

# The Bulletin

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Reconciliation Walk - September 22. Photo courtesy Lily Shinde.

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Terry Watada photo by John Endo Greenaway illustrations by Kenji Iwata SUBMISSION DEADLINE JANUARY 2014 ISSUE DECEMBER 20, 2013

# **OPINION**

### by Leslie Komori

Much controversy has surrounded Kogawa House. Many in the Nikkei community have heard cloaked accusations of sexual assaults on adolescent Japanese Canadian boys by Canon Goichi Nakayama of the Anglican Church. Canon Nakayama is the former owner of the Kogawa House and Joy's father. In a book entitled *Joy Kogawa, Essays on Her Works*, both the Kogawa House Society and Joy have chosen to disclose publicly the pedophilia of Canon Nakayama.

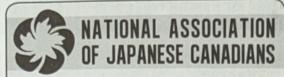


In the chapter "A Little House that Joy Saved," Ann-Marie Metten, executive director of Kogawa House, writes "her father had hurt others, as far as I could understand, mainly young boys of Japanese descent." In the chapter "Biography, A narrative of life through words and action," Kogawa, in an interview with Sheena Wilson, says, "if he could have admitted the truth, and if people could have thrown their stones at him, I could have loved him, stood by him, and accepted him as a deviant and perverted human being."

In the past, some members of the Nikkei Community have felt legitimate anger because Kogawa House did not disclose the transgressions of the Canon. Public silence appeared to condone the actions of a pedophile. Hopefully these essays will address the indignation held by Kogawa House critics and the Nikkei community can offer support to the historic house.

Joy's decision to disclose this disturbing piece of family history took immense courage. We must stop blaming Joy for her father's actions, something over which she had no control, because we cannot expect the child of a criminal to answer for her father's crimes. The community needs to demand accountability from the Anglican Church, since it created the mechanism whereby Canon Nakayama could access his victims.

The Indigenous nations in Canada, in their search for truth and reconciliation, offers us Nikkei a wise model to grapple with repercussions of trauma caused by the clergy. My hope is that Nikkei can follow a similar path to create a safe place to explore the truth so reconciliation may arise, like the dream of Kogawa House.



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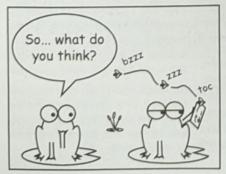
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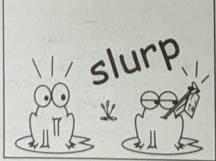
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