

KOKORO KARA

HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION

"from our heart"

Autumn 2017

IN THIS ISSUE:

New exhibit!
Moving Walls

*American Beauty:
Heart Mountain
Pin-ups*

Looking back:
PILGRIMAGE
2017

POLICING
THE CAMP



HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION

Honorary Advisors

Norman Y. Mineta
*Former U.S. Secretary of
Commerce and Transportation*
Alan K. Simpson
U.S. Senator (ret.)

Board of Directors

Shirley Ann Higuchi, *Chair*
Douglas W. Nelson, *Vice-Chair*
Claudia Wade, *Treasurer*
Aura Newlin, *Secretary*

Damany Fisher	Peter K. Simpson
Kris M. Horiuchi	Marc Sugiyama
Takashi Hoshizaki	Hanako Wakatsuki
Darrell Kunitomi	Shigeru Yabu
Sam Mihara	Jack Ybarra
Allyson Nakamoto	Kathleen Saito Yuille
R. Dana Ono	LaDonna Zall

Staff

Kim Barhaug, *Historic Site Manager*
Danielle Constein, *Operations Manager*
Dakota Russell, *Museum Manager*
Kate Wilson, *Consultant: Communications & Design*
Maggie Locker-Polding, *Executive Assistant to the Chair*
Sharyl McDowell, *Guest Services*
Anna Clifton, *Guest Services*

COMING TOGETHER

Chair Shirley Ann Higuchi

Our 2017 Pilgrimage was the largest we have had since the Grand Opening, with 450 people participating over the course of the weekend. This year marked the 75th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066, and our large turnout was an inspiring reminder that the Japanese American community can come together from across the country and converge on Cody/Powell, Wyoming to honor their shared history.

The extended family of Judge Raymond Uno brought close to 50 people to the Pilgrimage, some of whom traveled from as far away as Hawaii. Seeing multiple generations of legacies is what the Pilgrimage is all about, and we were thrilled that the Uno family, along with others, organized their reunions to coincide with the Pilgrimage.

Our ancestors' plight did not end with the war; their suffering must find meaning in what we do today. Our goal is to educate people so this never happens again to anyone, and this Pilgrimage made it clear we can achieve our mission of continuing to tell this story to younger generations.

The Pilgrimage was attended by those from other camps and organizations. A bus full of people from the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) traveled from California, and Minidoka leadership came from Idaho to share in the experience and show support. Having such a large group of people coming from all over the country is something special and for which we are extremely grateful. From Minidoka, delegates participated in our spoken word video workshop, sharing their families' stories. Having the sup-

port of Minidoka and JANM was wonderful and helped make this Pilgrimage such a success.

One of the highlights of the weekend was the Friday Educational Sessions, which featured talks from former incarcerated such as Sam Mihara, Takashi Hoshizaki, Shig Yabu, and Bacon Sakatani. Nancy Ukai's talk highlighted how the Japanese American community came together to halt the public auction of the Eaton items, a movement one prominent Japanese American said was the most unified he's seen the community since the redress movement that culminated in the passage of the Civil Liberties Act in 1988. The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF) led a legal battle to stop the auction that would have split up the collection of Japanese American art made in the camps like Heart Mountain. Our legal advocacy was paired with the social media advocacy of Japanese American History: Not for Sale, which started a grassroots movement to halt the auction. Nancy's presentation was a powerful example of what can be accomplished when the community comes together.


Our keynote speaker, JANM President Ann Burroughs, emphasized the importance of unity during the Saturday morning ceremony. She showed how two seemingly unrelated groups—black Africans in apartheid South Africa and Japanese Americans during WWII—had much in common, a reminder that all victims of racism suffer at the hands of fear-based discrimination. Understanding our connections from one community to another gives us strength in numbers and makes us



Shirley Ann Higuchi

more able to help prevent future injustice against anyone.

The HMWF recently received a Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) grant from the National Park Service to help fund the All Camps Consortium, which supports and serves the incarceration sites and Japanese American stakeholder organizations. HMWF leadership plans to meet with JANM and the Japanese American Citizens League in Washington, DC in late October to discuss our future and exciting opportunities. The All Camps Consortium, bolstered by the JACS grant, is the new link connecting our various stakeholders in the Japanese American community.

The past few months have been an exciting preview of what will happen if we stay strong as a community, continue to spread our message, and help others. The redress movement of the 1980s showed what we can accomplish when we come together. At a time when the rights of minorities are once again threatened, we must band together instead of turning inwards. Now is the time for unity, and our recent experiences have reminded us of this power and our ability to effect change. 

Shirley Ann Higuchi



Remembering the 2017 Heart Mountain PILGRIMAGE

by Maggie Locker-Polding

Not since the 2011 grand opening have so many people visited the Interpretive Center as did during the 6th annual Pilgrimage on July 28–29. 450 people were registered over the weekend, and the Friday night banquet was sold out, which led to dozens of pilgrims dining and watching from an overflow room. The banquet hall was packed with visitors, all of whom came from across the country to mark the 75th anniversary of their and their families' incarceration. It was a sign of the Interpretive Center's attraction and that the interest in the Japanese American incarceration remains and continues to grow.

Before the Pilgrimage began, the

nine participants in the Spoken Word Video Workshop arrived in Cody to begin working on their stories. They worked on their poetry with G Yamazawa, and filmed & edited their videos with Jeff MacIntyre and his team over the next two days. At the Friday night banquet, the films of original poetry set to music flashed in front of the audience, each one a snippet of the larger story that is the Japanese American incarceration. The participants ranged from high-schoolers to senior citizens.

Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF) Chair Shirley Ann Higuchi welcomed everyone at the Friday banquet. Former incarcerated Judge Raymond Uno, whose father was a WWI veteran who died while at Heart Mountain, spoke about how his experience in camp inspired him to devote his life to justice and to helping others, first as a social worker, then as Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) National president and Utah's first minority judge. Heart Mountain

baby Dale Kunitomi spoke of how he was born in the mountain's shadow and grew up to climb it as a geologist. Both were poignant reminders of how the connection to Heart Mountain affected them in both subtle and overt ways.



(L–R) Sam Mihara, Shig Yabu, & Takashi Hoshizaki

Vice-Chair Doug Nelson, accompanied by Board members Sam Mihara and Darrell Kunitomi, announced the new effort to raise money to restore the barrack recently relocated to the Interpretive Center (for more information, see page 12). The HMWF Board and Advisory Council had already pledged \$25,000, and the audience was challenged to help us get to \$40,000.

At Saturday's opening ceremony, Senator Alan Simpson, Secretary Norman Mineta, and Japanese



Bacon Sakatani

Consul General Hiroto Hirakoba from Denver opened the events. The Consul General thanked HMWF for its work and lauded it for drawing closer ties between the United States and Japan, a connection that helps HMWF's network grow and increase awareness of the impact and repercussions of Executive Order 9066.

As the Yellowstone Choir sang, Bill Shishima led a troop of Boy Scouts in raising the American flag over the Center, a moment captured in photo on the cover of a recent issue of the Pacific Citizen. Shishima was a Boy Scout incarcerated as a child at Heart Mountain, as was Secretary Mineta, whose friendship with Senator Simpson began at a Boy Scout jamboree at Heart Mountain. Their friendship has

spanned decades and flourished when they were both members of Congress, which helped fuel the redress movement and the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Their story was covered by both The Today Show and *The Washington Post*, who sent journalists Tom Brokaw and Lori Aratani to the Pilgrimage.

The Pilgrimage's keynote speaker, Japanese American National Museum President and CEO Ann Burroughs, connected the Japanese American community to the larger group that includes all minorities and victims of fear-based discrimination. Burroughs spoke of when she fought apartheid in her native South Africa, whose racist government imprisoned her. After being freed by Amnesty Interna-

tional, she dedicated her life to helping those who weren't as fortunate. Her experiences show the connection between all groups that face discrimination, whether they're black South Africans or Japanese Americans.

After lunch, buses drove the pilgrims in groups to the various sites around the interpretive center, including the new barrack, where Shig Yabu gave a tour and talked about his camp experiences. Mihara covered the hospital, while Takashi Hoshizaki gave tours of the Walking Trail and the Honor Roll. All three Board members were incarcerated at Heart Mountain, and gave valuable insight into the stops on the tour.

At the interpretive center, Emmy Award-winning filmmakers



(Clockwise from left) Shig Yabu prepares to read his book *Hello Maggie!*; Nancy Ukai presents an Educational Session; G Yamazawa presents slam poetry; our biggest group of participants since the 2011 Grand Opening take their seats.



(L-R) Shirley Ann Higuchi, Doug Nelson, Alan Simpson, Norman Mineta, Ann Burroughs, and Hiroto Hirakoba enjoy the stage.

MacIntyre and ABC news anchor David Ono showed their new film, “Faceism,” a documentary about racism and art. It focused on G Yamazawa and Roger Shimomura. Shimomura, an acclaimed painter and former Minidoka incarcerated with pieces in museums including the Smithsonian, had work on display at the interpretive center. Yamazawa, an award-winning spoken word poet and hip-hop artist, performed during the Saturday events, at points bringing the audience to tears. It was a powerful experience to watch a documentary about their art while sitting in a room surrounded by it.

In the evening, the Board presented Emeritus Board member LaDonna Zall with a new award in her name: The LaDonna Zall Compassionate

Witness Award, which honors those who have helped the community even though they are not directly impacted by oppression. An important part of keeping this story alive is having support from other groups, and it is people like Zall who help make that possible.

As the sun set on Saturday, Nelson announced that the barrack fundraising initiative had exceeded our goal of \$40,000. By September, we had raised around \$47,000. The 2017 Pilgrimage brought together different people from different places, and the result was a sense of energy, relevance, and longevity. As the Interpretive Center grows, so does its reputation and ability to spread the HMWF message to people of all ages and backgrounds.



Photo by Don Tanguilig

**SAVE THE
DATE!**

**2018 Heart Mountain
PILGRIMAGE**
Cody & Powell, WY • July 27–28, 2018

IN MUSEUM SPEECH, FORMER INCARCEREE AND HMWF BOARD MEMBER SAM MIHARA CONNECTS WWII INCARCERATION TO MODERN EVENTS

by Maggie Locker-Polding

Photo by JI Yang



Sam Mihara speaking at Alphawood Gallery

Iconic photographs of the incarceration were featured in a September 13 appearance by Sam Mihara, a Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF) Board member, and Azam Nizamuddin of the Muslim Bar Association, at the Alphawood Gallery in Chicago.

Sam, a Heart Mountain incarceree who later became a rocket scientist with a security clearance, framed his presentation around the photography of the exhibit, “Then They Came For Me: Incarceration of Japanese Americans During WWII and the Demise of Civil Liberties.”

The exhibit showcases the photography of Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange, among others, who were hired by the War Relocation Authority to document the mass eviction and imprisonment of Japanese Americans in the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Mihara used these photographs in his talk, in particular the pieces by Dorothea Lange that were censored for showing the US government in an unflattering light. One photograph shows a young Japanese American girl reciting the Pledge of Allegiance;

she would be classified as a non-alien and sent to prison camp.

Nizamuddin spoke to the importance of art and museums. “What’s important is using art to convey how treatment of the other is not only a historical event that occurred, but it can happen and is happening today.”

Mihara drove the point home as he flashed images of children behind barbed wire. “This could be your family. This could be your son looking at the guard thinking, What’s going to happen to me? This could be your daughter inside a prison camp wondering, When am I going to get out? This could be your son trying to get out of the prison camp not knowing there’s a guard with a weapon pointed straight at him.”

During the audience Q&A, a man asked whether there is a rational reaction to the fear that sparked mass incarceration during WWII. Nizamuddin quoted Star Wars, saying, “Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, and ultimately hate leads to suffering.”

“There’s a solution to the problem of fear, but it’s not denying their liberties and justice,” added Mihara.

After his release from Heart Mountain, Mihara became a successful rocket scientist with Boeing. After he retired, he found renewed purpose in lecturing around the country. “I should be bitter, and I was for a long time,” he said. “It dawned on me that it doesn’t help to be bitter; all you’re doing is getting angry at yourself by not taking more action that’s more positive.” For Mihara, that means educating the nation’s future leaders to prevent history from repeating itself, and donating his speaking fees to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation.

When he isn’t touring the country, Mihara lives in California with his wife of 60 years—the girl in the Dorothea Lange photograph.

“Then They Came For Me” is showing at the Alphawood Gallery in Chicago through November 19. 🍷🍷



Photo by JI Yang

Azam Nizamuddin speaking at Alphawood Gallery

American Beauty: The Pin-Up Girls of Heart Mountain

By Jordan Norviel

The image of Rosie the Riveter remains an iconic symbol of war-time labor and solidarity. The poster tells readers “We Can Do It!” with an image of a white woman with her sleeves rolled up. Many interpret this image as a feminist statement, declaring women’s labor is essential to the American efforts in World War II. But is it a universally American image? Rosie the Riveter cannot possibly speak to the Japanese American women unjustly incarcerated during the war. These women weren’t viewed as patriotic, or even as belonging to the United States. They were seen as an outside threat to be contained and disciplined. And yet, many young Nisei women found ways to prove their loyalty from inside camp fences. This article will explore just one avenue women used to perform their patriotism: beauty.

On April 7, 1945, the social corner of the *Heart Mountain Sentinel* celebrated the “Heart Mountain Pin-Up Girls,” highlighting Sanaye Okita in particular. Okita, who won the Pin-Up contest, was awarded a \$25 war bond and the title of most beautiful woman at Heart Mountain. Her photo is displayed alongside the other “Heart Mountain Cuties,” all looking so glamorous one might forget— if only for a moment— that this contest took place within a concentration camp. The 1945 Pin-Up Contest grew from the previous year’s “Bussei Queen Contest,” a pageant, talent show, and dance sponsored by the Heart Mountain Buddhist community.

The 1944 event was a rousing success, and the 1945 Pin-Up Contest became a camp-wide competition. Community clubs and organizations nominated their favorite young women “on the basis of beauty alone. No other requirement will be necessary.” The field was narrowed down through a popular vote, with ballot boxes placed in every mess hall around the camp. Nisei GIs on leave at the camp picked a winner from the top six candidates, selecting the girls they “would most like to be isolated in a foxhole with.”

The 1944 Bussei Queen Contest and subsequent 1945 Pin-Up Contest offered the Heart Mountain community an opportunity to connect and assert their own identity. The 1944 contest was attended by around 500 young people and grew in popularity the following year. The 1945 *Sentinel* heavily hyped the Pin-Up Contest, writing articles every week for months in advance. For Heart Mountain residents, the Pin-Up Contest was more than a passing amusement. It was a chance to select the perfect girl to represent the entire camp. In a time when propaganda depicted people of Japanese ancestry as sneaky, traitorous, and sub-human, the contest was one way to show the world how they saw themselves. The Pin-Up Contest allowed them to express pride in their Japanese Amer-



Courtesy of Online Archive of California

USO Hostesses entertaining a soldier at the HM USO

ican identity.

Wartime beauty pageants were common throughout the United States. Malia McAndrew writes that the American beauty queen was “not simply a stylish woman; she was a symbol of the abundant lifestyle Americans prided themselves on having obtained, even during a time of war.” Even while suffering the indignities and deprivations of life in the camps, Japanese American women sought to recreate the image of the American beauty queen. Andrews explains that “by claiming a patriotic identity through beauty pageants...and other acts of bodily adornment, Nisei youth used their bodies as a means of constructing counterarguments about who *was* and *was not* an American.” The beauty pageants at Heart Mountain gave young women an opportunity to assert their identity as Americans and to attempt to replace the very ideas about them that had caused their incarceration.

News of camp functions carried far beyond the boundaries of Heart

Mountain. Many camp functions were featured in the *Heart Mountain Sentinel*, like beauty pageants and popularity contests. Camp newspapers found their way into both the other camps and the outside world. The distribution of camp newspapers allowed incarcerated people to speak directly to larger American audiences. Knowing this, we can better understand how the “Heart Mountain Cuties” were performing the All-American Girl to a broader American audience.

The connection between the Heart Mountain Pin-Ups and the Japanese American soldiers of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team is particularly telling of the relationship between beauty and patriotism. Young women of all races and ethnicities were told to be beautiful to give soldiers “something to fight for” during the war. However, given the specific circumstances of their incarceration, Japanese American women faced still greater pressures to be beautiful. Young Nisei women were made to believe that the fate of both their country and their ethnic group rested on their ability to be beautiful for their men. Expanding on this idea, McAndrew writes that just as the “Japanese American male could, through military service, use his body to protect the United States, the

Heart Mountain Pin-up Girls



As seen in the *Heart Mountain Sentinel* (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

young Nisei female could contribute her all to the war effort by cultivating her beauty.”

The 1945 Pin-Up Contest highlights this connection. The *Sentinel* reported that portraits of each contestant would be given to the young GI judges. Additionally, pin-up photographs of all contestants would be sent overseas to the 442nd, along with photographs from women at other camps participating in similar contests. The soldiers of the 442nd would then choose one woman to be “the pin-up girl of the regiment.” These women, reduced to only images, were used to connect Japanese American fighting men to their country and their communities. In photographic form, they could travel the world and perform their patriotic duty, even as, in real life, they remained disconnected from mainstream America and confined behind barbed wire.

Looking through the Heart

Mountain roster, the Pin-Up Queen’s life appears less glamorous than the *Sentinel* might suggest. Sanaye Okita was just twenty years old at the time of the contest. Her name is listed along with her family and their number, 32099. An entire family experience, reduced to a number, and few other details. I do not wish to suggest these beauty pageants were cruel, or the only aspirations of young women, or a full representation of camp life. However, examining the Pin-Up Contest can offer us a few insights into the lives of young women with uncertain futures, learning to navigate both incarceration and their own identities. 🍷🍷



Hirahara Collection, Washington State University

Heart Mountain Bussei Queen and her attendants



“Working at Heart Mountain gave me the opportunity to connect with other people about history and social justice in a more personal way. From day to day encounters at the museum to large events like the Pilgrimage, I was able to learn from unique and varied perspectives.”

POLICING THE CAMP



by Devin M. Gonzalez

One of the first questions I had during my internship at Heart Mountain came from a student. After I explained that the military guards were not permitted inside the camp, they asked me: “But if there was a fight, who would break it up?” I didn’t have an answer. Later that day, the Museum Manager told me that there was a Japanese American police force inside the camp, but that not much research had been done about them. I eagerly jumped into the subject, thinking that any light I could shed on it would better aid the Center in educating the public. I soon discovered the fascinating story of Rosie Matsui and the Heart Mountain Police Department.

Like most jobs at Heart Mountain, the work of policing the camp fell to the incarcerated. The Heart Mountain Police Department employed 100 men. Forty percent of the officers were from the older Issei generation, and sixty percent were either Nisei or Kibei. However, the Issei held most of the positions of authority. Heart Mountain police officers worked up to

44 hours a week while only making—at most—sixteen dollars a month.

The police department served in the same capacity as any other force around the country, protecting residents and properties and preventing crime. Criminals were punished based on the severity of their crime. The War Relocation Authority established guidelines for prosecution:

Misdemeanors and other similar offenses are ordinarily handled by the Project Director or by a judicial commission made up of evacuee residents. The maximum penalty for such offenses is imprisonment or suspension of work and compensation privileges for a period of three months. Major criminal cases are turned over to the outside courts having appropriate jurisdiction.

Caucasian men held all the top administrative positions at the ten Japanese American concentration camps. At the other nine camps, one of these white men, the Chief of Internal Security, also served as the Chief of Police. At Heart Mountain, this was not the case. Robert Griffin, Heart Mountain’s Chief of Internal Security, chose to give control of the police force to an incarcerated, Ryoza “Rosie” Matsui.

Matsui came to the United States as a child in 1916. He grew up in the household of MGM cinematographer Clyde DeVinna, occupying a station somewhere between adopt-

ed son and servant. He was still in DeVinna’s employ in 1942, when President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. Matsui was sent first to the Pomona Assembly Center in California, where—despite no law enforcement experience—he found himself appointed Assistant Chief of Police.

Matsui’s success as Assistant Chief at Pomona must have led to his appointment at Heart Mountain, after Pomona’s residents were transferred to the Wyoming camp. Internal Security Chief Griffin was responsible for running three departments: fire, social welfare, and police. He chose to focus on the first two himself, but assigned Matsui the job of organizing and setting regulations for the police. By all accounts, Matsui was a well-regarded chief and member of the Heart Mountain community. In addition to his official duties, Matsui was well-known around the camp as coach of the celebrated Heart Mountain All-Stars baseball team.



Heart Mountain All-Stars with Coach Rosie Matsui

While Matsui may have been popular among the people, he and Griffin never saw eye to eye. Their disagreements finally came to a head with what Griffin called “a failure to cooperate on a case under investigation.” While the details of the case are unclear, it appears to have revolved around Matsui’s lax enforcement of the camp’s ban on alcohol. Griffin asked for and received Matsui’s resignation. In a show of soli-



parity with Matsui, the entirety of the Heart Mountain police force also resigned immediately afterward.

With Matsui out, Griffin named himself chief of the now unstaffed police department. In October 1942, the *Heart Mountain Sentinel* reported:

R.O. Griffin, internal security, will devote his full time to the police department due to the resignation of "Rosie" Matsui, police chief. Since the arrival of Miss Virgil Payne to lead the social welfare group and the organization of the fire department under capable leaders, Griffin will be able to spend all his time as chief of the police department.

Griffin still had to answer for his actions to Christopher Rachford, the Heart Mountain Project Director. Rachford intended to resign his position and return to his ranch at the end of the year, but he wanted to get the camp stabilized before he left. In keeping with this goal, Rachford

informed his staff not to disturb the incarcerated or give them any cause to be antagonistic towards management. Obviously, Griffin's actions against the police department ran against Rachford's wishes. Rachford took it upon himself to fix the problem. After dismissing Griffin, Rachford imposed a new set of police regulations for Heart Mountain:

- i. We maintain law-abiding citizens and will support reasonable regulations.
- ii. Policemen will take all necessary means to maintain law and order at all times and in all places.
- iii. Policemen are fully authorized to arrest individuals who commit any act contrary to the best interest of the general public.
- iv. Persons caught in the commission of crime can be arrested immediately and incarcerated in either the county jail or the military police barracks.
- v. The Police Department will hereafter be in the charge of Mr. Phillip

W. Barber of the Division of Community Services. He will have full authority to organize the Police Department.

vi. Barber will submit at the earliest opportunity to the Project Director a complete report on all suspensions and his recommendations for final action.

vii. In case of suspensions, the suspended officer will have the right to present evidence in his behalf before final decision is reached by the Project Director.

viii. The authority granted to Barber as head of the Police Department may be delegated by him to such officers and subordinates as he, in his judgment, may determine to be necessary.

ix. Crimes within the meaning of the above rules include theft, damage to property, drunkenness, assault and battery, illegal possession of weapons or contraband, general disturbance of the peace, the incitement to mob violence.

x. In order that all members of the Police force may have full opportunity to present their ideas for the betterment of the department, they will be privileged to present such recommendations in writing to Barber, and when approved by him & Project Director, will have full force and effect. Those that are disapproved will have written reasons for such disapproval.

With his new regulations in place, Rachford set about reforming the police department. One of his last administrative actions at the camp was to reinstate Rosie Matsui and his officers, fixing the wrongs perpetrated by Griffin.



Courtesy of Online Archive of California

Chief Tomlinson teaching a police school

The reformed Heart Mountain Police Department worked closely with the fire department to make the camp a safer place for the incarcerated. One of the biggest projects the two departments collaborated on was fire prevention. Each barracks apartment in the camp was outfitted with a coal-burning potbelly stove. Residents were responsible for properly extinguishing the ashes from these stoves before dumping them. However, some people in the camp were not complying with this request, causing fire hazards. The Fire Chief initiated a warning to the camp

that the police had promised support in punishing serial offenders.

Violent crime was not common within the camp, but it did occur. One of the most brutal incidents the police department was involved in was a stabbing on New Year's Day of 1943. Gytoku Tokita, 67 years old, attacked his 55-year-old roommate, Taro Suenaga, in their apartment at 15-21-E. The *Sentinel* reported Tokita "will be tried in the court in Cody... The 67-year-old is now in the custody of Sheriff Blackburn in Cody and is accompanied by Joe Tanaka, warden, acting as interpreter." Tokita pleaded guilty in the case, and the *Sentinel* noted he could face a maximum penalty of up to a year in prison and \$1,000 fine.

Another major action of the Heart Mountain Police Department was shutting down a gambling ring inside the camp. Gambling was not permitted at Heart Mountain, but some did not follow the rules. Chief Matsui led a raid on a suspected gambling den, where the police arrested seven gamblers in the barracks apartment, but two others fled. One was caught in the mess hall not far from the scene, and the other was caught in his apartment the following morning. All nine were sent to the Cody jail for operating a gambling house. The police also confiscated \$300.

Despite Matsui's reputation for looking the other way regarding alcohol in the camp, his police department didn't ignore all abuses. "Two of the cooks' helpers in mess hall 8-27," reported the *Sentinel* in early 1943, "learned definitely that raisins in Heart Mountain are for eating purposes only. Both were charged this week by the police department with using mess hall sugar, kitchen utensils and raisins to make 'home brew.'" Because this was only a minor offense,

the two mess hall workers were not sent to the Cody jail. Instead, their case was heard by a judicial commission of their fellow incarcerated, who also determined the penalty for their crimes.

One of the most beneficial experiences for the Heart Mountain police officers was a police school held in the camp. The school, taught by internal security officers from the other camps, instructed police department personnel as to their duties as officers. Like Chief Matsui, many officers had no law enforcement experience before being incarcerated. The police school not only helped to professionalize the department at Heart Mountain, but better qualified Heart Mountain officers to pursue careers in law enforcement once they were allowed to return home.

Some of the most amazing questions I was asked at Heart Mountain came from kids and school groups. More so than adults, they think about how the incarceration experience affected the everyday aspects of life we take for granted. In this case, they helped me to bring to light the subject of law enforcement at the Heart Mountain camp. The Heart Mountain Police Department was made up of prisoners assigned to police other prisoners, a force operating under bizarre circumstances that hopefully will never occur again.



My time at the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center was a great experience in my young museum career. The Heart Mountain staff taught me a lot about how the museum works and why museums are important. Any college student or high school student who is looking to have a great experience in this field should have the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center on their bucket list.



Devin M. Gonzalez



SAVE —A— BARRACK


Progress is underway on improvements to the original Heart Mountain barrack we have returned to our site. For those unfamiliar with the origin of this project, here is some background: in 2015, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF)—with the support of the Wyoming Episcopal Diocese and the Wyoming Cultural Trust—moved an original Heart Mountain barrack back to the

National Historic Landmark site. The building, which had been relocated to Shell, Wyoming decades ago, was divided into thirds, loaded onto flat-bed trailers, and hauled over 78 miles back to Heart Mountain.

Since that time, staff has been working to make the barrack a space where visitors can safely learn what life was truly like within the Heart Mountain camp. Stabilizing the building was the top priority. First, though, modern additions needed to be removed to provide carpenters full access to the building. This demolition was performed by students from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's (UNL) Center for Civic Engagement during their spring break service trip in March 2017.

As soon as the UNL Crew finished, contractors began adding additional support trusses to the barrack roof, stripping off years of decaying shingling, replacing water damaged

decking, and installing a brand new EPDM roof designed to simulate the original design. Support for this new roof came, in part, from the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office.

The barrack is stabilized now, but there's still more to do. To make the barrack accessible, new steps and a handicap ramp must be installed. Original doors, windows, and woodwork must be restored or replaced. Finally, the iconic tarpaper-and-battens exterior of the barrack must be created. Thankfully, the Foundation has found generous donors to help fund these projects. At the 2017 Heart Mountain Pilgrimage, attendees raised over \$47,000 to continue developing the barrack. Thanks to the efforts of friends and the HMWF membership, this historic structure will soon become an important part of every visitor's experience at Heart Mountain. 

To contribute to this fund and help us achieve these vital next steps, please visit www.shopheartmountain.org/products/save-a-barrack or call the interpretive center at 307-754-8000.

the
Save-A-Barrack
project
continues...

Photo by Morgan Tyree

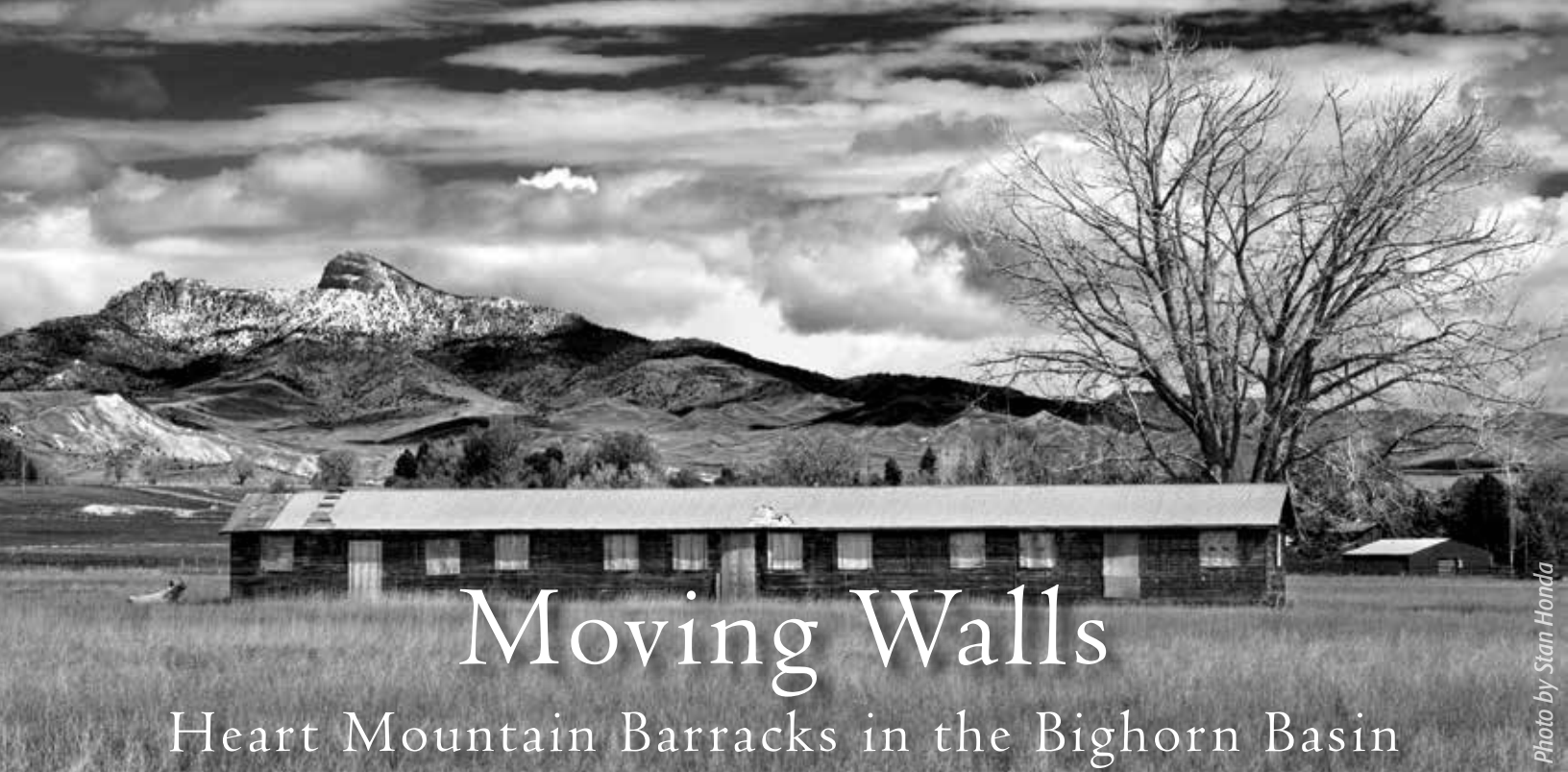


Photo by Stan Honda

Moving Walls

Heart Mountain Barracks in the Bighorn Basin

EXHIBIT

In September, we opened our latest special exhibit, *Moving Walls: Heart Mountain Barracks in the Bighorn Basin*. Featuring the photographs of night sky photographer and photojournalist Stan Honda, the work explores the fate of the Heart Mountain barracks after the “Relocation Center” was closed in 1945. Honda

collaborated on this project with Sharon Yamato, filmmaker and writer, to create the book *Moving Walls: The Barracks of America's Concentration Camps*, which accompanies the exhibit. Here we discuss the unique situation of the first inhabitants of the barracks (incarcerees) and the second inhabitants (homesteaders) in the setting of Wyoming.

The Incarcerees

From 1942 through 1945, Heart Mountain served as a concentration camp for some 14,000 Japanese Americans from the West Coast. Despite the barbed wire that surrounded it, the camp was not that different from other Wyoming settlements. Incarcerees farmed the land, established schools for their children, and did all they could with what little they had.

The government had quickly assembled nearly 500 barracks buildings on the site for incarceration to use as housing. The construction was sloppy and the materials cheap, but they soon turned these makeshift structures into homes. When World War II ended, the camp closed. In mere months, this bustling community became a ghost town, and the barracks sat empty.

The Homesteaders

The camp would not be deserted for long. In less than a year, the government opened the Heart Mountain



Photo by Stan Honda

Evalene George bakes bread in the kitchen of her remodeled barrack.

District for homesteading. Homestead claims were awarded by lottery, mostly to veterans and their families. While they waited for their names to be drawn, many of these homesteaders moved into the old barracks. Here, they experienced firsthand the bitter cold and the dust storms that had plagued the Japanese Americans before them.

As claims were awarded over the next few years, the camp began to empty out again. This time, the barracks left, too. The government offered barracks to homesteaders at two for \$1. This bargain made the trouble of dismantling and loading up these buildings worth it. Properly reconstructed on a new claim, two barracks counted as a homesteader's required improvement. By the mid-1950s, only a handful of buildings remained in the camp, but hundreds were scattered across the Bighorn Basin.

A Wyoming Legacy

The barracks are still here today, often hiding under new siding or completely enclosed by later construction. Some are barns and shops. Many are still houses. The experiences of incarcerated and homesteaders were vastly different, but they are united by their memories of life within the barracks. It's this common ground that Stan Honda and Sharon Yamato have set out to explore, through photography, prose, and film. There's a shared Wyoming heritage to be discovered when we follow the journey of these *Moving Walls*.

EVENTS

In conjunction with the exhibit, we held two events at the end of September, giving the public the opportunity to hear from the artists involved in the project, as well as from the people who lived in these barracks during

and after the war.

The first event included the premiere of "Moving Walls," a new documentary by Sharon Yamato featuring interviews with former incarcerated and with the homesteaders who lived in the barracks, gaining perspective on what it was like to live in the structures. After the screening, a panel discussion featuring former incarcerated Bacon Sakatani, scholar and Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation Vice-Chair Doug Nelson, and Heart Mountain homesteaders Evaleen George and Tak Ogawa was held. Sakatani and Nelson discussed the extreme hardship placed on incarcerated as they struggled to create suitable living conditions in the camps and in these drafty, tiny barracks buildings. What's so remarkable is the "extraordinary resilience and determination of the incarcerated to create an environment where they could live like

Americans and project that identity" said Nelson.

Ogawa and George represented the other side of the story, relating that while it came with a lot of hard work, it was the best day of their lives when each person's number was drawn for a homesteading plot, and especially when they had the opportunity to purchase the barracks, giving them the ability to create a home on their land very quickly.

The exhibit is on display through the end of 2017 and will become a travelling exhibit in 2018. 📖📷



Homesteader Takashi (Tak) Ogawa in front of a barrack fragment on his original homestead.



Takashi Hoshizaki in front of a barrack originally acquired by homesteaders Rudy and Doris Jolovich.



Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation
1539 Road 19
Powell, Wyoming 82435
www.HeartMountain.org

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
BILLINGS, MT
PERMIT NO. 1

Interested in seeing any of our special exhibits in your area?
Know a place that could host these exhibits?

Contact us at info@heartmountain.org or 307.754.8000!

Moving Walls Heart Mountain Barracks
in the Bighorn Basin



THE FABRIC OF MEMORY

INCARCERATION IN FOCUS

A Comparative Look at the Photographs of Ansel Adams and Yoshio Okumoto