

Manzanar Session

1998.38.49

Manzanar Session of the Inyo and Mono Counties

Oct. 1, 1943

What is Manzanar?

In years to come, when the war is over and peace has returned to the world, people may say to you, "What was Manzanar?" Then I hope you may say that Manzanar was a war-time city that sprang up from the sands of the desert of Inyo and returned to desert with the end of the war. It was the largest city between Los Angeles and Reno. It was a city serving a war-time purpose where people lived in peace and good will, where there was a school system that taught young citizens the ideals of American citizenship, where schools were of as high a rank as other California schools, and where students dedicated their future lives to the American way of living.

From the Senior Class Dinner Address by:

Ralph P. Merritt

Project Director

Manzanar Program

Time --- Event --- Place

12:30 --- Farm Luncheon --- High School Study hall

2:00 --- Variety Program --- Building 7-15

2:30 --- Round Table Report on Manzanar Schools --- Building 7-15

3:30 --- Conducted Tour

I. Manzanar Schools

A. Pre-School Education 1-14

The Manzanar Pre-School program offers Nursery and Kindergarten training for 370

children between 2-5 years. 22 evacuee teachers are under training and supervision of one Caucasian supervisor.

B. Elementary Schools 3-15

805 children in grades 1-6 attend school in 22 classrooms under the direction of 22 Caucasian teachers and supervisors and 6 trained evacuee teachers.

C. High School

The six-year high school has an enrollment of 986 boys and girls who are taught by a faculty of 40 teachers. The high school was recently accredited by the California State Department of Education.

D. Adult Education

Under the direction of one appointed staff member a faculty of qualified evacuee teachers has been developed for the Adult Education program. 1896 adults in Manzanar are taking advantage of the extensive program offered.

E. Museum

This is a very popular center where frequent exhibits give the people of the community an opportunity for valuable cultural and educational experiences.

II. Industrial Division

The various sections of the Industrial Division offer an opportunity for vocational training in several different fields of work.

A. Clothing Factory

The clothing factory makes all types of clothes which are sold to the citizens of the community through the cooperative stores. Uniforms for hospital personnel are made and distributed to all ten relocation centers.

B. Woodcraft Shop

All types of office furniture including executive desks, secretary desks, chairs, filing cabinets, and tables are made in the shop.

C. Signs and Paint Shop

This shop specializes in finishing new furniture and designing and painting signs for the entire community.

D. Food Processing

This factory preserves all surplus vegetables from the project-farms for winter use in the mess halls.

III. Guayule Ironing Rooms #6

The Guayule Experimental Station at Manzanar was organized under the direction of Dr. Robert Emerson of California Institute of Technology. Work in propagation of Guayule plants and extraction of rubber content has been carried on by expert evacuee scientists. Four scientific publications on guayule work done here are now near completion.

IV. Music Hall 24-15

This musical organization is under the direction of a manager and 9 evacuee teachers. All types of music lessons and an opportunity to participate in five different types of musical ensembles are offered to the members.

V. Children's Village

The Children's Village is a home for 68 dependent children. Their ages range from four months to 15 years. Mr. and Mrs. Harry Matsumoto, who came from the Japanese Children's Home, a Protestant organization in Los Angeles, are in charge of the institution. None of the other relocation centers has an orphanage. Thus, Manzanar receives all the dependent children of Japanese ancestry.

VI. Hospital

The hospital is directed by Dr. Morse Little who has three evacuee doctors assisting him. Because of the crowded barrack conditions, public health work is very important. Over 2000 out-patient cases are seen monthly. Fourteen nurse's aides and fifteen orderlies are receiving hospital training.

VII. Victory Gardens

The small gardens inside the center are owned and worked by the individuals of the community. Great pride is taken in producing fine vegetables and beautiful flowers.

VIII. Manzanar Farms

The Manzanar Farms under the supervision of Mr. Robert McConnell play a vital part in producing food for the residents of the community. All varieties of vegetables are planted within its three hundred twenty-five acres. Up to the present time over 600 tons of vegetables have been produced. It is anticipated that over 2000 tons of produce will be harvested by the end of the present season. With the addition of the poultry farm and hog farm which are now being developed it is hoped that Manzanar will become increasingly self-sustaining.

IX. Manzanar Cooperative Enterprises, Inc.

The Manzanar Cooperative founded on Rochdale principles is evacuee-owned and evacuee-operated. Its primary purpose is "to supplement the maintenance provided the evacuees by the Manzanar War Relocation Area with the best possible quality of goods and services needed by the members at the lowest possible cost."

The stores and services of the Cooperative include: a canteen, dry goods store, laundry depot, sporting goods, photo studio, artificial flower-making department, shoe repair shop, check cashing and money order department, watch repair service, barber and beauty parlors. It maintains an outdoor theatre which provides the residents weekly movies free of charge. It also underwrites a portion of the printing cost of the Manzanar Free Press, a bi-weekly publication of the center. During the first year of operation these stores registered a gross sales of approximately seven hundred thousand dollars.

Net earnings are returned to its consumer members quarterly in the form of patronage refunds after authorized expenses have been deducted.

Membership in the Cooperative is open to anyone who has attained the age of sixteen. The present paid-up membership numbers 6630 persons.

Do you know that?

1. The monthly salaries paid to the employed evacuees are: \$19.00 to professionals, such as doctors, dentists, teachers or supervisors; \$16.00 to clerks, stenographers and skilled workers; \$12.00 to apprentice or unskilled workers.
2. 65% of Manzanar's population are American citizens.
3. 244 boys of Japanese ancestry from Manzanar are serving in the Army. From this group, 22 are serving in the Army of Naval Intelligence?
4. There are 525 boys on seasonal leave to help harvest crops.
5. WAC recently recruited several Nisei girls from Manzanar?
6. There are over 20,000 people of Japanese ancestry not on the west coast who have never been placed in relocation Centers?
7. The average age of the male alien is about 62 years. The peak age of their children falls at 20 years. There is almost no middle-age group in our population?
8. The Japanese population in this country decreased 8.6% during the years of 1930-1940?
9. Only 15% of Japanese-American citizens have been registered by their parents for dual citizenships?