

## **In search of your roots? The Consulate-General of Japan offers help**

The New England JACL has exciting news for New England area Japanese Americans who would like to do a genealogy search in Japan. We received the following from the Consulate-General of Japan in Boston.

- The Japanese Foreign Ministry is willing to cooperate as much as possible with Japanese Americans searching for their roots in Japan.
- The Japanese Consulate would be able to try to research general information such as the names of ancestors' likely birth prefecture/city, if the inquirer can provide certain information. The Consulate could also request the prefecture in question to provide the current name of an ancestor's birthplace if the name has been changed.
- Each inquiry will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Cooperation will vary depending on the circumstances of each case. You shouldn't hesitate to confer with the Japanese Consulate if you are unable to make progress through the local Japanese American community.
- Please note that identifying current relatives will be difficult unless the inquirer has sufficient information about his/her ancestors. In addition, local municipalities might be reluctant to disclose information because of their concerns for individual privacy.
- The Ministry also suggests taking advantage of the tour opportunities provided by JNTO (Japan National Tourist Organization) for Japanese Americans who would like to pursue their roots and know their ancestor's birthplace. For more information go to [www.japantravelinfo.com/nikkei](http://www.japantravelinfo.com/nikkei). This web site also provides some helpful information on how to begin your search for some basic genealogy information.

In order to make an inquiry at the Consulate-General's office in Boston, contact:

Mr. Shinichi Kobayashi, Consul in Charge of General Affairs  
Consulate-General of Japan  
Federal Reserve Plaza, 14<sup>th</sup> floor  
600 Atlantic Avenue  
Boston, MA 02210  
Phone: 617-973-9772, ext. 141  
E-mail: [shinichi.kobayashi@mofa.go.jp](mailto:shinichi.kobayashi@mofa.go.jp)

Before contacting the Consulate General, please have the following information available where possible:

- Japanese name of your ancestors (including maiden name)
- Port in Japan from which they embarked
- Year they immigrated to the USA
- Any other useful information (name of ship they were on, date of departure from Japan, copy of passport or documents issued by the Japanese Government, etc.)