Densho Digital Repository: Preserving Community Memory

ALCTS Preservation Week 2018
April 26, 2018

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Densho: to pass on to the next generation or leave a legacy

“Tule Lake concentration camp, 1940s,” ddr-densho-2-33
Courtesy of the Bain Family Collection, Densho.
Japanese American Incarceration

- 1885 - 1924: 180,000 Japanese immigrants to US mainland; 200,000 to Hawaii
- December 7, 1941: Pearl Harbor attacked by Japan
- February 19, 1942: FDR signs E.O. 9066 authorizing the removal and incarceration of 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry; more than two-thirds are American citizens
- March 20, 1946: Last WRA camp Tule Lake closes
- August 10, 1988: President Reagan signs “Civil Liberties Act” into law

“Family during mass removal,” Hayward, California, ddr-densho-151-39
Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, Densho.
Origins

- 1995/1996: members of the Japanese American community in Seattle met about an oral history project
- Mission two-fold:
  - Capture the stories before those who experienced the incarceration were gone
  - Use the stories to educate, promote, and advance the ideals of democracy and to encourage civic engagement

“Barracks in winter, 1942-1945,” Granada (Amache) concentration camp, ddr-densho-159-39
Courtesy of the George Ochikubo Collection, Densho.
What is a community archive?

- An independent organization that gives a community control over how their history is collected, preserved and made available to the wider public.

“Japanese Americans lining up for mess hall” Manzanar Concentration camp, California
ddr-densho-93-21
Courtesy of the Library of Congress
Differences

- “Catch and release”
  - Densho does not keep the physical collections. Those always return to the families or individuals.

- Outreach
  - History Keepers
  - Collection Nomination Forms

- Donor Communications

Three children eat hot dogs on Christmas day in the mess hall at Minidoka concentration camp, 1944.

Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.
Densho Oral Histories

Victor Ikeda

Nisei male. Born February 4, 1927, in Seattle, Washington. Grew up in Seattle’s Japantown area, where parents operated a hotel. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, removed to the Puget Flap Assembly Center, Washington, and the Minidoka concentration camp, Idaho. Left camp to attend school in Minnesota, was drafted, and trained in the Military Intelligence Service Language School. After World War II, worked as a transportation agent with the Department of Army Quartermaster Corps.

Interviews

Victor Ikeda Interview — ddr-manu-1-23
November 6, 2007, Las Vegas, Nevada.
03:39:28 — 50 segments.
http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-manu-1-23/

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Densho Historical Materials Collections
Topics

The DDR is a subject headings list covering a variety of themes across the entire Japanese American historical experience. The main focus is on the World War II exclusion and incarceration, and how it was shaped by the pre-war immigration period as well as how it affected the community's post-war development.

Immigration and citizenship (143)
- Life in Japan and reasons for leaving (80)
- The journey (22)
- Arrival (27)
- Gaman Manzo
- Naturalization (17)
- Anti-immigration sentiment (88)
- Law and legislation (25)
- Discrimination laws (144)
- Legal cases (17)
- Picture folders (15)
- Industry and employment (217)
- Agriculture (56)
- Farmers, ranchers and stands (51)
- Chickee sailing
- Dairy farming (11)
- Farming (42)
- Flower growers (26)
- Migrant labor
- Plantations (2)
- Strawberries (27)
- Small businesses (18)
- Bakers (10)
- General stores (29)
- Grocery stores (13)
- Hardware stores
- Laundromats (18)
## Collection Workflow

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Using Archival Resources: Densho Encyclopedia

A free on-line resource about the history of the Japanese American WWII exclusion and incarceration experience

Explore
Browse the articles in the Encyclopedia through a list of categories or use the A-Z table of contents.

Yuri Kochiyama
Prominent Japanese American human rights activist in Harlem (1960s-1999) and Oakland (1999-present). Read the article »

This Is A Live Project
The Encyclopedia currently contains more than 650 articles. It is a continuing project with new articles and features being added on an ongoing basis. We would appreciate your ideas and feedback.

The Encyclopedia was made possible by grants from the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program, administered by the National Park Service and by the California State Library through the California Civil Liberties Public Education Fund.

This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

encyclopedia.densho.org
Densho provides free multidisciplinary lessons that introduce students to questions of civil liberties in relation to the life experiences of Japanese Americans. The online units available here feature a variety of printable lessons that meet curriculum goals correlated to standards in several subjects.

TEACHING WWII JAPANESE AMERICAN INCARCERATION WITH PRIMARY SOURCES

densho.org/learning
Khizr Khan’s words echo for Japanese American World War II Gold Star families
Lessons Learned

“Japanese American making mochi”
Granada (Amache) concentration camp, Colorado
ddr-densho-159-160
Courtesy of the George Ochikubo Collection, Densho
Densho preserves and shares stories of the Japanese American past to promote equity and justice today.

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