



Military Intelligence Service  
Club of Southern California  
707 EAST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

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YEAR 2000 ISSUE #2

SECOND QUARTER

LOS ANGELES, CA

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### COMING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

**MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES -- MIS OF SO CAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HOSTING THE SERVICES AT EVERGREEN CEMETERY. THE MEMORIAL SERVICE STARTS AT 11 AM ON MAY 29, 2000. JIM MITA, OUR PRESIDENT, WILL BE VERY PLEASED TO HAVE OUR MEMBERS COME AND PARTICIPATE IN THE SERVICES.**

**JUNE 3RD, SATURDAY, 2000, THE 100/442/MIS WWII MEMORIAL FOUNDATION IS SPONSORING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE UNVEILING OF THE "GO FOR BROKE" MONUMENT. THE CELEBRATION WILL BEGIN AT 10 AM. OUR OWN MISer, TAK SHINDO, HAS COMPOSED AND WRITTEN LYRICS TO TWO MARCH. ONE FOR THE 100TH AND THE 442ND RCT AND ANOTHER FOR THE MIS. THE MARCHES WILL BE PREMIERED AT THE CELEBRATION BY SIXTY MUSICIAN OF THE FAMOUS LOS ANGELES POLICE BAND. THE LYRICS WILL BE SUNG BY TAKS DAUGHTER AND RUSSELL NAKAOKA, THE SON OF THE LATE KEN NAKAOKA ALSO A MISer. THIS WILL BE A HISTORY MAKING EVENT, SO PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND BE THERE.**

**JULY 23RD, SUNDAY, WILL BE OUR ANNUAL PRIME RIB DINNER AT MARYKNOLL CATHOLIC CENTER. THIS YEAR, WE ARE HOLDING THE EVENT WITH THE HELP OF SANSEI AND YONSEI PROFESSIONALS KNOWN AS "THE BRIDGE" GROUP. THEY TAKE PRIDE IN BRIDGING THE SENIORS AND OTHERS WITH THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS. WE ARE EXTREMELY FORTUNATE TO HAVE SUCH A WONDERFUL GROUP OF YOUNG, ENERGETIC, CIVIC MINDED PEOPLE OFFERING THEIR SERVICES. SO, LET'S MAKE THIS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PRIME RIB DINNER BY ATTENDING AND HAVING A GREAT TIME!! ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE EVENT ARE APPRECIATED.**

**BONEN ENKAI AT LAS VEGAS, CALIFORNIA HOTEL WILL BE HELD DECEMBER 3 THRU THE 5TH, SUNDAY THRU TUESDAY. THE COST WILL BE \$78 PER PERSON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY. MORE ABOUT THIS EVENT AT A LATER DATE. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE INTERESTED SO GEORGE CAN RESERVE HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS.**

**FOR YOUR INFO -- A copy of a book called "Confinement and Ethnicity; An Overview the WWII Relocation Sites" published by the Government can be gotten free for the asking per Jack Herzig. This very informative book consists of 460 pages of pictures and statistics of all the camps. A simple letter or post card with a request is all that is necessary. Suggest you order copies for your children too. Write to: WESTERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CONSERVATION CENTER NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, 1415 NORTH 6TH AVE., TUCSON AZ 85705**

**SO YOU CAN SEE, WE HAVE MANY THINGS PLANNED FOR THE REST OF YEAR 2000. LET'S ALL PARTICIPATE AND ENJOY OURSELVES WHILE WE ARE STILL YOUNG, ABLE, AND HEALTHY.**

# 100<sup>TH</sup>/442<sup>ND</sup>/MIS WWII MEMORIAL FOUNDATION NEWS

## **GO FOR BROKE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATES EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE**

The first Anniversary Celebration at the **Go for Broke Monument** will celebrate the continuing work of the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup>/MIS World War II Memorial Foundation and its successful educational program. The public is invited to attend the Celebration on Sat., June 3, 2000, at 10am at the **Go for Broke Monument**, on Central Ave., adjacent to the Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, just north of the Japanese American National Museum at East First and Alameda Streets in Downtown Los Angeles.

The event will include: Master of Ceremonies, Noriyuki "Pat" Morita, a long-time supporter and friend of the Foundation; the premier of two new pieces, the Go For Broke 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> marching song and the MIS song, conducted and composed by MIS veteran, Tak Shindo and performed by the 60-member Los Angeles Police Band; talented singer and song writer Julie Inouye; Kara Takekawa, high school senior and granddaughter of a 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion veteran who is traveling from Hawaii to deliver her winning essay on Heroism from a contest sponsored by the Hawaii Sons and Daughters of the 100<sup>th</sup>; and veterans of the 100<sup>th</sup>, 442<sup>nd</sup>, Military Intelligence Service, 522<sup>nd</sup> and other units will be in attendance with their families.

Program information is available from the Foundation by phone at 310-327-4193 or fax at 310-715-3140 or email at [Goforbroke@worldnet.att.net](mailto:Goforbroke@worldnet.att.net).

## **OPEN CALL FOR TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP**

Educators are encouraged to attend a workshop on the World War II internment of Japanese Americans and the experiences of the Nisei soldier to help them incorporate this experience in their classroom curriculum.

The 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup>/MIS World War II Memorial Foundation in collaboration with the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) and the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is sponsoring a teacher training workshop at JANM on Saturday, May 20.

The workshop will include Colonel Young O. Kim as the keynote speaker, panel discussions with Nisei veterans and former internees, videos, class curriculum discussions and a *bento* lunch.

"Hearing the personal accounts of the veterans and internees are always a highlight of the workshop. Through their voices, participants are able to hear the impact of this lesson in American history first-hand," says Christine Sato, executive director of the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup>/MIS World War II Memorial Foundation.

Ten workshops have already been held in Northern California and this will be the second in Southern California. The first Southern California workshop in February was very successful and interest in the May 20 workshop has already been expressed. With only 40 spaces open, reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-serve basis. The cost is \$10 per person and the deadline to register is May 12.

If you or someone you know would like to sign up for the workshop, please use the attached registration form.

## **MIS NORCAL AND 100<sup>TH</sup>/442<sup>ND</sup>/MIS WWII MEMORIAL FOUNDATION TEAM UP**

MIS NORCAL and the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup>/MIS World War II Memorial Foundation's oral history program, *Hanashi: Voice of the Nisei Soldier*, agreed to work together to interview Military Intelligence Service veterans for MIS NORCAL's upcoming documentary, *Uncommon Courage: Patriotism and Civil Liberties*.

Four MIS veterans, George Kanegai, Mits Usui, Michael "Shig" Yasutake and Peter Okada were interviewed on April 8 and 9. Gayle Yamada, the producer of *Uncommon Courage* served as the interviewer and *Hanashi* volunteers provided the video crew.

"It is exciting to be able to work with *Hanashi* since we have a similar purpose in mind—to bring the life stories of World War II veterans alive. Our documentary project, *Uncommon Courage*, will be on public television, and we will be able to bring the public TO television with the help of *Hanashi*," said Gayle Yamada, film producer and daughter of an MIS veteran.

*Uncommon Courage* is scheduled for completion in June and will broadcast on Sacramento television station KVIE (date to be determined) and later on PBS.

"Until recently, little was known about the brave men who served in the MIS in the Pacific during World War II. Since much of the material has now been declassified, we are all excited to be working with Gayle and MIS NORCAL to help tell their story," said Craig Yahata, member of the Board of Directors for the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup>/MIS World War II Memorial Foundation and *Hanashi* advisor.

The *Hanashi* Oral History Program is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Nisei soldiers by educating the American public through videotape interviews of the brave men of the 100<sup>th</sup>, 442<sup>nd</sup> and the MIS from around the country. The program is comprised mostly of *Sansei* and *Yonsei* volunteers, some of them children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews of veterans.

For more information on how to schedule an interview, please contact the Foundation at 310-327-4193.

**THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED ON THE SUNDAY SPORT SECTION OF THE NEWSPAPER "BARTLESVILLE, OK EXAMINER-ENTERPRISE" DATED JANUARY 16, 2000. THE WRITER IS MIKE TUPA FORMERLY FROM NORTHERN CALIFORNIA THE SPORT COLUMN IS KNOWN AS "TUPA TALK".**

**ONE OF LIFE'S GREAT IRONIES IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRAGEDY AND REWARDS.**

**IT'S TRUE IN SPORTS WHEN A PERSON IN DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT GROWS AS A PERSON AND AN ATHLETE.**

**AND, IT'S PART OF LIFE.**

**OUT OF THE BITTERNESS OF REJECTION AND PERSECUTION CAN BLOOM A BETTER WORLD FOR THOSE WHO SURVIVE IT.**

**ONE DRAMATIC AND HEART-RENDING EXAMPLE WAS THE HOLOCAUST.**

**THE WOLD NEVER HAS KNOWN A DARKER MOMENT IN HISTORY NOR SUCH HUMAN MISERY AND WASTE.**

**YET, AS A RESULT, THE SURVIVING JEWISH PEOPLE GAINED THEIR OWN POLITICAL IDENTITY AND WERE GIVEN BACK THEIR OWN COUNTRY AFTER NEARLY 2,000 YEARS AS STRANGERS IN STRANGE LANDS.**

**WHILE THE LOSS OF THOSE WHO PERISHED COULD NEVER BE MADE UP, AT LEAST THEIR SACRIFICE AND THEIR TRAGEDY MEANT A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR OTHERS OF THEIR RELIGION.**

**OBVIOUSLY IT WAS NOT THE DARK ACTS OF HORROR WHICH BROUGHT ABOUT THE CHANGE, BUT IT WAS AS RESULT OF THE FIGHT AGAINST THEM.**

**IT'S THE POSITIVE AND FIRM REACTION AGAINST CHALLENGES AND TRAGEDIES WHICH OFTEN PRODUCE THE REWARDS OF ENDURANCE AND GROWTH.**

**IN THINKING ABOUT THIS, I AM REMINDED OF A GROUP OF UNSUNG AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO DESERVE OUR RECOGNITION AND GRATITUDE FOR THEIR PART IN WINNING WORLD WAR II.**

**I AM REFERRING TO THE JAPANESE-AMERICAN SOLDIERS, THOSE WHO WERE REJECTED BY THEIR FELLOW AMERICAN CITIZENS AND AMERICAN GOVERNMENT TO FIGHT FOR THE UNITED STATES.**

**THEIR LOVE OF COUNTRY AND THE AMERICAN IDEAL WAS DEEP ENOUGH AND BROAD ENOUGH FOR THEM TO ABSORB THE PREJUDICE OF THEIR TIMES AND FIGHT FOR THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY AND, HOPEFULLY MORE JUSTICE AND UNDERSTANDING IN THE FUTURE.**

**A MONUMENT IN LOS ANGELES WAS DEDICATED EARLIER THIS YEAR TO HONOR THIS GREAT GROUP OF MEN AND WOMEN.**

**LOCATED IN LITTLE TOKYO, IT IS CALLED THE "GO FOR BROKE" MONUMENT. THE SUBTITLE NEAR THE TOP OF THE MOON-SHAPE STRUCTURE IS "AN AMERICAN STORY." THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES DONATED THE LAND AND INSCRIBED ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE MONUMENT ARE QUOTES FROM SEVERAL FAMOUS PEOPLE, INCLUDING PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN, GENERAL DOUGLAS A. MacARTHUR AND PRESIDENT RONALD W. REAGAN.**

**THESE THOUGHTS BLOSSOMED IN MY MIND THIS WEEK AFTER I RECEIVED A PACKAGE FROM A MAN I CONSIDER AND AMERICAN HERO, 'RUSTY' KIMURA.**

**I KNOW RUSTY WAS THE SUBJECT OF A COLUMN WITHIN THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS. I APOLOGIZE FOR ANY REPETITION, BUT I THINK HIS STORY, AND THAT OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN SOLDIERS OF WORLD WAR II, DESERVES TO BE TOLD, AGAIN AND AGAIN.**

**I FIRST MET RUSTY TO DO AN ARTICLE ON HIS SPORTS EXPERIENCES AT OROVILLE HIGH SCHOOL IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA IN THE EARLY 1930s.**

**RUSTY HAD BEEN A 5-FOOT-3", 130 POUND FOOTBALL PLAYER AT OROVILLE, WHICH EVEN BACK THEN WAS VERY SMALL. HE ALSO PLAYED BASKETBALL, BASEBALL AND PARTICIPATED IN TRACK AND FIELD.**

**WHILE I ENJOYED RUSTY'S SPORTS EXPLOITS, I ALSO LEARNED ABOUT HIS HISTORY AS ONE OF THE THOUSANDS OF NISEI SOLDIERS WHO SIGNED UP IN THEIR AMERICAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS TO GO FIGHT FOR AMERICA.**

**ALMOST OVERNIGHT, HE WENT FROM BEING A PEACEFUL AMERICAN CITIZEN BUSY BUILDING HIS LIFE TO A VIRTUAL PRISONER, SHIPPED WITH HIS FAMILY TO AN ASSEMBLY CENTER ON THE MUDDY HORSE RACE TRACK IN SAN FRANCISCO. HE RECALLED SEEING OLD WOMEN STANDING ANKLE DEEP IN COLD MUD AT THESE CAMPS WAITING TO BE SHIPPED TO ONE OF THE CAMPS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.**

**I KNOW THERE WAS A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF FEAR IN CALIFORNIA AFTER THE ATTACK OF PEARL HARBOR -- I CAN APPRECIATE THAT AND DON'T WANT TO BE COMPLETELY JUDGEMENTAL OF A TIME OR PLACE WHERE I HAVEN'T BEEN. AT THE SAME TIME, IT SEEMED LIKE THE BACKLASH AGAINST JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS WAS FUELED BY DEEP DOWN RESENTMENTS AND PREJUDICES WHICH HAD EXISTED FOR YEARS.**

**IF PEOPLE HAD OVERCOME THOSE NEGATIVE FEELINGS BEFORE THEN, PERHAPS THE REACTION AFTER THE BOMBING WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE BALANCED, MORE COMPASSIONATE AND MORE LOGICAL.**

**ANYWAY, RUSTY GREW UP AS A NORMAL AMERICAN CITIZEN. HE WAS TAUGHT BY HIS FATHER TO LOVE AMERICA BECAUSE IT WAS HIS COUNTRY.**

**RUSTY RECALLED BEING SENT BY HIS MOTHER TO JAPANESE LANGUAGE LESSONS, BUT SNEAKING OUT TO GO HUNTING.**

FROM MY STUDY, OROVILLE SEEMED TO BE A MORE TOLERANT COMMUNITY THAN MANY OTHERS OF THAT ERA. RUSTY'S YOUNGER BROTHER (WHO WOULD ALSO FIGHT IN WORLD WAR II IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER) HAD PLAYED SPORTS AT THE CITY HIGH SCHOOL, FOLLOWING RUSTY.

DESPITE HIS SMALLNESS, RUSTY HAD A HEART OF A LION. ONE DAY DURING TACKLING PRACTICE, THE COACH ACCIDENTALLY PAIRED HIM UP WITH THE BIGGEST KID ON THE TEAM, WHO WEIGHED MORE THAN 244 POUNDS. WHEN THE COACH SUGGESTED A CHANGE, RUSTY REFUSED AND WENT THROUGH THE DRILL WITH THIS PLAYER. HE WAS KNOWN FOR TACKLING MUCH BIGGER PLAYERS BY GOING LOW TO KNOCK THEIR LEGS OUT OR TO PUSH THEM OUT OF BOUNDS.

AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, RUSTY SET ABOUT TO BUILD HIS LIFE – UNTIL DEC. 7, 1941. THAT MORNING, RUSTY AND A COUPLE OF FRIENDS HAD BEEN OUT HUNTING. THEY PULLED INTO A GAS STATION TO BUY GAS WITH THEIR HUNTING GUNS SHOWING IN THE CAR.

WHILE FILLING UP, THEY HEARD THE RADIO REPORT OF THE BOMBING OF PEARL HARBOR. AT FIRST THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE IT. WHEN THEY REALIZED THE REPORTS WERE TRUE, THEY DECIDED TO GET HOME RIGHT AWAY.

SOON, THE JAPANESE AMERICANS WERE ALL GATHERED AND RELOCATED THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES. MANY OF THEM LOST BUSINESSES AND PROPERTY WHICH THEY NEVER REGAINED, EVEN AFTER THE WAR.

WHILE IN ONE OF THESE CAMPS, THE GOVERNMENT REVERSED ITS RULES AND ALLOWED JAPANESE AMERICANS TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE ARMY.

RUSTY'S ATTITUDE WAS ONE SHARED BY MANY OF HIS FELLOW NISEI, "I'LL SHOW THEM WHO'S A LOYAL AMERICAN," HE RECALLED. SO , HE SIGNED UP AND BECAME PART OF THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, WORKING IN THE PACIFIC THEATER OF THE WAR.

DURING THE ISLAND CAMPAIGNS, HE SERVED AS AN INTERPRETER AND INTERROGATOR OF CAPTURED JAPANESE SOLDIERS. HE ALSO TRANSLATED ANY PAPER OR MAPS WHICH WERE CAPTURED.

THANKS TO RUSTY'S DILIGENCE, THE LIVES OF HUNDREDS OF SOLDIERS WHO SERVED WITH HIM WERE SAVED. ONE EXPERIENCE CONCERNED HIS WORK ON A MAP AND PAPERS WHICH FELL IN TO HIS HANDS. HE ANALYZED THE INFORMATION AS SAYING THE JAPANESE FORCES WERE PLANNING A MASSIVE SURPRISE COUNTER-ATTACK THE NEXT MORNING. RUSTY'S SUPERIOR DIDN'T BELIEVE HIM, BUT RUSTY INSISTED. FINALLY HE CONVINCED SOMEONE IN CHARGE TO PREPARE FOR A POSSIBLE ATTACK. . THE SOLDIERS WERE READY THE NEXT DAY WHEN THE JAPANESE ATTACK TOOK PLACE RIGHT AROUND THE TIME RUSTY HAD PREDICTED. AS A RESULT, A MASSACRE WAS AVOIDED AND THE AUSTRALIAN UNIT DROVE OFF THE ATTACKERS.

ANOTHER TIME, RUSTY'S OBSERVATION NOTED A CAPTURED JAPANESE SOLDIER HAD SUFFERED A LEG INJURY FROM FALLING OFF A BRIDGE. FROM THIS INFORMATION, RUSTY WAS ABLE TO GET THE SOLDIER TO TELL HOW FAR AWAY HIS CAMP WAS. THE ALLIES USED THIS INFORMATION TO PINPOINT TWO 105mm GUNS FROM WHERE SOME SNIPER AND MORTAR FIRE WAS COMING. AN AIRPLANE DESTROYED THE ENEMY NEST. IN APPRECIATION, THEY GAVE RUSTY A GUN SIGHT FROM ONE OF BIG GUN.

AND, SO IT WENT. RUSTY WAS ATTACHED TO AN AUSTRALIAN UNIT. SEVERAL TIME THE LEADERS INSISTED RUSTY WEAR THEIR UNIFORM INSTEAD OF HIS AMERICAN ONE. RUSTY REFUSED, SAYING IF HE DIED, HE WANTED IT TO BE IN AN AMERICAN UNIFORM.

EVENTUALLY, AMERICA WON THE WAR AND FORCED JAPAN INTO SURRENDER. RUSTY EVENTUALLY FOUND HIS CAREER AND MADE HIS MARK THERE BEFORE RETIRING.

NOW WELL IN HIS 80s RUSTY IS LIVING PEACEFULLY IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, I THINK NEAR HIS FAMILY.

HE WAS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE "GO FOR BROKE" MONUMENT.

RUSTY'S EXPERIENCES AND LOYALTY CAN BE MIRRORED IN THOUSANDS OF OTHER NISEIS WHO SERVED AMERICA.

HIS OWN BROTHER WAS WOUNDED IN THE FAMOUS BATTLE IN WHICH AN AMERICAN JAPANESE UNIT SAVED THE "LOST BATTALION" OF SOLDIERS FROM TEXAS, WHO HAD BEEN CUT OFF AND SURROUNDED BY THE ENEMY IN FRANCE. THERE WERE OVER 800 CASUALTIES TO THE NISEI UNIT DURING THE RESCUE EFFORT.

I APOLOGIZE FOR NOT MAKING THIS MORE SPORTS-RELATED. AS I SAID, RUSTY WAS A HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE AND MAY HAVE GAINED MANY OF HIS LESSONS OF TOUGHNESS AND ENDURANCE AND LOVE OF FAIR PLAY FROM THESE EXPERIENCES.

HE WAS JUST ONE OF THOUSANDS OF THIS GROUP OF AMERICANS SOLDIERS WHO GAVE SO MUCH. THROUGH THEIR TRAGEDY OF BEING DENIED THEIR CIVIL RIGHTS AT THE START OF WORLD WAR II, THEY FOUGHT FOR AN AMERICAN IDEAL IN WHICH THEY BELIEVED. AS A RESULT, THEY EARNED RESPECT FROM MANY AND BUILT FOR THEIR DESCENDANTS A HOPEFULLY BETTER, AND FAIRER, LIFE IN AMERICA.

THE LESSON I THINK IS CLEAR

WE CAN EITHER LET TRAGEDY CRUMPLE OUR SPIRITS AND CAUSE BITTERNESS AND HATE -- OR WE CAN FIGHT BACK AGAINST IT AND LEARN NEW PRINCIPLES OF FORGIVENESS AND HUMANITY WHICH WILL MAKE US BETTER PEOPLE.

NOTE: Rusty did not want me to publish this article, but I pleaded with him saying, yes, the article is based on his war experiences, but more than that, the writer is informing the people in rural Oklahoma about the Niseis and what we did despite the treatment our Government dealt us. This article may be the only article those people will ever read about the JA's during WWII. I want to thank Rusty for finally consenting to its publication in our newsletter.

Many veterans have told been that their service records have been destroyed in the 1973 fire at the St. Louis National Archives and Records Administration. I was at the VA in West Los Angeles the other day looking into filing for compensation for war related injuries. During the visit, I asked about what were the facts of the destruction of the military records. The officer of the VA gave me the following News Release by the Office of Public Affairs. Hope the release will clear some of the questions you may have.

## **Facts About the 1973 St. Louis Fire and Lost Records**

The National Archives and Records Administration is the official depository for records of military personnel separated from the United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy. The records are housed in three locations: the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C., the Washington National Records Center in Suitland, Md., and the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, Mo.

The NPRC contains records relating to:

- U.S. Army officers separated after June 30, 1917, and enlisted Army personnel separated after October 31, 1912.
- U.S. Air Force officers and enlisted personnel separated after September 1947.
- U.S. Naval officers separated after 1902, and naval enlisted personnel separated after 1885.
- U.S. Marine Corps officers separated after 1895, and enlisted personnel separated after 1904.
- U.S. Coast Guard officers separated after 1928, and enlisted personnel separated after 1914. Civilian employees of predecessor agencies (Revenue Cutter Service, Life-Saving Service and Lighthouse Service) of the U.S. Coast Guard from 1864-1919.)

## **The Fire**

A fire at the NPRC in St. Louis on July 12, 1973, destroyed about 80 percent of the records for Army personnel discharged between November 1, 1912, and January 1, 1960. About 75 percent of the records for Air Force personnel with surnames from "Hubbard" through "7" discharged between September 25, 1947, and January 1, 1964, were also destroyed.

## **What Was Lost**

It is hard to determine exactly what was lost in the fire, because:

- There were no indices to the blocks of records involved. The records were merely filed in alphabetical order for the following groups:

World War I:	Army	November 1, 1912 -September 31 1939
World War II:	Army	September 8, 1939- December 31
Post World War II	Army	1946 January 1, 1947 -December 31
	Air Force	1959 September 25, 1947 -December 31, 1963

Millions of records, especially medical records, had been withdrawn from all three groups and loaned to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) prior to the fire. The fact that one's records are not in NPRC files at a particular time does not mean the records were destroyed in the fire.

## **Reconstruction of Lost Records**

If a veteran is advised that his or her records may have been lost in the fire, he or she may send photocopies of any documents they possess to the NPRC, particularly separation documents. The address is National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132-5100. This enables the NPRC to re-establish files by adding those documents to the computerized index and filing them permanently.

## **Alternate Sources of Military Service Data**

In the event a veteran does not have any records in his or her possession, the essential military service data may be available from a number of alternate sources.

- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) maintains records on veterans whose military records were affected by the fire if the veteran or a beneficiary filed a claim prior to July 1973.
- Service information may also be found in various kinds of "organizational" records such as unit morning reports, payrolls and military orders on file at the NPRC or other National Archives and Records Administration facilities.
- There also is a great deal of information available in records of the State Adjutants General, and other state "veterans services" offices.

By using alternate sources, NPRC may often be able to reconstruct a veteran's beginning and ending dates of active service, the character of service, rank while in service, time lost while on active duty, and periods of hospitalization. NPRC is usually able to issue NA Form 13038, "Certification of Military Service," considered the equivalent of a Form DD-214, "Report of Separation From Active Duty," for the purpose of establishing eligibility for veterans' benefits.

### Necessary Information for File Reconstruction

The key to reconstructing military data is to give the NPRC enough specific information so the staff can properly search the various sources. The following information is normally required:

- Full name used during military service
- Branch of service
- Approximate dates of service
- Service number
- Place of entry into service
- Last unit of assignment
- Place of discharge

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### SOMEONE SENT ME THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE TO BE PLACED IN OUR NEWSLETTER. THE ARTICLE WAS IN THE NOVEMBER 1999 ESQUIRE AND TITLED "BIG BOY" BY DAVID SEDARIS

IT WAS EASTER SUNDAY in Chicago, and my sister Amy and I were attending an afternoon dinner at the home of friend John. The weather was nice, and he'd set up a table in the backyard so that we might sit out in the sun. Everyone had taken their places when I excused myself to visit the bathroom, and there, in the toilet, was the absolute biggest piece of work I have ever seen in my life -- no toilet paper or anything, just this long and coiled specimen as thick as a burrito.

I flushed the toilet, and the big boy roused around. This thing wasn't going *anywhere*. I thought briefly of leaving it behind for someone else to take care of, but it was too late for that -- before leaving the table I'd stupidly told everyone where I was going. "I'll be back in a minute," I'd said. "I'm just going to run to the bathroom." My whereabouts were public knowledge. I should have said I was going to make a phone call. I'd planned to pee and maybe run a little water over my face, but now I had *this* to deal with.

The tank refilled, and I made a silent promise. The deal was that if this thing would go away, I'd repay the world by performing some unexpected act of kindness. I flushed the toilet, and the beast spun a lazy circle. "Go on," I whispered. "Scoot! Shoo!" I claimed a giddy victory, but when I looked back down, there it was, bobbing to the surface in a fresh pool of water.

Just then, someone knocked on the door, and I started to panic.

"Just a minute."

At an early age, my mother had sat me down and explained that everyone has bowel movement. "Everyone," she'd said. "Even the president and his wife." She'd mentioned our neighbors, the priest, and several of the actors we saw each week on television. I'd gotten the overall picture, but, natural or not, there was no way I was going to take the rap for this one.

"Just a minute!"

I seriously considered lifting this monster out of the toilet and tossing it out the window. It honestly crossed my mind, but John lived on the ground floor and a dozen people were seated at a picnic table ten feet away. They'd see the window open and notice something drop to the ground. And there were people who would surely gather round and investigate, then there I'd be, with my unspeakably filthy hands, trying to explain that *it wasn't mine*. But why bother throwing it out the window if it wasn't mine? No one would have believed me except the person who had left it in the first place, and chances were pretty slim that the freak in question would suddenly step forward and own up to it. I was trapped.

"I'll be out in a second!"

And I scrambled for the plunger and used the handle to break it to manageable pieces, all the while thinking that *it wasn't fair*, that this was technically *not my job*. Another flush and it still didn't go down. *Come on, pal. Let's move it*. While waiting for the tank to refill, I thought maybe I should wash my hair. It wasn't dirty, but I needed some excuse to cover the amount of time I was spending in the bathroom. *Quick*, I thought. *Do something*. By now, the other guests were probably thinking I was the type of person who uses dinner parties as an opportunity to defecate and catch up on reading.

"Here I come. I'm just washing up!"

One more flush and it was all over. The thing was gone and out of my life. I opened the door to find my friend Janet, who said, "Well, it's about time." And I was left thinking that the person who'd abandoned this man-made object had no problem with it, so why did I? Why the big deal? Had it been left there to teach me a lesson? Had the lesson been learned? Did it have anything to do with Easter? I resolved to put it all behind me, and then I stepped outside to begin examining the suspects.

## I REMEMBER KOJI ARIYOSHI

I first met Koji when I was assigned to his team in the fall of 1943. I first heard about him at our graduation from Savage in June of 1943, where he was introduced as the most improved student of the Class of Dec., 1942. I do not remember him being at Camp Shelby in July 1943 taking basic training along with us. Koji was at least 14 years older than I.

After seven weeks of basic training, we returned to Fort Snelling for a short time before going back to Savage for overseas assignment. Until we were assigned to a team, we did some Japanese radio monitoring, brushing up on more of the language and even did some kitchen duty. It was a time to get checked out for dentistry and physical fitness and more time after hours to head for Minneapolis or St. Paul for Chinese food or shows.

Then one day, I was called by Koji telling me that I was to be a part of his team. In his team were Clarke Kawakami, Chris Ishii, Karl Yoneda, Kenji Yasui, Masao Kitsuta, Sam Sasaki, Alex Yorichi, Edgar Latha and myself. Koji's team was made up of mature, well educated (Strong in English, Japanese, or special professional talent) men. I didn't belong with this group, but I guessed they needed a flunky to do the odd jobs, so I stopped worrying about whether I fitted in with this talented bunch.

From the day of team assignment, I could tell that Koji was a take charge person. Nothing seem to scare him. He knew what he had to do, what equipment and books to take to perform the tasks ahead. He would go to Judge Aiso, Col. Rasmussen or anyone else he felt necessary to assure himself that he was prepared to carry out the team's assignment. One felt very confident and comfortable with his leadership. He was not afraid of anyone when it concerned his team.

We set sail out of Wilmington in early January 1944 on a brand new Liberty ship S. S. Linsey. I felt pretty good at first, but the ship was put on a shake down cruise before heading out to place unknown at the time. The ship did all kinds of maneuvers to assure the Captain the ship was sea worthy. This lasted about an hour, and I was sea sick -- all the next 60 days until we arrived in Calcutta, India.

The ship carried about 40 armed guards (navy seamen) besides the crew along with our team of ten and a group of ten OSS personnel as passengers. Since the seamen themselves were not able to man the gun positions 24 hours, we were assigned duty along with the sailors. Koji never assigned us a gun position that was dangerous. He took the crows nest or the bow positions which were the worsts during rough seas.

When the food was not the same as those served the ship crew, Koji went up to the Captain and demanded that we be served the same food. The Captain said the Army provided us only C rations, Koji threatened to write to our Congressman and the change was immediate.

When we finally arrived in New Delhi, India, we reported to Col. Swift who was the Chief of Intelligence at SEATIC HQ. Koji introduced us to the Colonel and said, "Colonel, Please take care of my men." I was shocked to hear a Tech Sgt telling the head man to care for his men. Koji was such a person. He didn't hold back because of rank or position. He felt that he was responsible for his men and he would go all out to protect and care for them.

Koji was assigned to China shortly after we arrived in Assam to work with the Office of War Information (A State Department operation). I was told later that he was to work along with the Chinese Communist leader, Chairman Mao. This is the group Sho Nomura and George Nakamura worked with. The report Koji made to OWI was shocking at the time because they were very pro Communist. That is, he was reporting that the US should be supporting the Reds because they were the future of China. This was very upsetting to me because Communism was a dirty word for me as long as I could remember. However, as years past by, I now understand what Koji was telling us. It was not that Communism was good, but Mao had the support of the Chinese people and he would eventually become the leader of China, therefore we the US should support him to defeat Japan. Koji was not only gutsy, he was a person who could see into the future. Sho tells me that Koji was respected and was trusted by the Communist leaders.

I never saw Koji after he left us in Ledo. Years later I heard he was tried as one of ten Communist in Hawaii. I remember him as a true leader who fought for his men and who feared no one. My only regret is that I was not able to tell him in person.

Ken

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Military Intelligence Service Club of SoCal  
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# An American Story

## From The Bill of Rights to Redress

### Teacher Training Workshop

The 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup>/MIS World War II Memorial Foundation, in collaboration with the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and the Japanese American Museum, is presenting a Teacher Training Workshop designed to educate teachers on the World War II internment of Japanese Americans and the experience of Nisei soldiers. Listening to the stories of internees and veterans, participants experience *first-hand* the impact of this period in American history.

The information gained from this workshop fulfills the California History/Social Studies State Framework and the Social Studies Curriculum Content Standards for grades 4, 5, 8 and 11.

## Saturday, May 20, 2000

Japanese American National Museum

Education Center 1

8:30 am to 4:00 pm

\$10

Keynote Speaker:

**Colonel Young Oak Kim**

Retired U.S. Army Colonel, served with the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion

Registration Form: *An American Story: From The Bill of Rights to Redress*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Areas(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade level \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ (\$10 per person)

Registration due: Friday, May 12, 2000

Enrollment is limited to 40 and on a first-come, first-serve basis

Make checks payable to the  
100/442/MIS WWII Memorial  
Foundation, and send to:

100/442/MIS WWII Memorial Foundation  
P. O. Box 2590  
Gardena, CA 90247

No refunds for cancellations one week  
prior to the event.