

FABULOUS, FANTASTIC, FENOMENOL FAMILY EXPO '94 AT L.A. CONVENTION CENTER...A GREAT SUCCESS!

After a year of many meetings, questions, mind-twisting, mind-boggling ideas, thoughts, etc...the WEEKEND arrived when all our (especially Tak's) worries and anxieties came to.... "SHOWTIME"...and WOW, the finished display was beyond expectations...IT WAS FENOMENOL!!!!

The two booths given to the Crystal City group and to the Japanese Peruvian group were put together presenting wide display for our stories...the pre-war, war-time, camp life, and post-war...the Japanese-Peruvian story display put together by Chieko Kamisato and her graphic artist Rick.

The many people who walked in, read the posted "stories", looking at various pictures... were so surprised to learn of our unique camp...questions asked...questions answered... voices of our folks were heard and listened to...their stories were finally heard! What a wonderful, warm feeling we all had...

Perhaps now, more people "out there" will realize that Crystal City was NOT A CAMP FOR "BAD PEOPLE". (Cont'd on pg 2)

A SPECIAL THANKS-GIVING TO:

Aya and Noby Yamakoshi...without their dedication and support for Crystal City, it was almost impossible to be recognized and accepted as an important and unique camp during WW II.

Irene Hirano, Karen Ishizuka, Nancy Araki and many others at the Japanese American National Museum for recognizing us and including Crystal City Internment Camp with the ten relocation centers during the war.

Ben Tak Takeuchi for the tireless effort to create a proper booth to depict Crystal City at the Family Expo '94 and for having Wayne Saito, graphic artist design our booth.

Wayne Saito and his assistant Janine Manji who worked hours and hours putting our booth together, giving up other jobs which meant giving up \$\$\$ income for our display.

Chieko Kamisato, Bebe Ganaja and Libby Yamamoto for their important Peruvian Experience display as part of Crystal City Camp's.

Chieko Kamisato for the generous donation, creating and donating special Crystal City T-shirts for our fund-raising.

Toni Tomita and Miyo Eshita for countless hours at meetings, working with their brother Ben on the display, their husbands for putting up with us meeting at their homes, eating great lunches (eating is very important to all meeting)

ALL of you C.C. friends...who worked in the booth, 40 of you who attended the dinner at the Expo, so many of you coming from far distance...flying in, driving...it was Ole Home Week at the booth...

Many, many more of you donating \$\$\$ for our booth expenses, for the Chatter, for ordering T-Shirts and Albums...

Thank you, thank you, thank you very, very much...we are... very grateful to you for you HUGE, GIGANTIC SUPPORT!!!!

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Toni Tomita

"IMAGES of the Family Expo --- And so they came. Niseis, now in their 60's and 70's. Niseis, tenderly guiding their aged parents through the maze of exhibits. Niseis, once reserved --- now hugging and warmly embracing long ago friends, laughing and recalling those "camp days". Sanseis with yonseis in tow, sanseis and yonseis peering at the photos, imagining what it must have been like to be a teenager in a camp for three years or so. Veterans from 100th, 442nd MIS, etc. proudly standing guard over a long row of mementos in glass display cases made by their sons and daughters. Veterans, with their memories sharpened by their recent reunion in Bruyeres, eager to tell their stories.

And so they came. Former internees from the 10 relocation camps and from Crystal City, the internment camp. The mission: to tell the story of our legacy -- the story of our parents, the Isseis, -- their struggles, their fortitude and resiliency. Former internees traveling from great distances with their camp exhibits -- Bainbridge Island, a traveling museum exhibit -- Minidoka photos from Seattle -- Topaz exhibit from San Francisco -- a guard tower built to scale, an "Obutsudan" (Buddhist Alter) intricately carved from wood in Heart Mountain and a trough used for washing at a camp -- all brought from the San Jose Historical Museum -- Poston I, II, and III exhibit from San Diego -- the ranger from Lone Pine at the Manzanar exhibit

(Cont'd on pg 2)

(Cont'd from pg 1, "Fenomenol Expo"...Sumi)

For so long, there was a stigma attached to the name "Crystal City Internment Camp".... mostly due to ignorance...to not really understanding the arrests of our fathers and 30 mothers...why?

Were they arrested because these Isseis were "bad"? What was the reason for their arrests from December 7th, 1941 into 1942? They must have done something "bad" to have been picked up all over, in Hawaii, in California, in Peru, in other Latin American countries...and yet, not one person arrested and taken into Detention Camps were ever proven guilty of any espionage or treason!!

We know that many were leaders of the Japanese communities...some were teachers, others were ministers and priests of various Japanese religions...martial arts teachers, the many kenjin-kai leaders, fujin-kai presidents, the "cream of the crop" Japanese leaders of many communities...and yet, there were many who were ordinary farmers, gardeners, fishermen, nurserymen, merchants, men and women from all walks of life...guilty? Why did the FBI's select these people's name out of thousands...why were they more suspicious than others? We haven't answers to these questions...we just know that they were taken in and kept in remote areas of this country...and never released into the other relocation camps or to the outside world...so Crystal City was built to have the family united for the duration of the war, and perhaps exchanged for the prisoners of war during the war with Japan.

Now, more people have learned about our Issei parents' struggles and strife...at last their VOICE IS HEARD! Mr. Hori...you are not forgotten...the promise I made to you years ago when you cried to me and my son is heard...you pleaded with me to never let your arrest and imprisonment be forgotten...I HAVEN'T, and now, I also feel "anshin" (at ease, relief) that I was able to keep that promise...I am grateful!

Many of you have thanked me for "keeping the group together". No one can keep any group together...it is this unique camp experience...so very friendly and warm that held together because of this injustice... **YOU KEPT IT TOGETHER...ALL OF YOU!!!**

I am very grateful for this opportunity of voicing our long frustrated years of being totally ignored and unrecognized...but not any longer...**WE ARE NOW HEARD, RECOGNIZED, AND INCLUDED INTO THE JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM!!! BANZAI -- DAI SEIKO!!!**

(Cont'd from pg 1, "From the President's Corner" ...Toni)

-- photos and mementos fresh from the recent Amache reunion in Las Vegas -- Gila exhibit, a one man effort by Sei Dyo, ready for their reunion in March and then on to permanent display in Arizona.

And so they came. Former Crystal Cityites - from Chicago, Texas, Vancouver, Sacramento, San Francisco, Richmond, Monterey, San Jose, Parlier, Redley and points south. To refresh old memories, to renew friendships, to recall mutual experiences. I know Sumi will let you know their names in her own inimitable way.

And so they came. Meeting after meeting - decisions to make about the visuals for our exhibit, meetings at the museum, finalizing the text for the display, setting up the display and finally dismantling the exhibit. It was truly a labor of love - love for our parents and love of our extended family, all those who were a part of Crystal City.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the Crystal City Committee - Sid, Sumi, Sei and my brother and sister - Tak and Miyo, I want to thank you all for your encouragement and warm support of this Family Expo project. To Tomo Mizukami, Sumi and Libby Yamamoto who scheduled the volunteers signed up for the three days event. To Yone Takeuchi, Kim Takahashi, Sachi Maehara, Sumi, Tomo and the Gardena group for all the goodies at our meetings. To Sei and Yets Dyo for their gracious hospitality, for allowing us to have our C.C. meetings at their clubhouse and for always providing hot and cold beverages. To Wayne Saito, our graphic designer, his able assistance Janine Manji, to Joan Takeuchi and Davis Mochizuki (these two took time off from work) who worked around the last week to complete the displays. **DOMO ARIGATO GOZAIMASHITA** - My deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks to you all and to anyone else I may have forgotten.

COMING EVENTS

The Japanese American National Museum is planning to feature a concentration camp each month in the coming year. Crystal City will be featured in the month of February. They are interested in a panel discussion and a hands-on workshop for the public. We will be seeking volunteers, especially for our candy making workshop. Anyone have a good recipe for taffy candy?

We will be scheduling a meeting in January to discuss the February event. One of our main goals this year will be to start the Oral History of former Crystal City Internees. We have so few Isseis left amongst us that time is of essence to initiate this project. Also, some of the Niseis tell me that they are getting forgetful too -- 'nuff said!"

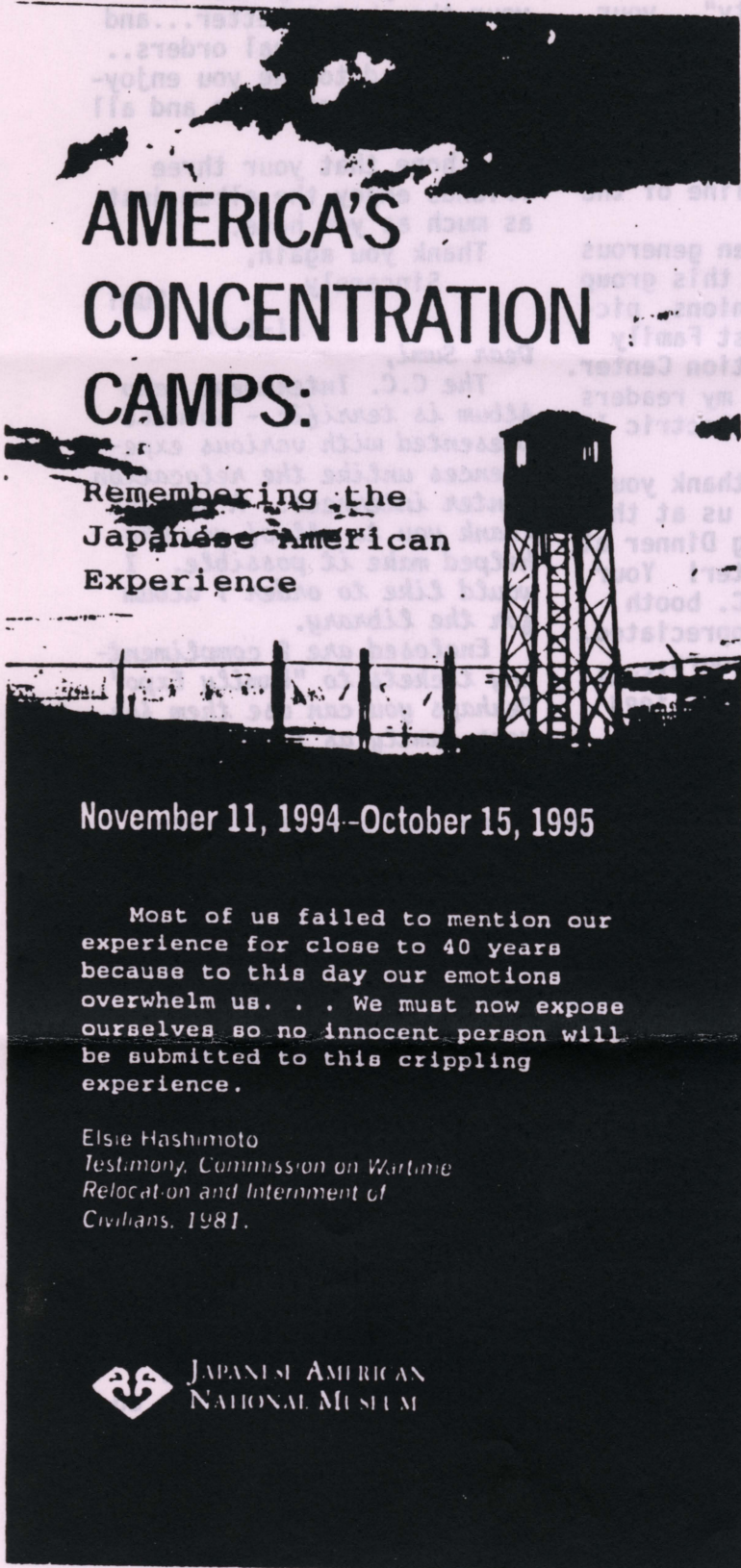
Toni T.

THE JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM... "AMERICA'S CONCENTRATION CAMPS: REMEMBERING THE JAPANESE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE."

From November 11, 1994 - October 15, 1995

AMERICA'S CONCENTRATION CAMPS:

Remembering the
Japanese American
Experience



November 11, 1994 - October 15, 1995

Most of us failed to mention our experience for close to 40 years because to this day our emotions overwhelm us. . . We must now expose ourselves so no innocent person will be submitted to this crippling experience.

Elsie Hashimoto
Testimony, Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, 1981.



JAPANESE AMERICAN
NATIONAL MUSEUM

Across the street from the Japanese National Museum in Lil Tokyo, a barrack was rebuilt to depict the living condition of what over one hundred and twenty thousand Japanese, Japanese Americans have lived in for several years in many parts of the country...often in desolate bleak parts of the United States.

This barrack was taken down and built up again by former Heart Mountain internee Bacon Sakatani and Keiichi Ikeda. Later Larry and Emi Nakashima came in their huge motor home. There were others who worked hard in taking the barrack down carefully so they can put it up again in Lil Tokyo.

The Mukai family lived in one of the rooms, and Tomo Mukai who lived there came with his son Ron. Professional carpenters and volunteers arrived. They brought two barracks from Wyoming for the Museums' new exhibit.

The reconstruction took place October 15 and 16. The result was a real barrack that withstood years of weathering in cold Wyoming elements, dismantling, shipping and reconstruction into authentic WW II barrack that many of us lived in for all those years...wondering what was going to happen...where would we eventually go to...and what the future would hold for all of us...

A guard tower is also built...although the area is fenced with cyclone fence and not the barbed wire fence...the effect of this barrack brought back memories and tears.

This is important artifact of our WW II experience. It is a living proof of our incarceration,

Inside the Museum, on the second floor, the ten relocation centers have their memorabilias and shows the area of all their own barracks, mess halls and washrooms with the shower and bathrooms.

Crystal City Internment Camp was included in this important exhibit. The numbers on the T-sections are wrong but most of you know where you lived so go in and place your little house and number on the map...have your pictures taken along with your memories and comment.

Since I was in both Heart Mountain Relocation Camp and Crystal City Internment Camp, I marked on both maps...and inserted my comments.

I encourage all of you to go and visit the Japanese American National Museum in Lil Tokyo. You will feel "manzoku"...very gratifying, full-filling...

Letters to the Editor:

10-25-94

Dear Sumi,

Thank you for the many hours of work you so faithfully devote to writing the Crystal City Chatter. We are so fortunate to be so well informed about the activities of the CC family activities.

I am so pleased to hear that there is a demand for more C.C. 50th Anniversary Albums. Having them distributed to major university libraries will certainly reach many who are unaware of our camp experience.

I am enclosing an order form for another album and also a check to be used for postage where ever funds are needed.

Keep up the fantastic work!

Sincerely,

Susie Sasagawa (Masuda)

Dear Susie,

Thank you for your kind letter and for your order and donation...now that we are into our second printing, we are requesting donation to cover the cost of the 300 additional albums, so we are very appreciative of your generosity.

Gratefully yours, Sumi

10-31-94

Dear Sumi,

It was so nice talking to you today. Thank you for all the work you're doing for this Expo in addition to all others.

I'm enclosing my check to cover the Saturday night dinner for the following 5:

Blanca Katsura

Amy Katsura

Leslie Katsura

Eloy Maoki

Libia Yamamoto

It's wonderful how the Crystal City people responded! A great deal has to do with you and your printing of the Crystal City Chatter which gives all of us a sense of unity.

Thank you! I look forward to seeing you in L.A.

Best to you,

Libia Yamamoto (Maoki)

Dear Libia,

I know many of you credit me with the "sense of unity", but all of you have created this "sense of unity"...your desire and interest has kept this Chatter alive...with not only your notes, letters and telling me personally when we meet, but with your donations which is the life-line of the newsletter.

You-all have been generous and have supported this group in many ways...reunions, picnics, and the latest Family Expo at the Convention Center.

So, you and all my readers have kept my IBM Selectric III humming and busy.

Thank you, and thank you for joining all of us at the Annual Fund-Raising Dinner at the Convention Center! Your presence at the C.C. booth was also greatly appreciated.

Very sincerely yours, Sumi

Lima, Oct. 1994

Dear Dr. Shimatsu,

I'm one of the few Crystal Cityites living in Lima, Peru.

I'm most grateful to you for availing me the Crystal City 50th Anniversary Album which you kindly mailed to Juan Kudo.

The Album is great! My sincere congratulations to all the staff who was in charge of it for the excellent work they did.

It's really heartwarming to see so many pictures, old and new ones, and to read interesting articles on our Crystal City Camp. Those memories which are a chapter in the story of our lives are treasures for all of us. They are unforgettable, good or bad, they will remain in our hearts forever.

I'm really glad to know (the good news) that the Album will be reprinted. Three persons here in Lima are wishing to purchase it...

Wishing you continuous success in your Crystal City Chatter.

Sincerely yours,

Yuriko Tanaka (Mishima)

Dear Yuriko,

Thank you very much for your thoughtful letter...and for your additional orders.. I'm so glad to see you enjoying the many pictures and all the articles.

I hope that your three friends enjoy the album just as much as you have.

Thank you again,

Sincerely,

Sumi

11-2-94

Dear Sumi,

The C.C. Internment Camp Album is terrific - so well presented with various experiences unlike the relocation center internees. A special thank you to all of you who helped make it possible. I would like to order 1 album for the library.

Enclosed are 2 complimentary tickets to "Family Expo". Perhaps you can use them for your family as I won't be able to attend. I was very pleased to read about C.C. being included at "Family Expo".

Also enclosed is a check to cover expenses for C.C. Chatter which I enjoy very much, especially the Japanese words and phrases plus the translations!

Sincere appreciation,

Alice Shimazu (Matsumoto)

P.S. Enclosed is a small donation for C.C. Internment Camp booth.

Dear Alice,

Thank you very much for the tickets to the Family Expo '94. I had out-of-town guests who were able to use them...it was very thoughtful of you...

Thank you also for the donation for the booth...it was about \$1,000. to pay for the cost, however, Wayne Saito donated his service so, we were very, very fortunate. Thanks to many, our cost for the booth was almost totally covered. Sumi

The Family Expo '94 at L.A. Convention Center

The final "D" day arrived...all the work and worries that Tak Takeuchi and ideas and work that Wayne Saito and Janine Manji had poured into our Crystal City Internment Camp booth was unveiled Friday, November 11th...and it was fabulous! The booth doubled in area as the Peru group added theirs to ours so instead of 10 X 10, we had 10 X 20 and Chieko Kamisato had her designer Rick put the Peru display on the right side...and added the complete story of our camp.

Toni was busy at the front, directing booth volunteers, as well as others...we had many C.C. friends who volunteered their services so there were always some group of people to answer the questions that many asked.

As you enter the huge center, the left side had booths lined up with all the military group with many of their plaques, flags, memorabilia, artifacts gathered...the 100th, 442nd, MIS, etc...it was very impressive.

Booths of every relocation camps...booths of many religious group, NCR, Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community, Boy Scouts Troop 379, the Koyasan troop, East West Players, JAFL, the American Friends Service Committee or better known to many of us as the Quakers who had Christmas gifts for all the children in many camps...(that was the first time I ever heard of "Quakers"), etc. etc. so many groups represented...many arts and crafts, beautiful artwork, photography, Rafu Shimpo, the J.A. National Museum selling books and T-shirts/sweat shirts, so much to see, so much to do.

All of my six children and their families...three mothers-in-laws, one from Hawaii (Jane Yokota), one from Oakland (Alice Ong), and one from Malaysia (K. Low)...and of course my friend Michi...they spent Friday in Lil Tokyo studying and asking me questions about Heart Mountain...then on Saturday, they were at the Convention Center...spending the day there...learning, listening, asking question etc.

I was at the C.C. booth both Saturday and Sunday...talking so much my voice started to fade...but Akemi rescued me with coke, and kept me going...so many people did not know of C.C.'s existence.

Of course, most people did not know about the Japanese Peruvian's plight. We had Carmen Mochizuki there, Bebe Ganaja, Libia Yamamoto, Blanca Katsura and Eloy Maoki to help us with the Peru information.

We had many volunteers to man the booth...I do remember all of them since I wasn't there on Friday...I know Teddy Mizukami was there Friday, George Kasai, and the Kurakanes were all there, Saturday, Aya Yamakoshi, Sayo Kubo and George Hosaka was there, along with Akemi and Yosh Yasuda, May Hamada, Sachi Maehara, Tomi Tanaka, Kanji Nishijima...Hats Nakamura, Ty and Fumi Nakamura, H.O. and Kazie Okamura...so many familiar faces...C.C. friends...coming around... Sam and Dottie Hatanaka, Kim Takahashi, Sei and Yets Dyo, George and Fudge Kodama, Mas and Shirley Okabe, Skip and Yone Takeuchi, Yoshinari and Sumi Honda, Yuki and Haj Nonoguchi, Ruby Sakurai and her mom Chiyo Fukunaga, meanwhile, Tak Takeuchi's in and out checking on the booth...Toni and Miyo were going back and forth from the J.A. National Museum (they were short of help) to the Convention Center...busy? you bet!!! Hideo and Ets Kasai, John and Teresa Amerson all the way from Texas...Natsue Nakamatsu and family, Stogie Kanogawa and of course Yae Aihara (who rode the shuttle bus from the J.A. Museum next to my son Luke who asked "Do you know my mom?" when he found out she was from C.C...she asked who was her mom and found out yup, she knew me...very well, she was my bridesmaid...small world)

and a real stranger whom I haven't seen since C.C. camp...HARU INABA KURUMIYA...she still had her warm smile and freckles...she was working at the NCR booth...it was so good to see her. Come around Haru...we really enjoyed seeing you again...and Charles McCullister, red hair & all!

I'm sure I missed many others...but my memory couldn't capture everyone...between talking to the people...explaining...informing...etc., it was a very, very busy weekend...and very, very successful!

When we met in January, February of this year to talk about this big Nisei Experience...and going month after month to each meetings, not getting solid ideas of how, what, etc. to be done and getting it done for the three days event...in July-August, we all wondered if we were ever going to be able to get it together, oh how little faith we had...it wasn't only getting it together, but put together so great!

Hats off to the Japanese American National Museum and their staff and all the people that they got together to put this great event on, but to do it at the same time that they had the Heart Mountain barrack and all the ten relocation centers and our C.C. Internment Camp display put together,

We had to take care of only our booth...they had to take care of two events-two exhibits...
FANTASTIC J.A.N. MUSEUM FRIENDS...TAKE A BOW!!!

Crystal City joins "Family EXPO" Exhibitors

When former inmates of the Crystal City, Texas internment camp learned of the opportunity to tell their own story at the Japanese American National Museum's "Family Expo: Sharing the Japanese American Legacy" on November 11, 12 and 13 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, they didn't hesitate. They committed to putting up a display.

"When we knew this Expo was happening," explained Toni Tomita, an active Crystal City committee member, "we started having meetings."

Toni's brother, Tak Takeuchi, contacted designer Wayne Saito and asked for his advice. Saito had worked on an exhibition at the recently-opened Museum of Tolerance and upon hearing of the Crystal City project, volunteered his own time. Saito came up with a display featuring panels depicting life before the war, blaring headlines when the war began, detention camps where the Issei leaders were held and scenes of Crystal City itself. There will also be a panel following the inmates after the war (some were shipped to a devastated post-war Japan) and a replica of a monument commemorating the Crystal City experience, organized by the local residents of Zavala County, Texas.

The Crystal City experience is not well known to outsiders. Many more people are familiar with the IO War Relocation Authority concentration camps that housed the majority of the Japanese Americans incarcerated by the government during World War II. Crystal City was administered by the Justice Department and originally held Issei men, who were picked up within days of Pearl Harbor. These men were considered the lead-

ers of the community, including Buddhist priests, language school teachers and Japanese association officials.

At the end of 1942, the Justice Department decided to make Crystal City a "family camp" where families could join their Issei relatives. Crystal City also held German and Italian internees and the Japanese Peruvians who were kidnapped from their homes in South America with the intent of being used in prisoner exchanges with Japan.

After the war, the Crystal City internees went their separate ways. The majority returned to their homes on the West Coast or in Hawaii. Others went to Japan. Many of the Japanese Peruvians were stuck in limbo. They didn't wish to go to Japan and Peru would not take them back. The American government treated them as illegal aliens, even though they had been brought here against their will. Many of the Japanese Peruvians were held at Crystal City until 1947.

This story is important to people like Sumi Shimatsu, who has been producing the "Crystal City Chatter" quarterly newsletter since 1988, the year Crystal City held its 45th Anniversary Reunion. Shimatsu noted that her father, Tokiji Utsushizawa, was imprisoned by the FBI because he once donated \$200 to the local Japanese language school. A pioneer photographer and one of the few Issei living in Southern California before the turn of the century, Utsushizawa never shook off the effects of his confinement at Crystal City. Shimatsu recalled that her father, not long

before his death, tried to pack up his possessions in a pillow case because he thought he was being transferred to another camp. Told he didn't have to leave, he sat down and cried.

Tomita said that Crystal City people have stayed close through the last half century. They often have picnics, a tradition started up soon after the war. The focus of the picnics has always been the Issei, with many activities geared toward them. "It was a chance for the Issei, our parents, to see each other," Tomita explained. "My mother said that this (Crystal City picnic) was her favorite."

Individuals like Aya Yamakoshi, wife of Museum Trustee Noby Yamakoshi, have flown in from Chicago. Others have come from Texas or even as far as Switzerland. One year, a German woman, who was held at Crystal City, came to a picnic.

Sadly, there were only six Issei at this year's picnic. Tomita, a retired teacher, is moving forward to collect oral histories on these survivors and on the older Nisei. Tomita fears if they don't act soon, much of the Crystal City story will be lost. That's why the Crystal City committee was happy to have the opportunity to put up a display at the Family Expo this year. They were also pleased when they learned that Crystal City will be part of the Museum's next major exhibition, "America's Concentration Camps: Remembering the Japanese American Experience," which opens at the Museum on November 11. Literally thousands of people will have the chance to learn about Crystal City. For the former inmates, it's about time. •

Down Memory Lane

Fifty years...many years ago, I would have said, that's a long, long time ago...and it still is, however, at times, it seems like another lifetime ago...

When I received a letter from the J.A.N. Museum, inviting me to the unveiling of an actual Heart Mountain barrack on Thursday, November 10th, because I was from Heart Mt. before C.C., I thought I would not be moved with a place that I stayed in only 1 year...my heart belonged to Crystal City.

Then I received a telephone call from my former Heart Mt. neighbor who now lives in San Francisco...Michi Onuma, a newspaper woman who still works for Nichibei Times at 87 years young...in Heart Mountain, she worked for the Sentinel newspaper...she asked if I was attending the unveiling of the barrack that was brought to Lil Tokyo after being carefully dismantled and then trucked to L.A. and reassembled across the street from the J.A.N. Museum...knowing that she was also interested, she made her plans to fly down to Burbank airport and stay with me...she had also signed up for the Annual Dinner at the Convention Center.

I picked her up Wednesday night late...the storm in San Francisco cancelled many of the flights, but hers was delayed couple of hours, and so Thursday morning, we both went to the Museum, got our name tags, programs, etc...soon with news media around, people gathered around the familiar black tarred barrack...and we listened while the dedication ceremony was held...yet, my thoughts and feelings were when mom and I stood looking at this barrack Sept. 1942, with suitcase and duffle bag we wondered how we were going to live, let alone survive out in the middle of nowhere...

This was ridiculous...I felt more for C.C. so how come I'm choking up looking at this black tar-papered barrack? C.C. was my real home and real camp...yet, here I was trying to wipe my tears and choke back the huge lump in my throat...I could see my tiny mom besides me, looking at this bleak place...we did live and survive 28° below 0 blizzards, sandstorms that came through every cracks and crevice of the barrack...

Michi also admitted her feelings...choking and tearing...and so I didn't feel too bad.

We looked inside (behind) the front structure...(the fence was open that day)...the rooms looked so small...Michi and I both

thought it was larger...I know I was smaller so the room would naturally look smaller now when I'm grown...but Michi was an adult...yet it was small to her too...the celotex was missing on walls but it was a real barrack...the pot belly iron stove was missing too...how we enjoyed the warmth of the iron stove...

Being a city kid, I didn't know how to start a fire or use the stove...when it got cold, I stacked the coal up half way, struck a match and dropped it in the stove, expecting the coal to light up and warm our room up...nope...after trying this method many times, I went out and learned to start it with newspaper and kindling wood...wow...this was new to me.

We used the laundry line in the back of our barrack to hang our clothes and linen after washing them at the laundry room on those wash boards...when the weather grew cold, the sheets and all the clothes froze stiff as a board...I folded them and brought them into dry inside our warm room, only to discover that in folding them, I had torn the sheets where I folded (nacherly), torn the knees to my jeans, and mom just laughed. Another lesson for the city kid.

Barbed wire never held me back from hiking out to Shoshone River...I'd go spend few hours to enjoy the sound of the creek/river, making sure I don't step on a rattlesnake...knowing that it felt "free" to be outside of the fence, even for a very short time...taking buckets, I'd fill it with minnows, and bring it back, letting them out in the laundry tubs...and many of the women would ask to take some home to their rooms...it gave them "pets" to see swimming around in a jar. So I went out to get more minnows for those who enjoyed them in their "home".

Of course, I had other "taste" in pets...Horned toads of all size were in my box of sand...I loved the little ones...wearing them on my lapel. Michi's sister Nao would have the "heebe-jeebe", and of course, this was funny to me. How could anyone feel that these cute horned toads could be ugly or scary?

Mom wasn't used to mutton stew, or "Gottani"... a type of goulash made of any meat they had tossed together with any vegetables they had...so our messhall cook had no imagination...it was day in and day out of "gottani"...she lost weight from 135 to 85 pounds in Heart Mountain...what she ate was the "gohan" and "tsukemono" made of dandelions that we picked while walking around the outskirts of the camp...the young dandelions made delicious "tsukemono" or Japanese pickles.

I learned to ice skate...no Kristi Yamaguchi, it was great...Michi's place had people coming nightly...we played Mah Jong, poker, Monopoly,

Down Memory Lane, Cont'd

all the important things...even Ouija Board on three legged card table...Michi and Nao were my "O-nesan" in Heart Mt...and I was Michi's baby-sitter for her 4 years old daughter Rumiko and 2 years old son Taiki...

Being 14, I found good messhalls to get into. Since ours had no imagination and we had the same ole goulash, block 12 was my favorite... Kida-san of old San Kwo Low Chinese restaurant was the chef, and he made everything not only tasty but delicious...block 8 had Mr. Shimatsu (later my father-in-law) as the chef, and his food tasted pretty good too...and being small, it was easy to sneak in and out of different block messhall, even though we were not allowed to...

The worst memory was communal bathrooms and showers...it was very difficult to take shower or go to "benjo" when there were no privacy...I think this was the worst, embarrassing situation...Estelle Ishigo lived in our barrack, and every morning, she took sketchbook, charcoal, easel, and folding chair...walking out and drawing, sketching, etc. Her husband was a very quiet, nice looking person with mustache...and worked in Hollywood as an actor. I always wondered why she was in a camp of all Japanese, Japanese American, and she just said "because I didn't want to be parted from Arthur."

It was nice to see her artwork published...I remembered many of the sketches I watched her draw in camp...

"Harry James" the very happy Salvation Army worker, the original "Forrest Gump" was out in middle of the sagebrushed, open area, "barking" out his message...and all one could hear in the distance was "Wan, wan, wan" like a barking dog...when you go close, you could hear words that he's preaching about the Lord. You had to get very close and listen very carefully...he had cherry red cheek...always smiling...he used to stand on the corner of San Pedro and East First St. by the Kataoka Jewelry...remember? He came back after the war to Lil Tokyo and continued to "bark".

School was school...smart Nisei kids...it was torture to study with straight A kids...but it was part of life. I enjoyed just hiking around every corner of the camp...

Summer was working in the farm...thinning vege, picking beans...hearing rattles from snakes nearby...hoeing, picking, etc...for a city kid it was fun, being out of the barbed area.

Then it was repatriation time...and mom and I

had to pack in 2 hours to leave for Missoula, MT...Mary Pagoda, the well loved school teacher was our chaperone to Montana via bus and train...end of August of 1943. That was the end of my time spent in Heart Mountain...Michi and her family had already left in June for Denver, CO, so I only felt somewhat apprehensive going to Japan, but eager to have mom and dad together once again...and be all together...so Heart Mt. became part of a short memory...

Through this relocation camp, I have continued to keep in touch with several of the people that we met...Michi was one that we kept in close relationship with...her children, who were so small are now grown and "older"...

The Takeuchi family were in Heart Mountain...and the other day, Tak told me how I always wore a red "beanie" cap around Pomona Assembly Center and in Heart Mountain. He has memory better than any elephant...really...his recalls are just fantastic.

Someday, I will continue this Memory Lane through Missoula Montana...the men who were imprisoned there since Pearl Harbor...the time in Ellis Island...meeting Yae Aoki, Yae Kanogawa and Reo and Stogie...and how we traveled down to Crystal City...all together. Yae Aoki was the only one who came from Crystal City, so she knew where we were going...it was a new camp for the rest of us.

o o o o o o o o

You all should write out your "Memory Lane" not only for yourself but for your children/grandchildren...even if you think there isn't much to write about...look what I could write of only 1 year of a relocation camp.

o o o o o o o o

I'm only sorry that I didn't get my father and mother's thoughts and memories...but I know that my father did not want me to know anything about Santa Fe or Lordsburg, New Mexico. He said that it was better that I did not know...typical how many Japanese people "worked out" their inner feelings. Today, so many out there feel that they must open up and regurgitate, to relieve all the pains and problems that they feel caused conflicts in life...perhaps, but somehow, I'm still of the old school that "gaman" and "ganbatte" you make something out of yourself.

Somehow, our Issei parents lived a difficult but courageous lives...and gave us Niseis so much... It sure was rough for them to have to lose everything that they had worked for...and still smile and be the wonderful Oji-chan and Obā-chan that they were to our children...I'm always very, very grateful to them..."Asakara Ban made, Kansha, Kansha"... "I'm grateful to them from morning till night."

Notes and Donations to the Chatter:

From Atsumi Ozawa (Suzuki), Chicago
Dr. Shimatsu,

Thank you very much for the Crystal City Chatter.

I greatly appreciate receiving it.
I hope someday in the future my grandchildren will like to look at the copies.

Please accept my contribution.

Sincerely, Atsumi Ozawa

From Hiromi Jones (Asano), Indiana
Dear Mrs. Shimatsu -

Thanks for the Crystal City Chatter. Enjoyed it very much.

Enclosed is a check for the album (and \$\$ for the Chatter, Editor)

There seems to be quite a network of Japanese in the L.A. area, from what I gathered in the newsletter. I'm looking forward to seeing the Album.

Thanks again, Hiromi Jones

A very nice personal letter from Sumie Nii (Ochiai) in Honolulu, Hawaii...

P.S. Please use the enclosed check to defray expenses for the Crystal City Chatter -- you do a super job. You write like you talk --- mucho fluent and interesting!!!

Aloha, Sumi

A little note from my dear friend Shiz Kato... (Ochiai) in Hilo, Hawaii

Just a short note to tell you that I received these tickets -- since we're members of the Japanese American National Museum -- and hope that maybe some one can use them for this week-end. Wish we were there to see the exhibits. etc. etc.

Love, Shiz

Shiz has been donating \$\$\$, Macadamia Nuts, candies, etc. etc...and even all those flowers at our '88 Reunion...remember all those orchids? Well, I just found out she had purchased it all in Hilo Orchid Farm...all by herself...and I did not know until now...Mahalo, Mahalo, Mahalo!!!

Donations have continued sending you these newsletters, and I have had fund-raising T-shirts to put \$\$\$ in the bank for all the expenses...

With all the expenses we had lately with not only the booth (which many have contributed towards...) we are ordering 2nd reprint of the Album, costing \$6,000., therefore, I had Chieko Kamisato design and silk screen these T-shirts to raise more \$\$\$ for the Album. Chieko donated all the T-shirts and the costs of having them silk screened...and just said "make money for the Chatter Sumi"...so, these are great, thick all cotton T-shirts...send in your orders PLEEZE!!!

Thank you...Sumi

ORDER FORM FOR:

CRYSTAL CITY 50th ANNIVERSARY REUNION ALBUM
Edited by Joy Nozaki Gee 2nd Printing:
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Large and X-Large sizes only:
\$20.00 each (See design below, right)

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Send your order and check to: (payable to Crystal City)

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Camarillo CA 93010

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BACK

Autumn...yet the weather is cold and feels like winter. Many of you went back East to see the Autumn leaves...I heard from several of you how gorgeous it was...the colder the weather, the brighter the leaves...however, the Sierras do not take second seat to the East coast...I took a drive up there Sunday, October 30th at 10:00...got to Sequoia at 1:30...the weather was just gorgeous...the Hospital Rock area was just as wonderful as I remembered it many years ago...I drove up to Giant Forest...the bright yellow, peach, orange and yes red autumn leaves were so beautiful against the green forest of pine, incense cedar and yes, the giant sequoias...so very majestic and huge! Driving through the wonderful forest..."kokoro no sentaku"..."cleansing of the soul"...and how I needed it!

It's another world...another time...and ageless...it's there!..always there ...so serene and soothes the soul!

So when they say "Peace on Earth...goodwill toward men (and of course women)..."this is the kind of peace you want to share with all of your family and friends...a real serene, meditative peace ...something not available in the city...freeways...smog...etc...certainly not in the mad, mad world of mall!

So, enjoy...take time to see the clouds drifting by...bask in the warm sunshine...smell the sweet, sweet air after it rains...

Inspite of all the injustice this country has done to so many groups of people...it's still a wonderful country! Aren't we fortunate that our folks chose to come to America?

Take care...life is fragile...especially at our lovely age...

Many, many years ago, when our six children were small and were fishing at the Redondo Beach Pier, an Issei lady in her 70's came by with her son, and expressed her joy in watching our children fish...she looked so beautiful...her eyes were glistening and her face shined....I was drawn to her and asked her, "Obasan, what is your religion?"...I wanted to know why she was so beautiful...she answered "Obasan wa neh, o-tento-san o, kansha shite imasu." (I am grateful to the sunshine)...*"Otento-san wa mai asa, kanarazu higashi kara agatte...ichinichi atataka sa to akari o itadaku desho...so shite, yu gata ni kanarazu nishi ni sagatte hoka no kuni ni atataka sa to akari o ageru desho, dakara, Obasan wa Otento-san ni asa muite, "Kyo mo yoroshiku ten ten to hikatte kudasai"..."so shite, yu gata ni, nishi o muite "Domo Kyo wa arigato gozaimashita...mata ashita mo onegai shimasu" to Otento san ni ogamimasu."* (I pray in the morning to the sunshine asking it to shine brightly throughout the day...then in the evening, I face west and thank the sunshine for a wonderful day, and to please come back tomorrow for more sunshine)...a very simple, child-like prayer, but it showed in her face...she said that she tries to be like the sunshine and live brightly each day...I can only say, her "religion" showed on her face...in her mannerism...in her bright smile and sweetness...Amen

Have a warm and wonderful Christmastime...in your way...lots of love, laughter and life!!!
Very sincerely yours,

Sumi Shintani

CRYSTAL CITY CHATTER
[redacted]
CAMARILLO CA 93010



TAD & SATOMI ISHIDA
[redacted]
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94116

