

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JAPANESE CANADIANS

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE – Vol. 8 – AUGUST 2020



### Organizational Update

It has been some time since we issued an NAJC Newsletter, back in February 2020. The intervening months have been an unprecedented period for everyone and there still is much uncertain about how the future will unfold.

The NAJC too has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the closure of our office and the cancellation of our 2020 NAJC Annual General Meeting and National Conference.

However, it seems that the level of activity for the NAJC has actually increased over the past few months. We have moved towards on-line program delivery, while all of our committees have utilized our on-line platform to meet, engage and fulfill their mandates.

We know that all of our member organizations are being challenged to adapt and persevere during this period of uncertainty, and the NAJC has tried to adapt to the changing needs and requirements of our membership.

Please stay safe and healthy!

Kevin Okabe – Executive Director

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## NAJC President's Message

August

By Lorene Oikawa



One of the commemorative events we recognized this month is Hiroshima Day on August 6. It's been 75 years since the bombing of Hiroshima. Many of the young children who survived that day are now seniors. I spoke to two of them to get their perspective.

### NAJC 会長のメッセージ 2020年8月

ロリン・オイカワ

8月の記念日の一つに8月6日の「ヒロシマ・デイ」があります。今年は広島に原爆が投下されてから75年になります。原爆を生き残った広島の子どもの多くは、もう後期高齢者になりました。わたしはそのうちの二人と話す機会がありました。

On August 6, we observe Hiroshima Day to remember the day in 1945 when the United States dropped the first atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima in Japan. The city was obliterated. About 70,000 people died that day and many more would die from their injuries and from radiation poisoning. The number of deaths would double by the end of that year. Most were civilians, including school children. The U.S. dropped a second bomb three days later (August 9) on the Japanese city of Nagasaki. An estimated 75,000 people died.

8月6日私たちはその日を思い出すためにヒロシマ・デイを見つめます。1945年8月6日に米国は世界で最初に原爆を兵器として広島市に投下しました。広島市は一瞬にして廃墟になり7万人が即死し、その他多くの人々が怪我と原爆症で亡くなりました。1945年末までに死亡者は2倍に増加しました。死亡者の大部分は一般市民と学童でした。米国は8月9日にまた長崎に原爆を投下しました。そしてここでも7万5千人余りが亡くなりました。

My family and I are settlers. My Canadian origins start with my ancestors, two brothers who came from Hiroshima, Japan in the 1800s. As a fourth-generation Canadian, I did not have much knowledge or connection to Japan or its citizens.

わたしの祖先は広島からカナダに1800年代に移民をして来た二人の兄弟まで溯ります。わたしは日系四世なので日本や日本人についての知識に乏しく、また交流もありませんでした。

My bubble burst with my first visit to Japan in 1987. I visited Hiroshima, where we still have relatives, and went to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. <http://hpmmuseum.jp/?lang=eng> There were facts, figures, maps and photographs. But what haunts me to this day are the drawings by children survivors. Those simple crayon drawings conveyed the gruesomeness of the injuries: limbs missing, eyeballs dangling from sockets, and the blood-red colour of the river where people gathered seeking relief for their burning bodies. Like the drawings, I will never forget some of the artifacts in the museum: a child's tricycle, a watch that was crushed at the time of impact, a charred-black lunch kit. It was overwhelming. I went outside into the bright sunny day, sat on the steps and wept.

わたしは1987年に初めて日本を訪問した時、私のバブルははじけました。わたしは広島にまだ親戚がいたので広島を訪問し、広島平和記念資料館に行きました。 <http://hpmmuseum.jp/?lang=eng>。



ここには広島原爆被害に関する資料、造形物、地図、写真などが展示してあります。わたしが一番衝撃を受けたのは原爆を生き延びた子どもたちが描いた絵です。手足を失った人、眼球が飛び出して垂れ下がっている人、燃えている体の救いを求めて、逃げ込んだ人の血で赤く染まった川などがクレヨンで描かれた絵です。絵の他にも忘れられないものが記念館にありました。原爆で壊れた子供用の三輪車、原爆がさく裂した衝撃で潰れた腕時計、黒焦げの弁当箱などです。わたしはただただ圧倒されました。記念館から明るく日の差す外に出て、入り口の階段に座り涙を流しました。

In preparation for an article I was writing, I contacted my mom's cousin, Katsukuni Tanaka. Katsukuni lives in Hiroshima and I wanted to ask him about family stories. He said the family had not wanted to talk about the bombing. It was only when they were close to death that they finally wanted to share what happened. He said, "My grandmother, Masayo Nakano, took me to every August 6 ceremony, and to the ceremony honouring post office workers. My aunt Toshie was killed by the A-bomb without any trace. She was 20 years old and working at the Hiroshima Central Post Office, which was very close to ground zero."

この記事を書くために、わたしは母の従兄弟で広島市にいる田中カツクニさんと連絡を取りました。田中さんに家族の話を知ることができなかったからです。田中さんは、家族は原爆の経験の話はしたがらなかったが、死が近づいた晩年になってやっと話してくれたと言いました。田中さんは次のように話してくれました。「わたしの祖母の中野マサヨは、毎年わたしを8月6日の平和祈念式に連れていきました。また広島中央郵便局職員の慰霊式にも行きました。わたしの叔母のトシエは当時20歳で郵便局で働いていましたが、郵便局は爆心地の直ぐ近くなので、トシエは原爆で何も残さずに蒸発してしまいました。」

On August 6, 1945, at 8:15 a.m., Katsukuni was a 20-month-old baby. He was at home with his mother when the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, obliterating the city. Their home was near

Hiroshima Station, which is about 1.8 kilometres from ground zero. Their home was flattened, but he and his mother survived. To get him to a safer location, his mom, Kimie, held onto him and walked 20 kilometres east, through the rubble, to Kaita.

1945年8月6日午前8時15分、原爆が投下された時、田中さんは20ヶ月の赤ん坊で、母親と一緒に広島駅近くの家にいました。この家は原爆投下地点から1.8キロほどの所です。家は爆風で平らに潰れましたが、田中さん親子は助かりました。田中さんの母親のキミエさんは爆心地から安全なところに逃げるために、原爆で破壊された町を赤ん坊を抱いて東に20キロ歩いて海田にたどり着きました。

Katsukuni told me that the names of everyone who died in the bombing are at the Hiroshima Peace Cenotaph. The names of all who died are kept in a registry held in a stone chest in the centre of the cenotaph. His mother and grandfather died of cancer in their early fifties. He and his remaining family are hibakusha—atomic bomb survivors, just like family friend, Setsuko Thurlow.

原爆で死亡した人全員の名前は記録帳に記載され、広島平和記念公園の記念碑の石で出来た箱に入れられていると、田中さんがわたしに教えてくれました。田中さんの母親と祖父は50代前半に癌で死亡しました。田中さんと田中さんの生き残りの家族は、その友達のセツコ・サーロウさんと同じように、全員被爆者です。

Setsuko Thurlow was a key note speaker at the NAJC AGM and Conference in Victoria in 2015. Setsuko is passionate about the survival of the world and bringing an end to nuclear weapons. It has been her life's work for the past seven decades.

セツコ・サーロウさんは2015年にビクトリアで開かれたNAJC年次総会で基調講演を行いました。彼女は核兵器の廃絶と核時代の世界の救済に向けて情熱を燃やしています。それが、過去七十年わ



たる広島の被爆者としてライフワークとなっています。

I told Setsuko I was writing about Hiroshima Day and she sent me her vivid recollections. In 1945, she was a 13-year-old schoolgirl. She was one of about 7,000 students who were in the heart of the city on the day of the bombing. She was on the second floor. "I saw the bluish white flash outside the window," she told me. "At that moment, I had the sensation of floating in the air. That's the end of my consciousness." She said she was trapped in smouldering rubble, but many "simply vaporized, practically melted, died."

わたしはサーロウさんに連絡して、ヒロシマ・デイについて書いていると伝えると、わたしに自分の鮮烈な原爆体験を送ってくれました。1945年、彼女は13歳の女子生徒でした。原爆投下の時に広島市の中心部にいた7,000名近くの生徒の一人でした。「わたしは校舎の二階の教室にいました。突然、窓の外が青白く輝くのが見え、わたしは宙を浮いているような気持ちになりました。それが意識のあった最後です。気がつくと、くすぶっている瓦礫の中に閉じ込められていました。生徒の多くは原爆で蒸発して消えてしまったり、実際に溶けてしまったりして、死にました。」

She spoke on July 7, 2017, at the United Nations in New York, where 122 countries voted to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons: "Let us pause for a moment to feel the witness of those who perished in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, both at that time, in August 1945, and over these 72 years. Hundreds of thousands people. Each person who died had a name. Each person was loved by someone." Animation of Setsuko Thurlow's speech at the UN

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9c6\\_qobMko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9c6_qobMko)

2017年7月7日、ニューヨークの国連で122の国連参加国が核兵器禁止条約の採択にむけて投票した時に、サーロウさんは講演をしました。「皆さん、ここで少し1945年8月、広島と長崎で原爆で亡くなった人たちの事を思い出してください。何十万という人達です。一人ひとりに名前がありま

す。一ひとり誰か愛してくれる人がいました。」  
(セツコ・サーロウの国連演説から)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9c6\\_qobMko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9c6_qobMko)

In December 2017, we saw a Japanese Canadian, Setsuko Thurlow, who accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The prize was awarded to ICAN "for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, and for its groundbreaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition on such weapons."

2017年12月、日系カナダ人のセツコ・サーロウさんは「核兵器廃絶のための国際キャンペーン」(ICAN)が受賞したノーベル平和賞を、この団体を代表して受け取りました。受賞理由は「核

兵器の人類にもたらす壊滅的な結果に世界の注意を向けさせ、条約に基づいた核兵器禁止を達成するための画期的な努力を続けていること」です。

Commemoration of Hiroshima Day underscores a commitment for world peace. Japanese Canadians joined with many others at events in Victoria, Winnipeg, Toronto, and virtually, across Canada. It's an important reminder of the consequences of nuclear weapons, and a call to action for nations to support the treaty ban on nuclear weapons. For Canadians, it's an opportunity to learn more, such as the role Canada played in the building of the atomic bombs, supplying the deadly uranium, and the harm that came to the Dene, Indigenous peoples in the Northwest Territories where the mine was located.

[CBC: Mining for a Bomb

<https://www.cbc.ca/history/EPISCONTENTSE1EP14CH2PA3LE.html> ]

ヒロシマ・デイは世界平和のための記念日です。日系カナダ人もビクトリア、ウィニペグ、トロント、その他カナダ各地でおこなわれるヒロシマ・デイに参加します。この記念日は核兵器がもたらす壊滅的被害を忘れず、条約による核兵器の禁



を支援するように呼びかける日です。カナダ人にとって、この記念日は原爆の開発にカナダが果たした役割を思いだす日です。カナダは原爆に必要なウラニウムを発掘して提供しました。この結果、北西準州の鉱山近くのカナダ先住民のデネ族の人たちは放射線被害を受けました。[CBC: 爆弾の採掘

<https://www.cbc.ca/history/EPISCONTENTSE1EP14CH2PA3LE.html> ]

Check out our online programming [najc.ca/online-programs/](http://najc.ca/online-programs/) On August 18, join a free masterclass with writer, broadcaster, theatre creator, Tetsuro Shigematsu. For updates and news sign up for NAJC e-news at <http://najc.ca/subscribe/>

NAJC のオンラインプログラム、 [najc.ca/online-programs/](http://najc.ca/online-programs/) をご覧ください。8月18日には作家、放送作家、演劇家のテツオ・シゲマツのオンライン授業があります。参加無料です。NAJC ニュースの電子メール配信希望者はここから登録してください。at <http://najc.ca/subscribe/>

The NAJC wishes you well as we start a transition into the fall and reopening of communities. Follow safe social/physical distancing, wear masks if you can't follow distancing, stay home if sick, cough/sneeze into tissues/your arm, don't touch your face, keep washing your hands, and no large gatherings.

この秋から活動を再開する日系カナダ人コミュニティーもあるでしょう。NAJC は皆さんが健康に気をつけ、新型ウイルス対策をとって安全に活動を再開されることを願います。安全な社会的・身体的距離を守り、距離を保てない場合はマスクを着用し、病気の場合は家に留まり、咳やくしゃみをする時はティッシュや腕の中にして、顔には触れず、手を洗い、たくさんの方が集まる集会はしないようにしましょう。

### Free online masterclass with Tetsuro Shigematsu



The National Association of Japanese Canadians is pleased to present a masterclass with Tetsuro Shigematsu. Tetsuro is a writer, broadcaster, and theatre creator who has centered his practice on the art of storytelling. In this session he will discuss his process of creating biographical theatre works such as 'Empire of the Son' and '1 Hour Photo,' from the ethical considerations of dramatizing personal life experiences, to the craft of eliciting captivating stories through one-on-one interviews with his subjects.

Presented in collaboration with NAJC Arts Culture Education.

This Arts Culture & Education Session will be recorded and shared publicly following the broadcast.

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

5 PM Pacific Daylight Time (PDT)

6 PM MDT, 7 PM CDT, 8 PM EDT

Please register in advance

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMvceuqqzkvGNQevXEOR5HjmEtJqnY-R5Z0>

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**Share your experience with discrimination and racism with STATISTICS CANADA**



This will help governments and organizations design and provide health and social services when Canada reopens workplaces and public spaces

Fill out the survey by **August 17, 2020**

[https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/survey/household/5323-covid-series?utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=statcan\\_covid-19-crowdsourcing-approcheparticipative\\_2020](https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/survey/household/5323-covid-series?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=statcan_covid-19-crowdsourcing-approcheparticipative_2020)



Given the survey is only available in English and French, please provide cultural and linguistic supports where you can

<https://surveys-enquetes.statcan.gc.ca/form-formulaire/q/en/eggsbaeb31c4a7354662a8773c45928521fe/p0>

The online questionnaire is accessible until August 17, 2020.

You can also support our work by following us on social media and reposting our content.

Thank you for your support,

Centre for Ethnocultural, Language and Immigration  
Statistics | Centre de la statistique ethnoculturelle,  
langue et immigration

Diversity and Sociocultural Statistics | Diversité et  
statistique socioculturelle

[statcan.celis-cseli.statcan@canada.ca](mailto:statcan.celis-cseli.statcan@canada.ca)

Statistics Canada | Statistique Canada

Government of Canada | Gouvernement du Canada

Statistics Canada has launched a crowdsourcing initiative to collect data on how the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting people's experiences of discrimination and trust in institutions, their neighbours and the general public. This initiative, which aims to examine possible social outcomes of the pandemic, supports our efforts to collect timely data that informs policy and program development and evaluation.

To meet data needs of the Canadian society, we count on diverse groups of people living coast to coast to complete our survey.

We are reaching out to you to help us increase awareness and completion of the questionnaire. We ask that you share the link below with your networks and partners:



## **Japanese Canadian Historic Sites in BC:**

### **Journeys of Home**

Contributed by Laura Saimoto

The BC Tourism Ministry partnered with BC Heritage to do a Feature Story on Japanese Canadian Historic Sites!

<https://www.hellobc.com/stories/japanese-canadian-historic-sites-in-bc-journeys-of-home/>

This is tremendous recognition for all of the Japanese Canadian historic sites that have been developed and maintained and a great way to promote the results of the efforts of the Highway Legacy Sign project.

Please visit the website to see where the sites are and how to get there!



## **75th Anniversary of the Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Committee (Winnipeg)**

Contributed by Terumi Kuwada

Here is the video that Paul Graham created from the event on Thursday August 6, "Lanterns for Peace" . Paul has been a member of the Committee that plans and hosts this event every year, and always does the video that is often on You Tube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSHktHLRRJY&>

Thank you to all who attended this event, it is a reminder to all of us of the devastation of nuclear weapons.

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### An open letter to the Prime Minister of Canada

### From Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the Hiroshima A-Bombing

<http://www.hiroshimadaycoalition.ca/>

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau Prime Minister of Canada

Office of the Prime Minister

80 Wellington Street

Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

June 22, 2020

As a Hiroshima survivor, I was honoured to jointly accept the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 on behalf of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. With the approaching 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6th and 9th, I have written to all the heads of state across the world, asking them to ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and I ask the same of our government.

After I married my husband, James Thurlow, and first moved to Canada in 1955, I often wondered what involvement Canada had in the development of the atom bombs that caused, by the end of 1945, the deaths of over 140,000 people in Hiroshima, 70,000 in Nagasaki and horrendous devastation and injuries that I personally witnessed as a thirteen-year old girl. It truly was hell on earth.

I hope you will be able to ask one of your assistants to examine the enclosed document, “Canada and the Atom Bomb” and to report on its contents to you.

The main points of the document are that Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom — as wartime allies during World War II — had not only completely integrated their production of conventional armaments. Canada was also a direct major participant in the Manhattan Project which developed the uranium and plutonium atom bombs dropped on Japan. This direct involvement operated at the highest Canadian political and governmental organizational level.

When Prime Minister Mackenzie King hosted President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in Quebec City in August of 1943, and they signed the Quebec Agreement for the joint development of the atom bomb, the Agreement — in Mackenzie King’s words — “made Canada also a party to the development.”

For the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6th and 9th, I am respectfully requesting that you acknowledge Canada’s involvement in and contributions to the two atomic bombings and issue a statement of regret on behalf of the Canadian Government for the immense deaths and suffering caused by the atom bombs that utterly destroyed two Japanese cities.

This direct Canadian Government involvement (described in the attached research document) consisted of the following:

—Mackenzie King’s most powerful minister, C.D. Howe, the Minister of Munitions and Supply, represented Canada on the Combined Policy Committee established to co- ordinate the joint efforts of the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada to develop the atom bomb.



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—C.J. Mackenzie, President of the National Research Council of Canada, represented Canada on a technical subcommittee set up by the Combined Policy Committee to co-ordinate the work of scientists working on Canadian projects with their colleagues in the United States.

—The National Research Council of Canada designed and built nuclear reactors at its Montreal Laboratory and at Chalk River, Ontario, beginning in 1942 and 1944, and forwarded their scientific discoveries to the Manhattan Project.

—Eldorado Gold Mines Limited began supplying tons of uranium ore from its mine on Great Bear Lake in the Northwest Territories to British scientists as well as to American physicists investigating nuclear fission at Columbia University in New York in October of 1939.

—When Enrico Fermi succeeded in creating the world's first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction at the University of Chicago on December 2, 1942, he used Canadian uranium from Eldorado.

—On the advice of C.J. Mackenzie and C.D. Howe, a secret Order in Council on July 15, 1942, allocated \$4,900,000 [\$75,500,000 in 2020 dollars] for the Canadian Government to buy sufficient Eldorado stock to have effective control of the company.

—Eldorado signed exclusive contracts with the Manhattan Project in July and December of 1942 for 350 tons of uranium ore and later an additional 500 tons.

—The Canadian Government nationalized Eldorado Mining and Refining Limited in January of 1944 and converted the company into a Crown Corporation to secure Canadian uranium for the Manhattan Project. C.D. Howe stated that “government action in taking over the Eldorado Mining and Smelting Company was part of the atomic [bomb] development program.”

—Eldorado's refinery in Port Hope, Ontario, was the only refinery in North America capable of refining the uranium ore from the Belgian Congo, the bulk of which (along with Canadian uranium) was used in the manufacture of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atom bombs.

—On the advice of C.D. Howe, The Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company in Trail, B.C. signed contracts with the Manhattan Project in November of 1942 to produce heavy water for nuclear reactors to produce plutonium.

—As General Leslie Groves, the military head of the Manhattan Project, wrote in his history *Now It Can Be Told*, “there were about a dozen Canadian scientists in the Project.”

When Prime Minister Mackenzie King was informed on August 6, 1945 that the atom bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima, he wrote in his diary “We now see what might have come to the British race had German scientists won the race [to develop the atom bomb]. It is fortunate that the use of the bomb should have been upon the Japanese rather than upon the white races of Europe.”

In August of 1998, a delegation from Deline, N.W.T., representing Dene hunters and trappers employed by Eldorado to carry the sacks of radioactive uranium ore on their backs for transport to the Eldorado refinery in Port Hope travelled to Hiroshima and expressed their regret for their unwitting role in the creation of the atom bomb. Many Dene had themselves died of cancer as a result of their exposure to uranium ore, leaving Deline a village of widows.

Surely, the Canadian Government should make its own acknowledgement of Canada's contribution to the creation of the atom bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Canadians have a right to know how our government participated in the Manhattan Project that developed the world's first nuclear weapons.



Since 1988, when Prime Minister Brian Mulroney formally apologized in the House of Commons for the internment of Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War, the Canadian Government has acknowledged and apologized for a dozen historical wrongs. These included apologies to the First Nations for the Canadian residential school system that separated young children from their families and sought to deprive them of their languages and culture.

Prime Minister Mulroney apologized for the internment of Italians as “enemy aliens” during World War

Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized in the House for the Chinese head tax imposed on Chinese immigrants between 1885 and 1923.

You yourself have acknowledged and apologized in the House for the Komagata Maru incident in which a shipload of immigrants from India were prohibited from landing in Vancouver in 1914.

You also apologized in the House for Prime Minister Mackenzie King’s decision in 1939 to reject an asylum request from over 900 German Jews fleeing the Nazis on board the ship St. Louis, 254 of whom died in the Holocaust when they were forced to return to Germany.

You apologized once again in the House for past state-sanctioned discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirited people in Canada.

Eldorado erected a cement marker at the site of its Port Radium mine that read in capital letters, “This mine was reopened in 1942 to supply uranium for the Manhattan Project (the development of the atomic bomb).” But this awareness by Canadians of our country’s direct participation in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has all but disappeared from our collective consciousness.

Your father, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, courageously brought about the withdrawal of American nuclear weapons stationed in Canada. I was present at the UN General Assembly’s First Special Session on Disarmament on May 26, 1978 when, in a fresh approach to disarmament, he advocated a “strategy of suffocation” as a means of halting and reversing the nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union.

“We are thus not only the first country in the world with the capacity to produce nuclear weapons that chose not to do so,” he stated, “we are also the first nuclear-armed country to have chosen to divest itself of nuclear arms.” I was profoundly impressed and thrilled by his speech to the UN Disarmament Session, so hopeful his courageous initiative would lead to a curbing of nuclear arms.

As the United States and Russia announce ever more dangerous nuclear weapons delivery systems and the modernization of their nuclear forces — and the U.S. contemplates resuming nuclear tests — new voices for nuclear disarmament are urgently needed.

You affirmed that Canada is back in international diplomacy. The approaching 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6th and 9th would be the appropriate moment to acknowledge Canada’s critical role in the creation of nuclear weapons, express a statement of regret for the deaths and suffering they caused in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as announce that Canada will ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Sincerely yours,

Setsuko Thurlow CM, MSW



## **Article on the Enthronement Ceremony in Japan – Part 2**

By Lorene Oikawa

In the February 2020 Volume 7 Membership Update newsletter, we shared an article by Dr. Henry Shibata who along with Setsuko Thurlow, attended the State Ceremonies related to the Enthronement of his Majesty, the Emperor of Japan.

In this newsletter we are pleased to share an article by Setsuko Thurlow. She is a peace activist who accepted the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for ICAN. She is the recipient of many awards including the Order of Canada in 2007.

Ms. Thurlow shares her impressions of the State Ceremonies which took place October 22-25, 2019 in the following article.

By Setsuko Thurlow

On October 22, 2019, Japan's 126th Emperor Naruhito officially ascended to the historic throne in the vast Imperial Palace surrounded by a mist-covered moat. Professor Henry Shibata of McGill University and I were privileged to represent the National Association of Japanese Canadians, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada represented the Canadian Government. About 2,000 invited guests from around the world, including numerous royal families and heads of state, created an elegant festive atmosphere. Interestingly, there was a significant representation of north, central and south Americans of Japanese ancestry.

The morning downpour, the increased number of vehicles, and 5,000 police for traffic control and security brought downtown Tokyo traffic to a standstill. Fortunately, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs transported guests efficiently into the palace grounds.

While waiting for the ceremony to start, the Emperor's biographical documentary film was aired on the monitors. It portrayed the Emperor as confident and committed to his task to serve the people of Japan. He is the first member of the royal family who was educated abroad, and married a Harvard-educated diplomat Masako. He loves mountaineering, sophisticated literary work and plays the viola. He is a father of teenager, Princess Aiko, a potential successor to the throne. The Emperor and Empress appear to be comfortably fulfilling their new roles, and are already greeting graciously with international guests.

After a painfully long wait, the solemn and slow paced ceremony began in total silence. Suddenly then, an eye opening moment arrived with the Emperor and Empress and other royal family members garbed in brilliantly colourful layered outfits, started participating in the ceremony by standing by and shuffling after the Emperor and Empress. The most significant part of the ceremony was the Emperor's short declaration in which he passionately expressed his determination that he would emulate his parents' profoundly compassionate roles which they played in relating to their people during their reign, especially to the victims of the Second World War, Okinawa, and the victims of

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the Fukushima earthquake, tsunami and nuclear plant meltdown.

With sensitivity and capability to respond to the changing needs of people, it is no wonder that the Emperor and Empress earned the respect and support of 80% of the current Japanese population. This enthronement ceremony allowed me not only to appreciate the Japanese history, tradition, culture and esthetics, but to ponder the meaning of the modern monarchy and its future. I left the Imperial Palace with a warm sense of hopefulness for the reign of Reiwa.



Japanese descendants from various countries were special guests at events marking the Enthronement of the Emperor of Japan. Setsuko Thurlow is in the front, third from the right, and Dr. Henry Shibata, is in the front, fifth from the left.

## VOLUNTEER FOR THE NAJC!

There are numerous other voluntary positions that we are seeking to fill **IMMEDIATELY** on our many committees.

If you ever wanted to get more involved with your national association, here is your chance! There are various positions available, requiring differing levels of involvement and commitment.

To express your interest in volunteering, apply online! Go to

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSejTwCSTEmmjH5A9eqAWYOle8GzUI\\_as-kYO2zwCZC0v8DezQ/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSejTwCSTEmmjH5A9eqAWYOle8GzUI_as-kYO2zwCZC0v8DezQ/viewform?usp=sf_link)

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### Mark it in your Calendars

### Upcoming Dates and Meeting

### Notifications:

## NAJC Annual General Meeting now Virtual!

October 2, 2020

5:30 PM PDT/6:30 PM MDT/7:30 PM CDT/8:30  
PM EDT

Because of the current COVID19 pandemic, the NAJC has had to cancel the NAJC Annual General Meeting and National Conference planned for Edmonton.

As a result, the Annual General Meeting will now be held virtually on the same date (October 2). Registration information will be shared with our membership later in August.

Date	Deadline/Event
Aug 18, 2020	Free online masterclass with Tetsuro Shigematsu <a href="http://najc.ca/online-programs/">http://najc.ca/online-programs/</a>
Oct 2, 2020	NAJC AGM and Conference

### Enews versus Membership

### Newsletter

This newsletter has been created to inform the official NAJC Membership about NAJC news, notifications and activities. This is different than distributions that are occurring via enews, which may include individuals and organizations that are not members of the NAJC.

If you would like to submit an article or notification to the next NAJC Membership Update, please email your submission to [ed@najc.ca](mailto:ed@najc.ca).

If you are not on the NAJC Enews distribution, please feel free to add yourself by going to [www.najc.ca](http://www.najc.ca) and filling out your details in the section on the bottom of the page “Subscribe to our mailing list”

### NAJC and Japanese Canadian Facebook Sites and Social Media

Check out the Japanese Canadian and NAJC Facebook site to keep up to date on events, happenings, stories and photos!

<https://www.facebook.com/najc.ca/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Japanese.Canadian.FG/>

(submit member request to join)

Twitter: @najc\_ca