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.

Manzanar National Historic Site
P.O. Box 426, Independence, CA 93526
Tel. 760-878-2194
E-mail: manz_superintendent@nps.gov

3/08

Manzanar

ID Card

WAR RELOCATION CENTERS & PEAK POPULATIONS

MILITARY EXCLUSION AREA

Minidoka **9,397**

Heart Mtn. **10,767**

Tule Lake **18,789**

Topaz **8,130**

Granada **7,318**

Manzanar **10,046**

Poston **17,814**

Gila River **13,348**

Rohwer **8,475**

Jerome **8,497**
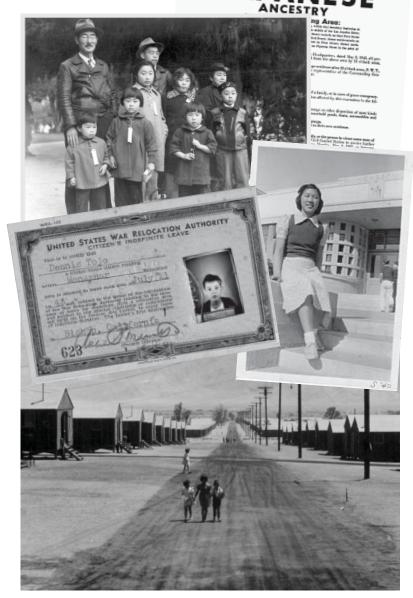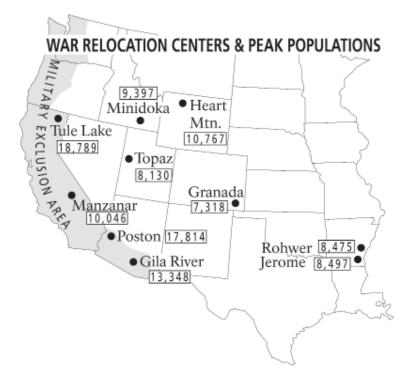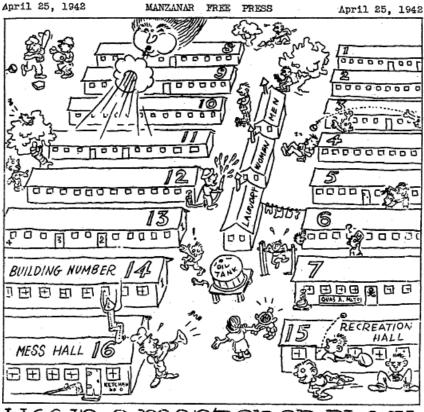
In 1942 the United States Government ordered over 110,000 men, women, and children to leave their homes and detained them in remote, military-style camps. Two-thirds of them were born in America. Not one was convicted of espionage or sabotage.

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

BUILDING NUMBER 14

MESS HALL 16

RECREATION HALL

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

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.

TETSUO KUNITOMI
Family # 2614
Camp: Manzanar, CA

Midori, Tets & Sue in Los Angeles, 1932

Some Lines for a Younger Brother (Written by Sue Kunitomi Embrey, Tet's sister)

Tetsuo Kunitomi was born on April 17, 1930, in Los Angeles, California. He was the youngest of eight children, born to immigrant parents from Japan. "Tets," as he was called, went to Amelia Street School, which was predominantly made up of students of Japanese ancestry.

Tets was eight years old when his father was killed in an automobile accident.

He was twelve when the family and the entire Little Tokyo population were moved to Manzanar.

He went to school in Manzanar and in the beginning there were no desks or chairs and he felt it was useless to study history when they were behind barbed wire.

He was confined there for three years with his sister and mother, as the rest of the family "relocated" to Chicago, until they could return to California.

Tets had dreamed of joining the service while interned at Manzanar and he loved military life.

Returning to Los Angeles in September of 1945, Tets attended Belmont High School. When he was 18 in 1948, he volunteered for the U.S. Army. When his two year term was over, he enlisted for a three year term. He had been in the South, and then transferred to San Jose. Soon after his transfer to the west coast, Tets was assigned to go overseas. While he was stationed in Tokyo, Japan, the Korean War broke out. Tets worried about having to go as a replacement for the soldiers coming back from the Korean front because others who had come back had such nightmares.

Tets had dreamed of joining the service while interned at Manzanar and he loved military life

While on a weekend pass, Tets collapsed on the street in Yokohama and died in an Army hospital. He was 22 when he died in 1952. He did not get to move on with a quality of life that others who were released were able to have.

Tet's sister Sue & his brother Jack visit his grave in Los Angeles, 2002