

NEWS RELEASE



Maple Ridge

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New Albion Park Name Honours Tsuyuki Family Legacy

Maple Ridge, B.C: The City of Maple Ridge joined family members of Tokutaro and Tori Tsuyuki on Oct. 23 to unveil the new Albion Park signage and interpretation plaque that bears their name.

Located at 241A Street and 112 Avenue, Tsuyuki Park honours the legacy and contributions the family made while overcoming adversity to open one of the area's first commercial greenhouse enterprises.

"Our community was built on the determination, passion and perseverance of people from around the world, like the Tsuyuki family," said Mayor Dan Ruimy. "By naming Tsuyuki Park after them, we recognize not only their contributions and impact on our community and agricultural heritage, but the enduring legacy of all immigrants as they helped build the thriving, diverse and welcoming community of Maple Ridge today."

In addition to the unveiling of the park name and signage, relatives of the Tsuyuki family helped plant two flowering cherry trees beside the information plaque that honours their family's history at this site. The park features a berry colour theme highlighting the Tsuyuki family's agriculture past.

"We are delighted to see our grandfather honored through the naming of this new park, a testament to his resilience as a new Canadian immigrant," said Carol Tsuyuki, spokesperson for the family. "Despite the numerous challenges faced by Japanese Canadians, including during WWII internment, our grandfather managed to build a life in British Columbia. Our presence in BC today is a result of his resilience, and we're proud to call it home. We hope future generations will enjoy this park as well."

Construction of Tsuyuki Park began in 2022, supported in part by a grant of \$500,000 from the Canada Community Revitalization Fund to enhance the park's amenities, and a donation towards the spray park of \$30,000 from the Kiwanis Club of Golden Ears.

The new park features include:

- Picnic and grassy areas
- A hillside playground, zipline and toddler play area
- Spray Park

- Sports court
- Scooter track
- Picnic shelter
- Washroom and plaza

The playground and sports court components were opened over the summer for the community to start to use, while the remainder of the amenities were completed. An official celebration event of the new park will be planned for the Spring.

Tsuyuki Family Legacy

Tokutaro Tsuyuki immigrated to Maple Ridge from Japan in 1907 and persevered amid anti-Asian sentiment to become self-employed and buy land. He married Tori Hara in 1917, and the couple raised five children while working together on their Albion farm.. They cultivated strawberries, raspberries and loganberries, and left their mark on local agriculture with pioneering greenhouse practices focused on tomatoes and cucumbers.

The outbreak of the Second World War brought intensified distrust towards Japanese immigrants, leading to the forced relocation of more than one-third of Maple Ridge's Japanese Canadian community. This included the Tsuyuki family, even though Tokutaro had served Canada in the First World War.

Given the choice between living in an internment camp or starting a new business in the B.C. interior, Tokutaro moved his family to Lillooet, where they began another greenhouse operation growing tomatoes on the property of a farmer in the area in exchange for growing hay for his livestock. After Tori died in Lillooet in 1949, Tokutaro returned to the coast with his children to start over. Unable to re-acquire their Albion property, they settled in Surrey and started their third successful greenhouse operation.

Today, Tsuyuki Park stands as a tribute to the strength and fortitude of Tokutaro and Tori Tsuyuki. This inclusive neighborhood park, with a diverse range of amenities, symbolizes their enduring legacy and contributions to the community.

For more information about Tsuyuki Park visit www.mapleridge.ca/1441.

For more information about the family story visit mapleridgemuseum.org/tokutaro-tsuyuki-family/

