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a newsletter of the Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress

Winter 2014

2014 DAY OF REMEMBRANCE - "GENERATIONS SPEAK OUT"

By Kay Ochi

More than seven decades after Executive Order 9066 was issued by President Franklin Roosevelt, the infamous action continues to affect generations of Japanese Americans. As an acknowledgement of this impact, the theme of the 2014 Los Angeles Day of Remembrance is "Generations Speak Out: Impacts of E.O. 9066."

The Los Angeles DOR commemoration will take place on Saturday, February 15 at the Japanese American National Museum, 100 North Central Ave, Los Angeles, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. followed by a reception catered by Carrie Morita's Community Caterers.

Central to this year's program will be a performance by six community friends, each representing their respective generation, who will read or perform an original piece. The Issei generation will be remembered through readings of their letters from camp.

The performance will feature Hiroshi Kashiwagi, Bay area Nisei, who will share his poem about the impact of the wartime incarceration on his life. Representatives of the Sansei and Yonsei generations will share their

connections to the camp experience and the impact on their lives by way of parents' and grandparents' influence and stories.

The DOR program is sponsored by the Japanese American National Museum, the Japanese American Citizens League/ Pacific Southwest, the Manzanar Committee, and NCRR.

The event is co-sponsored by dozens of community organizations including the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates, Little Tokyo Service Center, Pilipino Workers Center and the Shura Council of Southern California.

For more information, contact NCRR at (213) 284-0336.



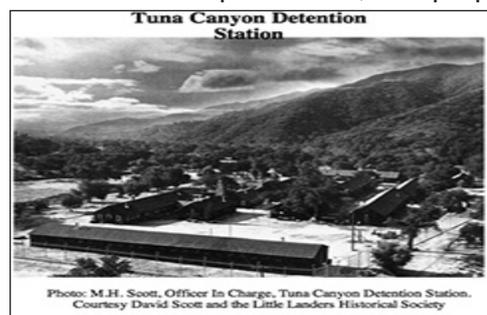
Hiroshi Kashiwagi will be a featured performer at the 2014 DOR. (Photo credit E. N. Matsuba/Discover Nikkei)

Tuna Canyon Detention Center Historic Marker Threatened

By Kanji Sahara

After December 7, 1941, the FBI rounded up enemy Aliens from Southern California and detained them at the Tuna Canyon Detention Station. Tuna Canyon was a "Temporary" Detention Station where aliens were held for a few months and then sent to "Permanent" Detention Stations such as Santa Fe, NM and Fort Missoula, Montana. Japanese, German, Italian and Japanese Peruvian aliens were processed there of which 1,490 were Japanese. The buildings could accommodate 300 detainees in its seven barracks. The Detention Station was closed in May 1942.

Tuna Canyon is part of the City of Los Angeles and located 14 miles north of downtown. It was built in 1933 as a CCC Camp. In 1960, the property was bought



Tuna Canyon Detention Station

Photo: M.H. Scott, Officer in Charge, Tuna Canyon Detention Station. Courtesy David Scott and the Little Landers Historical Society

by doctors who demolished all the structures and turned it into a golf course. The present owner, Snowball West,

wants to build 232 houses on the site. The site is 58 acres but only 20 acres are flat and suitable for houses.

Last summer, LA City Council voted unanimously to set aside one acre for a Historic Marker under a grove of sycamore and oak trees. A parking lot and pathway with display boards were planned. In response, Snowball West sued the City.

Neighbors of the area have been very supportive. For the hearings in LA, they wore red T-shirts and hired a bus. This group evolved into the "Tuna Canyon Detention Station Coalition". It received non-profit status and is negotiating with the City, elected officials and the property owner. The Coalition organized a Shinto Purification Ceremony of the Site on December 16.

NCRR member Haru Kuromiya's father was detained at Tuna Canyon, where she visited him as a young girl. Haru was on TV, quoted in press and interviewed on videos in support of the historic marker.



Haru Kuromiya being interviewed by Gordon Tokumatsu at City Hall. (Photo by Janice Yen)

NCCR on City of Glendale's Comfort Women Monument

NCCR was asked to speak in support of the Korean Comfort Women at the unveiling of the statue in Glendale. Since then, we have met with the San Fernando Chapter of the JACL and they have joined us at meetings with members of the Japanese Parliament representing the Japan Restoration Party, a small conservative group. The SFV JACL is working on a resolution and statement that we hope can be jointly supported by other civil rights groups. Both NCCR and JACL have been interviewed by Al Jazeera and other media. The following is a translation of the interview by Akiko Horiyama of the Japanese newspaper, Mainichi (December 18, 2013) with Kathy Masaoka

Nikkei Civil Rights Group Endorses Comfort Women Monument

Kathy Masaoka – co-chair of Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress

In July, I gave a speech in California at the Glendale City Park, endorsing the installation of a statue of a young girl meant to memorialize the former Japanese military comfort women. I did so on behalf of Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress, a citizen's group formed to fight for rights and reparations for the 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent who were sent to internment camps during WWII.

The statue is of a young girl, but it represents the universal suffering of women who have been the victim of sexual violence both historically and today. Sexual violence occurs all around the globe and the hope is that this monument can help bring peace and justice to those affected. I hope it can encourage victims to speak out and help solidify public opinion and awareness of this issue.

In 1981 the U.S. government held public hearings to investigate the damages caused to Japanese Americans forced into camps. The report that followed was the foundation for the reparations awarded in 1988. At first Issei and Nisei from the camps were reluctant to testify out of pain and embarrassment, but they began to give accounts of what happened because it was an official hearing and they wanted the record to show what happened. They wanted history to hear the truth.

Through this process, Issei and Nisei victims were able to unburden their hearts, regain confidence and dignity, and heal not only themselves, but the Japanese American community as a whole. Also through this process, we gained solidarity with other Asian American

groups, Koreans in Japan, and Native Americans in the USA, and we came to understand that the problem of discrimination against minorities is not unique to Japanese Americans.

I know there exists some controversy over the details and finer points of historical facts surrounding the comfort women issue. That's why we want to listen to the voices of former comfort women. I've learned from my experiences with concentration camp victims that listening to the testimony of those who were affected can bring new facts to light and make the truth clearer. Not only that, but the process of testifying can help restore the dignity of those testifying.

The Japanese government has apologized in the past, and made private funds available for reparations through "Asian Women's Fund," and now says that the problem has been resolved and settled. However, it does not follow that nothing more needs to be done. Ignoring and dismissing the former comfort women now only further injures their sense of dignity and gives the international community a bad impression of the Japanese government.

No one can prevent sympathy for the comfort women from spreading throughout the American public. The Japanese government should use this opportunity to once again appeal to the international community and apologize sincerely to the former comfort women.

After Japanese Americans were given compensation for the wrongs committed against them, plaques, statues, and monuments were created all around the country to remember what had happened. The



Kathy Masaoka speaking at dedication ceremony as other NCCR and community members look on. (Photo by JK Yamamoto/Rafu Shimpo)



Korean Comfort Women memorial statue in Glendale. (Photo by Suzy Katsuda)

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Bridging Communities 2014 – New and Former Participants Welcome

By Kathy Masaoka

The sponsoring organizations, Kizuna, JAACL PSWD, Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) and NCCR, have decided that this year's Bridging Communities (BC) program will focus on a project at the Manzanar Historic Site and community engagement. Instead of five or six Saturday sessions, the program will involve two full-day Saturday workshops, March 15 and March 22. The first workshop will include Bridging Communities activities around identity and community to bring the participants together. They will also begin planning the community seminars/workshops where they will have a chance to share some of what they have learned with multi-generational audiences at a later time. The second Saturday workshop on March 22 will be the service learning project at Manzanar. Because this year's funding for the program comes from the National Park Service - Japanese American Confinement Sites grant, the program involves a project organized by the Park Service staff at Manzanar. Unfortunately, the program does not include the Manzanar Pilgrimage but we encourage everyone to attend on their own or with their families in April.

We are often asked by past BC participants if they can come back and be part of the program again. Last year, several of them volunteered and were a real asset, helping with the activities. This year, we are asking former participants to outreach and partner with someone new to BC. Both will participate in the project at Manzanar and help organize the seminars but the alumnae will have a chance to use their experience in leading the workshops.

We appreciate any donations since all of the organizations contribute to the program each year. Donations can be sent to NCCR at the address noted on the Membership Form on page six. Please make a notation that the donation will go to Bridging Communities. Thanks for your support.

For more information, contact Sarah Amarragy at samarragy@jaacl.org.

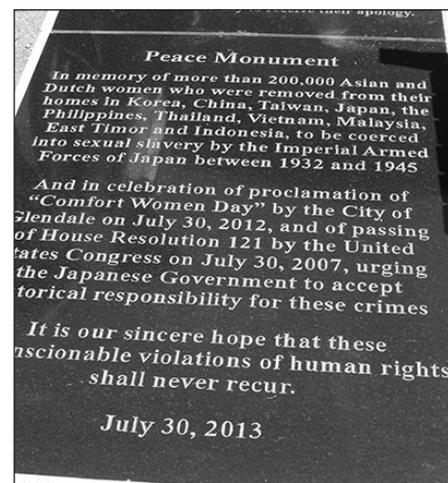


Multi-generational and diverse discussions groups at past BC events. (Photos by Amy Utsunomiya)

Korean Comfort Women memorial, continued from previous page

government did not say the issue was resolved or settled. Instead they continue to help pass down the memory from generation to generation. They help with memorial events and participate with community groups.

Because we are a country of immigrants, the monuments are an important way of recording and learning each other's history, even though the monuments are regarding events that did not happen here. For example, there is a statue in Little Tokyo of Chiune Sugihara who helped Jewish people get visas to escape the Nazis during World War II. Now we are also learning from the statue in Glendale about history of sexual slavery and the importance of women's dignity.



Plaque at Korean Comfort Women Memorial in Glendale. (Photo by Suzy Katsuda)

Manzanar and Tule Lake Sites Threatened by Government Actions

By Richard Katsuda

Seventy-two years have passed since Executive Order 9066 in February 1942 and the removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans. It took many years for our community to finally be able to mount the redress campaign that culminated in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. At the same time, the community has worked hard to recapture its history of incarceration and transform that history from years of despair--suffering and deprivation of civil liberties--to a powerful and moving learning experience for all Americans to prevent similar injustices in the future.

The Manzanar Committee took the lead in this growing movement. It waged mighty battles and stood strong to secure wording on a plaque at Manzanar's entrance that did not shrink into euphemistic language but spoke of "concentration camps" and urged, "May the injustices and humiliation suffered here as a result of hysteria, racism and economic exploitation never emerge again."

The Manzanar Committee then pushed to get Manzanar designated as a National Historic Site to assure that Manzanar would be preserved to teach current and future generations of Americans. An effective interpretive center was installed there as well as many new developments to give visitors the most insightful and powerful feel for reliving the Manzanar experience.

But a few weeks ago, the community learned of a proposed solar energy plant to be built by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). The proposed site is just across Highway 395 from Manzanar and would comprise 1,200 acres and one million solar panels. Les Inafuku, Superintendent of Manzanar, suggested that LADWP hold a public hearing in Los Angeles. At the November 16th hearing, there was essentially unanimous opposition to the proposed site. Nisei, Sansei, and Yonsei speakers passionately urged LADWP to preserve the integrity and power of the Manzanar experience without distractions or obstructions to visitors taking in what it felt like to be incarcerated at Manzanar. They stressed that the environment of isolation and barrenness must not be compromised.

Owens Valley residents drove four hours to Los Angeles to testify as well. Members of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe and Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe spoke with determination to keep the sanctity of their cultural and spiritual grounds. Other Owens Valley residents voiced long-held concerns that Los Angeles was depleting the valley of its resources: first water and

now historically and spiritually significant lands. Some speakers also expressed their fears of upsetting the ecological health of the area.

Those speakers in opposition to the site made it clear that they strongly supported building sources of renewable energy. Many asserted that LADWP should look at their own backyard and build solar energy installations on vacant lots and rooftops of buildings in Los Angeles.

Despite such resounding opposition, LADWP recently announced that they would proceed with their plans to build the plant near Manzanar.

On another important front, Tule Lake is also being subjected to a threat to its integrity as a living monument to those incarcerated within its boundaries. As the site of the former Tule Lake Segregation Center, the area has an especially notorious history that must be illuminated and examined.

However, local county officials are seeking a grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to build an eight-foot-high, three-mile-long fence around an airport that has operated within Tule Lake's boundaries. The operators of the airport state that they are concerned that animals may get onto the runway and obstruct the flight of airplanes.



National Historic Landmark marker at Tule Lake. (Photo by Janice Yen)

The Tule Lake Committee organized a campaign to send letters to the FAA to prevent the fence from being built. Like Manzanar, there is concern that such a fence would compromise the historical environment and the site's power to educate about the Tule Lake experience. The FAA has not yet responded with its decision.

Pending the FAA's decision on Tule Lake, the community is now on alert. Although there is great movement overall in memorializing the sites of the former concentration camps, the community must stand guard to ensure that the learning experiences at those sites truly mirror what Japanese Americans had to face during WWII.

Honoring Dr. Mervyn Dymally

By Kay Ochi

On October 7, 2012, the Japanese American community lost a good friend, former Congressman Mervyn Dymally, who passed away in Los Angeles at the age of 86. He will be long remembered by Japanese Americans for his early and staunch support of redress and reparations during the 1980's.

Dr. Dymally's career of public service includes being California's first black state senator, first black lieutenant governor, and first foreign-born black state assemblyman, as well as a member of Congress for six terms (1981-1993).

Shortly after Dymally entered the US Congress in 1981, his friend Mas Fukai introduced him to the issue of redress for Japanese Americans. Fukai described redress/reparations as the single most important issue in the JA community. Dymally embraced the issue and worked closely with NCCR members – including Miya Iwataki, Bert Nakano and Gerald Sato- to write legislation that reflected the community's demands.

In 1982, Dymally, who represented the 31st Congressional District (including Gardena and Compton), introduced the legislation for monetary redress and an apology to Japanese Americans for their unwarranted wartime incarceration. The first redress legislation had been introduced by Mike Lowry (D-WA) in 1979.

Although the redress legislation did not advance from

committee level, it served to educate many in Congress about the issue and provided NCCR momentum for the legislative route to winning redress. Dymally opened his office in Washington D.C. to NCCR members during the 1984, 1987 and 1989 lobbying delegations and enabled his staff members, including Miya Iwataki and Jim Fukumoto, to work on the issue.



Dr. Dymally speaking at the 1987 DOR. (Photo from nccr-la.org)



Dr. Dymally presents Frank Emi with an award at the 1987 DOR. (Photo from nccr-la.org)

Community Donations Requested

NCCR was informed last month that a life-sized statue of Dymally will be installed at the Mervyn M. Dymally School of Nursing at Charles Drew University, Los Angeles, CA. Under the guidance of Dymally's wife, Alice, and his former Chief of Staff Ken Orduna, artist Nijel Binns was consigned to create the bronze monument.

To cover the cost of the bronze casting and placing the monument, tax-deductible donations are being solicited. NCCR has committed to making a donation in Dr. Dymally's honor and to raising an additional \$1500 from the community. Donations from the JA community are requested and will be acknowledged collectively on the base of the statue as "NCCR & Japanese American Friends".

Checks should be made out to "Mervyn M. Dymally Monument Fund", a 501c3 organization, and sent to NCCR (c/o Kay Ochi, 255 Las Flores Drive, Chula Vista, CA 91910) by February 15, 2014. Your donation will help ensure that the gratitude of the Japanese American community to Dr. Dymally is not forgotten.

NCCR in the Pacific Northwest



NCCR members traveled to Seattle for the Japanese American National Museum's conference over the 4th of July weekend, where Alan Nishio gave a keynote address, members staffed a table at the Marketplace, and many took a trip to Bainbridge Island. Full story on next page. (Photos by Suzy Katsuda)

2013 A Busy Year for the Education Committee

By Janice Yen

The committee was pleased to organize several educational workshops for teachers and educators in 2013. After six years of outreach to secondary school teachers, NCCR has almost depleted its inventory of Stand Up for Justice Curriculum Guide packets (Ralph Lazo DVD and lesson plans about the incarceration). Funding from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program had made it possible for NCCR to produce over 2000 packets. Although few hard copies of the teaching materials remain, the Stand Up for Justice DVD is available for purchase online from Visual Communications and the curriculum guide can be downloaded for free on NCCR's website, www.ncrr-la.org.



Prof. Lane Hirabayashi led a discussion of NCCR panelists on the CWRIC hearings at the Seattle conference. (Photo by Suzy Katsuda)

One of the highlights of 2013 was the participation of the committee at the July Japanese American National Museum conference in Seattle. Under the auspices of UCLA Professor Lane Hirabayashi and sponsored by the UCLA George and Sakaye Aratani Endowed Chair, Richard Katsuda, Kathy Masaoka, and Kay Ochi spoke on the panel entitled "Power of Commission Hearings: First Person Voices of Japanese American Incarceration." Prior to the conference Ed Committee members viewed all 157 testimonies from the 1981 Los Angeles Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) hearings. Then Steve Nagano edited selected ones for inclusion into the segments shown at the workshop/panel presentation.



At the 25th anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. (Photo by Suzy Katsuda)

The audience participated in a lively discussion during and after the question and answer session.

In August NCCR showed excerpts from six films to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Among the films shown were Pilgrimage (Tad Nakamura), clips from

the 1981 CWRIC Hearings (NCCR/VC), Justice Now! Reparations Now! (Alan Kondo), Hidden Internment (Casey Peek), From A Silk Cocoon (Satsuki Ina), and Post 9/11 Vigil (Janice Yen). The films gave viewers a sense of the enormous impact the incarceration had on Japanese Americans and Japanese Latin Americans, and the resolve of the current generation to "never let it happen again." As at the Seattle conference, some in the audience learned for the first time what their parents and grandparents had gone through during World War II. Many, especially those of non-Japanese descent, did not know that the U.S. government had forcibly removed its citizens of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast.

In 2014 one of NCCR's goals is to obtain funding to add menus to the 13-DVD set of Speak Out for Justice!, the 1981 Los Angeles hearings of the CWRIC. Over 150 persons testified at the hearings and it is NCCR's

hope to make their first person accounts available to the public in an easy to use format. The committee also remains available to screen Stand Up for Justice, the Ralph Lazo Story to interested groups. Contact ncrrla@yahoo.com to schedule a screening or to obtain more information.



L-R Lane Hirabayashi, Kathy Masaoka, Richard Katsuda, Kay Ochi speaking on a panel at the Seattle conference. (Photo by Suzy Katsuda)



NCCR members at the "Stand Up for Justice!" workshop at the Reagan Library. (Photo by Suzy Katsuda)



Kathy Masaoka led the "Stand Up for Justice!" workshop at the Reagan Library. (Photo by Suzy Katsuda)

Historic Wintersburg Village Needs Community Support

By Kanji Sahara

In the city of Huntington Beach, there is an area called Historic Wintersburg Village. It is historic because five acres of land were bought by Issei prior to the 1913 Alien Land Law that prevented non-citizens from buying land. Four buildings on the site are still standing – 1910 Wintersburg Japanese Presbyterian Mission, 1910 Manse, 1912 Charles Furuta home and 1912 Barn.

A thriving Japanese Community developed in Orange County around Wintersburg Village. One of the purposes of the Mission was to encourage Japanese bachelors to start families and establish roots in America.



The congregation of the Wintersburg Presbyterian Church, March 8, 1910.
Photo courtesy Wintersburg Presbyterian Church

In order to raise \$1,500 for the undertaking, the Issei wrote a Prospectus which gave the reason they wanted to build the Mission as “. . . not having a church makes Americans distrustful of us and allows them to judge us a low class people to be looked down upon. That is the reason why we want to establish a church.”

100 years ago, the Issei in Wintersburg were very proud of their Mission. The Mission supported Japanese language schools and community centers in Garden Grove, Fountain Valley, Costa Mesa and Crystal Cove.

Rainbow, a refuse collection company, bought the site in 2004 and now wants to develop the site. On Nov 4, 2013, the Huntington Beach City Council voted to accept the EIR, zoning change from Agricultural to Industrial and

demolition of the buildings after 18 months.

Adjacent to Rainbow is an elementary school. Because of its effect on the children’s health, the School District sued to stop the development. Meanwhile, efforts are underway to get in on the National Register of Historic Places. Also, funds are being raised to buy the property. In Historic Wintersburg, pre 1913 buildings still exist and the site can be developed into a nice museum. We need strong Nikkei support.



Are You a Member? NCRR Needs You to Renew! Not a Member? Join Now!

NCRR is a not-for-profit organization that operates solely on grants and contributions from individuals like you. In order to keep up the fight for civil rights and justice, we need you to join or renew your membership today.

NCRR Membership Levels (tax deductible)

- \$30 One year
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And Then Some



NCRRL table at an event sponsored by the Chinatown Community for Equitable Development, who recently rallied to stop Walmart from coming into their community. (Photo by Suzy Katsuda)



traci kato-kiryama, founder of the Tuesday Nights at the Cafe (TNC), received a framed photos from NCRRL and other community organizations and spoke at her last night as Performance Director of TNC. (Photos by Janice Yen)

NCRRL is proud to support the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI) and its Day of Remembrance event on Saturday, March 1, 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM at the GVJCI. The theme will be "Unfinished Business After Redress". Professor Lane Hirabayashi will provide a context to the redress campaign and the Bridging Communities Program youth will share how the work continues today. The event is free and open to the public. Please call the JCI office for more information at (310) 328-6611, or email info@jci-gardena.org.

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Details Inside!

