



NAJC COMMUNITY PILOT PROJECT PROGRAM

SUMMARY REPORT FORM

**Nikkei Cultural Society of Lethbridge and Area
Ghost Town Bus Tour to Internment Camps in BC Interior**

Type of Program	Heritage Education Excursion
Description	This was a five-day bus tour to west Kootenays to visit the internment camps for Japanese Canadians during World War II. Stops included Kaslo, New Denver, Slocan Valley and Castlegar.
Overall Difficulty	Medium
Duration of Program	Start Date: Fall 2009 End Date: June 2010
Process	<p>Contacts were made with people in the Kaslo Historical Society to visit the Kaslo Museum that houses many pictures, stories, and artifacts of the Japanese Canadians during WWII. Arrangements were also made to visit S.S. Moyie (now a museum) and other establishments that would tell stories of the internment of Japanese Canadians.</p> <p>Nobbie Hayashi (local resident) was contacted to visit the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre in New Denver.</p> <p>George Takashima coordinated the visits to the Doukhobour Village and Museum in Castlegar for the tour group.</p> <p>Steve Koch Jr. of Exotic Travels arranged bus transportation as well as accommodations in Ainsworth and Nelson. Accommodation in New Denver was made by the NCS.</p> <p>Aya Higashi in Kaslo addressed the group at The Langham Centre. She was the only survivor of the WW2 internment still living in Kaslo. She taught school during WW2, went to university to take teacher training after the war, and returned to Kaslo where she taught in a high school until retirement.</p>
Goal	The purpose was to visit communities where coastal Japanese Canadians were moved to and held during World War II.



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Budget	Total Budget Including \$2000 received from NAJC	Portion for Capital Acquisition (e.g. equipments, resources, etc.)	Portion for External Services
	???	???	???
Human Resources	Participants	47	12 from southern Ontario; 50% were non-Asian
	Volunteers	1	Board member
	Others	#	NCS executive helped with the promotion
Promotions	Promotion of the bus tour was through posters, emails in Lethbridge and surrounding area, and a brief write-up of the tour in Nikkei Voice.		
Rate of Success	High		
Successes	<p>The project was successful in helping the southern Alberta community (almost half of the tour group was non-Japanese) experience and learn about internment, and the atrocities committed towards Canadians of Japanese ancestry.</p> <p>The tour was quickly sold out with a waiting list.</p>		
Challenges	<p>Finalizing arrangements, co-ordination and fine-tuning of schedules to visit Kaslo, New Denver and Castlegar required detailed planning.</p> <p>The tour originally included a visit to Sandon but did not materialize because of the road condition unsuitable for a tour bus.</p>		
Outcomes	More knowledge and shared learning with others occurred. Some internment survivors made an intentional effort to attend		



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	<p>the November internment storytelling event in Toronto.</p> <p>For many Japanese Canadians, the tour provided an opportunity to connect or reconnect with others who also lived in the camps. It proved to be a highly educational, emotional, and positive experience for non-Japanese participants. An artist on the tour commented on the haunting beauty of the historical sites. Another participant from Toronto was a cousin of the Mayor of Creston who provided the tour with surprise refreshments and conversation during a rest stop on the journey back to Lethbridge.</p> <p>The English editor of Nikkei Voice who was on the tour found it an eye opener and learning experience that led to a series of articles about the tour and southern Alberta.</p>						
Recommendations	<p>May/June is the best time to plan such a tour before tourist season begins. A Fall trip may be okay but some of the historical sites may be closed for the winter season.</p> <p>Limit the group size to 40 so that there are some extra seats as needed (seats at the back of the bus were not very comfortable).</p> <p>Accommodations in New Denver will be problematic for larger groups. Small groups may have to be formed to stay at different motels.</p>						
Comments	<p>The tour increased awareness and garnered interest from people outside of Alberta. Because of the successful tour, a second tour has been planned for June 2011.</p>						
Contact	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Name</th><th>Email</th><th>Phone</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>George Takashima</td><td>gptak@shaw.ca</td><td>403-328-0156</td></tr></tbody></table>	Name	Email	Phone	George Takashima	gptak@shaw.ca	403-328-0156
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