



Minidoka NHS News

May/June 2016

Breaking News

Guard Tower Wins “Orchid” Award:

Stan Cole of Cole Architects, Boise State University’s Construction Management Department, and the Friends of Minidoka were recently honored with the “Orchid” Award from Preservation Idaho for the reconstructed Guard Tower at Minidoka NHS. The awards were given at a ceremony and luncheon on May 21 in Boise.

Densho to Celebrate 20th Anniversary on September 24.

From a practice oral history interview in a dusty classroom twenty years ago, Densho now has a collection of over 900 video oral histories, 50,000 historic photos, documents, and newspapers, and 1,000 encyclopedia articles. The anniversary gala will be held at the Sheraton Seattle Downtown on Saturday, September 24. For further information: info@densho.org.

BIJAEMA Website

Bill Nakao recently announced that the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association has launched their website at <http://bijaema.org>. Check the website for upcoming events and new developments at the Memorial.

Heart Mountain Pilgrimage

The 2016 Heart Mountain Pilgrimage will be on Friday and Saturday, July 29-30. There will be a digital storytelling workshop led by Emmy Award-winning filmmakers Jeff MacIntyre and David Ono and Heart Mountain Executive Director Brian Liesinger. The National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) will be collaborating on this project.

2016 Pilgrimage Largest Pilgrimage to Date

The 14th Annual Minidoka Pilgrimage was also the largest Pilgrimage to date. Over 250 people participated in the three-day event from June 24-26 which culminated in the dedication of the new baseball field.

The Friday Education Program schedule included six sessions ranging from a film screening of *Children of the Camps* by Dr. Satsuki Ina to *Minidoka Memoirs: The Untold Story from the Yoshito Fujii Files* by Ken Mochizuki. The difficult part was choosing which program to attend within each session.

Pilgrims toured the historic site on Saturday morning under sunny skies and cool temperatures. Following



Pilgrimage closing ceremony with Namira Islam of MuslimArc.



Staff were available to explain the new visitor center design.

lunch at the New China Buffet, participants returned to the College of Southern Idaho for the Legacy Sessions where former incarcerated shared stories and experiences of camp life and others shared how the story of the Japanese American incarceration has impacted their lives today.

This year’s Sunday closing ceremony was held at a spot overlooking the new ball field near Warehouse No. 5. The dedication of the baseball field followed the closing ceremony.



Bus No. 3 tour group tried out the new bleachers

Minidoka Irrigator Headlines May/June 1944

Each month this column will feature headlines from the *Minidoka Irrigator* during the same months in 1944.

May 6: **Minidoka Roars Welcome to Kuroki.**

Luncheons, teas, dinners, and dances dominate the gala program to welcome T/Sgt. Ben Kuroki, the number one Nisei war hero.

May 13: **Improvements on Local Cemetery Asked By Board**

Recommendations include: improvement of road leading to cemetery; gravel and sand to be put on inside cemetery roads; trees to be planted just outside the cemetery grounds; and uniform permanent grave markers.

May 20: **Residents Repair Damage to Canal**

85 volunteer evacuee laborers began work repairing 1,800 feet of riprap damaged by a fire on the Twin Falls-North Side Canal three miles below the project.

May 27: **Women Drivers Still Needed**

Women able to operate or maintain a vehicle are urged to apply to Warehouse 5.

June 3: **300 to Receive Diplomas on June 9**

High School Principal Jerome T. Light announced that baccalaureate services will be held at the amphitheater below the motor pool on Sunday, June 4. Commencement exercises will be held June 9 in the amphitheater.

June 10: **Introducing Our Championship Track Team**

The track team won their two meets against Eden 75-9 and Jerome 41-30.

June 17: **New Gate Procedure Now Put Into Effect**

Any person leaving the center on a day pass will exchange his pass for a blue badge at the gate clerk's window.

June 24: **Work Starts On Pool**

With the arrival of the necessary machinery, excavation started on the swimming pool near Block 30.

Rehabilitation of the Herrmann House Begins

Park staff erected a construction fence around the Herrmann house immediately after the June Pilgrimage to signal the first step in the rehabilitation of the structure as a temporary visitor contact station and staff offices.

Contractors will begin work on the structure in the middle of July with a target date of December 2016 for completion of the work.

The Herrmann house is the "Farm-In-A-Day" house that was built on April 17, 1952 as a North Side Water and Soil Conservation District project showcasing new farm equipment and innovative agricultural techniques. Over 1,500 volunteers built the two bedroom house, dug irrigation canals, planted crops, and built corrals for Mr. Herrmann's animals. The local newspaper reported that 10,000 people viewed the day's activities. This 1952 event served as the model for the May 28 Field-In-A-Day event that built the new baseball field.



Construction fence at Herrmann House in 2016

The park is hopeful that the building will open to the public on or near February 19, 2017 to coincide with the Day of Remembrance. The opening of this temporary visitor center will provide an ongoing National Park Service presence on the site for the first time in its history.



Construction in 1952

Hunt Camp Photo Album



Once the swimming pool was completed, the majority of the lifeguards and the swim instructors were Japanese Americans. If you recognize anyone in the photo, please let us know.

NARA Photo

Honor Roll Additions

Seventy-nine names were added to the right panel of the Honor Roll prior to the Minidoka Pilgrimage held from June 24-26. Completion of the panel was made possible by Kelsea Holbrook and her grandmother, Fujiko Tamura Gardner (See January 2016 issue).

Twenty first names were added to the existing last names already present on the panel. Another fifty-nine complete names were added. The names were added using vinyl letters as a temporary way to list everyone whose names appeared on the historic Honor Roll.

The goal is to reproduce the entire panel in time for the Minidoka Pilgrimage in June 2017.



The Minidoka NHS Newsletter is in its second year of monthly newsletters designed to update our partners and friends on recent events at the historic site and elsewhere.

The newsletter has been on hiatus for two months due to the increased workload related to the Field-In-A-Day project and the Pilgrimage.

If you have information you would like to share or topics you would like to see discussed in the coming year, please email Carol Ash at carol_ash@nps.gov.

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



Book Corner: In Defense of Our Neighbors: The Walt and Milly Woodward Story

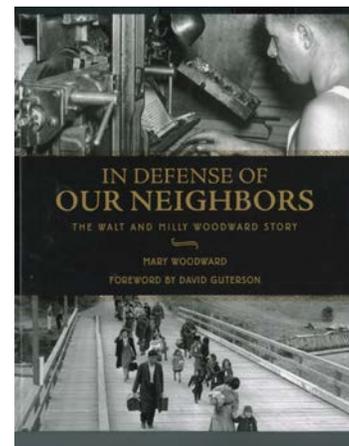
Author: Mary Woodward

Walt and Milly Woodward spoke out against the exclusion of their 227 Japanese American neighbors who were forced to leave their homes on Bainbridge Island on March 30, 1942.

They created a means for the separated community, both at Manzanar and at Minidoka, to keep in touch with events and friends back on the island. They hired young incarcerated to report about the activities of camp life.

With over 150 images and intimate knowledge of the topic, *In Defense of Their Neighbors* explores the legacy of Walt and Milly Woodward. Written by their daughter, Mary, the book traces life on the island for Japanese immigrants and their families, the uncertainty of the time between Pearl Harbor, and March 30, 1942, and incarceration first at Manzanar and later at Minidoka.

During this time the Woodward's were one of the only media voices in the country to speak out against the



incarceration of the Japanese Nikkei. The Bainbridge Review printed editorials questioning the legality and wisdom of the incarceration.

The last chapter of the book, "A Homecoming for Some," describes the return of 150 Bainbridge Islanders to their home after the war. It also chronicles the lives of Walt and Milly Woodward after the return of their neighbors.

The book is published by the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community.

Shiro Kashino Animated Film Wins Emmy



Emmy award winners Lawrence Matsuda, Shannon Gee, and Randy Eng

The animated short film, “Shiro Kashino” won an Emmy for the Seattle Channel in the historic/cultural/special category of the 53rd annual Northwest Emmy Awards. The film, based on the graphic novel, “Fighting for America: Nisei Soldiers,” was written by poet Lawrence Matsuda and illustrated by Matt Sasaki. The film, produced by Shannon Gee, was animated by Randy Eng with sound design and audio engineering by Thomas Cavit. Matsuda also received an Emmy for writing the story.



Emmy awarded to Lawrence Matsuda

In Memoria: Mariagnes Aya Medrud

Mariagnes Aya Medrud, born on April 9, 1925, passed away peacefully at the age of 90 at her home in Boulder, Colorado on April 7, 2016. When she was a senior in high school, Aya and her family were sent to Minidoka War Relocation Center. In her obituary, writer Amy Bounds notes, “Her lifelong passion for social justice was sparked by her experiences as a teen in a Japanese internment camp during World War II.

After attending art school in New York after the war, she worked with the U.S.



Army occupation forces in Japan and in 1950 married Nelder “Med” Medrud, Jr. After living the life of a career Air Force family, they settled in Boulder, Colorado where Aya completed her Master of Fine Arts at the University of Colorado and began her 18 year teaching career in Boulder.

She spent much of her life in community service working to integrate multicultural youth into the community. Friend Janet Heimer noted, “She wouldn’t take no for an answer when it came to equity issues.”

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.

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MIS Unit and Individual Awards

Research by several people including the founder of this project, Seiki Oshiro, has resulted in a listing of MIS Unit and Individual Awards. This ongoing project is a tribute to the men and women who served as Japanese linguists during WWII. The listing of awards is based on a canvas of 800 of the 5000 Japanese linguists who served in the Asia Pacific Theater.



They entered caves to persuade Japanese soldiers to surrender, translated documents, interrogated prisoners, and monitored communications to pass real time intelligence information to commanders. Thirty-three Nisei linguists died in the line of duty.

The list is drawn from Army records, books, publications, veteran’s organizations, and some veterans and their families. The list is a result of work done up to March 31, 2016. For further information, contact Terry Shima at ttshima@comcast.net.