



*Harada and Tabata family members in the 1920s.
City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 1 19.*

The Harada Family Records

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The Harada family's story is one that is shared by many Japanese Canadians who have lived in Richmond, both before and after internment. The family has deep roots in Richmond dating back to 1908 when Eikichi Harada emigrated from Japan. In 2023, Eikichi's granddaughter Jeanne Ryan (née Harada) donated her family's records to the City of Richmond Archives. The 2,000 photographs scanned from thirteen albums, dating from approximately 1900 to 1977, depict several generations of the Harada and Kamitakahara families and their extended relatives and friends as they move and travel between Japan and the Pacific Coast of B.C., including when they were forcibly interned in the interior of B.C. and displaced to southern Alberta. The albums feature themes of growing up, gatherings, weddings, celebrations, and new family members.



*Eikichi Harada (centre) and two other men, working as railway labourers, between 1908 and 1928.
City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 1 8.*

The Harada Family History

Eikichi Harada was born on May 18, 1892 in Ibusuki, Japan and came to Canada from Yokohama in 1908. In addition to fishing, he also worked loading railcars during his early years in Canada. He subsequently returned to Japan to look after his parents. While in Japan, he married Tamae Yoshida, who was also from Ibusuki. They returned to Steveston, B.C. before moving to a Japanese fishing village known as Ohama Camp at Canoe Pass on Westham Island in Delta. The houses were built on a wooden platform at the waterfront on stilts, which kept them dry during the high tides on the Fraser River. Eikichi and Tamae had seven children: Harue, Sakaye, Eiichi, Satoru, Sadako, Yutaka, and Junko (June). Harue passed away before her third birthday.

The children were not able to attend public school because the Haradas were not homeowners in Steveston. Consequently,

Eikichi took his eldest daughter Sakaye to Japan for schooling and to live with his in-laws. Sakaye became ill in her first year of return to Japan and passed away at age five or six. When the eldest son, Eiichi, who was born in Steveston in 1922, approached school age, Eikichi and Tamae made the decision to also take him and his three siblings to Japan, the whole family arriving in December 1928. Eiichi stayed for ten years before returning to Canada on May 17, 1937 on the passenger ship *Heian Maru*, rejoining his father on Westham Island. Eiichi attended Westham Island School for a year to relearn his English.

In 1942, the Canadian government interned families of Japanese descent. Japanese families at Canoe Pass were put onto farmer's trucks, driven to Steveston, and boarded onto a tram to Vancouver, where they were confined at



*Construction of the Harada home on Monteith Road, June 1963.
City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 9 53.*

Hastings Park and lived with numerous other Japanese Canadian families under intolerable conditions. From there, Eiichi and his father were sent to an internment camp at Slocan in the B.C. Interior. The rest of their family were still living in Japan.

When the Japanese internment ended in 1946 in Canada, Eiichi and his father still couldn't return to the B.C. Coast due to continued restrictions. Consequently, they moved to sugar beet farms in Wells and Iron Springs in southern Alberta.

Eiichi married Akiko Kamitakahara on November 28, 1946. Akiko's father, Miichiro Kamitakahara, had immigrated to Canada with Eikichi on board the *Tango Maru*. He and his wife Yaye Fukushi had eight children: Ayako, Akiko, George, Keiji, Saburo, Noburo, Haruo, and Keiko. Miichiro lived and worked on Sea Island prior to the war. The family was forcibly uprooted to Slocan, B.C. and Turin, Alberta.

With restrictions lifted in 1949, the Haradas returned to B.C. and settled in Steveston, continuing to earn a living through commercial fishing. Eiichi and Akiko had five children: Jeanne, Linda, Ruby, Misako, and Glenn. In 1963, the family built a home on property they purchased on Monteith Road.

Exhibit

Through documenting multiple generations of the Harada extended family, as well as friends and workmates, these photographic records pay tribute to a community's strength and resilience.

This exhibit presents 14 carefully selected photographs, grouped into four general categories: (1) Early 1900s Japanese Canadian Fishing Community; (2) Forced Displacement; (3) Rebuilding Community; and (4) New Beginnings.



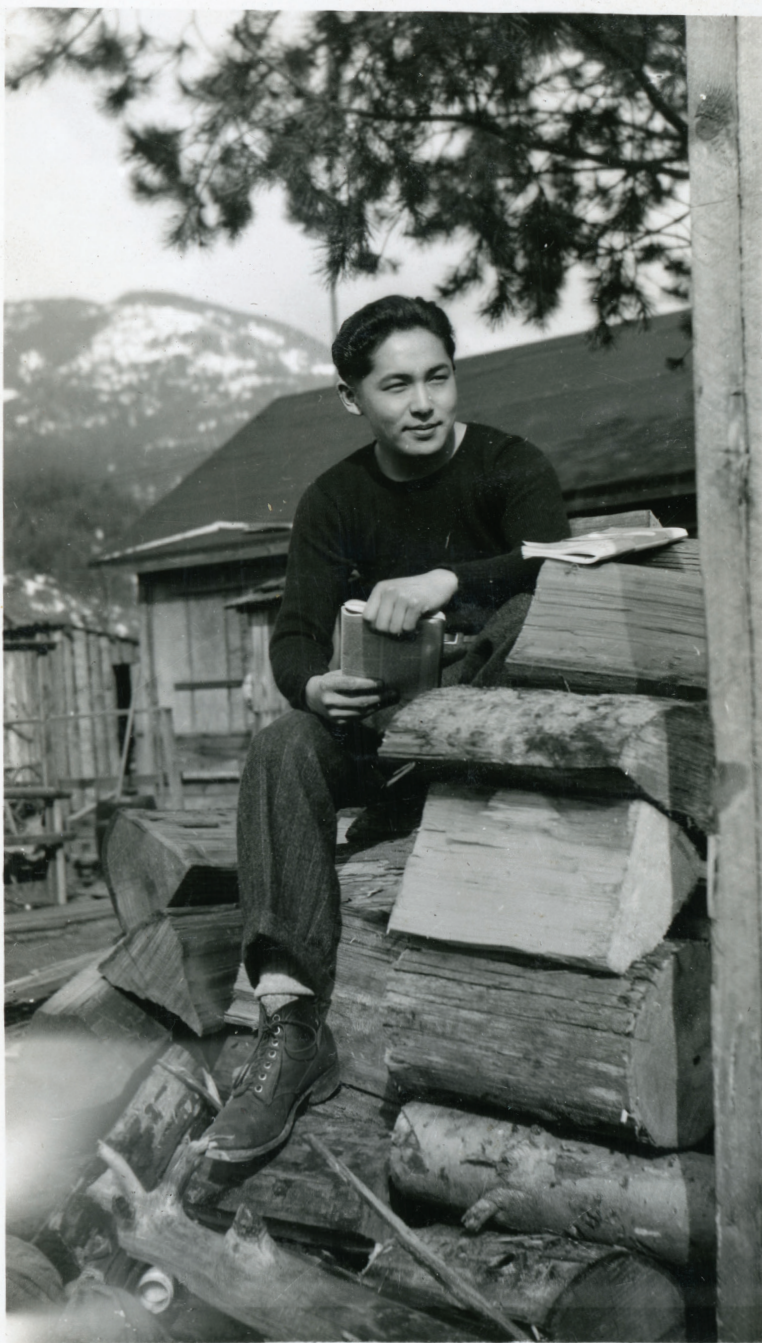
*Eikichi Harada with a sturgeon, 1930
Fraser River.
City of Richmond Archives Photograph #2023 13 1 26.*

Eikichi, the Harada family patriarch, was part of a large fishing community of Japanese immigrants who lived along the banks of the Fraser River. In this photograph, he has a White Sturgeon on the deck of his fishing boat. Now a species at risk, they were once caught for caviar. According to Harada family legend, this sturgeon was possibly hung in the window display of the historic Woodward's Department Store in downtown Vancouver.

This portrait depicts Ayako and Akiko, two of Yaye (née Fukushi) and Miichiro Kamitakahara's daughters. Miichiro was a fish-buyer for British Columbia Packers and a leading figure in the pre-war Japanese Canadian Sea Island community. The Kamitakaharas lived in the Vancouver Cannery Camp. Their home had the only telephone in the community, and they often had visitors coming and going to make calls and take messages.

*Ayako and Akiko Kamitakahara,
between 1923 and 1930
Vancouver Cannery, Eburne.
City of Richmond Archives,
Photograph #2023 13 2 1.*





After Japanese forces bombed Pearl Harbour in 1941, the Canadian government forced Japanese nationals and Canadians of Japanese descent into exile 100 miles from the west coast of B.C. All of their belongings and property were confiscated and later sold. Men were sent to road camps, and families were placed into internment camps in the B.C. interior. In this photograph, Akiko's brother George is in the Slocan City internment camp where Eikichi and his son Eiichi were also sent.

George Kamitakahara reading, between 1942 and 1946 Slocan City internment camp. City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 1 113.



Some families later moved to work on rural farms in Alberta. Eikichi and Eiichi lived and worked on multiple sugar beet farms in rural southern Alberta. Betrayed, many Japanese Canadians chose not to return to B.C. The Kamitakaharas were one such family who stayed in Alberta, making Lethbridge their new home.

*Eikichi cutting Eiichi Harada's hair, between 1943 and 1949
Beet farm, southern Alberta.*

City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 3 6.

Eiichi and Akiko were married in southern Alberta on November 28, 1946. As “enemies of the state,” Eiichi and Akiko had to receive permission from the government to wed. If you look closely, you will see that Eiichi favoured a bow tie on his wedding day. Prior to getting married, Akiko worked as a nurse at the Slocan City Hospital.

Akiko and Eiichi Harada's wedding portrait, November 28, 1946 southern Alberta.

City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 4 74.



In 1947, Akiko gave birth to a baby girl, Jeanne, while living on a sugar beet farm in Turin, Alberta. Farming sugar beets was hard work, and the winters were much harsher than the ones Akiko and Eiichi were used to on the Fraser River in B.C.

*Akiko and Jeanne Harada, possibly 1947
Turin, Alberta.*

City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 1 114.





Community elders and parents worked hard to care for their families and provide a safe home and supportive family life whilst enduring such traumatic experiences. As a result, moments of joy persisted despite extreme hardship. Moments like this wheelbarrow race demonstrate this incredible community resilience.

*Wheelbarrow race, between 1943 and 1950
Possibly in southern Alberta.
City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 4 99.*



In 1949, four years after the end of the Second World War, the Canadian government permitted the Japanese community to return to the West Coast. The day before their first day back to fishing, the fishermen gathered to celebrate. This celebration included community members such as Mr. Akune (front, right), Mr. Sameshima (reaching into the box) and Mr. Tabata (looking at the camera).

*Fishermen celebrating first day back, 1949
Steveston.
City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 5 20.*



From left to right in the back are: Mrs. Sameshima with Ron Sameshima on her lap, Grace Akune, Jeanne Harada, Emiko Akune, Bonnie Akune, Hideo Akune, and Toshio Sameshima.

From left to right in the front are: Vicky Sameshima, Ted Akune, Brian Sameshima on Hisako Sameshima's lap, and Dan Sameshima on Toshio Sameshima's lap.

*Akune, Sameshima, and Harada families, January 1951
Pacific Coast Camp, Steveston.*

City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 5 77.

The Haradas moved to Steveston, where they lived in housing provided by the Pacific Coast Cannery. They shared this rustic house with the Akune family. There was no bathroom or electricity. A shared bathroom and fridge for the residents were elsewhere in the camp. Eikichi, Eiichi, and Mr. Naonojo Akune were fishermen for British Columbia Packers and Akiko and Mrs. Tsuma Akune worked in the cannery. This photograph captures members of the Harada and Akune families socialising with members of the Sameshima family.



In 1952, members of the Harada family were reunited in Steveston. Tamae, Eikichi's wife, and Eiichi's siblings had been living in Japan at the outbreak of the war. They had been forced to remain apart throughout the duration of the war and Japanese Canadian internment. With the growth of the family, the Haradas were given a home to themselves in the Pacific Coast Camp.

From left to right starting from the back row: Eikichi Harada and Eiichi Harada. Middle row: Junko (June) Otori, Tamae Harada, and Akiko Harada. Front row: Linda Harada and Jeanne Harada.

*Harada family, between 1952 and 1957
Steveston.*

City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 1 120.

The Harada family continued to grow as Eiichi's siblings married and started families of their own. June Harada moved to Canada with her mother Tamae in 1952, and attended English school in Vancouver where she met Tadayuki Ohori. The two were married in the Vancouver Buddhist Temple.

*Tadayuki Ohori and June Harada's wedding, with Jeanne and Linda Harada as flower girls, 1955.
Vancouver Buddhist Temple.
City of Richmond Archives,
Photograph #2023 13 6 135.*





Street photographers were an exciting part of life in the 1950s. Families, friends, and couples would dress up and stroll along the street ready for the photographers to snap their picture. Here, three generations of the Harada family – Tamae, Akiko, and Linda – are out walking in New Westminster.

*Tamae, Linda, and Akiko Harada
New Westminster.*

*City of Richmond Archives,
Photograph #2023 13 1 149.*



During sports Day festivities at Lord Byng Elementary, a Queen and her Princesses would be crowned. Several years in a row the Akune girls were awarded this honour. Costumes were likely homemade by the families' mothers. On the right, Steveston photographer Noel McConnell is hard at work.

*Sports Day celebrations, possibly 1954
Lord Byng Elementary School, Steveston.
City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #2023 13 6 89.*



In the 1960s, the Haradas and the Akunes bought a lot on Monteith Road and subdivided it into two. Eikichi's grandson, Glenn, plays around with a bucket of water and a paintbrush, "painting" the home his family built.

*Glenn Harada, 1968
6111 Monteith Road, Steveston.
City of Richmond Archives,
Photograph #2023 13 10 178.*

Artefacts

The Harada family also generously donated some of the family's artefacts and heirlooms to the Richmond Artefact Collection. The selection here displays items from the domestic life of the Harada family mixed in with ephemera from the fishing industry—which their livelihood depended on. Akiko's perfume, Eiichi's ashtray, and the Harada's net mending

needle capture the personal details of a family. Included is a camera similar to the one used in the early images.

Artefacts from the Akune family are also presented. The Harada and Akune family lived together in the Pacific Coast Cannery housing and later were neighbours on Monteith Road.



Handmade wooden net making/mending needle, no date.

Stamped with the Harada name 原.

Donor: Jeanne Ryan (née Harada).

Richmond Artefact Collection 024.1.8.



Eiichi Harada's shoes, ca. 1940s.

Donor: Jeanne Ryan (née Harada).

Richmond Artefact Collection 023.15.53 a-b.



Eiichi Harada's personal commercial fishing licence, January 30, 1985.

Issued by Government of Canada Fisheries and Oceans.

Donor: Jeanne Ryan (née Harada).

Richmond Artefact Collection 024.1.3.



United Fishermen & Allied Workers' Union pin, 1979.

Belonged to Eiichi and Akiko Harada.

Donor: Jeanne Ryan (née Harada).

Richmond Artefact Collection 023.15.19.



Eiichi Harada's ashtray, no date.

Puretic Supplies Co. Steveston ashtray.

Donor: Jeanne Ryan (née Harada).

Richmond Artefact Collection 023.15.21.



Barber shears/scissors and comb.

Donor: Grace S. Hodgson (née Akune).

Richmond Artefact Collection 024.3.31 b-c.



Vase, no date.

Donor: Grace S. Hodgson (née Akune).

Richmond Artefact Collection 024.3.44.



Perfume bottle, no date.

Belonged to Akiko Harada (née Kamitakahara).

Donor: Jeanne Ryan (née Harada).

Richmond Artefact Collection 023.15.4 a-b.



Cosmetic jar, no date.

Belonged to Akiko Harada (née Kamitakahara).

Donor: Jeanne Ryan (née Harada).

Richmond Artefact Collection 023.15.8 a-b.



Kodak Brownie Target Six-16 Camera, 1946.

Donor: Lily Blair.

Richmond Artefact Collection 987.23.1.

Credits

Curated by Anouska Kirby and Jeanne Ryan (née Harada).
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