

## Transforming the *Japan Through the Senses* Education Kit



In November 2011, THEN/HiER funds were secured to hire a contractor to revise the *Japan Through the Senses* education kit into an engaging and relevant teaching resource that will enhance the teaching and learning about Japanese Canadian history. Education kits bring the museum into the classroom by providing teachers with a collection of “artefacts” – photographs, documents, audio-visual materials and other resources. A unique aspect of these education kits is that they share stories from the past that are not easily accessible to classroom teachers. As such, they effectively bring together teachers, students, museums and archives.

Through THEN/HiER’s Small Projects Grant, the Richmond Museum hired an experienced contractor, Masako Fukawa, whose background in teaching, curriculum development, and Japanese Canadian history made her the ideal candidate for this project. Through collaborating with Richmond Museum staff, archivists, teacher and museum educators and local Japanese Canadian community members, she successfully transformed the kit to meet the following objectives:

- Highlight the history of the Japanese community in Richmond, from the first recorded arrival in 1880s through to the present.
- Encourage critical reflection about this history through the historical thinking concepts, specifically historical significance, using primary sources as evidence, change and continuity and historical perspective.
- Ensure all curriculum materials and learning resources are accessible to elementary school teachers and students, through careful selection of written documents, well-developed guiding questions to support discussion and other means to scaffold learning.

The revised *Japan Through the Senses* Education Kit reveals exclusive stories about the Japanese



Canadian community. Students will learn about and determine the historical significance of Gihei Kuno, the namesake of Kuno Garden in Steveston. They will examine different types of primary sources in order to construct a narrative about the Japanese Canadian settlement on Don and Lion Islands. They will identify different social institutions that have helped shape the experience of Japanese Canadians, and look for areas of change and continuity. Preparations are being made to make parts of this resource available to a larger audience online.

Steveston School (today known as Lord Byng Elementary)  
City of Richmond Archives 1977 1 182

The informal launch for this education kit will take place during the Richmond Museum's annual Pro-D Workshop on Friday, October 19, 2012 at Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site, during which teachers will be invited to sample activities from the kit and give feedback. Several retired and current teachers have also been arranged to give their thoughts. Ongoing feedback will be collected through evaluation forms to assess the usability, effectiveness and relevance of this kit in the classroom.

On behalf of the Richmond Museum Society, I would like to sincerely thank THEN/HiER for supporting this project. Please forward any questions or comments to Emily So, Educational Programs Coordinator, Richmond Museum, 604-247-8334 or [museumed@richmond.ca](mailto:museumed@richmond.ca).