



*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.



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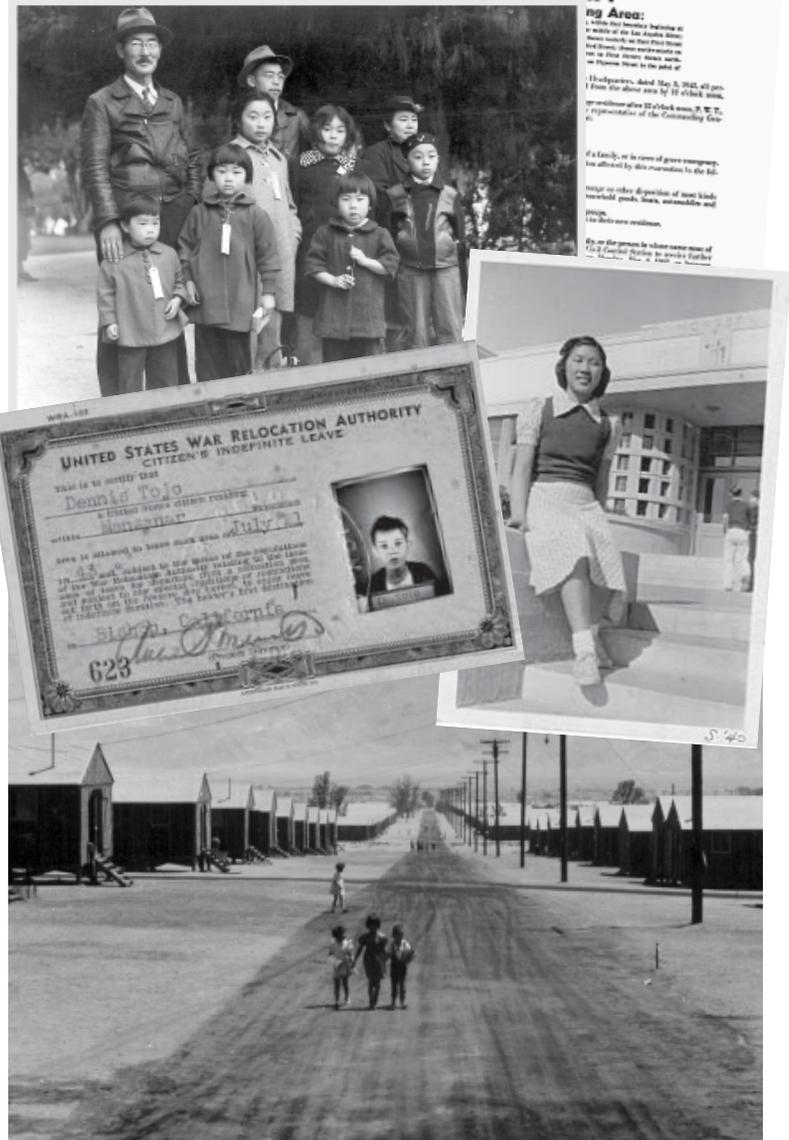
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# Manzanar



## 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**





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.



## 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 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.



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## SHO MARUYAMA

**Family # 2859**

**Camp: Manzanar, CA**

**Address: 16-4-1**

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My father came to the US in 1898, worked many jobs, including house boy when he first arrived. His family operated a futon store in Ueda, Japan and he and his older brother had no opportunity in the store because of many older brothers. So they migrated to US. My father worked in railroad gangs, operated several types of stores, farmed, searched, found and processed indigo in Mexico. My mother migrated from the same city in 1923 as a picture bride.

I was very frightened on Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor Day, when I heard the broadcast of war. I ran into the house and stayed, too scared to go out.

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**I was very frightened on Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor Day, when I heard the broadcast of war.**

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I remember the horrid, frightening, dark foreboding night we arrived in Manzanar after a long bus ride. The night was pitch black, without streetlights, house lights, shopping center lights. No stars flickered above. The cold wind blew the sand all around. I peeked out the bus window. The people appeared

to be demons. They wore goggles, Peacoats (Navy coats), plaid coats, heavy boots, gloves, wool caps. etc., not the T-shirts of carefree, civilized So. California I just left. They told us to walk in the dead, dark, pitch black night; I stumbled in the unaccustomed sand a couple hundred feet to pick up straw mattresses. The FBI picked up my father soon after Pearl Harbor and jailed him elsewhere so my older 17 year old brother had to take responsibility.

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**They placed my family, mother and two teenage boys, in a 20 by 20 room, with another family of five...**

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They placed my family, mother and two teenage boys, in a 20 by 20 room, with another family of five, a mother and her four teenage daughters. WOW!

I graduated HS in Manzanar in spring '44. Most of the boys hung out without much parental supervision, because the WRA gave us clothes, a cot, blankets, and fed us 3 meals a day. We were voracious teenage eaters, so we went to several mess halls during lunch and dinner. I had a hard time socializing because in Santa Monica, CA I had only Caucasian friends. In camp I had to learn a different culture, the Nisei culture. Santa Monica had few Niseis and they were not close, like me, they had many Caucasian friends. On the other hand San Pedro, Los Angeles and Hawaii had many Niseis and gangs. At a class picnic I batted left handed and accidentally hit a home run. A gang member decided

my smart impertinent behavior had shown them up and he needed to teach me a lesson. At the after school dance the next day, he and his bodyguard invited me outside and proceeded to beat the hell out of me. Days later they came over to my block, caught me in the bathroom, and proceeded to beat me some more.

After graduating, I volunteered for the Army because they offered a year of college before active duty. Because of the discrimination I experienced during the war, after my discharge from the Army, I chose a liberal college, Antioch College, which had no sororities, fraternities or intercollegiate athletics. I graduated and discovered and pursued a new and liberal helping profession, City Planning. I then moved on to the Poverty Program, and then to the Model Cities Program. I chose to live in an inner city neighborhood in Philadelphia, Powelton Village, which had liberals and Quakers. I engaged in many liberal causes, including integrating the neighborhood, forcing a reluctant school board to build an elementary school in my neighborhood so our children could attend an integrated school, promoting a neighborhood organization to counteract the all-white property owners association. With pride I can state that forty years later, this inner city neighborhood, two miles from city hall, is still integrated, blacks and whites, poor and middle class, college students and professors, families and singles, tenants and owners, young and old.