

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds

Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.1.1-14

Item Title A Digital Copy of Sections of the Program for the 1958 World Judo Championship

Item Date 1958



Item Description

The digital copy of the booklet contains greeting messages for attendees of the World Judo Championship, in Japanese and English, from Prince Takamatsu, President of the World Judo Championship Risei Kano, Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Aiichiro Fujiyama and Minister of Education Kokichi Nadao as well as the official rules of Kodokan Judo, the official judo style of the tournament, information on the International Judo Federation, the timetable for the judo matches and the history of Japanese and foreign judo.

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Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.2

Item Title A Digital Copy of a Newspaper Article Entitled Sasaki - Father of Canadian Judo

Item Date 1977



STEVE SASAKI, LEFT, CHATS WITH YOSHIO KATSUTA AT THE CANADIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

### *Katsuta began sport in Alberta*

## Sasaki - father of Canadian judo

By GARRY ALLISON

Herald Sports Writer

The Canadian judo championships were held in Lethbridge's post Sportsplex last Saturday, and in the crowd was a very interested spectator.

Steve Sasaki of Vancouver, 72 years of age, sat quietly through the day-long affair, hands clasped in his lap, occasionally leaning over to chat with his companion, Yoshio Katsuta of Raymond.

Though Sasaki displayed no visible emotion, he had to have a large amount of satisfaction wringing up inside of him throughout the day.

It was Steve Sasaki who first introduced the sport of judo into Canada back in 1926.

"I first introduced Kodokan Judo in 1926," the soft-spoken Japanese-born father of Canadian judo stated.

"Before that time there was ju jitsu, but it was just for show, and I was not satisfied with it. I wanted the judo spirit, not a business.

"Judo is a mental and physical process together. It is like a train on a track, if one side develops too much in the wrong direction, then the train is finished. If the mental aspect of judo gets ahead of the physical, or the other way around, then the man is finished. This is the main point of judo.

"I started the first club in Vancouver with about 30 students. After about seven years there were 3,000 taking part in 12 gyms. In fact, at one of those branches, Mission City, a young Yoshi Senda was a member.

"After the war the Japanese were scattered all over Canada, so I visited some of the oldest children from my classes at Toronto and helped organize a club there, about 1947.

"We organized each province and from there the provinces got together and formed a Canadian organization. In 1958 we went to Japan with the first Canadian to ever compete in the world judo championships. At the same time there was an international meeting, and with the expanded Canadian situation, we joined the world association.

"In Kodokan Judo you mainly help each other. You use the smallest energy to get the biggest result. You use the other fellow's energy, weight and power to your advantage. If he pushes, you pull, and if he pulls you push. It is not supposed to be muscle power.

"At first only Japanese joined our clubs, but then others joined. In 1922 the RCMP in Vancouver began taking lessons. I taught until 1941 in Vancouver and never received one cent, it was all at my own expense."

Sasaki's companion at the judo championships was also a judo pioneer.

Yoshio Katsuta introduced the sport to Alberta.

"I started in Raymond in 1943 and also had a club in Picture Butte," Katsuta stated. "The first club was composed of second-generation Japanese, town police, RCMP and white citizens as well. There were about 40-50 in the original club.

"I taught for 22 years in Raymond, and then went back to Japan for a holiday in 1966, and the club folded. I might start another one, but I'm getting too old now. I'm not so young any more."

An assistant of Katsuta's in his early days in Raymond was the same Yoshi Senda who began in Vancouver with Sasaki. Senda is now the head of the judo program at the YMCA and University of Lethbridge and has gained an international reputation for his expertise.

"I taught the first woman in my club about 1950," Katsuta stated. "This October the first official women's Canadian championship will be held in the sport."

Both men are accredited combatants in their sport. Sasaki holds the highest dan, or degree, of black belt of any man in Canada, the seventh. Katsuta is holder of the fifth dan black belt.

From the 30 original members in a club in Vancouver judo has grown to where more than 50,000 take part in the sport across Canada.

Steve Sasaki had every right to sit quietly, in calm reflection at the Sportsplex, and watch the product of his labor, the 16th annual Canadian Judo Championships.

Item Description

The digital copy of the newspaper article "Sasaki - father of Canadian judo" contains a story about the founding of judo in Canada by Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki, founder of the first judo club in Canada in 1926, and Yoshio Katsuta, founder of the first Albertan judo club in Raymond, Alberta in 1943, as well as some of the highlights of the development of judo in Canada. The article is written in relation to the coverage of the Canadian judo championship in Lethbridge in 1977 which was attended by both Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki and Yoshio Katsuta. In the image accompanying the article, Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki is seated on the right while Yoshio Katsuta is seated on the left.

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds

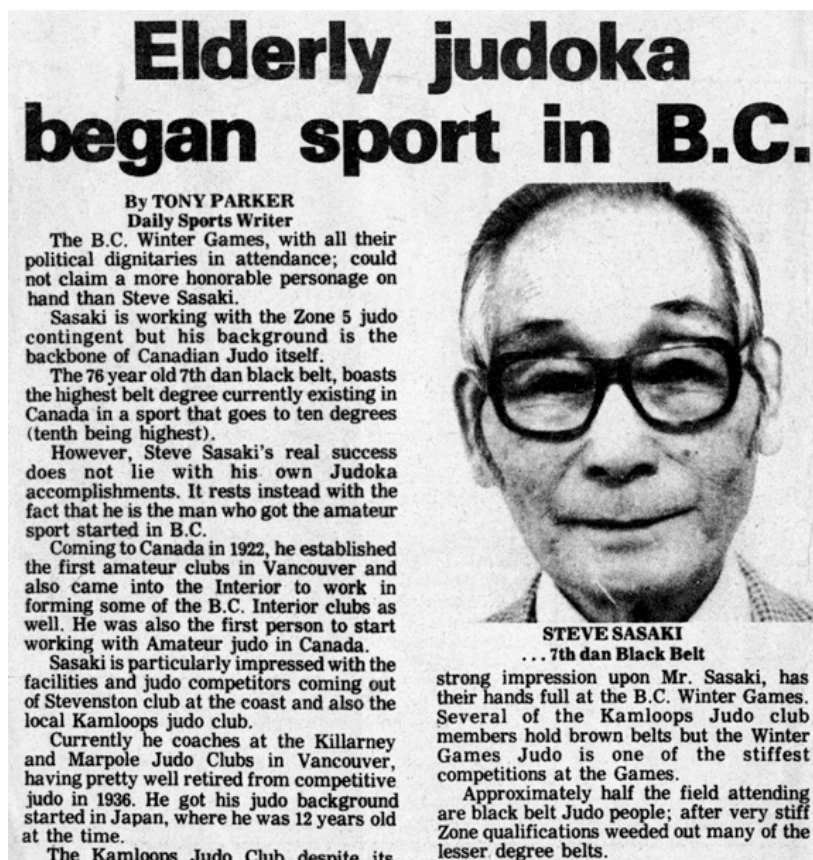
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.3

Item Title A Digital Copy of a Newspaper Article Entitled Elderly Judoka Began Sport in BC

Item Date 1979



Item Description

The digital copy of the newspaper article "Elderly judoka began sport in BC" contains a story about the founding of judo in Canada by Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki. It highlights when Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki began practicing judo, when he came to Canada and his achievements in regards to his own judo ranking and the development of the sport in Canada. In the image accompanying the article, Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki is pictured wearing glasses.

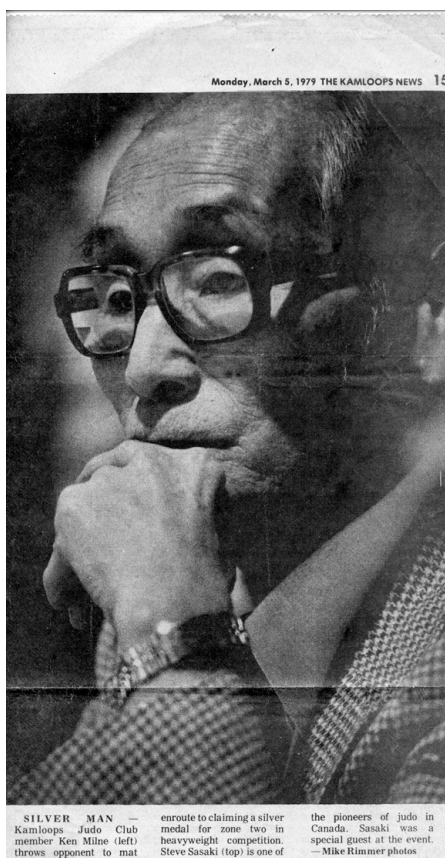
Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds  
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.4

Item Title A Digital Copy of a Newspaper Image Description with No Title

Item Date 1979



Item Description

The digital copy of the newspaper image description that, in relation to Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki, reads "Steve Sasaki (top) is one of the pioneers of judo in Canada. Sasaki was special guest at this event". The image shows Sasaki with sitting with his hand underneath his chin.

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds

Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.5

Item Title A Digital Copy of a Newspaper Entitled Legendary Master a Judo Juggernaut

Item Date 1986

**Legendary master a judo juggernaut**

By MICK MALONEY

It hurts when Steve Sasaki is the one-finger grab on a back of your hand and rids it forward more than degrees until your fingers are pointing directly at or against. It hurts with a kind of pain that makes a open your mouth and be a huge hole of air. You expect a little pain when you feign a blow at an opponent with eight Dan in judo (that's 13 runs of the judo proficiency ladder and only two short-steps from the pinnacle of a sport).

What you don't expect is a strength with which the old is applied and your complete willingness to follow this frail looking old gentleman says here to "vent further pressure on being administered. You are, after all, half-foot taller and 40 pounds heavier than Mr. Sasaki. Not to mention more than 40 years younger.

But the pain is fleeting. The 83-year-old, five-foot-six, 135-pound judo expert applies the hold only long enough for the camera to record your open-mouthed image. He is a gentle man who doesn't like causing others discomfort.

Mr. Sasaki began teaching judo in Vancouver in 1964, two years after coming here from Japan. A member of the Canadian Amateur Sports Hall of Fame, he is recognized as the "father of judo in Canada.

By the 1930s, Mr. Sasaki was teaching judo to RCMP officers from his Powell Street dojo and travelling to various locations around the Lower Mainland to instruct locals in the finer points of the "defensive" martial art. He is a dignified man with a strong moral code and a high level of integrity. It must have hurt a lot when he was relocated to the Tashme Internment camp when war broke out with Japan. He's not bitter, though. Mr. Sasaki is proud to be Canadian.

He organized judo classes at Tashme and put on a "happy face" to try and keep up morale among his fellow internees. After the war, Mr. Sasaki and his wife Sumiko were relocated to Ashford, but not many employers were willing to hire a middle-aged Japanese man.

The couple started a commercial laundry service for hotels and mining companies. It thrived under their careful management. Mr. Sasaki moved bundles of clothes and bedding aside to give him room for evening judo classes. He also studied up on how to set bones so he could administer necessary repairs for free if a student was accidentally hurt. When word got around about his skill as a bone mender, demands on his time were such that he only had a few hours a day to run his paying business.

"The wife is a very important part of judo because she makes a wage and pays my expenses," says Mr. Sasaki, an inextinguishable smile that would do credit to the Mona Lisa curling around the corners of his mouth.

He and Sumiko and their family moved to Vancouver in 1966.

When Mr. Sasaki speaks about judo, the oriental master who taught TV's Kung Fu character, Caine, Although the comparison is bold you hesitate to use it for fear of revealing a remarkable athlete.

"Mentally and physically they have to grow together," says Mr. Sasaki, about learning the martial art which relies upon defense to make an adversary's attack work against him.

"Most people just depend on muscle power when venting off an attacker, but we don't. There are limitations with muscle power, not the science of judo has no limit. Nobody throws you down, you throw yourself down. That, to me, is judo."

Mr. Sasaki was presented with a medal from the emperor of Japan and a huge leg of sake for his contributions to the public through judo.

Judo expert Steve Sasaki arches the eyebrows of Courier reporter Mick Maloney during a judo demonstration on the Sasaki family patio. "He's lucky I'm still weak from a bout with the flu," said Maloney, gingerly massaging his writing arm after the workout. Jim Harrison Photo.

He doesn't drink, though. He gave up drinking and smoking long ago because he didn't think it would look good to his young students.

Mr. Sasaki could easily turn 60. If you doubt he's still in fighting trim attend one of his classes and ask for a demonstration of the one-finger grab. He still travels the city, building up community centre judo programs by offering students his 40-plus years of experience at bargain rates of a few dollars a class.

Once the program is thriving, Mr. Sasaki moves on to another centre. He recently turned a community judo program over to Mr. Maki, a former captain of the Kyoto University judo team. The Kerrisdale class is large, with students ranging in age from small children to adults.

Mr. Sasaki believes Dunbar Community Centre might be the place to move to next. He doesn't think his sport will fade away even though it has lost ground to more offensive martial arts like karate.

"If people think about it I don't think judo will ever die out," he says, simply.

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**bridges**

Item Description

The digital copy of the newspaper article "Legendary master a judo juggernaut" contains a story about the history of Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki's judo practice, his achievements and describes how, in Sasaki's later life, he finds judo clubs in distress and reinvigorates them. In the image accompanying the article, Sasaki is pictured grappling the arm of Mick Maloney, the author of the article.

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds  
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.6

Item Title A Digital Copy of a Newspaper Entitled CBC Skates off with TV Contract

Item Date 1986



Item Description The digital copy of the newspaper article "CBC skates off with TV contract" contains a story about how the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) won a bid to televise the world figure skating championships, formerly held, in Canada, exclusively by Canadian Television (CTV). The second half of the article is about the recent inductees to the Canadian Amateur Sports Hall of Fame which includes Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki. In the image accompanying the article, the inductees are holding their induction certificates, from left to right, Hugh Fisher, Bob Sleeth, an unidentified man in a suit, Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki, Sue Holloway and Hans Fogh.



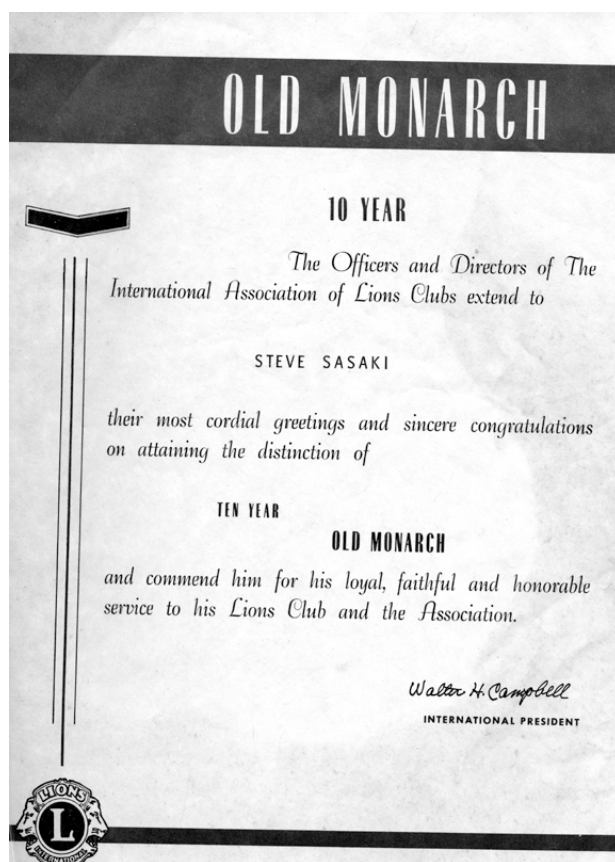
Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre  
www.nikkeimuseum.org

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds  
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia  
File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.8

Item Title A Digital Copy of a Certificate from the Lions Club for Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki

Item Date 1980



Item Description

The digital copy is a certificate for Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki giving him the title Old Monarch to mark his ten years of involvement with and service to the Lions Club.



Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds

Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.9

Item Title A Digital Copy of an Invitation to Dinner from the Prime Minister of Japan Yasuhiro Nakasone and the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark for Shigetaka

Item Date 1986



*In honour of His Excellency Yasuhiro Nakasone  
Prime Minister of Japan  
and Mrs. Nakasone*

*The Right Honourable Joe Clark  
Secretary of State for External Affairs  
requests the pleasure of the company of*

*Mr. & Mrs. Steve Shigetaka S. Sasaki*

*at a dinner in the Regency Ballroom  
of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver  
on Tuesday, January 14, 1986  
at 1830 hours*

*To remind*

*Lounge Suit*

Item Description

The digital copy is of an invitation addressed to Mr and Mrs Steve Shigetaka Sasaki from Yasuhiro Nakasone, Prime minister of Japan, his wife and Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, inviting Mr and Mrs Sasaki to dinner at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Tuesday, January 14th, 1986 in Vancouver, BC.

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds

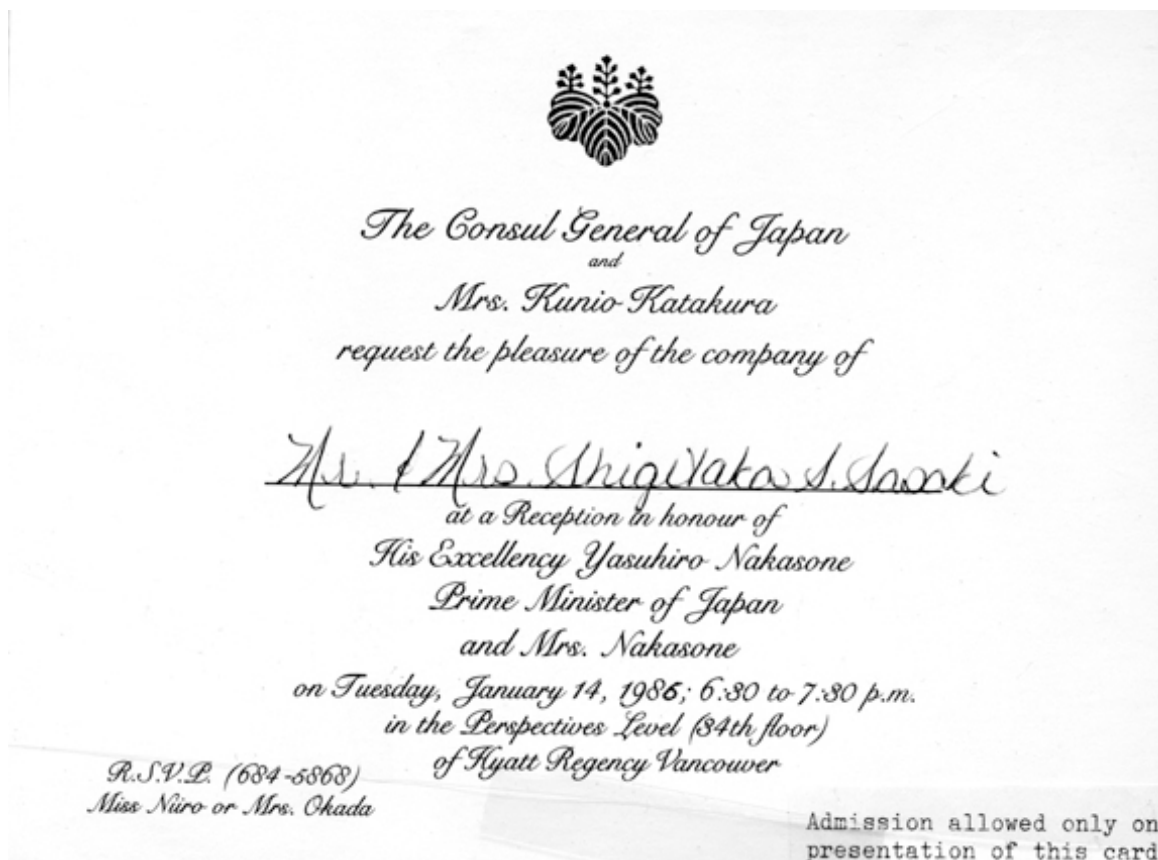
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.10

Item Title A Digital Copy of an Invitation to a Reception for Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki by Yasuhiro Nakasone and His Wife

Item Date 1986



Item Description

The digital copy is of an invitation addressed to Mr and Mrs Shigetaka Sasaki from Yasuhiro Nakasone, Prime minister of Japan, his wife inviting them to a reception on Tuesday January, 14th, 1986 at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Vancouver, BC.

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds

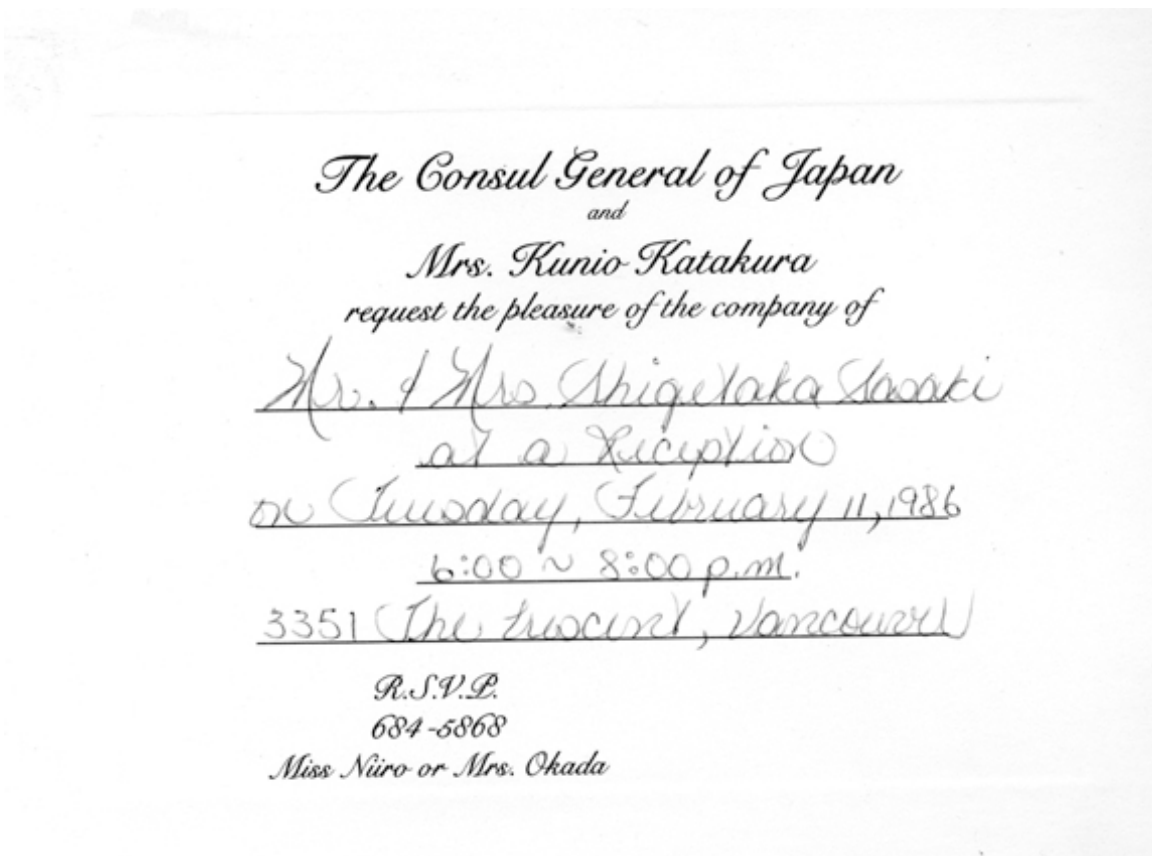
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.11

Item Title A Digital Copy of an Invitation to a Reception for Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki by Yasuhiro Nakasone and His Wife

Item Date 1986



Item Description The digital copy is of an invitation addressed to Mr and Mrs Shigetaka Sasaki from Yasuhiro Nakasone, Prime minister of Japan, and his wife that invites them to a reception on Tuesday January, 14th, 1986 at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Vancouver, BC.

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds

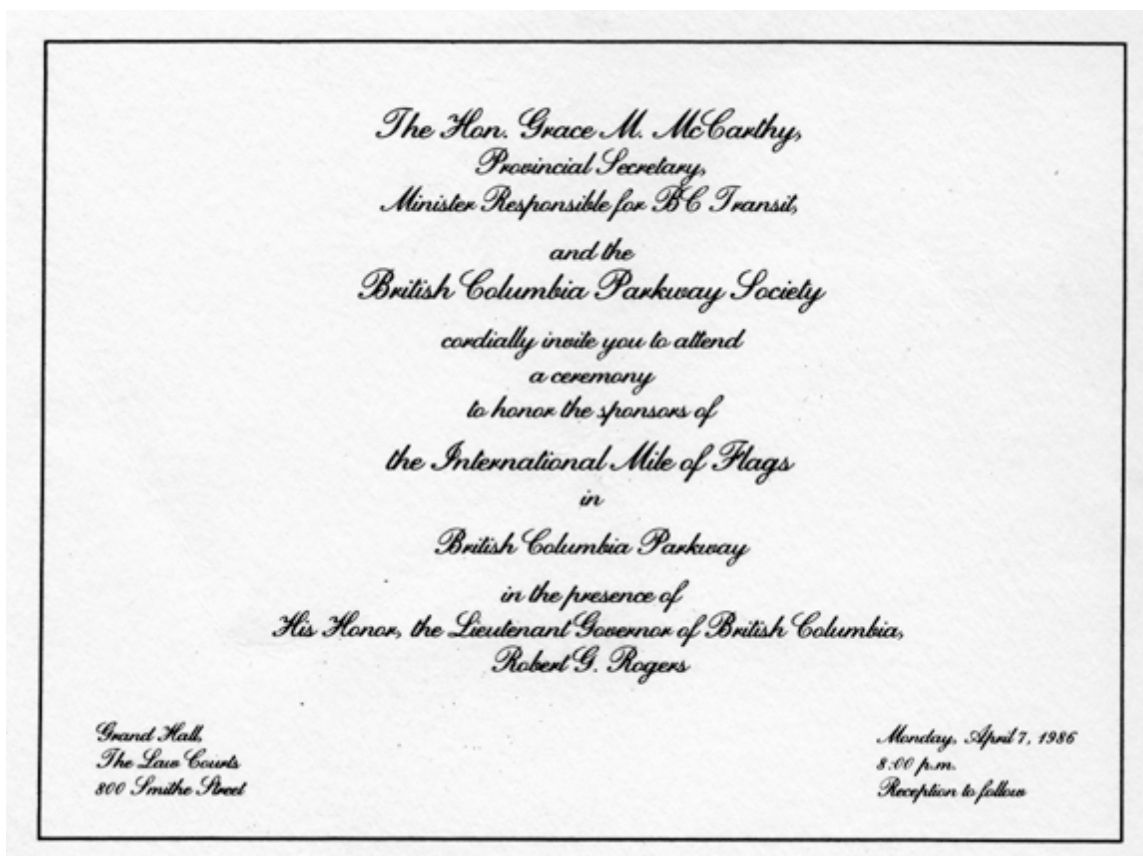
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.12

Item Title A Digital Copy of an Invitation to a Reception for Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki by Yasuhiro Nakasone and His Wife

Item Date 1986



Item Description

The digital copy is of an invitation addressed to Mr and Mrs Shigetaka Sasaki from Yasuhiro Nakasone, Prime minister of Japan, his wife inviting them to a reception on Tuesday January, 14th, 1986 at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Vancouver, BC.

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds

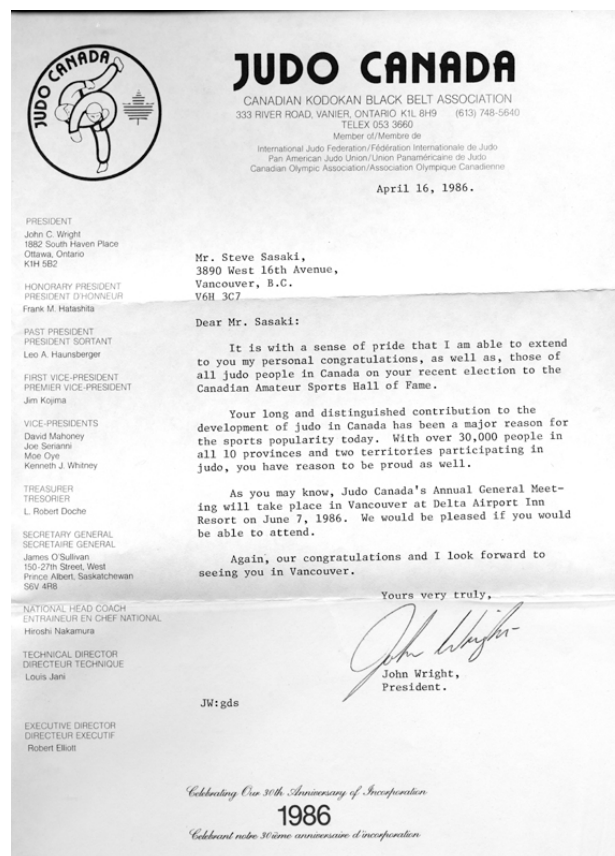
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia

File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.13

Item Title A Digital Copy of an Invitation to Judo Canada's Annual General meeting for Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki

Item Date 1986



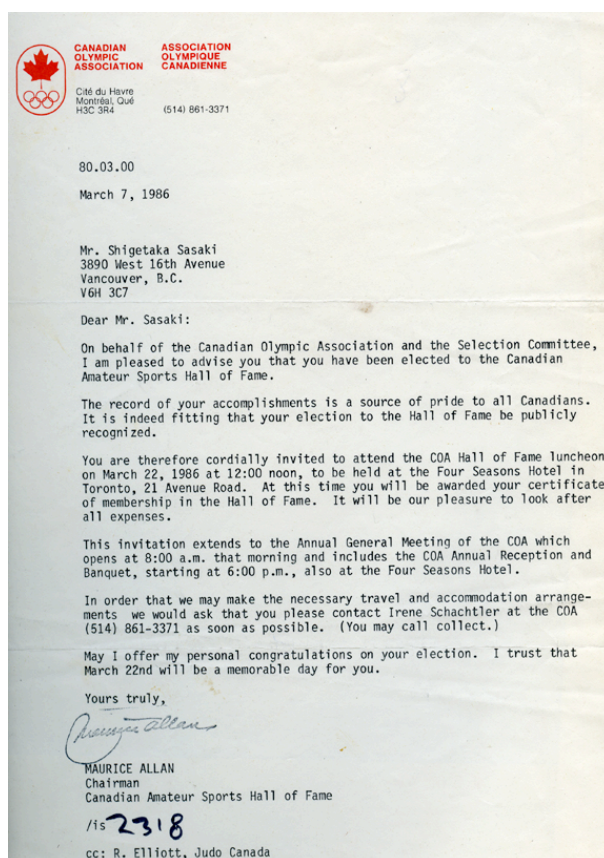
Item Description The digital copy is of an invitation addressed to Mr Sasaki, Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki, from the President of Judo Canada, John Wright, congratulating him on his induction into the Canadian Amateur Sports Hall of Fame and inviting him to the annual general meeting for Judo Canada on June 7th, 1986 at the Delta Airport Resort in Vancouver, BC.

Collection Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki Family fonds  
Series Judo Clippings and Textual Memorabilia  
File

Accession Number 2011.64.2.14

Item Title A Digital Copy of a Invitation Notifying Shigetaka (Steve) Sasaki of His Admission into the Canadian Amateur Sports Hall of Fame and Inviting him to the Induction Ceremony

Item Date 1986



Item Description

The digital copy is of a letter to Mr Shigetaka Sasaki from the chairman of the Canadian Amateur Sports Hall of Fame, Maurice Allen, notifying him that he has been selected to be inducted into the Canadian Amateur Sports Hall of Fame and inviting him to a ceremony on March 22, 1986 at the Four Seasons hotel in Toronto, ON.