

KOKORO KARA

"from our heart"

SUMMER 2021

HEART • MOUNTAIN • WYOMING • FOUNDATION

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Original Heart Mountain Barrack
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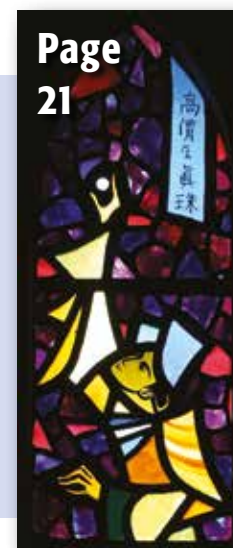
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read all past issues of *Kokoro Kara*!

www.heartmountain.org/kokoro-kara-magazine

KOKORO KARA

Volume 10, Issue 2

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.

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Change of address?

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THE MINETA-SIMPSON INSTITUTE: OUR WORK HAS JUST BEGUN

CHAIR SHIRLEY ANN HIGUCHI

It seems like just yesterday that we gathered at Heart Mountain for the grand opening of our interpretive center. That weekend in August 2011 showed the world we had arrived as a foundation and a leader in telling the story of the Japanese American incarceration.

I was inspired to be there with Doug Nelson, Takashi Hoshizaki, Eric Muller, Bacon Sakatani, Shig Yabu, LaDonna Zall, Carolyn Takeshita, Raymond Uno, and others who envisioned and built our extraordinary museum, which would go on to earn national awards for its powerful and truthful treatment of this shameful period in U.S. history. It also moved me to have one of my personal heroes, Senator Daniel Inouye, deliver the keynote address. Alongside him were two giants in their own right—Secretary Norman Mineta and Senator Alan Simpson.

Inouye said then that our work at Heart Mountain was just beginning. He was right. He understood the power and significance of the Heart Mountain story and urged us to use the lessons of that story to see that it never happens

again. He also praised how we went about creating our museum. We did it with the steadfast support from local Wyoming residents, former incarcerated and their families, and elected officials from both sides of the aisle. We believe it is that kind of coming together around a core American challenge that our country needs now more than ever.

That's why we are building **The Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain**. This new addition will be a state of the art facility that will allow us to host larger conferences, stream our events and programs to audiences worldwide, and to honor the lives, achievements, and friendship of Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson. Already, we have raised close to \$2 million for construction of this new wing.

Most of us know how Mineta and Simpson met as Boy Scouts during a jamboree at Heart Mountain, resumed their unlikely friendship after they arrived in Congress in the 1970s, and then helped pass the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Through it all, they never let their partisan differences stand in the way of getting things done for the American people.

The Simpson family has been vital to our success and to preserving the memory of Heart Mountain. We recently presented Alan's brother, Peter, with the LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness Award, for his support of the foundation and his leadership of educational efforts



Brian Smyer



Kathy Saito Yuille, Lynne Simpson, Shirley Ann Higuchi, & Peter Simpson at Heart Mountain.

(L-R) Jon Amakawa, Tyson Emborg, Shirley Ann Higuchi, Ann Burroughs, & Ray Locker at Heart Mountain.

Jon Amakawa developed the new Heart Mountain augmented reality app, available for download now! Read more about the app on page 7.

Tyson Emborg, Ray Locker, and Julie Abo (not pictured) oversaw the NEH educator workshops. Read more about the workshops on page 9.

Ann Burroughs is our newest addition to the Heart Mountain Board of Directors. Read more about Ann on page 6.



Julie Abo

throughout Wyoming and the nation. He joined other board leaders in August for a series of events in Jackson Hole in which he again showed his commitment to our cause.

Each day, we face issues and people who aim to divide us. One of the strengths of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation is that we strive to find common ground and to tell our story with honesty, openness, and integrity. That is the mission of the Mineta-Simpson Institute.

We're already seeing this mission at work. In June and July, sponsored by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), we convened two week-long workshops for educators. Each week, 36 educators joined our team for virtual workshops led by an expert faculty from Wyoming and the rest of the country. Some of our former incarcerated—Sam Mihara, Takashi Hoshizaki, Naomi Oshita, and Bacon Sakatani—participated as instructors and members of a panel about the legacy of Heart Mountain that kept the workshop participants riveted.

Educators in these workshops raved about the experience and said it opened their minds to the entire sweep of the Heart Mountain story, which includes the Native American tribes that lived on the land for centuries before Caucasian settlers arrived in the 1800s. NEH officials were also impressed. In fact, we have been selected as one of eight organizations chosen to participate in the same program next year. The success of these workshops shows the need for dedicated space at our site that will accommodate more frequent, on-site learning events—events that can also be shared remotely with larger audiences.

These remain exciting and challenging times. As we move ahead with all of our plans, we remain aware that the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic remains. We have adapted to the pandemic's changing nature repeatedly since March 2020 and we will continue in the future.

It's been a fascinating 10 years since we first opened our doors, and I remain optimistic that the next 10 years will be even more exciting and productive. Thanks for all of your support as we continue to reach our goals.

Stay inspired!

Shirley Ann Higuchi

“Believe you can and you're halfway there.”

—Theodore Roosevelt

BUILDING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DAKOTA RUSSELL

This issue is a very special one for me. After years of dreaming and planning, we are finally able to share with you our plans for the new Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain. This expansion to the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center will give us the ability to develop and hold new events and workshops, host a wider variety of visiting groups, and grow our online programming offerings. We will also be able to expand our collections storage area and create facilities to better accommodate researchers at the interpretive center. For a first look at the Mineta-Simpson Institute, turn to page 15.

To realize our vision for the Institute, we launched a new fundraising campaign at this year's Heart Mountain Pilgrimage. I am pleased to report that our friends and supporters have—as of this writing—raised nearly \$2 million towards our goal of \$5 million. We still have a long way to go, but the power of our Foundation has always been in our numbers, and in our unwavering belief in this cause. Most of us don't have deep pockets, but we give from our hearts, and we aren't shy about telling others why preserving this place and this story matters so much to us. I hope you will join me, and the rest of the

Foundation's leadership, in making a commitment to help build the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain.

The contents of this issue will no doubt serve as a reminder of what we can accomplish together. On page 9, you will learn about the amazing series of educator workshops we held over the summer, drawing teachers from across the nation. These events were so well-received that the National Endowment for the Humanities has already committed to sponsoring them again in 2022. On page 7, you can read about the newest way visitors can engage with the historic grounds at Heart Mountain, through an augmented reality app developed by Jon Amakawa.

As we open Heart Mountain's next chapter, I feel extremely grateful to be sharing this journey with all of you.



ANN BURROUGHS

NEWEST MEMBER OF THE HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ann Burroughs is an internationally recognized leader in the field of human rights and social justice. She is the Chair of Amnesty International's Global Assembly and was formerly the Chair of the Board of Directors of Amnesty International USA. Her life-long commitment to racial and social justice was shaped by her experience as a young activist in her native South Africa where she was jailed as a political prisoner for her opposition to apartheid and by her work at the South African Council of Churches, one of the key organizations that led the internal resistance to apartheid. She is currently the President and CEO of the Japanese American National Museum which uses a social justice lens to tell the story of the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans and to combat rising divisiveness and discrimination in the US. For over 25 years, she has worked with leaders, organizations, and networks in the US and globally to promote diversity, racial justice and a rights-based culture. She has previously served as Executive Director of the Taproot Foundation and as the Executive Director of LA Works and has worked as a consultant for the Omidyar Network, the Rockefeller Foundation and to the government of South Africa.



NORA JAMES

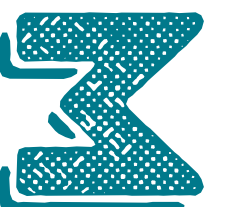
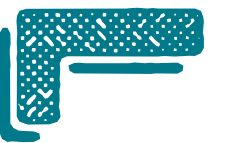
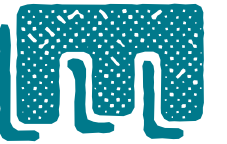
Nora James is the new VISTA Museum Educator at Heart Mountain. VISTA is an AmeriCorps program that places volunteers in communities for a year as they work to address issues of poverty. Over the next year, she will build off the previous VISTA's work to expand educational offerings at Heart Mountain by expanding Heart Mountain's virtual and in-person field trip programs, gaining additional funding for field trips, and planning community programming.

Nora previously held positions in programming and interpretation at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C., the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, and the DuPage Children's Museum in Naperville, Illinois. She has a B.A. in art history and English literature from Kenyon College.



EVA PETERSEN

Eva Petersen is the new Wyoming Service Corps member at Heart Mountain Interpretive Center. The Wyoming Service Corps, a part of the national Episcopal Service Corps, places fellows with social justice and social welfare organizations in Park County. Eva is a recent graduate of the University of Virginia, where she earned a B.A. in English and completed a thesis on the legacies of violence in Asian-American communities. She has previously worked as a preschool teacher and research assistant for UVA's School of Education. As a lifelong history buff and Asian-American activist, Eva is excited to be engaging with visitors and helping with the important work at Heart Mountain.



HEART MOUNTAIN AR AUGMENTED REALITY

BY JON AMAKAWA



As the creator of **Heart Mountain AR**, a free Augmented Reality (AR) based mobile app, I am pleased to announce that we have at last launched the app and made it available for download for iOS on Apple's App Store and for Android on Google Play. The app is the culmination of nearly two years of collaboration

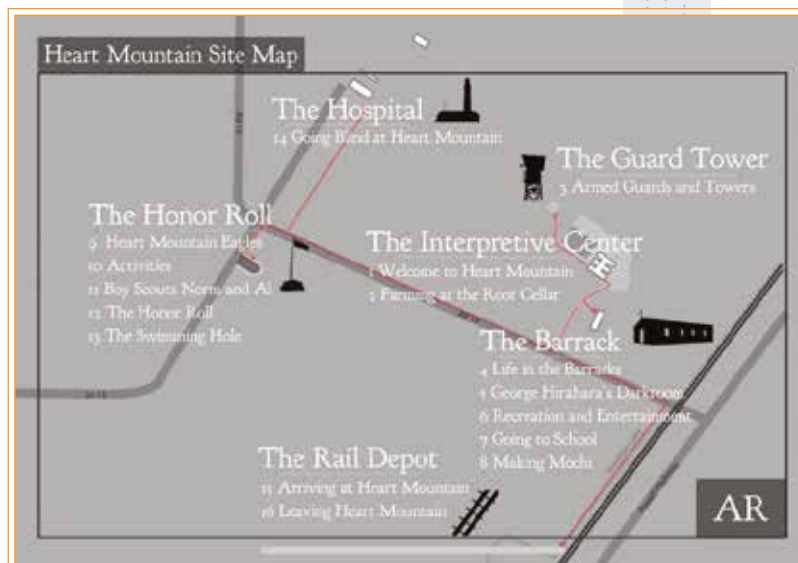
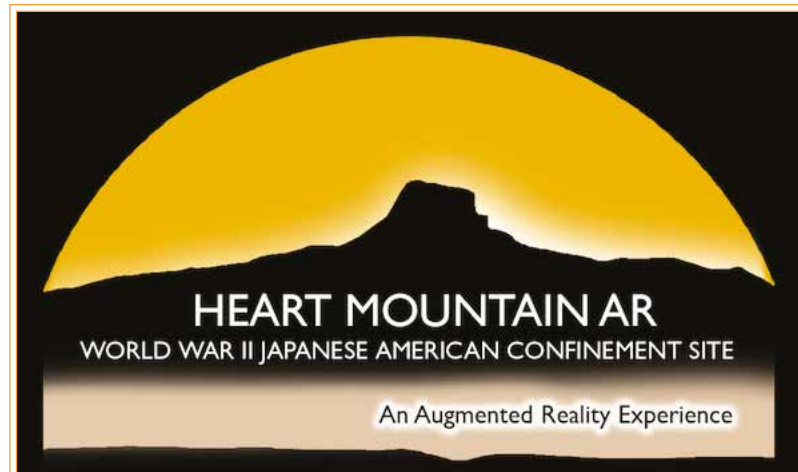
between the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, former incarcerated, and myself.

The goal of the app is to enhance the on-the-ground experience for visitors walking through the site. Thanks to recent advances in AR technology, the app enables visitors to see virtually recreated camp buildings, infrastructure, and animated people overlaid onto the current landscape. To do this, a visitor can view any one of sixteen special AR signs, now installed throughout the site in Wyoming. The AR signs recognize the visitor's location and position and enable the visitor to see (through their mobile device) virtually recreated scenes of camp life appearing on the landscape in front of them.

Most of the animated scenes feature stories from former incarcerated recounting personal experiences in the camp, told through audio clips in their own voices. Among others, scenes include stories about the Heart Mountain Eagles football team, going to school in the barracks, and Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson meeting at the Boy Scout jamboree. The stories selected are meant to present different aspects of the incarceration experience.

In short, Heart Mountain AR is designed to help visitors learn about Heart Mountain during World War II and the experiences of its incarcerated by filling in the gaps left by the missing camp infrastructure and buildings. While all of the animated content can be accessed from anywhere through a non-AR mode in the app, it is mainly intended to be used on site as a way of tapping into the "power of place".

The project originally came about when I was introduced to Shirley Ann Higuchi and other members of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and informed about their interest in using AR to interpret Heart Mountain. As a creator of AR historical apps and an Associate Professor in the Game Design program at Fitchburg State University in Massachusetts, I had considerable experience in the area of AR. I created some of the first AR mobile apps for historical sites, many of which faced similar interpretive challenges as Heart Mountain. These challenges being a landscape



Search for "Heart Mountain AR" to download the app. The 16 stories can be accessed anywhere, but are designed to be experienced onsite, as shown in the map above.

with an important story to tell but a lack of visible extant buildings and infrastructure.

Until Heart Mountain, my work focused mainly on sites associated with African American history, slavery, and the Underground Railroad through projects with the US National Park Service at the Lincoln Home in Springfield, Illinois and New Philadelphia in Pike County, Illinois. Unlike these projects, however, some of the people who experienced incarceration are still alive today. This has meant that I have been able to hear their stories first hand and receive feedback. For example, at the most recent Pilgrimage, I showed former incarcerated Sam Mihara a scene I created, depicting him as a boy guiding his blind father to and from the camp hospital. Sam critiqued the app, explaining that unlike the animation, his father always had him walk slightly in front to act as a "blocker". Sam if you are reading this—I will be making that correction soon!

As a Japanese American myself, working on Heart Mountain AR has been particularly meaningful. Early on, I felt that this was a story that I wanted to help tell. My family was not incarcerated (my father immigrated to the U.S. in 1961 so I am a *shin-nisei*). During my research for the app, I immersed myself in some of the visual arts and crafts created by incarcerated at Heart Mountain—for example, the drawings by Stanley Hayami, the paintings by Estelle Ishigo, and the numerous works by other artists in the Interpretive Center's collection. I was profoundly moved by the expressiveness and quality of the work which provided me with a significant source of inspiration when creating my own visual interpretations of life and experiences in the camp. Working on the project also gave me the opportunity to meet former incarcerated and their families and attend pilgrimages. The experience has given me a completely new appreciation of the Japanese American experience and pride in being a Japanese American.

While the app currently presents sixteen stories, there are so many others that should be told. It is my hope that the Heart Mountain AR app will serve as a model of interpretation for other camps and that the app will continue to evolve and incorporate more stories.



Examples of virtually recreated scenes of camp life in the app, including the Heart Mountain Eagles playing football and the Bon Odori Festival. Former incarcerated Takashi Hoshizaki welcomes visitors, seen here with Heart Mountain in the background.

Heart Mountain Holds Virtual NEH Teacher Workshops

By Ray Locker

This summer, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation hosted 72 educators for two week-long virtual workshops about Japanese American incarceration. Participants were selected from over 370 applicants from all across the country—from Alaska to Florida. The workshops, designed and led by Heart Mountain staff, were part of the Landmarks of American History and Culture program from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

The workshops followed the Japanese American experience from the first immigrants in the 1800s through incarceration and redress. These stories were interwoven with those of the Native American people that first lived near Heart Mountain and the white homesteaders who came after the incarcerated Japanese Americans left.

Tyson Emborg, a master teacher from Mountain Vista High School in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, developed the workshop curriculum. Emborg first became interested in Heart Mountain twenty years ago, after watching Frank Abe's documentary *Conscience & the Constitution*, about the Heart Mountain draft resisters. Abe also served as a member of the workshop faculty.

At a time of rising racism and increased hate incidents against Asian Americans, it's important to reach educators, Emborg said. "There's an exponential impact you have when you reach the educators who will then take this to their students," he said. "You will have students who learn this history and see it with the modern relevance."

The workshops are part of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation's strategy to develop more curricula about the incarceration, said Chair Shirley Ann Higuchi. "There's the constant question about why this isn't being taught in school," Higuchi said. "We have to educate people about what happened in 1942 to a group of American citizens because of their race. It's one of the critical issues of our time."

TEACHING THE TEACHERS

An impressive faculty was assembled to carry out the workshops, including Heart Mountain board members, longtime advisory council members, and participants in the Foundation's previous foundation events. Workshop faculty included leading experts on the incarceration from around the country and local Wyoming educators, including Aura Sunada-Matsumura Newlin and Eric Sandeen, from the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Northwest College, and the University of Wyoming.

Hanako Wakatsuki, a former Heart Mountain board member who now serves as superintendent of Honouliuli National Historic Site in Hawaii, conducted three classes for the workshops. Erin Aoyama, the granddaughter of former Heart Mountain internees and a former intern at Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, led sessions on the relocation of Japanese Americans during the war. Aoyama is currently finishing her Ph.D. work at Brown University.

Hana Maruyama presented a class on the relationship between the Native American nations and the land. Maruyama is the granddaughter of former internees. She began her career with Heart Mountain as executive assistant to the chair, before leaving to earn her Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Minnesota. She joined the faculty at the University of Connecticut this fall.

Writer and documentarian Frank Abe led a class covering the draft resistance story at Heart Mountain,



NEH Faculty and Staff at the 2021 HMWF Pilgrimage: From top, L-R (front): Hana Maruyama, Hanako Wakatsuki, Erin Aoyama, Aura (Matsumura Sunada) Newlin, Amy McKinney, Shirley Ann Higuchi, Sam Mihara; (back) Ray Locker, Tyson Emborg, Julie Abo, Doug Nelson

a topic many of the participating educators knew little about. Abe used his new graphic novel, *We Hereby Refuse*, as inspiration for his session on resistance in the camps.

Karen Korematsu, founder and executive director of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute, also discussed resistance while telling her father's story. Korematsu said she did not learn about Fred T. Korematsu's legal battle against the federal government at home. She didn't discover her father's story until she was a student in high school, when a fellow student mentioned his experience during a presentation.

Other workshop sessions highlighted the multigenerational trauma that affected the internees and their families. Donna Nagata, a clinical psychologist at the University of Michigan, told participants about her experience as the daughter of two internees and her research about the effects of the incarceration on the Sansei and Yonsei generations. The husband-and-wife team of Gordon Nagayama Hall and Jeanne Nagayama Hall of the University of Oregon discussed the corrosive effect of the Model Minority myth on Japanese Americans, which was a legacy of both the incarceration and continuing racism against Asian Americans.

POSITIVE REACTIONS

In surveys distributed after the workshops, participants responded to the content enthusiastically. Some teachers said they would share the lessons learned with other faculty members at their schools and push for Japanese American incarceration to be included in their curricula. "This is something other educators MUST KNOW," one response said.

Many participants said the workshops were their first exposure to the details of the incarceration. Several praised the inclusion of former internees in the workshops. Takashi Hoshizaki, Sam Mihara, Naomi Oshita, and Bacon Sakatani all participated in an elder panel with participants. Still other teachers applauded the workshops' intersectional approach, combining Native American and Japanese American stories with the agricultural history of Wyoming's Bighorn Basin.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

This year's workshops were originally conceived as in-person events, to be held during the summer of 2020. The workshops were first postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and later adapted to accommodate a virtual format. Despite these challenges, NEH officials were so impressed with this year's program that they asked the program leaders—Emborg, Julie Abo, and Ray Locker—to participate in a series of interviews and videos to promote the Landmarks of American History and Culture program. Sam Mihara was also interviewed about his participation.

NEH has awarded the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation a \$187,804 grant to repeat the program in 2022. Next year's workshops will take place in person as originally planned, with sessions at Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, in the restored barrack and cellar, and at other historic locations around Cody and Powell. Foundation leaders see workshops like these as a core offering of the new Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain, which aims to expand the Foundation's reach far beyond Wyoming through the development of new workshops, programming, and media.

2021 HEART MOUNTAIN PILGRIMAGE

The Heart Mountain Pilgrimage looked a little bit different this year. Due to the ongoing pandemic, only a small group of people attended the event in person. However, our online broadcasts from the event reached hundreds of viewers at home. Though we were geographically far apart, our strong sense of community endured.

Throughout the weekend, Pilgrimage attendees—both in Wyoming and watching from afar—participated in a wide range of presentations, panels, and site tours. Highlights of this year's Pilgrimage included the board's announcement of the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain, a planned addition to Heart Mountain Interpretive Center. Attendees also took part in the local Return to Foretop's Father event. The Apsáalooke (Crow) people hold this gathering each year to celebrate their own connection to Heart Mountain. The Pilgrimage also included a memorial service for LaDonna Zall, curator emeritus and longtime supporter of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. The LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness Award, created in her honor, was presented to another evergreen champion of the Foundation, Pete Simpson.

Below, members of the Heart Mountain board and staff, as well as other attendees, reflect on what this year's event meant to them.

Check out all of this year's virtual programming on our website: WWW.HEARTMOUNTAIN.ORG/PILGRIMAGE

Pilgrimage means connecting with my heritage and identity. As a person who was not raised in a Japanese American community, this allows me the opportunity to explore my JA identity as I grew up identifying more with my Korean heritage. Pilgrimages also allow me to reconnect with my friends.

—Hanako Wakatsuki,
recent HMWF board member



It was an odd year because of the virus situation. You had to consider the trip to Wyoming carefully. So traveling (I flew out of a crowded and chaotic LAX) and sitting in a tube with strangers was the first challenge. Then upon arriving the smoke in the air was as bad as the old days of thick, horrible smog in Los Angeles. But we visited the root cellar, and it was fantastic: it was cool inside and mysterious, like taking a step back into the war years. I had visions of stacks of incarcerated-grown vegetables, an old pickup truck, the incarcerated loading and unloading the food, working efficiently, cheerfully. There must have been a warehouse manager, and I'm sure he (it had to have been a 'he' at that point in time) kept an eye on things, and that the cellar was always a marvel of organization—a small "produce mart," naturally, as Japanese Americans were at the forefront of the produce industry. I felt a surge of pride being in the old cellar—in the worst of times our forebearers took matters literally into their own hands and built the structure. In bad times they responded by showing their best. In my humble opinion, perhaps only medicine and teaching rises above the nobility of growing food, and distributing the bounty to others.

—Darrell Kunitomi, HMWF board member



At past Pilgrimages, we have seen former incarcerated drawn to a place to which some never thought they would return. Whether it was due to pain, anger or shame, some were brought to tears upon setting their sights on Heart Mountain; for others it brought a sense of healing and closure. Whatever the reason, the "power of place" was just as strong at the 2021 hybrid Pilgrimage with the official viewing of the restored root cellar. Standing inside this space with its enormity made you visually reconnect with the past and be in awe of the resilience of those who built the structure while imprisoned behind barbed wire.

Unique to the 2021 Pilgrimage, too, was the invitation by the Crow tribe to a memorial for Grant Bulltail, a Crow elder and storyteller. The Crow Nation once included the land upon which the Heart Mountain Relocation Center was later built. While sitting in the audience, I couldn't help but reflect on what the emotions of the "power of place" held for the Crow tribe and the significance of Heart Mountain as their sacred site. It was an enlightening and thought-provoking experience.

—Kathy Saito Yuille, HMWF board member and former incarcerated

I am proud of the work the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation has done in making the Interpretive Center an award-winning representation of life for Japanese and Japanese Americans living at the camp during WWII.

The Heart Mountain story is best told by visiting this unique mountain and its arid and rugged landscape. Attending a Pilgrimage at this site provides social interaction with others whose lives and family history have been influenced by life at Heart Mountain.

—Claudia Wade, HMWF board member



Claudia Wade and Kathy Saito Yuille
in the root cellar.



Return to Foretop's Father event with
members of the Crow tribe.

Darrell Kunitomi

Entering the
Heart Mountain
root cellar.

To me, Pilgrimage means remembering ancestors and family who have passed as well as showing gratitude and love for those who are still with us. I think returning to these sites where harm took place and recognizing these wrongs with a community of people is deeply instructive, meaningful and healing.

—Julie Abo,
HMWF Washington
Affairs Director,
Office of the Chair



(L-R): Julie Abo, Jared Mann, David Fujioka, Erin Aoyama, & Brandon Daake.

David Fujioka's photo of LaDonna Zall and her daughter Lynne at the 2019 Pilgrimage.



David's "selfie" with Lynne at this year's Pilgrimage.

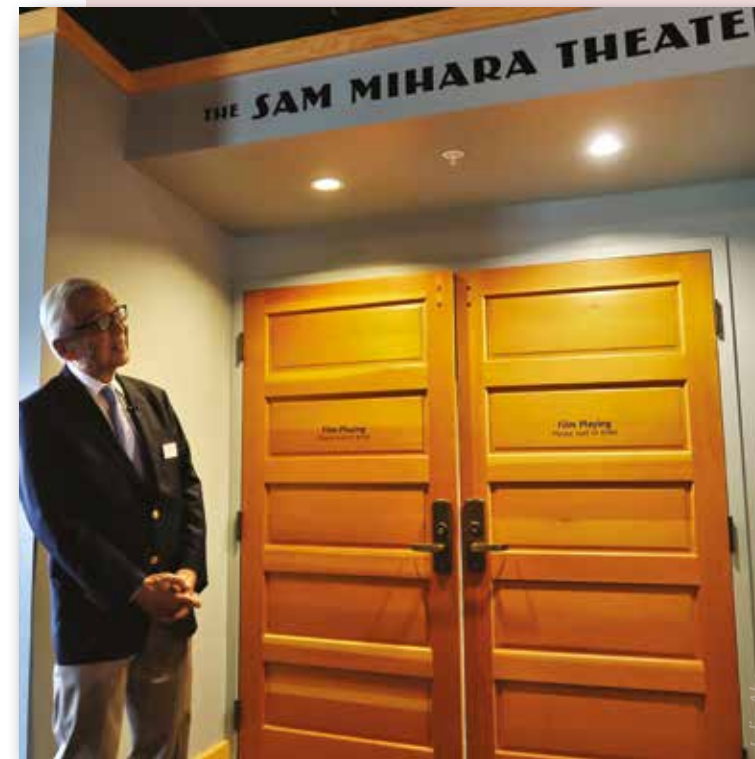
La Donna Zall's daughter came up to me after her mom's memorial service at the interpretive center. She said that she remembered me chatting with her mom during the 2019 Pilgrimage. I don't really remember any type of conversation, but I think I just said "hi" and thanked her for work for Heart Mountain. I took their picture back then, and was able to pull that up on my phone to show Lynne. She asked me to send that to her and then I asked if I could take a "selfie" with her. I sent her the "selfie" too. I guess this little anecdote just goes to show that you never know what kind of lasting impact you can make on someone by just offering a few words of kindness.

—David Fujioka, Heart Mountain descendant



This being my first Pilgrimage—and not a traditional one with such a small in-person group—I really had no idea what to expect. The feelings brought on by so many experiences—meeting our Nisei board members and hearing their stories, learning the stories (and dances) of the Crow people, the emotional memorial tribute to the late LaDonna Zall, the equally moving tributes to Sam Mihara during the dedication of the theater in his name and Pete Simpson on being named the honoree of the LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness award, and the outpouring of interest in our capital campaign to build the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain to honor two great men, Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson, as well as encourage the kind of open dialogue across all boundaries of society—were very powerful!

—Deni Hirsh, HMWF Membership & Development Manager



DEDICATION OF THE SAM MIHARA THEATER

Former Heart Mountain incarcerated Sam Mihara has spent the last 10 years traveling around the country, speaking to groups—of all ages and sizes—about his boyhood years spent as a prisoner of his own government. Sam has donated all the proceeds from his programs to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation.

At the Pilgrimage, we recognized Sam's extraordinary commitment by naming the theater at Heart Mountain Interpretive Center in his honor!

The Pilgrimage was a chance to understand what laid behind the barbed wire at Heart Mountain so I can better see what might lay beyond. To look back so we can see forward. It is a humbling experience to be surrounded by those with such complex and firsthand knowledge. And, to have a light shine in the shadows of history. In a practical sense the Pilgrimage was my chance to discover new friends, acquaint myself with old ones, and refocus my understanding of a history whose depth I have yet to comprehend.

—Tyson Emborg, HMWF master educator



The much smaller than usual group of onsite participants at this year's Heart Mountain Pilgrimage.

Join us! **2022 HEART MOUNTAIN PILGRIMAGE**
POWELL & CODY, WY • JULY 28–30

THE MINETA-SIMPSON INSTITUTE AT HEART MOUNTAIN

The leadership of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation is thrilled to announce the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain: A planned expansion to our award-winning Heart Mountain Interpretive Center and a bold new vision for the future of our organization.

Over the past several years, fear and anger have become the dominant forces in American politics. For our elders, who were unjustly imprisoned during World War II because of their race, this political climate feels all too familiar. To satisfy our mission, we realize the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation must not only educate about the past, but also help shape the kind of leaders we need for the future.

The Mineta-Simpson Institute will be a dedicated retreat space at the center, a home for workshops and programming specifically designed to foster empathy, courage, and cooperation in the next generation of leaders. The Institute will also expand the Foundation's capacity for digital outreach, allowing us to carry our message all over the world.

We are inspired in this endeavor by the lives, accomplishments, and—most of all—the friendship of Senator Alan K. Simpson and Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, who met as boys at Heart Mountain and have spent decades putting aside their personal differences to work together and better the lives of all Americans.



The Mineta-Simpson Institute, a new wing of Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, is designed to evoke the architecture of the camp's communal mess halls.



One time, we were having dinner and someone came up to us and said, "Senator Simpson, you're a conservative Republican and he's a liberal Democrat, what's the biggest difference between the two of you?" Alan thought about it, and he said, "Well, I wear size 15 shoes and he wears a size 8 and a half."

—Norman Mineta

TWO LIVING LEGENDS

In 1942, the US government forced more than 110,000 Japanese Americans—men, women, and children—from their homes and incarcerated them at ten camps in remote locations across the country. The government claimed these Japanese Americans were acting as spies and saboteurs, aiding the enemy. Yet, they never produced any evidence of wrongdoing. Young Norman Mineta and his family were among those sent from their home in San Jose, California to Heart Mountain, Wyoming.

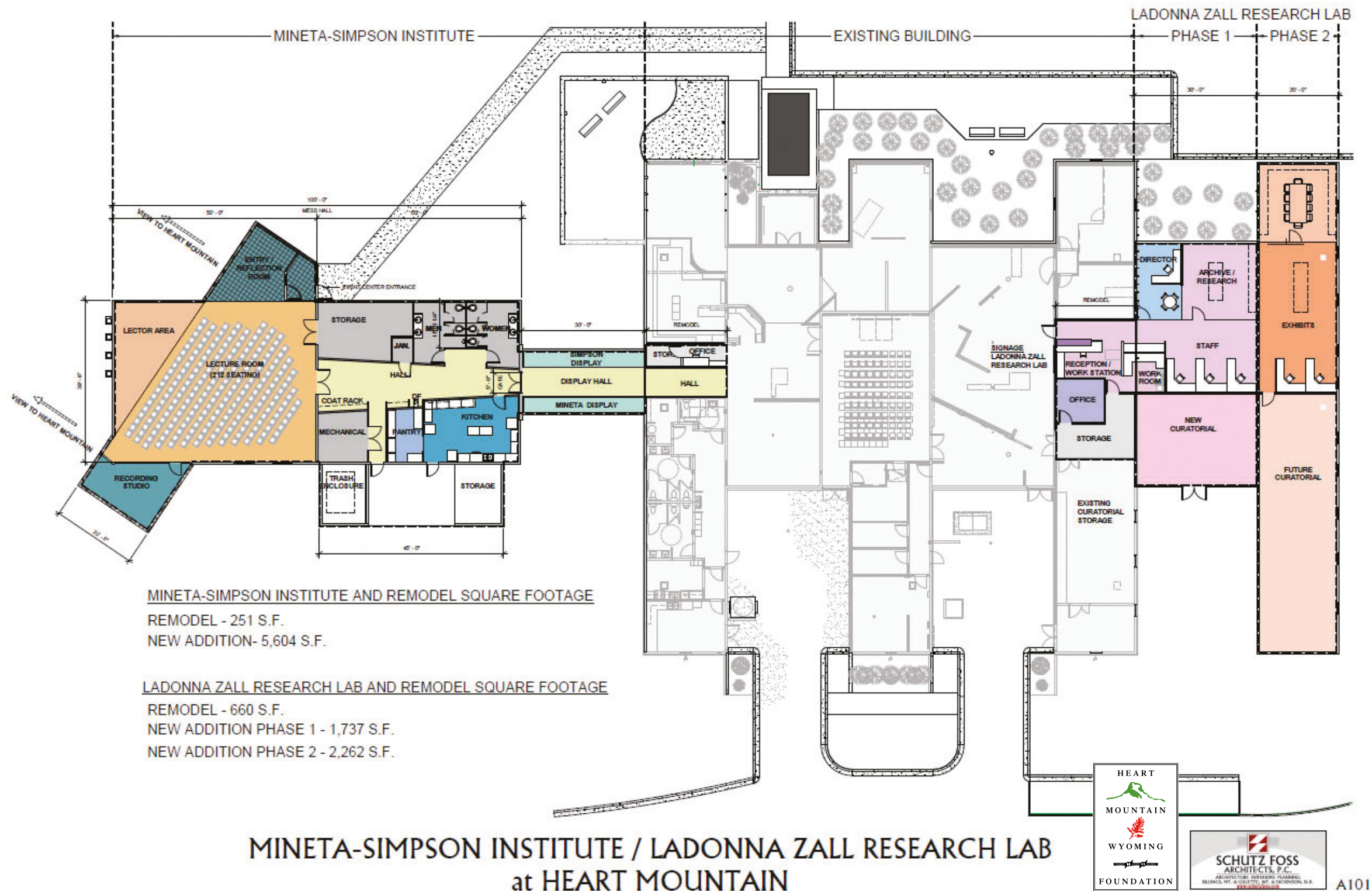
Alan Simpson grew up in Cody, Wyoming, just 13 miles from the Heart Mountain camp. Simpson was at first frightened when his Scoutmaster announced a visit to the incarcerated Japanese American Boy Scouts inside Heart Mountain. Once at the camp, Simpson and Mineta were paired up to share a pup tent. Neither forgot the friendship forged during those few days spent together at Heart Mountain.

Years later, Mineta would be elected the first Asian American mayor of San Jose, and go on to serve 20 years as a US Congressman for California. Though a Democrat,

Mineta's reputation won him favor across party lines. President Clinton appointed him as Secretary of Commerce in 2000 and President George W. Bush named him Secretary of Transportation in 2001.

Simpson spent 12 years in the Wyoming Statehouse before serving 3 terms as the Republican Senator from Wyoming. In 2010, at the request of President Obama, Simpson served as co-chair of the bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility.

Throughout their long careers, spent on opposite sides of the political aisle, Mineta and Simpson maintained the friendship they built as children. Their patriotism and values overcame their political differences, and they worked together to find common ground. Among their proudest accomplishments was the passage of the 1988 Civil Liberties Act, which provided redress for Japanese Americans unjustly imprisoned during World War II. Mineta and Simpson are now united in their support for the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and our efforts to learn from history and build a better tomorrow.



—OUR NEW FACILITY—

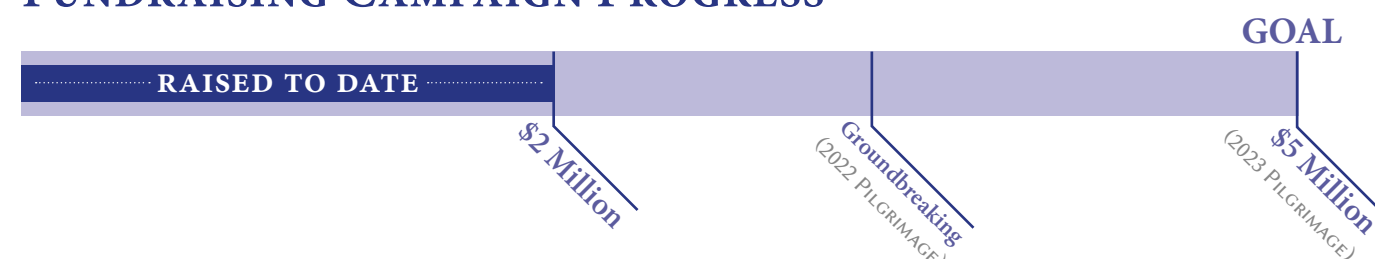
The Mineta-Simpson Institute will be a 7,341 square foot addition to Heart Mountain Interpretive Center. Just as the center was designed to evoke the architecture of Heart Mountain's residential barracks, the Institute will resemble one of the camp's mess halls.

The mess halls provided more than just meals for incarcerated Japanese Americans. They were one of the few places in camp where people could gather to discuss and debate the issues impacting their community. In reflecting the mess hall design, we intend the Mineta-Simpson Institute to carry on that tradition as a place to exchange information and ideas.

Features of the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain will include:

- A dynamic meeting space capable of hosting more than 200 people for workshops and programming, supported by a full kitchen and dedicated facilities.
- A modern digital production and broadcasting studio, from which we can both livestream in-person events and create original online content.
- A permanent exhibit telling the stories of Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson.
- Additional storage for our growing collection of original artifacts and archives.
- The LaDonna Zall Research Lab, a dedicated space where researchers can work with both archival documents and an expansive library of materials about the incarceration.
- Additional office and storage space to support the activities of the Institute.

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN PROGRESS



Please help us build the Mineta-Simpson Institute as a tribute to Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson, who throughout their long careers spent on opposite sides of the political aisle, never allowed partisan differences to overcome their patriotism, values and personal friendship in their commitment to find common ground and work for the good of all Americans.

We have raised close to \$2 million to date! We need your help to raise \$3.5 million by the time we break ground at the 2022 Pilgrimage and reach our ultimate goal of \$5 million by the time we open the Institute at the 2023 Pilgrimage. **EVERY GIFT is SIGNIFICANT.** Please make a personal commitment, and consider how you can connect us to individuals, businesses and foundations in your sphere of influence that would be interested in learning more about this campaign.

Dear Family and Friends,

Al Simpson and Norm Mineta have been chums for a long time. As their wives, we can vouch for the deep bond that these two men have shared for more than 75 years. Their chance meeting in 1943 shaped the rest of their lives. From the moment they were partnered together as Boy Scouts, Al and Norm realized the strength of their shared values.

"Hatred corrodes the container in which it is carried," Al often says. He and Norm have spent their lives and careers rejecting the hate that often poisons public life. They have always bridged personal and political differences to put country first. For more than 50 years in public life, they have shown that if you want to make a difference, you have to serve unselfishly and do your homework to learn more.

Serving in both the Congress and the Cabinet, Norm and Al have embodied forthright leadership and political courage. When Presidents sought solutions—in matters from fiscal policy to the course of the Iraq War—they turned to Norm and Al for their straight talk and their belief that communication and cooperation can solve even the most vexing problems.


Al and Norm have also been partners in championing the work of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. From its humble beginnings in 1996, the Foundation has earned national landmark status for Heart Mountain, built an award-winning museum, and preserved an original barrack, root cellar, and the hospital chimney.


We were honored when the Foundation came to us with an exciting idea to further Al and Norm's values through the construction of the **Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain**. We believe this new facility will enable future generations to learn from the example Norm and Al have set.

This new wing of Heart Mountain Interpretive Center will not only celebrate the achievements, character, and values of Norm and Al—it will build on their legacies. The Institute will provide a venue for dialogue on subjects critical to our nation's future, encouraging cooperation and understanding to overcome challenges and find principled common ground.

We hope that you may find a way to help the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation turn this special dream for Al and Norm into a reality.

Respectfully and Sincerely,


Deni Mineta


Ann Simpson



Norman Mineta, Deni Mineta, Alan Simpson, and Ann Simpson at a Heart Mountain Pilgrimage.

OUR PROGRAMMING GOALS

Relevant and engaging programming is key to the success of the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain. These are just some of the offerings we are working on for this new space:

Leadership Workshops: Targeted toward community organizers, public administrators, legislators, and other leaders on the local, state, and national level, these workshops will provide participants with practical ways to improve discourse, building alliances across political and ideological lines, and practice ethical leadership in their communities.

Educator Workshops: The best way to effect future change is to start with the youth. These workshops will give K-12 educators the tools they need to meaningfully engage students in conversations about civic responsibility, civil rights, and social justice in their classrooms.

Maurice Walk Lecture Series: The Institute will host top speakers and scholars from across the nation, presenting on topics that reflect both American history and issues of the present day. This series honors lawyer Maurice Walk, who resigned his government position in protest of the unconstitutional treatment of Japanese Americans.

Artist Series: This series of performances and talks will reflect the arts tradition present within the Heart Mountain camp, and will recognize the important role the arts play in helping us to understand our shared history and build empathy with one another.

Public Programming: We believe in the power of an informed and engaged citizenry. Throughout the year, we will offer public programs that encourage open dialogue and the exchange of ideas on issues of import to our communities.

Private Retreats: The Institute will be available for rent to corporations, nonprofits, and other organizations who wish to impart their meetings with a sense of history and greater purpose. Programs and workshop sessions from trained Heart Mountain staff will also be made available to these groups.



An internal view of the proposed design for the Mineta-Simpson Institute. The main room will feature a view of Heart Mountain.



KATHY SAITO YUILLE & CLAUDIA WADE
CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS

"Now is the perfect time to provide a historically significant place where people can gather to voice their opinions and find common ground. The Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain—an expansion of our award-winning Interpretive Center—will provide such a place. The Institute will honor Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson, whose life-long friendship began at a Boy Scout Jamboree at Heart Mountain. These two young boys from different ethnic and political backgrounds founded a friendship rooted in respect. Today, respect is not common, but the Mineta-Simpson Institute—in the shadow of Heart Mountain—will provide a place where respect is possible."

FATHER LUKE YOKOTA

by Krist Jessup



In the southwest corner St. Matthew's Cathedral in Laramie, Wyoming, there is an unassuming stained-glass window that you would miss if you were not looking for it. With the cathedral lighting turned off, the window shines radiantly in the darkness. With the backing of the bright afternoon sun, the purples, reds, and yellows illuminate a man clutching a pearl in his right hand. The blue and white text at the bottom reads, "To Luke Yokota, merchant, priest and saint, who found one pearl of great price. By his bishop and fellow clergy. Born in Japan buried in Lander."

This luminous dedication to Rev. Luke T. Yokota, titled *The Pearl of Great Price*, is a fitting tribute to the humble unassuming man whose "smile [and] infectious laugh" infused his dedication to his life's work for the Episcopal Church. However, Yokota's life was not without suffering. Like 120,000 other Japanese Americans, he experienced the darkness of racism and the trauma of incarceration behind barbed wire during World War II.

Luke Tadazumi Yokota was born on January 13, 1887 in Mito, Ibaraki-Ken, Japan, where he spent the entirety of his childhood. He was baptized at St. Steven's Episcopal Church in 1905, just before emigrating to the United States. Yokota landed in Vancouver, British Columbia, and took up residence in the dormitory at the Japanese Episcopal Missionary Church in Seattle just two days after his arrival. Wasting no time, Luke helped to establish churches up and down the west coast, starting with the Episcopal Missionary Church in Tacoma, Washington.

Though he stood just over five feet tall, Luke soon became an evangelical force to be reckoned with. He moved to southern California in 1911 and began what he called a "pilgrimage of all protestant denominations," referring to himself as a "stray sheep." He continued his dedication to his faith by establishing the Japanese Presbyterian Church in Long Beach, California in 1916.

After returning from a brief visit back to Japan in 1918, Luke met with Rev. John Yamazaki, the head of St. Mary's Episcopal Japanese Mission in Los Angeles. Yamazaki convinced him to return to the Episcopal Church. Shortly thereafter, Luke was confirmed as a Lay Reader into the Diocese of Los Angeles.

In just a few brief years Luke married Takeko Nagai in 1922, whom he'd met in Japan before emigrating. They would eventually have three children together: Margaret Yukio born September 1923, Paul Hiromu born in May 1925, and Joe Susumu born January 1927. For the next twenty years, Luke raised his children with Takeko while working as a social worker for St. Mary's.

In addition to being a social worker and Lay Reader, Luke was heavily involved in almost all other aspects of church life. In a letter to Bishop Winfred H. Zeigler, the Bishop of the Diocese of Wyoming at the time of the incarceration, Luke listed his activities at St. Mary's, including teaching at the Japanese Language School and the Sunday school for over 300 children. He took part in the leadership of the Church Boy Scout troop, helped with the young people's group, wrote and issued the church bulletin in Japanese, participated in the Brotherhood of St. Andrews, served as contact with other denominational groups, and represented St. Mary's at the Diocesan Layman's Group. Luke admitted that he may have done too much to really dedicate himself to any one thing, but believed that all this experience prepared him for the challenges he was to face in Heart Mountain.



Yokota Family
(minus daughter
Margaret) at Heart
Mountain, c.1943.

Photo courtesy of
the George & Frank
Hirahara Collection,
Washington State
University



Paul & Joe Yokota
in their boy scout
uniforms at Heart
Mountain.

Photo courtesy of
the George & Frank
Hirahara Collection,
Washington State
University

The Pearl of Great Price stained glass at St. Matthew's Cathedral.

Photo courtesy of Krist Jessup

Luke and Takeko had dreams for their children to attend university but understood that they did not make enough money as language schoolteachers. In 1939, with monetary assistance from church members and the owners of Itabashi Grocery, they decided to enter the hospitality business. The Yokotas lived in, owned, and operated the 50 room Hillcrest Hotel in downtown Los Angeles where you could rent a room for 50 cents a night. Margaret, Paul, and Joe cleaned the guest rooms and attended to other chores after school and on the weekends. Fortunately for Luke, he was approached by a wealthy language school to continue his work as a part-time teacher, which he accepted.

His position as a teacher quickly made him a target of suspicion after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The Yokota's home was searched by the FBI three times eventually leading to arrest and removal of Luke on their final search, leaving Takeko and the children to manage the Hillcrest on their own. In a moment of foresight, Luke had negotiated a transfer of ownership of the Hillcrest, which Joe claimed, "saved [their] skins."

After his arrest, Luke was taken first to the county jail and then the Pomona Assembly Center and eventually sent to the Department of Justice camp in Santa Fe, New Mexico. In May, the rest of the Yokotas were ordered to the Santa Anita racetrack, their residence for the next four months. A month later Luke was released from Santa Fe

and was reunited with his family. This was thanks to the many letters and character testimonies from bishops and missionaries who knew Luke; a privilege not afforded to Buddhist or Shinto laymen.

The Yokota family was forcibly relocated to Heart Mountain from the Santa Anita detention facility on September 8, 1942. Their assigned residence in the camp was at block 28, barrack 17, unit D. After entering Heart Mountain, the Yokotas quickly found jobs throughout the camp. Luke was hired as a dishwasher in the mess hall, making \$16 a month. Additionally, he was elected block chairman, where he would help resolve complaints of block residents and meet with other block chairman in deciding what issues to bring to the camp administration. Margaret took a position with the recreation department.

Joe and Paul worked outside the camp as beet laborers, harvesting beets when they were not in school or participating in the boy scouts, bringing the total family income to \$32 per month. Once again taking on too much, Luke also began organizing an Episcopal Church group. Takeko assumed Luke's dishwashing position when the group, and Luke's responsibilities, began to grow.

Founded in late 1942 by Luke, Shoji Nagumo, Eddie Matsuda, and Yoshio Saito, Heart Mountain's Japanese Episcopalians consisted of 10 families from St. Mary's Church in Los Angeles and six other individuals, bringing the group total to 79 people. Beginning on



Luke Yokota pictured here (top row, second from right) with his wife Takeko (second row, far right), Bishop Winfred Zeigler (bottom row, center) and Rev. John McLaughlin (second row, third from the left), who would make bi-weekly visits to conduct service.

Photo courtesy of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of Wyoming, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming

The Church of Atonement congregation members in the chilly winter at Heart Mountain.

Photos courtesy of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of Wyoming, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming

The Church of Atonement congregation members hosting church members from the surrounding community.



September 20, 1942, Rev. John F. McLaughlin from Christ Church in Cody visited the camp bi-weekly to minister and give communion to the incarcerated. However, McLaughlin admitted that, if not for Luke, "there would be no work done within the Center by [the] Church." McLaughlin showed his appreciation for Luke's work by taking the entire family to Yellowstone National Park for a day trip. A thoroughly uncommon experience for most incarcerated.

The Episcopal Church was extremely enthusiastic to hire Luke and wanted to grant him the "special rating as the religious worker of [Episcopalian] communion." This served two purposes. First, It allowed the Church to compensate Luke for his work, as he had given up his secular duties as both a dishwasher in the mess hall and as block chairman in order to fulfill his duties to the



Church. Second, Bishop Zeigler and Bishop Charles S. Reifsnider, the primary man in charge of overseeing the nine Japanese American Episcopal congregations in the camps, believed that granting Luke this status would give him—and consequently the Church—more legitimate standing with the Japanese Interdenominational Minister's Council at Heart Mountain.

On October 9, 1942, almost a month to the day since the start of the Yokotas' incarceration, Luke was appointed a Lay Reader for the Missionary District of Wyoming and paid \$25 dollars a month from the Church's "Japanese" fund. One day later, he was accepted as the Episcopalian representative to Heart Mountain "at a joint ministerial conference" of Japanese American ministers. For Luke, this was the first step to achieving his dream of becoming an ordained clergyman. He had wanted to be ordained since his time at St. Mary's, but instead prioritized securing a comfortable living for his family and ensuring his children could go to college. He felt that his twin goals of clerical service and economic stability were incompatible.

While at Heart Mountain, Luke's interest in being ordained was rekindled. Bishop Zeigler and other clergy members were extremely supportive of Luke joining



Meeting of clergy in Cheyenne, WY in September 1948. Luke can be seen as the third person from the right towards the bottom row.

Photo courtesy of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of Wyoming, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming

the ministry and regularly encouraged him in their correspondence. However, Luke later revealed that he also lacked confidence because he believed his “lack of clerical education” to be a hinderance.

Nonetheless, in 1943 Luke T. Yokota became “postulant for the diaconate” and quickly took up full-time responsibility for the Episcopal Church group at Heart Mountain. His daily routine mainly consisted of clerical studies in the morning and administrative duties—such as making calls, writing bulletins, and keeping up with correspondence—in the afternoons. On occasion, the Yokota family would also host white Church members from the surrounding community in the camp.

That same year the Episcopal group at Heart Mountain was officially recognized by Bishop Zeigler as The Church of the Atonement, with Luke at its head. Though the Episcopal Church originally wanted all nine congregations throughout the camps to have their own church buildings, they soon realized this was impossible and that they would need to share worship space with the rest of the religious organizations in

the camp. Cody Christ Church donated a retired altar, organ, and other furnishings to the camp recreation hall that would serve as home for the Episcopalian meetings and other protestant services. Hymnals and prayer books were furnished by Episcopal societies across the United States. By the end of 1943, The Church of the Atonement at Heart Mountain was recognized, furnished, and led.

The Church ran smoothly and without incident through 1944, and Luke kept much of the same schedule. Luke’s daughter Margaret left camp to attend college in April 1943, and sons Paul and Joe relocated outside Heart Mountain on May 22. Joe left to attend the University of Wyoming as a pre-med student before being drafted in 1945. Paul volunteered for the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) as a Japanese interpreter and sent to Japan. Only Luke and Takeko remained in the camp. This was a common pattern throughout Heart Mountain after the government permitted Japanese Americans to “resettle” in cities away from the West Coast. Young adults left for work or school, while their older parents stayed behind. By January 1945, The Church of the Atonement’s membership had dwindled to only five families.

On January 25, 1945, Luke Yokota was ordained deacon at St. John’s Church in Powell, Wyoming. Thereafter, he served as vicar of the Church of the Atonement at Heart Mountain Relocation Center. He discharged his duties as vicar throughout the spring and summer of 1945, until he and Takeko left Heart Mountain just before it closed, on November 9. However, this was not the end of Luke and Takeko’s story in Wyoming.



Wedding of Paul Yokota to Mary Shizue Hirano in 1955, officiated by Luke Yokota, with Joe and Margaret in attendance.

Photo courtesy of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of Wyoming, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming

The Yokota’s moved to Ethete, Wyoming after leaving camp, where Luke continued to serve his parish and the Diocese of Wyoming. In 1946, Luke achieved his dream and was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church at St. Matthews Cathedral in Laramie, Wyoming. However, the dark cloud and long shadow of racism still haunted Luke. When he first began conducting services, there were many in the Diocese that actively avoided his services, owing to the continued prejudice and racial bias against Japanese Americans. This discrimination is starkly visible in a photograph of a meeting of Wyoming ministers in 1948. On the corresponding name page, Luke’s duties as missionary to the Japanese community in Wyoming are described as a “Jap Work”. This would not stop the interminable Luke Yokota; he continued his ministry throughout Wyoming for the next decade. He was a regular attendant of Wyoming Clergyman meetings, and accompanied Bishop James W. Hunter, the new head of the Wyoming Diocese, to Detroit in January 1955 to attend and speak at a missionary conference. Perhaps one of Luke’s happiest acts of service came in 1955, when Paul returned to Wyoming to be married by his father in Ethete to his wife Mary Shizue Hirano, with Joe and Margaret at his side.

Only a year later, Luke passed away on August 28, 1956. He was buried in Lander next to Takeko, who lost her battle to an extended illness three years previously. He was beloved by his parishioners and the Wyoming Episcopal community as a whole, evidenced by the large number in attendance at his funeral. Many openly wept at the loss of “Father Luke,” as he was affectionately known. Two years later, on October 26, 1958, people from around the state gathered on a crisp Wyoming Autumn day for the dedication of a new stained-glass window at St. Matthew’s Episcopal Cathedral. While Luke Yokota’s window honors his contributions to the Church, it also stands witness that his life in Wyoming was the result of forced relocation and incarceration of Japanese Americans during the Second World War.

Special thanks to the archives of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of Wyoming and the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming for the use of their collections in researching this article. This article was made possible through the support of the Embassy of Japan in the United States.



Detail of the dedication on “The Pearl of Great Price” stained glass. It reads “To Luke Yokota, merchant, priest and saint, who found one pearl of great price. By his bishop and fellow clergy. Born in Japan buried in Lander.”

Photo courtesy of Krist Jessup



Krist Jessup is a Yonsei Japanese American from Laramie, Wyoming, where he is the Assistant Supervisor of the Content Listing Unit at the American Heritage Center. He is the descendant of an incarcerated of the Santa Fe detention facility.

Heart Mountain Remembers LaDonna Zall's Compassion and Decades of Service



The Legacy of Heart Mountain

by CJ Baker

Sam Mihara spent three awful years incarcerated at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center during World War II, among the tens of thousands of Japanese Americans confined to prison camps by suspicious federal officials. There were the armed guards, the terrible food, the awful weather and the cramped, uncomfortable accommodations at the camp, while Mihara's father went blind and his grandfather died.

"But the worst experience," Mihara said, "was going to downtown Cody." When he and other Japanese Americans from the camp eventually got a chance to visit the city, Mihara said about every third store was posted with a sign saying "No Japs." And inside the businesses that were open to the incarcerated "everyone was frowning," he said, "not a single smile."

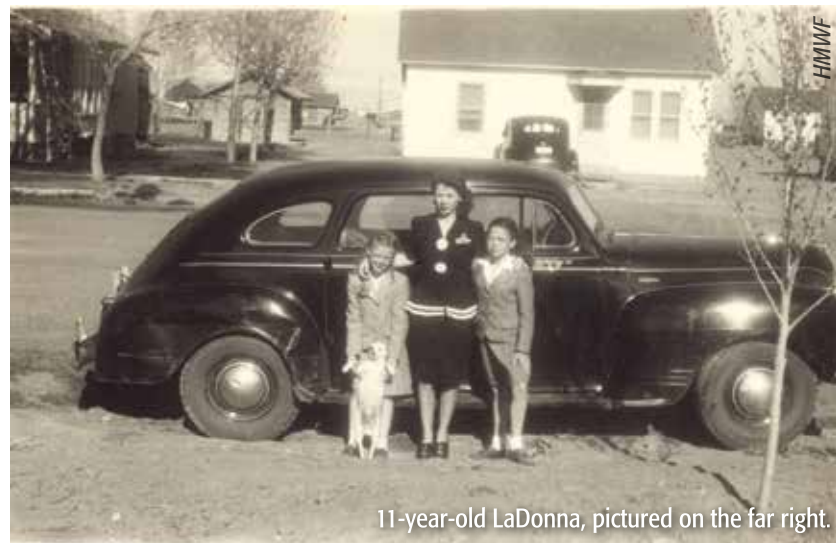
Mihara ultimately decided that he wanted nothing to

do with Wyoming or its people. Nearly 50 years later, however, he passed through Cody as part of a trip to Yellowstone National Park. He inquired about touring the former camp site and was told to meet a woman in the shade of a pair of cottonwood trees just off U.S. Highway 14-A.

"I went up to her, and she smiled," Mihara recalled. "It was the first person from Wyoming who smiled at me. And I went, 'Oh my gosh, this is a different person.' And she said, 'I'm LaDonna, and I'm going to help you out.'"

The woman, the late LaDonna Zall, then guided Mihara through a farm field and right to the spot where he'd once lived. The memories came flooding back in a kind of homecoming.

"I really thank her for what she did," Mihara said. He was just one of hundreds of people that Zall led around the site—and the tours were just one of the many things that



11-year-old LaDonna, pictured on the far right.

she did to help preserve the former camp and the stories of those who were held there.

Zall, a longtime Powell area resident, died on June 22 at the age of 87; at a memorial service on July 24 hosted by the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, speakers recalled and honored her more than three decades of service.

"LaDonna was in many very real ways the essence and the soul of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation," said Doug Nelson, the nonprofit's vice chair, "and for me it's hard, at least right now, to imagine this foundation without her."

As an 11-year-old, Zall cried as she watched the final train car of incarcerated people leave Heart Mountain in November 1945, as the U.S. government freed the last of the Japanese Americans. "She was filled with sadness at what, as a little girl, she instinctively knew had been hurtful and wrong," Nelson said. "And that empathy, years later, led her to try, in so many different ways, to set things right."

In 1989, Zall became involved in what would become the Heart Mountain



Above: LaDonna with the Honor Roll at Heart Mountain.

Top Right: LaDonna's partner Joyce speaks at LaDonna's memorial service.

Right: The grand opening of the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center in 2011. (L-R): Shirley Ann Higuchi, Norman Mineta, Takashi Hoshizaki, LaDonna Zall, Bacon Sakatani, Alan Simpson, and Daniel Inouye.



CJ Baker

Wyoming Foundation. She served as the first registrar and curator of the collection that would eventually form the core of Heart Mountain Interpretive Center; she also donated faithfully to the foundation and inspired others to support the nonprofit as well.

"She always wanted to do everything for the program," said Zall's life partner, Joyce Harkness. In her book, "Tales of Heart Mountain," Zall wrote that she had "the best job of all."

"I get to meet nice people, hear their stories and see the wonderful artifacts that they permit us to care for," she wrote. Although the pandemic hindered her efforts, Zall had been helping to index all of the names that appeared in the camp's newspaper, the Heart Mountain Sentinel, so a search for a person turns up all of the articles in which they are mentioned. That work is expected to wrap up in the coming months.

Nelson said there was no way to measure all of the contributions Zall made to the foundation, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary, and the interpretive center, which is marking its 10th. "But it's not those contributions alone, which we are missing today: We are also mourning the loss of one extraordinary human being," Nelson said, praising Zall's authenticity, honesty, courage, warmth, kindness and compassion.



Kevin J. Inouye

The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation issues an annual LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness Award, which recognizes individuals whose families were not incarcerated during World War II, but who nonetheless have worked to expand awareness of the Japanese American incarceration.

This year's recipient was Pete Simpson of Cody, a member of the foundation's board of directors, historian and educator. Board chair Shirley Ann Higuchi said Simpson "has long been an icon and representative of what Wyoming is great for." In selecting Simpson, the board specifically noted how he has supported the mission to educate the public about the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans; inspired thousands of Wyoming residents to seek higher education and public service; and helped inspire the creation and development of the foundation.

Simpson called the award the best and most important he's ever received, though he said no one carried out the mission of preserving the memory of the Heart Mountain Relocation Center better than Zall. "This place wouldn't be here without love—and that's who brought it, right there," he said, pointing toward a smiling photograph of Zall on display. "She loved what she did, she had empathy for it and she didn't seek self-aggrandizement for it."

While Zall often spoke of the emotion she felt while watching the last train leave, Simpson recalled a visit to the camp with his Boy Scout troop. He shared a specific memory of throwing a football around with a Japanese American boy and being invited inside the boy's small tarpaper shack, where his mother offered a cup of hot cocoa. The gesture impacted Simpson in a way that still moves him today.

"All of us carry with us—all of the incarcerated and their descendants ...—carry this emotion as a part of what we do," he said, "to make sure nothing like that can occur again."

A version of this article was originally published in the Powell Tribune.



CJ Baker is the editor of the *Powell Tribune*. He has lived in Powell since second grade and is a graduate of the University of Wyoming.



Top left: Former incarcerated Sam Mihara (left) and Prentiss Uchida (right) pictured with Compassionate Witness Award recipient Peter Simpson.

Left: LaDonna leading a group of students from Northwest College.

Above: LaDonna working with Laurel Vredenburg in the research center.



In Memoriam

LaDonna Zall (1934–2021)

LaDonna Su Jackson Zall entered the world in May 1934 and peacefully left June 22, 2021. She was an asset to the planet; a generous good woman who made a difference in the many lives she touched during her 87 years. Best of all, she did it with a wry sense of humor.

Born in Elk City, Kansas, LaDonna traveled the United States as a child with her family led by her pipe fitting father, the late George Conlan Jackson, who always took time to educate his children along the way. LaDonna was a good student who paid attention. They eventually settled in Powell, WY, where LaDonna finished high school. She went on to prepare for a teaching career by earning a bachelor's in physical education with recreation degree from Rocky Mountain College and, in 1967, a master's degree in elementary guidance. She focused her teaching career in Wyoming—five years in Casper and 31 years in Cody.

There was a bit of fire in LaDonna Zall's spirit. Occasionally it got her in trouble but more often than not it served her well. She was interested and interesting throughout her life. She took time to explore people, nature and art. She carved wood and worked in pastels, oils and watercolor.



LaDonna was a creative thinker and doer. She lived simply. She was unpretentious, kind, generous, playful and funny.

LaDonna's labor of love in retirement became preserving the history of and sharing the story of Japanese American incarceration at Heart Mountain. She began giving tours to people by meeting them by the cottonwood trees where you turn off the highway to the site of the former camp. She opened her heart gave generously of her time and wisdom to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation.

LaDonna is survived by her life partner Joyce Harkness, daughter Lynne and son-in-law Tony Perry, brother-in-law Wayne Stewart, and nieces, nephews plus their children. LaDonna deeply appreciated the enduring value of endowed funds. Her family suggests memorial donations

be made to Heart Mountain's Memory and Justice Endowment Fund.

Remember: LaDonna would tell you to carry on and "N Joy." Meet her at the Cottonwood trees.

This remembrance of LaDonna comes from her close friend and fellow Heart Mountain volunteer, Laurel Vredenburg. Laurel (pictured with LaDonna on the opposite page) was a founding member of the board of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and remains a steadfast supporter of the Foundation's mission.

DUSTED OFF

Highlights from the Heart Mountain Collection

With the passing of LaDonna Zall this summer, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation has suffered a great loss. Other articles in this issue have detailed the kind of person LaDonna was and why she will always be a part of the Heart Mountain story. LaDonna was the first curator and collections manager at

Heart Mountain, a job she did purely out of her passion for this place and its story. It is only fitting, then, that we also take a look back at some of the very first objects that she collected and reflect on how much the collection has grown since the first days of the Foundation.

The very first accession recorded by LaDonna, 1999.001, consists of four items donated by another longtime supporter of the Foundation, Shig Yabu. Shig is well known for his stories of his boyhood at Heart Mountain, his service on the Foundation's board of directors, and as the author of the children's book *Hello Maggie*. The objects donated by Shig represent two themes prevalent in the Heart Mountain story. The shoe last and cobbler's hammer reflect the self-sufficiency of the Japanese Americans incarcerated at Heart Mountain. Incarcerates not only grew their own food and ran their own fire and police departments in camp; they also built and repaired their own shoes.

1999.001.002 and 1999.001.003
Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation
Gift of Shigeru Yabu



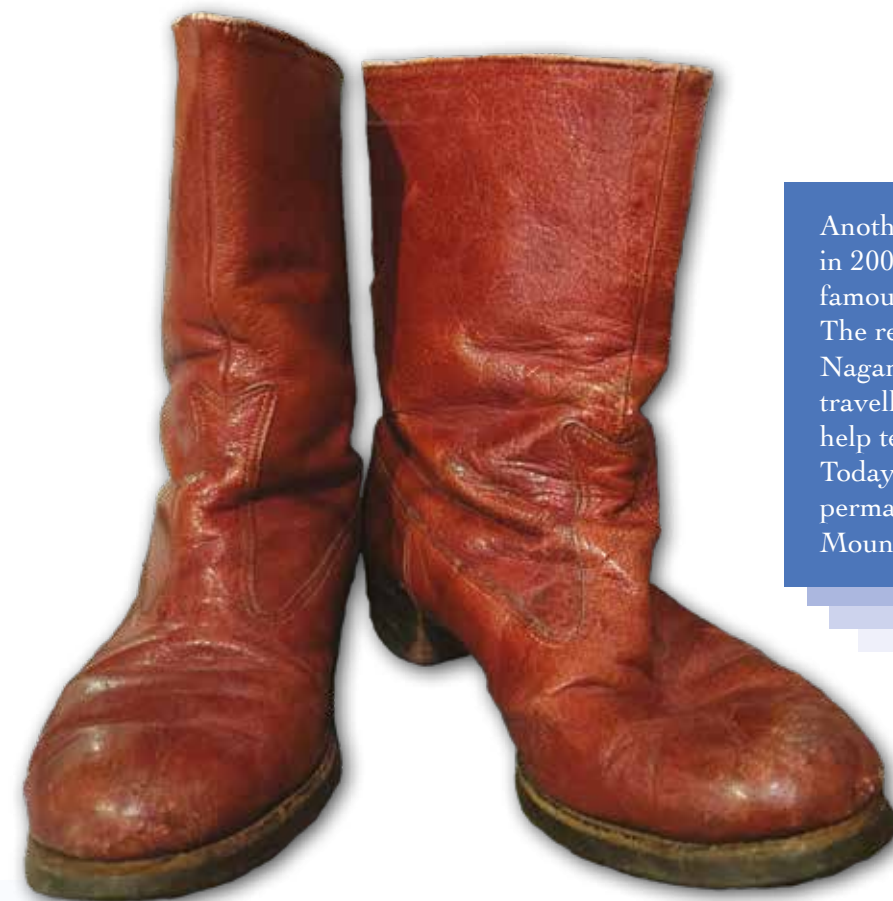
The blue star flag reminds us of the young men who left the camp to serve in the Army. Families with relatives in the military would hang flags like this in the windows of their barracks in honor of their loved ones. Nearly 400 men were inducted directly out of Heart Mountain to serve in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service.

1999.001.004
Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation
Gift of Shigeru Yabu



1999.002.001
Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation
Gift of Carl Okada

The second gift LaDonna accepted was this painted wood carving, donated by Carl Okada in 1999. The carving depicts several rows of barracks lining either side of a road leading up to Heart Mountain, which looms in the background. Whether in the photos of Yoshio Okumoto or the paintings of Jishiro Miyauchi, this is a recurring motif in camp artwork. Much of the art made at Heart Mountain depicts this iconic scene, no matter what the medium is.



Another early accession, first made in 2000, has become one of the most famous artifacts in the collection. The red boots purchased for Toshiko Nagamori Ito by her father have travelled far and wide in order to help tell the story of Heart Mountain. Today, they are a highlight of the permanent exhibit at the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center.

2000.004.001
Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation
Gift of Toshiko Nagamori Ito

One of the main reasons museums collect artifacts is because of the power objects have to tell a story. Today, Heart Mountain Interpretive Center is an award-winning facility where people can experience the story of Heart Mountain where it happened. However, the center is only 10 years old. Before it existed, LaDonna carried the story of Heart Mountain with her wherever she traveled across the country, through a series of traveling exhibits. These showcases of the Foundation's artifact collections helped her gather support for building the interpretive center. Many of these exhibits included Toshiko's boots, as seen in this exhibit at the Homesteader Museum in Powell, Wyoming. LaDonna is seen here bringing the collection to life with local schoolchildren.



Or in this photo taken at an event at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, which also featured presentations from notable figures including Frank Emi and Fred Korematsu.

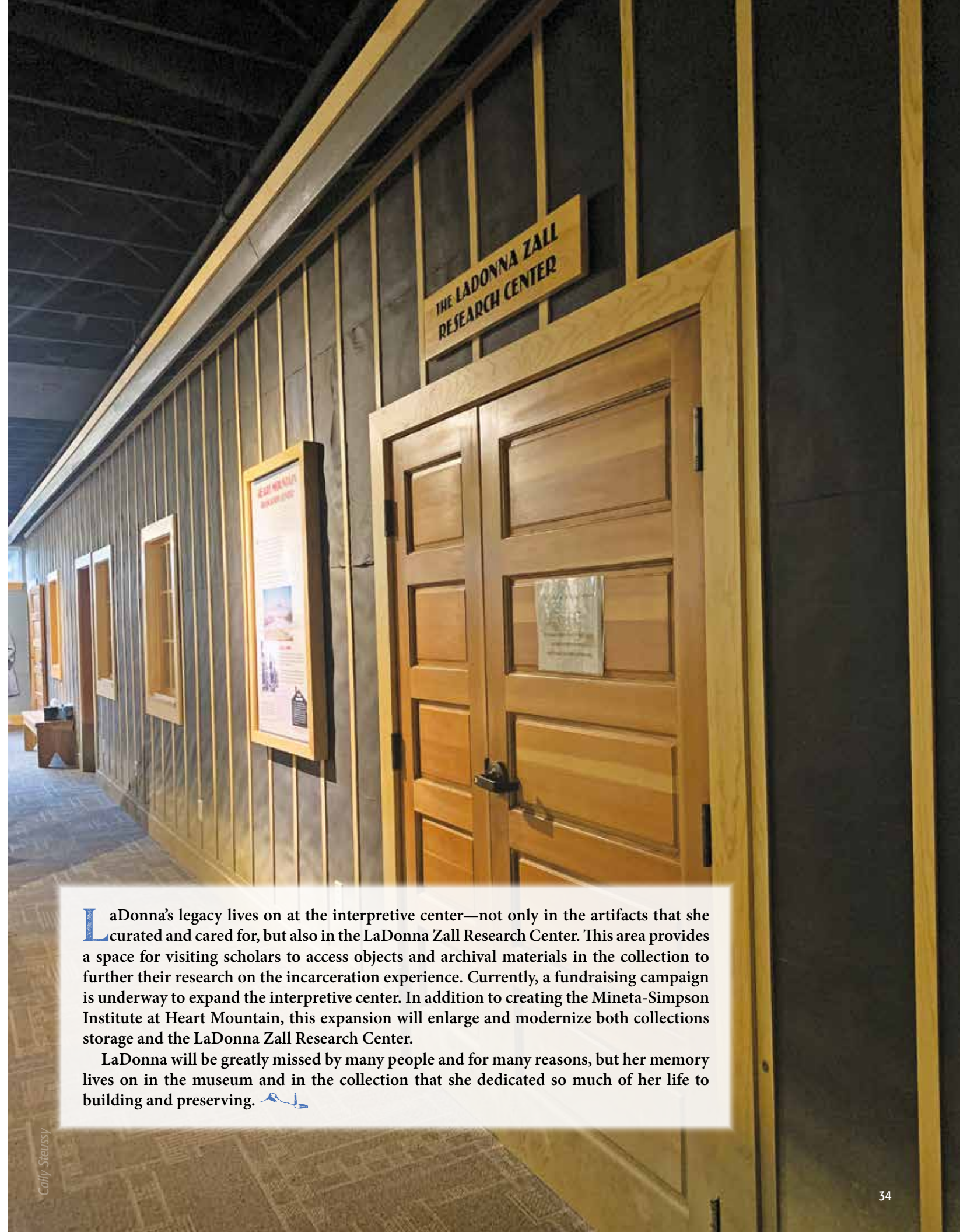
Much has changed since LaDonna first began collecting artifacts in 1999. Heart Mountain's collections were initially stored in the vault of a local bank, before LaDonna moved them to a dedicated storage facility. Today, the Foundation's artifacts and archives are housed in a purpose-built section of Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, equipped to follow the best standards and practices in museum collections management.

LaDonna with Kara Miyagishima from the National Park Service just after the collection was moved from the bank into its new storage space in Powell.



LaDonna's legacy lives on at the interpretive center—not only in the artifacts that she curated and cared for, but also in the LaDonna Zall Research Center. This area provides a space for visiting scholars to access objects and archival materials in the collection to further their research on the incarceration experience. Currently, a fundraising campaign is underway to expand the interpretive center. In addition to creating the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain, this expansion will enlarge and modernize both collections storage and the LaDonna Zall Research Center.

LaDonna will be greatly missed by many people and for many reasons, but her memory lives on in the museum and in the collection that she dedicated so much of her life to building and preserving.





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