



Minidoka NHS News

Breaking News

A Conversation with David Sakura

David Sakura's family was forcibly removed from their home and sent to Minidoka in 1942. After the war, the family started life again in Wisconsin. Since David's retirement in 2008, he has lectured about the Japanese American experience before, during, and after the war. Join David as he describes his family's experiences on April 10 at 7 pm at the Eatonville, WA High School.

FOM Board Meeting

The Friends of Minidoka Board met on Saturday, February 28 to discuss current and future projects at the historic site. The Guard Tower project is nearing completion and plans are progressing for the 2015 symposium. The CAFO issue remains a priority for the board.

Bainbridge Island March 30th Annual Commemoration

This year's event includes a special appearance by Congressman Derek Kilmer and the unveiling of a new sculpture specially designed for the memorial. Events run from 9am-1 pm.



Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience



**Liberation War Memorial
Bangladesh**



**Gulag Museum of
Communism - Russia**

Minidoka recently joined the War Liberation Memorial in Bangladesh and the Gulag Museum of Communism in Russia as a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. The Coalition consists of over 180 sites throughout the world that preserve the places and stories of people who were persecuted and denied their civil rights and the courageous people who battled against injustice and hatred.

Coalition members in the United States include Manzanar NHS in California, Wing Luke Museum in Seattle, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS in Atlanta, Georgia.

Places are sites of conscience because of what happened there and through the telling of these difficult human stories. Minidoka NHS is a sacred place that reminds us of the struggle for civil rights and the fragility of those rights in a time of fear and prejudice.

The Coalition's mission states, "We are sites, individuals, and initiatives activating the power of places of memory to engage the public in connecting past and present in order to envision and shape a more just and humane future."

Sites of Conscience strive to answer these questions:

- How should the story be told to the next generation?
- How can we inspire this generation to repair wrongs of the past?
- How do we address lingering legacies of past events?
- How should sites be developed in the future?

The Minidoka NHS staff and partners help the public draw connections between the Minidoka history and its contemporary implications.

Minidoka NHS information will be on the Coalition's website in the near future:

<http://www.sitesofconscience.org>.

Minidoka Irrigator Headlines March 1943

Each month this column will feature headlines from the *Minidoka Irrigator* during the same month in 1943.

March 6: **Overseas Broadcasters Sought by Government**

A call for shortwave propaganda broadcasters in the Japanese language was announced at Minidoka.

March 6: **Project Wide Kite Tourney Site Selected**

The kite tourney will award prizes in 5 categories: fanciest kite; largest kite that will fly; smallest kite that will fly; pulling contest based on poundage; and string cutting contest.

March 13: **Some in Block 22 May Move to Make Way for School Needs.**

Buildings 7 and 9 will be used for offices and school purposes. Residents will be asked to move when apartments are available elsewhere.

March 13: **Concert to Be Presented in Rupert by Mass Choir**

The Minidoka Mass Choir will present its third off-site program at the LDS Tabernacle on Sunday, March 14.

March 20: **Change in Anti-Oriental Nationality Act Sought**

Introduction of an amendment to the Nationality Act of 1940 rallies forces seeking to open ordinary naturalization channels to Orientals.

March 20: **Hunt Cagers Chalk Up 150 Baskets**

The Hunt high schoolers hit 150 baskets in the Heart Mountain inter-center free throw tournament. The ten students averaged 15 baskets per person.

March 27: **Form Crew to Combat Range Fires**

A volunteer crew of 50 young men will be trained and ready to fight forest, brush, and grass fires in the region.

March 27: **Twin Falls Residents Donate Bulbs, Shrubs, Flower Seeds to Hunt**

The donated materials will be used in victory gardens and to tie down loose soil before the dust season arrives.

Military Exhibit

This month the temporary visitor center of Minidoka National Historic Site (located at Hagerman Fossil Beds NM) premiered the first part of a new exhibit entitled, "Nisei in Uniform." The exhibit highlights the valor and service of the men and women who served as part of the Military Intelligence Service, the 100th Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the Women's Army Corps, and the Army/Navy Nurse Corps.

The centerpiece of the exhibit is a replica of the Congressional Gold Medal that was awarded to the men of 100th and 442nd in 2010. Also within the display case are panels that explain the policy of enlistment and exclusion, how each unit operated, the decorations awarded to them, and photos of Nisei in uniform.



A map showing troop movements highlights the exhibit
In the coming weeks, two additions are planned for the exhibit; both are scrapbooks that will allow visitors to experience the war as it happened. The first book will feature photos of the Nisei in action along the European Front. The second book will be a collection of all the military related stories as they appeared in the *Minidoka Irrigator*.

The Gold Medal was donated to the park by Steve Odoi. The exhibit was created by Park Ranger Wesley Gant.

Honor Roll Update

Upon entering the historic site, one of the first things you see is the reconstructed Honor Roll. The original structure was built to honor the men and women who served in the military from the camp. The center panel listed 418 names. As more people volunteered or were drafted, their names were added on two side panels. With nearly 1,000 names on the Honor Roll, Minidoka had the highest percentage of incarcerated to serve in the military.

The reconstructed Honor Roll was dedicated on July 3, 2011. Historic photos were used to identify the names as they appeared on the original structure. None of the historic photos clearly show the names on the right panel. Many names starting with S, T, and U were not visible.

Minidoka staff has collected the names of 39 people who should be listed on that panel. If you know of others whose names should be added, please contact the park. At a future date the park will update that panel.



The reconstructed Honor Roll at the entrance to the historic site

The Empty Chair



On July 12, 2004, The Empty Chair Memorial was dedicated in Juneau, Alaska to honor the 53 Juneau Japanese World War II incarcerated. At the 1942 Juneau High School graduation a black wooden chair was left empty for the 1942 class valedictorian, John Tanaka, who had been forced to leave his home earlier as a result of Executive Order 9066.

All the Issei men were arrested immediately after Pearl Harbor and sent to prison camps in New Mexico. The women and children were removed in April 1942, spending up to four months at the Puyallup Fairgrounds Assembly Center in Seattle, before being sent to Minidoka War Relocation Center.

The memorial sculpture is a large bronze chair set on boards reminiscent of a gym floor with the names of the locally incarcerated. The memorial, created by Peter Reiquam, is the first of its kind in Alaska.

An exhibit was created to recognize this facet of Juneau's WW II history and the years immediately following.

Eight family stories are told through photographs, keepsakes, letters, and documents. Items made during incarceration and seven mixed media pieces by Juneau artist Fumi Matsumoto bring added depth to the exhibit.

To ensure that future generations are aware of this legacy, educational resources are being developed for use in schools, museums, and libraries.

The exhibit is being developed as a traveling exhibit. Plans are underway to have it available at this year's Symposium in Boise and at the Pilgrimage in June. The exhibit will then spend several months at the Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument Visitor Center.



The exhibit panel telling the story of John Tanaka

In Next Month's Issue

- Baseball Field Update
- Pilgrimage Memento
- Book of the Month – *Minidoka: An American Concentration Camp*
- Herrmann House Rehabilitation Update
- Civil Liberties Symposium update
- Minidoka Blog

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

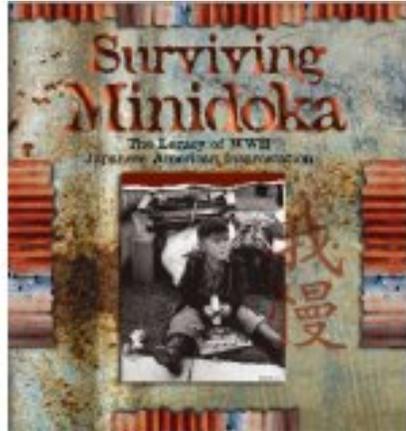


Book Corner: *Surviving Minidoka*

Todd Shallot and Russell M. Tremayne, CO-Editors

Historic photographs, newspaper headlines, magazine covers, political cartoons, artifacts, and artwork fill the pages of *Surviving Minidoka*. This collection of essays was co-edited by Todd Shallot and Russell M. Tremayne and published by the Boise State Publications Office in 2013.

Essays include "Fragrant Violations" by David Adler, "The 442nd" by Jette Morache, "Forgiving the Past" by Frank Kitamoto," and "Through the Lens" by Lane Ryo Hirabayashi. Lawrence Matsuda, Shizue Iwatsuki, Mitsuyue Yamada, and Lawson Fusao Inada describe the incarceration experience through poetry.



Surviving Minidoka was named an Idaho Book of the Year.

Minidoka Museum Collection and Recent Donation



This four panel screen was made by Tom Matsumoto and donated to Minidoka NHS by Gene Itogawa

How did the incarcerated furnish their living spaces? What did they do for amusement and recreation? How did they provide for their families? The growing museum collection helps to answer some of those questions. The park collects and preserves historic and archeological artifacts, works of art, and archival documents that are a reflection of life in the camp.

The park's Scope of Collection Statement cites three thematic areas: Minidoka War Relocation Center; Bainbridge Island/Egledale Ferry Dock; and the Farm-In-A-Day.

A recent donation relates to the third area: Farm-In-A-Day. Emory Shellenbarger was the project manager for the Soil Conservation District's project that built John Herrmann's farm on April 17, 1952. The Herrmann Farm was part of the lands added to the park in 2008.

The collection was donated by Shellenbarger's stepson, Michael Burr, and children, Jeanne Fitzgerald and Gary Shellenbarger.

Farm-In-A-Day projects were held throughout the country in the late 1940s and the 1950s. The collection consists of information related to projects in Maryland, Washington, and Idaho that helped inform the Herrmann project. It includes news clippings, correspondence, and planning documents such as "Farm Job Needs," "Suggestions for Participating Equipment Dealers," and an "Assignment List." Over 10,000 people participated in the event as workers or spectators.

Minidoka NHS welcomes donations that can add to the knowledge and understanding of the site. For further information, contact JoAnn Blalack at JoAnn_Blalack@nps.gov.

Go For Broke Essay and Video Contest

This newsletter is published monthly for our friends and partners across America.

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The Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial on Bainbridge Island is a unit of Minidoka NHS. It is managed by Klondike Gold Rush NHP.

Comments? Write to:
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The Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC) in Los Angeles is sponsoring an essay and video contest highlighting the Japanese American WWII experience. The GFBNEC exists to preserve the legacy of Japanese American veterans through education. The Center has recorded the life stories of over 1,150 Japanese American veterans, reached over 100,000 students through teacher training and web-based curriculum, and welcomed over 100,000 visitors to the Go For Broke Monument near downtown Los Angeles.

The contest is open to high school students (9-12) and college students. Over 200 essays were submitted last year. Entries can be a 250-500 word essay or a 3-5 minute video. The deadline for entries is Tuesday, June 30, 2015. Winners will be notified by email by Friday, July 31, 2015. Cash prizes will be awarded to twelve winners.

For further information contact Chris Brusatte at 310-222-5711 or email chris@goforbroke.org.



Go For Broke
NATIONAL EDUCATION CENTER