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Newsletter: Spring 2012

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Continued Progress at Minidoka NHS

Our busy winter has turned into a busy spring as we continue to move forward on projects and prepare for this year's Annual Civil Liberties Symposium and Pilgrimage!



Rehabilitation work on the fire station, barrack and mess hall (moved to the historic site after last year's Pilgrimage) included removing nonhistoric fabric, stabilizing the structures, cleaning and decontaminating, repairing historic fabric and replacing roofs. A National Park Service historic preservation crew will provide preservation treatment for the original doors and windows in 2012.

The Long-Range Interpretive Plan, a 7-10 year implementation plan for interpretation and education will be completed by the end of 2012.

A re-created section of the historic barbed wire fence was built along the North Side Canal from the camp entrance to the swimming hole area.

A new fence was installed around the historic camp landfill to provide security and protection for this important resource.

Additional wayside exhibits and benches have been installed along the 1.6 mile walking trail and new directional signage will be installed.



Interpretive programs continue on and off-site. The park received funding in 2011 to complete the first phase of the Minidoka Junior Ranger program and has received additional funding this year to expand the program.

The new museum building at Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument was completed in 2011. Minidoka artifacts and archives have been moved into the new facility's collection storage and we hope to offer special tours during this year's Pilgrimage.

Planning has begun for the construction of a new maintenance facility at Hagerman Fossil Beds NM that will also serve the needs of Minidoka National Historic Site.

Funding has been approved to conduct stabilization work on the historic root cellar. Stabilization work continues on the barrack, mess hall, and fire station.

On February 10, I joined park partners and supporters at the Idaho State Supreme Court to hear oral arguments concerning the proposed CAFO near Minidoka NHS. We continue to work with our Solicitor's Office and experts in our regional office to address this threat to the park and help ensure the long-term protection of this national treasure.

The Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium will be held June 21 and 22 at Boise State University. We are excited to have a new partner, BSU. The park received a \$15,000 grant from the National Park Foundation to support this year's symposium.

The park supported the Friends of Minidoka (FoM) in their application for a Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) grant to reconstruct the historic guard tower. We want to congratulate the FoM on receipt of the grant and look forward to working with you, as well as our partner Boise State University (School of Engineering and Construction Management Program), on this exciting project!



Congratulations to our other partners who received JACS grants: the Oregon Nikkei Endowment, Densho, Japanese American Citizens League, and the Wing Luke Museum. These projects will continue to preserve and interpret Minidoka's history and legacy.

I made two trips to our Bainbridge Island Unit in March, first to meet with our partners, and

then to participate in the 70th Anniversary Commemoration events. Congratulations to the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association and all of the partners who organized this wonderful "Day of History, Honor, and Healing."



Our work would not be possible without the passion, commitment, and expertise of you and our other partners. Thank you for your commitment to preserve and share this site, story, and legacy, which is as relevant today as it was 70 years ago.

-Wendy K. Janssen

Superintendent, Minidoka National Historic Site and Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument

Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium

June 21-22, 2012



"Through the Eyes of Children: Prejudice, Education, and Community" The 2012

Symposium will be held at the Simplot Ballroom on the Boise State University campus on June 21-22. The 7th annual Civil Liberties Symposium is co-sponsored by Minidoka National Historic Site, Friends of Minidoka, the College of Southern Idaho, and Boise State University.

This year's theme is "Through the Eyes of Children: Prejudice, Education, and Community," exploring the effects of curtailed civil liberties on children, their families and communities, and their education. Symposium speakers will address the theme as it applies to a diversity of experiences: Japanese Americans during World War II incarceration, Native American boarding school education, African American school integration, and labor camp migratory lifestyle.

The Symposium will feature presentations by noted scholars and educators and panel discussions by former Japanese American child internees and authors of related children's literature. Dr. Satsuki Ina, producer of *Children of the Camps*, will speak on the documentary and educational project developed for Japanese American adults incarcerated as children. Featured speakers will also include Dr. David Adler, Dr. Errol Jones, Dr. Larry Matsuda, Dr. Tetsuden Kashima, and Dr. Linda Tamura. Course credit is available through BSU and CSI.

A one-day teacher's workshop, to be held on Thursday, June 21, will be conducted by staff of Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project and Minidoka National Historic Site. The workshop will highlight the Minidoka curriculum that meets Idaho, Oregon, and Washington state educational standards.

Participants in the annual [Minidoka Pilgrimage](#) will join Symposium participants on Friday, June 22. The Pilgrimage will then continue in Twin Falls for activities on Saturday, June 23 and Sunday, June 24 including tours and ceremonies at Minidoka National Historic Site.

Minidoka Pilgrimage

June 21-24, 2012

The Minidoka Pilgrimage provides an opportunity to share memories, ask questions, and learn more about the Minidoka experience. Consider participating in the pilgrimage as a way to bring your family together, reconnect with friends from the past and build new friendships.



The Pilgrimage will combine with the Civil Liberties Symposium sponsored by Friends of Minidoka in Boise, ID at Boise State University. The second day (Friday, June 22nd) of the Civil Liberties Symposium at Boise State University is included in both pilgrimage packages. The Pilgrimage will officially begin in Boise on Thursday evening, June 21st and then travel down to Twin Falls, ID once the Symposium concludes on Friday, June 22nd.


In Twin Falls, participants will visit the grounds of the National Historic Site. On Saturday, there will be guided tours of what remains of the former site. On Sunday, a memorial service will be held at the National Historic Site to honor former internees. Throughout the duration of the trip, there will be opportunities to share memories and stories with fellow participants.

This year the Pilgrimage Committee is very excited to offer a SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP for this year's Pilgrims who are over 80 years of age and older, and were imprisoned in any of the American concentration camps during WWII.

We hope that you can come to this year's pilgrimage. For more information on the Pilgrimage

or scholarships go to www.minidokapilgrimage.org .

A Day of History, Honor and Healing

Despite winter-like winds and morning rains on March 30, 2012, more than 700 people turned out on Bainbridge Island, Washington to mark the 70th Anniversary of the first of 120,000 Japanese Americans to be forcibly exiled from the west coast during World War II. 

Called "A Day of History, Honor and Healing," the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association (BIJAEMA) hosted a series free, community-wide day of events to commemorate this sad chapter in American history, and to celebrate the unique legacy of a community that stood by their Japanese American friends and neighbors and welcomed them home.

Reflecting the historic, widespread support that the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community (BIJAC) experienced in WWII, a dozen local community organizations and businesses proudly co-sponsored and supported nine island-wide events and tours that highlighted the history and legacy of Japanese Americans.

The eventful day started with a morning mini-film festival at the Historic Lynwood Theater, featuring numerous locally produced documentaries highlighting the history of Bainbridge Island Japanese Americans, as well as the first, shorter version of "Honor and Sacrifice - Nisei Patriots and the MIS" and the Bainbridge Island premiere of "The Manzanar Fishing Club."

Among the local titles, the film "Fumiko Hayashida -- The Woman Behind the Symbol" -- tells the powerful life story behind the iconic photograph of her holding her infant daughter Natalie. It chronicles their first Minidoka Pilgrimage together as mother and daughter in 2009.

In the afternoon, a tour of the oldest continuously operating farm in western Washington -- the Suyematsu strawberry farm -- was hosted by the Only What We Can Carry Project and the Suyematsu and Bentryn Family Farms, where lucky visitors were treated to displays of just-discovered and rare WWII artifacts of Aiko Suyematsu.


Following the Suyematsu farm tour was an informative presentation at Bainbridge Gardens by Donna Harui sharing the pioneer legacy of her family's iconic nursery.

The "Day of History, Honor and Healing" ended with a late afternoon tour of Sonoji Sakai Intermediate School with hosted tours of the school's permanent historic Japanese American displays, followed by an evening screening of the award-winning documentary "Conscience and the Constitution" and an enlightening and informative speakers forum featuring film maker Frank Abe and incarceration survivors.

Throughout the day, people could visit at their leisure three other venues, with hundreds choosing to make personal pilgrimages to the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, many of which were seeing the 276-foot long Memorial Wall for the very first time.

The Bainbridge Island Historical Museum experienced crowds of visitors who appreciated the award-winning exhibits "Ansel Adams: A Portrait of Manzanar," "Kodomo No Tame Ni -- For The Sake Of The Children, BIJAC History," and "Yama and Nayaga -- The Historic Japanese Mill Worker Communities of Bainbridge Island's Blakely Harbor."

The third site was the award-winning Haiku Garden at the Bainbridge Public Library, built in 1997 as a gift from the BIJAC to the people of Bainbridge Island.

Making the historic BIJAEM site accessible in a new way, a free mobile website designed for use with smart phones and other mobile devices was unveiled, featuring historic photographs and brief interviews with Bainbridge Island Japanese Americans sharing their personal stories. It can be accessed at www.bijaem.org/mobile .

Update on Confined Animal Feedlot to be Built Near Minidoka

As many of you have been following, a regional dairy company was given a permit to build a 15,000 head confined animal feedlot operation (CAFO) near Minidoka. For several years now, the Friends of Minidoka has been appealing the permit. Water, soil and air contaminates from cattle feces will harm Minidoka's historic integrity and visitor experience.

In February, our lawyers presented appeal arguments to the Idaho Supreme Court. Now, we are awaiting a final decision on our appeal. Should the Judge side with us, the feedlot permit will be null. The Southveiw Dairy will have to reapply for a building permit to the Jerome County Commissioners. However, laws on feedlots have tightened since our lawsuit began. It will be more difficult for the permit to be given and the amount of cattle allowed will be definitely be lower.

Protecting Minidoka is our job as Americans. Minidoka is a section of American history that needs to be preserved for all to utilize. Your support in this effort is still needed. We are significantly in debt from this long legal effort. You can give online at www.minidoka.org/cafo.php or send a check with "CAFO" on the memo line to: Friends of Minidoka, P.O. Box 1085, Twin Falls Idaho 83303-1085.

Friends of Minidoka wins Grant to Recreate Guard Tower

This spring, Friends of Minidoka was awarded \$280,378 in a two-for-one matching grant from the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program to reconstruct a guard tower at Minidoka.

The guard tower will be a two-year project managed by the National Park Service. Students from the Construction Management Department in the Boise State University School of Engineering will oversee the installation. The students' time will satisfy our matching requirement for the grant, leaving Friends of Minidoka with no need to fundraise for the project.

The guard tower will restore the entrance of the camp to more closely resemble what Minidoka looked like in 1942. It will be constructed with the same materials as originally created and will be built in the exact location.

42 applications were received in this year's grant cycle. It is an honor that we were selected as 1 of 17 organizations to receive funds.



Day of Rembrance Taiko Festival

On February 19, 2012, the 70th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 and in conjunction with Seattle University's Day of Remembrance commemoration events, the Minidoka Pilgrimage Planning Committee and Friends of Minidoka, along with Seattle University, co-hosted their annual Day of Remembrance Taiko Festival. Held in Seattle University's Pigott Auditorium, 8 taiko groups from around the Seattle area came together to play in this annual festival. Over 300 people came to watch: Inochi Taiko, Northwest Taiko, Seattle Kokon Taiko (SKT), One World Taiko, Japanese Drum Ensemble, The School of Taiko, Kaze Daiko and this year's new addition, Okinawa Kenjin-Kai display their passions and perform their creative art forms. The crowd also was treated to a special grand finale performance, arranged by One World Taiko's Gary Tsujimoto, which involved all 8 taiko groups performing together on a single stage.

[News archive](#)