

Hasselmann, Lisa

*Fujioka Family Farm Landmark Nomination*

**Mailing City** Vashon

**Website**

[www.instagram.com/forestgardenfarm](https://www.instagram.com/forestgardenfarm)

**Council District** 8

**Short Project Description**

Nominate the Fujioka Family Farm on Vashon Island for King County Landmark status with the assistance of historic preservation consultant Holly Taylor.

**Project Discipline / Choice Criterion**

Preservation of Historic Place/Artifact

**Venue Address**

Fujioka Family Farm  
10515 SW 140th St  
Vashon WA 98070

**Amount Requested** \$8,000

**Total Project Budget** \$8,000

**Venue Council District** 8

**Project Venue Notes or Comments**

We will be working with our consultant Holly Taylor to determine whether the Landmark Nomination should include the entire 23.9 acre property or just the northern 10 acres that was cleared and farmed by the Fujioka Family and where all structures both historic and current are located.

**Project Description**

The Fujioka Family Farm was stewarded for most of the 19th century by Sadaji and Tsune Fujioka and their eldest son, Tashio. The family with six surviving children rented one of the two residences on the property, the 1915 cedar shingled house ("Hanson Cabin") from at least 1930-1934 and then returned after incarceration during WWII to eventually purchase the property and move into the 1927 main house ("Fujioka Farm House"). In the 1950s, Tashio Fujioka won multiple awards from Washington State for growing over 5-tons of strawberries per acre on the northern 10 acres. Both residences and four outbuildings were lived in and used for farming by the Fujioka family and still maintain the overall form, massing, location and primary fenestration as when the farm was in operation. Sadaji and Tsune's youngest children, Mary and Susie sold the property to Lisa Hasselmann and Chris Hedgpeth in 2014 who returned the property to farming and still harvest fuki and apples planted by the Fujiokas to sell at their on-farm farmstand and at the Vashon Farmers Market.

The 23.9 acre property was clear cut of its native evergreen forests in the 1800s and was owned at the turn of the century by the Port Blakely Mill Company. The first known structure on the property, a two-story, cedar shingled residence ("Hanson Cabin") was built approximately 1915 when the land was owned by John L. Hanson. A second residence, "Fujioka Farm House," was built in 1927. The first clear evidence of the Fujioka family residing at the property is a 1932 photograph of the family of eight in front of the Hanson Cabin. According to Martha Fujioka Nakamoto, the Fujioka's eldest daughter, after Susie Fujioka is born in 1930 at the "Lande" property, the family moved to the "Dyrness"...where Tashio [Fujioka] now lives." Martha Fujioka ~2005 autobiographical history, *The Yesteryears*, p. 2. She continued:

Our new home and place was 5 acres [the property is 23.9 acres and was that same size at that time], a large house with no electricity or running water. Dad dug a well [which still remains] so there was plenty of water. Every day we manually drew water in buckets, carried to house for use in kitchen, laundry and furo (bath). You can imagine the buckets full we had to carry. The place was rented under proxy (W. Tanamura) since Tashio was still under age.

*The Yesteryears*, p. 3.

The Fujioka's lease ended and they were forced to leave the property about 1934. During this time, according to later accounts by Tashio Fujioka, a midwife lived and worked out of the Fujioka Farm House and multiple babies were born in what for decades became the elder Fujiokas bedroom and is now our dining room.

The Fujioka family was the largest family, two parents and six children, to be forcibly removed from Vashon in 1942. Although most of the Fujioka's children did not return to Vashon after incarceration, Sadaji, Tsune, Tashio and their youngest daughter Susie did. In 1946, they built a three bedroom addition onto the Fujioka Farm House and were able to purchase the property in 1951. At some point prior to their purchase, the Hanson Cabin had its front and rear porches/wings removed and it was moved about 300 feet south away from SW 140th where it currently resides. More research is needed to determine who constructed the four currently standing outbuildings (a chicken coop, a shed with the original privy, and two garages) but they all appear clearly in the 1961 aerial photograph from Pacific Aerial Surveys and appear in Fujioka family photographs from the mid-1950s.

Sadaji, Tsune and Tashio farmed the northern portion of the property mostly in strawberries and lingonberries. In the 1950s, Tashio won multiple awards by the State of Washington for growing more than 5 tons of strawberries per acre. One of the metal signs he was awarded hangs at our current farmstand. In the 1970s, Tashio Fujioka stopped farming and went to work at the post office. He planted a number of still-standing trees like red and black pines that are traditionally planted at a Japanese garden entrance and five coast redwoods that are now over 100' and are the tallest trees on the property.

When we purchased the property in 2014, we mainly focused on returning the area around the house to farmland in order to support ourselves as organic farmers and to forest stewardship so we could restore the majority of the property to native evergreen forest. We did so in order to find a fulfilling and healthy profession, connect more with the land and address climate change. We have added permanent farming beds, three green houses and a covered wash station in the past 10 years. As farmers, we still benefit from the Fujioka's farming efforts. We harvest and sell Fuki, a traditional Japanese vegetable that the family planted near the irrigation pond. We harvest and sell King apples from a tree they planted near the Hanson Cabin. Our efforts to work in the soil are easier because they removed large amounts of rocks from the glacial till soil.

We feel incredibly lucky to have discovered the rich cultural history of the property and the connections the Fujioka family descendants still have to the place where the family would gather for the holidays every winter. We have made minimal changes to the structures on the property - in order to preserve them until we had the time and resources to begin restoration. We put metal roofs onto the Hanson Cabin and one of the small sheds to replace dilapidated tarps. We added structural supports inside the Hanson Cabin to support the new roof and in one the garages in order to support the solar array we installed in 2015.

At this point, we are able to earn a basic living by farming and are turning to needed repairs and restorations on the structures. We have just begun working with an architect, Hoshide Wanzer, who is concurrently working on restoration of the Mukai Fruit Barrelling Plant and a structural engineer to move forward with returning the Hanson Cabin to a functioning residence and then make improvements on the Fujioka Family House so that it can survive another 100 years. Having two residences on the property would allow us to have seasonal farm interns who otherwise would not be able to find affordable housing on Vashon.

We want the historic value of these resources to be preserved and shared and that is why we are embarking on this landmarking process. This nomination feels urgent as Mary and Susie Fujioka have passed away and none of the Fujioka descendants now live in the State of Washington. The Fujioka family was not well recognized on Vashon due to a number of reasons including that their family name was mis-dictated in every U.S. census. The descendants, especially Martha's grandson Trent, have brought their history to life by continuing to visit and share photographs and documents to tell their family's incredible story of resilience and environmental stewardship. As the buildings are in disrepair, we hope to preserve them before they and their stories slip away.

September - November 2024: Conduct research on the history of the property, related historical themes, and physical changes over time to buildings and landscape, examining

physical and digital collections including the Vashon Maury Island Heritage Association, Vashon Library, Washington State Historical Society, Pacific Lutheran University Archives, King County Archives, Puget Sound Regional Archives and other regional repositories;

November -December 2024: Prepare King County Landmark Nomination Form, including property data, physical description, and statement of significance;

November – December 2024: Prepare associated photographic documentation, maps and other required nomination attachments;

January 2025: Revise and amend nomination submission as needed, based on feedback from King County Historic Preservation Program staff and other reviewers.

### **Project Impact**

As a commercial produce and flower farm, Forest Garden Farm, the property and what is happening on it have high public visibility for a privately owned parcel. Our nearly year-round on-farm farmstand sees a few thousand visitors a year. We have used it as a medium of communicating the continuity of farming efforts from the Fujioka Family Farm to Forest Garden Farm. See photograph of farmstand history display and brochure. We also sell at the Vashon Farmers Market every season May through October in the center of town. We have our farm brochure at our market booth and we have discussed our farm's history with many community members while they shop.

Multiple times a year, we welcome community members on farm tours. The largest to date was our participation in 2023 in the Vashon Center for the Arts Garden Tour. Over 1200 attendees walked our farm in a weekend and they had our farm brochures laminated as guides discussing the Fujioka's farming history and a small display with more information about the property's history. We also regularly host farming workshops for new farmers.

We look for partners to help us share the history of the property. Holly Taylor has offered to expand the presentation she will make at the King County Landmarks Commission designation hearing, and turn it into a public presentation. Bruce Haulman and Elsa Croonquist at the Vashon Heritage Museum have stated they would welcome a zoom talk or some other to-be-determined format as part of their lecture series in the fall or next spring. Other possible partners, with whom we have previously worked, are Mukai Farm & Garden and/or the Vashon Island Growers Association for collaborating on something with a broader focus. We have previously collaborated in other projects honoring the Fujioka's family history in the Revisiting Washington project that is a tour of Japanese American Agricultural sites and in a two-part documentary on the Japanese American presence on the island. See [https://revisitwa.org/heritage\\_tour/japanese-american-heritage/](https://revisitwa.org/heritage_tour/japanese-american-heritage/) and Vashon Then and Now: Japanese American Presence on Vashon <https://voiceofvashon.org/vashon-then-now/>

We have and will share the history we are collecting through our social media channels. We regularly post on instagram including about historical aspects of the farm.

[www.instagram.com/forestgardenfarm](https://www.instagram.com/forestgardenfarm). We wrote a short biography of Tsune Fujioka for the Vashon Heritage Museum's Women's History Month social media campaign.

Long term, landmark designation will support our stewardship efforts through access to the technical assistance offered by the King County Historic Preservation Program to landmark property owners.

### **Relevant Expertise / Experience / Accomplishments**

While we have not pursued Landmark status previously, my husband and I have years of experience in managing grant-funded projects in order to build out our farm infrastructure, achieve and maintain WSDA organic and Real Organic certifications and return the surrounding forest, which had areas overgrown with invasive plants, into a healthy native forest. These rehabilitation projects received grant funds from the Tilth Alliance, King Conservation District, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Washington State and private donors.

We have maintained the architectural and physical integrity of the structures on the property for the past ten years.

For this project, we are working with historic preservation consultant Holly Taylor, who has successfully nominated many historic properties to the King County Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. Prior to establishing Past Forward in 2003, she served as a cultural resources specialist for the King County Historic Preservation Program. She holds degrees in cultural anthropology and architecture history and theory, and is currently working to complete an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in the Built Environment at University of Washington. She also serves as an affiliate instructor in the UW Department of Urban Design and Planning where she teaches a graduate course in historic preservation planning.

If we are not fully funded we will seek funding from other sources and contract with Ms. Taylor on a phased schedule until all funds are raised.

### **Project Implementation**

#### **Advancing Equity**

Our buildings are primarily associated with the Island's Japanese American and Agricultural communities. The research we conduct through this project may reveal additional historical relationships to marginalized or underrepresented communities, and we are particularly

## 4Culture Panel

interested in documenting how agriculture has intersected with immigration and race in our island's history.

This project seeks to preserve the history and resilience of a Japanese American family who immigrated in the early 1900s and began farming on Vashon Island. They faced barriers to land ownership forcing them to rent and move multiple times on Vashon and were forcibly imprisoned in the 1940s during World War II. Despite these injustices, in 1951, the family returned and purchased the property on which they had formerly lived and farmed in the 1930s and stewarded this land into the 2000s. My husband and I purchased this property from the Fujioka family in 2014 and are returning it to native evergreen forest and organic farming. The family is still connected to and visits the property a few times a year. This project seeks to honor the Fujioka's legacy here on Vashon by researching, preserving and communicating it to the community.

## Project Budget\*

Expenses		Estimate
Planning		<input type="checkbox"/>
Design		<input type="checkbox"/>
Construction		<input type="checkbox"/>
People	\$8,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Soft Costs		<input type="checkbox"/>
Facility Purchase		<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising		<input type="checkbox"/>
Services	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplies	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promotion	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation/Shipping	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation/Assessment		<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment/Fixtures		<input type="checkbox"/>
In-Kind	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	
Income		Confirmed
Applicant	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundations	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corporations	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual Donors	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Earned	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
In-Kind	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>
4Culture Request	\$8,000	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	

\* Empty budget fields were not included in this application.

## Project Budget Notes

The expenses associated with this Project are all devoted to Consultant Holly Taylor's fee. If we do not receive full funding from 4Culture, we will apply to the National Trust for Historic Preservation as well as other sources.

### **Support Materials**

*Support materials may include Work Sample Description and Externally Hosted Work Sample URLs in addition to other attachments.*

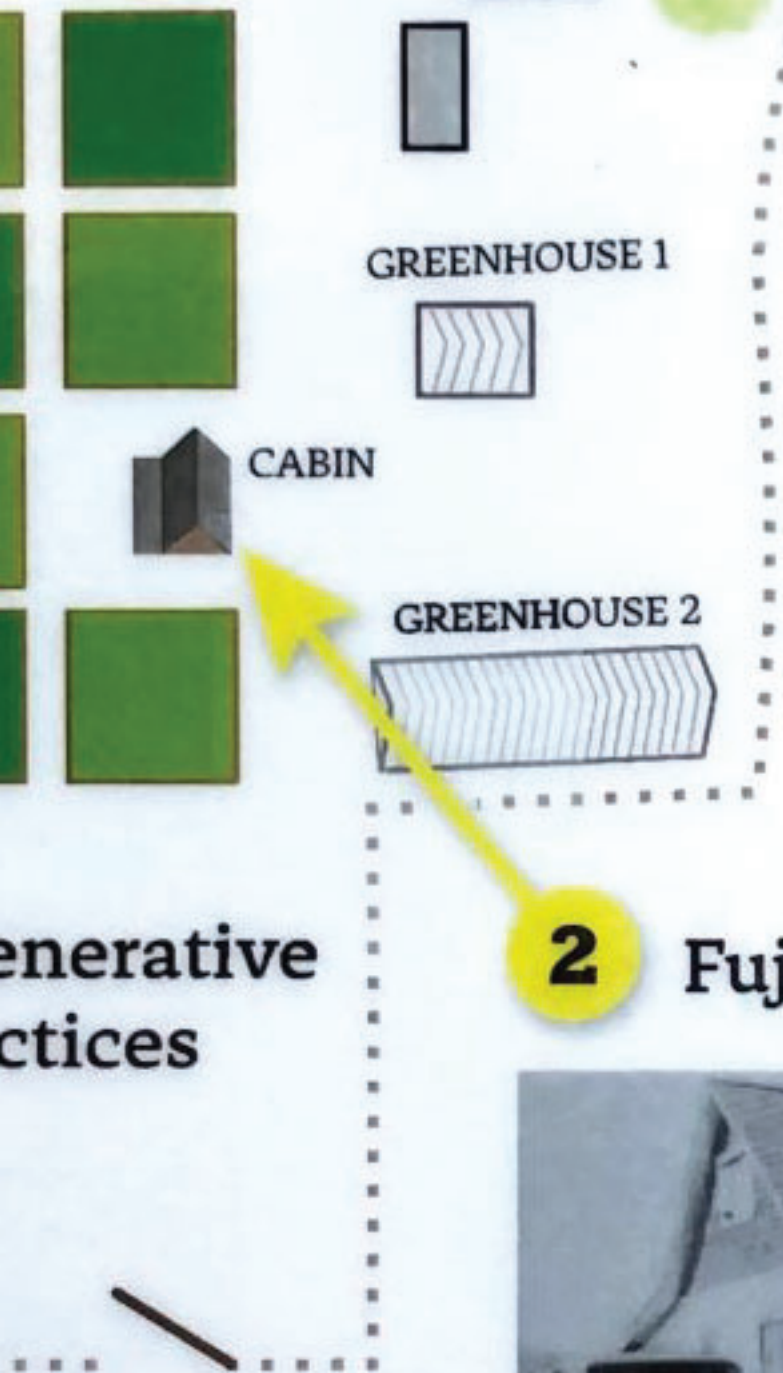
#### WORK SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

The front and back of our 2023 farm brochure that includes some of Fujioka family history. The current history display in our on-farm farmstand that includes photographs of Tsune and Sadaji Fujioka and Chris and I standing in the same spot 45 years later and Tashio Fujioka on his tractor in his strawberry fields.

The short biography we wrote about Tsune Fujioka for the Vashon Heritage Museum's women's history month social media campaign.

Note: We have not yet received an eligibility determination from Todd Scott at King County - we will email to Emily Lawsin as soon as its received. (Update: DOE Received and attached 4-30-2024 - EL)





enerative  
ctices

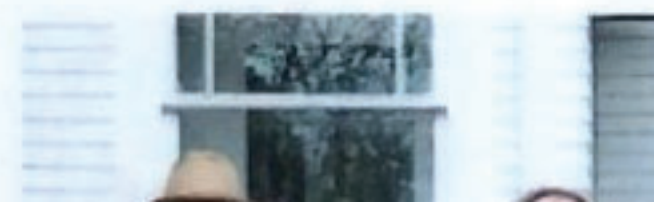
4 Historic  
farming



Tashio Fuj



Lisa & Chris 2021





When youngest daughter returned to vashon after the war a  
farm.

erty is being restored to native evergreen forest through a for  
King Conservation District. Since 2014, invasives have been  
d.

ew strawberries and lingonberries commercially. In 1955, Ta  
ngton for growing over 5 tons of strawberries per acre (over  
roduction). The family also grew vegetables and planted per  
ding Fuki and apples.

## farming practices

ermanent growing beds  
nd removing invasives

as much as possible

Dept. of Agriculture Organic Certification  
fied

ts (fertilizers, compost, straw, etc.) are organic and as locally  
c Food for Plants made on-island by Vashon Bioenergy Farm  
ring waste.

ng hens are fed an organic diet, have daily access to pasture

ce and flowers everyday February-December at the Forest C  
ay on SW 140th. We sell at the Vashon Farmers Market Sat



Tash  
Ph



Lisa Hasselman &  
Photograph by Tume and



## **Tsune Fujioka Biography**

Tsune Fujioka, mother, cook and berry farmer, was born in Japan in 1885 and emigrated to Vashon in 1910. She arrived in Washington with very few belongings, a few clothes and a fabric runner that she wove herself. She and her husband, Sadaji, had eight children. They lived at multiple properties on Vashon where they all worked hard to support the family. The Fujiokas wanted their children to learn their language and culture. They paid tuition to get a teacher from Seattle to travel to Vashon and the children went to Japanese language school every Saturday. They learned odori, flower arranging, and kendo (fencing).

In early 1942, the FBI started making surprise raids on Japanese homes for contraband. This led the family to destroy family heirlooms linking them to Japan. As her daughter Martha Nakamoto later put it "the war so drastically altered our living, innocent as we were - forever!" In May 1942, as the crops were readying for harvest, Mrs. Fujioka and her entire family were forced into concentration camps along with 110,000 other individuals of Japanese ancestry. In the camps, Tsune continued farming, going out to the fields to weed and harvest. She also did beautiful Japanese embroidery.

Tsune, Sadaji, their eldest son Tashio and youngest daughter Suzie returned to Vashon after the West Coast opened again. As daughter Martha described, "It was the start of a new life...They started farming, but literally from scratch. Ironical that once they had a thriving farm and now are reduced to start again." She farmed with her whole family hand-planting and tending strawberries and loganberries. She raised chickens and gardened including planting the perennial Japanese vegetable Fuki which is still being harvested from her plantings today. She was a firm believer in working hard and saving. The family shared the chores which had to be done and prospered.

Tsune was a wonderful cook - fishing, foraging and growing her ingredients. She served rice twice a day. One hundred pounds would last 28 days so they would have many rice sacks and Tsune pieced them together to make sheets. The family would fish for perch, rock cod and shiners and Tsune would make delicious tsu-ku-dani. On New Years, she made sushi and ozone and ama-sake with tea of ume. And the family made mochi from scratch every year.

In the words of Tsune's eldest daughter, Martha: "It has been 100 years since my parents immigrated...We are blessed and fortunate despite all the hardships. We will forever remember their courage and sacrifice enabling us to live where there still exists many opportunities...As I look back I am awed at the strength my parents and fellow immigrants had in a strange new world. They brought the true spirit of promise into the new world."









Proposal for Preparation of a King County Landmark Nomination  
for the Fujioka Farmstead / Forest Garden Farm, 10515 SW 140<sup>th</sup> Street, Vashon Island  
April 8, 2024

Scope of Work

Estimated  
hours

[Redacted]

Total estimate of billable time

Hourly fee

Total estimated consultant fee





# King County

Department of Natural Resources & Parks  
**Historic Preservation Program**  
2913 Franklin Ave E, Suite A  
Seattle, WA 98102

April 30, 2024

[sent by electronic mail]

Lisa Hasselman  
Forest Garden Farm

RE: Determination of eligibility, 10515 SW 140<sup>th</sup> Street, APN 1823039021

Ms. Hasselman,

This letter is in response to your request of March 21, 2024, to look at the eligibility of the Fujioka Farm located at the referenced address. I have reviewed the documentation provided by you and by Holly Taylor of Past Forward NW Cultural Services and have determined that the property is eligible for local landmark designation as a rare extant example of a Japanese American berry farm that conveys the transitional history of agricultural production from pre-World War II years through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. According to research conducted, it was farmed by the Fujioka family in the early 1930s, prior to their internment during the war, then was purchased by the family after the war in order to continue berry production. Additionally, the farm was recognized statewide as a major producer of strawberries in the mid-1950s. Production continued there into the 1970s.

This historic resource is significant primarily for its agricultural contributions to King County by Japanese Americans, both before and after WWII. Few Japanese American farming families returned to King County after their internment, and fewer still returned to previous farming locations. The Fujiokas not only returned to a farm they had occupied more than a decade earlier, but they continued to produce berries for the next few decades. The farm is an exceptional resource that represents the changing nature of agricultural production in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both before and after the war, particularly for Japanese American farmers.

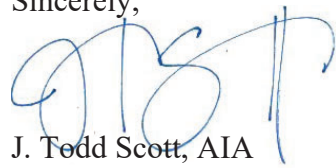
The site remains in agricultural use. There are two historic houses on the property, along with four historic outbuildings, and a number of newer structures for agricultural production. The overall appearance of the site has changed somewhat since its heyday for berry production, primarily as a result of invasive tree growth. The current owners have been working to reduce the tree canopy to provide more space for continued agricultural use. The property does retain several aspects of integrity, including location, setting, and association. Further research will be needed to determine if other aspects of integrity are met, such as materials, design, and workmanship. The property also meets the basic age criteria of forty years.

Consequently, our office would consider the building eligible as a King County Landmark based on Criterion A1 of King County Code 20.62.040. That criterion is what we typically refer to as the “broad patterns criterion” and “Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state or local history.” The property’s history as a farm for Japanese American workers prior to World War II, and the subsequent purchase of the property by the same family after WWII, along with the statewide recognition and significance of berry production during the 1950s and 60s are adequate to warrant local designation.

It is possible the property could also be eligible under KCC Criterion A3, the “architectural criterion,” which is a resource that “Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, style or method of design or construction.” Further documentation would be needed to include this criterion in the landmark nomination, but only one must be met in order to be listed.

We look forward to your continued efforts to landmark this important island resource. Please communicate with Sarah Steen regarding the designation process. If you have any additional questions regarding eligibility, please feel free to contact me at (206) 477-4545 or [todd.scott @ kingcounty. gov](mailto:todd.scott@kingcounty.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JTS', is positioned above the printed name of the sender.

J. Todd Scott, AIA  
Preservation Architect/Planner

cc: Holly Taylor, Past Forward NW Cultural Services  
Sarah Steen, King County Landmarks Coordinator