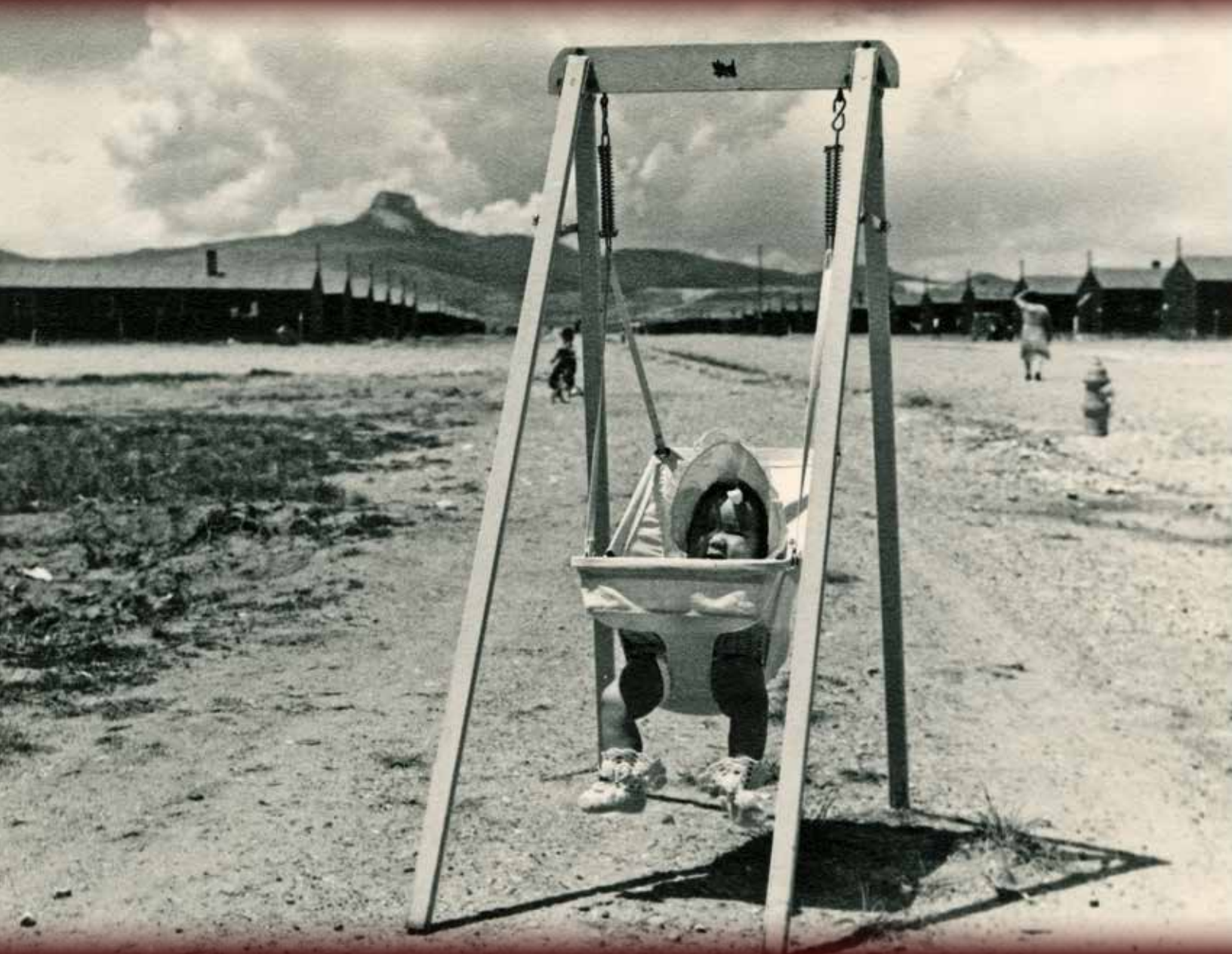


KOKORO KARA

Fall 2014

HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION

"from our heart"



In This Issue:

- **WWII Vet Returns to Heart Mountain**
- **New Exhibit: *First Steps At Heart Mountain***

Giving Thanks in San Jose this November: Board Chair Shirley Ann Higuchi

At this time of year seventy years ago, many Heart Mountain internees had already spent two years of their lives behind barbed wire. Another Thanksgiving was around the corner, but it was a holiday that yet again would be spent away from home. Unable to return to the West Coast, Heart Mountain internees faced the prospect of yet another cold winter, yet another year behind barbed wire.

It seems fitting that the week before Thanksgiving this year the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation Board will gather in San Jose—the place that my father and so many others knew as home. On Saturday, November 22, we will have a Heart Mountain luncheon, planned by former internee Jimi Yamaichi. We will hold a Town Hall meeting at the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin. Afterward, we will convene for a screening of David Ono and Jeff MacIntyre's film *The Legacy of Heart Mountain*. I hope you will join us if you are in the area. RSVP to events@heartmountain.org.

As I am surrounded by my Heart Mountain family and friends the week before Thanksgiving, I will give thanks that we are able to return to the place that my family called home—knowing how much it would have meant to them, seventy years ago, to celebrate it there.

I will give thanks for all of the friends who have joined us in our mission of telling these stories. Some of these friends I have known for many years. It was a pleasure to see so many of you at our Annual Pilgrimage this past August: Senator John Barasso, Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, Senator Alan K. Simpson, Irene Hirano Inouye, Floyd Mori, Don Nose and more. Others I have just met. I met Ted Koppel at our Pilgrimage, when he happened to be in town visiting friends. I met Eric Saul in D.C. when we both happened to be attending the same conference and he agreed to be a keynote speaker for the Pilgrimage.

We are fortunate to have a beautiful Interpretive Center that is dedicated to telling Heart Mountain stories. I am thank-



Shirley Ann Higuchi

“We must work together to ensure that preserving the story of Japanese American confinement continues to be a priority for our lawmakers. The fate of all Americans will be in their hands should we forget this history.”

ful for our wonderful staff and dedicated board and advisory council that never tire in their efforts to make our world-class museum the best it can be.

It has indeed been a busy year for Heart Mountain. In February, we held events in Los Angeles at the Japanese American National Museum. We hosted a national consortium on judges in Wyoming in June and held our annual Pilgrimage honoring the Heart Mountain veterans in August. In September, we joined the Congressional Gold Medal Advisory Council to aid in the creation of their upcoming exhibition for the National Museum of American History to ensure that our Heart Mountain vets are represented. I look forward to seeing the progress that the exhibition makes

this upcoming year as it seeks to honor our Nisei veterans.

We give thanks at this time of year, but we also look to the future. We are grateful for the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program, but know that we must work together to ensure that preserving the story of Japanese American confinement continues to be a priority for our lawmakers. The fate of all Americans will be in their hands should we forget this history. In that vein, we hope to convene a group of leaders to pursue this agenda in 2015.

We are grateful, likewise, for all who joined us at our Pilgrimage in 2014, and hope that you will show support once more in 2015. Next year, we hope to host an All Camps Meeting, and connect with individuals from other confinement sites to learn about their activities and traditions.

We have accomplished a lot in 2014, and with your help 2015 will be even better. Thank you for your continuing support. I hope to see many of you in San Jose on November 22!

Shirley Ann Higuchi

ON THE COVER

This edition's cover image features Dianne Oki. She was one of 558 babies born at Heart Mountain. Born on Saturday, October 30, 1943, to Tom and Gloria Oki, Dianne spent most of the first two years of her life at Heart Mountain. Along with several other babies, Dianne is featured in our new exhibit First Steps at Heart Mountain, discussed on Page 10 of this newsletter.

Looking Back, Looking Ahead:

Executive Director Brian Liesinger

Before I use this column to look ahead to 2015, it's time to pause and look back at the busy summer we've had.

I look back with particular fondness on this year's Pilgrimage. What an honor it was to share a few short days in Wyoming with our 2014 Pilgrimage attendees. I thank all those who were able to attend for making it so memorable. As Board Chair Shirley Ann Higuchi mentioned in her column, the program could not have been a success without the meaningful contributions of Senator John Barasso, Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, Senator Alan K. Simpson, Irene Hirano Inouye, Floyd Mori, Don Nose, Sharon Yamato, Ann Kaneko, Marlene Shigekawa and, frankly, the entire Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation Leadership.

Another joy of 2014 was the opportunity to attend the Heart Mountain Reunion in Montebello, California, in September. Thanks to the Heart Mountain Committee, I had the pleasure of connecting with several Heart Mountain friends and giving a few remarks. A personal highlight was dining next to Keiichi Ikeda and Bacon Sakatani, who have both reached legend-

“So far, 2014 has been filled with great successes, particularly in expanding our reach, increasing visitation at the Interpretive Center and strengthening bonds with key supporters.”



Brian Liesinger

ary status around the Interpretive Center.

In addition, Heart Mountain Board Member Darrell Kunitomi delivered moving remarks about both the sacrifices of the Nisei and their parents, and the importance of building upon their legacies. And, of course, Bacon masterminded a series of photo shoots all the while. For those reading this who were in attendance: It was a pleasure to visit with you “on your own turf,” and to see a few of the communities that were built on the backs of incarcerated who returned to the West Coast from the confinement camps.

During this trip, I was also able to visit the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) again and visit with Sharon Yamato, who, in addition to being one of the producers of the Stanley Hayami film, *A Flicker in Eternity*, is working on an update of her book *Moving Walls*, which covers the moving of the Heart Mountain barrack that now rests in JANM. That project took place twenty years ago through the great effort of several committed people. I brought that inspiration back with me to my work this fall, to begin investigating the return of original camp buildings to the Heart Mountain site today. Stay tuned...

So far, 2014 has been filled with great successes, particularly in expanding our reach, increasing visitation at the Interpretive Center and strengthening bonds with key supporters. It will continue next month as well, with events in San Jose (highlighted on page 6 of this issue). I look forward to yet another opportunity to connect with our West Coast friends.

Energized by these accomplishments, we look forward to 2015 with the same

commitment to our mission. I thank our many members who help us do the heavy lifting, and I encourage non-members to join this meaningful work. On page 11, you'll see our membership form, which represents an opportunity to take an active part in what we are building. Join us in expanding our reach, sharing the stories of incarceration and educating future generations with the Heart Mountain history.

HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION

Honorary Advisors

Norman Y. Mineta

Former U.S. Secretary of 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*

Kris Horiuchi Takashi Hoshizaki

Alan Kumamoto Darrell Kunitomi

Sam Mihara Eric Muller

Allyson Nakamoto R. Dana Ono

Pete Simpson Shigeru Yabu

Kathleen Saito Yuille LaDonna Zall

Staff

Brian Liesinger, *Executive Director*

Bethany H. Sandvik, *Operations Manager*

Kim Barhaug, *Facilities Manager*

Nicole Blechynden, *Archivist*

Kate Wilson, *Communications Coordinator*

Hana Maruyama, *Communications Assistant*

Danielle Constein, *Gift Shop Manager*

Anna Clifton, *Front Desk*

Sharyl McDowell, *Front Desk*

2014 HEART MOUNTAIN PILGRIMAGE HONORS VETERANS

“Honoring Selfless Service” was the theme of the 3rd Annual Heart Mountain Pilgrimage held August 22 and 23 at the Heart Mountain WWII Japanese American Confinement Site. This year’s events recognized soldiers who were incarcerated at Heart Mountain during World War II. With support from the Go For Broke National Education Center and the National Veterans Network, HMWF honored several veterans who returned to Heart Mountain, remembered those we have lost and rededicated the Heart Mountain Honor Roll Memorial to HMWF advocate and friend, the late Senator Daniel K. Inouye.

On August 22, attendees enjoyed a banquet dinner at the Cody, Wyoming, Holiday Inn. Judge Raymond Uno, Bacon Sakatani and HMWF Board Chair Shirley Ann Higuchi led the program which included viewing of the updated Heart Mountain Grand Opening Montage and the documentary presentation of *A Flicker in Eternity* by Sharon Yamato and Ann Kaneko. *Flicker* is the story of Stanley Hayami, who through his diary and drawings,

tells his own story of incarceration and loyalty. We were fortunate to have Hayami’s family with us at the Pilgrimage to help share his story.

The evening ended with a dessert reception and an impromptu celebration of “Mr. Heart Mountain” Bacon Sakatani’s 80th birthday.

Saturday events included opening ceremonies with keynote addresses from Senator Alan K. Simpson (ret.) and Eric Saul, former founding curator of the Military Museum at the Presidio of San Francisco, and current Executive Director of Visas for Life and ISRAH. Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) also gave remarks. A flag ceremony followed at the Heart Mountain Honor Roll Memorial led

by local Boy and Girl Scouts and included a twenty-one gun salute performed by the Powell Veterans Honor Guard. Remarks were given by Floyd Mori, President/CEO of the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies and Secretary Norman Mineta (ret.). Finally, Senator Inouye’s widow, Irene Hirano Inouye, was

presented with Senator Inouye’s commemorative plaque rededicating the Memorial in his honor. Irene is the President of the U.S.–Japan Council and former President and founding CEO of the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

Other events of the day included a Veterans panel discussion moderated by Aura Matsumura Newlin with participation from Heart Mountain veterans James Iso, Yuji Morita and Tosh Okamoto; Don Nose of Go for Broke; hisotrian Eric Saul; and Irene Hirano Inouye. In the Interpretive Center’s reflection room, author Marlene Shigekawa read from her chil-



Honor Guard



The Sakatani family at the Honor Roll. (L-R: Setsuko, Chevel, Sherman, Luisa, and Bacon)



Marlene Shigekawa entertains visitors with a reading of her book *Welcome Home Swallows*.

dren's book *Welcome Home Swallows*. There were also two special exhibits on display at the Interpretive Center: *Girl Scouts at Heart Mountain* and featured images of Sen. Daniel K. Inouye's career.

The Heart Mountain Pilgrimage was sponsored by Blair Hotels and Party Time Plus with generous support from Keele Sanitation, Wyoming Financial Insurance, Peaks to Prairie Realty, Pinnacle Bank and the Powell Tribune. Additional funds came from North Fork Anglers, Whittle, Hamilton & Associates, the B.P.O. Elks Lodge No. 1611, The Lamplighter Inn and 360 Office Solutions.



(L-R) Sen. John Barrasso, Shirley Ann Higuchi, Brian Liesinger, Sec. Norman Mineta, Irene Hirano Inouye, Doug Nelson, Kris Horiuchi, Sen. Alan K. Simpson and Floyd Mori.



Shigeru Yabu, Homer Yasui, Grace Kato and Hal Kato listen to the speakers.

SAVE THE DATE!

Next year's Pilgrimage will be held
in Cody and Powell, Wyoming on
**Friday, August 21 &
Saturday, August 22, 2015**

Heart Mountain Interpretive Center Earns JACS Grant

The Heart Mountain Interpretive Center's goal of increasing accessibility to and appreciation for the exhibits and displays in the Center and on the Walking Trail will now be fulfilled, thanks to a recent grant from the National Park Service's Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) grant program. Heart Mountain will receive \$16,943 from NPS for the project, which will include audio and video interpretation enhancements and translation services.

Visitors to the Center will now have the opportunity to use iPods uploaded with translated audio tours in several languages including Japanese, Spanish and German as well as in English. Visitors will also be able to request a subtitled version of our introductory film *All We Could Carry*. Subtitles will be available in English, Spanish, German and Japanese.

For the Walking Trail, additional communication tools will take the form of Braille interpretation stations and online content

links on the outdoor exhibits, including nine separate Quick Response (QR) codes that will be scannable via smart phone. The QR codes will direct visitors to online resources from our website and our YouTube channel.

In a letter of support for the project, Park County Travel Council Marketing Director and HMWF Board Treasurer, Claudia Wade noted, "In 2013, 10% of [Park County's] visitors were international. If the incredible story of the Japanese and Japanese-Americans who were interned at Heart Mountain was translated in other languages (including Japanese) their message would reach a much broader audience."

Translating the exhibits within the Interpretive Center will begin this winter followed by the installation of outdoor interpretation in the spring. We hope to have most of the project in place at the beginning of the 2015 tourist season as we welcome visitors from across the country and the globe.



DO YOU KNOW THE WAY TO SAN JOSE?

The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF), in partnership with the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj), will bring its leadership and a special film screening to San Jose on Saturday, November 22.

A Town Hall is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. at the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin gymnasium, with the film screening of Emmy Award-winning *The Legacy of Heart Mountain* to follow at 4 p.m.

As many former Heart Mountain incarcerated come from the San Jose area, these events continue to be important as we share their stories at the Interpretive Center in Wyoming.

The Betsuin is a significant gathering point for the event, as it housed Japanese Americans as they were being released from the WWII confinement camps. The Betsuin opened its gym and annex as temporary housing for those displaced by the injustice of incarceration.

JAMsj, in addition to featuring programming about the Japanese American incarceration experience, also has strong connections with Heart Mountain through its current curator Jimi Yamaichi and one of its founders, Ei-ichi Sakauye. Both also served as HMWF board members.

Yamaichi, in his “camp” days was outspoken about the injustice suffered by Japanese Americans. He was eventually sent to Tule Lake, where he joined an organized group of draft resisters. “My brother at



Scene from *The Legacy of Heart Mountain*.

Fort Riley wrote back about how they took their guns away when President Roosevelt came,” he has said of the experience. “And we heard about Heart Mountain (draft resistance), so I said okay, I’m not going to go. I’ll go to jail.” As it turned out, the Tule Lake draft resisters were the only draft resisters from the 10 WRA camps not to be fined or jailed. Yamaichi also served as the construction manager for the jail at Tule Lake, which still stands today.

Sakauye in addition to being a block manager and activities coordinator at Heart Mountain, served as assistant superintendent of agriculture. His extensive agricultural experience allowed him to help build a tremendously successful ag program at Heart Mountain, through which the incarcerated were able to feed themselves and even store enough produce to fill three root cellars. These root cellars, a major point of pride to those incarcerated involved with building them (like Yamaichi), were built with his guidance. One of the cellars remains today, and the HMWF has recently acquired it from the landowner and is committed to its preservation. Sakauye continued as a community leader in San Jose after WWII and was instrumental in helping acquire the property that would become the Japanese American Museum of San Jose.

San Jose also served as the home of HMWF Advisory Council Member and

former Heart Mountain incarcerated, Dr. William Higuchi. His daughter, Shirley Ann Higuchi, now serves as the Chair of the HMWF.

She will be part of the HMWF leadership that addresses the crowd during the Town Hall events.

Following the Town Hall will be a screening of a new, extended version (one hour) of *The Legacy of Heart Mountain*. The film has recently received several awards, including three Emmy Awards, a Unity Award and an Edward R. Murrow Award. The film will be followed by a panel discussion with the filmmaker, David Ono, members of the cast and Yamaichi.



JOIN US: Schedule of Events

2:30 p.m. Town Hall

4:00 p.m. Film Screening &
Panel Discussion:

The Legacy of Heart Mountain

Saturday, November 22
San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin
640 N 5th St, San Jose, CA 95112

The November 22 events are open to the public, but an **RSVP** is required. Send yours to events@heartmountain.org. For more information on the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, visit www.heartmountain.org.

HMWF Welcomes New Board Member: Darrell Kunitomi

The first time Darrell Kunitomi visited Heart Mountain he had come to Cody for a fly-fishing trip. An avid fisherman, he took time away from the Shoshone River to visit Heart Mountain, the place where his parents had been incarcerated and where his older brother, Dale, had been born. The Blackburn family gave him a tour of the camp, and he searched for remnants of the lives his family and so many others had led there.

“It was a meaningful visit because my family had been very involved in camp activities,” said Kunitomi in a recent interview. “Dad was the Sports Editor of the *Heart Mountain Sentinel*. Uncle Ted Fujioka was the student body president who went off with the 442 after volunteering and was killed in action. My family had a lot of connections to that place.”

Kunitomi returned to Heart Mountain twenty years later for the Grand Opening of the Interpretive Center. “I thought it was pretty darn well done,” he said. “I liked the concept of it—the barracks look and the comprehensiveness of the entire presentation.”

In 2011, he wandered through the Center for the first time—but not for the last. This August, at the third annual Pilgrimage, Kunitomi was elected to the Heart Mountain Board. Kunitomi lives in Los Angeles, California, and still enjoys fishing as much as he did on that first trip to Heart Mountain. He has worked for the *Los Angeles Times* for 37 years in the Communications Department, giving speaking engagements on behalf of the newspaper and giving tours around the newspaper’s offices to individuals and groups. Over that time, he has become the company’s historian. He has also written articles on the outdoors for *The Times*.

“We could not be more pleased to have Darrell join the Board,” said Chair Shirley Ann Higuchi. “He has shown such commitment to telling our story—his own family’s story—and we feel that he will be a wonderful asset to the Foundation.”

As the nephew of co-founder of the Manzanar Pilgrimage, Sue Kunitomi

Embrey, Kunitomi has felt for years the importance of preserving the story of the forced relocation of Japanese Americans. Kunitomi believes that, with many of the Issei and Nisei generations already gone, the responsibility now falls to the Sansei to preserve the legacy of Heart Mountain. “It gives me a bit of an anxious feeling,” he said, “because I hope that the next generation—the older Sansei, and then the middle Sansei, like myself, and the younger Sansei, like my younger brother—can keep the torch going.”

K u n i t o m i believes that the Interpretive Center will help keep the story of what happened to his parents and extended family alive. Though Kunitomi may be new to the Board, he has been sharing the story of Heart Mountain for years. Members may remember him in David Ono and Jeff MacIntyre’s film *The Legacy of Heart Mountain*. Los Angeles members may recall seeing him in the panel discussion in February at the Los Angeles premiere of the film at the Japanese American National Museum.

He feels that it is dangerous to forget this period of our past. He said, “History repeats itself in this country. The United States gets itself into a tight situation and those that live here can be the recipient of ill-will. And that’s happening right now with our Middle Eastern citizens. It’s just disappointing that we don’t remember the recent past.”

Some of that forgetfulness stems from ignorance, Kunitomi believes. “It’s amazing that there are many people still that are ig-

norant of the history,” he said. “It’s amazing that after seven decades many people—whether they are young, old, east, central or west—are totally unaware of what happened.”

The Interpretive Center is just one of the ways in which Kunitomi seeks to educate the public about this period of history. He



Darrell Kunitomi

***“History repeats itself in this country...
It’s just disappointing that we don’t
remember the recent past.”***

was a member of the Manzanar Committee for several years, during which time he served as the emcee for the annual Manzanar Pilgrimage and edited the event’s print program. He is also a member of the Grateful Crane Theater Ensemble, an organization that creates performances around Japanese and Japanese American stories. This past spring, the group performed for Tsunami victims in Japan and visited Hiroshima as well.

“It takes care on a person’s part to consider and remember and honor that past,” Kunitomi said. That care is why he joined the Foundation Board—but the proximity of the Interpretive Center to the Shoshone River and its promises of fly-fishing can’t have hurt.

WWII Veteran Returns After 69 Years:

Tosh Okamoto

On December 7th, 1941, Tosh Okamoto was spreading chicken manure on his family's farm when his sister, Aki, came running out. She told him that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor.

"I did not know where Pearl Harbor was but had an ominous feeling about our future," he said.

Toshikazu Okamoto was born in Seattle, Washington, to Juhei and Sugie Okamoto in 1926. It was his father's second marriage, and Okamoto had two half-brothers and two half-sisters as well as two sisters and one brother. His older half-siblings were "kibeis," having been educated in Japan. When the Great Depression hit, Okamoto's father lost his job, and became a farm laborer. His father tried to save money despite financial hardships and, when Okamoto was in high school, his father was able to lease a farm of his own.

When he wasn't in school, Okamoto worked on the farm and drove his father to the farmers' market where they sold their produce. Just a few months later, he watched Japanese Americans from within the city of Seattle being transported to the Puyallup Fairgrounds and knew that he would follow them soon. His family tried to sell their farm equipment. "Our neighbor bought our truck for practically nothing, and that was the only item we sold," he said. Much of the rest was stolen by thieves.

Okamoto remembers boarding the train with his family, with the blinds of the windows drawn shut and no knowledge



Tosh Okamoto with his wife Toshiko at the Honor Roll.

of their destination. As the weather grew hotter, they knew they were heading south. Finally, they arrived at Pinedale Assembly Center, in Fresno, California. "The temporary barracks had asphalt floors," said Okamoto. "The army cots with steel legs sank into the asphalt. Most evacuees had diarrhea at one time or another. Our barrack was near a latrine with inadequate sewer systems and the smell was unbearable."

That fall, the family was transferred to Tule Lake. Okamoto got a job shoveling coal from railroad cars. Soon after their arrival, Okamoto's father had a heart attack, so his oldest half-brother became the head of the family.

"He told me not to sign the loyalty oath," Okamoto said. His half-brother had been raised in Japan, but Okamoto had spent his entire life in this country. Okamoto's mother also tried to convince him not to answer "yes" to questions 27 and 28 on the loyalty questionnaire, out of fear that he would be killed in combat. But Okamoto refused and his older sister sided with him. He answered "yes" to both questions. When the 442nd Regimental Combat Team was formed, Okamoto wanted to enlist but his mother asked him not to because his father was still weak from his heart attack.

Those who had answered "yes" were sent to other confinement sites as Tule Lake was to house those deemed "disloyal." Okamoto, his sister, mother and father were assigned to Minidoka. But his father was still weak and unable to travel. By the time he could be moved, Minidoka was full, and the family instead left for Heart Mountain.

At Heart Mountain, Okamoto heard about a new resistance movement, the Fair Play Committee. Okamoto was intrigued because one of its leaders, Kiyoshi Okamoto, shared his last name. The Fair Play Committee felt that Nisei should protest the denial of Japanese American rights by refusing to comply with the draft until their rights were restored. Okamoto attended some meetings, but decided not to join. "I had already signed the oath," he wrote, "and would not change my mind."

Okamoto found jobs working outside of Heart Mountain—first in a lumber mill near Cody, then as a carpenter. Finally, he and a friend found work in a defense power plant in Columbus, Ohio, and left Heart Mountain for good.

In June 1945, Okamoto was drafted. The war in Europe was over. After basic training, he was assigned as a rifleman to the 442nd, which was by that time stationed in Leghorn, Italy. He was later sent to the 88th Division in Northern Italy, where he worked as an auto mechanic until he was discharged in February 1947.

Back in Seattle, Okamoto received training as an auto mechanic but was met with discrimination while seeking work. He found a job with a Japanese auto repair shop and the U.S. Navy as a civilian auto mechanic, before becoming a mechanic for the Seattle Fire Department. He was the first minority hired by the department, and faced mistrust from some of the firemen who had fought in the Pacific Theatre. He was eventually accepted when they learned that he too was a U.S. Veteran. In the course of his 32 years there, he was eventually promoted to the post of Supervisor.

Okamoto also worked to create assisted living opportunities for Nikkei in the Seattle area since hearing that *Issei* were not receiving adequate treatment due to language barriers. He is one of the founding board members of Nikkei Concerns, which established the Seattle Keiro Nursing Home, the Nikkei Manor Assisted Living Facility, the Kokoro Kai Day Care and Nikkei Horizons education and wellness programs. He also serves as a director for Kawabe Memorial House, a not-for-profit that provides elderly housing with culturally sensitive programs and services in Seattle.

This summer marked the first time Okamoto returned to Heart Mountain for the 2014 Pilgrimage, on August 22, 2014. That weekend, visited the Interpretive Center, saw the unveiling of the newly-restored Honor Roll and read his name upon the memorial wall. He spoke in a panel discussion about his experience during World War II, along with James Iso and Yuji Morita, two other World War II veterans from Heart Mountain.

Now, nearly seventy years have passed since Okamoto left Heart Mountain. He was pensive upon his return to a landscape that had changed very little compared to the vast changes in the world since then.

"I could not believe we were imprisoned in such a desolate place," he wrote. Nonetheless, he said, "I admired the new Center."

National Conference of Judges Learns About Heart Mountain's Legal History

Seventy years after Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee members were condemned in the largest mass trial in Wyoming history, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF) hosted a reenactment of their trial for the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts Annual Meeting.

In early 1944, the Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee decreed that members would not comply with the draft until their rights and their family's rights were restored. Nonetheless, members had to be willing to fight for this country if their rights were restored and anybody who had answered "no" to questions 27-28 on the loyalty questionnaire was not permitted to join. Members did not comply with their draft notices and were subsequently arrested.

In June 1944, 63 young men were tried in a Cheyenne Court Room by Judge T. Blake Kennedy. On the first day of the trial, Judge Kennedy addressed the defendants as "you Jap boys." After a short trial, all were sentenced to three years in jail.

In June 2014, 150 judges from across the country gathered in Cody, Wyo. Four out of five of the Wyoming State Supreme Court Judges were in attendance, as were local District Judge Steven Cranfill and Chief Judge John St. Clair of Wyoming's Shoshone and Arapaho Tribal Court.

Over the course of the conference, attendees learned about the injustices faced by the Japanese American community during World War II and about the legal questions at hand. Keynote speakers were Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, a former internee who went on to become U.S. Secretary of Commerce and Transportation; Senator Alan K. Simpson, who attended Boy Scout jamborees at Heart Mountain and later served as U.S. Senator for Wyoming; and Judge Lance A. Ito, whose parents were incarcerated at Heart Mountain and is now a Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge.

Attendees participated in a variety of panel discussions and seminars on topics relating to issues facing immigrants and other minorities in the courts today. In one of the seminars, Board member Eric Muller, a professor in the College of Law at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, spoke at the Interpretive Center about the legal dilemmas posed by the incarceration.



Yosh Kuromiya relives memories of the trial in which he participated in June, 1944.

Judge Paul Suzuki, the son and brother of Heart Mountain internees, attended the conference. In an email to conference co-chair Aura Newlin, he wrote, "You put on a great conference. I was especially moved by the Heart Mountain Museum."

In another message, National Consortium Board Member Judge Cynthia Stevens of Michigan wrote, "Thank you for your team's amazing conference. It is unusual,

indeed, rare for a conference to touch mind, body and spirit!"

The backdrop of Heart Mountain gave participants insight into the prejudice that permitted the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans on the west coast during World War II and its effect on court decisions. The reenactment of the Heart Mountain draft resister trial illustrated the discrimination faced by all Heart Mountain internees, as well as the reasoning of the Heart Mountain draft resisters and the issues of bias that arose in this particular trial.

The reenactment was written by Judge Denny

Chin and Kathy Hirata Chin, a husband-wife team who have written several reenactments of landmark trials relating to the Asian American community. They attended and participated in the reenactment at Heart Mountain, along with conference attendees, Heart Mountain board members, and local community members.

"The trial re-enactment was very educational for me," said Judge Cranfill, who played Judge Walter A. Huxman in the reenactment. "Judge Chin did a great job of placing you in the moment. It was also powerful to have one of the defendants in the program, and then to share the experience in his own words."

Yosh Kuromiya, one of the original Heart Mountain draft resisters, participated in the reenactment. He played himself and received a standing ovation from the audience. In his remarks afterward, he recalled thinking to himself during the trial, "The truth of what is happening will emerge."

"And I think we are finally coming to that point in history," he said at the reenactment, seventy years later.

Though the weather was rainy throughout the conference, the skies cleared during the Closing Reception, and the judges gathered for a portrait under the guard tower at the Interpretive Center, the sun peeking out overhead.



PHOTO BY DEWEY VANDERHOFF

Several of the attendees of the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts Annual Meeting were judges, and they pose here for a picture in their robes at the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center.

Current & Upcoming EXHIBITS

First Steps at Heart Mountain

October 15, 2014
through
January 31, 2015



Kasuo Fujii was born on January 14, 1943 at Heart Mountain. His photos are included in the *First Steps at Heart Mountain* exhibit.
HMWF Okumoto Digital Collection:1:326.1

The children born at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center were very special. They were born American citizens in a place where they were incarcerated for looking like the enemy. All people of Japanese descent including Japanese Americans who lived on the West Coast of the United States were rounded up and detained in "Relocation Centers" until the end of World War II. This exhibit features photos and artifacts from just a few of the 558 babies born at Heart Mountain. Most photos contained within the exhibit are from the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation's Okumoto Collection with artifacts on display from the Heart Mountain Archives, the Park County Homesteader Museum and from HMWF staff.



Executive Order 9066, Series 24: "Non-Alien" Nursery School, 1942-1945
Watercolor on Paper 30" x 22"

Featured
Artist:
Hatsuko
Mary
Higuchi
February
through
May 2015
(exact dates
TBD)

Works by Hatsuko Mary Higuchi will be featured this spring in the Ford Foundation Special Exhibition Area at the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center. Mary's family was imprisoned in the U.S. War Relocation Authority's Colorado River confinement camp at Poston, Arizona from 1942-1945. Mary Higuchi paints a variety of themes such as landscapes, figures, and abstracts. She uses watercolor, acrylic, mixed media, collage, and calligraphy. Her EO 9066 paintings depict faces with anonymous features or none at all, symbolizing the mass anonymity to which over 110,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were reduced—denied due process and judged guilty solely by reason of their race. Mary Higuchi's haunting portraits are a warning that what happened to Japanese Americans is a precedent for similar actions against other groups, unless we remember the lessons of the past. Her exhibit at Heart Mountain will conclude with a presentation by the artist.

COLOURS • OF CONFINEMENT *Coming Summer 2015*

I WANT THE WIDE AMERICAN EARTH:
AN ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN STORY
from the
Smithsonian Institution
Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES)
September 19 through November 29, 2015

Membership Matters: Join Us or Renew Your Membership Today!

One Thousand. That is the number of active members we hope to have by the end of 2014. Member support is an ongoing commitment to the mission of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and to the daily operations of the Interpretive Center. We love our members! This is not only because you give annually to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, but also because you have allowed us to form relationships over time. "I feel like I've gotten to know so many of our members," says Operations Manager, Bethany Sandvik who has been heading up membership responsibilities for over two years. "There are some who will write us a personal note every year and some who will call in to renew asking how work at the Center is going." Sandvik continues, "Even though I haven't met many of our members in person, I recognize names and notice when they renew or increase their gift. Membership renewals serve as a constant reminder of who we serve, as well as an affirmation that we're doing our job well."

You may have received a call from someone on our staff asking you to renew your membership or to become a member for the first time. As our membership drive continues, we will be calling many of you. If you are already a member, THANK YOU! If not, we would love it if you would accept this invitation to take a more active role in the Heart Mountain Family. Your membership helps us tell your stories and the stories of your families who were confined at Heart Mountain during WWII. It also helps you be more connected to the Foundation. To become a member or renew online, go to www.shopheartmountain.org or use the form below and mail it in (feel free to enclose a note)!

Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation Membership Benefits:

General Membership Benefits

(Valid for one year and renewable annually)

- Free Admission to the interpretive Center
- Subscription to the newsletter
- Free admission to exhibit receptions and previews
- 10% discount on store purchase including online.

Senior/Student (\$30)

- General Membership benefits for one

Individual (\$35)

- General Membership benefits for one

Family/Dual Membership (\$60)

- General Membership benefits for two adults at the same address and children or grandchildren under the age of 18

Friend (\$100)

- All the benefits of Family/Dual plus:
- 2 one-time-use guest passes

Contributing (\$250)

- All the benefits of Family/Dual plus:
- 5 one-time-use-guest passes

Sustaining (\$500)

- All the benefits of Family/Dual plus:
- 10 one-time-use guest passes
- Discount on use of Multi-purpose room (by appt.)

Heart Mountain Circle (\$1,000 - \$4,999)

- All the benefits of Family/Dual plus:
- 20 one-time-use guest passes
- Recognition on the Annual Giving Wall
- Discount on use of Multi-purpose room (by appt.)
- Behind the scenes collections tours (by appt.)

Kokoro Kara Circle (\$5,000 and above)

(Kokoro Kara-from the heart)

- All the benefits of Heart Mountain Circle plus
- Any-time admission for 2 member accompanied guests
- Free use of Multi-purpose room (by appt.)



Photo: Okumoto Collection HMWF

New Membership Membership Renewal

Name: _____ Mr. Mrs. Ms.

Name: _____ Mr. Mrs. Ms.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ H W C Email: _____

Giving Level: Senior/Student (\$30) Individual (\$35) Family/Dual Membership (\$60)
 Friend (\$100) Contributing (\$250) Sustaining (\$500)
 Heart Mountain Circle (\$1,000-\$4,999) Kokoro Kara Circle (\$5,000+)

Membership Contribution: \$ _____

I would like to make an additional tax deductible gift of: \$ _____

Total Contribution: \$ _____

I would like to receive information about planned giving opportunities.

Method of Payment: Cash Check Mastercard Visa

Name: _____

(exactly as it appears on your credit card)

CC#: _____ Exp Date: _____

Signature: _____



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

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

New from the **GIFT SHOP** this Holiday Season:



**Elk Antler
Ornament**
\$12.95



**Welcome Home
Swallows Book**
\$14.95

**442: For the Future
DVD**
\$21.95



**Heart Mountain
Hat**
\$15.95



Consider purchasing a membership as a gift
for a friend or family member.

Shop online at www.heartmountain.org