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ビクトリア盛岡友好協会

VICTORIA-MORIOKA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY

5273 Parker Ave., Victoria, B.C. V8Y 2N1

Phone (250) 658-1569

Email -wrmccreadie@outlook.com

Good Afternoon Ladies & Gentlemen and Students.

It is an honour to greet you on the wonderful occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the twinning of our Cities. Forty-one years ago Sakashita-san came to Victoria with a dream of uniting our Cities as sisters. He was inspired by Dr. Nitobe's dream of being "A Bridge Across the Pacific". One year later his dream came to fruition when Mayor Pollen of Victoria and Mayor Ohta of Morioka signed the twinning documents.

Over the years since signing the agreement the citizens of both Cities have enjoyed reciprocal visits and made close friendships. Together they have enjoyed sporting events, cultural exchanges and student educational exchanges. The relationship has left its mark on each City. Morioka has an example of First Nations Art work in the Totem Pole in Morioka. Victoria has benefited with a healing garden at the Royal Jubilee Hospital designed by Paul Alison of Victoria and Fujimura-san of Morioka. This Garden has transformed a barren space full

of weeds into a beautiful healing garden used by patients and staff to relax and let nature help in their recovery.

After the earthquake and tsunami of 2011 which devastated the East Coast of Iwate Prefecture the citizens of Victoria rallied around their friends in Morioka and supported the morale of the students in the coastal cities. As part of the fund raising the Victoria friends created tee shirts with the slogan “Gambere Nippon”. In appreciation of the efforts of their friends in Victoria, Sakashita-san and Taguchi-san of Morioka created the Friendship Bell and made it as a special gift to the Citizens of Victoria. Today the Friendship Bell is located in Quadra Park close to Victoria’s Inner Harbour.

The future of the Sister City relationship rests in hands of the students who have and will visit Victoria in the future. These students should be encouraged to keep in touch with their home-stay families and the school friends they have met during the exchanges. Speaking for myself, I would hope that the students would find the same love for the sister city relationship that I have felt over the 39 years I have been involved with the Sister City relationship.

Yours truly,

William McCreadie, President, Victoria Morioka
Friendship Society.