



*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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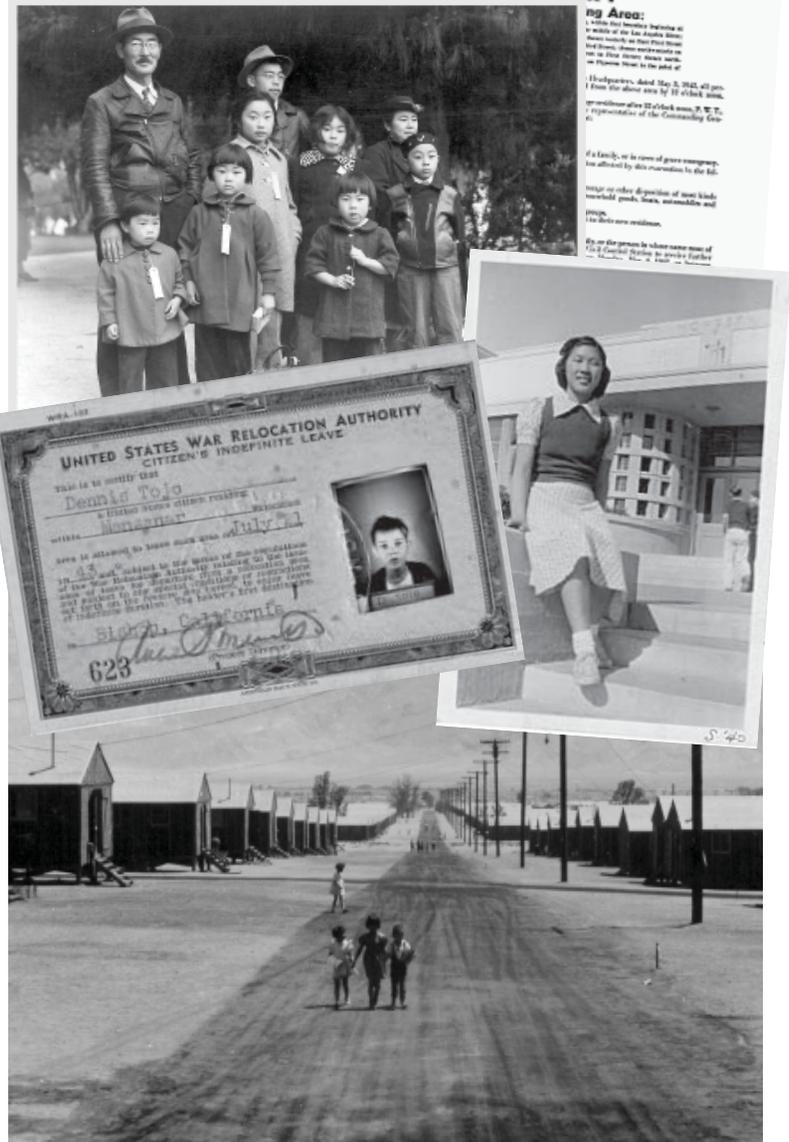
Printing was made possible by a grant from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program.

# Manzanar



## ID Card

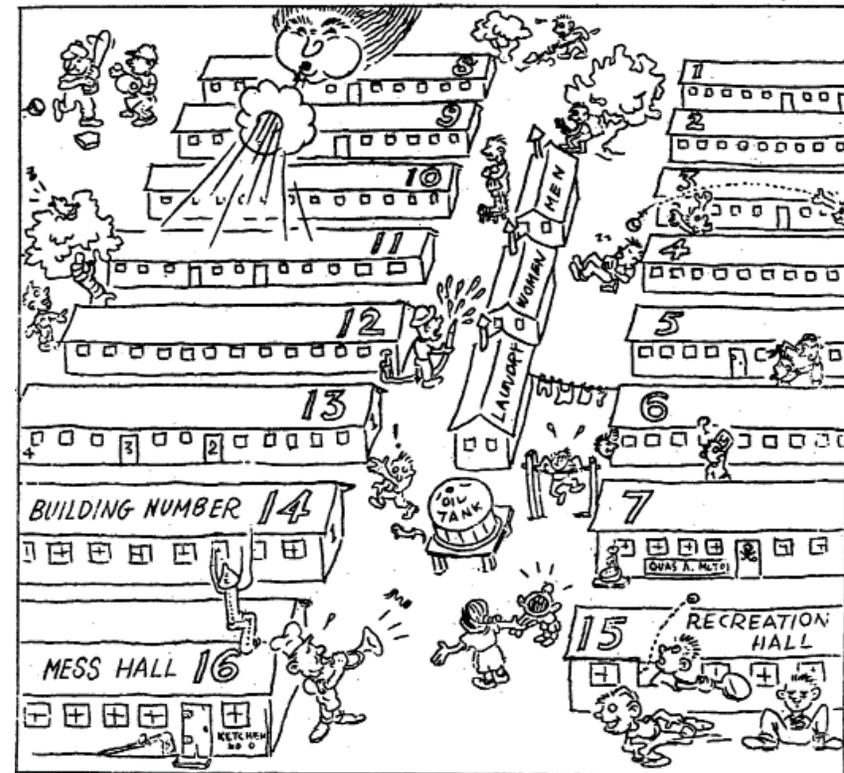
WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY  
 WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION  
 Presidio of San Francisco, California  
 May 3, 1942  
**INSTRUCTIONS  
 TO ALL PERSONS OF  
 JAPANESE  
 ANCESTRY**





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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## HANK UMEMOTO

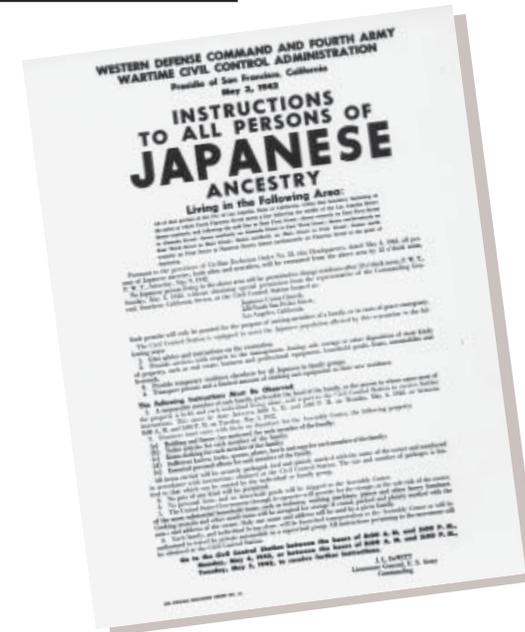
Family # 8648

Camp: Manzanar, CA

Address: 30-2-3

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Uncertainty filled the air as we departed the farm in Florin which our parents had and devoted thirty-two years in to making, and accepted the evacuation as just another formidable interruption in our lives. I would rather have the

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**I would... hope that Manzanar be a reminder that freedom is not a right to be taken for granted, but a privilege which is tested time and again...**

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*Florin, California Evacuation Poster, 1942*

Japanese Americans go down in history as people who endured the wartime incident peacefully with dignity and determination, rather than be pitied as a victim of injustice; and hope that Manzanar be a reminder that freedom is not a right to be taken for granted, but a privilege which is tested time and again through the fiery furnace of time.



Leaving Manzanar with three friends on a Short Term Leave to work in Stockton, we boarded the train at Mojave and were ushered into the men's lounge instead of regular seats. On our return trip, I was kicked by a porter since my foot was protruding into the aisle. At L.A. bus depot, we were denied taxi service. The thought never entered our young naïve minds that this could be an act of discrimination until a Marine said, "Konichiwa". "Konichiwa, I replied. He looked at his buddy and said, "Yeah, he's a Jap!" with an air of arrogance and continued to stroll down Broadway. Back at Manzanar, the "outside world" appeared bleak and horrifying, and I realized that the warm, sheltered and carefree camp life would soon be over and Manzanar would be but a memory.

Enclosed by barbed wire at 30-2-3 (later 30-14-3), I knew that I was a prisoner, augmenting confusion and frustration of a teenager with hostility and rebellion. As the jeep passed by, I yelled "F--- you!" The MP brought the jeep to a quick halt and I was soon staring into the barrel of a rifle.

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**The MP brought the jeep to a quick halt and I was soon staring into the barrel of a rifle.**

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"What's your name?" he questioned. "Hank," I replied. "And what did you say?" I lied with a trembling voice, "N..N..Nothing." But as I gained new friends and became occupied with a variety of camp activities, the hostility and rebellion which I initially harbored during the first twenty-four hours began to subside and eventually disappear, leaving in its aftermath fond and cherished memories of experiences which I shared with so many at Manzanar.



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**The world which Ryosuke and Kusu visualized as the land of opportunity for their five children had also abruptly dissipated with the declaration of the war...**

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We boarded up the windows and took our ancestor's Samurai swords and hid them under the house rather than having them confiscated. Being curious as to the destiny of my friends, I visited them only to find that they were going to Fresno and Pinedale Assembly Centers. Being a typical

thirteen-year-old teenager, the circle of friends was my whole universe, and realizing the vacuum, the whole world seemed to collapse before my eyes. The world which Ryosuke and Kusu visualized as the land of opportunity for their five children had also abruptly dissipated with the declaration of the war and the Umemoto family was now Number 8648, destined for an unknown desert community called Manzanar, and never to return home again.



*Manzanar War Relocation Center, 1942*

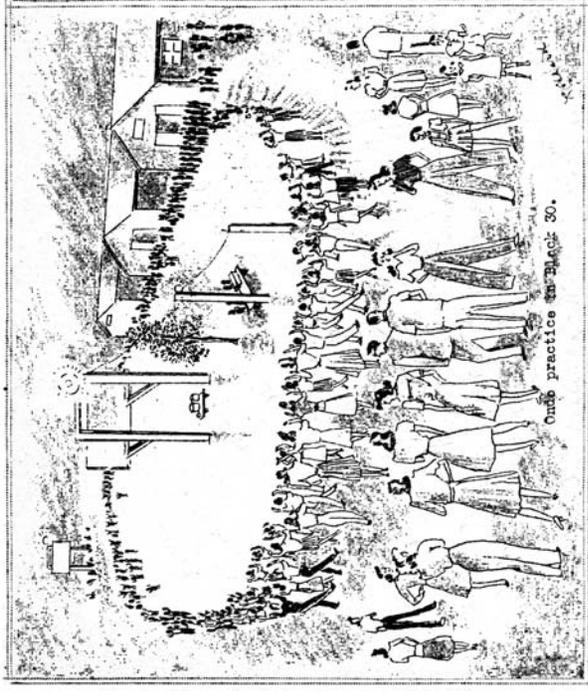
## Block 30 Triva

- Date Occupied: May 25, 1942
- Population: Approximately 300
- Issei Residents: Approximately 95 persons
  - General Issei Age Range: 38-65 yrs
  - Nisei & Sansei: Approximately 205 persons
  - General Nisei & Sansei Age Range: 1-32 yrs

Evacuees were strawberry and grape growers from Florin, California area, which had a population of approximately 2,500 in 1942. They were evacuated to Manzanar Relocation Center, Poston Relocation Center in Arizona, Rowher Relocation Center in Arkansas, and Tule Lake Relocation Center in Northern California.

## Block 30 Athletic Teams

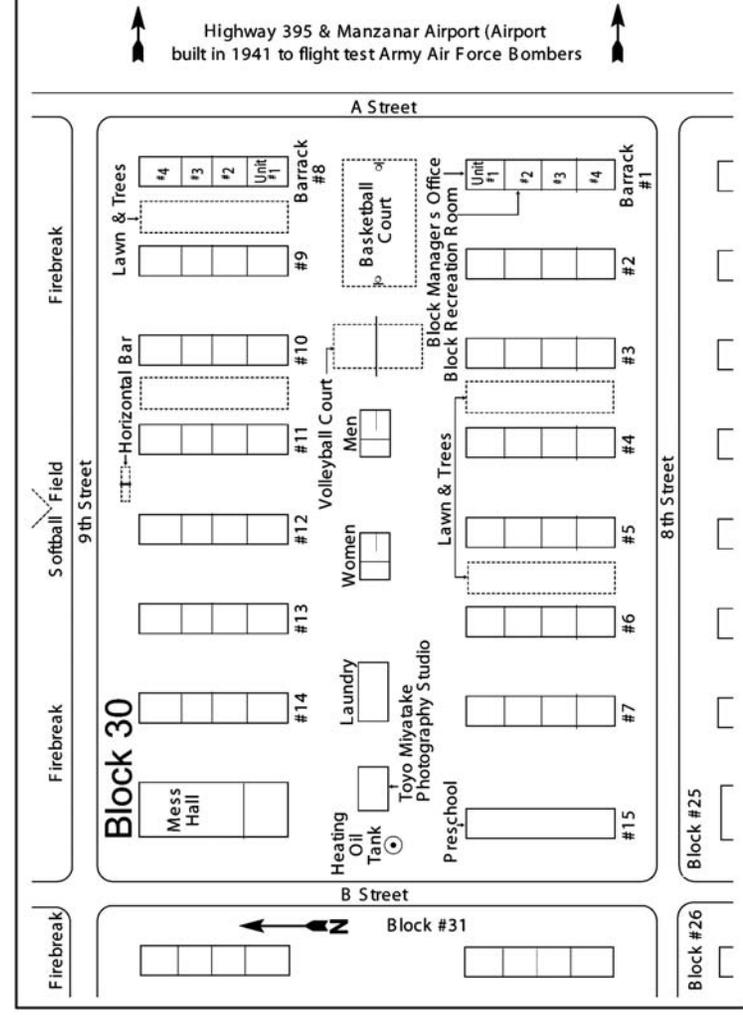
- Rangers: Young Adults-- Softball Baseball, Basketball
- Falcons: High School Age-- Softball, Basketball
- Mikado Midgets: Jr. High School-- Softball, Basketball



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## Ondo Practice in Block 30

A reproduction of a sketch by Richard Hasimoto of Ondo Dance practice (published in the September 1943 Manzanar Free Press. (Barracks 1, 2, & 3 in upper center background; basketball & volleyball courts in center.)



**MANZANAR WAR RELOCATION CENTER, 1942-1945**

Residents formerly from Florin, California (Near Sacramento) Drawn and Compiled by Hank Uemoto