

April 12, 1992

Dear Kenjiro and Shigeko,

This letter will probably come as a surprise to you since I have not communicated with you for such a long time. I hope you are all well in Okinawa.

It was nice having Yoko and Asako visit with us last November, although it was a very short stay. We were pleased to have news and photographs of the family, and there was much to talk about. We enjoyed seeing the pictures which Yoko brought of everyone at Emi Obasan's 85th birthday celebration, Masato's 20 years' party, and seeing how much Kana has grown. It was also a strong reminder that the six years since our trip to Okinawa have passed quickly.

Yoko told us that perhaps Emi Obasan may come to America for a visit. We hope that she does and we look forward to seeing her. If she does come, please let us know right away because my sisters, Emi and Rayko, would also like to visit with her. Fumi Obasan, Kenshiro Yabe's widow, said that she would also try to come here to see Emi Obasan. It would be a very happy occasion for us.

I wish that I could say that everyone here is fine, but I have some sad news for you. Rayko's husband, Isaku Konoshima, who had been ill with cancer, died on March 7 of this year in New York. He had been sick for about seven months and was in and out of the hospital several times. Rayko is now all alone, and unfortunately, Emi and I live on the opposite side of the country from her. But she does have many good friends and neighbors close by, and we keep in touch often by telephone and letters.

Emi's family is fine and she is now a grandmother to a girl, Maia (4 years), and a boy, Devan (1 year). She and her husband Bill live on a boat in the Sacramento River area in California.

Homer and I are well and keeping very busy after his retirement from his medical practise. Homer has spent the past several years researching his family history and classifying it all in his computer. He spends many hours each day at it, and it has

been especially interesting to him as well as to the rest of the family.

His work, and my reading the book, "History of the Okinawans in North America", published by the Okinawa Club of America, has really made me curious about the Yabe family history. The book, incidentally, was a project that my father and a few of his friends started in 1927. Papa's death in 1939, and the outbreak of World War II delayed the book, but the Japanese version was finally completed in 1981. The English edition was printed in 1988. It has been fascinating to read about the issei pioneers here and their struggles.

Some years ago, Kenjiro, you gave me two books on the Yabe family history and genealogy, which you had written. They were done in beautiful calligraphy. For many years I have kept them safely stored in our metal file cabinet, but now I would like to read them. I realize that you did a lot of research and spent much time and effort in creating those books. I also realize that those volume must contain a wealth of information, and I would very much like to read them. Since I cannot read Japanese, would you allow me to hire a translator to prepare an English version of your books? And for such a worthwhile collection, have you obtained a copyright? I would like to have your answers to these questions before I have the work started. And, of course, if you have any objections, I will certainly respect your wishes.

We are enjoying an early and very colorful spring in Oregon. The flowers and fruit trees are all in bloom and it is a very beautiful time of the year.

Later this month, Homer and I will drive to California, meet with Emi and then continue to Los Angeles. We will go "ohaka mairi" since both Mama and Papa are buried there, and we will visit old friends. We also plan to attend the opening of the Japanese American National Museum, the first Nikkei museum in America. Some items which were taken from the old Yasui Brothers Store in Hood River, Oregon, will be shown in the exhibit.

Homer's father, Masuo Yasui, and his uncle, Renichi Fujimoto (whose name is different because he was a "yoshii"), started the Yasui Brothers Store in 1908, a few years after they came to America. It will be interesting to see the exhibition.

In May, we will visit Barbara and Bob and their two children, Mari (age 10) and Daniel Akira (age 7) in Washington state. Our second daughter, Meredith, does not have children. Our son, John, has four children...three daughters and one son. When they all visit here at once, we have a houseful!

I apologize for having typed this letter, but it is much easier to read than my handwriting. I hope that you will not have any trouble translating it.

Please give Homer's and my best regards to your mother, Kana, Yoko and her family. Please keep well.

Sincerely,

*Miyuki*

P.S.: I would appreciate an early reply regarding your books. The person whom I have in mind to do the job teaches at a California university and can begin working on them as soon as the present school term end.