

The background of the entire page is a painting of a winter scene. It shows a vast, snow-covered mountain range under a deep blue sky. A full moon is visible in the upper right. In the foreground, a small town with several buildings and a tall utility pole is nestled in the snow. The overall mood is serene and quiet.

# KOKORO KARA

*"from our heart"*

SUMMER AUTUMN 2019

HEART • MOUNTAIN • WYOMING • FOUNDATION



# HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION

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*Heart Mtn. Wyo. 1945* by Jishiro Miyauchi  
HMWF 2002.021.002

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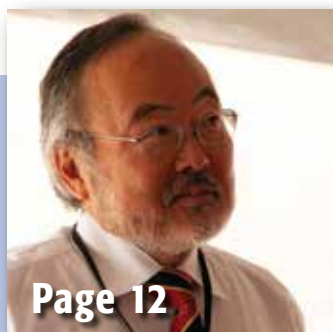
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## KOKORO KARA

Volume 8, Issue 3

Editor/Designer: Kate Wilson

### Have an idea for an article?

Would you like to be a contributing writer? We're interested! Write to Kate Wilson with your story ideas—these could include a profile of a former incarcerated, a specific aspect of the Japanese American experience before/during/after the war, or an act of kindness from a non-incarcerated, just to name a few.

[katew@heartmountain.org](mailto:katew@heartmountain.org)

### Change of address?

Contact Danielle Constein to update your contact information and for questions regarding membership & donations.

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# THE BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY: OUR JOURNEY BEYOND HEART MOUNTAIN\*

CHAIR SHIRLEY ANN HIGUCHI

Nothing is an overnight sensation. Success comes after years of preparation, hard work and focus. Nowhere is that truer than at the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. Our July Pilgrimage was our eighth and our most successful. Some of our old friends, such as Tom Brokaw and Lance Ito, gave inspiring speeches about our shared experience and the value of Heart Mountain. In his remarks, Brokaw said all presidential candidates should visit Heart Mountain. Shinsuke Sugiyama, Japan's ambassador to the United States and a first time attendee to the Pilgrimage, said that all Japanese need to know what happened to their kinsmen during World War II. We are reaching new audiences and making new friends.

It didn't happen overnight. Our board and staff have traveled around the country to meet with other confinement site groups, members of Congress, potential donors, and members of the Japanese government, raising the Foundation's profile. We've helped other organizations develop their own programs and led the way to unify the Japanese American community. We've seen the results of that work during the last Pilgrimage, at the national Japanese American Citizens League convention the following week in Salt Lake City, and in our planning meetings since then. We are attracting new support and expanding our center because of that hard work.

At both our Pilgrimage and the JACL convention, I was struck by the continued involvement of our Nisei. More than fifty Nisei participated in our Pilgrimage, including many new faces. A friend noted to me that one of the great successes of Heart Mountain is the work of the Nisei

and our local Wyoming community. We can't take our Nisei members for granted, as many of them are now in their eighties and nineties. We must treasure each day we spend with them and gain as much knowledge as we can from their experiences now. They are our last living link to the incarceration and everything that has happened since.

We have a responsibility to honor the legacy of the Nisei. We can do that, in part, by ensuring the future sustainability of our Foundation, expanding and improving our interpretive center and historic site, and spreading the lessons about the Japanese American incarceration to audiences around the world. The outreach we've begun has brought new supporters to Heart Mountain. That success begets more success. Already, other potential donors are pledging their support.

We recently received a \$424,000 National Park Service grant to continue our restoration of the original Heart Mountain root cellar. We are also working with the Bureau of Reclamation to secure the hospital buildings and memorial property, which will enable us to develop that area. Both features will help us attract new visitors.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded us a



Ambassador Shinsuke Sugiyama



Tom Brokaw



\$170,000 grant to conduct two week-long workshops for teachers about the incarceration, so they can take their knowledge back to their classrooms and raise awareness of this history and the lessons that we can learn from it. The workshops will take place between July 19 and 31, 2020. NEH officials told us that it was extremely rare for a group to win a grant on its first try, and the program only accepts 30% of its applicants. The good news is that Wyoming is an under-served area for the NEH. Again, we are entering another 'blue ocean' of future possibilities.

Additionally, we are republishing three books that will expand Heart Mountain's outward reach. They are *Lone Heart Mountain* by Estelle Ishigo, *Light One Candle* by Solly Ganor, and *Heart Mountain: The History of an American Concentration Camp* by Doug Nelson. *Lone Heart Mountain* deals with issues, such as interracial marriage, that are increasingly relevant today. Ganor's book creates connections to the Jewish community, which shares many of our interests in social justice and the treatment of minorities.

In late August, my daughter Adele Collier and her boyfriend Derek Dodd traveled to Israel with a scroll thanking Solly for signing over the rights to his book. Our entire board had signed the scroll during the July Pilgrimage, and Adele and Derek returned with the signed agreement turning over the copyright of *Light One Candle* to Heart Mountain (more on page 6).

Next year, I plan to announce the formal effort to expand the interpretive center to create the Mineta-Simpson Center, a meeting and retreat space which will honor the work done by Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson to help our Foundation. This center will enable us to host larger events and workshops without



Judge Lance Ito

occupying the center's theater. It is a key element of our long-term strategy to make our foundation an essential part of educating the public about the incarceration and social justice issues.

Deni Mineta and Ann Simpson, Norm and Al's beloved partners, have agreed to be the honorary co-chairs of the Mineta-Simpson Center project, and will be spearheading our fundraising efforts and guiding development of the center and its programming. They will be joined by two members of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation board, Kathleen Saito Yuille and Claudia Wade, who will serve as the project's co-chairs. Kathy, who was born at Heart Mountain, lives in Milwaukee and is a trustee of the Milwaukee Art Museum. Claudia is a Wyoming native and the executive director of the Park County Travel Council in northwest Wyoming.

Our dreams are big. Our mission is just. Our team is strong, and I believe there is nothing we can't do.

Stay Inspired,

*Shirley Ann Higachi*

*It's too late to start digging a well  
when you feel thirsty.*

\*To learn more about the Blue Ocean Strategy, visit [www.blueoceanstrategy.com](http://www.blueoceanstrategy.com)



Shirley and her daughter Adele with the scroll that was presented to Solly Ganor in Israel.

# HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS & INTRODUCE A NEWSLETTER

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DAKOTA RUSSELL

They say that, after a certain age, it gets harder to make new friends. Obviously, they have never been to a Heart Mountain Pilgrimage. Each year, I come away from Pilgrimage weekend feeling like I've made hundreds of new friends. It's exciting to know that our message is reaching more and more people through this annual event.

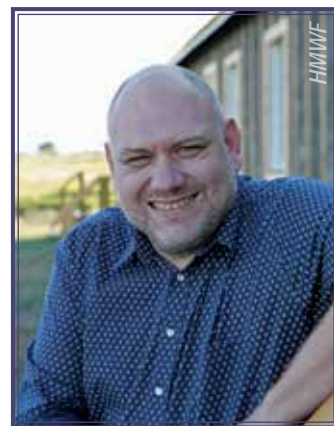
Among those new friends this year was a delegation from the Embassy of Japan in the United States, including Ambassador Shinsuke Sugiyama. Ambassador Sugiyama and I talked about the Foundation's work, and how we might serve as a model for Japan as it starts reconciling its own painful World War II history. On page 11, you can read about how our friendship with the Japanese Embassy has blossomed since the Pilgrimage.

At this year's event, we also welcomed several children of the camp's Caucasian staff, some of whom had even gone to school at Heart Mountain during the war. Looking at the attitudes and experiences of Heart Mountain's white workforce can be fascinating, as you'll see in the article on page 34.

This issue also contains a history of the military police companies that served as the camp's guards, on page 23.

Speaking of new friends, I feel fortunate each summer to be able to work alongside our interns, the next generation of museum professionals. These passionate young people work both in public roles and behind the scenes. Over the next few issues, you'll be seeing articles from each of our 2019 interns, detailing the specific corner of Heart Mountain history they have been working with. On page 29, public history intern Cally Steussy looks at the journals created by the camp's Issei poets.

My time at Heart Mountain has taught me that it's easy to make new friends when you share something you care about. And, like our Foundation, I know these friendships are built to last. 🏔️📖



# Welcome!



The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation is pleased to welcome a new member to our board of directors, **Julia Ishiyama**.

Ishiyama is a soon-to-be attorney based in Boulder, CO. She received her B.A. in American Studies from Stanford University. After college, she worked for C-SPAN on a documentary series telling the stories of the people and movements behind landmark Supreme Court cases, including *Korematsu v. United States*. She recently graduated from Stanford Law, where she was on the board of the Women of Stanford Law, an active member of the Asian Pacific Islander Law Students Association, and received distinction for her pro bono service.

Ishiyama is the granddaughter of Heart Mountain and Manzanar internees George and Setsuko Ishiyama and credits her interest in the law to her family's experience with the U.S. justice system. After WWII, her great-grandfather successfully fought the racially-based denial of his commercial fishing license as the plaintiff in the Supreme Court case *Takahashi v. Fish & Game Commission*.



# Light One Candle: Bridging the Incarceration and Holocaust Experiences

Solly Ganor was a teenager when Nazis forced his family from Lithuania and sent them to the Dachau concentration camp outside Munich. He labored in a Dachau satellite camp until the end of World War II, when guards forced the surviving prisoners on a death march to an unknown location. While on that march, Ganor was rescued by Clarence Matsumura, a Japanese American soldier who had been incarcerated at Heart Mountain. Ganor and Matsumura met again in 1992, 47 years after their first encounter in the snows outside Dachau. Ganor was inspired to write *Light One Candle*, his memoir of the Holocaust and his rescue by men who, ironically, had also been incarcerated because of their ethnicity.

This year, Ganor signed over the copyright to *Light One Candle* to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, so we can republish and distribute it to a new audience. We have big plans for Ganor's story, which we believe can be a bridge between the Japanese American and Jewish communities. We hope to convene a series of forums that will address issues of vital importance to both groups and to strengthen partnerships and promote future collaboration.



Above: Adele Collier & Derek Dodd visit Solly Ganor in Israel in 2019; Middle top: Solly Ganor after he joined the U.S. Army in post-war Germany; Middle lower: Clarence Matsumura & Solly Ganor meet in Israel in 1992, nearly 50 years after their first encounter in Germany; Right: Clarence Matsumura in Waaricken, Germany in 1945, at the spot where he found Solly Ganor in the snow.



# INSTITUTE CORNER

The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation board created the Heart Mountain Institute to explore new ways to expand the reach of our mission. The Heart Mountain Institute will focus on publishing, filmmaking, education, and innovative technology to bring the incarceration story to new and larger audiences. The **Institute Corner** will feature the latest news about this exciting new initiative.

# In Memoriam

## Momoko Murakami (1931–2019)

Photo courtesy of Elaine Murakami




**M**omoko Murakami was born in Los Angeles and spent her preteen years at Heart Mountain. She attended school at Heart Mountain, and later completed high school in Chicago. Momoko went on to obtain a degree in

Library Science from the University of Washington, and got a job as a librarian at the UCLA School of Law. After retiring from UCLA, she volunteered as a bibliographer at the Franklin D. Murphy Library at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, where she compiled a vast bibliography about the imprisonment of the

Japanese Americans during WWII.

She wrote a column, “Moments with Momo” for the KaMai Forum, a Japanese American newspaper in Los Angeles. Her articles included theatre and book reviews and covered a wide range of topics, including books about the WWII American Concentration Camps, Japanese gardens in the United States, tansu, and kabuki. Her articles about the Manzanar Pilgrimages and the 442nd “Go for Broke” Memorial were important in promoting public participation and in garnering support.


Momoko’s hobbies included collecting Japanese ceramics, photography, ikebana, and jam-making. She had a life-long affection for mystery novels, as evidenced by her book report on Ellery Queen while a student at Heart Mountain, and her reviews of mystery novels by Naomi Hirahara and Nina Revoyr in the KaMai Forum. 

## Joe Nakanishi (1923–2019)

**J**oe Nakanishi’s plans to attend art school were derailed by his incarceration at Heart Mountain when he was nineteen years old. Joe spent much of his time in Wyoming sketching and painting scenes from around the camp. His talent was noticed by the camp’s reports officer, Bonnie Mechau, who hired him to help document the camp through his art. Joe eventually applied for leave to Chicago, where he worked for an engraving firm and later as a graphic artist for famed designer Raymond Loewy.

After the war, Joe reunited with his family in Los Angeles. He worked as an artist for CBS before joining the staff of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. In addition to scientific illustrations, Joe also designed promotional materials, including the invitations to the museum’s annual gala. His most

recognizable creation is likely the saber-toothed cat that still sits atop the entry sign to the La Brea Tar Pits.

In the 1990s, after retiring from the museum, Joe returned to his Heart Mountain works and made several large paintings\* from his original sketches. A selection of these paintings, *Joe Nakanishi: Perspective*, was exhibited at Heart Mountain Interpretive Center in early 2019. 

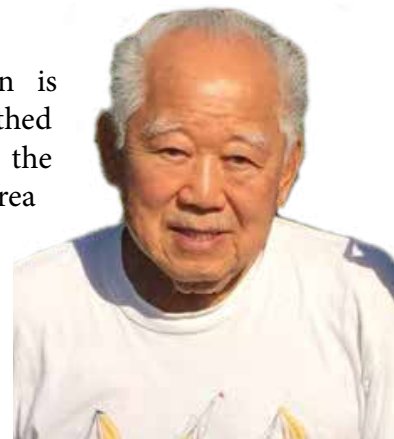


Photo courtesy of Gen Nakanishi

\*To see an example of Joe’s artwork in this issue, go to the theme image for the 2019 Pilgrimage on page 12.



## Art Kishiyama (1942–2019)



**A**rthur Yukio Kishiyama was born on May 21, 1942, at Pomona Assembly Center after his parents had been forcibly removed from their home.

He and his family were sent to Heart Mountain for the duration of the war. His childhood years were in Los Angeles, where his parents ran a mom and pop grocery store that eventually grew into one of the first local supermarkets. After graduating from San Luis Obispo High School in 1959 and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in 1964 with an architecture degree, Art joined the Air Force where he retired 26 years later with the rank of colonel.

He immediately began a second career at Walt Disney Imagineering, building international theme parks. That colorful career spanned 15 years before he enjoyed a second retirement. One of his Disney highlights was leading the team that built DisneySea, adjacent to Tokyo Disneyland. Created from landfill out of Tokyo Bay, the maritime themed park, hotel, and shopping complex opened in 2001 and hosts about 13 million visitors annually.

Art with his mother, Tsuyoko Kunisaki (aka Ellen Kishiyama), his father Kosaku "Kay" Kishiyama & brother, David Kishiyama at Heart Mountain.

Art and his wife Lynn, an established artist and teacher in the Central Coast area, were most recently working on their Olio Nuevo brand of boutique olive oil. Grown on his sun-soaked, 20-acre Ranch at Cripple Creek in Paso Robles, Olio Nuevo was on store shelves in three states and bought worldwide by hundreds of discriminating seekers of artisan olive oil. He was also the former president of the Central Coast Olive Growers, representing about 70 local olive farms.

Art is survived by his wife of 46 years, Lynn, two brothers David and Michael, a sister Chiyo Lacy, and several nieces and nephews.

Photos courtesy of Lynn Kishiyama



## Commemorative Brick

Looking for a way to honor or memorialize your loved one? Commemorative bricks, inscribed and placed permanently at the entrance to the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, make a unique and meaningful tribute.

Contact staff at 307.754.8000 or go online at [www.shopheartmountain.org](http://www.shopheartmountain.org) for more information.

A CACTUS PRODUCTIONS FILM

# RETURN TO FORETOP'S FATHER

WE MUST BE CAREFUL NOT  
TO BREAK THE BOND WITH NATURE







In the beginning, the Crow were the only people here. Then the Blackfeet came from the north, raiding into Crow lands and making war. The Blackfeet had greater numbers, and it seemed the Crow tribe might be lost. A young warrior climbed to the top of the Crow's sacred peak, Buffalo Heart Mountain, to pray for help. The mountain came to him in a vision, and adopted him as its son. The mountain loaned him its power, and he led the Crow in driving back the Blackfeet and saving their homeland. He brushed his hair up from his forehead, to resemble the mountain's peak. For this reason, he was known as Foretop, and the mountain became known as Foretop's Father.

This story of Heart Mountain, which is still known to the Apsaalooke (Crow) tribe as Foretop's Father, was told to Grant Bulltail by his grandfather, Comes Up Red. Comes Up Red was born in 1847 and lived a full hundred years, long enough to see his people removed from their homelands near Heart Mountain and sent to a reservation in Montana. As he grew up, Bulltail learned the history of the Crow people from his grandfather's stories. Preserving those stories for future generations has become a driving force in Bulltail's life.


Each year, Bulltail comes back to Heart Mountain to lead a seminar, a pipe ceremony, and a hike to the mountain's summit. Just as Foretop did years ago, Bulltail asks the mountain to loan him some of its energy. Bulltail says he releases that energy into a modern world that has fallen out of harmony with nature. "When you abuse something over and over again," he says, "it turns back and hurts you. There's a lot of things that the Earth could do to hurt us. This is what I'm worried about."

During his visits to Heart Mountain, Bulltail works to educate people on the importance of reconnecting with the land. Along the way, he has gathered a following, both of family and friends from the reservation and of Cody area residents who support his mission. The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation has also played a role in the Return to

Foretop's Father events since the first year in 2010, when former incarcerated Bacon Sakatani provided welcoming remarks.

This year, the Foundation was honored to host a community screening of a new documentary about Bulltail's life, also called *Return to Foretop's Father*, at Heart Mountain Interpretive Center. Bulltail led a question and answer session after the screening, alongside filmmaker Preston Randolph and event organizer Mary Keller. The three also hosted a special screening of the film at this year's Heart Mountain Pilgrimage in July.

At the Pilgrimage, Bulltail recalled driving past the Heart Mountain camp as a boy. He remembered his grandfather's disappointment that land taken from the Crow was being used to incarcerate others. Bulltail said he believes that the mountain lent the Japanese Americans strength to endure their imprisonment, just as it has helped the Crow endure their hardships for generations.

This summer, Bulltail was recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts as one of their 2019 National Heritage Fellows. *Return to Foretop's Father* has also been selected to screen at the Laramie Film Festival in November, and is in consideration for several other festivals in 2020. More information about the film can be found at [www.returntoforetopsfather.com](http://www.returntoforetopsfather.com). 

Left: *Return to Foretop's Father* film poster, courtesy of Preston Randolph

Above left and right: At the Return to Foretop's Father event at Heart Mountain; above middle: Grant Bulltail & Preston Randolph at the film screening at the Interpretive Center (photos by Dakota Russell)

# Heart Mountain Chair Participates in Events at Japanese Embassy



(L-R): Smithsonian curator Noriko Sanefuji, HMWF board chair Shirley Ann Higuchi, former Topaz incarceration Mary Murakami, 442nd veteran Terry Shima, Minister Kenichiro Mukai, & Midori Mukai.

At a recent question and answer session at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C., a member of the Imaoikiruhito Resonance Harmony Choir asked Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation chair Shirley Ann Higuchi what forced removal and incarceration during World War II meant for her family. Higuchi described how her father's family had to sell their 14.25-acre farm in San Jose, and how her mother's family lost their store in Oakland. Upon hearing these details, some of the audience—including the questioner—dissolved into tears.

The session was part of two days of activities with the choir and members of the Japanese Embassy staff in Washington. Events included two performances by the choir and a panel with Higuchi, former Topaz incarceration Mary Murakami, and 442nd Regimental Combat Team veteran Terry Shima. Murakami, 92, told how her father was rounded up by the FBI shortly after the Pearl Harbor attack, and the family did not know where he was for weeks. He was eventually reunited with them at Topaz. Shima, 96, talked about the pride he felt as a member of the 442nd, the most-decorated U.S. military unit for its size and length of service. He said it was essential that Japanese Americans prove they were more patriotic than other Americans, in order to show they did not deserve to be incarcerated.

Heart Mountain's participation in the Embassy events followed this year's Heart Mountain Pilgrimage, which was attended by an unprecedented number of Japanese diplomats. During his remarks at the Pilgrimage, Japanese Ambassador to the United States Shinsuke Sugiyama said the incarceration was something all Japanese people needed to study and learn from. Minister Kinichiro Mukai and his wife, Midori, also attended the Pilgrimage, and asked Higuchi to take part in the Embassy program. Midori Mukai is a member of the Imaoikiruhito Resonance Harmony Choir.

After the events in Washington, the Japanese government invited Higuchi to participate in its Japan Up Close program in November. The program allowed Higuchi to visit her father's family's ancestral home in Saga Prefecture on the island of Kyushu, meet with her father's former doctoral students in Tokyo, consult with Japanese officials, and engage in a variety of cultural programs. It enabled Higuchi to deepen the relationship with the Japanese government and help build support for the planned Mineta-Simpson conference center project at the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center. The conference center will enable the Foundation to hold more events at the site like the two workshops sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities scheduled for next July. 🏯



Imaoikiruhito Resonance Harmony Choir event participants gather after three-person panel discussion.



# 2019 Heart Mountain PILGRIMAGE

Watercolor by Joe Nakanishi, HMMWF Collection, 2018.045.010



**E**ach Pilgrimage, we think of our Heart Mountain Heroes: some still with us and some now gone. They all share the desire to reach out to others—no matter how different—and make a connection. This year, we honored that legacy by building bridges to connect past and present, different cultures and communities, and people who didn't know they stood on common ground. Join us in reflecting on that ambitious project, to build a path toward our shared future, in this review of the 2019 annual Heart Mountain Pilgrimage.



Right: A swallow observes the Ito Victory Garden; Duncan Williams opens the Saturday ceremonies with a Buddhist blessing.

Below: An attendee considers the Memorial Honor Roll; Caitlin & Catherine Takeda view the hospital chimney; Mary Abo & Bacon Sakatani enjoy a bit of lunch.



Photo by Janet Reed-Bradley



Photo by Ray Locker



Photo by Janet Reed-Bradley



Photo by Janet Reed-Bradley



Photo by Julie Abo

# LaDONNA ZALL COMPASSIONATE WITNESS AWARD

The LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness Award honors those who have provided exceptional service to the Heart Mountain community. This year's recipient was the legendary newscaster and author Tom Brokaw. "Race is not in any fashion in America a measure of worthiness," Brokaw told attendees. "We're all the same."

Since speaking at the 2011 grand opening of the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, Brokaw has continued to report on the injustice of the Japanese American incarceration, including an NBC News report marking the 75th anniversary of Japanese internment in 2017.

The former NBC anchorman closed his speech with the story of former U.S. Representative Sam Gibbons, a Florida Democrat who was a paratrooper who jumped behind German lines on D-Day on June 6, 1944. Brokaw quoted Gibbons as saying he didn't care about the ethnicity of his fellow paratroopers, who could only tell friend from foe by using a clicker. When they clicked back, Gibbons told Brokaw, "They didn't say 'I'm an Italian American, I'm an Irish American.' They just..." Brokaw clicked his own clicker he had brought. "Those are the guys I'm going to fight with." 🐦



Tom Brokaw receives the Compassionate Witness Award from HMWF board chair Shirley Ann Higuchi



Left: Judge Lance Ito delivers his keynote speech.

Above: James and Toshi Ito at Heart Mountain.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Former Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Lance Ito, whose parents met while imprisoned at Heart Mountain, gave the keynote address to attendees Saturday, honoring the incarcerated farmers who turned the dusty high-desert soil of the Bighorn Basin into rich farmland. His father, James Ito, led those farmers, using skills developed at UC Berkeley to analyze the area's soil and determine which crops could thrive when the farms finally received irrigation. Ito showed a series of photographs highlighting the work done by his father and fellow farmers, who grew more than one million pounds of produce that they stored in the root cellar currently under restoration at the Heart Mountain site.

Like Tom Brokaw who spoke before him, Ito grew emotional talking about his parents and their fellow incarcerated. "My parents never talked about [the incarceration]," he said. "Every now and then, they would say, 'I knew him in camp.' [Not] until I was in middle adulthood did I persuade my parents to tell me about it." Eventually, however, James and Toshi Ito became fixtures at Heart Mountain events, and she gave the interpretive center some of its most treasured artifacts. 🐦

52 types of vegetables, including many used in traditional Japanese cooking, were grown at Heart Mountain.





# DIGNITARIES & PRESENTERS

**H**is Excellency, Shinsuke Sugiyama, Ambassador of Japan to the United States, told attendees that every Japanese citizen needs to know about what happened to their friends and relatives in the U.S. during the war.

“Heart Mountain is a place of moral significance,” Sugiyama said, adding that he first became interested in going to Heart Mountain after a visit to the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. “I had to come here and see how you did it and got to redress.

“Back in Japan, Japanese people need to know better what happened here,” Sugiyama said. “I am here to lead a course of understanding.” 🇯🇵



Photo by Marvin Inouye

**P**resenters on Friday included a panel featuring authors of new and upcoming books about Heart Mountain. Panelists were Duncan Williams, Bradford Pearson, Andrea Warren, and Foundation board chair Shirley Ann Higuchi. Another panel focused on the stories of the Heart Mountain draft resisters, and featured documentarian Frank Abe, historian Art Hansen, and resister Takashi Hoshizaki.

On Friday afternoon, former incarceratedees and their families participated in multigenerational discussion groups and talked about the lingering trauma caused by incarceration. On Saturday, Nisei from Heart Mountain led tours of the site and shared personal stories about the hospital, life in the barracks, and the men and women from Heart Mountain who served in World War II. 🇺🇸



Right: Legendary animator and former Topaz incarceratedee Willie Ito.

Far right: A magpie poses on one of the old hospital buildings.

Below: Attendees tour the former hospital site and the original Heart Mountain barrack building.



Photo by Darrell Kunitomi



Photo by Darrell Kunitomi



Photo by Janet Reed-Bradley



Photo by Darrell Kunitomi





## FILM SCREENING

### Discussion with Filmmakers, Norman Mineta, & Alan Simpson

Former Heart Mountain incarcerated and Cabinet Secretary Norman Mineta appeared throughout the Pilgrimage, starting with a Friday morning screening of *Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Story*, a new documentary by Dianne Fukami and Debra Nakatomi. That film, which has aired nationally on PBS, detailed Mineta's journey as a child from San Jose to Heart Mountain and then to the U.S. House and the Cabinet under Democratic President Bill Clinton and Republican President George W. Bush.

"I cherish the term 'citizens' because of our own government being unwilling to acknowledge us," Mineta said in reference to the government's use of the term *non-alien*s to describe American citizens of Japanese descent. "That threat still exists. What's our democracy all about?"

Retired Senator from Wyoming, Alan Simpson, first met Mineta in 1943 when his Boy Scout troop from Cody traveled to Heart Mountain for a jamboree with the scouts behind barbed wire. Simpson joined Mineta and the filmmakers onstage for the panel discussion due to Mineta and Simpson's longterm friendship and bi-partisan collaborations.



Alan Simpson and Norman Mineta entertain the crowds at the Saturday morning opening ceremony at the interpretive center, pictured below with the Pilgrimage tent.

Photo by Janet Reed-Bradley



Photo by Derrell Kunitomi

Marvin Inouye (second from left), poses with Bacon Sakatani, Norio Uyematsu, Norman Mineta, Shig Yabu, and Takashi Hoshizaki, some of the original Heart Mountain boy scouts. They performed the flag-raising ceremony at this year's Pilgrimage.

Simpson said he has to "keep it light, because [the incarceration] is heavy on the heart." He told the crowd to get a copy of the dissent in the 1944 Supreme Court decision *Korematsu v. United States* by Justice Frank Murphy. "He used the word 'racism' six times," Simpson said, adding that Murphy called the incarceration a product of war hysteria and racism.

A special exhibit about the legacy of Mineta and Simpson will open in 2020 at the interpretive center.



Photo by Janet Reed-Bradley

Photo by Janet Reed-Bradley







UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library

## A CHANCE MEETING

*Every year, people reconnect at the Pilgrimage. Sometimes it's only been a few months or a year since meeting. For others, it can be decades. Pilgrimage attendee David Fujioka had a true blast from the past when he ran into someone whom he hadn't seen since childhood. David describes this chance meeting here:*

I remember seeing an old photo of Ann and Robert Kodama and their infant son at Heart Mountain, in their barracks during the war. After the war, when the Dick Fujioka family was living on 2nd Ave and 42nd Street in Manhattan, we met the Ann and Robert Kodama family who lived on 3rd Ave and 42nd Street (just around the corner from us). I'm not sure if my dad knew the Kodamas from camp or not. The Kodamas had three children: Robert, Jr., Eric, and Gloria. I remember we used to play with Gloria, since she was the youngest in their family and closer in age to my sister Mary Ellen and myself. The family moved away when we were still kids and we never heard from them again.

Fast forward several years: I was looking at a recent Heart Mountain newsletter, reading a list of donors to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. Here I noticed the names of Bob, Eric, and Gloria Kodama. I thought "Wow, it must be the same family from the




Photo courtesy of David Fujioka

Eric Kodama & David Fujioka this past July at the Heart Mountain Pilgrimage after running into each other in the interpretive center.

Left: Robert & Ann Kodama with their infant son Robert Jr. at Heart Mountain.

old neighborhood." At that moment, I formed a plan to keep an eye out for anyone with a Kodama nametag at the next Pilgrimage. With more than 300 Pilgrims at Heart Mountain, odds were against me finding a Kodama. However, on the Saturday of the Pilgrimage weekend, I saw a guy wearing a nametag that read "Eric Kodama." I approached him and asked him if he was related to Ann Kodama. He said yes, that she was his mom. So after almost 60 years, we had reconnected. What are the odds of that happening? And to add to this incredible reconnection story, I found out that Eric Kodama is married to Chris Ito, who just happens to be the sister of this year's keynote speaker, Judge Lance Ito. It is truly a "small world" after all.

Attending the Heart Mountain Pilgrimage is such a rewarding experience. You never know what new connections you might make or the reconnections you might rekindle. 

# SAVE THE DATE!

## 2020 Heart Mountain PILGRIMAGE

Powell & Cody • July 30–August 1, 2020



# Songs on



by Erin Aoyama

Heart Mountain was never silent. With nearly 11,000 people crammed into a single square mile, the camp echoed with snippets of conversation, clanging mess hall bells, and the other myriad sounds of lives being lived under hard circumstances. Above the noise, though, there was music.

On cold winter nights, Japanese folk songs drifted from the laundry rooms. The sounds of the big band orchestra, practicing for their next gig, spilled out into the street. The horns and drums of the Boy Scouts announced every special event or parade. Music was more than a pastime here. It was a way of coping, an expression of loss or defiance. It was proof of life, broadcast out into the high desert by the untiring Wyoming wind.

When Julian Saporiti and I were asked to curate a special exhibit for Heart Mountain, we knew this was the story we wanted to tell. For the past two years, we have both been studying the Asian American experience as part of our doctoral work at Brown University. We're also both musicians by training. As a way to bring our research to a wider audience, we created a multimedia storytelling performance, called "No-No Boy," which we've shared with audiences around the country.

Heart Mountain has always been front and center in our performances. Julian was first drawn to Heart Mountain while studying and teaching at the University of Wyoming, and looking for the often-hidden story of Asian Americans in the West. For me, Heart Mountain has always been there, a part of my family's history. My grandmother, Misa Hatakeyama, was incarcerated at the camp as a young woman, just twenty years old. It was a part of her life I longed to understand better, but she passed away before I could find the words to ask.

For Julian and me, the *Songs on the Wind* exhibit has been the culmination of a journey that has been academic, musical, and personal. Although most of the individuals we researched are gone now, we feel deeply connected to



Aoyama Collection, HMMWF

Boy Scouts Bugle and Drum Corps



# the Wind



Tets Bessho on the clarinet.

each of them. We are immeasurably grateful to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and Wyoming Humanities for giving us the opportunity to share their stories with others.

## George Igawa: The Bandleader

**B**efore the war, George Igawa led the Japanese American swing band the Sho-Tokyans. The band was in regular demand in clubs around Los Angeles and even made a tour of Japan. After his incarceration at Heart Mountain, Igawa scouted the camp talent shows for new band members and formed the George Igawa Orchestra.

George's impulse was not unusual. At each of the ten camps, like-minded men and women formed dance bands. They realized the uplifting potential of bringing the sounds of Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Harry James, Artie Shaw, and the like to their barbed wire-enclosed desert home.

The George Igawa Orchestra became a staple at dances and other camp activities. At its peak, it boasted six saxophones, five trumpets, three trombones, a piano, a guitar, a string bass, drums, and both male and female vocalists. On average, they played an event every two weeks.

At one point, George planned a variety show of Japanese music and dance aimed toward the

many Issei in camp. For this performance, a trio of traditional Japanese instruments—a shamisen, koto, and shakuhachi—were added to the band. This cultural blending created a minor problem: no sheet music was available for these instruments. By listening to Japanese records, Igawa was able to write arrangements incorporating these traditional instruments.

In addition to gracing the social calendars of young Nisei at Heart Mountain, the George Igawa Orchestra often left the confines of the camp to play for the surrounding communities. As other Wyoming musicians left to join the war effort, the Orchestra found themselves in greater demand around the state. They played events ranging from



The orchestra practicing. Photographer Tom Parker described them as "a strictly hep gang directly in the groove."

the high school prom in Thermopolis, to a Mormon church dance in Lovell, to a Red Cross benefit in Powell. Their interactions with the world outside of camp, premised on a shared appreciation for and love of music, was a way for these Nisei to affirm their American identity, even as they were excluded from American society.

## Joy Takeshita Teraoka: A Singer in the Band

Joy Takeshita Teraoka was 16 years old when, on a whim, she auditioned as a singer for the George Igawa Orchestra. She remembers going to the tryouts with her girls' club from school, The Radelles. Joy had not done much formal singing before her family was sent to Heart Mountain, but she had always loved to sing. "I had more nerves than brains," she remembers. "George wanted me to sing, so I did." With the George Igawa Orchestra, young Joy became a touring musician, traveling to gigs across the state during the year that her family was at Heart Mountain.

*A bus transported us to the events and, when we were through, it returned us right back to the confines of our barbed wire, sentry-posted camp...Many of the people "outside" treated us cordially. On one occasion, they prepared a wonderful roast venison dinner for us, which was most delectable in comparison to our usual mess hall fare.*

After her release from Heart Mountain, Joy met Dennis Teraoka, a dentist from Hawaii who served with the 100th Infantry Battalion during the war. The two were engaged after just eleven days. Nine months later, Joy joined Dennis in Hawaii and they were married.

For Joy, singing with the George Igawa Orchestra was a great thrill—one that she remembers with immense gratitude and fondness. She continues singing to this day. At 93



Photo courtesy of Julian Saporiti



Photo courtesy of Joy Teraoka

Left: Joy performing at the Honolulu 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans Clubhouse in 2018; Right: Joy singing with the George Igawa Orchestra at Heart Mountain.

years old, she participates regularly in a karaoke club.

Julian and I visited Joy in Honolulu in 2018 and performed with her at the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans Clubhouse, singing a few of the songs she once sang for dances at Heart Mountain. We created a short film, *For Joy*, from our interviews and performances with her. The film was screened at the interpretive center throughout the summer and autumn, alongside the exhibit. It is also available to watch on Heart Mountain's YouTube channel.

## Frank C. Hirahara: The Trumpeter

Frank C. Hirahara was born in Yakima, Washington in 1926. His parents, George and Koto Hirahara, owned the sixty-room Pacific Hotel in that city. Frank, an only child, grew up within the busy and exciting environment of the hotel. Frank's parents placed special emphasis on his education, including music. Frank was given private lessons in the trumpet and the violin. The trumpet became a special passion for him.

Frank and his family were incarcerated at Heart Mountain when he was just 16 years old. Despite his young age, he impressed George Igawa with his skill playing the trumpet, and was invited to join the orchestra.



Frank Hirahara at Yakima's Washington Junior High School in 1939, where he played trumpet as a member of the school band.

Courtesy of the Hirahara Family Collection Yakima Valley Museum



Music was one of the many ways Frank kept busy during his time confined at Heart Mountain. He was also active in the Heart Mountain High School Associated Student Body, and served as that group's Commissioner of General Activities. Frank is best known, though, for the over 2,000 photographs he and his father took documenting their experience and daily life inside the Heart Mountain camp.

We were fortunate to be able to borrow Frank's trumpet from his daughter, Patti Hirahara, to be a centerpiece of the *Songs on the Wind* exhibit. Frank's trumpet has previously been part of the Yakima Valley Museum's exhibit *Land of Joy and Sorrow: Japanese Pioneers in the Yakima Valley*.

## George Kurasaki: The Trombonist

George Noboru Kurasaki was born on June 21, 1919 in San Jose, CA. He was the youngest of six children born to Matagoro and Naka Kurasaki. Growing up, George worked on his family's prune farm and played trombone in the Campbell High School orchestra. He also enjoyed woodworking and auto repair.

After Pearl Harbor was bombed, a curfew was imposed on Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. George risked arrest by violating the curfew, so he could propose to his sweetheart, Violet Teruko Masamori, before they were forced into camps. Like many young couples, George and Violet saw marriage as the best way to stay together after they were incarcerated. The two were married on April 29, 1942 and arrived at Santa Anita Assembly Center on May 30. Though he could only pack what he could carry, Kurasaki chose to bring his trombone along with him.

The Kurasaki family, including George and Violet, arrived at Heart Mountain on September 13, 1942. George soon found a place for himself and his trombone with the George Igawa Orchestra. Although he enjoyed his time with the band, George's term at Heart Mountain ended with his arrest by U.S. Marshals in 1944.

In the spring of 1943, the Heart Mountain administration began distributing the "loyalty



questionnaire" to Heart Mountain incarcerated. This survey was supposed to help the government discover Japanese sympathizers and subversives within the camps. George dutifully answered all the questions, until he reached Question 27: "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?"

"No," George ultimately answered. "Because I know I will be more helpful at our home front, such as agriculture, mechanical, and other defense work." George resented the government's plan to draft men out of the camps and into the army. When the notice to report for his army induction physical arrived, he refused to go. After his arrest, he was tried for draft evasion alongside 62 other young Heart Mountain men, and sentenced to three years in federal prison.

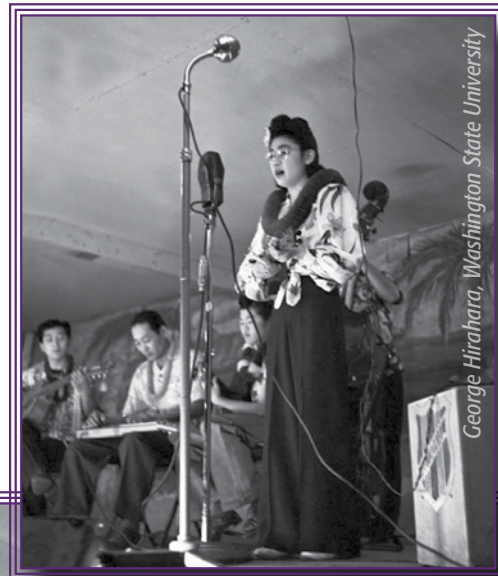
George's nephew, Prentiss Uchida, is a member of the Heart Mountain board of directors, and was instrumental in securing George's trombone (pictured below) for our exhibit. When he learned of the exhibit, George's son, Bruce Kurasaki, was pleased to donate the trombone to Heart Mountain's permanent collection.



## The Surf Riders

The George Igawa Orchestra was far from the only band of musicians that formed at Heart Mountain. Hawaiian-born Nisei Alfred Tanaka brought a musical tradition to Heart Mountain that took the edge off the cold Wyoming winters. No matter the weather, Tanaka's Surf Riders combo took the stage in leis and Hawaiian shirts, plucking steel guitars and ukuleles. Tanaka's wife, Amy, sang with the band and trained the young women that served as hula dancers during their performances. The Surf Riders were a regular part of the mess hall talent shows that occurred weekly throughout the camp.

In the spring of 1943, Tanaka heard that the local radio station in Powell was holding tryouts for a weekly music program. He received permission for the Surf Riders to audition, and from that point on, they had a standing Thursday night performance on KPOW, broadcasting all across the Bighorn Basin. Tanaka also played standup bass in the George Igawa Orchestra. When traveling to gigs outside the camp, the Orchestra would bring the Surf Riders along, and the Hawaiians would keep the music going during the big band's breaks.



George Hirahara, Washington State University

Lillian Morimoto performs a mess hall concert with the Surf Riders.



George Hirahara, Washington State University



The George Igawa Orchestra at Heart Mountain

HMWF Collection 2001.007, Gift of Joy Teraoka





Michiko Iseri's dancers pose with the mandolin band.

Courtesy of UCLA

## The Mandolin Band

The Heart Mountain Mandolin Band was formed in the summer of 1942, shortly after Heart Mountain first opened. Although mandolins formed the core of the band, most any stringed instrument was welcome. Estelle Ishigo, the Caucasian artist who voluntarily accompanied her husband to Heart Mountain, played violin with the group.

A performance by the mandolin band could be a feast for both the ears and the eyes. Michiko Iseri—who would later achieve Broadway fame as the choreographer of *The King and I*—brought her traditional dance students to accompany many of the band's performances.

Minoru Yamada, a 21-year-old singer in the band, kept a photo album and scrapbook of his time with the band. He also illustrated his songbook of Japanese music with romantic scenes that combined

the Wyoming mountain landscape with traditionally garbed Japanese characters. Min left Heart Mountain in early 1944, after finding a job in Clinton, Missouri, but he held onto his mementos from the band for the rest of his life. His daughter, Sayo Yamada-Horgen, donated his songbook and scrapbook to Heart Mountain in 2013.

The Songs on the Wind exhibit was on display at the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center from May to November 2019. 



Photo by Diego Javier Luis

Erin Aoyama is a Ph.D. student in American Studies at Brown University. Her research focuses on the ways in which Japanese American identity is understood in our national memory, and how the formation of racial identities impacts our understanding of American history and the role of the United States in the world.

# THE MILITARY POLICE COMPANY

## TOKEN SECURITY

BY BEN AND JIM MURPHY

**W**hen the governors of the Western states met in Salt Lake City on April 7, 1942 to discuss the impending arrival of thousands of persons of Japanese ancestry in one or more of their states, they were united and unequivocal about how they wanted these people to be contained. The governors wanted prison camps surrounded by barbed wire, guarded by armed soldiers ordered to shoot anyone trying to leave. From the beginning, these security tactics were motivated by politics and the optics of “security.”

The Army had a company-sized unit that could perform the mission of guarding the camps once construction was completed. They were called “Military Police Escort Guard” (MPEG) companies, a brand new kind of military unit. Conceived in mid-1940 as the U.S. Army expanded rapidly with war looming on the horizon, MPEG companies were designed to guard prisoners of war or “enemy aliens.” The MPEG company was created to be in the Army’s inventory only for the duration of the war. No MPEG company existed in the Regular Army, Army Reserve, or the National Guard before April 1941. It was this type of unit selected to guard the yet-to-be-built camps to imprison the Japanese Americans.

Circular 19, issued by the Western Defense Command to the War Relocation Authority’s national director, Milton Eisenhower, on September 17, 1942, specified the duties and responsibilities of the MPEG companies assigned to guard the Japanese/Japanese Americans after they were rounded up and placed in confinement sites:

- They shall control the traffic on and the passage of all persons at arteries leading into the area.
- They shall allow no person to pass the center gates without proper authority.
- They will maintain periodic day and night motor patrols around the boundaries of the center.
- They shall apprehend and arrest evacuees who do leave without authority, using such force as is necessary to make the arrest.
- They shall not be called upon for service in apprehending evacuees who have affected a departure unobserved.
- They shall be available, upon call by the project director or by the project police, in case of emergencies such as fire or riot.
- They shall inspect parcels and packages consigned to evacuees at those centers.

Table of Organization (T/O) 19-47, dated April 1, 1942, specified the organization, manpower, equipment, and capabilities of an MPEG company (See Figures 1 and 2). The company was composed of three officers and 135 enlisted men organized into a company headquarters and four escort guard sections. Each escort guard section, in turn, was composed of a section headquarters, one rifle squad, one shotgun squad, and one machine gun squad. A section was capable of providing security for 250 “alien enemies” or prisoners of war. Thus, an MPEG



company was capable of guarding 1,000 persons. This is a notable figure, as Heart Mountain held over ten thousand people at its maximum population, a figure ten times in excess of an MPEG company's T/O capability.

On August 10, 1942, the 331st MPEG Company, commanded by 1st Lt. Carl R. Greene, arrived at the Vocation siding by train and moved into the not quite complete military police barracks, located near the site's main gate. Construction started on the military barracks on July 3, 1942, and was declared complete on August 12, 1942, two days after the 331st arrived at Heart Mountain.

The soldiers comprising the 331st MPEG Company were armed, per the T/O, as listed in Figures 1 and 2, summarized in Table 1. This is a lot of firepower to guard Issei forty years old and older, and the young Nisei. However, there is no photographic evidence suggesting that crew-served automatic weapons (machine guns) or shotguns were deployed by the 331st (or by the 335th which replaced them) at any time during the site's life. These weapons may not even have been issued to the company, particularly machine guns.

TABLE OF ORGANIZATION  
No. 19-47

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, April 1, 1942

# MILITARY POLICE ESCORT GUARD COMPANY

Designation: †----- Military Police Escort Guard Company

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Unit	Technician grade	Company headquarters	Section headquarters	Rifle squad	Shotgun squad	Machine-gun squad	Total	Total company (company headquarters and 4 escort guard sections)	Enlisted cadre	Remarks
1 Captain.....	1							1		†Insert number of company.
2 First lieutenant.....	1							1		• Second in command.
3 Second lieutenant.....	1							1		• Weapons for machine-gun squad.
4 Total commissioned.....	3							3		• Tower weapons at enclosures.
5 First sergeant (585).....	1							1	1	• Weapons for shotgun squad.
6 Staff sergeant, including.....	2							2	2	• Weapons, machine-gun squad, escorting and guarding.
7 Mess (824).....	(p1)							(1)	(1)	• Armed with pistol.
8 Supply (821).....	(p1)							(1)	(1)	• Tear gas grenades issued to personnel escorting and guarding prisoners of war.
9 Sergeant, including.....	1							1	4	Each section provides the escort and guard for prisoner of war or enemy alien company of 250 prisoners or interned aliens.
10 Military police (677).....	(p1)						(1)	(4)	(4)	This company provides the escort and guard for 4 prisoner of war or enemy alien companies aggregating 1,000 prisoners or interned aliens.
11 Corporal, including.....	1			1	1	1	3	(13)	5	In selecting leaders and in apportioning the work among the members of the company, each company commander will select from among the internees men who are qualified to perform, respectively for each company, the functions of—
12 Clerk, company (405).....	(p1)							(1)	(1)	1 first sergeant.
13 Military police (677).....				(p1)	(p1)	(p1)	(3)	(12)	(4)	4 platoon sergeants.
14 Technician, grade 4.....								1	1	16 squad leaders.
15 Technician, grade 5.....	14			10	10	5	25	4	2	16 assistant squad leaders.
16 Private, first class.....								50		1 barber.
17 Private.....								59		1 carpenter.
18 Armorer-artificer (511).....	5	(p1)						(1)	(1)	4 cooks.
19 Bugler (803).....		(p2)						(2)		4 cook's helpers.
20 Chauffeur (344).....		(p3)						(3)		3 hospital orderlies.
21 Clerk, record (405).....	5	(p1)						(1)		4 interpreters.
22 Cook (060).....	4	(p1)						(1)	(1)	1 mechanic.
23 Cook (060).....	5	(p2)						(2)	(1)	1 plumber.
24 Cook's helper (521).....		(p2)						(2)		1 shoemaker.
25 Military police (677).....				(9)	(9)	(5)	(23)	(92)		1 tailor.
26 Basic (521).....		(2)		(1)	(1)	(2)	(10)	(10)		192 internees (48 for each platoon).
27 Total enlisted.....	18	1	11	11	6	29	134	15		The serial number symbol shown in parentheses is an inseparable part of the specialist designation. A number below 500 refers to an occupational specialist whose qualification analysis is found in AR 615-26. A number above 500 refers
28 Aggregate.....	21	1	11	11	6	29	137	15		
29 O Carbine, cal. .30 <sup>b</sup> .....						3	3	12		
30 O Light or heavy machine gun <sup>c</sup> .....						1	1	4		
31 O Pistol, cal. .45.....	19	1	1	1	1	4	35	42		
32 O Rifle, cal. .30.....	2		10				10	42		
33 O Shotgun <sup>d</sup> .....				10			10	40		

\*This table supersedes T/O 7-217, May 1, 1940.

447333°-42

WEAPON	QUANTITY
Carbine Cal .30	12
Light or Heavy machine gun	4
Pistol, cal .45	35
Rifle, cal .30	42
Shotgun	40

TABLE 1 • Weapons Complement of an MPEG company

FIGURE 1

Table of Organization 19-47, Page 1

## MILITARY POLICE ESCORT GUARD COMPANY—Continued

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Unit	Technician grade	Company headquarters	4 escort guard sections (each)				Total	Total company (company headquarters and 4 escort guard sections)	Enlisted cadre	Remarks
			Section headquarters	Rifle squad	Shotgun squad	Machine-gun squad					
35	O Thompson submachine gun					2	2		8		to a military occupational specialist listed in Circular No. 14, War Department, 1942.
36	Q Truck, $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton, cargo		1						1		
37	Q Truck, $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton, command		1						1		
38	Q Truck, $1\frac{1}{2}$ -ton, cargo		2						2		

[A. G. 320.2 (2-20-42).]

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

G. C. MARSHALL,  
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

J. A. ULIO,  
Major General,  
The Adjutant General.

Courtesy of Ben &amp; Jim Murphy

Although the T/O specifies the soldiers were to be armed with cal .30 rifles or cal .45 pistols, photographs show that older bolt-action models (not semi-automatic models) of these weapons were issued to the MPEG company. Figure 3 (page 26) shows a soldier on duty in the guard tower on the west side of the site near block 12, armed with the bolt-action M1903 cal .30 Springfield rifle. The principal sidearm was the cal. 45 semi-automatic pistol. Figure 4 (page 27) shows PFC Courtland Dahlheim, 335th MPEG Company, on duty at the main Heart Mountain gate, armed with the cal. 45 revolver. These photographs suggest that the weapons assigned to MPEG companies were older, cheaper weapons, with less firepower.

FIGURE 2 • Table of Organization, 19-47, page 2

Larry R. Pacheco (LP), a guard assigned to the Tule Lake Relocation Center was interviewed about his experience manning a guard tower at Tule Lake.

**LP:** And they had me scheduled to go out on these towers and spend all day out there. It was pretty boring, but what can you do?

**INTERVIEWER:** And you're standing or sitting in a chair?

**LP:** Yeah, you could sit, or the towers had, you could walk around the outside, and there was a...I can't even remember what kind of guns we had. I think all we had was, there was no mounted guns in the tower like a machine gun or anything, there wasn't anything like that. There was just the gun that we'd carry to go up there, like maybe a Thompson submachine gun or something... Because all you have to do is call in and they would come out there with a jeep...We probably didn't even need a gun up there, just had a telephone.

This soldier's experience supports the view that crew-served automatic weapons, at least, were never deployed.

As stated in Circular 19, one of the duties of an MPEG company was to provide periodic motor patrols around the periphery of the center day and night. An analysis of the vehicles assigned by the T/O to an MPEG company suggests that General DeWitt's order for round-the-clock motor patrols could not have been implemented by an MPEG company. Only four vehicles were assigned to the 331st MPEG Company, all in the company headquarters. The Escort Guard sections of the company, who actually performed the security duties, had no assigned vehicles, thus were unable to mount motor patrols of any kind. The company's four vehicles were two 2-1/2 ton trucks and two  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton trucks.

Aerial photographs of the site show no indication of roads around the periphery of the populated portion of Heart Mountain or around the War Relocation Authority's boundary fence, nor does any document suggest motor patrols were used.

Figure 5 (page 28) shows military police soldiers posing for a picture taken on June 15, 1944. The four soldiers in the back row (standing) are privates, the lowest enlisted rank, indicated by having no chevrons on the sleeves of their uniforms. The soldiers appear to be in their early to middle 30s in age, older than one would expect for men entering the military for



the first time during a war. As with weapons and vehicles, the Army cut corners with the soldiers assigned the task of guarding the site's residents.

In November 1942, the War Relocation Authority began building a standard two-barb, four-strand barbed wire 'stock fence' around the center, a type to be found throughout the West to control the movement of livestock. While its presence caused general outrage among Heart Mountain residents, it was incapable of keeping people within the site; anyone could duck between the strands with little effort.

Early in the site's life, the nine guard towers surrounding Heart Mountain were manned by armed guards as shown in Figure 3. Later pictures of the site show the towers abandoned. Sam Mihara (14-22-C), who was at Heart Mountain from ages 9 to 12, recalls the guards were withdrawn from the towers in mid-1943. The probable reasons for this change, Sam suggests, include the following: first, there had been about ninety residents in the other camps shot at by their military guards, seven of whom died of gunshot wounds, and the government didn't want any more "bad press." Second, the residents of Heart Mountain didn't want to escape—they risked being caught and "hung" by the locals. In addition, where was an escaped incarcerated to go in northwest Wyoming?

Another factor in the lack of manned towers may have been the reassignment of the 331st MPEG Company on October 23, 1943 to the confinement facility at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, which held 600 newly captured German prisoners of war from General Erwin Rommel's *Afrika Korps*. Replacing the 331st was a detachment from the 335th MPEG Company, Granada, Colorado. The 335th, in effect, was divided into two detachments, one remaining in Granada and the second moving to Heart Mountain—this resulted in a 50% reduction in MPEG company staff at Heart Mountain. The Heart Mountain detachment was commanded by First Lieutenant John B. Kellogg.

Contact between members of the military police and the Heart Mountain residents was forbidden by regulation—

no fraternization. Three incidents of note occurred, however, between the incarcerated and the guards. The first, on December 2, 1942, involved a group of thirty-two children sledding down the hill west of the site, outside of the recently completed fence, between blocks 27 and 28. The military police responded and arrested these "escapees" outside the fence without passes. They were released to the custody of their bewildered parents the same day. One of those detained, Donald Yamamoto, aged 14 (29-19-B), was especially upset as he and his sledding companions had to leave their sleds on the hillside when they were hauled off by the military police. Donald, along with some of his friends, unbowed by their brush with military authority, returned the next day to retrieve their sleds still outside the wire.

On October 28, 1943, the second incident involved a worker from the site, Shiro Bepp (2-9-C), aged 32, assigned to a crew bringing straw to Heart Mountain destined for the root cellars under construction. Bepp stopped in Cody to shop and was struck by a member of the military police detachment from Heart Mountain, fracturing his jaw.

The third incident occurred over a four day period (June 24–28, 1943) when roughly half of the hospital's 300 workers went on strike over a mix of low pay, long hours, lack of equipment, and general irritation with



**FIGURE 3** • Soldier Armed with a bolt-action, Cal .30 Springfield Rifle

the senior Caucasian staff. Tensions ran high and as a precaution, 5 soldiers from the 335th were assigned to the hospital to maintain order and protect the hospital's Caucasian workers. When the strike ended, the soldiers withdrew without further incident.

The 335th military police detachment left their post in September 1945, leaving the site unguarded until November 10, 1945 when Heart Mountain closed.

As the war progressed, it became obvious that armed military police units, barbed wire, and guard towers were unnecessary. To placate the political forces responsible for creating them, a "token" security program had to be maintained. The four strand barbed wire fence kept the cattle out. The guard towers were soon unmanned, their flood lights salvaged for other uses. Twenty-four hour armed motorized patrols, although ordered by General



**FIGURE 4** • PFC Courtland Dahlheim, 335th MPEG Company, armed with Cal .45 Pistol



DeWitt, were never implemented. Older model individual weapons were issued to the military police. Crew-served automatic weapons were never deployed. Over-committed by a factor of ten to begin with, the military police force was cut in half in October 1943. However, the War Relocation Authority could truthfully report to any Western governor or congressman who inquired about the security employed at the site, that barbed wire, guard towers, and an armed military police force were in place as required.

In the notes of a meeting held on July 7, 1942 in Cody between the architects and the construction consortium, an interesting comment was made: “The fence for the evacuee area is only a *token fence* (emphasis added) and may consist of four strands of barbed wire...”

The final paragraph of the order assigning one half of the 335th MPEG company to Heart Mountain, reads “No publicity whatsoever will be given to the reduction in guard strength at these installations.”

The populations of the confinement sites were comprised of parents, grandparents, children, infants, and even the infirm. The majority were American citizens. This begs the question: why was it

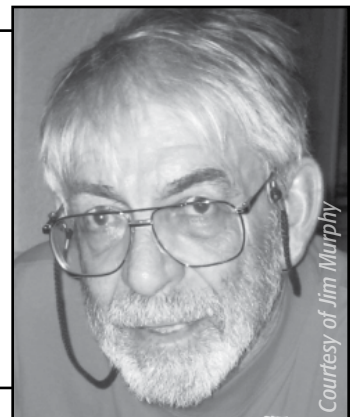


**FIGURE 5 •** Soldiers of the 335th MPEG Company posing on June 15, 1944

necessary to utilize barbed wire fences, guard towers, searchlights and armed military guards? The military didn’t fear residents escaping into sparsely settled northwestern Wyoming—they feared the knowledge that these reductions in Heart Mountain’s security operations would become publicly known, igniting a racially inspired political backlash from the Western Governors and/or members of Congress representing the Western states. From the beginning of the site’s life, the military police, the guard towers and the fence served a political purpose, not a security one.



*Ben Murphy retired from the U. S. Army (colonel) and subsequently worked for Paramount Pictures Corp in its Information Technology department in Hollywood. His interests include travel, historical research, and writing. He currently lives in the San Fernando Valley in Southern California.*



*Jim Murphy is a retired telecommunications manager who worked in the Rocky Mountain Region, Pacific Northwest and New York City. His interests are private research, crossword puzzles, and enigmas.*

*As adolescents, brothers Ben and Jim spent three years (1948-1950) living with their parents at Heart Mountain after World War II ended and the incarcerated had left. As kids, the brothers explored the many open and abandoned buildings. Years later, as adults, they decided to learn more about this unusual place where they spent part of their growing-up years. They continue to research the Heart Mountain Relocation Center’s unique infrastructure, while also serving on the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation Advisory Council.*



# Under an Autumn Moon

A Glimpse  
into the  
World of  
Heart Mountain  
Haiku

by Cally Steussy



# 高峰を背に千軒の秋の月

Mountain peak at my shoulder, thousand barracks under an autumn moon

-Taketaro “Shikai” Azeka, translated by Mieko Azeka

## Haiku Culture at Heart Mountain

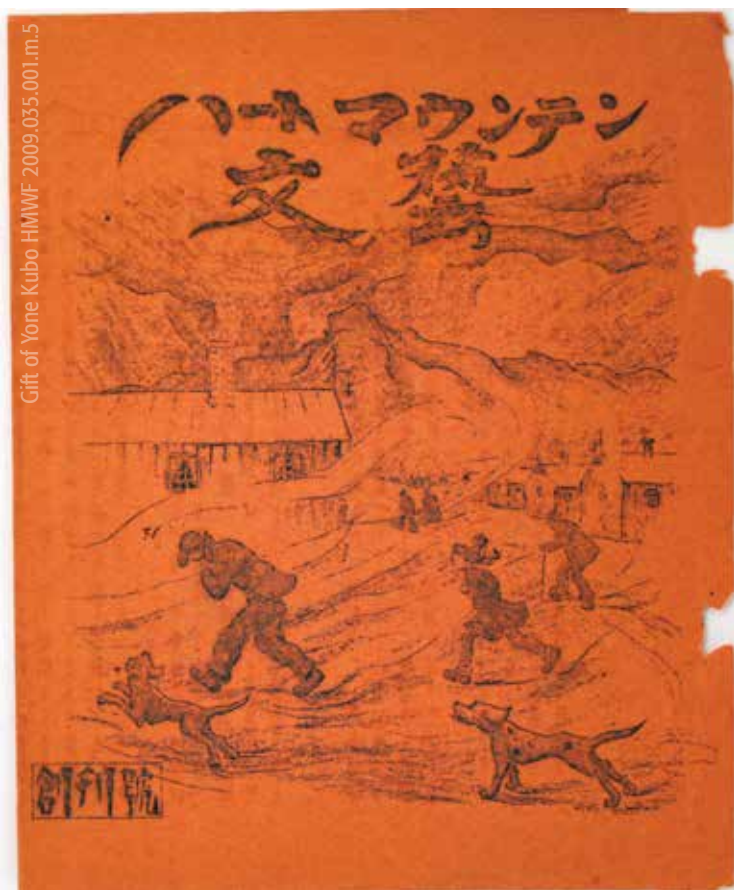
Most Americans know haiku as a form of short, non-rhyming traditional Japanese poetry, characterized by a 5-7-5 syllable structure. In fact, this description applies to many forms of Japanese poetry! The modern haiku, as codified in the late 1800s, has three important characteristics that distinguish it from other short poems: juxtaposing imagery, the use of nature to evoke an emotion, and *kigo*, or season words. For example, the opening haiku uses the *kigo* “autumn moon,” associating it with the autumn season, traditionally August through October. The poem evocatively juxtaposes the barracks of the Heart Mountain Japanese American concentration camp against the clear light of the moon and the figure of Heart Mountain itself. Careful observation of the poet’s surroundings, and the ability to evoke them succinctly, is also considered the mark of a true haiku poet.

Haiku was a popular pastime for Issei and Kibei at Heart Mountain; anyone educated in Japan would have learned the fundamentals of haiku composition as part of the basic curriculum, and it required only a writing tool and paper to participate. In addition, haiku traditionally includes a social element in the form of *haiku-kai*, where writers gather together to critique, edit, and vote on haiku submissions. At Heart Mountain, the *Heart-yama Ginsha* (Heart Mountain Poetry Society) was headed by Shisei Tsuneishi, Shiro “Muin” Fujioka, and Mr. and Mrs. Hosoe. Not everyone who wrote haiku participated in these societies, however; Taketaro Azeka, who wrote the opening haiku, is not listed as a member.

Nonetheless, Azeka—who wrote under the pen name “Shikai”—was an active haiku author both before and after the war.

## Heart Mountain Bungei

Inhabitants of the camp had two main outlets for publishing their haiku. One was the Japanese edition of the *Heart Mountain Sentinel*, the camp’s newspaper. Due to page limitations, the weekly editions only published occasional submissions, but the special New Years’ editions for 1943 and 1944 featured extensive poetry selections, including



The cover of the first *Heart Mountain Bungei*

haiku. Alternatively, haiku authors who wanted to publish their work could submit haiku to Japanese-language literary magazines produced within the camps, including the *Heart Mountain Bungei*.

The *Heart Mountain Bungei* focused on essays, poetry of all forms, and occasional short stories—the term *bungei* loosely translates as “liberal arts.” It was edited primarily by Yoshiaki Iwamuro, a Kibei interested in the arts, and Tadashige Okubo, a relatively young Issei who had worked on the *Shin Sekai Asahi Shimbun* (New World Asahi Newspaper). The magazine was produced roughly monthly from January to September of 1943, although it appears that there was not a June or August edition; production ended when Okubo, the last remaining editor, left Heart Mountain for Chicago. Its contents include a wide variety of essays, including a two-part

essay by Tsuneishi (a professional haiku editor) on how to read haiku and multiple essays by the Zen priest Nyogen Senzaki. It also has illustrations and cover art by Estelle Ishigo. However, the magazine is predominantly dedicated to poetry, including free form poems as well as traditional styles

such as *tanka*, *senryu*, and haiku. The haiku in the magazines include selections from the *Heart-yama Ginsha* featuring the work of many poets, as well as independent submissions from individual authors.

Taketaro Azeka contributed two brief compilations of haiku, as well as an essay. The poem that opens this article comes from a set of six haiku published in the very first volume of the *Heart Mountain Bungei*, titled “Celebration: The Publication of the *Heart Mountain Bungei*.” The complete collection reads as follows:

# 高峰に映ゆる日の出や雪ほのか

Mountain peak shining in the sunrise with traces of snow

## 犒いの紅茶に更なる秋の夜

The autumn night makes black tea even more welcome

## 高峰を背に千軒の秋の月

Mountain peak at my shoulder, thousand barracks under an autumn moon

## 呼び返す跽にゆるゝ秋の水

Calling back and forth, echoes of autumn waters

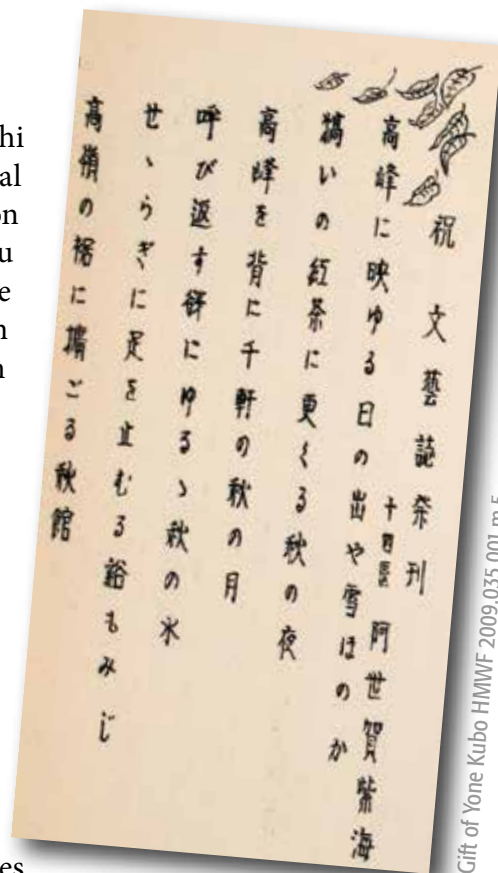
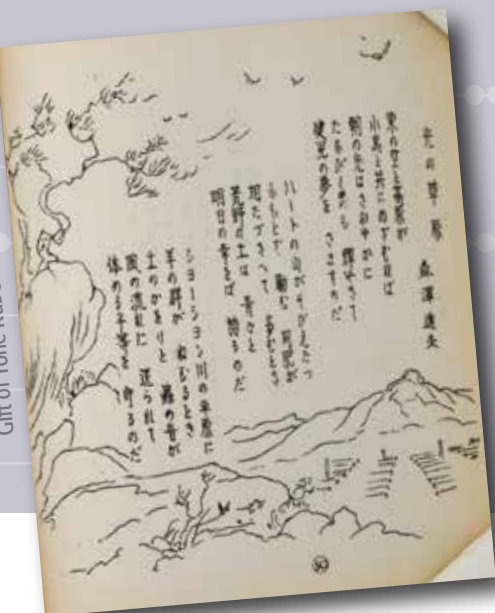
## せゝらぎに足を止むる谿もみじ

Feet pausing at the stream, red maple leaves in the valley

## 高嶺の裾に擴ぐる秋館

Autumn buildings spreading across the mountain peak's foothills\*

Gift of Yone Kubo HMWF 2009.035.001.m.5



Gift of Yone Kubo HMWF 2009.035.001.m.5

Left: Poems from the from the *Heart-yama Ginsha* with drawings by Estelle Ishigo.  
Above: Taketaro Azeka's *Celebration* collection from the first *Heart Mountain Bungei*.



## Reading the *Celebration* haiku

Ideally, a haiku captures a single moment of time, image, and emotion. Each of these haiku achieves this goal, and it is very possible that they were not composed at the same time. For example, while most of the haiku use all-season autumn *kigo*, “autumn leaves” is specifically a late autumn term, traditionally corresponding roughly to the month of October. Moreover, the term “snow” in the first haiku is a winter term. However, the use of “snow” could be interpreted as related to autumn. In the Japanese tradition, *snow* specifically refers to late winter. This would traditionally be January—after the haiku was published! However, haiku writers have long debated on the use of *kigo* in climates with different seasonal markers. In Wyoming, where snow falls early—

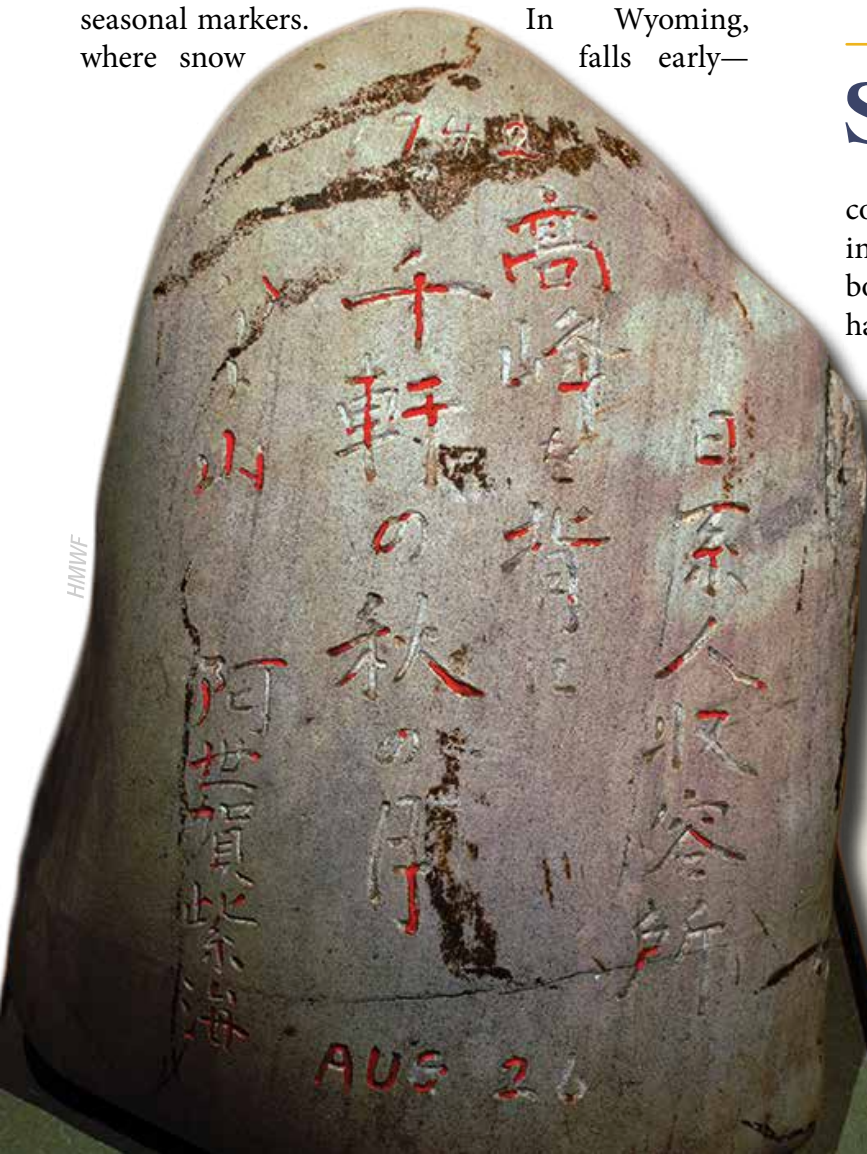
particularly in the mountains—*snow* could very well be understood as a term marking late autumn or early winter.

Another striking continuity in these haiku are the terms 高峰 and 高嶺, which begin the first, third, and final haiku in the collection. Although they are translated in the haiku as “mountain peak,” following Mieko Azeka’s translation, there is an interesting subtlety within the Japanese here: the most common Japanese term for mountain is 山. The term “peak” (峰 or 嶺) is much rarer—but within the Japanese-speaking community of the Heart Mountain camp, it was frequently used when speaking specifically of the eponymous mountain west of the camp. The repetition of this term sets these haiku vividly within the specific landscape of Heart Mountain itself.

## The Heart Mountain Haiku Stone


So why begin with the third haiku from this collection?

According to Mieko, Taketaro “Shikai” Azeka was concerned that the history of the Japanese American incarceration would be wiped from the history books of the United States. He chose to carve this haiku into a 200-pound stone, along with his name,

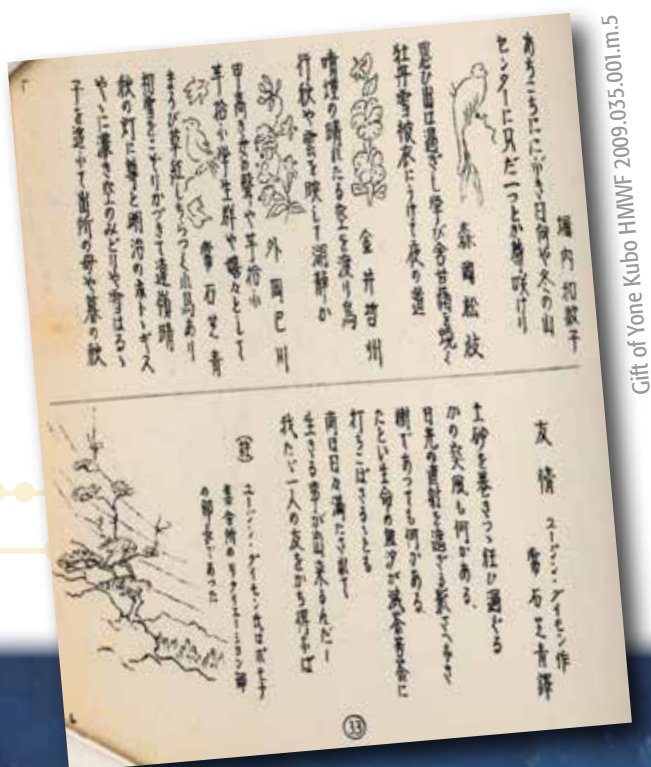


Taketaro “Shikai” Azeka carves the Heart Mountain Haiku Stone (stone picture to the left in its present form).

the date of his arrival at the Heart Mountain camp, and the name of the camp. This follows a Japanese tradition of monument making, called *kuhi*, by carving haiku on a natural stone. Azeka then buried the stone in the Heart Mountain graveyard, in the hopes that archaeologists would someday find it and rediscover this chapter of American history. The Solsberg family eventually uncovered the stone, and today it holds pride of place near the exit of the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center exhibits.

To many Americans, haiku are simply short poems, often cryptic in their brevity. But the Heart Mountain stone shows the poignancy and expressive power of this Japanese poetry. To Azeka, this haiku crystallizes the essence of how he experienced the Heart Mountain camp: countless barracks lined up under a moon shining bright and clear in the autumn sky, with the ever-present mountain a supporting presence behind. 

*\*All translations, where not otherwise noted, are the work of the author.*

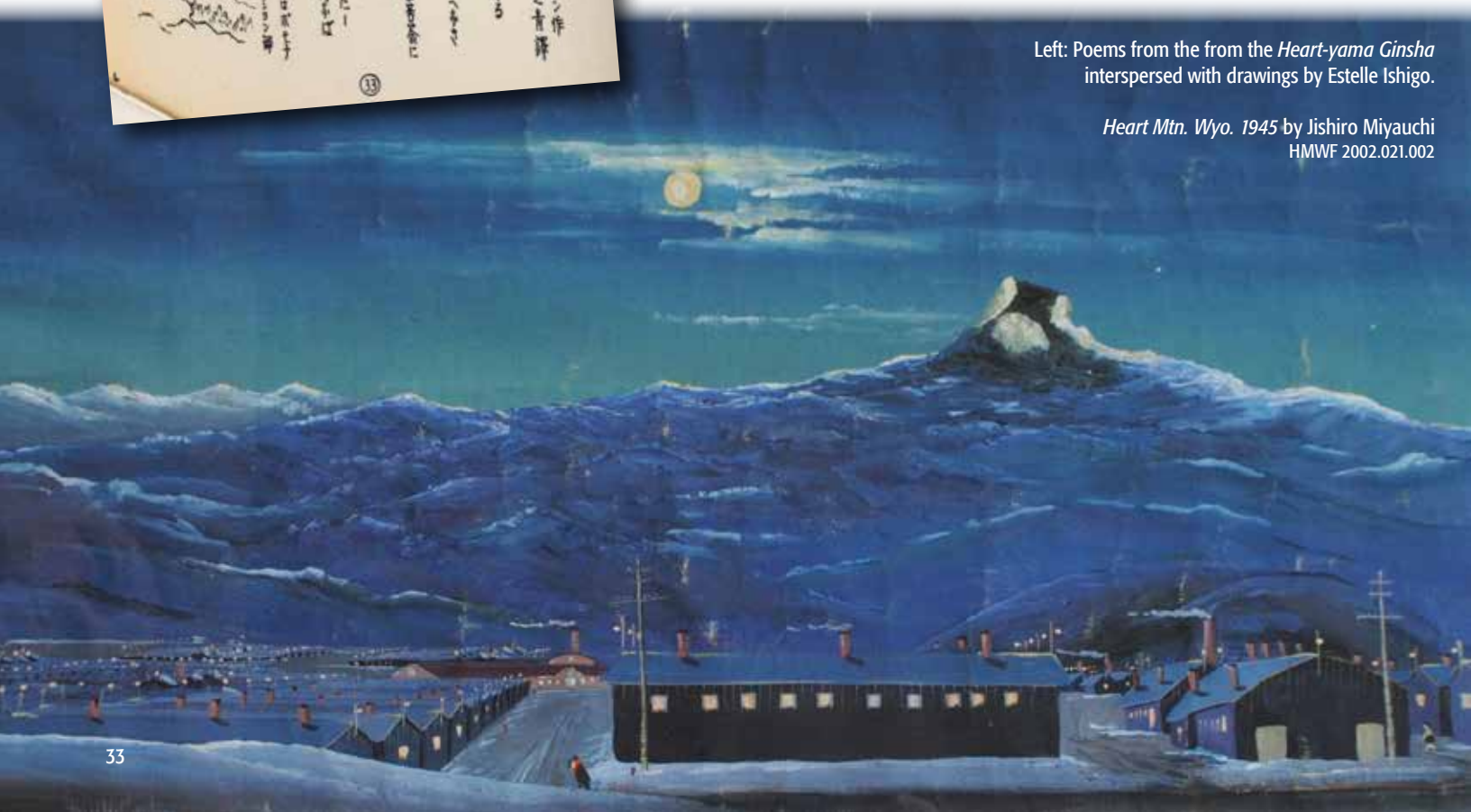


Cally Steussy lived in Japan for several years after graduating from college. Today, she is working on a PhD in archaeology at Indiana University. Her research looks at how the Japanese Americans expressed their feelings about the Wyoming landscape in different art forms.

"It was amazing to meet all the different people who came through the Center's doors, and to see how each of them reacted to the story of Heart Mountain. I met some people who didn't know anything about the camps, and survivors who had actually lived in and experienced them."

Left: Poems from the from the *Heart-yama Ginsha* interspersed with drawings by Estelle Ishigo.

*Heart Mtn. Wyo. 1945* by Jishiro Miyauchi  
HMWF 2002.021.002





# THE APPOINTED STAFF: CAUCASIAN WORKERS AT HEART MOUNTAIN

## PART I

BY DAKOTA RUSSELL

**M**ost of the work at Heart Mountain was performed by the incarcerated. From the coal shovelers to the doctors in the hospital, it was Japanese American labor that kept the camp running. However, the federal government also employed a Caucasian staff of over 200 people. These staff members almost always held positions of power over their Japanese American counterparts, and received much better pay than the incarcerated, whose maximum wages were limited to \$19 per month.

These white staff members are a subject of fascination for many people. What kind of person chooses to work inside of a concentration camp, and

why? Did the experience of working in the camp change their attitudes toward Japanese Americans? For the better or the worse? This two-part series will attempt to answer some of those questions, and explore not just what the camp's Caucasian staff did, but how they thought and felt about their work.

The best insights into those questions come from the people who left the most detailed records: the administrators who managed the camp. The handful of administrators profiled below represent only a small part of the staff, but their experiences help to paint a picture of what working at Heart Mountain was like.

## THE MEN IN CHARGE

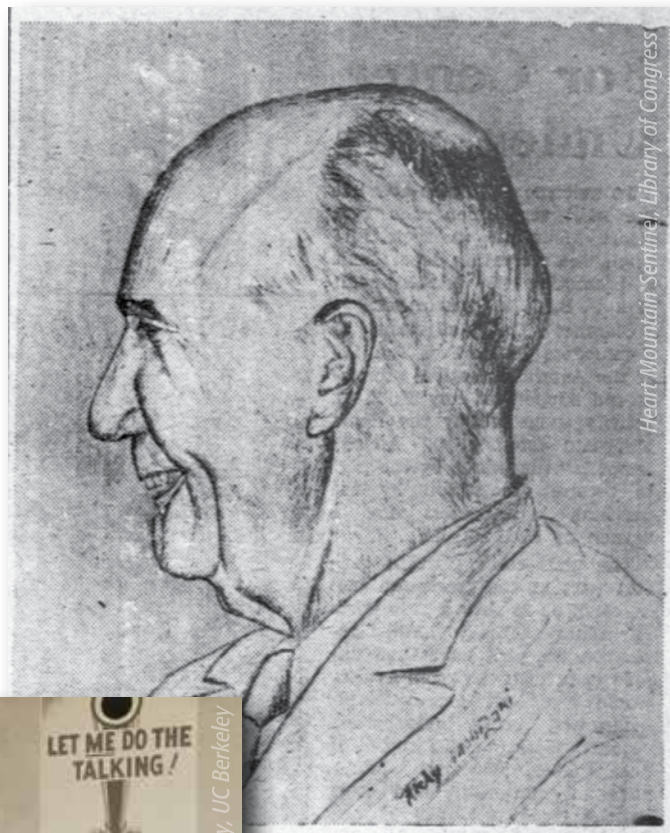
The government's first choice to run the camp, C.E. Rachford, had been recruited into the nation's fledgling Forest Service as a young man in California. He quickly rose through the ranks and enjoyed a long and celebrated career. By 1942, though, he had purchased a ranch outside El Cajon and settled into private life. He reluctantly agreed to come out of retirement to become the Heart Mountain project director.

Rachford returned to government service as a favor to War Relocation Authority director Milton Eisenhower. After a brief stint at the Tule Lake camp in his native Modoc County, Rachford was transferred to Wyoming in the spring of 1942. He arrived just as construction was beginning.

Rachford's disarming and folksy charm won him friends among both the staff and the incarcerated. He preferred his sheepskin rancher's coat to formal business attire, and common sense solutions to bureaucratic red tape. But the challenges of running the camp soon weighed on him. Rachford made clear early on that he considered this to be a temporary appointment. By October, he was planning to return to his ranch. After acceding to stay a few months more, Rachford drew a hard line and resigned in December 1942.

Upon Rachford's departure, assistant director Guy Robertson was promoted to the head position. Robertson had little background in government work, but a wealth of experience in the private sector. He had managed coal companies, grain elevators, construction firms, and even Jackson Lake Lodge in Grand Teton National Park for a time.

Robertson was, in many ways, Rachford's polar opposite. "Robertson was not nearly as sympathetic as Rachford was," *Heart Mountain Sentinel* editor



Top: This sketched portrait from the *Heart Mountain Sentinel* captures the laid-back personality of Heart Mountain's first project director, C.E. Rachford.

Above: Heart Mountain's second project director, Guy Robertson, sits at his desk. Unlike his predecessor, Robertson had a reputation as a stickler for the rules.

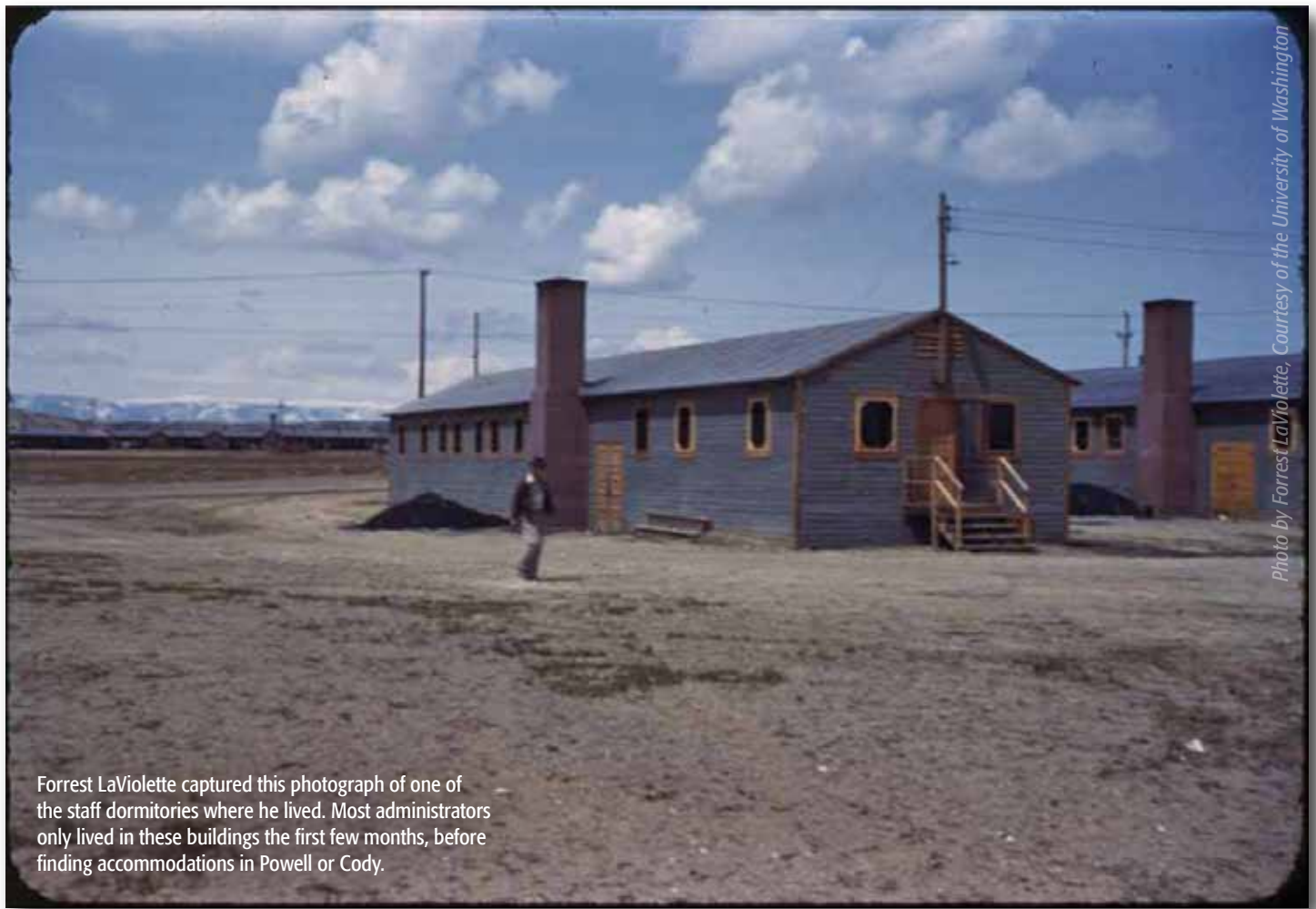
Bill Hosokawa recalled. "...He was much more strict about abiding by the rules that had been set down in Washington." In his final report, Rachford argued that his detached coolness toward the incarcerated was by design:

*On a few occasions some of the appointed personnel leaned over backwards to sympathize with the evacuees but generally those persons were not with the organization for long. They soon learned that the evacuees, themselves, did not want that kind of treatment and preferred, by*

*and large, to be treated as individuals and not as persecuted persons.*

Robertson's popularity among the staff and incarcerated would wax and wane during his tenure at Heart Mountain, but the government's faith in him





Forrest LaViolette captured this photograph of one of the staff dormitories where he lived. Most administrators only lived in these buildings the first few months, before finding accommodations in Powell or Cody.

held steady. Robertson remained project director until the camp closed in November 1945.

## THE DIARIST

The best insights into the lives and thoughts of Heart Mountain's administrators come from the diaries of John A. Nelson. Nelson, like Rachford, had a background with the Forest Service, and was accustomed to the challenges of government work. He was hired as the camp's administrative officer in 1942, and was later promoted to an assistant director position before being drafted into the Army in 1943.

Nelson's diary entries reflect a lot of frustration, almost all of it directed toward the federal government. Nelson frequently complained about long hours, staff infighting, difficulties obtaining cash and supplies, and inefficient government contracts. In one entry, Nelson railed about changes in how staff paid for

their meals. "It isn't at all satisfactory," he wrote of the new system. "Someone had a thought. That's what Washington offices are for apparently. These people should spend more time on the ground."

Nelson became especially exasperated when the glacial pace of government increased the hardships of incarcerated. When the weather turned cold in the fall of 1942, and promised winter clothing allowances for incarcerated failed to materialize, Nelson agonized over the crates of warm work jackets his department had sitting in the warehouses. He couldn't distribute them, he was told, until a disagreement about policy was resolved in Washington.

Most of the time, Nelson's sympathy was firmly with the incarcerated. One night, he jotted down, "I pity those poor Japanese who are in apartments with no heat and not enough bedding to keep them warm. Really it's a crime... [T]hese people of all ages are supposed to keep warm with three measly army blankets. I've never been able to keep warm with a

dozen of them.” Below, he added sheepishly, “Then we belly ache because they insist on more speed in getting the barracks lined with celotex and getting the stoves in operation. I marvel at their patience.”

During its first few months, Heart Mountain came under attack by Wyoming politicians and newspaper editors. They accused the government of letting the incarcerated live in luxury, with abundant food and no wartime rationing. Nelson seethed when he read these reports. “Our Senator from Cody who never visited the camp has borne down on us tooth and nail...” he wrote. “The Denver Post has carried articles about us for weeks now that contain the meanest race baiting I have read anywhere. Frankly if the public were influenced greatly by the Post articles we would wind up treating the Japanese much as the Jews were treated in Germany.”

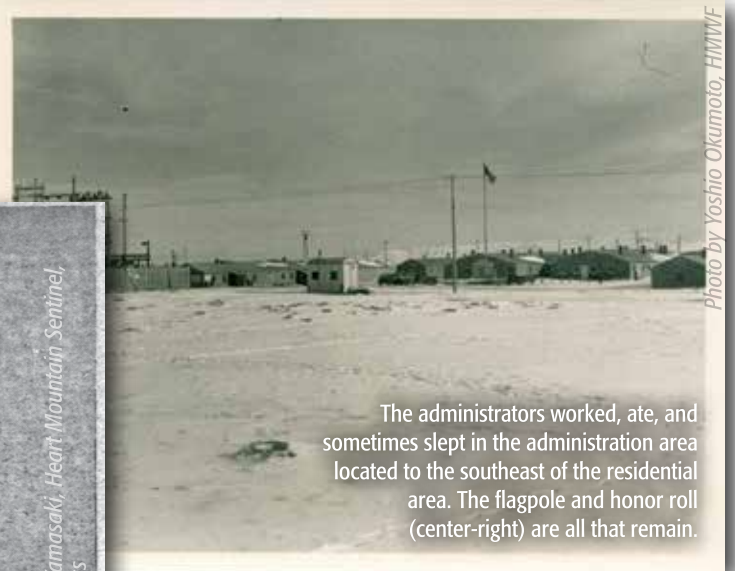
Nelson recognized the injustices experienced by Japanese Americans in Heart Mountain, but he was just as quick to rationalize the camp’s existence. To him, Heart Mountain was “an experiment in making democracy work,” even during a time of World War. Nelson wrote off the many protests against conditions in the camp as the work of a “pro-axis group” among the incarcerated. Like many administrators, Nelson’s positive opinion of Japanese Americans was often dependent on them behaving in ways he viewed as “patriotic.” In one particularly venomous diary entry, he turned on the people of Heart Mountain:

*They have cried “We are loyal”, but when given a chance to prove it, less than two dozen out of more than a thousand eligibles volunteered for military service. Many more than we anticipated answered “no” to the question of loyalty on their questionnaire.*

The catalyst for his ill mood, it turned out, was a fight that broke out when an incarcerated called a staff



John A. Nelson, sketched here by Issei artist Jack Yamasaki, kept a regular diary during his time at Heart Mountain, providing a window into the worldview of the administrators.



The administrators worked, ate, and sometimes slept in the administration area located to the southeast of the residential area. The flagpole and honor roll (center-right) are all that remain.

member a vulgar name. “Ordinarily a white man wouldn’t have hesitated,” Nelson grouched, “but our man hesitated too long.” He vowed to crack down on dissension within the camp.

Nelson also clung to an oft-repeated fallacy among the camp administrators: that loyal Japanese Americans were in the camp for their own protection. In the middle of one of his entries, a passionate defense of Heart Mountain’s residents against racist rhetoric, Nelson stopped to clarify his position. “I am not advocating that we send the citizens back home,” Nelson wrote. “That would lead to bloodshed.” Nelson considered himself an ally to Japanese Americans, which required him to perform some mental and ethical gymnastics to justify his complicity in incarcerating them.

## THE ACADEMIC

Most of the administrators, like Nelson, were career civil servants. However, there were some outliers. Forrest LaViolette, for instance, came from the halls of academia. As a sociologist, LaViolette had been studying Japanese American assimilation since the 1930s, and had developed strong ties within the Japanese American community.

LaViolette wrote a book about how successfully the Nisei generation had assimilated into American culture, but was unable to find a publisher in the



period of anti-Japanese sentiment that preceded the war. Frustrated, he left the United States and took a teaching position in Canada. When war broke out, LaViolette volunteered his services to the War Relocation Authority, and was assigned a six-month position as Heart Mountain's community analyst.

The role of the community analyst was to monitor the pulse of the Heart Mountain population, to study trends and movements and detect potential problems before they grew serious. "Doc LaVee," as he was known around the camp, took a hands-on approach to the work. Rather than work out of the administration offices, he set up shop inside the camp's residential area. He regularly attended incarcerated block meetings and events, volunteered with the fire department, and cultivated a reputation as a problem solver people could come to for advice.

LaViolette's primary objective was to win over the Heart Mountain community on the government's "resettlement" initiative. Under this program, incarcerated could apply to leave camp for work or college in the interior of the United States. Government officials had long been nervous about the growing population of Japanese Americans along the West Coast. They saw resettlement as a way to discourage incarcerated from returning home after the war, and to diffuse them across the interior—mostly in the Midwest.

Although the rationale behind resettlement—that Japanese Americans must be forced to assimilate—ran contrary to everything LaViolette learned in his earlier research, he took to his duties with enthusiasm. Partially because of his efforts, nearly 3,500 Heart Mountain incarcerated took advantage of

the resettlement program. Nonetheless, it remained controversial, as did the "loyalty questionnaire" that resettlement applicants were required to complete.

LaViolette left Heart Mountain with an abundance of material for further study. However, perhaps because of the earlier reluctance to publish his book, he kept it to himself. When his book was eventually released, it contained none of the data he collected at Heart Mountain. LaViolette didn't find his voice again until well after the war was over, when he drew public attention to the plight of the Japanese Canadians, who had also been incarcerated during the war, and were struggling to return to normal life.

Privately, LaViolette seems to have had more concerns about the staff at Heart Mountain than the incarcerated. Shortly after his time at Heart Mountain ended, LaViolette expressed his worries to a Japanese American colleague. He noted that the camp's white staff were "disorganized and frustrated" and that he



Photo by Hikaru Iwasaki, Courtesy of Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley

The government went to great lengths to sell incarcerated on the resettlement program. Photographer Hikaru Iwasaki was hired to travel around the country and follow families through the process of resettling.



Social Welfare Director Virgil Payne was the only woman to hold a senior administration position at Heart Mountain. She tackled some of the camp's most trying and sensitive problems.

as Heart Mountain's social welfare director. She was one of the few women to be appointed to the senior staff of the War Relocation Authority.

Known for her "democratic and somewhat Bohemian ways," Payne won the incarcerated's respect through her compassion and her fearlessness. One story circulated around the camp described how Payne, while on a visit to Cheyenne, missed the bus back to Heart Mountain. Undeterred, she flagged down a truck full of road workers, climbed in the back, and hitched a ride all the way to Cody. Payne was also a frequent volunteer on the Heart Mountain farm, pitching in by driving tractors and picking vegetables whenever she had free time.

"did not find any there with the missionary zeal." He attributed this discouragement to economic anxiety about the future. The war in the Pacific was turning in the Allies' favor, and employees had started to anticipate the closing of the camp.

## THE SOCIAL WORKER

Like LaViolette, Virgil Payne was educated as a sociologist, but she sought more practical applications for her studies. For better or worse, the Great Depression offered her many opportunities. Payne worked for just about every program created by the New Deal, from the Federal Transient Program to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration to the Works Progress Administration. In 1942, Payne, who had been living in Cheyenne, Wyoming, was selected

Payne took on some of the most difficult and sensitive problems in the camp. Her department looked after the neediest individuals and families in Heart Mountain, distributing emergency clothing and aid, establishing a nursing home for Issei with no relatives in the camp, and tackling the complex problem of juvenile delinquency and youth gangs. The incarceration had separated families, and pulled apart even those who remained together physically. Virgil Payne and her department tried to help clean up the mess.

It was Payne that first noticed the impact that the resettlement program was having on family life at Heart Mountain. Young husbands were successfully being recruited to jobs outside the camp, but they were mostly leaving their wives and children behind. For families trying to save money to rebuild their lives after camp, this arrangement made the most



financial sense. One person could live more frugally in a city like Chicago than a whole family could, especially in light of wartime housing shortages.

While couples may have viewed these separations as necessary, they furthered the breakdown of family units at Heart Mountain. In early 1944, Payne delicately reported that some lonely wives had “developed strong friendships with other men while their husbands are away.” One Heart Mountain lothario was said to have, in addition to his pregnant girlfriend, “three other women in this center he is seeing regularly and a fourth lady at Poston.” Witnessing the emotional distress all this was having on the community, Payne began urging the government to resettle families together.

When she wasn’t dealing with cases like those above, Payne found herself very much in demand as a speaker, both inside and outside the camp. With her assistant department head Peggy Fujioka, Payne traveled around the Bighorn Basin speaking to women’s groups about life inside the camp and working to wear down local prejudices. Inside Heart Mountain, she spoke to parents about the proper raising of children and adolescents, and even spoke to the adolescents themselves, on occasion. The *Heart Mountain Sentinel* notes that in November 1943, Payne was slated to address the camp’s Girl Scouts on the subject of “Boy and Girl Relationships.”

Payne stayed at her position in Heart Mountain for most of its three year run. She left in September 1944 to become the assistant supervisor of the Great Lakes WRA office, where she assisted families who had resettled in that area. In July 1945, she accepted a position overseas with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, helping to rebuild war-torn Europe. Payne considered Heart Mountain just one chapter of her career spent trying to help people in need.

The administration offices and mess halls can be seen in this color slide by the camp’s community analyst, Dr. Forrest LaViolette. The chimney of the hospital’s boiler house can be seen in the background on the right.

## THE BIG PICTURE

**E**xasperation is perhaps the most consistent theme that runs throughout the writings of Heart Mountain’s administrative staff. Their accounts paint a picture of the camp as a stressful workplace, where hours were long, bureaucracy ran rampant, and their efforts were barely understood—let alone appreciated—by their superiors in Washington. On top of it all, at least some administrators began to harbor nagging doubts about the moral correctness of what they were doing. It’s no wonder that staff turnover was high at Heart Mountain, even among upper management.

Most administrators were generally sympathetic toward Japanese Americans. However, quite a few of them harbored beliefs about race that made them at best, patronizing and at worst, openly racist toward the people of Heart Mountain. Robertson argued that Japanese Americans must be treated as individuals, but frequently generalized them as a group. Nelson genuinely believed in the importance of giving incarcerated a degree of self-determination, but bristled when they determined to protest their treatment. This was where Heart Mountain’s administrators often found themselves—trapped in their own contradictions. 🏔️



Photo by Forrest LaViolette, University of Washington

# DUSTED OFF

## Highlights from the Heart Mountain Collection

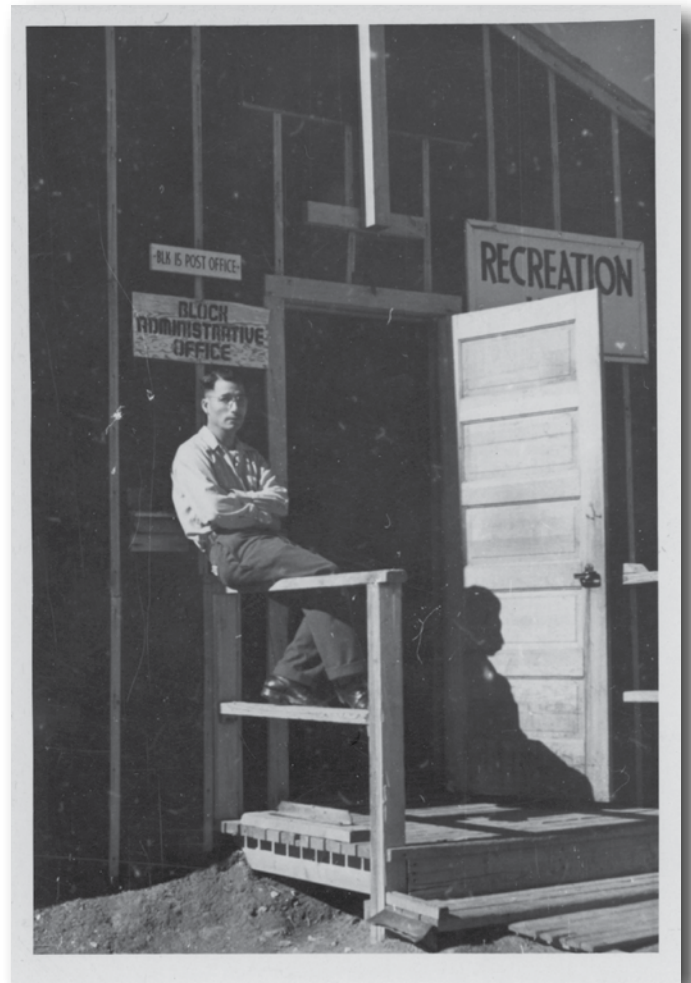
If you have items relating to the Heart Mountain confinement site that you would like to donate, please contact the registrar at [archives@heartmountain.org](mailto:archives@heartmountain.org).

The Heart Mountain Recreation Department was headed by Caucasian Director Marlin T. Kurtz and Japanese American Assistant Director David Yamakawa. Yamakawa was chosen based on his “record of one talent show a week while at Pomona Assembly Center and his pre-evacuation experience in recreation and theater.” The department was carefully planned to include activities for everyone: adults, children, and both Japanese and English speakers. Activities were further sorted into categories such as education, dance, music, sports, etc.

David Yamakawa’s daughter, Patricia Yamamoto, donated her father’s Recreation Department records to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation in 2011. In Yamakawa’s papers, he and Marlin Kurtz report:

*The advance of workers arrived at Heart Mountain from Pomona Assembly Center on August 12, 1942, among them were former recreation leaders at Pomona, however, it was not until all the evacuees were inducted from Pomona, Portland and Santa Anita Assembly Centers that Mr. Marlin T. Kurtz, Activity Director of Recreation Dept. called a meeting of people interested in recreation. This delay was to insure all evacuees had equal voice and opportunity in the recreation program.*

Over the three-plus years the camp was open, the Recreation Department saw many personnel changes, as incarcerated left for jobs and other opportunities, mostly in the Midwest. In all, the department had over 100 volunteers and staff members, working



HMWF 2009.035 Yone Kubo Collection

on everything from scheduling and maintenance to leading activities and clubs. The younger Nisei generation made up most of the staff and volunteers, about 70%.



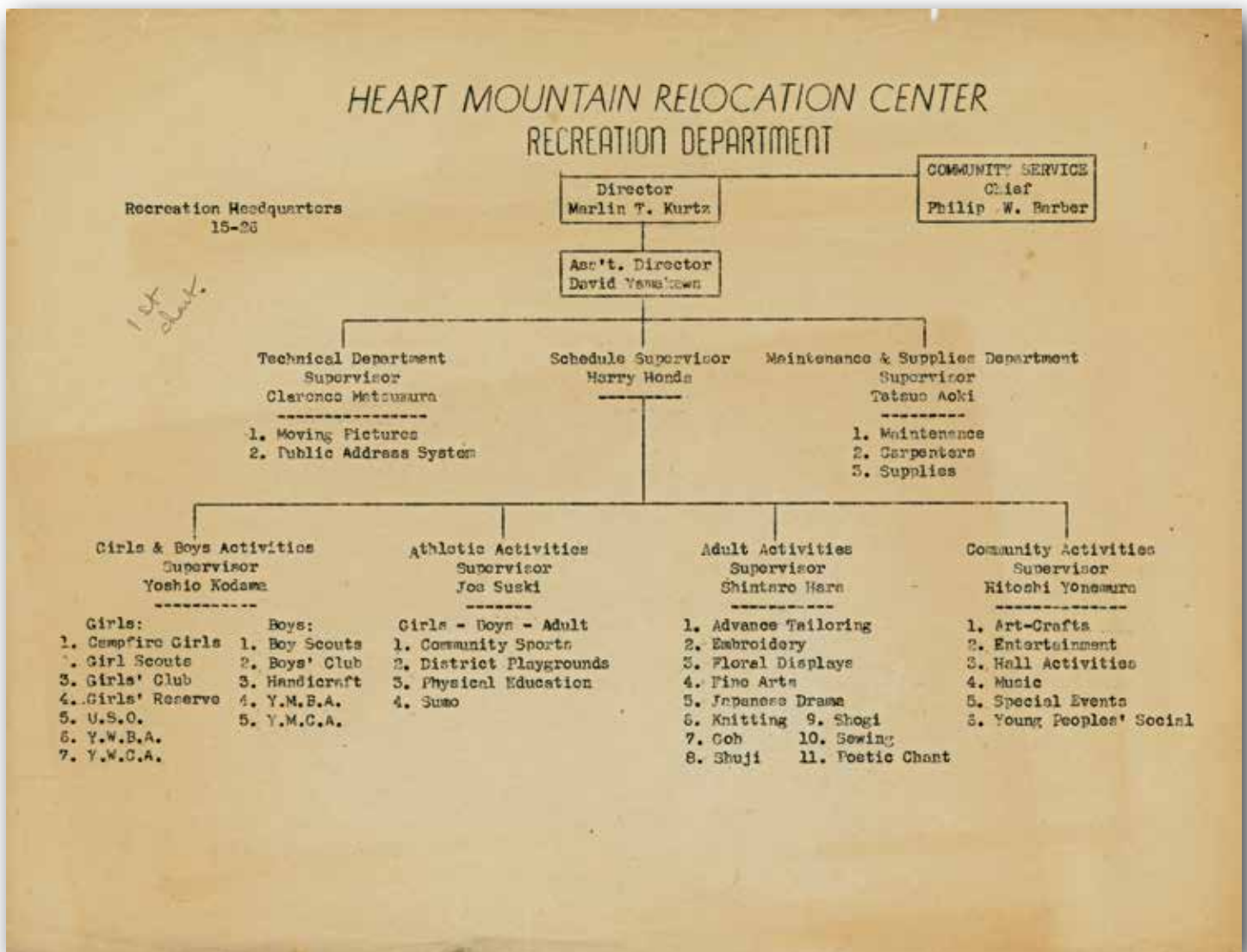
The department was successful in offering a wide range of activities, in keeping the rate of juvenile delinquency down through youth organizations, and in holding popular holiday events and Christmas parties. However, the plans they made in the early days of camp were not fully carried out, due to a number of reasons. Many recreation halls were co-opted for non-recreation activities, like poster production or housing the police department offices. The Recreation Department's biggest hurdle was a lack of finances to maintain the activities. Incarcerates typically financed community activities themselves, aided by government funds for obtaining equipment like portable stages and playground equipment.

Japanese cultural activities and entertainment were not sponsored by the War Relocation Authority, but

they were permitted, with some regulation. In a 1943 report to Project Director Guy Robertson, Marlin Kurtz stated:

*Japanese style activities made great progress at the beginning of our program, particularly the theatre art groups. This is because many professional entertainers were among the evacuees from Los Angeles and gave it impetus. It has, however, steadily declined. The main factors are:*

- A. When American type of activities were organized, interest of the younger group in oriental cultural art declined.*
- B. Japanese style activities were not encouraged.*
- C. Lack of space was another determining factor.*



Recreation Department Organization Chart  
HMWF 2011.032, Folder 9  
Gift of Patricia S. (Yamakawa) Yamamoto in memory of David & Shizu Yamakawa

An Issei man plays a game of *shogi* in January of 1943.



Photograph by Tom Parker, Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration



Traditional Japanese dance is performed on an outdoor stage at Heart Mountain.



Block 22  
 Barrack 25  
 Embroidery and Goh  
 Barrack 26  
 Christian Church

Block 23  
 Barrack 25  
 Club Office, U.S.O.  
 Barrack 26  
 Handicraft, Shogi

Block 24  
 Barrack 25  
 Shoe Repair, Dye Works  
 Insurance  
 Barrack 26  
 Social Welfare, Post Office

Block 25  
 Barrack 25  
 Court House, Nichiren Church  
 Barrack 26  
 Kindergarten, Block Office  
 7th Day Adventist

Block 27  
 Barrack 25  
 Poster Dept. Youth Activities  
 Barrack 26  
 Production

Block 28  
 Barrack 25  
 Kindergarten, Christian Church  
 Barrack 26  
 Fine Arts, Electric Shop  
 Tailoring, Crochet, Christian Church

Block 29  
 Barrack 25  
 Youth Activities, Block Office  
 Barrack 26  
 Costume Design, History Class

Block 30  
 Barrack 25  
 Boxing, Sewing, Wood Carving  
 Buddhist Church, Poetic Chant  
 Barrack 26  
 Buddhist Church, Block Meeting

A total of 15 Recreation Halls are being used for Community purposes such as, the canteen, shoe repair, social welfare, etc.

5 buildings are being used for kindergarten and pre-school nursery.

5 halls are being used for unscheduled youth activities.

A total of 19 Recreation Halls are left for the purpose of the Recreation Program.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY  
 CENTRAL REGION

HEART MOUNTAIN RELOCATION PROJECT  
 HEART MOUNTAIN, WYOMING

Community Activities

March 19, 1945

The following is the list of the Recreation Halls in the Center and what activities takes place within them:

Block 1 Barrack 25 Knitting, Block Office, Goh Holiness Church Barrack 26 Sewing, Clinic	Block 12 Barrack 25 Post Office and Recreation Office Barrack 26 Kindergarten, Block Office Salvation Army, Seicho-no-ye
Block 2 Barrack 25 Youth Activities, Block Office Barrack 26 Bridge, Judo Sewing	Block 14 Barrack 25 High School, Buddhist Church Barrack 26 Youth Activities, Block Office Hawaiian Orchestra, Block Chairmen Meeting
Block 6 Barrack 25 Post Office, Weight Class Barrack 26 Kindergarten, Block Office Buddhist Church	Block 15 Barrack 25 Library Barrack 26 Kindergarten, Block Office
Block 7 Barrack 26 High School	Block 17 Barrack 25 Flower Arrangement, Buddhist Church Barrack 26 Boy Scouts, Penmanship, Embroidery Buddhist Church
Block 8 Barrack 25 Drama Class, Band Practice Catholic Church Barrack 26 Canteen	Block 20 Barrack 25 Canteen, Radio Shop Barrack 26 Judo, Block Office
Block 9 Barrack 25 Youth Activities, Block Office Christian Church Barrack 26 Artificial Flower Class, Kita Christian Church, Kanze, Bim Poetic Chant	Block 21 Barrack 25 Information, Housing Barrack 26 Post Office, Police

Community Activities List  
 HMWF 2011.032, Folder 9

Gift of Patricia S. (Yamakawa) Yamamoto  
 in memory of David & Shizu Yamakawa



HMWF 2009.035 Yone Kubo Collection

Ikebana flower arrangement, mostly using artificial materials, was a popular activity in camp and one of the first classes to be organized with the first meeting in early September of 1942. Like many of the community activities for arts and crafts, competitions and exhibits were held in recreation buildings for incarcerated to come view the work of the clubs.

“Adult evening school for sewing + English — no one knew the constitution, there was not even a copy of it in the camp.”

Estelle Ishigo



HMWF 2018.036.094  
Gift of Bacon Sakatani  
in memory of  
Arthur & Estelle Ishigo



The HMWF is dedicated to caring for these important artifacts. Donations to the Collections Care Fund go towards the preservation and management of our collection.

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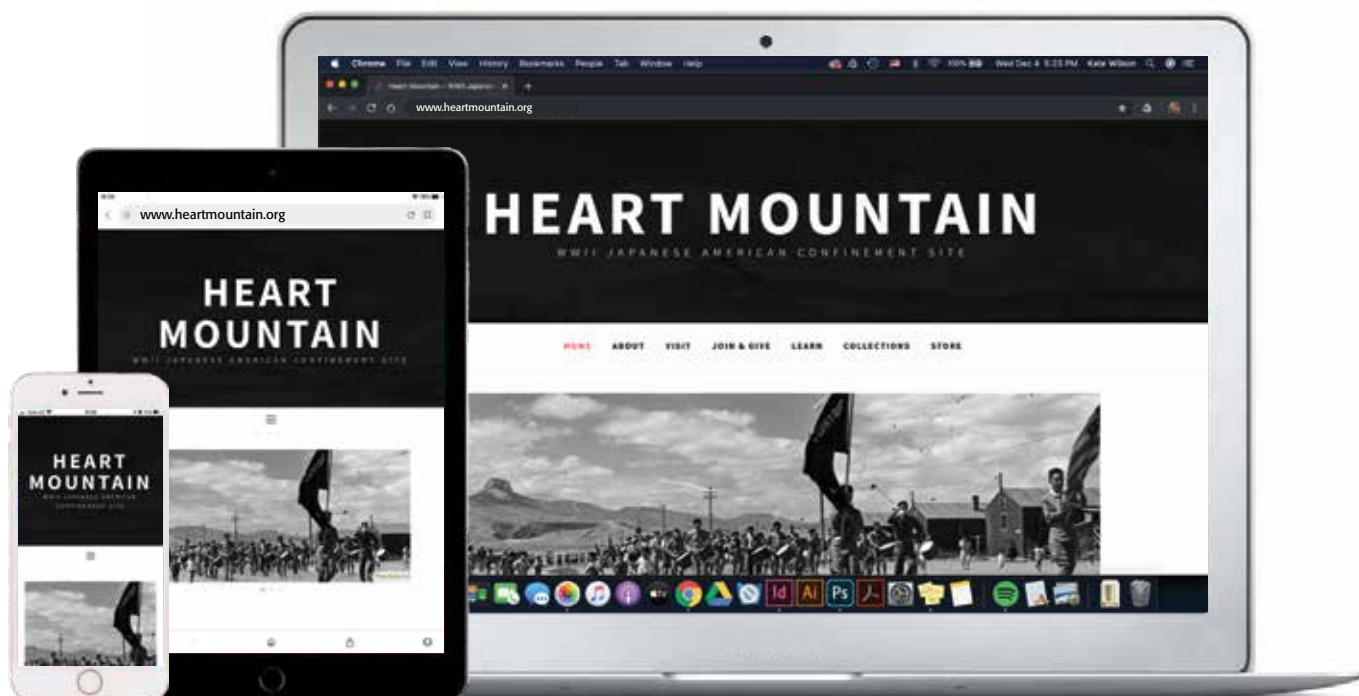
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HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION, 1539 Road 19, Powell, WY 82435

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