

## **BC ALPHA WORK REPORT (JULY 2012 – JUNE 2013)**

**5 - 21 July 2012** The [2012 Peace & Reconciliation Study Tour to Asia for Educators](#) was participated by over 30 teachers and volunteers from Canada and US including 5 sponsored by BC ALPHA. Participants met with survivors of war crimes committed by Japanese Imperial Army, visited historical sites and attended seminars with scholars and lawyers supporting the redress movement. The cities visited including Shanghai, Nanjing, Harbin, Seoul and Hong Kong. The participants explored the issues on “comfort women”, Nanking Massacre, forced labour and the Unit 731 – Japanese biological and chemical warfare.

**July – October 2012** Working Group on re-designing our organization website: [www.alpha-canada.org](http://www.alpha-canada.org) completed the re-structuring of the website. The new website was launched in October. A set of 6 bookmarks was designed and used for the promotion of the website.

**19 October 2012** Information table was set up at the [BC Social Studies Teachers' Association Provincial Conference](#) at Vancouver Technical Secondary School to promote the newly re-designed ALPHA website and related works of BC ALPHA.

**16 – 18 November 2012** Information table was set up at the [National Council for Social Studies Annual Conference](#) held in Seattle to promote the newly re-designed ALPHA website and related works of BC ALPHA. A workshop on “Unveiling Canada and US Teaching Guides on Asian WWII Atrocities” was conducted at the conference. A 2006 Peace & Reconciliation Study Tour participant, Doug Cervi of Oakcrest High School, NJ conducted the workshop together with Thekla Lit, president of BC ALPHA.

**20 November 2012** 2012 Peace & Reconciliation Study Tour participant, Randy Matheson of Crofton House School made a presentation on **Ethical Dimensions of Japan's Medical and Biochemical Warfare Research** to students of Crofton House. Representatives of BC ALPHA were invited to attend and to provide feedbacks for future presentation at the 2012 IHRDSS.

**November 2012** **Donation Appeal** was sent out to solicit donations to support the work of BC ALPHA.

**6 & 7 December 2012** The 4th [International Human Rights Day Symposium: Human Rights in the Asia-Pacific 1931-1945](#) was held at Vancouver Technical Secondary School sponsored by Vancouver School Board. The symposium was organized to help students better understand and reflect on issues of human rights violations during the Asia-Pacific War (1931-1945) and to make connections to present day local and global issues. Videos of the symposium are available at the following YouTube links:-

- Welcoming Remarks - <http://youtu.be/wK-FjEV8v7Y>
- Special Remarks by Joy Kogawa (Dec 6) - <http://youtu.be/gsqdRsIEfyw>
- Special Remarks by Joy Kogawa (Dec 7) - <http://youtu.be/CYs36cJzeYk>
- Canadian Students & Teachers Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre - <http://youtu.be/saH5skJ63ck>

English & Chinese news report are available at the following YouTube links:-

- <http://youtu.be/bF0nXXZRsk>
- <http://youtu.be/SkzTrIisUYk>
- <http://youtu.be/wRSX6kcnZQg>
- <http://youtu.be/zw8C3xPWuBs>
- <http://youtu.be/nvBwUXpVwqc>
- <http://youtu.be/pngSHB7yDNY>

Teachers of Social Studies 11, History 12, Law 12 & Social Justice 12 registered to bring their students to attend the Symposium. Around 800 students and teachers from 14 secondary schools of 7 school districts participated in the Symposium which had 3 plenary sessions and the following 7 workshops:-

- “Comfort Women” & Violence Against Women in War & Peace
- Canadian Hong Kong veterans as POWs: Wounds and Closure
- Human Experimentations & Biochemical Warfare of Dr. Josef Mengele & Dr. Shiro Ishii - Role & Ethics of Medical Personnel and Scientists
- Rescuers and Global Citizenship in the Rape of Nanking
- Forgotten Holocaust – Atrocious Human Rights Violation and its Impact on Victims Now and Then
- Ethical Dimensions of Japan’s Medical and Biochemical Warfare Research
- Up Close with Survivors

**9 December 2012** Jointly organized by BC ALPHA and Historic Joy Kogawa House, representatives of Japanese and Chinese Canadian communities along with more than 60 concerned Canadians crowded into the tiny living room at Historic Joy Kogawa House to **commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre** and to start a historic roundtable discussion to call for ongoing cooperation and understanding between Japanese and Chinese Canadians to overcome the tension between Japan and China.

The roundtable included the following discussants:

- Joy Kogawa of Historic Joy Kogawa House
- Thekla Lit of BC Association for Learning and Preserving the History of WWII in Asia (ALPHA)
- Judy Hanazawa and Tatsuo Kage of the Japanese Canadian Citizens Association Human Rights Committee
- Satoko Norimatsu of Peace Philosophy Centre and Vancouver Save Article 9 Group
- Bill Chu of Canadians for Reconciliation Society
- Ellen Woodsworth, former Vancouver City Councilor

Participants at the gathering also called for the public to observe the 75th anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre on Thursday, December 13. Videos of the roundtable discussion and candle light vigil are available at

- <http://youtu.be/1LUmxBO2Y-Y>
- <http://youtu.be/ytVBjcaWxBQ>

Media report are available at the following YouTube links:-

- <http://youtu.be/thml-1r-3y8>
- <http://youtu.be/wRSX6kcnZQg>

**22 December 2013** Follow-up roundtable for peace & reconciliation was held at Historic Joy Kogawa House attended by Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Caucasian Canadians. As a result, a Facebook page [Denial No More - for justice and reconciliation in Asia](#) was created. It calls for people of Japan and its new government to courageously and honourably acknowledge historical facts of atrocities committed by Imperial Japan against people of Asia and Allied POWs during the periods of colonization and wars of aggression from the late 19th century to Japan's defeat in the Asia-Pacific War in 1945.

**22 January, 2013** BC ALPHA issued an [open letter to people of Japan](#) to ask people in Japan to participate in the larger reconciliation by formally acknowledging the country's past wrongdoing and by standing in solidarity with the victims from this grim period in history.

**14 February 2013** Representative of BC ALPHA was invited to speak about Japan's Military Sexual Slavery issues at the One Billion Rising – Women Memorial Project Event at Thornton Park in support of the global activist movement to end violence against women and girls.

**17 March 2013** Bookmarks to promote the newly re-designed website were distributed at the BC Teachers Federation annual conference.

**11 – 12 April 2013** BC ALPHA is one of the partners and sponsoring organizations of the bi-annual [Social Justice Conference 2013: From the Personal to the Universal](#) for students of the Maple Ridge School District. It is a two day conference held at the ACT Theatre and Riverside Centre in Maple Ridge. BC ALPHA sponsored the following 3 workshops:-

- All That is Necessary for Evil to Triumph is for Good Men to do Nothing – Rescuers and Global Citizenship in the Rape of Nanking by Karin Dhar of York House School
- Ethical Dimensions of Japan's Medical and Biochemical Warfare Research by Randy Matheson of Crofton House School
- Military Sexual Slavery During World War Two (“The Comfort Women”) by Christine Paget of West Vancouver School District and Heather Evans of BC ALPHA

**22 June 2013** Representatives of BC ALPHA were invited to the annual luncheon meeting of the [Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association](#) (HKVCA), BC Region. Lee Naylor, Education Director of the BC Region who participated in the 2012 Peace & Reconciliation Study Tour made a presentation of the Study Tour as well and reported on his participation in BC ALPHA's International Human Rights Day Study Symposium in the last 4 years. The HKVCA expressed appreciation for the opportunities provided for them to share the legacy of Canadian Hong Kong Veterans to the younger generations.

***Prepared by Thekla Lit, President of BC ALPHA***  
**For AGM on June 28, 2013**