

Hidden Histories Society Yukon Board Meeting
September 16, 2021.
By Skype

Present: Charlotte Hrenchuk, Peggy D'Orsay, Lillian Nakamura Maguire, Paul Gowdie, Kaitlin Normandin, Karen Routledge

1. Peggy's CDF research:

- She has been able to find information about Massa Sakata's family dating back to 1900.
- She located the NWMP record of Massa's father entering the Yukon in 1900. Massa and his mother must have joined him later as they were not listed.
- Massa's father was known locally as Joe Sakata & Big Joe Sakata
- Massa married in BC in 1914 and Peggy has a copy of the marriage certificate. It names both sets of parents. A 1917 newspaper article mentions a son.
- From 1904-1906, Massa's father was a special constable, a cook for the RNWMP. There were debates in the House of Commons about Japanese Canadians being special constables, so this may have affected his employment.
- A 1917 newspaper article indicates that Joe worked as a cook on two sternwheelers, plus worked as a cook in Whitehorse and later ran at least two businesses in Dawson: a Japanese Employment Agency and the Occidental Café. Peggy has e-mailed Dawson City Museum to see if they have any more info on these two businesses.
- Some discrepancies in the records over whether Massa identified as Anglican or Buddhist.
- In 1917, the whole family except for Massa returned to Japan for a visit; Massa stayed back in Dawson to look after the businesses.
- Joe Sakata died in May 1920 of pneumonia at St Mary's Hospital, Dawson.
- In 1921, Massa was working in Granville as a cook.
- In 1923-24, Massa likely moved to Mayo and was a cook in the Mayo hospital.
- He later works as a barber in Dawson. In 1938 he is in Mayo Landing working with Treadwell Yukon
- A Mayo Historical Society report says that Massa was born in Canada (no source given). This would explain how he was on the 1918 electors' list (eligible to vote) as Peggy has not found any evidence of his naturalization.
- Massa ended up in Mayo hospital for treatment after injuring his hands in a meat grinder.
- 1946-48: was working as a cook for YCGC. Peggy is hoping to get his employment file from the YCGC fonds in Ottawa.
- 1948: purchased a lunch bar in Dawson.
- We also have a report from the Mayo Historical Society, showing that Massa was in the Mayo-Keno area a lot. He probably went back and forth between there and Dawson as mining economy went up and down.

- Peggy will go check at YA to see if she can find identification info for some of the photos in the Mayo report.
 - Massa retired in the 1960s. Lived on Alexander St. in WH until 1974 when he died. He had obituaries in Yukon News and Whitehorse Star. One obituary said he had a son and two grandchildren in Japan.
 - Facebook page for Keno-Elsa-Mayo has a bit of info on him. Peggy is going to post on there and ask a few questions.
 - Massa went to Japan as the Yukon rep for the Olympics in 1964.
 - For more details on Massa's life, see Peggy's notes.
 - i. Lillian: Nikkei Museum and Library and Archives Canada have records of Japanese Canadians in the Second World War. It might be worth a query to the museum to see if they have a file on Massa Sakata. Even though he was not interned, he probably had to report monthly to the RCMP.
 - ii. Peggy to prepare an invoice for the work she has done at the end of September.
2. Library exhibit (Paul):
- Paul will start production next week sometime.
 - Charlotte found some printed HHSY images of kids. She will give Paul these photos and old toys this afternoon, as well as some HHSY banners.
 - No one else has old toys for props.
 - i. Charlotte: paper dolls were really popular and you can print some off the internet.
 - Paul is hoping to install the exhibit on October 3.
3. Societies (Charlotte):
- In October we will have to do some work on the bylaws.
 - We can decide not to include our home address as public information, can give the HHSY box number.
 - Karen and Kaitlin volunteer to help Charlotte with bylaws or other tasks if needed. Charlotte to let them know what needs to be done.
4. Next meeting:
- Next meeting Thursday October 21, 12-1 at Yukon Archives.