



## 2007 Minidoka Pilgrimage Recap

by Dr. Frank Kitamoto, photos by Ryan Kozo

On Friday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 41 people boarded the bus at Bellevue Community College at 6a.m. to make the 12-hour trek to Twin Falls, Idaho. They were joined by 130 others who traveled to the 2007 Pilgrimage on their own. The time on the bus seemed to fly by with games, story sharing, videos, and frequent “relief” stops. After night have seemed like wandering for 40 days and nights, the bus finally “found” Twin Falls and the barbecue picnic site where old friends, acquaintances, and new friends met, ate, and conversed.

Saturday morning saw the Pilgrimage continue as three busloads of former detainees, their children, their children’s children, and others visited the Minidoka site, with guidance from National Parks personnel. At the Idaho Farm and Ranch Museum, we toured two original barracks transferred from surrounding farms.

After lunch at the College of Southern Idaho, laughter and tears were shared as former detainees shared their experiences and those too young to have been imprisoned voiced emotionally how much the sharing meant to them. Fumiko Hayashida was the oldest attendee at age 97. Public Broadcasting of Idaho filmed the Symposium and Pilgrimage and is putting together a video for Public Television. The group then attended “Nisei” a one act original play.



The 1940's “Andrew” Sisters from Portland

That evening at the Prescott Ranch, a barbecue beef and sushi dinner was hosted by the Prescott clan. Our hosts from the Idaho Farm and Ranch Museum, Idaho State and Federal politicians, and farmers from the local Jerome/Twin Falls area attended. Entertainment was provided by the Boise Taiko group and the “Andrew” Sisters from Portland. It was a wonderful evening and a time to meet some very special Idahoans.

The evening ended at the Red Lion where participants purchased T-shirts, books, and newly reprinted Minidoka Interludes. Issei Memorial preliminary renderings were shown and discussed.

Sunday morning the group boarded buses for the closing ceremony held at the Kubota Victory Rock Garden at Minidoka. George Azumano read the names of Nisei who sacrificed their lives during WWII. Neil King gave the perspective for the National Park. Rev. Brooks talked about his father Rev. Emory Andrews Brooks, the discrimination he faced and the many trips Rev. Andy made from Twin Falls to Seattle on the behalf of detainees. My keynote talk explained that authentic power is your heart, your soul. While external power can be lost or taken away, authentic power can never be lost or taken away. The residents of Minidoka had authentic power. To finish, participants pinned origami frogs to a model of a barrack, made by Jerry Arai.

The group returned to the Red Lion for lunch, more sharing, and raffle prize drawings. Then, the bus carried the weary and sleepy, but content pilgrims back on the long ride to Bellevue Community College. To view more pilgrimage pictures go to [www.minidoka.org](http://www.minidoka.org).



Dr. Frank Kitamoto, Akira Ichikawa, and Jerry Arai at the Friday evening Dutch oven dinner

## 2007 Civil Liberties Symposium in Review by Dr. Russ Tremayne

The College of Southern Idaho and the Friends of Minidoka hosted the second Civil Liberties Symposium in June. The conference focused on “Presidential Power in War Time” and was organized by Neil King, Dr. Bob Sims, and Russ Tremayne. More than 100 people attended with approximately thirty teachers; about half of the participants received college credit and the others were involved through community education “enrichment.”

Historians Dr. Bob Sims and Dr. Greg Robinson began the proceedings talking about Japanese American internment – Dr. Robinson is an expert on Franklin D. Roosevelt and offered a terrific keynote address. Sociologist Dr. Tetsuden Kashima spoke about his remarkable experiences and research before a powerful and funny lunch presentation by the honorable Michael Gillette, Associate Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court. The afternoon session featured political scientist Dr. David Adler who offered a critical assessment of President Bush’s civil liberties record and then moderated a panel discussion that involved Robinson, Kashima, and Judge Gillette.

The second day focused on legal matters and education. Attorneys Brandon Mayfield, Maria Andrade, and Monica Schurtman spoke about their experiences. Mr. Mayfield explained the details of his arrest in

connection to the Madrid bombing, Maria Andrade discussed her work as a lawyer working on immigration cases, and Professor of Law Shurtman examined a variety of issues related to immigration, human rights, and war. Floyd Mori, National Director of the JACL, provided an emotional speech for lunch, while Linda Tamura met with teachers for a special workshop on teaching internment history. The education theme continued after lunch with Densho founder, Tom Ikeda, presenting a brilliant sample of his oral history research. Literature professor Robert Hayashi concluded the proceedings with a provocative lecture about his experiences and writings.

It is hard to imagine gathering such a distinguished group of scholars in Twin Falls. Evaluation forms indicated that most of the audience considered the meeting a great success and were very impressed. A few thought speakers were too liberal and there has been an ongoing debate in the local newspaper about issues raised at the conference. Many think that internment was fair and that preserving the Minidoka site is not necessary. One letter noted that CSI’s involvement in such a forum indicates the liberal nature of the institution!

With comments and attitudes like these being voiced, it is more important than ever to continue the symposium. The show must go on!

## Planning for the 2008 Civil and Constitutional Rights Symposium by Dr. Robert Sims

The symposium planning committee has determined that the theme for the 2008 event will be: The Role of the Press in Times of National Crisis. (Exact title to be determined.)

Our national history holds many examples of how dissent, freedom of speech and freedom of the press have been suppressed during critical times or how the press have sometimes contributed to crises by over sensationalizing potential dangers. To some extent, this happened in World War II and affected public policy toward Japanese Americans. The symposium will take a broad look at this problem, including some of the challenges our nation faces today. We plan to have

speakers and panels of individuals who are directly involved in the work of the media. There will be a special session for teachers utilizing a new curriculum developed by *Densho* which explores the question of “how do members of a democracy become fully informed so that they can participate responsibly and effectively?” The curriculum includes an in-depth study of the role of media in the incarceration of Japanese Americans in World War II.

**The Symposium is scheduled for June 19-20, 2008 at the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls.**



Dr. Sims with his 2007 Pilgrimage raffle prize, a photo by Emily Hanako Momohara

## Minidoka Reunion in Los Vegas, November 6-7, 2007

The reunion will take place at the Golden Nugget Hotel. There is a \$150 cost per person, which includes a welcome reception and a dinner banquet. Rooms at the Golden Nugget are \$89 per night and can be reserved directly with the hotel by calling 1-800-634-3454 and referencing the Minidoka 2007 Reunion. [For more information or to register, contact Tak Todo, 15537 32nd Ave NE, Shoreline, WA 98155. Phone: \(206\) 362-8195.](#)

## An Update Letter from Superintendent King

Hello from Idaho,

And yes, it continues to be very hot and dry, with many wildfires, but fortunately none that have affected Minidoka. I would like to provide an update on the proposed legislation.

H.R. 161 has been introduced in both the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, sponsored by the federal delegation from both Idaho and Washington, and many other states. In the U.S. Senate, it was voted out of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and is currently waiting scheduling for a vote by the full Senate. In the U.S. House, it is in the House Committee on Natural Resources waiting scheduling for hearings.

The Bill, H.R. 161, if passed into law would accomplish the following:

- Change the name to Minidoka National Historic Site.
- Establish the *Niotoda Nai Yoni* 8 acre site on Bainbridge Island as a satellite unit of Minidoka.
- Authorize the National Park Service to acquire the *Farm-In-A-Day* (128 acres) site; transfer the *Warehouse Area* (10.18 acres) from the Bureau of Reclamation, and the *Minidoka Historic Dump Site* (80 acres) from the Bureau of Land Management; and extend the Minidoka boundary to include those areas.

So the news is very positive, and I am optimistic that the legislation will pass, hopefully this year. I sincerely appreciate your continued support and interest as we move forward into the implementation phase at Minidoka.

Best Regards,  
Neil

## Farm-in-a-Day Site at Minidoka

by Dan Sakura

For the first time in decades, at the 2007 Pilgrimage, visitors to Minidoka were able to tour the historic Farm-in-a-Day property. It includes Minidoka's fire station and the site of barracks block 22. Preserving the 128-acre farm and restoring barracks block 22 in its original location will enable the National Park Service (NPS) to better tell the full story of Minidoka to current and future generations.

Based on recommendations of the Japanese American community and the local residents, the NPS included the Farm-in-a-Day site in its General Management Plan for Minidoka.

To help implement the plan, The Conservation Fund, a national, non-profit, land conservation organization, purchased the Farm-in-a-Day, in partnership with the Friends of Minidoka. We thank the generous financial assistance from many of you, individual donors, and private foundations.



Pilgrims and locals at the Farm-in-a Day Site

# **MINIDOKA INTERLUDE has been reprinted & is now on SALE!**

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