

# Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre

## Remembering the Internment Experience

**W**elcome to the **Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre**: the only site in Canada dedicated to telling the story of this infamous chapter of World War II history.

In 1942, about 22,000 Nikkei (people of Japanese descent), 75% of whom were Canadian citizens, were stripped of their civil rights, labeled “enemy aliens” and forced from their coastal BC homes. The federal government ordered men to road camps. Families assembled in Vancouver’s Hastings Park were placed in animal stalls awaiting removal to interior BC “relocation” camps or sugar beet farms in Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario.

The NIMC chronicles this extraordinary episode of Canadian history. As well, we pay tribute to the rich legacy of the *issei* (first generation) pioneers who first arrived in Canada in 1877.

On September 22, 1988 the historic Redress Settlement was signed by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Art Miki, President of the National Association of Japanese Canadians. The government issued an official apology and token monetary compensation for property losses suffered at the time.

As victims of racist legislation and dispersal policies that sent Nikkei to Japan and east of the Rocky Mountains, the rebuilding of this fractured community, now numbering about 60,000, continues to this day.

The Kyowakai (“working together peacefully”) Society, the creator of this project, first met in a hall on this site in 1943. This is the only internment camp organization still in operation.

The NIMC aims not only to enrich our understanding of internment history, but also to emphasize the fragile nature of democracy and importance of civil rights for all Canadians.

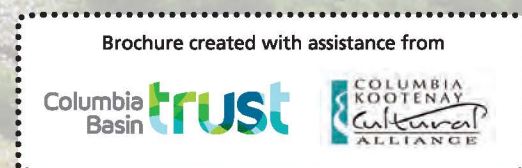
The centre was designated a National Historic Site of Canada in July 2010.

The Kyowakai Society and the Village of New Denver thank you for your support.



Conceived and sponsored  
by the Kyowakai Society

The Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre is located on the south side of Carpenter Creek, on part of the former “Orchard” internment camp, within walking distance of the Kohan Garden, Centennial Park and Campground.



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## Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre

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Owned and operated by  
the Corporation of  
Village of New Denver

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New Denver  
British Columbia



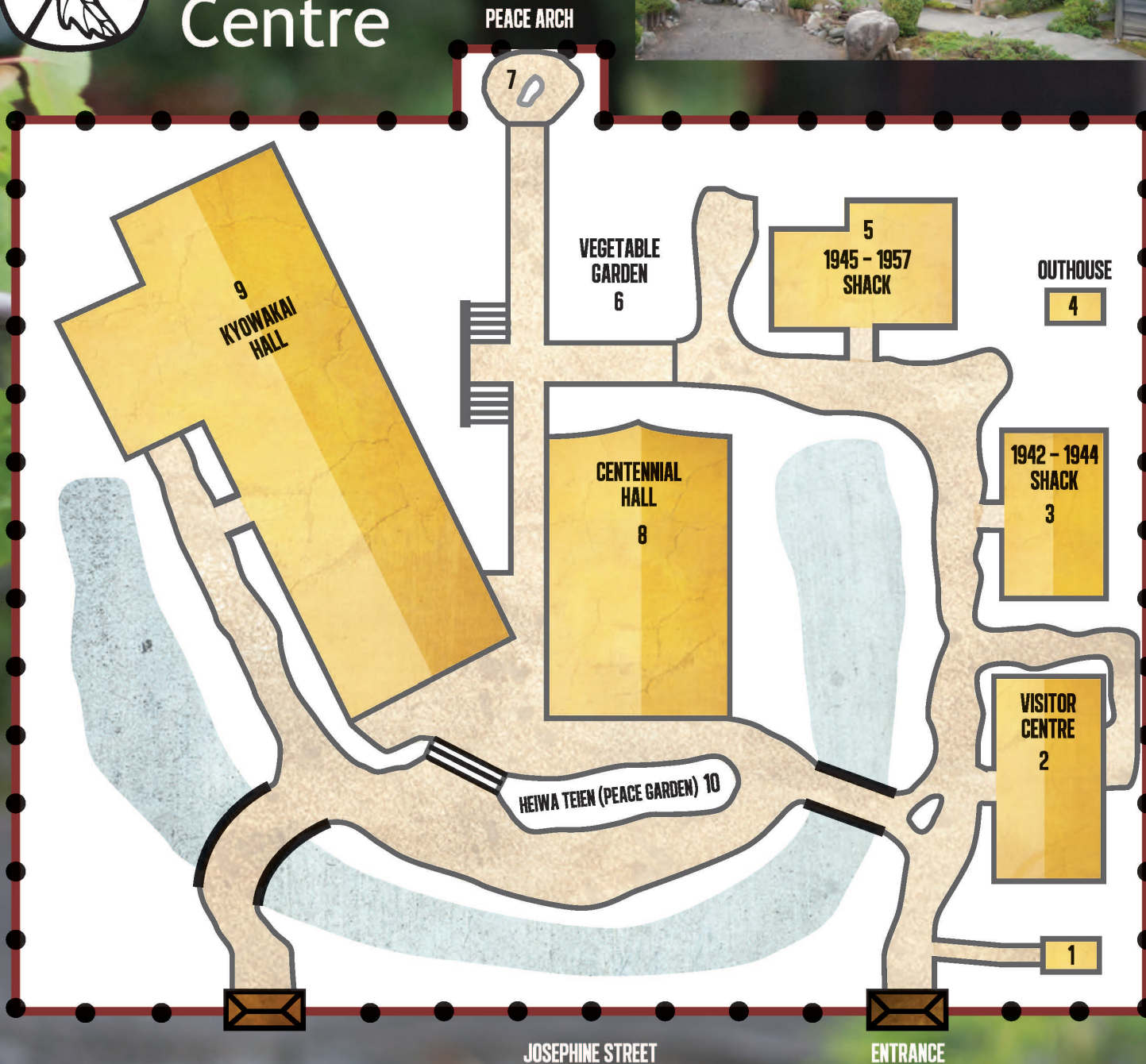
Canada's  
Historic Places

Lieux patrimoniaux  
du Canada





# Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre



## 1 FIRE & WATER DISPLAYS

Fire bucket stands were strategically located throughout the area. They were the only fire-fighting equipment available at the time of internment. The carved names are those of fire-fighters from the Lemon Creek camp who fought a fire in Arrow Park and carved their names in a log there.

## 2 VISITOR RECEPTION CENTRE

The exterior of this building is typical of BC Security Commission dwellings built by issei & nisei internees. The interior has been completely renovated and modernized for visitors' use.

## 3 1942 - 1944 SHACK

This 14' x 28' shack typically housed two families with up to six children each. There were approximately 200 shacks in the area called The Orchard.

## 4 OUTHOUSE

One outhouse served the needs of up to 50 people. They were divided by a central partition into a men's and a women's side.

## 5 1945 - 1957 SHACK

In 1957 the shacks in The Orchard were deeded to their Japanese Canadian residents by the BC government. This shack was occupied until the mid-80s.

## 6 THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

Vegetable gardens were planted by the Nikkei soon after their internment. The vegetables seen here are typical of those grown. They were valuable foods in times of scarcity.

## 7 PEACE ARCH

The arch and the fence work together to represent peace and harmony. While the arch offers a bridge of welcome, the fence speaks of the links between the people of all nations. It is a replica of the Peace Arch that stood at the entrance to the New Denver Tuberculosis Sanatorium from 1943 to 1952.

## 8 CENTENNIAL HALL

The exterior design of this building is reminiscent of traditional Japanese architecture. This hall was built in 1977 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first Nikkei to arrive in Canada, Mr. Manzo Nagano. This building is not open to the public.

## 9 KYOWAKAI HALL

This building was originally constructed in 1943 as a communal bath house, but was used instead as the social, political and cultural centre of the New Denver Nikkei community.

## 10 HEIWA TEIEN (PEACE GARDEN)

This garden was designed by Mr. Roy Tomomichi Sumi, who worked for the Nitobe Memorial Gardens at the University of British Columbia. Mr. Sumi, a former Rosebery internee, designed the gardens in the karesansui (dried-up water scenery) style. He used a "Past, Present and Future" theme in this unique Japanese garden.