



# KOKUBAN

## Volume 4, Issue 05

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The JCCC is pleased to bring you Kokuban - our monthly e-bulletin that covers topics from heritage treasures to stories about this unique community.

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## Sedai Features: Dr. Henry Sugiyama – Career in Medicine



This month, Sedai Features an interview with Dr. Henry Sugiyama, a second-generation Japanese Canadian who built a successful practice in medicine. Dr. Henry talks about attending medical school at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg during a period of heightened discrimination against Japanese Canadians and, subsequently, his move to Toronto, Ontario, with his wife, Joanne Sugiyama.

[Click here to listen to the interview](#)

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## Japanese Canadian Shops & Landmarks

**Nikko Gardens Feature by Daria Murphy**

Join us as we explore Toronto's past and present Japanese Canadian shops and landmarks. Last month we visited Furuya Trading Co., a shop in downtown Toronto that sold everything from Japanese foodstuffs to videos and even flight tickets. Furuya operated from 1962 to 1998 and was located on the first floor of 460 Dundas Street West. On the second floor was Nikko Gardens, the feature of today's article. Nikko Gardens was the premier restaurant for Japanese food in Toronto. The restaurant was run by the brother duo Gus and Jim Kadonaga. The pair were supporters of the Japanese Canadian community in Toronto and ensured that their guests were comfortable and well-fed. As we explore Nikko Gardens, we will discover that there is more than meets the eye.

(TORONTO)

**FULLY LICENCED**

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460 Dundas St. W.  
Toronto  
Reservations: EM. 6-2164

For best arrangements  
Reserve ahead of time.

VARIOUS KINDS OF SUSHI AND OTHER JAPANESE  
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FREE DELIVERY



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*New Canadian, March 21, 1980, page 4*

Nikko Gardens was considered one of the best Japanese restaurants in Toronto. In 1977, a New York Times travel article about Toronto listed Nikko Gardens as having “Superior Japanese food” in all of Toronto. The article notes that a sukiyaki dish at Nikko Gardens costs \$8.50, which today, in 2023, would cost approximately \$40. A Toronto history blog run by John Chuckman details that the waitresses at Nikko Gardens were all dressed in kimonos, and certain dishes were cooked tableside in a skillet on an electric burner. The Nikkei Voice article, “Memories of Nikko Gardens, One of Toronto’s Finest Japanese Restaurants,” written by David Tsubouchi, details the author’s excitement about visiting Nikko Gardens as a young boy in 1961. He recalls dressing up in his finest clothes—per his mother’s request—for the rare occasion to eat at a restaurant. Upon arrival, the Tsubouchi family first walked past Furuya Trading Co. and then made their way up a dimly lit staircase to the second floor. David Tsubouchi explains that visiting Nikko Gardens was one of the first times he experienced Japanese culture; he recalls: “It seemed foreign, and yet in a way, through my western eyes, it was familiar.”

Nikko Gardens was more than just a restaurant. Gus and Jim Kadonaga created a space where the Japanese Canadian community could eat a delicious meal, as well as meet to discuss important issues, host clubs, and celebrate special occasions. Behind the main restaurant seating area was an enclosed meeting room for community groups. The New Canadian newspaper advertised many of the public-entry meetings at Nikko Gardens.

## "Orchid" Lecture & Demo At Nikko On April 27th

TORONTO. — A lecture and demonstration on the "Orchid" will be held on April 27th from 8 p.m. at the Nikko Garden meeting room, 460 Dundas Street West. Speaker will be Mr. Peter Toot of the Southern Ontario Orchid Society.

Slides will also be shown. Everyone is welcome to attend.

*New Canadian, 1974. "Orchid" Lecture & Demo At Nikko On April 27th.*

Many types of meetings, such as an Orchid Lecture and Demo that was held on April 27th, 1974, by Mr. Peter Toot of the Southern Ontario Orchid Society, were held at Nikko Gardens.

## Saisei Kai General Meeting At Nikko March 30

TORONTO. — The Saisei-Kai's general meeting will be held at Nikko Garden, 460 Dundas Street West, Toronto on Friday, March 30th, 1973, starting 7. P.M.

The agenda of the meeting will include the election of directors and auditor for 1973 and discussion of general business matters of the corporation.

The annual dinner party of the members will be held at the same time. Please make reservations before March 28th. Please phone Mr. Kameoka, (368-9934, \$2.50 per person).

*New Canadian, 1973. Saisei Kai General Meeting at Nikko March 30.*

Other types of meetings required a reservation and membership to the society, such as the Saisei Kai General Meeting held on March 30th, 1973, wherein members elected the new directors and auditor.

## Credit Union To Hold General Meeting At Nikko

TORONTO. — The Japanese Canadian (Toronto) Credit Union's 7th Annual general meeting will be held on Saturday, April 27 at 7:30 p.m. at the Nikko Gardens.

After the presentation of various reports and discussions on

these matters (including the dividend of the profits) an election of officers for the coming term will take place. Refreshments and a dance will follow.

All members, families and friends are urged to attend.

*New Canadian, 1963. Credit Union To Hold General Meeting At Nikko.*

The Japanese Canadian Credit Union was another group that hosted meetings at Nikko Gardens. The Credit Union's 7th Annual general meeting was held on April 27th, 1963, where reports were presented and elections were announced. The meeting was followed by refreshments and a dance. Community members recall that Nikko Gardens also had a

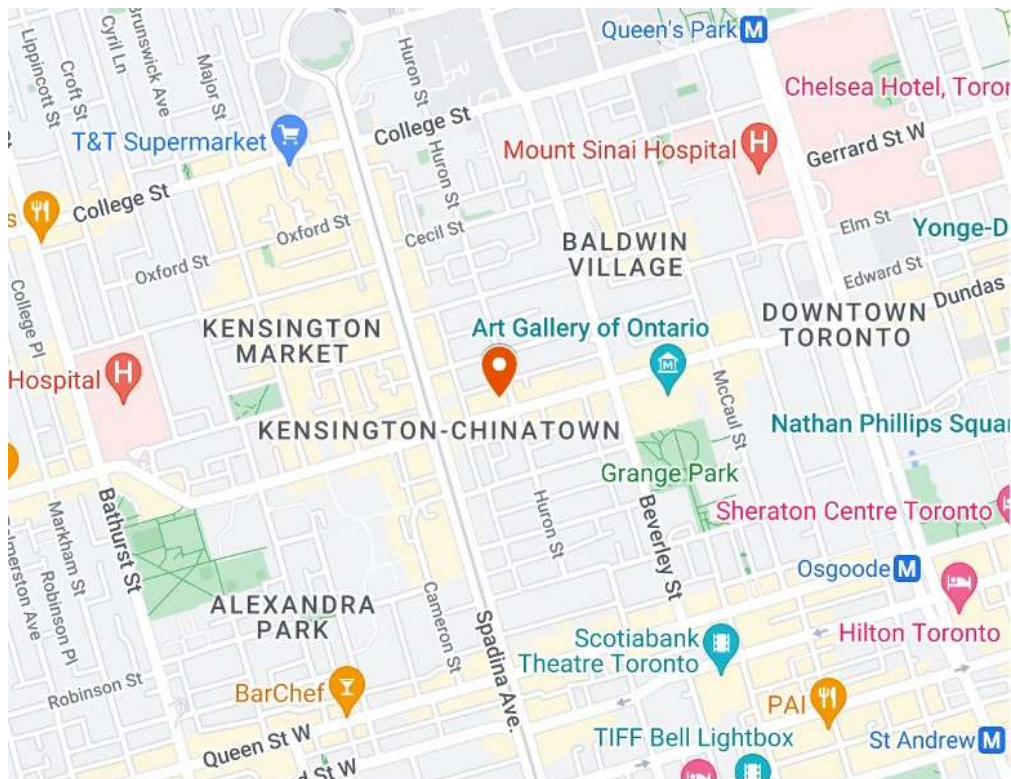
money-lending program. This program may have been in partnership with the Credit Union, although it is uncertain how these two systems worked together.



*Photo courtesy of Google Maps.*

It is uncertain the exact date when Nikko Gardens closed its doors for the last time. However, by 1998, Furuya Trading Co. terminated operations on the first floor of the building. As of today, the second floor of the building houses a Chinese pub-style eatery and bar. The next time you are walking along Dundas West, make sure to keep in mind Nikko Gardens on the second floor and Furuya Trading Co. on the first floor. This building

was a dynamic spot for the Japanese Canadian community.



*Photo courtesy of Google Maps.*

The map above marks the location of the old Nikko Gardens with a red pin. Click on the image for directions. For a map of all Japanese Canadian Shops & Landmarks featured in this series, please see the link below.

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1\\_qxalkG38BnWZrrmSwYPxfHdfOKMF0E&hl=en&usp=sharing](https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1_qxalkG38BnWZrrmSwYPxfHdfOKMF0E&hl=en&usp=sharing)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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## SHIN SUGINO ARTIST TALK

Embark on a captivating journey at the JCCC on May 28 at noon during **Doors Open** and delve into the artistic world of Shin Sugino, the mastermind behind *Déjà Vu: Split Perception as One*. As a renowned photographer, Sugino's compelling body of work encompasses both commercial and art photography. Join us as he shares his profound insights, processes, and personal experiences captured through his lens. Discover the profound themes that have shaped his art, from the complexities of Catholicism to the profound connections he has forged with his subjects.



## REFLECTIONS OF AN ELDER: AN EVENING WITH DR. DAVID SUZUKI

Join us at the JCCC on May 26 from 7 pm to 9:30 pm for a very special evening with DR. DAVID SUZUKI , Award-Winning Scientist, Environmentalist, and Broadcaster. Dr. Suzuki has long been a source of great pride among the Japanese Canadian community. His discussion will present his “reflections as an elder” as an exceptional Canadian and a Japanese Canadian.

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