San Paulo in Brazil and he has done evil things..." (D) somehow met these people during his ministry.

That was the last talk I had with (D) and I was never able to contact him again.

The thing is, when (B), the neighbour, died, I went to (B)'s funeral and I met his whole family and the first person to say hi to me was (A)'s brother, (C), who I told you was at that skating party as well. And we talked and I said "(C), where is (A)?" and he says, "That's the sad thing, we haven't seen him. Period. We don't know where he is living." Then tears welled up in his eyes and me and (C) stopped talking about it. I never saw (C) again. Anyway that is my involvement with the Nakayama story. And since (D) died I've closed my files on it.

– *Anonymized to protect the identities of the individuals mentioned.*

TESTIMONY 6

Stan Shigehiro. 1947. Personal Testimony.

This is my story.

The family was interned to Alberta and ended up in Raymond in 1942. We lived in a two-room shack on the Paxman farm working in the sugar beet fields.

Around 1945, my parents converted to Christianity – Anglican – through convincing conversations with a neighbour. They were Buddhist prior.

Reverend Nakayama visited our home in 1947. His visits always ended up with dinner and an overnight stay. I was then ten-years-old and the oldest of two.

We only had one bedroom with two double beds. One bed for my parents and one bed for my brother and I. When Nakayama stayed overnight he slept in one of the beds with me while my brother joined my parents in the other bed.

Sometime during the night he would grope me and would take my hand and place it on his penis and force me to stroke him. After the second visit, which might have been a couple months later, and this happened again, I decided to sleep outside in a tent on his third visit. He followed me and came in and the same ensued.

I would go visit my friend down the street during the day and if Nakayama was visiting he would want to come with me. On the way he would kiss me on the lips and force my hand in his pants.

Following this third time, I would make myself very scarce whenever he visited and avoided him as much as I could. ♦

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