

IF THE CEDARS COULD SPEAK: *Japanese and Caucasians Meet at New Denver*

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HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS of movie watchers glimpsed a scene on a mountain bench without knowing its real story. A wall of cedar trees obscures the mountain. Directly in front of them, a tiny cabin, neatly constructed of rough-hewn, seemingly weather-beaten cedar slats looks out over a pasture and towards the water. In the film, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, based on David Guterson's best selling novel,¹ it is the prewar home of a Japanese family on San Pedro Island (Bainbridge Island) in the San Juan Islands of Washington State.

The movie features a romantic interracial entanglement, but the book revolves around the death in 1954 of Carl Heine and the murder trial of Kabuo Miyamoto, another fisher. Miyamoto's alleged motive was to regain the farm that he believed Heine's family stole in 1942 after the Miyamotos were sent to the Manzanar internment camp and could not make the final payments.

What purports to be Puget Sound is Slocan Lake, and the cabin is a movie set. If the cedars could speak, they would note the irony. From 1942 until shortly after the war the pasture was part of the Harris, or Bosun, Ranch, which the British Columbia Security Commission, the federal agency responsible for the resettlement of the Japanese, leased and used to house evacuees from the Coast. The ranch was the south end of the New Denver evacuation centre, which included a main settlement in the Orchard at the townsite, and another settlement at the nearby community of Rosebery.²

¹ David Guterson, *Snow Falling on Cedars* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994).

² W.A. Eastwood, 8 March 1943, National Archives of Canada (hereafter, NAC), British Columbia Security Commission Records (hereafter, BCSCR), v. 34; British Columbia Security Commission, *Removal of Japanese from Protected Areas, March 4, 1942 to October 31, 1942* (Vancouver: B.C. Security Commission, 1942)



Japanese house built for the film "Snow Falling on Cedars."



Japanese internment camp, Bosun ranch.

Though in some ways a miniature Canadian version of Manzanar, New Denver was also different. Manzanar, on the site of abandoned orchards in the southern California desert, was the first of ten "concentration camps" established by the American War Relocation Authority to house Japanese removed from the Coast. Barbed wire

surrounded it and armed guards watched its 10,000 residents. New Denver had neither barbed wire nor armed guards; mountains, limited roads, and police checkpoints easily kept Japanese within the limited radius they could travel without permission.³

In both Manzanar and New Denver, the main dwellings were hastily built of wood. The American camps were covered with tarpaper; the Canadian camps did not have that minimal protection from the elements in the first winter, though many residents later cut shakes and shingled their homes.⁴ At Manzanar, families of five to eight members were assigned an apartment of twenty by twenty-four feet in a barrack-like structure. Each block shared a communal dining hall and a bank of open and odiferous latrines.⁵ The quarters at New Denver were smaller. Thirty-one of the fourteen-by-twenty-eight-foot shacks were designed for two family groups and 244 for single families. Each family did its own cooking. So lacking were facilities that the installation of electricity and one water pipe for four or five families meant a more “comfortable life.”⁶ At the Harris Ranch, where twenty-three of these shacks were built, water was not piped to the houses until the summer of 1943.⁷ Both sites had traditional Japanese bathhouses, but toilets were outhouses “down the street.”

Whereas housing on both sides of the border had some broad similarities, the school systems were different. At Manzanar, the War Relocation Authority employed many Caucasian teachers in its elementary and high schools to “speed up the assimilation of Japanese Americans into the dominant pattern of American life.”⁸ At New Denver, with the exception of the high schools operated by the United and Roman Catholic Churches,⁹ the school system was entirely Japanese. The refusal of the British Columbia department of education to school evacuee children, and a dire teacher shortage, forced

³ For details of travel restrictions, see Ken Adachi, *The Enemy That Never Was: A History of Japanese Canadians* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), 257.

⁴ E.L. Boulton to W.A. Eastwood, 8 November 1943, BCSCR, vol. 7.

⁵ Jean Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar* (Toronto: Bantam, 1974), 22. Details on the American accommodations may be found in Michi Nishiura Weglyn, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps* rev. ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 84.

⁶ *New Canadian*, 27 February 1943.

⁷ J.C. Harris to “Progeny,” 22 August 1943, British Columbia Archives (hereafter, BCA), J.C. Harris Papers.

⁸ Thomas James, *Exile Within: The Schooling of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 38.

⁹ A few high school students paid tuition fees to the local high school. See H.T. Pammett to A. MacNamara, 4 February 1943, BCSCR, v. 13.

the security commission to set up elementary schools with staff composed of evacuees, almost none of whom had teaching experience.¹⁰ To give these neophyte teachers some formal instruction in pedagogy, the security commission arranged for faculty from the Vancouver Normal School to hold summer schools for teachers from all of its schools at New Denver. This provided occasions for New Denver's Caucasians to meet Japanese. During the first session in 1943, the Board of Trade had a beach party for the students, and the students' drama club interviewed district pioneers and then wrote a play on the history of New Denver to entertain all residents.¹¹

Apart from administrators, guards, and a few missionaries, teachers were the only Caucasians at Manzanar. In New Denver, however, the Japanese were placed in an existing community. Since the opening of the Nikkei Internment Centre in 1994, the Japanese presence has become a major tourist attraction for the village. When I visited the centre and its moving displays of the wartime settlement I wondered what old New Denverites had thought about their new neighbours. What did the Japanese think of New Denver? How well did they get along?

Although residents denied New Denver was a "ghost town,"¹² it had only about 350 people in 1941. It did have Christian churches, stores, and a hospital that the newcomers were expected to use. In mid-summer 1942 the British Columbia Security Commission sent Japanese construction workers, under the supervision of White foremen, to build the shacks that became homes for evacuees.¹³

New Denver's Japanese population was never static as people moved eastward or came in from other centres. As of January 1943 it had 1,601 Japanese residents, of whom 933 were Canadian-born; 208, naturalized Canadians; and 460, Japanese nationals.¹⁴ Outsiders

¹⁰ For details, see Patricia E. Roy, "Due to Their Keeness Regarding Education: They Will Get the Utmost Out of the Whole Plan": The Education of Japanese Children in the British Columbia Interior Housing Settlements During World War Two," *Historical Studies in Education; Revue d'Histoire de l'Éducation* 4 (Fall 1992): 211-31.

¹¹ F.C. Boyes, "New Denver Summer School, July-August 1943," BCSCR, box 13.

¹² Pupils of Grades VII and VII of the New Denver Elementary School, *New Denver: Eldorado of the Past* (New Denver, 1946 [?]).

¹³ BC Security Commission, *Removal of Japanese*, 23.

¹⁴ E.L. Maag, Delegate of the International Red Cross, "Report on Visit to Settlements of Japanese Removed from the Defence Area on the Pacific Coast, in the Province of British Columbia, Canada, 9-19 January 1943," NAC, Department of External Affairs Records (hereafter DEAR), vol. 3006. These figures were very close to the overall percentage of

seemed unaware of divisions between those loyal to Japan and those who considered themselves Canadians,¹⁵ and of conflict between a “dissatisfied element” of Japanese nationals who had staged sit-down strikes in the road camps and who caused similar trouble when they came to New Denver.¹⁶

Overall, New Denver’s Caucasians were uncertain about receiving Japanese, and some retained that ambivalence. When she arrived in September 1942, Gwen Suttie, a United Church missionary, found that many residents were “almost as bewildered as the Japanese.” As she recalled, “one man and his wife refused an introduction to me when they heard I had come to work among the Japanese, and it was said that this gentleman was even circulating a petition asking the government to supply New Denver with an arsenal for the protection of the citizens against the invaders.”¹⁷

As a few Japanese passed through en route to other settlements or came to the town for medical treatment, local residents “began to grow accustomed to seeing an occasional Japanese.” J.C. Harris, who leased his ranch to the security commission, recalled that, after “much hot discussion,” Dr. Arnold Francis, who had practised in New Denver since 1930, convinced people “that the poor Japs had to go somewhere, and that they had better surrender their own prejudices and make a virtue of necessity.” Thus, the village council and Slocan District Board of Trade, based in New Denver, accepted “these unfortunate outcasts.”¹⁸ In contrast to the Canadian Legion branches on the Coast, which agitated for the removal of Japanese, the New Denver branch viewed “the influx of Japanese” as “a very necessary War Measure” and accepted “the situation in a spirit of Democratic Co-operation, and true Christian spirit.”¹⁹ Japanese members of the legion even attended its meetings.²⁰

Early in 1943 the Board of Trade attributed a “considerable upturn in business generally” to the Japanese.²¹ “We didn’t have much money,”

Canadian-born (60 per cent); naturalized Canadians (14 per cent), and Japanese nationals (25 per cent) for the province as a whole. See Adachi, *Enemy That Never Was*, 424.

¹⁵ Mrs. T. to Mr. S, 31 January 1944, censored letter, NAC, Department of Labour Records (hereafter, DLab), v. 1527.

¹⁶ “Japanese Movement – Pacific Coast (Period ending December 31, 1942),” BCSCR, vol. 34.

¹⁷ G.W. Suttie, “With the Nisei in New Denver,” *B.C. Historical News*, 5 (February 1973): 17.

¹⁸ J.C. Harris, “Notes and Memories of the Coming of the Japanese to the Slocan Lake Country 1942,” 28 March 1944, BCA, Harris Papers, box 3.

¹⁹ R.W. Crelling to W.K. Esling, 13 September 1942, DLab, v. 655; *Arrow Lake News*, 8 October 1942.

²⁰ *Silver Standard*, 22 October 1942.

²¹ *Arrow Lakes News*, 18 February 1943.

Ryuichi Yoshida observed, “but there was still a lot of us to go shopping.”²² Similarly, Dr. Matasuro Uchida recalled, townspeople did not “like us” at first and wondered “what kind of animals we [were].” Once “they start[ed] to make money from us,” they did not want “to see us go” and treated “us just like themselves. They find we [were] not animals.”²³

The security commission also chose New Denver as the site of a 100-bed tuberculosis sanatorium. The construction of the sanatorium caused some consternation within the Japanese community because the Japanese were “very frightened of T.B.”²⁴ Nevertheless, it and the hospital became meeting grounds for old and new residents. While the sanatorium had only Japanese patients, the hospital treated both Japanese and Caucasians. Japanese and Caucasian doctors and nurses worked side by side.²⁵ They also played together. Several medical men and the wife of Dr. Paul Kumagai, a dentist, participated in golf tournaments. At a 1945 tournament, Henry Naruse, an optometrist, shot a hole in one.²⁶ The sanatorium also saw the whole community meet. Caucasians attended the big charity dances the Japanese organized to mark the openings of the main building in March 1943 and the annex in November 1944.²⁷

The medical institutions provided work for some evacuees. Initially, evacuees had expected each family would get a small acreage suitable for subsistence farming.²⁸ Many families, especially at the Harris Ranch, where twenty-seven acres were put under cultivation, planted gardens, but the plots were too small to be commercial enterprises. Between 85 per cent and 90 per cent of the able-bodied males found remunerative work in lumber camps, cutting firewood or, initially, building houses. Women found employment as teachers, hospital workers, or in the security commission’s office. Pay ranged from 22.5 cents per hour to \$75.00 per month, depending on the skill required.

²² Rolf Knight and Maya Koizumi, *A Man of Our Times: The Life-History of a Japanese-Canadian Fisherman* (Vancouver: New Star, 1976), 79.

²³ Barry Broadfoot, *Years of Sorrow, Years of Shame: The Story of the Japanese Canadians in World War II* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1977), 209.

²⁴ “Japanese Placement – Pacific Coast (Period ended November 30th 1942), BCSCR, v. 34.

²⁵ See *Medical Aspects of Evacuation Days, 1942-1946 (New Denver-Slocan)* (New Denver: J. and G. Brighton, n.d.).

²⁶ *Silver Standard*, 9 August 1945.

²⁷ J.C. Harris to “Progeny,” 27 March 1943, Harris Papers; *Silver Standard*, 1 April 1943 and 30 November 1944.

²⁸ *New Canadian*, 1 July 1942.

Doctors and dentists earned more.²⁹ Families on maintenance (relief) received a maximum of \$42.00 per month for a family of seven or more. The commission provided shelter, wood, and water, but an International Red Cross representative calculated in December 1942 that a family of three needed \$61.60 for groceries and miscellaneous supplies.³⁰

The security commission, in October 1942, claimed that the Japanese at New Denver considered themselves “very fortunate” to be in such a “fine district.”³¹ The sociologist, Forrest E. LaViolette, who visited in 1944, however, thought that the main settlement in the Orchard was “an outwardly attractive but psychologically deceptive place in which to live.”³² The representative of Spain, the Protecting Power for Japanese interests in Canada, observed the fine scenery from the Harris Ranch but said that the Japanese did not consider it a choice location because of the long walk to school and to shopping in town.³³

The Harris Ranch was also the site of the “Old Bachelor Home,” where the commission housed about fifty elderly men in the ranch house. They occupied themselves mainly in tending their own gardens. The presence of another 250 or so people in commission houses on the property made life less lonesome for them.³⁴



“Old Bachelor Home” on Bosun ranch.

²⁹ Department of Labour, *Report on the Administration of Japanese Affairs in Canada, 1942-1944* (Ottawa: Department of Labour, 1944), 10.

³⁰ Maag, “Report...9-19 January 1943.”

³¹ “Japanese Movement – Pacific Coast (Period ending October 31, 1942), BCSCR, vol. 1.

³² Forrest E. LaViolette, *The Canadian Japanese and World War II: A Sociological and Psychological Account* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948), 100.

³³ Pedro E. Schwartz to Under-Secretary State for External Affairs, 2 December 1943, DEAR, vol. 3004.

³⁴ “Japanese Settlements, Inspection Tour Made by E.L. Maag,” June 1945, DEAR, vol. 3006.

Many Japanese Canadians worked hard to make themselves part of the community. They participated in the local Victory Loan campaign³⁵ and organized concerts to which they invited White residents who enjoyed the performances.³⁶ Although the New Denver Brass Band had limited success in recruiting Japanese bands members to fill gaps in its ranks,³⁷ civic festivities and team sports were occasions for meeting. A feature of the activities for Victoria Day, the main civic celebration, in May 1943 was a baseball game between Japanese students and local high school boys. Such games between Japanese and Caucasian baseball and softball teams became an annual event and, in recognition of that, J. Mizuhara became a member of the organizing committee.³⁸

Some individual recreational activities were problematic. Every summer from 1943 through to 1946, when it abandoned the campaign, the Women's Institute sought to deny Japanese access to Bigelow Beach, ostensibly because the presence of large numbers of people would make it dangerous for small children.³⁹ Members of the rod and gun club, however, were amenable to seeing Japanese participate in sport fishing, though their motives may not have been wholly altruistic: they wanted to let the Japanese use nets or hooks and lines to catch the coarse fish that were devouring the spawn of game fish. Other Kootenay rod and gun clubs rejected the idea because it would be impossible to control the use of hooks and lines.⁴⁰

Although many Japanese were Buddhists and built their own church, the Christian churches became sites of integration. Anglican, Roman Catholic, and United Church evacuees used existing church buildings. Gradually, Japanese Christian women participated on the fringes of the established congregations by buying raffle tickets at a Catholic bazaar,⁴¹ taking their turn at cleaning the Anglican church,⁴² or, in the case of the United Church Japanese ladies choir, singing at an ecumenical service for the Women's World Day of Prayer.⁴³ One Japanese woman was an active member of the Catholic Women's League.⁴⁴

³⁵ *Silver Standard*, 22 October 1943.

³⁶ *Arrow Lake News*, 7 January 1943. *Silver Standard*, 7 January 1943.

³⁷ *Silver Standard*, 13 May 1943 and 31 May 1945.

³⁸ *Arrow Lake News*, 3 June 1943. *Silver Standard*, 3 June 1943 and 1 June 1944.

³⁹ New Denver Women's Institute, Minute Book, passim, BCA.

⁴⁰ *Arrow Lakes News*, 29 October 1943.

⁴¹ *Silver Standard*, 2 December 1943.

⁴² *Silver Standard*, 9 March 1944.

⁴³ *Silver Standard*, 2 March 1944.

⁴⁴ *Silver Standard*, 13 July 1944.

The United Church was most active in promoting integration. Its lay missionaries sponsored social gatherings for the staffs of the Japanese and the public school systems. After this contact, Occidental teachers invited Grade 7 and 8 Japanese students to attend monthly educational film showings.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Japanese students were reluctant to participate in the 1944 civic Remembrance Day services lest they “be laughed at.” Their principal claimed she did not know by whom but noted that “the Student Council eventually volunteered” to serve as prefects, and, although the Saturday morning assembly was not compulsory, practically the whole school attended and behaved admirably at the service at which both Japanese and Caucasian clergy spoke.⁴⁶

Before the Japanese came, the minister from Nakusp served the United Church in New Denver. When Japanese ministers offered services in English some Caucasians attended.⁴⁷ In November 1945, members of the Japanese United Church invited all local United Church members to an evening of social fellowship with devotions, community singing, games, music, and refreshments. Twenty-four Caucasians and eighty-six Japanese Canadians attended. J.C. Harris, who had already publicly said that the Japanese had “many noble qualities that [would] eventually enrich Canadian life,”⁴⁸ spoke on behalf of the local church board.⁴⁹ The next summer, Reverend T. Komiyama became its regular minister. The speeches welcoming him noted that “the occasion was one of real importance, for while the appointment of a Nisei to a position of responsibility should be nothing out of the ordinary, it is unfortunately rare enough to be noteworthy as an example of natural fraternity.”⁵⁰ Japanese newcomers were becoming part of the New Denver community.

When Manzanar closed in November 1945, its residents had the choice of returning to their prewar homes or moving elsewhere in the United States. The Canadian government was slow to close its

⁴⁵ J.C. Harris to “Progeny,” 16 October 1943, Harris Papers; *Silver Standard*, 2 November 1944; Report for New Denver Orchard School November 1944, BCSCR, v. 13.

⁴⁶ Report for New Denver Orchard School November 1944, BCSCR, v. 13; *Silver Standard*, 16 November 1944.

⁴⁷ “Memo re Japanese in the Interior, 1943,” United Church Archives, Toronto (hereafter, UCAT).

⁴⁸ J.C. Harris to ed., *Daily News* (Nelson), 27 August 1943, J.C. Harris Papers, published in *Nelson Daily News*, 3 September 1943.

⁴⁹ *New Canadian*, 24 November 1945.

⁵⁰ *Silver Standard*, 13 June 1946 reprinted, *The New Canadian*, 22 June 1946.

camps, and the only options it gave their residents were moving east of the Rockies or to Japan.

Even before Ottawa announced its postwar plans in August 1944, New Denver's Caucasians showed concern for the future of the Japanese. Late in 1943, when the Nelson Board of Trade sought reassurance that the Japanese would leave the Slocan after the war, the Slocan District Board agreed with dispersal but said that British Columbia must accept a share of the Japanese. Moreover, it noted, regarding the Canadian-born, "we who pride ourselves on our democratic principles must see to it that the Japanese who are allowed to remain do not become a minority group with a persecution complex."⁵¹ The Canadian Legion unanimously endorsed a request by the Japanese veterans of the First World War that wartime injustices imposed on them be rectified.⁵² That sympathy and the relative freedom enjoyed by Japanese in New Denver may explain why a relatively high percentage of them chose to stay in Canada after the war.⁵³

When the government began implementing dispersal and "voluntary repatriation," church workers at New Denver protested violations of civil rights.⁵⁴ The Women's Institute sent a telegram to Prime Minister King objecting to "the repeated uprooting of the Japanese during the war, some for the 3rd and 4th time" and requesting compensation for their property losses. It called the government's policy neither democratic, Christian, nor consistent with war aims or its stated policy.⁵⁵ Seventy-one New Denver residents signed a petition protesting repatriation and dispersal east of the Rockies. As J.C. Harris, the group's secretary, told Labour Minister Humphrey Mitchell, "we have found them to be friendly and desirable neighbours."⁵⁶ In a personal letter to the prime minister, Harris wrote: "We tried from the first to be helpful & friendly to them and we won each other's esteem and respect. The oft made assertion that The Brown Man and The Whites will never mix has little foundation.

⁵¹ Colin Clifford, Secretary, Slocan District Board of Trade, to W.G.C. Lansckail, Secretary, Nelson Board of Trade, 2 December 1943, BCSCR, vol. 4. (Clifford was an employee of the B.C. Security Commission.) *Daily News* (Nelson), 11 December 1943. *Arrow Lakes News*, 16 December 1943.

⁵² T.W. Clarke to H. Mitchell, 10 July 1945, NAC, Ian Mackenzie Papers, vol. 25.

⁵³ J. Lediard to Mrs. C.M. Loveys, 19 May 1945, UCAT, Home Missions, box 3.

⁵⁴ Ella Lediard and A. Helen Lawson to Mackenzie King, 5 March 1946, NAC, W.L.M. King Papers, no. 367616; J.S. Rowe to Mackenzie King, 6 March 1946, King Papers, no. 373406; Lediard to Nelson *Daily News*, 20 October 1945; Rowe editor, *Daily News* (Nelson), 16 March 1946.

⁵⁵ New Denver Women's Institute, Minute Book, 11 July 1945, BCA.

⁵⁶ J.C. Harris to H. Mitchell, 16 November 1945, DLab, vol. 655.

The children play together in most friendly fashion. The young people dance together," and we have found them to be "good sports."⁵⁷

Of the Canadian camps, New Denver was the last to close. When the government realized that some individuals could not be moved because of age or infirmity, it let them and their families settle in New Denver. As of 1 January 1947, 900 Japanese lived in New Denver, many of whom had recently come from other centres.⁵⁸

By then, social integration was largely complete. The previous summer, Lakeview High School, the United Church school, closed. In September 1946, fifty of its students arrived at the one-room public high school, but the teacher would only accept thirty and suggested that the remainder could attend the Roman Catholic high school. According to Gwen Suttie of the United Church, "the local Occidental parents rose in a mass and demanded the admittance of the Japanese to make a larger school with two teachers."⁵⁹ Suttie joined the public high school staff and brought her students with her. Her concern about their integration was dispelled when she learned students were "borrowing each other's homework."⁶⁰ The security commission operated a small elementary school until the end of the 1946-47 school year, when the remaining students and two teachers transferred to the public school.⁶¹

Adults too had integrated. In 1947, when the New Denver baseball and hockey teams resumed activities that had been suspended during the war, they had both Japanese and Caucasian members.⁶² By then, Japanese and Caucasians were attending the same private functions (such as bridal showers and birthday parties). Japanese and Caucasian young people together established a "Teen Town."⁶³ And no one complained when Japanese began buying property.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ J.C. Harris to Mackenzie King, 23 February 1946, King Papers, no. 365411.

⁵⁸ *Report on the Re-establishment of Japanese in Canada, 1944-1946*, (Ottawa: Department of Labour, 1947), 9

⁵⁹ Gwen Suttie to Mrs. C.M. Loveys, 16 September 1946, UCAT, Women's Missionary Society, Home Missions Records, box 3.

⁶⁰ Suttie, "With the Nisei," 23.

⁶¹ H.T. Pammett, "Report on Inspection Trip," BCSCR, vol. 17; A. MacNamara to T.B. Pickersgill, 8 June 1946 and C.V. Booth to Pammett, 19 February 1947, BCSCR, vol. 12.

⁶² *Silver Standard*, 23 January and 26 June 1947.

⁶³ *Silver Standard*, 13 and 20 November 1947.

⁶⁴ Suttie, "With the Nisei," 23; *Silver Standard*, 3 July 1947. The number of Japanese in New Denver has fallen. The 2001 telephone directory lists only about a dozen Japanese names. This is undoubtedly the consequence of limited economic opportunities in the village.

Although no artefacts of its Japanese past remain on the Harris Ranch, the Japanese presence survives in the Orchard. Not only does the sanatorium, now an extended care hospital,⁶⁵ remain, but some shacks, a few little changed, are still occupied. The hall, built in 1943 by the Kyowakai (“working together peacefully”) Society as a communal bathhouse and community centre, is now the main gallery of the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre. Photographs and wartime artefacts⁶⁶ fill the gallery, but the centre’s most memorable display is a shack furnished as it was in the war years. Triple-decker bunks and hanging laundry starkly show crowded and primitive conditions and the lack of privacy endured by evacuees. Yet, the surrounding gardens are tranquil. In contrast, in developing Manzanar as a national historic site, the National Parks Service began by reconstructing sentry towers and the barbed wire perimeter.⁶⁷

Making internment sites into tourist attractions is ironic. *Snow Falling on Cedars*, however, offers the greater ironies of a fictional prewar Japanese home being re-created where Japanese Canadian evacuees lived, providing scenes of an impossible interracial romance being shot where “intermarried, intermingled faces”⁶⁸ are now a characteristic. Some old New Denverites needed time to accept the Japanese, but there was mutual good will and the two communities did integrate. If the cedars could speak, they would tell how distrust and uncertainty evolved into tolerance and friendship.

⁶⁵ The building itself has a history. After the provincial government took it over, it closed it as a sanatorium. From 1953 to 1959 it was a dormitory for Sons of Freedom Doukhobor children whose parents refused to send them to school.

⁶⁶ It has panels on the 1988 Redress Settlement but offers little explanation of why the Japanese were removed from the Coast.

⁶⁷ A detailed inventory of the site may be found at <http://www.nps.gov/manz/Spring2.htm> (11 June 2001).

⁶⁸ Ken McQueen, “Something Inspiring Grows in the Valley of the Ghosts,” *Vancouver Sun*, 29 August 1998.