



Japanese Canadians/Hastings Park Committee Initiative

Hastings Park Interpretive Centre

Japanese Canadians at Hastings Park

History as told by hastingspark1942.ca

- ▶ In early 1942, after Canada declared War on Japan, the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) grounds at Hastings Park in east Vancouver were used by the government to temporarily house Japanese Canadians who were being uprooted from the BC Coast
- ▶ Over 8000 were detained in the exhibition and livestock blds at Hastings Park before being sent to internment sites in the BC interior or to work camps across the country
- ▶ Officially called the Hastings Park Manning Pool, the grounds were also used to collect and store impounded vehicles, and set up a hospital and an office of the BC Security Commission.
- ▶ About 25% of the Japanese Canadian population lived outside of the Vancouver area, in smaller outlying fishing, forestry and mining communities up and down the BC Coast. They were systematically removed from their homes and escorted by the RCMP to Hastings Park.
- ▶ Canadians of Japanese descent were labelled Enemy Aliens, even though 63% were Canadian born and 14% were naturalized citizens. Only 23% were Japanese Nationals.
- ▶ Many people were given only 24 hours notice to leave their homes. They were only allowed to carry 1-2 suitcases each (150 lbs per adult, and 75 lbs per child).
- ▶ The BC Security Commission oversaw the uprooting, with the help of RCMP, the BC Provincial Police, the Department of Labour and the Custodian of Enemy Property.



Japanese Canadian Hastings Park Committee

Interpretive information about the detention of Japanese Canadians in Hastings Park

- ▶ PNE has been working with the Japanese Canadian Hastings Park Committee (JCHPC) for many years to help tell this story
- ▶ In 1993 the Momiji Commemorative Garden was built as a reminder of the internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War.
- ▶ In 2012 the 1989 Parks Canada Japanese Canadian Internment Plaque was moved to a prominent, visible location near the stone wall atop Momiji Garden.
- ▶ In 2015, four commemorative and interpretive plaques were unveiled at the 4 sites around Hastings Park.
- ▶ In 2017 the Livestock Barns hosted the play “Japanese Problem” by Yoshié Bancroft which educates the public on forced incarceration through interactive theatre. ... The play is a collaborative work between survivors of internment, actors and dramaturgs, and it aims to educate the public on the racialization and the forced incarceration of Japanese-Canadians
- ▶ Ongoing...Walking tours and special events around this history take place on site.



Japanese Canadian Interpretive Centre Initiative

- ▶ The JCHPC & PNE Management have been collaborating about having an interpretive centre on site for a decade +
- ▶ Livestock building is preferred location
- ▶ Master Plan redevelopment of this asset to accommodate a centre is not on the immediate horizon
- ▶ PNE has therefore set aside 1600 sq feet of self contained space in the north side of the current Livestock building to accommodate a temporary interpretive centre until the full centre can be built out post renovation
- ▶ The centre is meant to chronicle the history of Japanese Canadians interned during World War II in British Columbia and honour their history on our site



Public Art Under Review

Artist: John Sasaki

- ▶ 2019 COV Call for Public Art
- ▶ Showcase Artists with a Relationship with Vancouver
- ▶ Over 100 applicants
- ▶ Jon Sasaki – grandmother was interned in LiveStock Building
- ▶ The “Hollow Man” is not intended to celebrate Ian Allister MacKenzie, but rather to create a conversation and a teachable moment
- ▶ Support from the Japanese Canadians Hastings Park Committee for its’ installation
- ▶ Plan is to install at entry of Interpretive Centre at the Livestock Building



“I have personally been working on the development of a permanent interpretative centre for more than a decade and more than seven decades have passed since the incarceration of Japanese Canadians at Hastings Park. This partnership announced today is an important step towards finally achieving a permanent interpretive centre,” says JC Hastings Park Committee spokesperson Daniel Tokawa.

“Given the direct connection between Hastings Park and the Canadian Government’s incarceration program during WWII, we believe this location is the right place for such a facility.”

