

Manzanar



ID Card

WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION
Presidio of San Francisco, California
May 3, 1942

INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY



Living Area:

A person that becomes temporary at a camp of the War Relocation Authority must be located at that First Street and Second Street, which are marked on the map in the camp, those marked on the map in the camp of the War Relocation Authority.

It is required, dated May 3, 1942, all persons from the above area by 12 o'clock noon, or earlier after 12 o'clock noon, P. M. T., representative of the Commanding General.

If a family, or in case of grave emergency, as affected by this evacuation to the following:

except for other disposition of new kinds household goods, items, automobiles and things.

In their new residence:

On, or the person in whose name must of "Civil Control Authority" to receive further on Monday, May 3, 1942, or before.





In 1942 the United States Government ordered over 110,000 men, women, and children to leave their homes and detained them in remote, military-style camps. Two-thirds of them were born in America. Not one was convicted of espionage or sabotage.

In this booklet, you will read the story of a person who lived this history, in his or her own words.

FREDERICK P. CAUSEY, JR.**Camp: Manzanar, CA****Address: R-4****Administrative Housing**



When World War II began, our family was living in Bethesda, Maryland. My father Frederick P. Causey Sr. was a civil engineer working for the District of Columbia. My mother Mildred E. Causey was a stenographer working at the National Institutes of Health. My sister Ann and I were attending Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School. I was in the seventh grade, my sister in the fifth.

In 1942, my father tried to enlist, but failed the physical. Later that year, he volunteered to go to Trinidad, in the British West Indies, to install gun emplacements. After several months, my mother, sister and I tried to go there, and got as far as Miami before being told we could not leave the U.S. because of the war. My mother found a house to rent, and went to work. My sister and I attended Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Elementary School.

In 1943, my father returned from Trinidad, and went directly to the Manzanar War Relocation Camp, in southeast California. After he was settled in, my mother, sister and I took

a troop train from Miami to Chicago and then to Barstow, California. We lived on a diet of sandwiches and soda pop during five days and nights sitting in a train with what seemed like thousands of soldiers.

My father met us in a borrowed car, and drove us to Camp Manzanar. My first impression was what a beautiful place, the sky so blue and the mountains so tall.

We had never seen such mountains. Back east, a hill of 2,000 feet is considered a mountain. The winters were interesting, watching the clouds roll down the mountains and then recede, revealing beautiful snow-covered peaks.

My father worked as a civil engineer for the WRA, (War Relocation Authority) the federal agency that ran Manzanar. My mother worked as a secretary for the administration.

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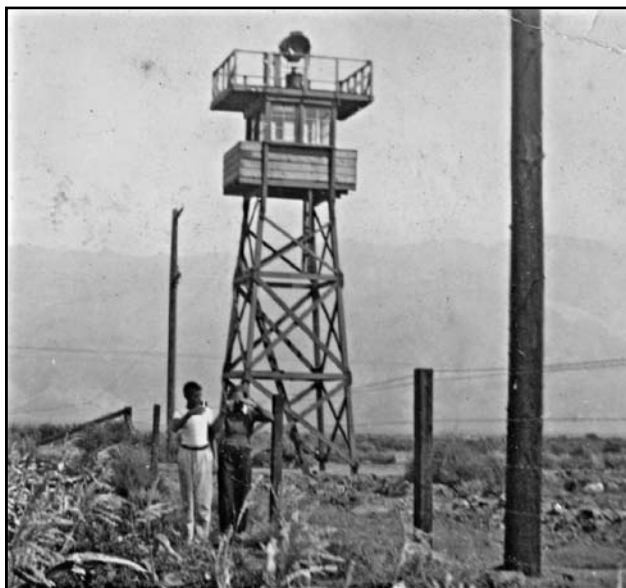


Manzanar War Relocation Center, 1942

Our first several months, we all lived in a staff apartment, one room with a bath. After that, we had more spacious accommodations: two bedrooms, a living area and a bath. It was comfortable, but stark. My sister Ann and I slept in bunk beds in one bedroom and my parents occupied the other bedroom.

Although we had a kitchen in our apartment, we took all our meals at the staff mess hall. As I recall, the food at the mess hall was always good to excellent, and there was plenty of it. It was cafeteria style. You grabbed a tray and went through the line taking whatever you wanted. Dinner was the biggest social event in camp for us. We were always amazed at all the fresh fruit and vegetables available to us. The Japanese, given a little desert land and enough water, could make almost anything grow.

For recreation, we played basketball in an area set out for us in the southeast corner of camp, about 300' from the guard tower. There was one basketball hoop and one basketball; I don't know whose it was. The court was not blacktop but hard packed dirt. Boy did we get some strange bounces. You could hardly get four or five boys together for a game. There was Bud Gilkey, Richie Collins, Art Williams, David Oile, and Pat Nail, whose father was captain of the Military Police Company. We were all in different grades but we got along okay. Nearby the basketball area was a bar to do chin-ups.



Fred and his mother Mildred pose near a Manzanar guard tower

One day David Oile and I slipped out of camp and tried to hike up Mount Williamson. We reached the base of the mountain and not much further. The slope was loose and steep and for every few hundred feet you climbed up you slid back down a hundred feet. So we gave up on that proposition pretty fast.

During the hot summer months, the Los Angeles aqueduct became our swimming pool. It was a half-mile walk for a bunch of us kids unaccompanied by our parents. We could do anything we wanted and they never worried.

Often for fun we'd go chasing the wild jackasses which grazed in the pasturelands across the highway from camp. We could never catch them. Quite frequently in the spring and summer months a shepherd and his flock would pass to the west of camp. You'd see a huge cloud of dust creeping northward. There were visits to the Manzanar airport to watch planes take off and land.

My father bought a 1929 Model T from a man in camp for \$25. That was our transportation to Lone Pine and Independence. You couldn't drive it uphill very far so we didn't travel into the mountains much. Of course there was gasoline rationing and people didn't travel too far. We did go to Lone Pine almost every Saturday night to

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see war movies, the kind John Wayne starred in. Manzanar had an outdoor theatre in Block 16 and we sat on the ground watching movies with the Japanese residents of camp.

Another thing we did as kids was walk down to the Military Police camp where they had a canteen and we could get a cold Coke and my Dad would have a beer while he shot the breeze with the soldiers.

My sister and I went to Independence High and Grammar schools. It was a very small school, with hardly enough boys to put together a football team. They played Manzanar High School, and the score was lopsided in favor of Camp Manzanar. We had friends in the camp and also in Independence.

My sister and I had bicycles and frequently rode around camp. Once we rode from Camp Manzanar to Independence. I have fond memories of the drug store in Independence where they had fantastic milk shakes. For ten or fifteen cents you'd get this huge milkshake that was often times our lunch.

While we were at Manzanar, I never felt any animosity from Japanese Americans directed toward us.



Some people had grown up with bad feelings toward the Japanese in California. As a kid, I may have harbored some ill will until I came to Manzanar and got to know and live with Japanese Americans. They cooked our food and cleaned our apartments. We all got along and were happy to get out of there when camp closed. I don't believe I saw the guard tower manned more than once or twice.

In 1945, the camp was starting to close down, and my father was laid off. We drove to Sacramento, California, where my parents both found work, and my sister and I continued school until the end of the war. Then we went back to Bethesda, Maryland, where we had rented our home to a group of Navy personnel. After graduating High School in 1947, I signed up with the Navy and became a pilot for the next twenty years.

I recall my years at Manzanar as some of the happiest of my life. We were a very close-knit group of children and adults.

MANZANAR *Free Press*

MANZANAR

Location: Inyo County, California, at the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada.



Environmental

Conditions: Temperatures can be over 100 degrees in summer and below freezing in winter. Strong winds & dust storms are frequent.

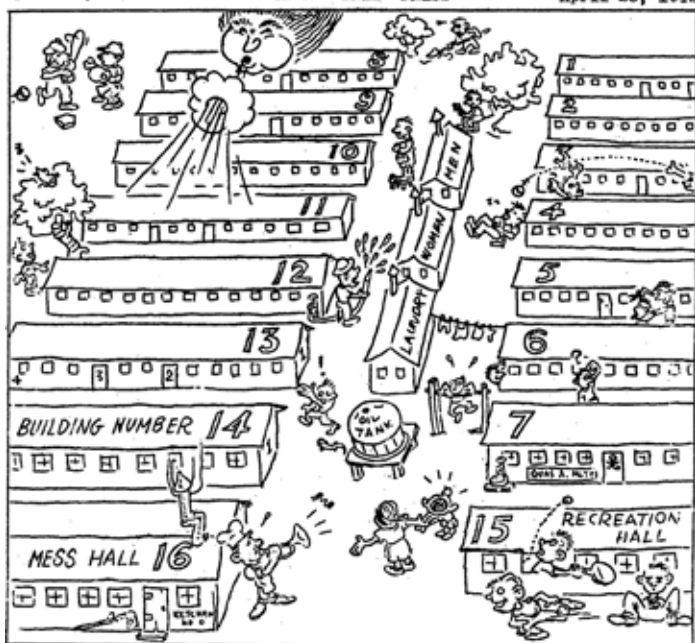
Acreage: 6,000

Opened: March 21, 1942 as a Reception Center and June 1, 1942 as a War Relocation Center.

Closed: November 21, 1945

Max. Population: 10,046 (September 1942)

Demographics: Most internees were from the Los Angeles area, Terminal Island, and the San Fernando Valley. Others came from the San Joaquin Valley and Bainbridge Island.



LIFE IN A MANZANAR BLOCK

Wind and Dust

This wind and dust I have to bear
 How hard it blows I do not care.
 But when the wind begins to blow --
 My morale is pretty low.

I know that I can see it through
 Because others have to bear it too.

So I will bear it with the rest
 And hope the outcome is the best.

-- George Nishimura, age 16 (1943)



Manzanar Cemetery, Winter 2002.

This booklet was developed by the park rangers at Manzanar National Historic Site in partnership with the individuals profiled and their families.



The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. To learn more about your national parks, visit the National Park Service website at www.nps.gov. To learn more about Manzanar National Historic Site, please visit our website at www.nps.gov/manz.

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