

About the Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society



The VNCS was formed in 1993 specifically to establish a sense of community for those of Japanese heritage and/or those interested in Japanese culture.

As stated in our constitution the purpose of our society is to:

- Promote the awareness of Japanese culture for the benefit of its members and the greater community;
- Represent the Japanese community to the greater community;
- Support related Japanese organizations; and
- Identify and serve the needs of the Nikkei community.

Throughout the year the VNCS organizes social events for its members often with a theme related to a Japanese holiday or special occasion. Our promotion of Japanese culture is not only for our members but is also open to the greater community. Our annual Japanese Cultural Fair and Mochi parties are examples of our outreach efforts. Where appropriate the VNCS will act as a spokes-organization for the Nikkei community. We work with other similar cultural/ethnic-minded organizations such as the National Association of Japanese Canadians and the Victoria Japanese Friendship Society, to promote Japanese culture.

The VNCS is registered under the BC Society Act, has charitable status and is a member of the Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria.

If you are interested in becoming a member, we would appreciate hearing from you or you may send in the membership form.

Typical VNCS Calendar of Events

- JAN: **New Year's Celebration.** Traditional Mochi party of pounding the rice to bring prosperity. (Mochi tsuki kai).
- FEB: **Nori Tori** - Seaweed gathering outing.
- MAR: **Sakura Cherry Blossom Viewing.**
- JUL: **Tanabata @** Esquimalt Gorge Park.
Japan Fest @ Broadmead Shopping Centre
- AUG: **Obon** (grave washing) in partnership with the Victoria Japanese Friendship Society at the Kakehashi Memorial in Ross Bay Cemetery to honour the 152 persons of Japanese ancestry who are buried there.
- AUG: **Japanese Cultural Fall Fair @** Esquimalt Gorge Park Pavilion. Cultural exhibits, demonstrations, performances, food, children's activities, and more.
- SEP: **Japanese Film Night** in partnership with the Japanese Consulate in Vancouver.

In addition, we hold different adhoc social events for our members such as movie nights, games nights (hanafuda), karaoke and potluck dinners. We welcome your participation and suggestions of events which may be of interest to you and/or your family and friends.

VNCS Sponsored Groups

Furusato Dancers

The Furusato Dancers are a recreational dance group that learns and performs Japanese folk dancing called "odori". We practice twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at the Cook St. Village Activity Centre located in the Cook Street Village at 380 Cook Street. Practice times are from 7:00-8:30. Two times a year our Sensei (dance instructor) comes over from Vancouver to teach us new dances. To become a member of the Furusato Dancers, you must be a member of either the Japanese Friendship Society (JFS) or the Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society (VNCS).

Ikebana

Sensei Michiko Seguev provides instruction in the Sogetsu School of flower arranging. The class has up to 10 students, ranging from beginner to more advanced levels. Each student or small group is given an assignment to complete and there is time for our sensei to offer individual instruction. Then we all display our arrangements and can observe how the basic principles have been interpreted in each arrangement.

Sakura Fujinkai Ladies Group

Sakura Fujinkai is a social group for women to share ideas about Japanese culture and support the VNCS activities and events. Monthly dinner meetings are scheduled on the last Tuesday of each month. We patronize the restaurants that have contributed to our Fall Fair. We collect "Things Japanese" and make sewing and craft items with a Japanese influence for sale at the Cultural Fair each year. We also co-ordinate the food preparation for the sushi and manju sales.



Uminari Taiko

The VNCS helped to form and provides ongoing support to Uminari Taiko Vancouver Island's first and only taiko drumming ensemble. Its mission is to share and promote the art of Japanese taiko drumming through teaching and performance. Since its formation in 2002, Uminari Taiko has performed in numerous schools, and public and private functions both in Victoria and around Vancouver Island, and has taught many workshops and classes. For more information go to www.uminaritaiko.com or visit them on Facebook.

VNCS Membership / Donation Form

(Tear off this portion and mail)

(You can also sign up online at our Web site)

(www.vncs.ca)

Full Name: Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. / Miss

Address:

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ - _____

Fax: _____ - _____

Email: _____

Membership:

Individual \$10.00

Family \$15.00

No. of family members: _____

Family member names:

Donation: \$ _____

Please send this form along with a cheque made payable to the Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society:

Memberships - VNCS
3933 Cumberland Road
Victoria, BC V8P 3J5



Japanese Canadian History

Victoria was the port of entry for many people from Asia. One of the first known immigrants from Japan was Manzo Nagano who arrived in 1877. His first wife and child were buried in Ross Bay Cemetery in 1893. In 1937, to help celebrate Victoria's 75th birthday, the Japanese Community entered a float in the Victoria Day parade. The float was adorned with paper cherry blossoms and had women and children dressed in the traditional kimono riding it. The float won first place in two categories and the Japanese community presented the cash prize to the City with the request that flowering cherry trees be planted on the boulevards of Victoria. In the late 1930s, Victoria purchased 1,013 trees from Yokohama Japan. Many original trees exist today along the boulevards of Victoria.

By 1940 the Victoria Nikkei population was approximately 500. But in 1942, 273 people of Japanese descent were exiled from Victoria. It was not until 1949 that the Nikkei were allowed to move back to the west coast. None of the original Nikkei residents of Victoria returned. However, today there are over 2000 people of Japanese ancestry living in Victoria.



**VICTORIA NIKKEI
CULTURAL SOCIETY
(VNCS)**

**ビクトリア
日系文化協会**

**“Celebrating
Japanese-Canadian
Culture”**

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