

## HISTORY OF THE OFFICE NO. 2

### Primary Stage ---

No. 2 Information Office was opened at 10-8-4 on April 25, 1942 with Yoshitake Ando undertaking the job of opening the office. On April 27, 1942 this office was reorganized having Gunji Tonai as acting manager, Iwao Shirokawa as clerk, Mrs. Chiyo Tayama as social worker, and Mike Minato and Mamoru Murata as messengers. with this personnel, No. 2 office had four blocks (3, 4, 9, and 10) under its jurisdiction.

At this time three information offices (No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3) had been opened for the benefit of the residents in Manzanar.

### Secondary Stage ---

On May 4, 1942, in order to facilitate office business, a typist, Kimiko Oka, was assigned to this office. On May 8, 1942, our two messenger boys had to quit their job because of their under age. At that time the labor regulation was that all the messengers must be over 16 years of age. replacing those boys Yukiya Tatsumi, Kyoichi Nakanishi, and Richard Kai were assigned to this office as messenger boys. On May 16, Nori Nakai as a clerk was attached to No. 2 office replacing Iwao Shirokawa who was transferred to No. 4 office which was opened on the same day. On May 18, Frank Takimoto was attached to No. 2 office as a clerk replacing Nori Nakai who was transferred to No. 4 office.

About this time the No. 1 office arranged the night crew of electrician to stay at our office for repairing services from 4 P. M. to 10 P. M. everyday.

Present Stage ---

On May 18, 1942, Iwao Shirokawa was assigned to this office as acting manager taking the position of Gunji Tonai who had been appointed as the net-weaving project foreman.

At this time, increasing the number of our messenger force to four, Masaru Murata was assigned to this office, because our office had to relay messages between No. 1 office and field offices (No. 3, 4, and 5). As a result of the new policy of the personnel office, information office had to cut down the five newest of the messenger boys. Masaru Murata, being recently employed, was released from his job as a messengers in the information office.

About this time, for the convenience of the residents here, mail delivery sub-stations were organized throughout this Center, and No. 1 sub-station was established in our No. 2 office. On June 20, 1942, Masatsugu Yamasaki who had been assigned to this office on June 1, 1942, as a messenger, was released from his job, because he wished to work on camouflage net project in the Production Department.

Personnel of No. 2 Office

Iwao Shirokawa- - - - - - - - - - -Acting manager  
Frank Takimoto- - - - - - - - - - -Clerk  
Chiyo Tayama- - - - - - - - - - -Social Worker  
Kimiko Oka- - - - - - - - - - -Typist  
Yukiya Tatsumi- - - - - - - - - - -Messenger  
Richard Kai- - - - - - - - - - - Messenger

At the present time, we have six blocks under our jurisdiction namely Block 3, 4, 9, 10, 15, and 16.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

Type of Services ---

Judging by our clients' attitude and listening to gossip we believe that our information offices became one of the most beloved offices in this Center. They feel that information offices were the guiding lamp to the residents who were not accustomed to this strange country.

At the time they had arrived here, they were just one year old babies. They didn't know how to light oil-stoves, where to go to eat, where the lavatory is, and so on.

After we had taken care of these elementary problems, we had to show them how to get mop, brooms, and buckets to fight against everyday-piling-up-dust. Then we took in various minor complaints everyday with a smile as a symbol of our services, such as broken doors, broken beds, burnt-out bulbs, plumbing troubles, roofing troubles, and so on. As soon as they had adjusted themselves into this new world, most of the employable residents started to look for suitable jobs.

As far as job application is concerned, they still claim, the information office was always the best advisor to them.

Another great job was to fill in the forms of changing address (F.B.I., Local Board, Department of Justice, and Post Office) for every resident in this Center.

Another distinctive service was to fill in the selective service questionnaire and the occupational questionnaire for the residents who are not able to read and write English. This was appreciated greatly by the residents.

Along with this particular service the information office had the Center Management to arrange Mrs. Hopkins, Notary Public, to come to our No. 2 office for the notarizing services occasionally.

There were two important routine works for the field offices; one, posting the notices issued by the Management through the information center at the Mess Halls under its jurisdictional area, another, taking care of lost and found articles.

Also we took in the applications for room change, but this procedure was revised later so that applicants must go to warehouse 26 directly.

In this way the Manzanar residents were guided and educated to adjust themselves into this new environment. As they grew older from boyhood to manhood, they had great faith in our offices and wished us to write letters for them. This service was willingly rendered to the public residents as one of our personal services.

Two most important duties of the information offices, we believe, were to take in major complaints, suggestions to improve welfare of our community, and major inquiries, and furnish the correct informations answering the general inquiries.

Another important duty was to kill false rumors flying around the Center harming the Center morale.

Looking back into the past the job which had to be very tactful and careful was accepting and rejecting applications of family reunion, but this job had been handled by our office very successfully until the end of our days.

On top of this family application job we had taken care of the application to send for the articles stored in the government storages.

OUR OPINION

Dealing directly with the residents we encountered many difficult problems and were blamed as being the responsible party, such as delayed pay-check, but being servants of the public our office always enjoyed serving the people here.

Really it was the greatest enjoyment we have ever experienced. In this way we were encouraged and spirited to tackle difficult problems to come.

For two months we believe we did our best enjoying to see the people served and convincing them what the American Government is trying to do for them. Also contacting many different types of people was a good sociology study for us.

Another great pleasure was that by sending complaints and suggestions made by the residents to the Management, we saw the great amount of improvement in this Center since the beginning.

As we exit and look back into our brilliant days, we sincerely hope and believe that the block-leaders will assume out duties as "the Servant of the Public", not "the Servant of the Management".

--- Iwao Shirokawa